TEACHER BELIEFS AND PRACTICES THAT IMPART
SELF SYSTEM AND POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY ATTRIBUTES

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by
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Teacher Beliefs and Practices that Impart Self-System and Positive Psychology Attributes


Abstract

We are in an education revolution where children are learning about life through their schooling and people are spending much more of their lives in school. Yet, little is known about the complex development that occurs through schooling; the dominant paradigm in a child’s life for learning about themselves. The study of the self in cognitive developmental and positive psychology has taken on heightened importance due to the increasing awareness of the central, functional role that the self plays in development across the life-span. This study investigated teacher beliefs and practices for imparting self system and positive psychology attributes because of the critical link between the construction of the self and happier, healthier, more successful children. This study considered the interactions among the beliefs that teachers hold about the importance of their role in the development of the selves of their students, the classroom practices used to impart self system and positive psychology attributes. Research design is a combination of qualitative interviewing (n=25) using grounded theory methods; and a case study at the middle school level. Open-ended, in-depth interview protocol utilize: subjective happiness, meaning in life, satisfaction with life, and psychological well-being scales from the Positive Psychology Center. I argue that teachers can do much more to impact the human development of students. Most studies that are conducted within a school context consider academic achievement as the dependent variable or outcome of a child’s schooling. Teachers are important in the life of a child not merely for imparting academic content knowledge, but additionally and more directly than is known, in aiding their cognitive and human development in terms of an integrated, whole view of children, or a self system. Understanding the differing teacher beliefs and intervention and instructional strategies used to impart happy, healthy and whole children is the focus of this study. Results included: teachers hold deep beliefs to empower adolescent development; teachers have minimal classroom strategies available; there is a gap between espoused theories of action versus theories in use; this study developed a theory that an alignment of teacher beliefs with classroom practices that focus upon an integrated self leads to developmental outcomes. Implications include policy, curricula, and teacher development. Suggestions for further studies were also made.

Keywords: teacher beliefs and effectiveness; cognitive and positive psychology; self theory; purpose of schooling; self in teaching and learning.
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Chapter One

RATIONALE FOR THIS STUDY

“Improvement of the soul requires harmony among the three aspects of self.”
- Nel Noddings

“If I should tell you any secret of my life, it is the intense desire I have to see growth and improvement in human beings. I think that is the whole secret of my enthusiasm and study, if there be any secret to it, my intense desire to see mind and soul grow.”
- Francis W. Parker

Why this Study is Important

We are in an education revolution, which began approximately 100 years ago and continues today (Baker, 2008), where children are learning about life through their schooling and people are spending much more of their lives in school. Yet, little is known about the complex development that occurs through schooling; the dominant paradigm in a child’s life for learning about themselves. Formal education on such a vast scale in the world and in the United States cultures “does more than socializing children, it constructs and transforms society” (Baker, 2008, p. 1). But the cognitive demand of schooling imparts the value that “students are students more than they are children” (p. 13) as opposed to people with good moral character, well-balanced personalities, and unique ways of interpreting life experiences creating a personal purpose, among other attributes essential for a fulfilling and successful life. In point of fact this focus upon “academic intelligence” through increased cognitive abilities is called “an objectified good” by educational theorists (Baker, 2009).

There is recognition that children and adolescents who possess self understanding grow up to be more accomplished in the domain of school and later in life as healthier adults (Hawkins, et al, 2008). Additionally, self efficacy is the leading antecedent to
children’s aspirations and career trajectories (Bandura, et al., 2001), and performance in the classroom (Pajares, 1996). Indeed, Bandura wrote that individuals possess a self system that enables them to exercise a measure of control over their thoughts, feelings, and actions (Bandura, 1986). There are clearly important attributes for children and adolescents to learn through their development through schooling, and this is where the self system and positive psychology come together for me in the way I conceptualize teaching and learning; the self of the learner.

The study of the self in cognitive developmental psychology has taken on heightened importance due to the increasing awareness of the central, functional role that the self plays in development across the life-span, and because schooling has had such a powerful impact upon the growth of our society’s consciousness. Although the importance of studying the self has grown recently in cognitive developmental psychology; there exists very little acknowledgement of this importance in education.

Schooling has elevated our conscious awareness that there is a “self” to consider, and that people can and should be happy. This insight offers educators a pathway to develop the personalized human goodness that lies within each of us. However, we have reached a point in our cognitive development facilitated through schooling, where the way in which we overemphasize the cognitive dimension when teaching our young students is limiting to them as people, as human beings. As educators we no longer need to follow the industry or production model of schooling where the focus is upon a group of children with narrow, measurable, academic outcomes. We can now consider and teach to each individual child in a classroom setting as human beings with teaching and learning methods that focus on differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 1999; 2000; 2001).
What is needed is further integration of a psychology of the self with pedagogy to produce human outcomes and not merely academic or achievement outcomes. After all, it is noted philosopher and psychologist William James (1900; 1992) who commented about educating young people, that “the absolute, uncriticised reality of the self is the root of the whole matter” (James, 1992, p. 1055).

To shift the focus upon helping children and adolescents learn about themselves and all associated attributions, would bring into balance, a healthy balance, the role that academics plays in a young person’s life through schooling experiences, and contribute to a future life course trajectory of success and well-being. Imparting attributes of human development should be the focus of teachers and the purpose of schooling, not academic achievement, but certainly not at the expense of academic learning. Academic learning is one way to impart developmental attributes. However, we should not use the promise of these attributes primarily for academic achievement gains to satisfy administrative and education system needs for accountability.

We know that young people today are feeling many stresses associated with modern life. Research has shown that these stressors produce issues of concern such as, drugs, depression, obesity, alcohol, eating disorders, suicide, bullying, and cutting, among others. Young people need new strategies to deal with these concerns while going through them, and for their life-times. We also know that young people today want to lead a meaningful life, to empower the fullest expression of their best and highest selves, and to enhance their abilities to experience more fully love, pride, happiness, self respect, and joy. Schooling is where young people get to learn all of these attributes much like adults use work and marriage to learn about and express these attributes; young people
need opportunities to learn about and express these attributes as well, and where better than the place they spend approximately eight (8) hours per day.

In my counseling practice I often hear a client say something to the effect that they want to be happy, or, “my well-being is not where I want it to be.” My interventions usually consist of transforming the paradigm of understanding that the client brings to our work through a process of finding meaning (Frankl, 1984). This approach is grounded in the following Rogerian (1980; 1989) paradigm: that individuals have a future potential to be happy, to enhanced well-being, to discover their own reasons for living a full life. This means that all individuals have it within themselves to create the life they can imagine.

A developmental outcome that is important to a positive life course trajectory, is subjective well-being, defined as “a person’s cognitive and affective evaluations of his or her life” (Diener et al. 2002, p. 63). This important attribute is seldom measured in studies of psychopathology and education, and yet, this is certainly one important measure teachers and counselors alike utilize to assess their effectiveness. The engaged life consists of using one’s strengths and talents to meet challenges; our young people want to live an engaged life. To be able to teach our young people how to construct a self as the mediator between their inner life and external life, so as to be able to assess and take control of their subjective well-being is of primary importance to educators.

*Personal meaning* is where the self system and positive psychology come together – the nexus – of teaching and learning. Personal meaning is an attribute from the positive psychology literature.
Positive Psychology is the newest branch of the American Psychological Association, and represents an evolution in psychology. In fact it represents one of the three (3) legs of the original mission of psychology as it emerged in the United States at the beginning of the 20th Century. In addition to “curing” mental illness, and understanding how to develop superior intelligence, the third mission for American psychology was to bring about the enhancement of everyday living through increased individual happiness, noble purpose in life, and intrinsic motivations to succeed in life.

Past American Psychological Association President and Professor Martin Seligman asserts that the goal of traditional psychology “was to bring patients from a negative, ailing state to a neutral normal state – from a minus five to a zero” (Seligman in Wallis, 2005). The vision of positive psychology is to bring human beings from zero to plus five and answer the question, “what are the enabling conditions that make human beings flourish” (Seligman, 2000)? This is an important question for educators to consider precisely because schools and schooling are where teachers can influence those “enabling conditions that make human beings flourish” and not merely to perform academically. Therefore, the view of the human mind and a psychological paradigm that considers individual differences and how we construct our unique realities as part of an enabling condition is important for educators to consider.

As our society becomes more and more complex, adolescents require additional cognitive and socio-emotional tools, processes and supports (Cohen, 2007; Duckworth, Steen & Seligman, 2005) so as to maximize learning and development outcomes, not only in terms of academic achievement, but also health and well-being. “Happy people are healthier, more successful, and more socially engaged” (Cohen, 2006. P. 203),
therefore we should develop models of understanding children’s happiness and what
teachers can do to impart our children’s health and well-being (Deci & Ryan, 1985; 1995;
Deci, Nezlak, & Sheinman, 1981). The fact that children’s health and well-being, and
their full and unique potentials are not being maximized using all of the psychological
and pedagogical methods available, in particular, the potential impact of positive
psychology in education, demands that we study teaching best practices that impart a
healthy self through schooling. I argue that teachers can do so much more to impact the
human development (Armstrong, 2007) of students as well as academic achievement, and
given that schools are in the people business, they have the responsibility to do so.

To impact child well-being statistics requires rethinking our curriculum, and other
schooling processes, to a more balanced view, where well-being is valued along with
academics. The changing course of curriculum requires that it reflect societal changes
toward self awareness and well-being, or a whole child perspective. Unfortunately,
societal changes include child well-being and school performance statistics, which are
tragic. These statistics require a change in our curriculum and education policies toward
a focus upon the health and well-being of our children.

Children are experiencing many problems in and out of schools. It is critical for
educators to shift their focus to imparting self system and positive psychology attributes
in order to teach children how to flourish in life through schooling.

Examples of tragic child well-being and school performance statistics include the
following. School dropout rates are approximately 25% for all students in the United
States, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2005). Most
recent statistics found that graduation rates for the largest 50 cities are 51.8% (EPE
Research Center, 2008). Even though by age twenty-five we have very high secondary school completion rates, our PK-12 system of education does not work for over a quarter of students going through this system – certainly not creating conditions for our students to flourish.

Our system of education is intended to provide school aged children with the tools to succeed in life, but a large percentage are not taking advantage of this system of education. For example, in 17 of the 50 largest U.S. cities, less than half of the students who entered high school in 2003 ended up graduating. In Detroit, not even one in four students finished high school (Chronicle of Higher Education, April 11, 2008). In Pennsylvania less than 50% of 11th graders are proficient in math, 20% are not proficient in Reading, just 44% of students attend college, only 28% receive college degrees, and only 44% of high-school graduates possess a college-ready transcript (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2005). Therefore, school aged children are not engaged in their schooling and are not learning the essential academic tools to succeed in life.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) approximately 60% of our children are overweight, and 20% obese (CDC, 2005), and in 2003 – 2004 there was an increase of teen suicide of +76% among 10-14 year old girls; a +32% increase among 15-19 year old girls; and a +9% increase among 15-19 year males (CDC, 2007). These statistics are relevant for this study in that if teachers are imparting self system and positive psychology attributes then they will be contributing to the well-being of children— a critical indicator of success across the life-span. If our system of education is producing happy children then these statistics on obesity and suicide would not be so pronounced.
Whichever manner you assess student outcomes from PK-12 schooling, well-being or academic, we are not meeting even minimum standards, let alone a higher vision for what is possible for each student. The vision of positive psychology is to empower young people to a higher vision, or a “plus 5.” As educators and counselors we know something is not quite right, and we want to do more to empower our young people, yet we are not certain what or how, and we do not have a paradigm for thinking through these integrated, complex problems that effectively combines education and psychology.

Children that are products of schooling processes become working, productive citizens, making our society a better place. Yet, approximately 75% of all health care expenditures go toward behavior based illnesses (Borysenko, 1987), which if we could provide early and preventative interventions could potentially save billions of dollars in direct costs. For example: “In 1997, the latest year comparable data are available; the United States spent more than $1 trillion on health care, including almost $71 billion on treating mental illnesses . . . total expenditure for treatment of substance abuse in the United States was $11.9 billion in 1997” (Cresta, 2004, p. 4). To underscore the economic argument for early interventions into child and adolescent well-being through schooling, the direct cost of treating obesity in the United States in 1986 was $45.8 billion or 6% of the total expenditure of health care (Wolf and Colditz, 1994).

In a related study, obesity related expenditures accounted for 9.1 percent of total annual U.S. medical expenditures in 1998 and may have been as high as $78.5 billion ($92.6 billion in 2002 dollars). More than half of Americans are either overweight or obese. Moreover, the prevalence of overweight and obesity has increased by 12 percent and 70 percent, respectively, over the past decade. This trend is alarming, given the association between obesity and many chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes,
cardiovascular disease, several types of cancer (endometrial, postmenopausal breast, kidney, and colon), musculoskeletal disorders, sleep apnea, and gallbladder disease (Finkelstein, Fiebelkorn, & Wang, 2003). I argue if we took merely a portion of these expenditures and invested in the well-being of young people, this investment would provide a substantial return to the quality of people’s lives and to the fabric of our society. We are operating in a paradigm of crisis instead of prevention in health care and in education.

It is the paradigm, including the inherent guiding beliefs, that structures our activities – the particular activities, the specific problems upon which we choose to focus, to solve concrete problems, ones considered true, necessary, and filled with potential. It is the paradigm that makes sense of the facts or the circumstances we are now experiencing. Kuhn (1970) identifies a “crisis phase” in the changing of paradigms. He defines it as “when significant anomalies, inelegances, challenges, and the like accumulate to the point where the reigning paradigm is increasingly felt to be failing or discredited in the eyes of a significant proportion of the relevant community” (Kuhn, p. 184). As a counselor and a teacher working with people, I believe we are in need of a new paradigm of understanding and impacting people. To better understand the growing needs of a new model of impacting people, I began to study both counselors and teachers and what was common to both in terms of professional effectiveness.

Teachers are on the frontline of helping children learn, grow and develop, and through two (2) pilots studies (Brzycki, 2004) I conducted, data collected and analyzed demonstrated teachers have well formulated system of beliefs about the importance of imparting self understanding attributes, as well as an awareness of their responsibilities and commitments to impart these. Additionally, the pilot data indicated very strong beliefs of the teachers that the health and well-being of students is job number one for
them and is the pathway to higher academic achievement for their students through increased teacher caring, to produce in their students increased happiness, engagement and higher sense of purpose (Diener & Oishi, 2002; Eccles & Midgley, 1989; Eccles, Midgley & Blumenfeld, 1993; Grolnick & Ryan, 1987; Heubner & Laughlin, 2001; Zentner & Renaud, 2007).

These are all positive psychology attributes these teachers are highlighting, yet, there is little support from policy and administrative leadership to measure these or reward the imparting of these attributes to students (Fink, Boggiano & Barrett, 1990; Herman, Reinke & Ialongo, 2008). Nor are there teaching and learning methods that are taught to pre-service, student, or master teachers either through teacher education programs or professional development.

Most studies that are conducted within a school context consider academic achievement as the primary and most important outcome of a child’s schooling. Teachers are important in the life of children not merely for imparting academic content knowledge, but additionally, and more directly than is known, in aiding their cognitive and human development. These include their well-being, self concept, identity formulation, self-efficacy, interest and motivation, socio-emotional maturing, purpose in life, hope and inspiration, happiness and life satisfaction, and other attributes (Eccles & Wigfield, 1993; Harter, 1999; Murphy & Alexander, 2001; Pajares, 1996; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002; Rosenberg, 1965; 1986; Wigfield & Eccles, 1997). This study considers the beliefs that teachers hold about the importance of their role in the development of the selves of their students, and their actual, middle school classroom teaching practices used to impart self system and positive psychology attributes. This study investigated teacher
beliefs and practices for imparting self system and positive psychology attributes, because of the critical link between the construction of the self and happier, healthier, more successful children (Hunter & Csikszentmihalyi, 2003; Kuiper & Rogers, 1979; Leondari & Kiosseoglous, 1998; Mueller, 1982; Murphy, 2005; Tomlinson & Eidson, 2003; Tomlinson & Germundson, 2007). This is true especially when interventions are performed in childhood and adolescent stages of development.

**Definition of Self System and Positive Psychology Attributes**

The study of the self in cognitive developmental psychology has taken on heightened importance due to the increasing awareness of the central, functional role that the self plays in development across the life-span. I situate my definition and use of self in a post-modern, socio-constructivist view where the self is socially constructed.

The self system and positive psychology attributes reinforce one another through development across the life-span, and mostly through early formal schooling experiences. An analogy would be a mobile, where one element when moved, impacts all other component parts to varying degrees. By way of example, if a student is clear about his/her unique purpose in life, this may impact his/her motivation to succeed by making larger contributions to the greater good envisioned. Previous research conducted on self system and positive psychology attributes typically isolate one of many attributes, or at most looks at the relationship between only one attribute and school achievement. That view minimizes the holistic nature and dynamic that exists among all component parts of the self.
William James (1900) first offered a view of a self in the early 1890’s with “a man's self is the sum of all that he can call his” (p. 291). According to James this includes the inner and outer dimensions of self. Examples of the inner dimensions include; feelings, thoughts, spiritual understandings, and the outer dimensions, such as; physical and social. This inward life is the central nucleus of the self.

Dewey (1916) extended key self distinctions in psychology and their application to education to include; moral development, interests, conscious purpose, desire and reflection, among others. He also placed these distinctions at the center of teaching and learning, what is known to educators as “child-centered pedagogy” which characterized the progressive movement throughout the 1920’s and into the early 1950’s (Cremin, 1964). Dewey (1916) encouraged educators to never see the self as complete, that it is always becoming, which I take to mean always changing and growing and developing.

Founder of humanistic psychology, Carl Rogers (1961; 1980) places our experiences in life at the center of the process of constructing or coming to know ourselves. He founded “client-centered therapy” widely used today in which the discovery of self of the client is at the heart of well-being and success pathways. Humanistic psychology scholars place self actualization, discovery of self concept, and self understanding as important to learn through life’s experiences. Rogers (1961; 1980) theorized that in education a “whole person” focus was required which he defined as the bringing together of the affective with the cognitive, the mind and the body. He asserted that the whole person goes to school, not just the intellect.

At approximately this same time, Bruner (1960; 1996) initiated the “cognitive revolution” where the study of “mind” became important in the cognitive sciences; a
clear and welcomed departure from the dominant behaviorist views. The mind includes cultural influences and in fact is shaped by these external forces. Cognition and feelings and emotions are all equal to the process of meaning making and in the construction of ourselves and of our realities. For Bruner, “the role of schools in ‘self’ construction, it is very much a part of education” (Bruner, 1996, p. 13). Education is perhaps the most influential cultural institution that operates at the crossroads of individual development and society values, and therefore is a most fertile field for developing a self. It is through Bruner’s work that we have an understanding that the self of a person includes the mind, which is a dynamic system of internal cognitive and affective processes, combined with the external cultural and social influences.

Psychologist and researcher Albert Bandura with his publication of *Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change* in 1977 facilitated a breakthrough in our understanding of the importance of self efficacy, as one component part of the self, and launched numerous academic studies investigating the importance of this single self attribute. In fact, “by the year 2000, over 2,500 articles had been written on this important psychological construct” (Pajares, 2002, p. 8). Many scholars followed with studies on component parts of the self.

Developmental psychologist, Susan Harter offers an integrated construct of the self she calls the “self system” (Harter, 1999). By “system” she does not mean to establish a systematic or predictable view of how component parts of the self operate. Harter does mean to offer a holistic view that is consistent with that of Dewey’s and James’ where a self is the sum of all component parts.
Building upon Harter’s definition, I define the self system and self system attributes to consist of: self concept, self esteem, self efficacy, self understanding, identity, locus of control, self affects, and self schemas.

Positive psychology is an evolution of the cognitive developmental and humanistic views of the self. I define positive psychology attributes (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000) to consist of such commonly understood concepts as: life purpose, life satisfaction, life meaning, happiness, intrinsic motivation, inspiration, and possible selves, where these contribute to psychological and subjective well-being outcomes (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Lent, Sibley, Sheu, & Gainor, 2005) and therefore are important protective factors for educators to consider.

In the Lent, et al (2005) study the researchers proposed an integrative model or a unifying theory of well-being and psychosocial adjustment. Their model includes personality traits and affective dispositions, life satisfaction, self-efficacy expectations and environmental supports and resources. They found that the most direct path to life satisfaction was through domain satisfaction – the experience of success in an area of life, such as school. “Domain satisfaction was found to be the single most consistent predictor of overall life satisfaction” (Lent, et al, 2005, p. 439), demonstrating the importance of developing a positive self system through the domain of schooling in the life of an adolescent as a protective factor to a positive life course trajectory (Patrick, et al, 2007; Shannahan, 2000).

As a counselor and a teacher I became interested in studying how to make a difference with young people in my care, or how to empower them through my work. This is where these two human service professions come together at the mission level, to
empower the life course in terms of health and well-being, as these are learned and manifest through meaningful experiences in life. I wanted to go deeper than the processes that these two professions used their respective strategies for impacting people; counselors’ interventions and teachers’ lesson activities. It seemed that what was common to both – people seeking to learn academic content in a classroom, and how to be happy in a therapist’s office – was self understanding. I became aware that my professional effectiveness in both professional arenas was based upon my ability to help both my students and clients learn about themselves, as the self mediates the inner life with the outer life to determine our realities and shape a positive life course.

The self is a social construction, while at the same time, is the mediator of the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). I argue that the self mediates the cognitive with the environment, that it is the self of the learner that is the context of all personal meaning, a priori, where reality gets created in one’s life, and for children and adolescents, this occurs most readily in their schooling environment. Educational psychologist Pajares (1992; 1996) underscores the need for educators to take an integrated view to completely understand key components of the self, with: “Self efficacy is considered an important component of an individual’s self concept. The literature on self-schemas and possible selves provides a concept of self with four dimensions, one of which, the efficacy dimension, is characterized by individuals’ beliefs about their potentialities” (Pajares, 1996, p. 557). It is important for teachers to impart “beliefs” about their students’ “potentialities” frequently through the teaching and learning process. Thus, when combined with imparting a self efficacy attribution, a teacher is
making a difference in the life of a student who may not believe that she/he can manifest her/his own unique potential in life.

Teacher beliefs, as one example of an outer factor that influences the socio-construction of the self of a student, shape the actions in a classroom. Therefore, the importance of understanding how teachers conceptualize their work through their core beliefs: about their missions to empower children, about children’s growth and development, about those enabling and empowering conditions they confront. I am interested in understanding if and how teachers are imparting self system and positive psychology attributes through their day-to-day classroom instruction and activities, thus contributing to “enabling conditions” for young people going through adolescence.

I use the term “impart” to mean “to give, convey, or grant from; to communicate the knowledge of” (Merriam, 2009). Teachers communicate the knowledge of self system and positive psychology attributes in ways that students construct that knowledge (Bruner, 1990; Glasersfeld, 1995; Kant, 1990; Piaget, 1970; Dewey, 1916).

**Research Questions**

This study examines the beliefs that teachers hold about the importance of their role in the development of the self of each of their students, as well as their actual classroom teaching practices used to impart self system attributes. This study looks at teacher beliefs and practices for imparting self system and positive psychology attributes through their daily classroom instruction because of the critical link between a positive self system construct and healthier, happier, more successful children. This perspective will be reviewed in the Literature Review in Chapter 2 (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; 2000;
2003; Harter, 1999; Seligman, 1998; 2005). From the perspective of the teacher, I want to study what the relation is among concepts that teachers hold about the self of students, academic performance, and student well-being. If teachers perceive themselves as responsible for academic performance, do they also see themselves as responsible for (facilitative of, etc) concepts of self? And if a teacher encounters students who are perceived as demonstrating negative concepts of self, do they believe that they should intervene, and with what strategies?

Specifically, this study seeks to answer the following questions:

1. What beliefs do teachers have about their responsibility and ability to intervene into the well-being of young people?
2. What concepts about the selves of students do teachers hold?
3. Do teachers impart attributes of the self system and positive psychology to their students? And if so, how?
4. How do teachers understand schooling effects on child development and well-being outcomes?

I want to more thoroughly understand whether teachers believe it is their responsibility to enhance the well-being and happiness of their students through academic curricula, and what those beliefs are. Because of my personal desire I am attempting to build a rich description of teachers in a middle school setting, and the connection between schooling’s role in the construction of young peoples’ development and self psychology, and those teaching practices that can and do impart the self system and positive psychology attributes.
I also closed any gaps in situations where gaps exist between my conceptual frameworks of teacher beliefs and practices with that of an integrated self theory. I am attempting to build a rich description of teachers, their characteristics and practices, and teaching and learning that includes the self, and that has never been done before. This is why I have chosen grounded theory research methodology, so as to develop a new theory inductively from the data gathered.
Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

“The habits we form from childhood make no small difference, but rather they make all the difference.”  
- Aristotle

“Impart as much as you can of your spiritual being to those who are on the road with you, and accept as something precious what comes back to you from them.”  
- Albert Schweitzer

Three lines of research literature inform this study: cognitive developmental and positive psychology; teacher beliefs and effectiveness; and the purpose of schooling. In this section of the proposal I introduce each line of inquiry as a lens through which to view teacher beliefs and classroom practices that impart self-system and positive psychology attributes in adolescent students.

**Cognitive Developmental and Positive Psychology**

Presently there is not an agreed upon theory of self – only component parts of the self (Bruner, 1960; 1996; Dewey, 1916; James, 1900; Rogers, 1961; 1980). I will utilize two bodies of work known as self system (Harter, 1999) and positive psychology (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; 2000; 2003; Seligman, 1998; 2005). Self system distinctions include these widely accepted component parts: self concept, self understanding, self efficacy, identity, personality, motivation, and emotions (affective components or self affects). There is a growing understanding of the holistic nature of the self necessitating an integrative view of the self of the learner, with all the attributes of the self working together and not in isolation or separate from each other.
There is interest in the academic community to include the recent emphasis in psychology known as positive psychology where scholars are still attempting to develop theories and approaches that bridge positive psychology with education. Although not having supplanted traditional forms of cognitive interventions typically used in therapeutic contexts, it is emerging as an additional situation-specific approach and now also seen in schooling contexts. Positive Psychology leads us out of the overemphasis on the focus of abnormal behavior by clinical psychology, and the single cognitive aspects of academic learning, into a re-emphasis of enhancing strengths of human beings.

The work being done at the University of Pennsylvania’s Positive Psychology Center has developed the Penn Resiliency Program (PRP) which is a curriculum of lessons delivered in a school setting to both teachers and students to improve or prevent the depressive symptoms of adolescents with robust results. The work of human development researcher and practitioner, Dr. Mark Greenberg (1998), has been delivered to young people in school settings with positive results in terms of behavior. Note that these programs focus upon, typically, only one well-being symptom, depression in the case of the PRP, and behavior outcomes in the case of Greenberg. Both view interventions into the development of young people from contextual and institutional factors, not the inner dynamics of the individual. Missing from the literature are references and studies that impart both academic and human developmental outcomes through teaching and learning in a school context – through everyday schooling consisting of lesson activities in all content areas.

Educational psychologists Bracken & Lamprecht (2003) offer a construct of a positive self concept relevant for educators to consider, presenting “how healthy self
concepts develop and can be acquired” (Bracken & Lamprecht, 2003, p. 103).

Psychologists, Huebner & Gilman (2003) argue that “considering psychology’s historical goal of making the lives of individuals more fulfilling and productive, it is surprising that most of the research and clinical practice has focused on factors contributing to mental illness and psychological distress” (Huebner & Gilman, 2003, p. 99). For purposes of this study at the middle school level, adolescent self concept development is of primary importance and in particular the transitions to and from adolescence.

Most research on transitions is from a stage development view, where Erikson’s (1959) identity crisis stage predominates. The research supports the idea of self concept crisis or disturbance that is due to biological and hormonal changes, and especially, to the shift from elementary to junior high (Gecas, 1982, p. 25; Glas, 2006). I am interested in understanding if and how teachers are imparting inner, self attributes, and do they see evidence of positive psychology attributes through their teaching: meaning in life, purpose in life, life satisfaction, quality of life, subjective happiness, personal growth initiative, and inspiration.

Given all of the increased stressors on an adolescent navigating a life course trajectory within schooling processes that communicate that academics are more important than their individual unique qualities, Frankl’s (1984) work on finding meaning under the most dire human circumstances informs my study framework. Personal meaning is an important positive psychology attribute that works in combination with the self of a student as the place where meaning is made, and assists students in rising above their schooling and life challenges.
The young person through schooling can choose to create a meaningful life, which consists of attachment to, and the service of, something larger than oneself. Baumeister & Vohs (2002) pointed out that the “something” to which individuals choose to connect varies widely. Some find meaning in their connection to family and friends or to church, synagogue, or mosque; others find greatest meaning in their work, or perhaps in a serious avocation. Adolescents most often seek meaning from multiple, overlapping attachments. One common symptom of depression and substance abuse is emptiness, or the lack of perceived meaning in life. Unfortunately, therapists outside of the humanistic-existential tradition are not trained to focus on meaning as a route to relieving disorder. Consequently, teachers certainly are not aware of how to teach students how to create personal meaning in life (Duckworth, Steen, Seligman, 2005; (Krettenauer, T. (2005).

**Teacher Beliefs and Teacher Effectiveness**

“The children have the abilities, but they are not brought out by the ways in which they are taught, which divorce academic content from the children’s realities.”
- Sternberg, 2007, p. 152

Educational psychologist Barbara McCombs’ Learner Centered Principles (LCP) attempt to shift the focus of teaching and learning to a more complete view of the self of the learner. She view them “as individuals with minds, emotions, and personal, developmental, social, cultural, and other individual differences and needs that must be addressed in educational contexts” (McCombs, 2003, p. 94). Learner Centered Principles inform a construct of the self system (Harter, 1999) to enhance teacher effectiveness by including those factors most responsible for creating meaning and reality in life; examples include (adapted from McCombs, 2003, p. 95):
1. Learning is enhanced through the intentional process of constructing meaning from information and experience.

2. Learning is enhanced when students create meaningful, coherent representations of knowledge.

3. The motivation to learn is influenced by the individual’s emotional states, beliefs, interests and goals, and habits of thinking.

4. Learners have different strategies, approaches, and capabilities for learning that are a function of prior experience and heredity.

5. The learner’s creativity, higher order thinking, and natural curiosity all contribute to the motivation to learn.

Learner Centered Principles (LCP) effectively combine cognitive developmental and positive psychology into an integrated whole underscoring the role of the self in creating personal meaning using everyday classroom lessons.

At the center of how the self is constructed through schooling experiences is a model proposed by Pajares (1992) who discusses the important role of schemata in the teaching and learning of the self: “knowledge is fluid and evolves as new experiences are interpreted and integrated into existing schemata” (Pajares, 1992, p. 312). This model and view underscores the utility of the integrative self system (Harter, 1999) in teacher instruction: “newfound cognitive abilities also scaffold the construction of a more complex hierarchy of self-evaluation in which there are general self-schemas at the apex (e.g. global self esteem), under which more specific attributes (e.g. cognitive competence, social skills) are conceptually nested” (Harter, 1999, p. 12). Children and adolescents are
generally not taught the cognitive skills or how to use their “developing cognitive apparatus” (Harter, 1999, p. 12). The thesis of this study is that we should be compelled to integrate a wide range of self attributes, and impart these through a variety of teaching interventions and strategies, and when teachers believe this model, they are more effective (Alexander, P.A., et al, 2002).

Beliefs (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999; 2000; 2003; Harter, 1999; Pajares 1992; Rokeach, 1968) are fundamental to shaping and creating our realities and therefore are essential to formulate when teaching children what is important in life. If teachers are trained to believe that teaching academic content standards and achievement measured on a test are more important than the inner life of human beings, or their well-being, then this will be the reality we create, the environment that children grow within and what values and attributes they acquire.

I am attempting to conceptualize a paradigm of psychological understanding that more accurately meets the beliefs of teachers who have devoted their lives to study and guide young people. Teachers know who their students are as people, not as test scores or achievements. We have over emphasized cognitive psychology to the extent that we have trapped or bounded the potential of young people, and this is why positive psychology holds so much promise in an education context, and the self in teaching and learning. It holds promise because it de-emphasizes the use of cognitive psychology in education to enhance measuring academic or intellectual outcomes and not more human outcomes. Yale University, archetypal psychologist James Hillman (1999) underscores this view with:
“The eye for the image [image of the person’s character] cuts to the essential. In our over psychologized culture, psychological testing substitutes for this seasoned eye and prevents its development. Instead of looking, we test; instead of imaginative insight, we read write-ups; instead of interviews; inventories [like numbers]; instead of stories, scores. Psychology assumes it can get at character by probing motivations, reaction responses, choices, and projections. It uses concepts and numbers to assess the soul, rather than relying on the anomalous eye of the practiced observer” (p. 35).

Positive psychology, with its more integrated view of human development works with teachers’ “seasoned eye” to offer more rich pathways to developing attributes of students’ selves that empower positive life course trajectories of health and well-being and success. Positive psychology adds to the body of scholarly work by studying the personal dimensions of our humanness, not merely brain power (Shannahan, 2000).

**Purpose of Schooling**

“The aim of education is to enable individuals to continue their education – or that the object and reward of learning is continued capacity for growth”

- John Dewey

Many scholars such as Bruner (1996), Dewey (1916), Meier (2003), Noddings (2003), et al all have been thoughtful and vocal in proposing aims of education and the purpose of schooling at different time periods in the history of American education. Relevance to this proposed study is that in our present time the purpose of schooling may be different than it was fifty or even ten years ago, and therefore we are required to
rethink the aims of education, where “the role of schools in ‘self’ construction, is very much a part of education” (Bruner, 1996, p. 13), and educational philosopher Noddings asserts, “happy children, growing in their understanding of what happiness is, will seize their educational opportunities with delight, and they will contribute to the happiness of others” (Noddings, 2003, p. 261). Our prominent educational philosopher John Dewey (1916) “formulated the aim of education in social terms, but he was convinced that education would read its successes in the changed behaviors, perceptions, and insights of individual human beings” (Cremins, 1964, p. 122). Through this study of one middle school with 25 teacher interviews, I was able to collect data that indicates the prevailing understandings and teacher beliefs about the purpose of schooling in today’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) era of school reform. This provided vast insight into potential obstacles to the teaching of self system and positive psychology attributes due to pressures to teach to the test and narrow academic content.

As Dewey (1916) aptly theorized, “capacity” means the potential for growth as the aim of education. This I would also contextualize to mean a belief in the development of the self of the young people in our care.

**Schooling’s Role in the Construction of Reality**

I argue that a student’s personal epistemology and ontology include knowledge and beliefs about one’s self. We use the information gathered from our everyday realities when living life to construct our understanding of our worlds and our selves, or what is commonly referred to as “the self as an architect of social reality” (Swann and Hill, 1982). Indeed, we reference every moment to our selves in a “looking glass” (Cooley,
1902) social interactionist (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934) manner. “The self is not seen lying inside the individual like the ego or an organized body of needs, motives, and internalized norms or values” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007, p. 29), but rather is constructed through interactions with the world. Considering the lives of children and adolescents and the amount of time spent in school, therefore, the self is constructed through meanings made through schooling experiences.

Reflecting the social interactionist’s view, educational theorist Baker asserts that in every moment we are presented with the opportunity to change ourselves and the world in which we live through the sociocultural construction of reality, including knowledge and beliefs (Baker, 2008). The self is a social construction, while at the same time, is the mediator of the social construction of reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). I argue that the self mediates the cognitive with the environment, that it is the self of the learner that is the context of all personal meaning, a priori. It is this self where reality gets created in one’s life, and for the adolescent learner, this occurs most readily in their schooling environment.

Self System and Positive Attributions as Protective Factors

Researchers in both education and psychology too often focus upon factors that are external to the person to explain life course trajectories. These are merely circumstances that require the resilient person to overcome and rise above. Who does not meet challenging circumstances in a life span of development?

Informing the conceptual framework of this study is a body of research that is closely aligned with the field of positive psychology known as resilience in development
Resilience research is important to consider because it examines those inner and outer factors that contribute to children’s successful life trajectories in the face of “significant adversity or risk” (Masten & Reed, 2005, p. 74). *Inner factors* are the component parts of the psychological self, whereas *outer factors* are contextual or external to the psychological self, such as family or schooling (Mason & Boscolo, 2004; Murphy & Alexander, 2007; Rokeach, 1968; Rotter, 1966). Therefore this study also looks for teachers’ awareness of and contribution to those *inner factors* that are imparted through a child’s schooling experiences that create resilient children.

School aged children are in a constant state of change where they are attempting to overcome many inner and outer factors in order to succeed. Therefore, the self of children must change in order to overcome any of life’s challenges. Educational psychologist Karen Murphy informs this view with, “ontology and epistemology are foundational to the change process” (Murphy, in press, p. 25) where the self has to change in order for positive change to occur. If the self is socially constructed (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Cooley, 1926; Cross & Markus, 1994; Csikszentmihalyi, 1993; DiMaggio, 1997; Kelley & Green, 1998) through daily interactions with the world, then the self is in a constant state of change (Dole & Sinatra, 1998; Erikson, 1959; Gecas, 1982; Swann & Hill, 1982). As the self is in a constant state of change, individuals can learn to change their selves, their views of themselves and of the world. In cases where children construct self schemas (Cross & Markus, 1994; Harter, 1998; 1999; Siegler, 1991) that are “negative, the individual will display low self esteem that may not be responsive to interventions and that may be associated with other liabilities, such as depression” (Harter, 1999, p. 12). A child, who sees his self as filled with possibilities,
may also learn to see the world in this way, thus wanting to make a difference or a positive impact in the world (Marsh, 1999).

To underscore the important connection between negative self system constructs and well-being outcomes, “a child who experiences attachment figures as rejecting or emotionally unavailable and nonsupportive will construct a working model of the self as unlovable, incompetent, and generally unworthy” (Harter, 1999, p. 13), and “the most common affective correlate of negative self-perceptions is depression. In the extreme, depressive reactions associated with negative self-perceptions will lead to suicidal behaviors” (Harter, 1999, p. 13; Locker & Cropley, 2004).

A contemporary of humanistic psychologists Maslow (1954; 1968) and Rogers (1961; 1989) is Marie Jahoda (1958) whose foundational work has helped us make a paradigm shift from mental illness to mental health, which is the focus of positive psychology and of this study. Her work provides a framework for understanding the conceptual distinctions of mental health applied to education. The six (6) processes that contribute to mental health are: (1.) acceptance of oneself; (2.) growth/development/becoming; (3.) integration of personality; (4.) autonomy; (5.) accurate perception of reality; (6.) and environmental mastery. All six (6) of these processes are developed and learned through schooling and are critical success factors for a positive life course trajectory. In a similar manner to Jahoda’s influence, I hope to inform the new role of positive psychology in education and new paradigm.

In a meta analysis of thirteen (13) studies that promoted resiliency known as the Penn Resiliency Study (PRP), researchers Gillham, Brunwasser, & Freres, (2007) found that only two studies failed to demonstrate any improvement in depressive symptoms.
All studies involved adolescents as participants with twelve (12) taking place in a school setting. Results are promising that a planned curriculum incorporated in everyday lessons can improve the well-being of adolescents at the critical stage of development occurring in the middle school years. Of concern, however, is the perspective taken by these researchers to look at improvements in depressive symptoms, which is bringing a client from a negative state to “zero” instead of studying young people in a school setting who are at “zero” and empowering them to a “positive five” state of wellness.

Two relevant studies point to the importance of interventions in childhood (Herman, et al, 2008) where he found direct connections between children’s academic performance in the first grade, self perceptions of adolescents in the sixth grade, and well-being of seventh graders. Clausen (1991, 1993) focused upon mindfulness, the ability to plan and dream about the future, and confidence to be the most relevant attributes to acquire in mid-adolescence (13-15 years old) that lead to better choices during the transition from adolescence to adulthood, the focus of the middle school teachers in this study.

**Teachers’ Classroom Practices**

“Instruction is about connecting content with human beings, sharing ideas that matter with people who matter. When we connect with a student, we know that student in enough depth to see his or her vulnerabilities and to see how our teaching can contribute to that student’s well-being.”

- Carol Ann Tomlinson

In a pilot study where pre-service teacher beliefs were surveyed about the importance of imparting self system attributes through their classroom practices, 198 out of 200 participants felt that this is their “most important job” as a teacher (Brzycki,
This indicates that there is an awareness of the important connections between teacher beliefs about the importance of self esteem (as one self system attribute), performance in the classroom, as well as more global accomplishments. Therefore, I argue that it is important for teachers to believe that they can teach their students how to formulate a healthy self-concept, and that they be rewarded for developing intervention and instructional strategies that produce these outcomes. Curriculum theorists and scholars have researched teachers’ personal beliefs directly relate to behavior or teaching strategies demonstrated in the classroom where they draw theoretical conclusions about this connection and importance of beliefs and classroom practices (Pajares, 1992; Pearrow and Sanchez, 2007),

I suggest that teaching interventions should intend to shift the ontology of each individual student. Murphy & Mason (2006) underscore this importance with, “students should be provided with situations that help them understand that their conceptions are not necessarily facts but rather personal connections about how the world functions” (p. 27), which would be consistent with inquiry based instruction (McCarty, et al, 1991) and the constructivist paradigm of teaching and learning “where the active role of the learner is recognized” (p. 6) when imparting self system attributes through their instruction.

A possible paradigm of teaching and learning that could inform a new model that focuses upon self system and positive psychology attributes is the humanistic or what is often called a “curriculum for human beings” (Greene, 1995). According to curriculum scholar John McNeil (2006) “the ideal of self-actualization is at the heart of the humanistic curriculum” (McNeil, 2006, p. 5). Humanistic teachers believe that by only concentrating on the academic outcomes through lessons and learning activities, it
depersonalizes and even objectifies the student (McNeil, 2006). Therefore the approach is to find personal meaning through the curriculum or academic content taught, thereby elevating the child’s holistic self to a higher position of importance than the child’s academic performance – or at least equal consideration.

Many scholars and certainly all of the teachers interviewed in this study concur that the middle school level may very well be the best opportunity that we have as teachers, counselors and parents to help our adolescents connect with themselves, internally, prior to embarking upon learning the skills and technical information needed to survive in the world (Shannahan, 2000; Urdan & Schoenfelder, 2006). Of course, as a point of clarification, as human beings are forever changing and growing, self understanding and transformation is possible throughout the life span. The “best opportunity” assertion considers that the self of a person in middle school, or early adolescence, is at a critical point of development where beliefs are in the formulation stage versus stagnant or hard to change stage as would be the case later in life. This inner connection requires a holistic focus integrating all dimensions of the self: spiritual, intellectual, physical, emotional and social. This is a prime opportunity for these children to know themselves and their interrelationship with the world. Perhaps they are forced to learn too much conceptual knowledge in the middle school curricula. If so, they may be losing their imaginations and higher order cognitive processing abilities, and the understanding that they matter more than content standards.

Teachers who are aware of the importance of imparting self system and positive psychology attributes will use either consciously or intuitively a wide variety of teaching and learning philosophies, including: student-centered, experiential, expressive,
reflective, authentic, holistic, social, collaborative, democratic, cognitive, developmental, constructivist and challenging, among others. What is common to all of these teaching best practices is that they consider the student first, and then academic content.

This student centered view can be traced to the influential educational philosopher John Dewey (1900; 1902; 1916; et al) where he theorized that the process of teaching a child to learn should begin with the interests, characteristics, beliefs, abilities and other inner attributes of the child. This view is of particular interest to me in this study as a theoretical frame in light of today’s educational environment which places the importance of learning academic content standards ahead of the child’s interests, self understanding, and well-being. This creates an out of balance in the emphasis and priorities in the teaching and learning relationship, and more generally in the system of education. This curriculum centered pedagogy characterizes the dominant philosophy in the NCLB era of education, contributing to this out of balance.

In point of fact, effective teaching strategies require that the self of the student be considered while learning, and not separated as in;

“A man’s interest in keeping at his work in spite of danger to life means that his self is found in that work; if he finally gave up, and preferred to be that kind of a self. The mistake lies in making a separation between interest and self, and supposing that the latter is the end to which interest in objects and acts and others is a mere means. In fact, self and interest are two names for the same fact; the kind and amount of interest actively taken in a thing reveals and measures the quality of selfhood which exists” (Dewey, 1916, p. 352).
In the context of this study the self system and positive psychology attributes, of which “interests” is just one, must be considered as an integral part of classroom practice, i.e. they cannot be separated. Dewey (1916) seems to assert a common positive psychology view that if the inner life of a person is fostered, understood and nurtured, as in “man’s interest” then an important resiliency is imparted that will help a person continue on a positive life course trajectory in spite of troubling circumstances confronted through life.

Further, teaching best practices consists of combining the inner life of students with pedagogy that yields better students academically and better people in terms of well-being attributions as underscored by Dewey (1916), “dispositions of desire and thinking should be an organic factor” and, “activity embodying the student’s own interest, where a definite result is to be obtained, and where neither routine habit nor the following of dictated directions nor capricious improvising will suffice, and there the rise of conscious purpose, conscious desire, and deliberate reflection are inevitable” (p. 350). By way of a specific example of a teaching philosophy that combines the organic with individual interests, with thinking, that of differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 1999; 2000; 2003).

As teachers we are on a quest to find methods that work for us as and for our students. We want to empower the full and unique potentials of each of our students regardless of the national educational policies in place, or in vogue teaching techniques, or views on child development. Differentiation according to its founder, Carol Ann Tomlinson (1999; 2000; 2003) is a philosophy that allows teachers to understand the unique and special needs of individual students and to plan instruction, e.g. lesson plans and activities, which meet those needs. This approach does not minimize the importance
or use of academic standards, yet allows teachers to thoughtfully and strategically consider both. Using differentiated instruction teachers can differentiate in these ways:

1. Academic content or standards
2. Learning styles and interests
3. Process or performance tasks

Of particular relevance as a conceptual framework for this study is that teacher beliefs, classroom practices, and individual child developmental characteristics are all considered and potentially aligned to produce both high academic outcomes and student developmental outcomes.

In Chapter 5, Data Analysis: Presentation of Results I discuss the teaching strategies used by the teachers in this study, including two who used differentiated instruction.
Chapter Three

RESEARCH DESIGN

Methodology

This study design uses a combination of open-ended, in-depth, qualitative interviews (Kvale, 1996) situated in a suburban/rural, middle school. Using the grounded theory method (Strauss & Corbin, 1998; Corbin & Strauss, 2008), in-depth interviews with twenty teachers (n=25), from all three grade levels (grades 6-8) in a public middle school were coded and analyzed.

Grounded theory calls for a coding system to be developed inductively, starting from the information contained in the interviews and documents. Grounded theory is “a specific methodology developed for the purpose of building theory from data” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 1). Because I wanted to more thoroughly understand whether teachers believe it is their responsibility to enhance the well-being and happiness of their students through academic curricula, and what their beliefs are, I built a rich description of teachers in a particular context, of teaching and learning processes, of the connection between schooling’s role in the construction of children and adolescent’s self system and positive psychology, and of teaching practices that can and do impart self system and positive psychology attributes. I also close any gaps in situations where gaps exist between my conceptual frameworks of teacher beliefs and practices with that of an integrated self theory. I set out to build a rich description of teachers, their characteristics and practices, of teaching and learning that included the self, and I successfully accomplished these research goals, and those have never been done before.
Additionally, I conducted a literature review of academic/scholarly studies to affirm or refute my theoretical framework and hypothesis.

**Context of Study – Study Site**

I first became aware of the K-12 public school district and middle school while working for the Pennsylvania State University as an Instructor and Supervisor in their teacher education program. I was to develop partnerships similar to the popular Professional Development Schools (PDS) model between PSU and central Pennsylvania school districts. The study site Superintendent and Middle School Principal were identified as innovative, progressive and forward thinking which provided for a rich context for teacher education and student empowerment research. My history and relationship allowed me to gain access to the study site and study participants.

I would characterize this district as a combination suburban-rural school district in that it is a bedroom community for two larger municipalities; one of the cities has the typical inner city problems, along with a more rural community with a broad based farming and agricultural industry base. For example there are vegetable processing plants and storage facilities owned and managed by large companies. Associated with this economic base, and proximity to both small urban centers and farms, is a broad mix of multicultural populations consisting of: Hispanic, Russian- East European, Asian, and African-American. Approximately ninety (90) percent of students are white not Hispanic; five (5) percent Hispanic and Black, not Hispanic; and two (2) percent Asian and/or American Indian.
Teachers in this study reported increased incidences of: small crimes such as vandalism, in school and cyber bullying, drug and alcohol use, and single parent family homes. Students that are eligible for a free or reduced-price lunch program is forty-one (41) percent indicating the student economic level in this district. Median household income is $33,883.00, with 18% holding a college degree.

Spending per pupil is $9,174.00 which mirrors the state average of $9,675.00. Approximately sixty-four (64) percent of district expenditures go toward “instructional” purposes.

The District Report Card for 2004-2005 provided by The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Education, Bureau of Assessment and Accountability reports that 181 out of the total 184 teachers in the district meet the Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT) statute required by NCLB.

The district’s overall results in Mathematics are: 25% Proficient, and 33% Advanced. Grade 8 results are: 28% Proficient, and 36% Advanced. Overall results in Reading are: 33% Proficient, and 27% Advanced. Grade 8 results are: 33% Proficient, and 31% Advanced. These results compare favorably with the state averages; 2% higher in grade 8 Math and 1% lower in grade 8 Reading. All five (5) district schools met AYP status for 2004-2005 results.

Ninety (90) percent of students graduate from the districts high school. The district has 2347 students in grades K-12, whereas the middle school has 563 students, and 38 teachers. (Data obtained from District website).

This study population of n=25 teachers addresses approximately 67% of all teachers and a consensus view.
Data Collection

My goal was to collect two types of data: (1.) in-depth interviews with twenty-five (25) teachers about their beliefs and classroom practices that impart self system and positive psychology attributes; and, (2.) curriculum and lesson plans incorporating self system or positive psychology attributes from the teachers who have been interviewed. This analysis of curriculum and lesson plans was derived from interview responses, not a document analysis in that the teachers interviewed did not have documents as examples.

I had permission to access to my sampling frame for in-depth interviews and collection of artifacts from the superintendent of the school district, and the Principal of the district’s only middle school.

Face-to-face interviews

Sampling was by self selection and referral from administrators who have a recommended profile: teachers from a wide array of subject areas with a broad spectrum of teaching experiences with middle school students, from one (1) to more than thirty years (30) of experiences. The participants’ were interviewed during four (4) professional in-service days in the middle school conference room located in the library, which was very private and confidentiality was assured. I administered an open-ended interview protocol (Kvale, 1992) and interviewed twenty-five (25) school teachers from middle school, grades 6-8, between August through November 2008. All study participants were middle school teachers from one school, which served to increase the consensus building process when analyzing my interview data and provided a rich single site description of the teachers’ situation and circumstances.
Interviews took approximately one hour, were individual meetings, and elicited a wide range of teacher information, such as: teacher beliefs about the self, teacher training and background, and the type of pedagogy emphasized in the school/school district (please see Appendix A for interview protocol). All in-depth interviews were audio taped, and tapes were transcribed by a professional transcriptionist approved through the Penn State, Office of Research Protections, human subjects’ application process.

All interviews were transcribed literally and not changed even during my use of this data in this paper. This is to protect the integrity of the data and represent it “as is” for the reader. There may be numerous interpretations of the data collected and presented.

**Limitations**

It may be difficult to determine the generalizability of the results with this one middle school and teachers to other teachers in other communities who may not have the same guiding missions, demographics or institutional policy changes. It is possible that these teachers may reflect the perspective of their administration, and small suburban – rural school system values rather than those in more urban or wealthy suburban communities.

**Validity and Reliability Issues**

For Strauss and Corbin (1998), a qualitative, grounded theory study is not constrained by the same parameters as a quantitative study. Therefore, “significance, theory observation compatibility, generalizability, consistency, reproducibility, precision,
and verification” (p. 266) from the quantitative paradigm have been replaced in the qualitative paradigm with “consensus” (p. 44). Consensus, is the process of obtaining the “varied meanings and interpretations of events, actions/interactions, and objects so that we can build these variations into our theory” (p. 44). Consensus is also how situations are negotiated (how participants agree or disagree on a point), and whether or not the participants agree or disagree with the researcher’s interpretation of the data. Strauss and Corbin (1998) also suggest that the researcher’s personal background provides knowledge of how to recognize “incidents as being conceptually similar or dissimilar and to give them conceptual names” (p. 47). During each interview I was very cautious about making interpretations on my own without validating these with participants. Interview transcripts demonstrate a rigorous inquiry process within each interviewee and across all other interviews.

Maxwell (2005) reminds researchers of the importance of critically thinking about validity issues. He cautions researchers against simply listing a variety of techniques and strategies as if by listing the strategies they will act as “magical charms” driving away threats to validity. Researchers must consider the particular context of the study being conducted and choose validity tests appropriate to the context and methods of the study. While each study will have its own unique challenges, threats to validity can be broadly divided into two categories: researcher bias or subjectivity; and reactivity or observer effect. Maxwell (2005) suggests that these threats to validity cannot be eliminated or even minimized. The responsibility of the researcher is to recognize how researcher bias and reactivity influence the collection and interpretation of data.
Maxwell (1996) refers “to the correctness or credibility of a description, conclusion, explanation, interpretation, or other sort of account” (p. 87). He suggests that qualitative researchers typically use this basic definition of validity as they seek to ensure that their studies are indeed credible to readers and fellow researchers alike. Merriam (1998) notes, “the applied nature of educational inquiry thus makes it imperative that researchers and others have confidence in the conduct of the investigation and in the results of any particular study” (p. 199). Directly stated, validity in qualitative research is concerned with how well the study accurately represents or captures what it is claiming to examine. Additionally, threats to the validity of a study can occur in several ways, each of which must be adequately addressed to assure that research is trustworthy. Fortunately, qualitative researchers agree that there are a number of strategies one can employ to deal with these various threats to validity. Several of these strategies have been used in the current study and will be presented below.

**Validity Threats and Checks**

**Internal Validity**

Internal validity specifically addresses whether or not the researcher’s presentation of results represents the true meaning of what was being studied. This is particularly important because in most cases, qualitative studies seek to examine individuals or groups in natural settings where the meaning participants assign to their lives and to the events taking place around them are critical to one’s understanding of the phenomenon under study.

In an effort to enhance the internal validity of this case study, I employed two
strategies identified within the qualitative research literature. The first strategy used was the constant comparison and theoretical comparison methods. This involves using new interview responses that have similar concepts to previous interview responses and concepts to seek to clarify commonalities in meaning. These same concepts are compared to the conceptual or theoretical frames used in this study. A second strategy used was respondent validation (Maxwell, 2005, p. 111); and rich data from intensive interview situations (Maxwell, 2005, p. 110); comparison, (p. 113); and, searching for discrepant evidence and negative cases (p. 112).

External Validity

External validity refers to the extent that the results of a study can be applied to other situations (Merriam, 1998, p. 207). While external validity is a critical component of quantitative research studies, qualitative researchers think about this type of validity in a slightly different way. Although the results of qualitative research are typically not meant to be generalizable to other settings, there are several ways that this study can be useful for others, particularly as other school districts continue to be faced with similar situations, especially as the interest and study of middle schools increase.

Maxwell (1996) presents several points concerning generalizability that are significant for this particular study, noting that among other things, there are factors that can provide a certain “reasonableness” to the kinds of inferences drawn from qualitative studies. Such factors include “respondents’ own assessments of generalizability, the similarity of dynamics and constraints to other situations, the presumed depth of universality of the phenomenon studied, and corroboration from other studies” (p. 97). It
is reasonable to assume that the experiences with the middle school study site may be similar to other school districts given the nationwide statistics regarding adolescent well-being and the growing consensus that the demands placed upon teachers due to NCLB requirements for accountability create an out of balance with regards to teachers’ mission to empower young people and teaching to the test. There is much to learn from a committed group of middle school teachers that are attempting to meet the dual challenges of empowering young people while working within a system that draws them away from their closely held beliefs. Further evidence that there this study may be generalizability are the numerous comments made by study participants who encouraged me to initiate a “Governor’s Institute” which is a professional development forum where experienced teachers come together, usually in the summer months, to design curricula addressing new issues and concerns.

**Researcher Bias**

A critical element of enhancing validity within qualitative research is the idea of addressing the researcher’s own bias. The first step in addressing researcher bias is to be aware of it, and to understand my own assumptions about the topic under study. I chose this topic of study because of an inherent interest in it, which means that I have given the topic some thought as a counselor and teacher. As objective as I attempt to be, I do have opinions and assumptions about the subject I am inquiring into. My own perspective must therefore be taken into consideration throughout the development, implementation, and final presentation of the research itself. Maxwell (1996) argues that we should not
attempt to eliminate such bias, but instead understand “how a particular researcher’s values influence the conduct and conclusions of the study” (p. 91).

Upon deciding to conduct this study on the beliefs and practices of these middle school teachers, I immediately recognized the inherent bias I had in outcomes of schooling adolescents. And yet, I genuinely wanted to find out what career teachers at this middle school level thought about their students’ well-being, as they have been on the front lines of helping young people succeed in school and in life. During the pilot study at this same school I learned that this group of teachers held special commitments toward helping young people live a successful life, and would provide rich data for this full study. I found that my own bias of wanting school to be a place where young people learn about themselves and how to live a successful life were pale in comparison to the teachers at this particular school. Their commitment could serve as a limitation of this study in that other schools may not have a staff so committed and dedicated.

My assumption is that teachers are concerned about the well-being of students, and had hoped that they were focused upon and committed to imparting these attributes. I had also assumed that middle school teachers had a vast array of lesson plans available to them that do indeed impart the self system and positive psychology attributes under study, even though the field of positive psychology is new and has yet to be incorporated into the field of education and teacher preparation in particular. As a result of self-reflection about my own views on teaching and biases toward those who don’t appear to support such a concept, I was able to remain open enough to interview all participants with the same degree of engagement and respect, and not lead the study participants
through my questioning – probably a skill learned through my professional counseling experiences.

It was important to identify my assumptions as they could influence the construction of interview questions as well as the conduct of interviews and the interpretation of data. Another method that I used increases the researcher’s awareness of bias is the memo or journaling process. Writing memos and journals about data collection and initial data interpretations can reveal to the researcher any assumptions or biases held about the participants or the data as well as insights on the data (Bogdan & Biklen, 2006; Maxwell, 2005).

**Reliability**

It is important that I address the reliability of this study, as I believe that this study is highly reliable and easily duplicated. Reliability is concerned with how well the study can be duplicated and is important in qualitative research where what is under study – teachers in school settings for example, is not a static concept and therefore cannot be studied in exactly the same way at a different point in time. Furthermore, the design of this study was developed so that it captures the phenomena in the present moment or in a specific moment in time, and that it is about teachers in middle school, it can be duplicated in almost any school in the United States public school system.

Given the nature of qualitative research, the question is not necessarily whether if conducted again, the results would be the same, rather it is a question of whether, the current results make sense given the data that was collected. Reliability in qualitative research is seeking to enhance the consistency and dependability of the actual study
(Merriam, 1998, p. 206). The methods of constant comparisons and theoretical comparisons described above were also used in this case study to address issues of reliability.
Chapter Four

METHODS OF DATA ANALYSIS

The transcriptions were coded utilizing the constant comparison method of analysis with theoretical comparisons (Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Glaser and Strauss, 1967), which allowed me to examine particular components of an interview and compare them with components of other interviews in an effort to identify categories that depict frequent patterns within the data.

I followed a three (3) stage process for coding and analyzing data (Figure 1 depicts this three stage process):

Stage 1: open coding and analyzing for patterns using constant comparison and theoretical comparison methods.

Stage 2: conceptual coding analyzing for emerging themes.

Stage 3: theoretical coding analyzing conceptual codes for a model or connections among themes.
From the initial coding process, numerous patterns within the data began to emerge. Using the first several interviews as a guide, I identified and highlighted particular elements within the transcriptions, which although initially based on my interview protocol, began to take on a life of their own as participants responded in ways that could indeed be compared with one another. While using the constant comparison method with theoretical comparisons, I memoed extensively as a way to reflect upon emerging themes and inherent bias.

Upon a second stage of coding, I was able to identify several broad themes from which to present and interpret the data utilizing the theoretical frameworks outlined in the review of literature. Data analysis was further conducted in this process by identifying areas in need of further clarification and coding as themes were discussed and examined in greater detail.
In the pilot study conducted in February 2008, I developed a coding system recommended by Corbin and Strauss (2008) that was also used in this study. Assisted by NVivo 7.0 software, I analyzed transcribed interviews and other raw data from artifacts/documents using two strategies: constant comparison, and theoretical comparisons and coding techniques. In addition, I developed a coding system from transcribed interviews and other raw data from documents using axial coding, comparative analysis, open coding, and theoretical coding (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Corbin & Strauss, 2008) strategies. Coding for grounded theory expanded to build a rich description of teacher characteristics and practices, which involved coding strategies built from interview transcripts and artifacts and documents collected. Grounded theory takes an inductive approach to coding and analyzing research data from study participants’ points of view.

Then I moved to a strategy for data analysis (coding with memoing), with comparisons and pattern matching among the 25 interviews in this study.

My coding system followed a three stage process. In Stage 1, I reviewed in excess of twenty-five hours of transcribed interviews, and identified key words to which I assigned open codes or free nodes (NVivo 7.0 uses the term “free nodes” for the grounded theory initial coding stage of assigning “open codes”) and these are:

1. Emotional commitment made to students
2. Caring impacts behavior
3. Mothering works
4. No self awareness within students
5. Self esteem improvement through family and teacher influence
6. Life dreams and goals
7. Caring and improved learning
8. Happiness
9. Mothering and multicultural students
10. Purpose and learning
11. Emotional well-being
12. Hope and Inspiration
13. Motivation and caring
14. Belief in happiness
15. Belief in the impact of NCLB
16. Belief in emotional well-being
17. Belief in linking the past with the present
18. Motivation
19. No motivation
20. Belief in motivation
21. Positive motivation
22. Activity – Academic
23. Purpose in life
24. Belief in purpose in life
25. Dreams
26. Personal purpose
27. Activity – Non-Academic
28. Self esteem
29. Belief in self esteem
30. Heart and caring
31. Hope
32. Personal relationships
33. Destiny
34. Belief in belief
35. Multicultural
36. Fathering
37. Belief in potential
38. Belief in character
39. Belief in multiple selves
40. Multiple selves
41. Obstacles to empowering students from admin.
42. Belief in development
43. Interests
44. Self awareness
45. Self and learning
46. Belonging
47. Belief in dreams
48. Difference making
49. Goals
50. Academic outcomes

In Stage 2 of my three stage coding process, I took the open codes to look for relationships between/among them, meaningful connections, and conceptual codes or
axial codes. I assigned the following axial codes or conceptual codes to portions of the interview data from open codes assigned previously. From the list of open codes and memoing I moved toward conceptual coding or emerging themes which are:

1. Teacher beliefs in their missions to empower students
2. Teacher beliefs in which attributes are most important
3. Classroom strategies – Instructional
4. Classroom strategies – Environmental
5. Outcomes – Academic
6. Outcomes – Developmental, self system attributes
7. Outcomes – Developmental, positive psychology attributes

From these seven conceptual coding categories I was then able to determine three (3) more general codes that represented an emerging theory or model of teaching and learning. These three theoretical codes are:

1. Teacher beliefs
2. Classroom strategies
3. Outcomes

From this coding strategy and data analysis I then moved toward conceptual memoing and theoretical coding (Corbin& Strauss, 2008) to develop a model of teaching and learning that include an integrated theory of the self. This theory is presented in Chapter 6 of this paper.
The next stage in my coding system, Stage 3, was theoretical coding which brought together the previous two coding categories in order to explain what is going on in the teachers’ minds about empowering student well-being, or a dynamic between and among the themes.

The goal of my research was to build a theory inductively from teachers’ experiences that impart well-being to their students. *The Self Theory in Schooling: Pathways to Adolescent Well-being* is presented and described in Chapter 6.

**Summary of Methods of Data Analysis**

This study and methods used were executed at a very high level of quality. Quality in grounded theory research means *credibility*, that the data were collected in a systematic way according to the methodology, and that the data was compared to multiple comparison groups; researcher Flick (2002) calls this “methodological consistency” (Flick, 2002, p. 219). In this study the data was compared between all twenty–five study participants’ responses and conceptualizations, as well as to theoretical frames used for this study, and relevant research studies that affirmed or contradicted my findings.

Number or frequency of coded responses indicates a general understanding, or emphasis of views, not necessarily detailed statistical data. These views are represented in tables and should be read as evidence of beliefs, or practices or outcomes, and priority of each.

There was consistency in using a three stage coding system required in grounded theory. In Stage 1, fifty (50) open codes were established from twenty-five (25) study
participant interviews consisting of over twenty-five (25) hours of taped interviews. From these fifty (50) open codes, seven (7) conceptual codes characterized the emerging themes in Stage 2. Finally, in Stage 3 a theoretical coding system utilizing three (3) theoretical codes was established to describe the dynamic relationship among the themes which formed the grounded theory presented in Chapter 6, *The Self Theory in Schooling: Pathways to Adolescent Well-being*
Chapter Five

DATA ANALYSIS – PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

In this chapter, I present the results of this study focusing upon the three (3) main themes that emerged from my data: teacher beliefs, classroom practices, and developmental outcomes. Within each theme I will connect it to the research question that I sought to answer through this study and the relevant table or chart that supports the research findings.

This study investigated teachers’ beliefs, classroom strategies, and outcomes of beliefs and practices in two developmental categories (please see Figure 2 which depicts these three dimensions):

**Figure 2 – Three Themes from Grounded Theory**

- **Teacher Beliefs**
  - Adolescent Well-being
  - Obstacles to Imparting

- **Classroom Practices**
  - Academic Content Lesson Plans
  - Environmental/Classroom Culture

- **Developmental Outcomes**
  - Self System
  - Positive Psychology

Source: *Teacher Beliefs and Practices Study Data, 2009*
We know that teachers are effective imparting academic content material through classroom practices such as; discovery learning, direct instruction, conceptual models, project based learning, et al, but what we did not know prior to this study was what teachers do to impact the human development of their students. This study certainly sheds light on what teachers do to impact their students’ human development, and in particular, self system and positive psychology attributes.

This study began as an investigation into how teachers empower human development outcomes among adolescents through their schooling experiences. Then, after a pilot study at the middle school level, I developed four research questions to narrow my research inquiry. Specifically, this study answers the following questions:

1. What beliefs do teachers have about their responsibility and ability to intervene into the well-being of young people?
2. What concepts about the selves of students do teachers hold?
3. Do teachers impart attributes of the self system and positive psychology to their students? And if so, how?
4. How do teachers understand schooling effects on child development and well-being outcomes?

Because I wanted to more thoroughly understand whether teachers believe it is their responsibility to enhance the well-being and happiness of their students through academic curricula, and what their beliefs are, I build a rich description of teachers in a middle school setting, of the connection between schooling’s role in the construction of
young peoples’ development and self psychology, and those teaching practices that can
and do impart the self system and positive psychology attributes.

In the following discussion, I will represent study results within each of the three
(3) themes: Teacher Beliefs, Classroom Strategies, and Academic and Developmental
Outcomes.

Research Findings: Theme One – Teacher Beliefs

(1.) Teachers believe that it is important to impart self system and positive
psychology attributes but their understanding of these distinctions is limited.
(2.) Teachers believe that schooling empowers the human development of
adolescents, but they do not intentionally impart human development outcomes
through their classroom practices. Classroom practices are primarily used to
improve classroom behaviors and/or performance on tests and assignments.
(3.) Teachers’ understanding of their students’ developmental needs, even though
they were aware that their needs were many, did not extend to the deeper
distinctions of self system and/or positive psychology, the focus of this study.
(4.) There are two perceived obstacles to impacting both the human and academic
development of their students: (a.) focus upon testing required by NCLB and
PSSA’s and being measured by these results and not on developmental outcomes;
and, (b.) required use of new lesson planning and curriculum mapping methods.
These lead to breaking the psychological contract that exists between teachers and
students, and teachers and school leadership.
Throughout this chapter I will connect the research findings to the research questions and the supporting data. Two research questions that framed this study are of particular relevance and answered directly within the theme of teacher beliefs: What beliefs do teachers have about their responsibility and ability to intervene into the well-being of young people? What concepts about the selves of students do teachers hold?

There are five (5) top beliefs that teachers hold about their responsibility and ability to intervene into the well-being of young people. Teachers believe in the importance of their role in human development, self esteem, emotional well-being, and motivation. And they believe that an obstacle to their “ability” to intervene into these attributes is the, No Child Left Behind (NCLB) administrative requirements and unbalanced views of the outcomes of schooling.

Table 1 (pages 62-64) represents the top five (5) teacher beliefs, the number of sources or individual interviews where each belief was stated, the way the teachers conceptualized the specified belief, and an example teacher statement about the belief from interview transcriptions.

Sixteen (16) teachers believe that impacting the development of their students is their primary responsibility and is more important than imparting academic knowledge or outcomes as measured on tests. Their understanding of adolescent development was a general sense of overall well-being qualities that students seemed to be doing well in school and in life. When asked to go a little deeper into their understanding of development, they focus upon the self esteem of students or the degree that student’s value themselves. It is clear that teachers realize the connection between the self esteem of students and academic performance, and this is their primary concern, not necessarily
self esteem that is transferrable to other domains in the students’ lives, such as other subject areas, or the athletic field, home life, peer relations. Their understanding was that if they imparted self esteem in their classrooms such that their students performed well academically, then this self system attribute would transfer automatically.

Teachers also believed that it is important to impart emotional well-being to their students, and seven (7) teachers had this attribute as their main focus. They understood emotional well-being to mean the characteristic or qualities of balance between emotional vitality and positive functioning, and of self acceptance and autonomy. They commented that they “can play a role in the enhancement or advancement of a child’s emotional characteristics and development (November_Interview_5).”

The fourth most cited belief is to motivate students to want to be in school and to possess internal reasons for wanting to do well mostly in academic performance and even on standardized tests, with: “I think kids should be motivated and want to be here otherwise if this test is so important you might as well make them want to take the test and to do well on it” (November_Interview_6). The job of motivating students is becoming more difficult in this middle school. One comment characterizes a common perception that students who are not motivated should be in learning support and coded with learning disabilities: “Our low group is like they should be like they are borderline like learning support. I mean there are some labeled kids in there but I think they all should be that way and I mean that is what I am seeing. I don’t know why they are not motivated so that is really hard” (Nov7_Interview_3). This statement also represents another teacher perspective that student cognitive and academic abilities and well-being indicators have decreased over the past five to ten years. Please note that this particular
teacher used language that may be more suitable for one of her adolescent students. This is further evidence that this teacher, as with many teachers in this study, does not have the teaching methods available to impart developmental outcomes and resorts to relationship building as her primary strategy. Thus, she regressed to the age and language and mindset of her students so as to be in relationship. This same teacher upon conclusion of our interview requested, with a sense of desperation that I come into her school and classroom to conduct professional development workshops on effective teaching and learning strategies.

Additionally, teachers are frustrated with the lack of motivation and caring, with: “That you can see that too through the years. They don’t care and I don’t have the time to make them care anymore because of you know you got to get it done, got to get it done. I don’t know what to do about it other than you know just keep trying and try and figure out ways around it. How can I, even the little to the littlest thing but it is I can’t even put into words how frustrating it is” (November_Interview_7)!

The perspective that students academic and well-being indicators have suffered in recent years has been most often attributed to a dominant belief sited by twelve (12) teachers on thirty-four (34) occasions. They conceptualize the obstacles to empowering children psychologically to be administrative procedures and or school policies that impede or preclude teachers from acting on beliefs. The direct connection between the policy requirements to measure human beings on such narrow standardized tests and just how large an obstacle this has become is demonstrated with: “the time and caring that you can put into helping their development along is getting smaller and smaller” (November_Interview_7), demonstrating the widening gap between deeply held beliefs
about empowering young people in school and in life, and actual practices day to day. This sentiment cannot be emphasized adequately or substantially, as it was expressed over and over again to the point where teachers would arrive in the interview room and literally break down and cry over their frustrations with these obstacles and the inability to manifest their beliefs.

   Sociologically, teachers sentiments expressed characterize the tensions felt between the system of education and societal values or needs; they are operating at the nexus of competing values and needs. There is a gap between the two and a lead-lag relationship. Theoretically, the education system is in place to help manifest the predominant societal values and perceived needs. Clearly, these teachers understand their students’ needs to be developmental, self esteem et al, where the system of education is requiring academic standards as measurement of success and progress.
### Table 1 – Conceptual Themes of Teacher Perspectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perspective</th>
<th>Number of References/Teachers</th>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher Beliefs</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Adolescent development and/or human development; meeting student broader needs than academic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Esteem</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>The feeling of self worth, a self concept or image that is valued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Well-being</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Emotional characteristics or qualities of balance between emotional vitality and positive functioning, and of self Acceptance and autonomy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Reasons for taking action toward an end result: Internal and or external</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obstacles to Impacting Children Psychologically (NCLB)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Administrative procedures and or school policies that impede or preclude teachers acting on beliefs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Classroom Strategies</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environment or culture</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Consists of classroom rules, atmosphere/cultural such as everyone belongs, personal issues are discussed, modeling good behavior, and rewards for certain values.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional connection</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Characterized by feeling connected with students emotionally; a shared journey of coping; a commitment made to one another.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal relationship</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Consists of knowing student interests, life outside of school context; personal likes and dislikes, interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>----</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Based/Lessons</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Represented by attributes that are imparted through lesson plans and activities.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and team</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Denotes the collaboration among colleagues and inclusion of family members.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring and heart</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Consists of expressing caring to students as mother, Father, and expressions of the heart.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“She was able to focus more and it’s not a onetime deal or that she is Good to go for the next month. You know I check back with her. And again I think it has to do with building that rapport. She knows that I care about what is going on in her life. I am not just saying that you know watersheds are important lets learn about watersheds and forget the rest.”

“I know for her in that moment just breaking up with her boyfriend Nothing else really mattered. So I knew I had to address it in some way and I think the journal writing helped and then just discussing it.”

“I hope that I have done something with his self-esteem and his Confidence in himself so that he can pursue the dreams that he has through talking with his Mom and different family members and beginning stages when he was very quiet and wouldn’t tell us what he liked.”

“It was a sort of relationship that of almost a surrogate Dad is what it Was turning in to and there was a lot of positives out of that. Well the young kid became a great, real good athlete both basketball and football. He ended up getting a scholarship to Rhode Island.” And, “I know what you can do and what you can’t do. Oh now you are starting to sound like my mother. And I said yeah well maybe I am. I said because I care about you and I know you can do this.

### Academic and Developmental Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>45</th>
<th>18</th>
<th>Students reaching proficient level on standardized tests; Making honor roll, and improving in skills and abilities.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self Esteem</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>The feeling of self worth, a self concept or image that is valued.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Reasons for taking action toward an end result: internal or external.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Characterized by being aware that a self exists consisting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

“I try to with this particular age group, adolescents ,I feel as though Certainly content is three quarters of what I do but often this particular age group needs to have other needs meet to enable them develop in the other ways.”

“I think one of my favorite students that I have observed growth in Is one who came into my classroom and spoke no English, with very poor self-esteem, scared to death to be here. He ended up getting the most improved student award!”

“I think motivation is a big part of it yes. I think they have to see that There is a purpose to it. They have to make an effort.”

“They were more expressive. I was shocked at what they were willing
Strengths and weaknesses and differences from peers and Change over time.

Dreams and Goals 24 12 A future ideal state and desired or intended ends with tangible representations.

Purpose in life 19 10 A sense of direction in life; an essence of individual or unique to self reason for living, or *raison de’ tetra*

to share with each other and teachers, like really deep stuff about their Dad leaving them, their Mother being mad at them.”

“Because every kid has a dream and everyone should be able to attain their dream.” And, “my job it to get these kids to succeed [in life].”

“And to make their lives worthwhile.” And, “This is the age where we need to make an impact on them to change their lives.” And, “He has that ability and he can make a difference in someone else’s life to make something a little bit easier.”

Source: *Teachers Beliefs and Practices Study Data, 2009*
Significantly, teachers believe that schooling impacts and empowers the development of their adolescent students, but they impart developmental attributes so as to enhance academic performance or improve behavior – not necessarily as developmental outcomes. I define developmental outcomes to mean attributes that remain with the students becoming a part of their thinking and being and actions across multiple domains, not merely isolated to a single domain or academic lesson.

Teachers believe in the development of their students and use phrases such as: “needs”, “take an interest in the student”, “cared for”, “create a supportive, calm environment”, “it is a social obligation to support students that don’t get it at home”. However, these are somewhat vague and shallow understandings of what development is at this middle school level, especially considering many of the teachers interviewed, twenty-one (21) out of twenty-five (25), have over five (5) years of experiences teaching this age group (Please see Table 2).

Table 2 – Middle School Teachers’ Characteristics: Years of Experience

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Teachers</th>
<th>Grade Levels</th>
<th>Years of Experience working with adolescents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>0 to 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>3 to 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>6 to 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>11 to 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>16 to 20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>21 to 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6-8</td>
<td>≥ to 31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Teachers Beliefs and Practices Study Data, 2009
Teachers’ understanding of their students’ developmental needs, even though they were aware that their needs were many, did not extend to many, if not most, of the deeper distinctions of self system and/or positive psychology, the focus of this study.

Additionally, given the experience level of these teachers, and the consensus view that this is the most exciting level, and important level to teach precisely because of the ability and availability to impact the development of adolescent students, I would have expected deeper distinctions about development and self system and positive psychology.

### Table 3 – Teacher Beliefs and the Attributes They Impart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief</th>
<th>Self System</th>
<th>Positive Psych</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Believes in Student</td>
<td>Self Esteem</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Self Esteem</td>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Well-being/Emotional</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Well-being</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Intrinsic Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Selves</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Possible Selves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Possible Selves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Esteem</td>
<td>Self Esteem</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect/Feelings</td>
<td>Affect</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreams</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Life Meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose in Life</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>Life Meaning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCLB*</td>
<td>Obstacles*</td>
<td>Obstacles*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Totals | 14   | 3    | 6    |

Notes: (1.) The * marking No Child Left Behind (NCLB) was a common belief which emerged as a dominant theme from study data; it was referenced by 12 teachers on 34 occasions and always as an obstacle to impart either self system or positive psychology attributes to students. (2.) This table depicts the difference between the teachers’ perspectives about their beliefs and the actual self system and/or positive psychology attributes they imparted. These were taken from comments made in interview transcripts.

Source: Teachers Beliefs and Practices Study Data, 2009
Table 3 depicts the difference between the teachers’ perspectives about their beliefs and the actual self system and/or positive psychology attributes they imparted, or the espoused theory of action compared to theory in use (Pajares, 1992). These were taken from comments made in interview transcripts. Thirteen (13) beliefs led to imparting either a specific self system or positive psychology attribute. However, there were a number of beliefs coded from transcripts, that were not correlated to imparting self system or positive psychology attributes. Only three (3) self system and six (6) positive psychology attributes were actually imparted. Table 3 also indicates that when teachers were clear about a self system or positive psychology attribute belief that they indeed imparted that attribute. The importance of this point is that if teachers had a deeper and richer understanding of the full range of attributes they would have more opportunities to empower their students developmentally. Further, this is evidence that what teachers’ believe does indeed impact the learning outcomes in their students.

Knowledge of attributes such as self efficacy, locus of control, and self schema could dramatically enhance teachers’ effectiveness at empowering student academic and developmental outcomes.

Self esteem was referenced thirty-six (36) times by seventeen (17) teachers (Table 1) where teachers’ understanding of this concept is characterized by these statements: “to make them feel good about what they are doing”, “to build their self esteem as a person, as a student”, “if you don’t treat them with respect and you don’t make them feel important, they won’t play for you”. I interpret these statements to mean that these teachers see self esteem accurately; a value judgment about how one feels about ones self. Noticeably absent from their framework are the distinctions self efficacy and self concept, which were
Self awareness as distinct from self esteem was referenced sixteen (16) times by eleven (11) teachers as a developmental outcome that was important to impart.

Self esteem emerged from the data to mean to these teachers a feeling about student’s academic work in their classes, whereas self awareness is an attribute they believed was a developmental outcome. This distinction is important at this adolescent stage of development in that it may be that teachers see awareness as a broader view with enhanced potentialities for long term success.

Missing from teacher’s understanding about adolescent development is the distinction of “identity” which are essential to enhance both learning and developmental outcomes in that identity formulation is the most critical stage (Erikson, 1959; Marcia, 1966; 1993; 2002) where a student either emerges from adolescence with a healthy identity formulated or confusion about who one is. Teachers are a little more aware of affect, where affect is the ability to feel, or what is often called “hot cognition” (Eccles & Midgley, 1989), which, in an academic learning situation, requires that a student feel emotions toward the topic under study in order to connect with it. When a student connects with a topic emotionally, personal meaning is made, or constructed. This is essential for deep cognitive processing and learning.

What the data is demonstrating is that teachers believe in imparting varying human development attributes to their students, and have developed their own home grown strategies predominately to impart them. Importantly, they are using their understanding of self distinctions and ability to impart these to enhance learning outcomes, not necessarily developmental outcomes, although in a few cases both. This is a form of
manipulation, in that they are helping students feel good about themselves, but only to get higher grades, not a systemic or fundamental shift in how students view themselves more globally where there is transfer to other domains in the life of an adolescent. This manipulation is not intentional, because teachers believe that when they impart self esteem to their students through their classroom practices this attribute stays with the students for the long term and becomes a developmental outcome. This is further evidence, however, that the system of education in this example is not about helping to meet the students’ needs for well-being, self understanding, or even for connecting with academic material through personal interest.

Teachers want to do more to impact the health and well-being of the young people in their care, but do not have the tools or support from the administration, the paradigm of schooling characterized by NCLB requirements, teacher education programs, or professional development opportunities.

A prominent belief emerged in this study that was not expected, nor was it present in the pilot study conducted approximately six (6) months previously, and this was the belief in the impact of NCLB, or at least the new administrative procedures associated with NCLB, on the attitudes, moods, and views of twelve (12) teachers. These teachers expressed in very strong terms a perspective that laid blame on the requirements of NCLB, on local school district, and specifically their own middle school policies and procedures. A consensus view of study participants is that the new lesson planning format required of a new district-wide initiative known as “focused schools program” (please refer to Appendix D for a description of this program) that uses curriculum mapping extensively, is a “climate killer” for the school and an obstacle to the most experienced teachers, with
over 3 years of experience in particular. One participant indicated that the new teachers in the district were happy just to have a job and to be with children; while the more experienced teachers disapproved of the increased lesson planning and reporting requirements and did not have additional prep time to satisfy them. In addition, they complained that this focused schools program was first introduced during two days of in-service professional development days just prior to the opening of the school year.

This may be a more accurate underlying reason why NCLB as an obstacle was so prominent as a belief that teachers held, but their many comments shed light on the emphasis upon testing at the expense of children’s’ well-being, or that the system is out of balance, such as:

“You know you don’t get in here [get the opportunity to teach at such a wonderful middle school] because you have to teach to the stupid test. The kids aren’t getting what they need to get. I mean there is a reason why a lot of kids are not getting proficient on the PSSA’s. It is because their minds are elsewhere or you know we are not teaching them. I don’t feel personally that we are teaching them what they need. I don’t even know what they need” (Nov7_Interview_3).

(Note that the term “PSSA’s” used in this passage refers to the state standardized test administered and required by the state of Pennsylvania and is the acronym for “Pennsylvania System of School Assessment.”)

When we analyze this statement further, this teacher is offering insights into the heart of the issue for the teachers, that adolescents’ minds are not available to teachers in this middle school. The level of cognition that is needed to perform intellectually, the
working memory space, the use of creativity, and metacognitive critical thinking, is not available. There is so much going on in the minds of adolescents (Baker, et al, in press), it is like “a stuffed closet and this is a common neurodevelopmental affliction within the age [middle school] group” (Levine, 2002, p. 309).

Further, this teacher is expressing another common frustration that these teachers do not have the necessary teaching strategies to reach their students, intellectually or personally. In addition, she did not know what her students need in either domain, the intellectual/cognitive or the emotional/developmental.

Two additional comments add another perspective on increasing pressures felt by teachers, who on the one hand believe deeply in empowering the development of their students, while on the other hand being asked to adhere to increased lesson planning requirements:

“You can see that too through the years. They don’t care and I don’t have the time to make them care anymore because of you know, you got to get it done, got to get it done! I don’t know what to do about it other than you know just keep trying and try and figure out ways around it. How can I, even the little, to the littlest thing but it is, I can’t even put into words how frustrating it is” (November_Interview_7).

And from this same teacher, “For teachers, the time and the caring that you can put into helping their development along is getting smaller and smaller.”

Findings in this study are consistent with this view:

“When the educational paradigm or reform agenda puts something other than the learner or learning at the center of instructional decision making, all learners suffer.
Students know that the system is not about them and is not responsive to their needs. In such a system, learners recognize they are not important, because who they are and what they need are not at the heart of the learning process. At worst, they feel left out, ignored or alienated; at best, they feel the system is impersonal and irrelevant” (McCombs, 2003, p. 96).

That students “feel left out, ignored or alienated; at best” explains why approximately 20% of teachers interviewed for this study stated that students’ well being and academic performance is lower now than in past years. Emotions play a key role in developmental change during adolescence and in learning academic information, but unfortunately, the balance in schooling is toward cold cognition, or the absence of emotions in a learning situation (McCoombs, 2003; Peterson, Stahlber, & Dauenheimer, 2000; Pintrich, Marx & Boyle, 1993; Pintrich & Schunk, 2002). Once again another study participant shed light on a second climate killer at this middle school – that of the absolute “no touching” rule between teachers and students, not even a pat on the back for a job well done, “I think there had been more closeness [among teachers and among students and between teachers and students in the recent previous years]” (November_Interview_8), thereby making school a cold, inhuman place with the emphasis upon technical rationality associated with measuring students narrowly.

Five (5) teachers believed in developing the character of their students through schooling and their influence, especially when considering that many young people do not get this type of influence at home. Consider this teacher’s views:
“I think our ultimate goal isn’t a test result in a school . . . I think it is just a daily display of good morality, just being a good person . . . I mean just setting them up to be a good functioning adult and treating people in their environment respectfully and maturely because they may be parents someday and they are going to have to pass along certain qualities to their own children that makes society function in a very optimum kind of way. If we aren’t the trainers or the helpers in that process we can’t always assume the parents do because of the family breakdown and the problematic things that are brought to us virtually every day from kids . . . the more positive we can be with each other as adults the better functioning we are in a family unit, in a community and society in general, and that is what is so exciting about the middle level education, because kids are so moldable right now and they can go one way or another ” (November_Interview_8).

This perspective assumes that if teachers are good people themselves, and model goodness in the classroom or athletic fields, then students will adopt these attributes as well. However, the view that there are larger concerns regarding how a young person learns to become a good parent, and community member helping society function better suggests we should integrate these intentions into the curricula. Additionally, statements “that is what is so exciting about the middle school level education, because kids are so moldable,” expresses the belief that teachers have a larger purpose and can make a significant difference in the life course of their students. However, the evidence does not suggest that we can leave the goodness and purpose to chance, that maybe students will learn from our modeling.
Nine (9) teachers believed that motivation – an attribute that is a part of self system and positive psychology – was important in their work and almost exclusively to improve academic performance. Consider these views which support this conclusion: “I think kids should be motivated and want to be here otherwise if this test is so important you might as well make them want to take the test and want to do well on it for themselves because telling them they need to do well on it for the school, that wouldn’t drive me” (November_Interview_6). Once again we see a reference to the PSSA tests and finding ways to motivate students to want to achieve on these, not understanding that the emphasis on the test is not about the students’ development or intrinsic motivation.

Another teacher said, “I think motivation is a big part of it. I think they have to see that there is a purpose to it. They have to make an effort. Motivation can come from a variety of sources” (October_interview_5), However, the teacher did not further articulate that helping students determine their own purpose, or internal motivations, or dreams in life, are possible motivators.

In point of fact, helping students know their own dreams in life was referenced by only one (1) teacher, and affect or feelings were not referenced at all in over 25 hours of in depth interviews. Dreams in life is a positive psychology concept and attribute that has not been studied, yet from clinical experiences I have found that this is perhaps, along with purpose in life, the most important attribute to impart that empowers a dramatic trajectory of improvement in well-being measures and performance in a number of domains, such as school. Purpose in life, life meaning, hope and inspiration, destiny in life, are all positive psychology concepts not referenced by the teachers in this study. There was a noticeable
absence of understanding of these important attributes that empower trajectory of successful developmental outcomes.

**Summary of Beliefs**

Answering the first research question framing this study, teachers do believe they have the responsibility and ability to intervene into the well-being of young people. They are passionate in their beliefs that they empower the full development of middle school students, and this is why they got into the teaching profession initially. The teachers interviewed find the challenges associated with this age group, especially the many developmentally based challenges, compelling reasons to remain teaching at this level. Teachers’ understanding of their students’ developmental needs, even though they were aware that their needs were many, did not extend to the deeper distinctions of self system and/or positive psychology, the focus of this study. They see that their ability to impart developmental outcomes is limited or impacted by NCLB administrative requirements and the intense, narrow and out-of-balance focus upon testing. Sociologically, this characterizes the tensions felt between the system of education and societal values or needs. There is a gap between the two and a lead-lag relationship. Theoretically, the education system is in place to help manifest the predominant societal values and perceived needs. Clearly, these teachers understand their students’ needs to be developmental, self esteem et al, where the system of education is requiring academic standards as measurement of success and progress.
Research Findings: *Theme Two – Classroom Strategies*

(1.) Teachers do not have the tools, or strategies with which to impart the attributes they consider to be important.

(2.) Teachers believe they are making a difference, i.e. empowering the development of students, but actually are using their understandings of “development” and “self” primarily as a strategy to enhance learning /academic outcomes.

(3.) Teachers want to impact students well being, hope and inspiration, and other attributes, but they just do not have the time nor the ability to develop the classroom lessons/activities that will help them. Therefore, they just do what they are measured on – academic outcomes.

(4.) Personal relationships emerged as a primary classroom practice to impart attributes and manifest beliefs.

(5.) Teachers see their job as empowering students’ academic success and human development.

(6.) Teachers do impart attributes, but they are unaware of the specific self distinctions and rely upon strategies that are homegrown, environment versus curricula, based primarily upon praise. And their effectiveness is limited by these strategies and lack of awareness. They care, they praise, they want to impact and empower more than just academic success, but they need more. And they want more tools and methods.
Throughout this section of the chapter I will connect the research findings to the research questions and the supporting data. One research question, in particular that framed this study is of particular relevance and answered directly within the theme classroom strategies: Do teachers impart attributes of the self system and positive psychology to their students? And if so, how?

There are six (6) top classroom strategies that teachers utilize to impart attributes of the self system and positive psychology to their students: through the environment or culturally, establishing emotional connections, developing personal relationships, expressing caring and heart, collaborating among teacher teams and parents, and through academic lesson activities. Table 1 represents these top six (6) classroom strategies, the number of sources or individual interviews where a strategy was stated, the way the teachers conceptualized the specified strategy, and actual teacher statements from interview transcriptions.

The most utilized strategy to impart self system and positive psychology attributes is to establish a classroom environment or culture with classroom rules, creating an atmosphere where everyone feels that they belong, an openness where personal issues can be discussed, the modeling of good behavior by teachers and establishing rewards for certain values and behaviors. One teacher, within her first few years of teaching, is proudly aware of her impact with: “I think that the environment that I try to create in the classroom creates happy kids. I try to make them feel a part of a team, the school, the community” (November_Interview_6). In this particular case she is focused upon producing the positive psychology attribute “happiness” through her classroom strategies, however, she has not had formal training or instruction on what methods are available to
help her create this environment. Her strategies are “homegrown” and unique to her personality and life experiences, which given her particular talents may be sufficient, but would further blossom with additional resources and training.

Eighteen (18) teachers considered forming personal relationships with students to be their most utilized strategy to empower their students. They conceptualized this personal relationship strategy as consisting of knowing their students interests, being aware of life outside of the school context and personal likes and dislikes. Teachers often said they considered knowing their students as people, as human beings, to be more important than the teaching of content. When they are able to know their students, this impacted their students’ emotional well-being in all areas of life as well as academic readiness, by freeing up working memory and space for cognitive processing, as in:

“She was able to focus more and it’s not a onetime deal or that she is good to go for the next month. You know I check back with her. And again I think it has to do with building that rapport. She knows that I care about what is going on in her life. I am not just saying that you know watersheds are important and let’s learn about watersheds and forget the rest” (August_Interview_2).

This teacher is clearly aware that her focus upon the human being in her class, in her care, is an effective strategy to impart a number of well-being characteristics and that these transfer to other subject areas and domains in this young person’s life. Looking beyond the watersheds and academic performance, this teacher expressed the more rare commitment to imparting developmental outcomes.
Closely related to a personal connection is the strategy of developing emotional connections between student and teacher, which is characterized by a feeling, connected with students, as if on a shared journey of coping in life, and a commitment made.

Teachers in this study who utilized this strategy in their classroom realize the importance of focusing upon the affective dimension of teaching and learning and the emotional state of mind of their students, as in: “First thing, yeah I would say to take care of their, whatever issue are that are making them all unhappy, making them miserable” (August_Interview_2). This is distinct from imparting “affect” as a developmental outcome which is connecting students emotionally with the content or their own life’s goals, or teaching student to harness their emotions.

Twenty (20) teachers made fifty seven (57) references to imparting attributes through academic based lessons, e.g. lesson activities. However, all of these teachers used homegrown activities to impart attributes, especially self esteem or self confidence, so as to help students be more competent in their to be more able to do academic work, not the focus upon imparting lifelong developmental outcomes.

Teachers found much joy and happiness and a sense of doing important and meaningful work when they reflected upon those times in their careers when they inspired a student, helped them realize their potential in a certain academic area, or saw them through a temporary emotional crisis, as in: “I know for her [a student] in that moment just breaking up with her boyfriend nothing else really mattered. So I knew I had to address in some way and I think that journal writing helped and then just discussing it” (October_interview_7). Teachers who taught language arts find a rich array of content to
draw upon and potential strategies such as the journal writing activity used in the previous situation.

During one interview with one of the teachers with fifteen years experience teaching middle school when she was asked about whether or not she or schooling produces happy people, she said in a very stern and direct manner, that this is not her job as a language arts teacher, it is to teach academic content and curricula standards. When asked about her greatest success story in her many years, she hesitated to even think and reflect upon all of the many faces, souls, people she impacted potentially. Then as we were nearing the end of the interview, when pressed for one example, she said, with tears in her eyes, and softening facial expressions:

“His mother came up to me and said you are the first person who told him he was a good writer. He hadn’t heard that before and you encouraged him to write and you encouraged his creativity and now he wants to be a writer and he is going to [a competitive college] and you know. . . It is a big deal and he went to a summer institute and really through high school he ran into such trouble with those organizational issues that he was getting a lot of negative feedback but she said you told him he was good at writing and thank you and now he is writing he really is a wonderful child” (November7_Interview_5).

This is an example of a teacher realizing she had encouraged a student’s writing ability, but perhaps not realizing that she had produced the impact of imparting a life purpose and dream of expressing himself as a writer by making him aware of his innate potential, through her kindness, caring and academic lessons. This same teacher declared
with pride and happiness, that it was her team’s ability to empower the self esteem of its students that produced the only class in the building to make AYP last year. Thus her distinctions are about an academic skill and self esteem, but not other positive psychology attributes.

Nine (9) teachers indicated that caring and heart were effective strategies for empowering their students – expressing caring to students as a mother or father would, with expressions from the heart. This mother-father approach was referenced twenty-five (25) times, but these two specific cases characterize the impact:

“It was sort of the relationship of a surrogate Dad is what it was turning into and there was a lot of positives out of that. Well the young kid became great, a real good athlete both basketball and football. He ended up getting a scholarship to [a big name athletic university]” (October_interview_1).

This fathering strategy inspired a life dream and a life course trajectory of success in one domain, the classroom that transferred to others, the athletic field and eventually a successful professional career and family life.

In a mothering approach a math teacher worked with an adopted boy of Asian descent who had little to no self esteem or self awareness and was doing poorly in school and in life where his peers would poke fun at him and his differences. She both protected him from the other children and made him feel as though he belonged; additionally, she expressed caring and a deep belief in his goodness and potential to do well, with: “I know what you can do and what you can’t do. ‘Oh now you are starting to sound like my mother.’ And I said yeah well maybe I am. I said because I care about you and I know
you can do this” (October_interview_3). This teacher realized that she inspired hope in him that he could rise above the immediate circumstances and realize his dreams, which he did as a successful finance executive.

**Table 4 – Academic and Non-Academic Classroom strategies and methods used to impart attributes**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Classroom Strategy</th>
<th>Number of References/Sources</th>
<th>Academic</th>
<th>Non Academic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Emotional commitment/connection with students</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothering works</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family and team teaching</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring and motivation</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mothering and multicultural</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic: lesson activities *</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreams</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-academic methods: atmosphere, rules</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring and heart</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal relationship</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multicultural</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fathering</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self and learning</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: * These activities are described in Table 5.

Source: *Teachers Beliefs and Practices Study Data, 2009*
Twenty-five (25) teachers developed thirteen (13) classroom strategies to empower the development of their students. Teachers developed their own homegrown student empowerment program either through curricula or most often through classroom culture or environmental approaches. Most simply and directly they used a form of positive feedback when students would respond to problems such as “good job” or “you have really improved in your ability to . . .” which is consistent with the research where ability feedback had a strong effect on self-efficacy and performance (Schunk, 1983; Schunk & Gunn, 1986).

Table 4 represents that the classroom strategies and the number of times they were referenced. Academic lesson activities and personal approaches and atmosphere are predominant themes.

Academic based strategies were used by twenty (20) teachers and included those approaches listed in Table 5, including: project-based learning, problem-based learning, among others. Another category of academic based strategy was using the self of the student in some way to improve academic accomplishments.

### Table 5 – Academic Classroom Strategies that Impart Self System and Positive Psychology Attributes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Content Area</th>
<th>Teacher Lesson Activity and Teaching Method(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Technology Ed</td>
<td>Paper tower where students were given four sheets of newspapers and twenty four inches of masking tape: <em>Problem-based Learning.</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language Arts</td>
<td>Writers’ workshop where students <em>brainstorm</em> something they want to write about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>Using novels such as Huckleberry Finn or Odysseus and characters’ journeys, apply these to your own lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read plays with a moral and ask students to examine what life lessons did a story teach and apply these to their own lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Poetry writing contest where students are challenged to express inner most thoughts and feelings from a first person perspective: <em>Real World Learning, or Experiential-based Learning</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>English Language Learners reading and speaking in Spanish where translations were provided: <em>One-on-one coaching</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assess individual strengths and learning styles using Theory of Multiple Intelligences; artistically talented students will do lessons in drawing or pictures; kinesthetic learners use a rock climbing wall with words to reach for to learn new vocab words; logistic/scientific learners do this same rock wall for the solar system: <em>Differentiated Instruction</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math</td>
<td>The million dollar mission where a student is offered one million dollars up front or be paid everyday for thirty days, starting with one penny that will be doubled every day: <em>Problem-based Learning</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students use interests that engage them, such as tractors to learn concepts: <em>Differentiated Instruction</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long division or any difficult math problem with high expectations that engage students through motivation: <em>Challenge method</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geography</td>
<td>The Amazon River and places on the map: <em>Project-based Learning</em>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Teachers in Art, Health, Family Consumer Science, Library, Learning Support, Life Skills, and Alternative Education did not relay imparting attributes through academic lessons.

Source: *Teachers Beliefs and Practices Study Data, 2009*
Thirteen (13) teachers had imparted self system and positive psychology attributes through academic content as their primary focus and had actual lesson plans. This perspective was not commonly understood by teachers, but to these thirteen it was obvious to them that the academic material provided substantive material to help students know themselves better as a pathway to personally connecting to the information delivered.

One experienced language arts teacher described what she does in her classroom: “Well we read plays with morals, but I ask them to examine what lessons did this story teach and how do you characterize each character and what were their motivations. I mean they could apply it to their own lives” (October_interview_5). She indicated that she opens up an inquiry, or inquiry-based instruction, with her students to explore both moral issues and personal changes that they could make based upon lessons learned through a character. She mentioned in particular *Huckleberry Finn* and *Odysseus* as two that provided rich material for this type of inquiry.

Another teacher had a boy in class, who spoke only Spanish at the beginning of the year, and she developed an approach in her classroom that would be called a combination of differentiated instruction (Tomlinson, 1999; 2001) peer-to-peer and cooperative based learning strategies. When a book was assigned, different groups would offer to help translate the book into Spanish for the boy so that he could see both versions. His English improved dramatically, as did his classmates’ Spanish! This teacher reported that helping the boy feel that he belonged and was cared for by her and his classmates supported this boy’s performance. In addition, the boy felt a strong personal connection with teacher and classmates alike.
In technology education, self efficacy was imparted through two classroom activities using problem learning strategies around Thomas Edison’s Journals and “The Golf Ball Exercise” where students attempt to support golf balls with sheets of paper.

A fairly new math teacher uses a problem-based learning strategy that imparts intrinsic motivation, self efficacy, inspiration, and happiness through the “Million Dollar Challenge” problem. This teacher was aware of the important connection between student interests and academic material to empower both self attributes and academic achievement.

Non-academic strategies included creating an environment of empowerment, such as a personal relationship with all adolescents, involving the families through teacher-parent conferences, using a “mothering” or “fathering” approach to express this type of caring, and making certain that student knew that they were cared for and felt a sense of belonging. Additionally, ten (10) teachers had used these non-academic strategies in their multicultural classrooms with great success both academically and developmentally.

**Summary of Classroom Practices**

Through a combination of teaching and learning strategies such as differentiated instruction, problem and project based learning, and homegrown and classroom culture approaches, teachers do impart self system and positive psychology attributes, answering one of our research questions; do teachers impart attributes of the self system and positive psychology to their students? And if so, how?

None of the teachers utilized a well known and researched body of work known to help teachers provide a classroom culture that helps children feel that they belong, and that they are an integral part of something greater known as “Responsive Classroom”
Responsive Classroom is a PK-12 teaching best practice (please see Appendix F).

None of the teachers interviewed utilized experiential learning models such as service learning, or Outward Bound (Rohr, 1966), or some of the emerging models of learning, such as “Meaning Makers” (Wells, 1986), where children both learn language and use language to learn, or “Freedom Writers” (Gruwell, 1999), or others that would be classified as “alternative models” or transformative pedagogy (Duncan-Andrade, 2008). Two teachers utilized problem based and project based learning with substantive results in terms of self efficacy, motivation, and self esteem, and two others used differentiated instruction to empower self esteem, motivation, and happiness.

Teachers developed lesson activities that provided opportunities for students to be empowered and for teachers to empower their self system and positive psychology attributes; however these were homegrown and limited in terms of number of lessons. Few teachers had hard copies of attribute imparting lesson activities intertwined with traditional academic lessons, but rather used their guidance or coaching to impart attributes. Attributes were predominately imparted intentionally so as to improve academic performance and not long term development.

In cases when teachers were successful in imparting both attributes that enhanced academic performance and long term human development across many domains (resulting in a life trajectory of success and happiness and fulfillment of innate potential), teachers were happy and empowered knowing they were manifesting their own life purpose and dreams.
It is worthwhile considering the level of understanding that teachers have about development and its critical role in teaching methods. Meaning, that if teachers had additional understanding of, for example, self efficacy, they would design lessons with self efficacy as the intended result. Self efficacy then would be used as a teaching and learning strategy and imparted as a longer term developmental outcome.

**Research Findings: Theme Three – Outcomes**

(1.) There is a gap, a growing gap, between what teachers believe they are teaching, and their practices: or espoused theories of action versus theories in use-practice (Pajares, 1992). This is probably the most significant finding. They believe that they are empowering their students and want to, but are often not aware that they are and, they do not have a method to measure developmental outcomes or receive feedback.

(2.) When they do empower students by imparting self system and positive psychology attributes, it is primarily so that students achieve or behave, not for long term developmental outcomes or across domain transfer of attributes.

(3.) Teachers are not aware of the important connections between positive psychology and self system attributes to empower students both in the classroom and more globally in life.

(4.) Teachers want to make a difference in their students’ lives, but they are being asked to teach only content and get away from difference making.
(5.) Teachers are aware of the wide spectrum of developmental attributes that they could impart to this age group, and seek to deepen their distinctions and in their practice.

(6.) Students’ well-being is lower than in past years.

(7.) Academic performance is lower than in past years.

Throughout this section of this chapter I will connect the research findings to the research questions and the supporting data. Two research questions, in particular that framed this study are of particular relevance and answered directly within the theme outcomes: What concepts about the selves of students do teachers hold? How do teachers understand schooling effects on child development and well-being outcomes?

There are six (6) outcomes, one academic and five developmental that shape teachers understanding of student selves. Table 1 represents these top (6) outcomes, the number of sources or individual interviews where an outcome was stated, the way the teachers conceptualized the specified outcome, and actual teacher statements from interview transcriptions.

**Academic Outcomes**

Eighteen (18) teachers frequently spoke (45 references) of the importance and need to meet student academic needs through developmental strategies in the classroom, indicating a strong belief in the development of the student so as to empower academic achievements, as the desired outcome. One math teacher’s comments underscore this point:
“I think one of my favorite students that I have observed growth in is a student that came into the classroom and spoke little to no English with very poor self-esteem, scared to death to be here. He ended up at the end of the year getting our most improved student award, went on to the high school and is currently making the honor roll and applying to for college to pursue a career in finance” (October_interview_9).

What is not clear from the data is if this increased self esteem transferred more globally to other areas or domains of the student’s life, or if this wonderful impact was made because of her belief or her classroom strategy of “mothering works” (please see Table 4). But clearly this situation demonstrates a key concept in social cognitive theory: “The self-efficacy component of social cognitive theory does more than identify a contributory factor to career development. The theory provides the means for enhancing the personal source of control over the course of one’s self development” (Bandura, et al, 2001). This means that self efficacy as a part of the self theory I am proposing is critical to the future success of young people in academic achievement and life, and learned through schooling experiences.

Fourteen (14) teachers spoke about the importance of self-esteem as a developmental outcome but used it as a learning strategy, to empower student academic performance (please see Table 6). Thus, it can be said, that teachers thought that if they enhanced self esteem and this helped the student perform academically, then teachers assumed that this enhanced self esteem transferred more globally to other domains in life and for the life span.
Table 6 – Attributes teachers use as a teaching and learning strategy or to impart a developmental outcome

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Number of References/Sources</th>
<th>Used as a Learning Strategy</th>
<th>Used to Impart Developmental Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Behavior</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Esteem</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Academic Performance</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dreams and Goals</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose to Learning</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Well-Being</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope and Inspiration</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motivation</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Positive Motivation/Grades</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose in Life</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hope</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destiny in Life (control of)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple Selves (possible)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interests</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self Awareness</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belonging</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Difference</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>√</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: (1.) It is not known if once the attributes are imparted as a strategy to enhance learning if there is transfer to other domains of life, nor for how long. (2.) * Academic Performance is considered an academic outcome, or an outcome of the process of schooling, not a developmental outcome.

Source: Teachers Beliefs and Practices Study Data, 2009

Self awareness was intended as a developmental outcome by one seasoned teacher with six to ten years of experience. Self awareness is characterized by being aware that a self exists, consists of strengths and weaknesses and differences from peers, and changes
over time. During a school crisis the previous year students wanted an emotional outlet, more than they were provided through counseling or home environments. A team of teachers took it upon themselves to develop and use language arts lessons to impart the developmental outcomes requested by students and needed as evidenced by: “they were more expressive. I was shocked at what they were willing to share with each other and teachers, like really deep stuff about their Dad leaving them, their Mother being mad at them” (October_interview_8). Demonstrating the important connection between positive psych and self system to empower students both in the classroom and more globally in life resulted in emotional well-being. This particular teacher welcomed the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of her students through language arts lessons such as the above poetry lessons, as she is clear that the students’ long term developmental needs are being met, and this is why she teaches.

It was curious to me that only twelve (12) teachers referenced dreams and goals on twenty-four (24) occasions, because goals have been a commonly used distinction in the teaching profession as an approach to motivate students to achieve. One newer teacher however had very specific ideas about the importance of imparting this positive psychology attribute to her students: “Because every kid has a dream and everyone should be able to attain their dream . . . and my job is to get these kids to succeed in life” (November_Interview_6). When I interviewed this teacher there was something very uplifting about her presence in that she believed her job was to help children see and achieve their dreams, regardless of their backgrounds or circumstances.

Ten (10) teachers attempt to impart the positive psychology attribute purpose in life which is a sense of direction in life, an essence of the individual, a unique to self reason for
living, or *raison de’ tete*. This attribute, once learned, helps young people create personal meaning in their lives out of all of their life experiences, or: “to make their lives worthwhile, and at this age where we need to make an impact on them to change their lives” (October_interview_3). Here this teacher is intending to intervene into the trajectory of middle school students’ lives by imparting a sense or knowing about their purpose in life. However, how to impart this attribute or the understanding of its importance is not even taught in counselor education programs let alone teacher education programs. The balance is toward teaching content, not on difference making for lifelong well-being.

All teachers were asked at some point in the interview which was more important to them, making a difference in their student’s life through impacting their development or performing well on standardized tests. 100% of teachers indicated without hesitation the development of their students, and hopefully for the long term so as to live a good quality of life and see and achieve their full potentials. They also admitted that their professional evaluations did not account for empowering students’ development. (I was provided with the professional evaluations form/rubric used by the districts leadership to evaluate teachers; please see Appendix C). In this evaluation form there are thirty-five (35) criteria on which teachers are measured, only two (2) deals with the human development of young people, meaning that thirty-three (33) pertain to academic improvements as evidence of teacher effectiveness. I believe the overemphasis upon academic performance and a teacher’s ability to empower their students to measure up, without a balanced view that includes deeply held teacher beliefs to empower the human development of students is the source of frustration felt during interviews.
When asked if there were ways to measure and assess the growth and development of students, all teachers thought this would be a great improvement to measuring their professional effectiveness and welcomed such a measurement too, as it would provide more of a balanced view of what teachers intend to produce as outcomes from their expertise and efforts.

The Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania has a number of assessment scales that could be used, including: subjective happiness, meaning in life, satisfaction with life, and psychological well-being scales. Susan Harter (1999) has also indicated to me (personal communication, 9/15/08) that she would allow the self system measures to be utilized as well, which is explored further in the future research consideration section of this paper. The point is that methods are available that would provide feedback to these teachers who are uncertain at present as to whether or not they are empowering the development of their students, and would even help more accurately record the effectiveness of using self system and positive psychology distinctions as a strategy to enhance learning or academic outcomes, let alone moving beyond to life span development outcomes. Educators are missing a special opportunity to simply add more well-being criteria to an evaluation that would focus teachers’ commitment to the well-being of their students, and given all of the compelling evidence from research that early empowerment of children’s self esteem (Hawkins, 2008; Herman, et al, 2008) this would seem to be an effective change.

Many teachers reported that students’ academic levels are lower than past years, that this began showing up in student artifacts and testing approximately three years ago, and that there may be connection between academic outcomes and psychological well-
being. For example: “I know I am not perfect and I have said things because I can get so frustrated. I mean and like I said I have been doing this for like ten years and I don’t want to say that the kids are not as smart as they were ten years ago but there has been a definite decrease in ability . . . Like our low group I have never had a low group like this one” (Nov7_Interview_3). Another teacher who took some time off between teaching jobs commented on the significant difference she observed in both student academic abilities and their well-being: “I mean I do want them to achieve in math and do well in my classroom but the way a society is right now something has to change. It is like I said having had those eleven years off really was an eye opener to me coming back into teaching” (Nov7_Interview_1).

One teacher offered keen insights as well, commenting that student performance may be due to the concentration on the tests and less time dedicated toward children’s well-being issues and concerns, with:

“We have our kids separated by ability and what we consider the high groups they score usually advanced on the PSSA’s that is how they are grouped. Every year when I get them in language arts I feel their ability, their skill, their knowledge is getting lower and lower you can see it. My what they consider a low group the low basic in math and reading they are I have to question why many of them are not labeled because they seemed to and they shouldn’t be but they are that low now and as the years go by it is getting worse and worse and that is my question where is this happening? Is that because having to focus on the standards and not so much
the child and that interaction and you know being able to build on that”

(November_Interview_7).

Later on in this same interview:

“As far as the writing and the writing is where we are noticing a major decline. However, their test scores in fifth grade on the writing are showing that they are improving yet when they get to me and I am trying to review different things they cannot write a sentence. A complete, they can do capital sometimes, they use punctuation sometimes but they are lacking the complete thought. Now by the time they get to sixth grade why is that? That two years ago three years ago that was not an issue, not an issue at all and now we are seeing it a lot more yet their scores are going up. I am not understanding that” (November_Interview_7).

Another of the more seasoned teachers interviewed underscores the importance and the use of self esteem as a strategy to enhance academic performance:

“. . . And you asked me about self-esteem and I do think, I think one thing we do well as a team both my team and the other team in eighth grade is by consistently our students perform well on the PSSA’s and I think really [the school Principal] has said you know we were the only class to make AYP last year, in our building. But he said you know what is different between what they are doing in sixth grade, what they are doing in seventh grade and what they are doing in eighth grade? I said really [Principal] I think that it might be that we are cheerleaders who just
encourage. So I don’t think really we are doing anything that different” (November7_Interview_5).

Note that this teacher downplays the role of self esteem, labeling her team’s approach as “cheerleaders” which is really a way to enhance self esteem with this age group in an academic setting. She is indicating that she is not aware of the importance of the self-esteem as a self system attribute, when empowering adolescents in a classroom setting.

**Developmental Outcomes**

Developmental outcomes are those attributes whether from self system or positive psychology, that when imparted become a part of the adolescent’s being or paradigm of thinking, and acting in the world and in their lives. They are outcomes that become a part of the personality and make up the whole person, not merely one dimension of the young person such as the intellectual. All dimensions of the young person are enhanced for the long term when developmental outcomes are imparted.

Seven (7) teachers indicated that they imparted “happiness” as a developmental outcome which was referenced on 19 occasions (Table 6), with five (5) teachers indicating that this was a belief (Table 1). One teacher in particular emphasized this attribute: “First happy environment for them to come in, you, and happy kids when they leave my room” (October_interview_3).

Teachers want desperately to help young people as evidenced by this comment: “This is what you are feeling as a teacher, our kids are hurting and you want to help, don’t you?” Teachers reported that students’ well-being is lower than in past years. They do not
know what to attribute this to, but they speculate that it is a combination of: teachers not having enough time to dedicate to their well-being, and to care; along with the breakdown of families including the nature of modern life with two busy parents not spending enough time with their children; and the increased pressures to succeed consistent with what they have learned from media and popular culture. For example: “Over the past few years... I can pin point the class, the last class that academically I would say was together. It has gotten progressively worse over the years. The class that I had in 2005 so that would have been my sixth grade class” (NovemberInterview_7).

One of the research questions deals with how teachers understand schooling effects on child development and well-being outcomes. This particular teacher’s sentiment characterizes a common view among interviewed:

“The way society is changing also I think that things like that with the development in different areas with these kids that you would naturally expect to occur at home does not occur at home anymore. A lot of times parents aren’t home to do that so school is the only place with the teachers that they get it. And now I feel that is being taken from us also and where is that going to leave our generations to come” (NovemberInterview_7).

What this teacher is expressing is a concern about what type of society we are producing from one generation to the next if we do not change the well-being outcomes of our children and adolescents.
Later on in this same interview this teacher considers just how important it is to help her students in terms of their human development, through developing a close personal relationship of trust and connection:

“I think well for me I think it helped me with my teaching. It kind of gives you a direction. Umm it gives you a feel for to get to know the kids a little better and what they you know maybe what they need as a teacher. What you can do for them or focus on or what areas. I think that with the kids it builds their self-esteem when they have that opportunity to talk to someone like that. I think that helps with their development also in different areas and I think you know not only personally but in education I think it helps with the development there because they when they can develop that you know that type of relationship where they trust can trust the teacher and I think they are willing to do a little more academically. What is that going to do to the world, in the world? Who cares about those scores? When you are done with school who cares about that? The people that are you know in my world it is the knowledge and the practices that they have, the ability, the skills that they have and without that connection, without that self-esteem and building upon that we are just worried about scores. I mean really that is not in any way helping us” (November_Interview_7).

Here she is clearly commenting on the discrepancies between the goal of schooling and the needs of our students, and she is proposing that a focus on the developmental outcome and self system attribute of self esteem is perhaps the solution.
Summary of Outcomes

There is a gap, a growing gap, between what teachers believe they are teaching, and their practices: or espoused theories of action versus theories in use-practice (Pajares, 1992). They believe that they are empowering their students and want to, but are not aware of the specific ways to do so and they do not have a method to measure developmental outcomes or receive feedback. When they do empower students by imparting self system and positive psychology attributes, it is primarily so that students achieve or behave, not for long term developmental outcomes or across domain transfer of attributes. Teachers are not aware of the important connection between positive psych and self system to empower students both in the classroom and more globally in life. Further they want to make a difference in their students’ lives, but they are being asked to teach only content and get away from difference making. Teachers are not aware of the wide spectrum of developmental attributes that they could impart. Finally, regarding the effects of schooling on child development and well-being outcomes, teachers report that both students’ well-being is lower than in past years and their academic performance is lower than in past years.

What concerns these teachers is that we may be in a downward spiral of our quality of life, and there is less time and fewer resources to help young people with opportunities to live a life of full and unique potential.

What surprised me the most throughout these study results was the prominent and dominant perspective that NCLB with its inherent narrow academic measures along with the associated lesson planning requirements and had on teachers’ beliefs. They were very clear that this model of education and new lesson planning requirements negatively
impacted their abilities to empower children in the ways they wanted – their well being and human development.
Chapter Six

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

“At any moment, we can choose to transform ourselves and the world.”
- David P. Baker

“Among our memorable teachers of our childhood . . . in their gaze, we saw our own power reflected; no one had to give us the power we already possessed. We exercised it by tapping into our own capacities for courage, faith, and hope.”
- Madhu Suri Prakash and Gustavo Esteva

The results presented in the previous chapter affirm the theoretical frames used in this study: cognitive developmental and positive psychology; teacher beliefs and effectiveness; and, purpose of schooling. These results are also supported by the research literature in each of these frames. Additionally, the data collected and analyzed answer all four (4) research questions that framed this study. The integrity of the study process satisfies the requirements established by Glaser and Strauss (1967) for a quality study.

According to Glaser and Strauss (1967) a quality study must also have “credibility” which means the theory formulated from the data analysis process has applicability to “the area from which it was derived and in which it will be used, a theory should be readily ‘understandable’ by laymen well as professionals, a theory should be sufficiently ‘general’ to be applicable to diverse situations and populations, and finally, a theory should provide the user with sufficient control to bring about change in satiations” (Glaser & Strauss, 1967, p.237-250). The theory I put forth in this section has applicability to: classroom practices and teaching and learning; psychology as it is applied in education; and, educational policy at the national, state and local levels.
**Grounded Theory Development**

This next section describes my proposed grounded theory that an *alignment of teacher beliefs with classroom practices that focus upon an integrated self leads to developmental outcomes*. I will discuss a theory of teaching and learning that situates the integrated self of the learner at the heart of the theory, and as the central guiding principle. I will call this proposed theory: *The Self Theory in Schooling: Pathways to Adolescent Well-being*.

Grounded theory calls for a theory to be developed inductively, starting from the information contained in the interviews and documents. Grounded theory is “a specific methodology developed for the purpose of building theory from data” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 1). Because I wanted to more thoroughly understand whether teachers believed it is their responsibility to enhance the well-being and happiness of their students through academic curricula, and what their beliefs are, in the data analysis in Chapter 5, I built a rich description of teachers in a particular middle school context, of teaching and learning processes, of the connection between schooling’s role in the construction of children and adolescent’s self system and positive psychology, and teaching practices that can and do impart self system and positive psychology attributes. In this discussion I close any gaps in situations where gaps exist between my conceptual frameworks of teacher beliefs and practices with that of an integrated self theory.

The conceptual framework of my theory is that there needs to be an alignment of teacher beliefs *with* classroom practices that focuses upon the self of each student *with* adolescent developmental outcomes and with academic outcomes. All of these when aligned empower the well-being and life course trajectories of adolescents in that children
learn that they have control over their own destinies in life. Having self understanding that they have control over their futures is a basic motivation (Deci & Ryan, 1995) of all human beings. In addition, the development of this sense of control over one’s destiny begins in childhood and is particularly important during the middle school grade levels, or ages 10 to 13. One teacher’s perspective: “I had one kid in my fashion design class and he was really creative and then we went to a talk on from York College some guy came up and talked about York College and I had it all geared to the fashion and there was an application to go to summer school and I found out that he did take a summer class down at the York Fashion Institute so I was kind of pleased about that” (November_Interview_3).

In this example, this teacher spoke of being pleased that she was able to help this student use his creativity toward a bigger dream and actually took initiative to manifest that dream through summer courses and completing the college application process. What was missing from this teacher’s understanding and the others, who mentioned dreams, was a sense that students were acquiring the skills to control their own destiny.

A study of elementary school aged children conducted by University of Missouri researchers (Herman, et al, 2008) found that there are direct links between academic performance in elementary school and self perceptions and well-being (depression symptoms) in middle school aged students (sixth grade), and that “along with reading and math, teachers and parents should honor skills in other areas, such as interpersonal skills, non-core academic areas, athletics and music” (p. 406). One of the findings in this study described in Chapter 4 is that teachers believed that students who do poorly in academic outcomes often do not feel good about their abilities to control their own destinies, or
future success, showing the direct causal connections between self esteem and academic
performance, and academic performance and self esteem, which is consistent with the
findings from the Herman (2008) study.

There is a dynamic and integrated network between academic outcomes and the
self system and positive psychology attributes, a network for a whole self, and if teachers
better understand and act on their beliefs and focus upon these attributes as outcomes
through curricula, then middle school students will be more successful in schooling
outcomes and well-being outcomes. These self attributes can be focused upon through
traditional content found in public schools much like the Learner-Centered Principles
(McCombs, 2003; Lambert & McCombs, 1998) pedagogy or the Penn Resiliency Program
(Seligman, 2002) curricula provides.

To focus upon more narrow learning results is contributing to a decrease in the
well-being of school-aged adolescents, as stated by the teachers in this study. Therefore,
schools are contributing to a decrease in the quality of life of young people and teachers
attach blame to the increased administrative responsibilities, and lesson planning, and the
focus upon narrow academic learning outcomes and away from the human development
outcomes of their students in this era of NCLB. Of major concern and a significant
implication of the out-of-balance focus upon just two intelligences, mathematical and
linguistic (Baker, et al, in press; Gardner, 1983; Robinson, 2001) is that children’s
cognitive development and capacities are severely limited.

Cognitive functioning, such as critical thinking and creativity as two examples, are
two capabilities required for 21st century learning and skills development. In point of fact
Sir Ken Robinson calls creativity as essential in the 21st century as literacy was in the
nineteenth and twentieth (Robinson, 2001). Therefore, the gains in intelligence and
cognition through schooling over the past 100 years could level off or be reduced if this
out-of-balance continues. The teachers in this study clearly communicated their
frustrations with this overemphasis on only two measures of what it means to be good or
fit the value system of schooling, at the expense of other cognitive and human
development attributes, where there is much administrative support for the former and little
to none for the latter.

The data suggests that teachers use a close relationship with students to impart self
system attributes, and this is becoming increasing difficult in the environment of technical
rationality, and emphasis upon assessing young people based upon numbers in place of
human qualities. Eighteen (18) teachers in this study most often reported that they had to
rely upon their personal relationships with students as the most used strategy to empower
their students, and most often non-academically: “he was always drawing these amazing
graphics. So I would ask him about that. He would show me. It got to be kind of like
a…..every time he would draw something he would come back and show me later and tell
me where he got the idea from the video game or something. Umm…. And later on at the
end of the year we were talking about what are your goals for the future. What do you
think you might like to be, even after high school, it was only sixth grade but I told him if
you could think ahead that far what do you think you might like to do later on”
(August_Interview_2).

Indeed, participants stated that there have been “climate killers” over the recent
past, including the increased administrative responsibilities which takes time and energy
away from building personal relationships with children. Also, the policy of no student
touching has also contributed to a cold climate. Taken altogether – the focus upon testing, the more extensive and rigid lesson planning, and no touching – core teacher beliefs to impact the well-being of students through empowerment of the self is impeded dramatically.

A focus upon this dynamic network of self system and positive psychology is important because “beliefs, attitudes, and values form an individual’s belief system” (Pajares, 1992, p. 314) and teachers want or intend to produce these self outcomes in their students, not merely as a strategy to enhance learning outcomes but to empower a positive life course trajectory (Bandura, et al, 2001; Harter, et al, 1998; Hawkins, 2008; Herman, et al, 2008).

This characterizes the theory that is being discovered through this study, and closes the gaps in the theoretical frames used, that teachers beliefs lead to student self system and positive psychology knowledge and empower a positive life course trajectory (please see Figure 4). In proposing this new conceptual framework – their needs to be a prism or mechanism or nexus for all of the numerous attributes to come together as a whole. The nexus is the self, where the self is constructed, and a holistic view of the self is put together and understood through the teaching and learning process in everyday lessons. Figure 3 below depicts this holistic view and dynamic among the self system and positive psychology attributes of the self. This integrated self, is central to *The Self Theory in Schooling: Pathways to Adolescent Well-being*. 
This study found that connecting academic learning to the development of students was possible: “I was a language arts teacher and we did a poetry in there and they jumped on the poetry thing just to kind of release, just to kind of get in touch with themselves and at the beginning of the year I don’t think I would have seen that so it was kind of like that was like an outlet for a lot of them and they started entering poetry contests and they wanted to share with the class and I thought that was kind of neat” (October_interview_8), demonstrating, in this example, the teacher saw a number of integrated self attributes emerge, and the construction of a self. The students exhibited more motivation (“jumped on the poetry thing”), self understanding (“get in touch with themselves”), and
achievement ("started entering poetry contests"), and ("they wanted to share more expressively with the class").

At the heart of this theory is an integrated self theory, the integration of the self system with positive psychology attributes into a whole view, where each impacts the other in a dynamic, active relationship. The self is the nexus because of the constructive, reflective processing that both shapes and is shaped by interactions with the environment.

Sternberg’s (2007) research provides insight into the dynamic nature of the framework of the self theory and how and where children create their realities, with: “The children have the abilities, but they are not brought out by the ways in which they are taught, which divorce academic content from the children’s realities” (p. 152). DiMaggio (1997) focuses upon “schema theory as especially relevant to the representation of social phenomena” (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 283), and “the ways in which social identities enter into the constitution of individual selves” (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 275). This informs our integrated self theory in that we cannot avoid understanding our role of representing cultural beliefs as schemata, or the “acquisition of schemata by individuals during development” (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 280). Our study data represented the important role that middle school teachers play in empowering the “schemata” in adolescence.

DiMaggio’s (1997) view that “individuals experience culture as disparate bits of information and as schematic structures that organize information” (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 263) rounds out our view of the self to include where meaning is created in our everyday lives, within the schemata of the self. Schemata are beliefs learned from life experiences and they shape our paradigms of reality, therefore they are important to include in our broader construct of self in education. In teaching and learning processes students want to
see and achieve their full and unique potentials in all areas of their lives. Most of learning takes place at ontological and epistemological levels, therefore a self construct must take advantage of innate information processing capabilities of the mind to frame beliefs for productive use when living life, or “the development of self-knowledge grows out of the social process” (Scheffler, 1985, p. 25).

According to DiMaggio, “culture is stored in memory” and “the actor [the self of the actor] organizes the information in the form of schemata” (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 268), where “schemata are both representations of knowledge and information processing mechanisms” (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 269). This view marries the cognitive with the philosophical understandings of knowledge; “in schematic cognition we find the mechanisms by which culture shapes and biases thought” (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 269).

The information processing model of cognition therefore is itself a schema of how reality is constructed by an individual. Individuals in everyday classroom lessons bring their schemas which are “mental structures that influence perception, interpretation, planning and action” (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 270). Hence reality gets constructed through the self in everyday teaching and learning processes that occur in the classroom, and require that educators make the self a focus of the next education paradigm. If our students know that they are in charge of creating their own destinies in life through this construction of reality and of their selves, they will more readily want to learn academic content in that it will inform their selves.

As teachers we can reference how academic content can be used to create a paradigm of the self using the information presented; if we present a new piece of information that requires either assimilating that information into our student’s paradigm
of reality, or creating a new paradigm of reality in order to accommodate it, we need to teach our students the mental processes at work when constructing a self with schematic (Markus, 1977) representations of one’s identity. “Work on identity suggests the possibility that ‘the self’ may be an emotionally supersaturated cluster of schemata tending toward consistency and stability over time. Schemata that are embedded in the self-schemata, then, are more closely articulated with other schemata than those that are not incorporated into the self” (DiMaggio, 1997, p. 279). This means that teaching and learning effectiveness are dependent upon “schemata embedded in the self-schemata” in that they will be more deeply learned.

Pajares (1992) discusses the important role of schemata in the teaching and learning of the self, “knowledge is fluid and evolves as new experiences are interpreted and integrated into existing schemata” (Pajares, 1992, p. 312), which also underscores the utility of the information processing model in teaching and learning. Further, “Sigel (1985) defined beliefs as ‘mental constructions of experience – often condensed and integrated into schemata or concepts, whereas Harvey (1986) defined belief as an individual’s representation of reality” (Pajares, 1992, p. 313). For our purposes, the shaping of a student’s self is the process of constructing reality out of experiences in the form of beliefs and knowledge. I would suggest that this learning how to construct a self is paramount in our system of education, especially a positive construct of the self.

Further, there is a psychological contract between teacher and school and between teacher and student, defined as: “A psychological contract represents the mutual beliefs, perceptions, and informal obligations between an employer and an employee [teacher]. It sets the dynamics for the relationship and defines the detailed practicality of the work to be
done. It is distinguishable from the formal written contract of employment which, for the most part, only identifies mutual duties and responsibilities in a generalized form” (http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Psychological+contract).

This psychological contract is important because the teachers in this study indicated that this has been broken in three places, between: (1.) the school and teachers; (2.) the teachers and their students; and, (3.) students and responsible adults (administrators and testers) who make decisions about what to teach the next generation. Students know that the system of education is not about them, their futures, or their well-being, and they have disengaged in schooling processes. McCombs (2003) underscores this point with:

“When the educational paradigm or reform agenda puts something other than the learner or learning at the center of instructional decision making, all learners suffer. Students know that the system is not about them and is not responsive to their needs. In such a system, learners recognize they are not important, because who they are and what they need are not at the heart of the learning process. At worst, they feel left out, ignored or alienated; at best, they feel the system is impersonal and irrelevant” (McCombs, 2003, p. 96).

At the heart of this grounded theory is striking the proper balance between the focus upon academic outcomes measured narrowly, and broader outcomes of human development and well-being measures. Both sets of outcomes are measurable as is discussed later in this chapter. Our present national and state educational policies framed by NCLB legislation grounds our paradigm in historically outdated thinking and approaches stemming back to the long-lasting debate between Thorndike and Dewey.
The discipline of educational psychology (Thorndike, E.L., 1914) emerged out of the need to measure people’s intelligence in the early 1930’s in order to justify categorizing students during a time of dramatic growth in and the industrialization of America’s school system. At this same time period in our educational history, John Dewey (1900; 1902; 1929), the father of progressive education, provided a vision of child-centered pedagogy where he “formulated the aim of education in social terms, but he was convinced that education would read its successes in the changed behaviors, perceptions, and insights of individual human beings” (Cremins, 1964, p. 122). When taking a look at who won this struggle for the hearts, minds and souls of American educators from today’s No Child Left Behind (NCLB) era, past Harvard University School of Education dean and historian Ellen Condliffe Lagemann declared, “Thorndike won and Dewey lost” (Lagemann in Gibboney, 2006). The findings in this study support this declaration when viewed from both schooling and the well-being of our children perspectives – our schools are cold, inhuman places, and trends in child well-being statistics are tragic.

Through this study data, I have formulated a grounded theory that an alignment of teacher beliefs with classroom practices that focus upon an integrated self leads to developmental outcomes. At the heart of this theory is a certain kind of psychology, with a specific perspective to bring to the classroom to meet the beliefs of teachers who have committed their lives to study and empower young people. This theory with its self psychology and perspective will also potentially meet the developmental needs of young people, their human needs. Teachers know who their students are as people, not as test scores or achievements. And yet, through our preponderance of focusing upon test scores, or even academic achievement, as the measure of a person, we attempt to view people as
the same, through the lens of academic learning. This is not a balanced, nuanced view of human being. We have over psychologized on what is wrong, or the negative state, or the deficit model, to the extent that we have trapped or bounded the potential of young people, and this is why positive psychology and the self in teaching and learning holds so much promise in an educational context.

Through this theory I am creating a new paradigm of teaching and learning where teachers help students see and achieve new possibilities in their lives, if they further reinforce those elements which focus upon that which is common to all human beings – the self – with its component yet highly integrated parts, including: souls, feelings, psychological well-being, intrinsic motivations, hearts and minds, purpose and meaning in life, and the capacity to create a better life and world for ourselves and each other – in essence, the self attributes of positive psychology (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993; Seligman, 2000; et al). However, as the experienced and dedicated middle school teachers stated over and over again, there are obstacles in the way of manifesting their deeply held beliefs about impacting their students. These obstacles pertain to what teachers are required to focus upon when designing their daily lesson plans and activities and the narrow standards by which they and their students are assessed.

What we assess through schooling processes will be taught by teachers and learned by students. Figure 4 is a chart of how the proposed “The Self Theory in Schooling” could provide for a new outcome from a child’s perspective. Figure 4, represents the academic content- self understanding relationship dynamic with two (2) possible pathways and outcomes for us to consider. This model considers the role of teacher beliefs and teaching effectiveness when imparting self system and positive psychology attributes through
academic content lesson activities with assessments for well-being outcomes. Teacher beliefs are integrated with a pedagogy that puts the self at the center of teaching and learning with intended developmental outcomes.

Figure 4 – The Self Theory in Schooling: Pathways to Adolescent Well-being.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>For Students on Winning Streaks</th>
<th>For Students on Losing Streaks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Teacher beliefs, practices, and assessment results provide</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continual evidence of success</td>
<td>Continual evidence of failure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The student feels</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hopeful and optimistic</td>
<td>Hopeless</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empowered to take productive action</td>
<td>Initially panicked, giving way to resignation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The student thinks</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It's all good. I’m doing fine.</td>
<td>This hurts. I’m not safe here.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See the trend? I succeed as usual.</td>
<td>I just can’t do this . . . again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I want more success.</td>
<td>I’m confused. I don’t like this—help!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School focuses on what I do well.</td>
<td>Why is it always about what I can’t do?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know what to do next.</td>
<td>Nothing I try seems to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback helps me.</td>
<td>Feedback is criticism. It hurts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public success feels good.</td>
<td>Public failure is embarrassing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**The student becomes more likely to**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Seek challenges.</th>
<th>Seek what’s easy.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seek exciting new ideas.</td>
<td>Avoid new concepts and approaches.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practice with gusto.</td>
<td>Become confused about what to practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take initiative.</td>
<td>Avoid initiative.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Persist in the face of setbacks.</td>
<td>Give up when things become challenging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take risks and stretch—go for it!</td>
<td>Retreat and escape—trying is too dangerous!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**These actions lead to**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-enhancement</th>
<th>Self-defeat, self-destruction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive self-fulfilling prophecy</td>
<td>Negative self-fulfilling prophecy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceptance of responsibility</td>
<td>Denial of responsibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manageable stress</td>
<td>High stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeling that success is its own reward</td>
<td>No feelings of success; no reward</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Curiosity, enthusiasm</td>
<td>Boredom, frustration, fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous adaptation</td>
<td>Inability to adapt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resilience</td>
<td>Yielding quickly to defeat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strong foundations for future success</td>
<td>Failure to master prerequisites for future success</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adapted from: Stiggins, 2007, p. 24.*

If a middle school child is reminded of academic failure, then this produces a schema of thinking and feeling, that includes feeling hopeless, anxiety, and potentially resigned that things will never change. A student thinks “nothing I try seems to work” or “public failure is embarrassing”, and he is likely to avoid initiative or attempting to learn new concepts and approaches, or retreats and escapes through withdrawal, computer games, or substances. These actions lead to “self defeat, self destruction” and “negative self fulfilling prophecy” and “failure to master prerequisites for future success” (p. 24). Considering the well-being of our children through schooling the teachers in this study confirm the dynamic between self, curricula, and outcomes, and that meaning is a constructive process through the interaction of the self and classroom practices. The wrong
emphasis and dynamic results in children that are not well emotionally, spiritually, psychologically, and physically.

Even Rick Stiggins, President of the premier standardized testing service Educational Testing Services (ETS), is calling for a new perspective when assessing school children to broaden our focus to understand more fully, and in a more balanced way, that throughout the entire assessment process the young person is experiencing (or feeling) success or failure, and this yields results in terms of well-being outcomes:

“When we use assessment for learning, assessment becomes far more than merely a one-time even stuck onto the end of an instruction unit. It becomes a series of interlaced experiences that enhance the learning process by keeping students confident and focused on their progress, even in the face of occasional setbacks . . . even the most valid and reliable assessment cannot be regarded as high quality if it causes a student to give up” (Stiggins, 2007, p. 22).

If teachers teach students to focus upon winning through schooling experiences such as generating and collecting evidence of success, this leads to the student feeling “hopeful and optimistic” and “empowered to take productive action” (p. 24). Cognitively the student thinks “I’m doing fine” and “I want more success” and school is a place that focuses upon “what I do best” and really cares that I grow and develop as a person. This leads to the student “seek[ing] challenges; seeking exciting new ideas, taking initiative, and persist in the face of setbacks.” Possible new ways of being in the world consist of: self enhancement, positive self fulfilling prophecy, acceptance of responsibility, manageable stress, resilience, and a strong foundation for future success.” It is clear that
the second pathway in our two examples would produce two very different types of people, well-being profiles and attributes.

Well-being outcomes can be assessed just as readily as academic outcomes using a number of instruments used almost exclusively by counselors, including: Psychological Well-being scales (Ryff, 1998), Subjective Happiness scale (Lyubomirsky 1999), Meaning in life Questionnaire (Steger, et al, in press); Satisfaction with life scale (Diener, 1989); among others (these scales are summarized in Appendix B). Using the proposed theory where teacher beliefs are aligned teaching and learning practices that places the integrated self at the center, will have the possibility of reversing downward trends in child well-being.

Minimally, this study demonstrates the importance of self in teaching and learning. If middle school students learn just one self attribute per semester or even per year, well-being and academic measures would rise. This study’s findings support those of social cognitive theorist Bandura where: “the self-efficacy component of social cognitive theory does more than identify a contributory factor to career development. The theory provides the means for enhancing the personal source of control over the course of one’s self-development” (Bandura, 1997).

**Perceived Obstacles to Impacting Adolescent Development**

There are three significant “climate killers” in this middle school that teachers speak about that lead to the violation of the psychological contract that exists between teachers and adolescent students delivered through schooling methods and practices. The three climate killers are: focus upon testing; no touch rule; and curriculum mapping and
lesson planning using “Focused Schools” (please see Appendix D for a description of this model) to improve test scores and accountability in the classroom practices and outcomes. One study participant’s responses help us to understand two out of the three climate killers and two obstacles in the way of empowering student well-being and development outcomes, with:

“I have been in the education for thirty two years and somebody argued well maybe you are describing yourself. I like to think I am not. I think it is just based on sheer observation but one thing is certain we all regardless of position in school can work harder at that social side of development of kids to build their self-esteem, to build their confidence and to make them more kind adults and to prepare them better for treating others as they want to be treated as their time evolves into adulthood. We surely can do a better job . . . I think [all teachers] would like to be in a position to be more influential [when impacting the emotional well-being and self esteem of students] but I think there are two things, so not to be cynical, but there are two things that sometimes get in the way, particularly this time in the year and one is just the particularity of you mentioned the word content. The practicality of test preparation and being judged and viewed and measured by a test result and that really has quite an impact on certain teachers given their curriculums typically LA or language arts, math people feel more responsible for outcomes of tests that are hitting reading, math.

So you know that distracts from their maybe their conscious, a conscious desire and effort to touch on the social side of development.
And the other would be and neither of these are profound but I think they are climate alterers in a sense. The other is I think this whole notion of not being able to understand the good touch versus the bad touch [the “no touch” rule]. I don’t sense the same level of interaction from teacher to pupil outside of a class setting. I am talking about transitional times, hallways, cafeteria, when there is passing by opportunities. I think there was more of a climate of feeling good about you know talking to a child aside from the regular routine. . . I think there had been more of a closeness; it is just that there is maybe a little more of a reluctance to be to get to close to the child” (November_Interview_8).

There was a notable difference in attitude about how much of an obstacle these climate killers were between the more experienced teachers, those who are tenured with more than five (n=21) years of experiences with middle school students, and those who are new, within the first three to five years of teaching.

More experienced teachers had considerable problems with the new lesson planning requirements imposed on them during two in-service days just prior to the beginning of the new school year. Their views are characterized in:

It is extremely difficult [teaching in the new climate]. I feel extremely overwhelmed and if I am feeling this way whether I can express it to the kids or not they pick up on that . . . For teachers the time and the caring that you can put into helping the development along is giving us smaller and smaller [due to the] push for standards and [state standardized tests] and certain lesson plans and
development of certain things that way I think we are losing more time to focus on
areas like that with the kids” (November_Interview_7).

Whereas newer teachers, with five years or less experiences (n=4) were “just
happy to be working with children” and were more inclined to see that curricula standards
and student development could be combined through lesson activities, and did not see the
conflict as obstacles to manifesting their deeply held beliefs to empower children.

The teachers are so frustrated with NCLB and Focused Schools program because
they want to make such a big difference in the lives, in the well-being, in the self esteem of
their students and to not have all of the available tools, notably self and positive
psychology distinctions.

These teachers are feeling the tensions that are emerging; they are at the crossroads
of our society’s needs. There are two emerging and conflicting needs; the need to take
care of our children’s emotional well-being, develop a strong sense of self, and happiness,
with the need to produce academic outcomes that are measurable. This most likely
explains the emotional reactions that I received at the beginning of many of my interviews,
where teachers literally cried. They are feeling the frustrations that would accompany
working for the institution that represents the hopes and dreams of each student, and the
future of our society. Schools and schooling hold at once those values held special by
previous generations with those newer ones required for future success, in this case the 21st
century with its emphasis on science, technology and math, with measurable outcomes.
Importance and Contributions to the Field

Through participation in this study, the school district teachers and administrators may develop a renewed understanding of the importance of teaching to the self of each student, and an interest in learning about new approaches that will impact the health and well-being of their students as well as their academic achievements. The implications of this study are that it may inform teacher best practices now being collected by the Pennsylvania Department of Education (http://www.pde.state.pa.us/). University teacher education programs and professional development programs should begin to work on a new conceptual framework and proven data base of practices to manifest deeply held beliefs about the mission of a teacher, thus assisting in training teachers in how to be more effective when reaching the hearts, minds, and souls of children.

The field of positive psychology may take its place among the other psychological paradigms and inform educational psychology and teacher education, thereby further bringing together psychology and education through a teaching and learning paradigm that includes the self. With this new paradigm of self in schooling:

1. Teachers will have a pathway to expressing and manifesting their deeply held beliefs and mission to impart a significant protective factor in a child’s life course, a healthy and positive self system.

2. Students’ well-being and their academic achievement will improve as they learn that a positive self system is where meaning is made, which engages their natural interests to learn and excel.
3. Policy makers may want to adopt the researched teaching best practices and put them into their own best practices toolkits for teachers to draw upon. Additionally, they may take action to shift the balance toward a whole child focus.

4. It is my highest hope that the self theory in teaching and learning becomes the guiding framework for future K-12 reform. I want children to be well and to learn how to be well for the remainder of their life spans – psychologically, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

5. I admire and respect teachers and the teaching profession and as a teacher of teachers I would like to empower pre-service and master teachers alike to believe that their core beliefs to lift children higher are meaningful and important.

6. Education and psychology researchers will have a self theory to study.

**Implications for Research and Practice**

**Classroom Practice – Teaching and learning**

Education, and specifically the process of teaching and learning, according to the dominant view, educates the intellect of people. Actually, it creates reality, and more accurately, it teaches people how to create their realities. Using teaching methods that impart attributes through daily lesson activities, at least on par with academic standards, could improve the developmental outcomes now produced from schooling.

Integral to the theory developed in this Chapter are new assessments that assess schooling outcomes using much broader measures than math and reading scores on standardized tests. These measures could include those offered by the *Positive Psychology Center* at the University of Pennsylvania or those advocated by psychologist Barbara
McCombs and Learner Centered Principles framework. Either or both would send strong communication to young people that who they are, their self understanding, and their well-being are important, at least as important as their math and reading scores.

The teachers in this study all underscored the importance of helping young people through their academic lessons, yet, their pedagogical tools were limited at best, and mostly non-existent. A combination of approaches such as differentiated instruction, inquiry based learning and others with a shift in intended results from curricula frameworks to human development conceptions such self system and positive psychology attributes could serve as a new pedagogical framework.

In sum, it is possible to place the self of students at the center of teaching and learning when designing lessons, and if teachers learn how to do this they will be better able to impact both the academic and developmental outcomes they intend and that are expected.

**Policy Implications**

Noddings (2003) asserts that aims or purposes of education should be considered as criteria to judge whether or not we have effectively addressed the societal needs for which our policies were intended: “educational aims always reflect the aims – explicit or implicit – of the political society in which they are developed” (Noddings, 2003, p. 88). I argue that education policy must be based upon, and more fully, an understanding of where we want to go, or with a clearer vision of future possibilities for our society and for equipping our children to thrive in the 21st century. Therefore, policy makers at the Federal and state
levels may listen with respect to the teacher beliefs voiced in this study, as well as take note of the child well-being statistics summarized and highlighted in Chapter 1.

One possible vision of where we might head is pilot program at The Geelong Grammar School Centre for Well-being. This program’s focus could inform the policy debate to include the outcome measurements to demonstrate that the health and well-being of our youth is important and that we can positively impact the growing health and well-being crisis in America. We can shift our view to a more balanced view between academics and well-being, and measure both to the increased satisfaction of parents, students, and teachers. What if policy makers called for a “well-being center” in every middle school, if not all schools? This would be a preventative strategy to the health and well-being crisis and improve academic readiness through our present model of education characterized by NCLB.

A “well-being center” would be modeled after the commonly used resource center. A well-being resource center would be a central location where resources are available to distribute to students, teachers and parents. Resources would not be therapy or counseling services directly administered. They would be educational services where teachers would utilize a workbook of self distinctions that could be incorporated into daily lesson plans by subject. Teachers are accustomed to this model when drawing upon new methods for teaching writing across the curriculum, for example. In this example, an earth science teacher would draw upon a teaching and learning center’s resources to better understand how to help her students write better while learning science concepts.

Another example of a widely used center in public schools today is that of a peer mediation center. In this type of center students with the help of trained student facilitators
address disrespectful and harmful behaviors most often based in anger and frustration. Thus, preventing escalation of fighting, bullying contributing to an unsafe school environment.

Certainly, it would be preferable to follow the Dewey (1916) model of developing the child through a child-centered curriculum. However, the realities of today’s NCLB education model have taken further and further away from this child-centered philosophy of education. A well-being center would bring us closer to a child-centered approach, and hopefully closer to a model of education where a child’s well-being is as important as its math test scores.

Teachers describe students as worse off today than in years past, with lower levels of academic capabilities, which means that our focus upon content or academics is not empowering the full potentials of young people.

Teachers who are happy report using content to empower self attributes, and do not see a conflict between content standards and their beliefs to empower students’ well-being; they use one to enhance the other. This lends credibility to Parjares’ (1992) espoused theory in use and practice coming together to the benefit of both teacher, in terms of morale and effectiveness, and students, in terms of empowering both academic achievement and well-being. Teachers are happy when they empower the self of students, and this strategy impacts academic outcomes.

If teachers were measured equally on well-being of students, perhaps using Psychological Well Being scales (Ryff, 1998), and not just on the academic performance of students, then they would be happier, especially seasoned teachers who have been in the system for a while.
There appears to be a growing gap between a teacher’s belief to empower students and the increased requirements to adhere to administrative requirements imposed by NCLB. As demonstrated by the data in this study, we are trying to meet the new demands in our society for healthier people, so that they will not be a financial drain on the health care system, and for new skilled workers in the 21st century workplace, with the old and out of date assumptions associated with the NCLB educational model (Robinson (2001).

I am suggesting that placing the self of the learner at the center of a new K-12 reform framework would empower teachers and students alike to higher levels of achievement and outcomes aligned with the needs of our society.

**Teacher Preparation**

Chapter 49 (Please see Appendix H) in Pennsylvania calls for increased training in child and adolescent development, but does not call for more coursework in educational psychology or human development and learning. How will this be accomplished? Most likely through integration of educational psychology concepts with teaching methods courses where the objective is to increase the academic outcomes using standards and standardized tests, and not through the motivation, self understanding, or well-being of young people.

New Pennsylvania legislation calls for core competencies in human development to consist of nine (9) credit hours, or three (3) courses noted in this way: “4-8 Professional Core Development, Cognition and Learning (middle level cognitive development, early adolescent and adolescent development and learning theory)” (The Framework for 4-8 Program Guidelines, Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2008, p. 7).
Harvard education professor Kane (2006) conducted a study looking at the effectiveness of teachers trained at a number of teacher education programs and concluded that there is no difference in the quality of teachers measured by student achievement.

Arthur Levine (2006) in his study found that teacher education programs do not make a difference in the lives of either those going through them or in the ability to produce results in students. These stunning conclusions suggest that perhaps we are not focusing upon what is important to teachers, the well-being of young people in our care. The teachers at the middle school study site were all trained at various teacher education programs, yet were collectively so consistent in their beliefs about empowering children.

Levine (2006) characterizes the purpose of schooling today and what teacher education programs need to focus upon in order to prepare teachers effectively:

“They should educate teachers for a world in which the only measure of success is student achievement. They should educate teachers for subject matter mastery, pedagogical competence, and understanding of the learning and development of the children they teach. The challenge facing education schools is not to do a better job at what they are already doing, but to do a fundamentally different job. They are now in the business of preparing teachers for a new world: an outcome-based, accountability driven system of education in which all children are expected to learn” (p. 104).

Levine’s (2006) study and others support the assertion of a “new world” reality in which school of education are in the business of producing teachers for an outcomes based system. Teachers believe however that schools are in the child or adolescent development
business, empowering young people in their care. There is certainly a direct contradiction and working at cross purposes.

Educational theorist Greg Goodman calls for “teachers to consider their role as fundamental to the development of their students’ leadership, and awareness of social justice and equality in education as critical for a healthier and saner world” (Goodman, 2008), clearly stating that teachers and schooling can produce a “healthier and saner world.” Additionally, he challenges educators in modernity to take responsibility for developing the professional perspective and skills to empower all children’s learning so as to develop their full and unique potentials in life, not merely to be measured in state administered standardized tests which continue the cold technical rationality begun by Thorndike and acculturated through NCLB. I believe young people, starting in middle school, want to dedicate themselves to a higher purpose in life, to making a difference beyond their own self interest and help make life better for all human beings in our global community. The teaching and learning processes that incorporate educational psychology is not meant for training educators in how to limit people’s potential, but rather they can be used to release the full and unique human potentials of all people through learning and schooling processes.

Child Development – Well Being Characteristics

Schools and schooling are where children learn how to be well, how to succeed in life, where they construct a paradigm of self that empowers their understanding of their full and unique potential. Yet schools are set up for children to fail, they focus upon children’s weaknesses, which reminds them constantly that they are not achieving. They are further
and further driven into the mindset of survival, fear that they are measuring up. Will they survive? This is also true for teachers; they are being asked to teach contrary to their own beliefs and homegrown practices that make an impact with children. Positive psychology as applied to education is about building academic skills and life skills based upon strengths, and this is what we can teach children. We can also give teachers more resources and training on self system and positive psychology attributes and new ways of imparting and measuring these attributes. Children are often frozen in fear, fear of being judged prior to being ready to be evaluated, and how children see themselves is learned from the system of education/schooling. Children are experiencing the myriad of well-being symptoms discussed in this study largely due to being unaware of who they are, and not merely as a student with an intellect. Children are frozen in fear because their worth is measured by test scores, and they are not understood for the whole being that they are.

Schooling reinforces a disconnect between thinking and feeling, between the intellect and emotions. Today’s students are products of the NCLB era of cold technocratic rationality and want to connect in important and emotional ways to the why of learning, and affect is the fuel that brings this life. How important it is, especially in this era of disassociated education (a clinical psychologist’s term to describe the separation of our feelings from our experiences in life) to teach future educators that the “teachers who have the best success are the ones who deeply care about their students. This caring covers not only the academic competency their students’ achieve, but it extends to the whole child. A caring and compassionate teacher knows that the feelings that the child experiences are an integral part of his or her life” (Kolencik, in Goodman, 2008, p. 180).
The schooling model characterized by a cold technocratic rationality and the era of disassociated education is one possible reason why psychological theorist Daniel Goleman asserts that we need to consider all dimensions of what it means to be human, including the emotional dimension:

“These are times when the fabric of society seems to unravel at ever greater speed, when selfishness, violence and a meanness of spirit seem to be rotting the goodness of our communal lives. There is growing evidence that the fundamental ethical stances in life stem from underlying emotional capacities. For one, impulse is the medium of emotion; the seed of all impulse is a feeling bursting to express itself in action. Those who are at the mercy of impulse—who lack self-control—suffer a moral deficiency. The ability to control impulse is the base of will and character. By the same token, the root of altruism lies in empathy, the ability to read emotions in others; lacking a sense of another’s need or despair, there is not caring. And if there are any two moral stances that our times call for, they are precisely these, self-restraint and compassion . . . The very name, Homo sapiens, the thinking species, is misleading in the light of the new appreciation and vision of the place of emotions in our lives that science now offers. When it comes to shaping our decisions and our actions, [and I would suggest our selves] feeling counts every bit as much, and often more, than thought; we have gone too far in emphasizing the value of the purely rational, of what IQ measures, in human life” (Goleman, in Robinson, 2001, p. 164).
One pathway to empower the well-being of children, and I think Goleman (1995) would concur, is to create a pedagogy that emphasizes the whole child, and ameliorates the dissociative nature of schooling.

Teachers, who participated in this study, know their students’ souls and hearts and want to do more to help them understand these for themselves. In Appendix C is the teacher evaluation form used by the administrators in the middle school study site. Note that the only criterion that pertains to child well-being or development is “establishes rapport with students.” Therefore, other criteria are more valued in this school district, those that help measure academic outcomes that are aligned with NCLB incentives with its narrow outcomes.

Gardner (2007) asks: “what kinds of mind do we need if we are to create a world in which we would like to live?” His answer: (1.) a disciplinary mind where students are able to master a major school of thought and at least one professional craft; (2.) a synthesizing mind; (3.) a creating mind; (4.) an ethical mind (one willing to take on responsibilities as a world citizen); (5.) a respectful mind, and I would add a theory of mind where the self changes and grows toward higher and higher levels of conscious awareness, so as to manifest wellness. By placing the self of the student at the center of learning, the symptoms of not knowing the self will reduce as children come to know themselves more thoroughly and deeply. Knowing one’s self is the pathway to healing and well-being and to ameliorating tragic mental and physical health issues and concerns, including: obesity, depression, cutting, alcohol and drug abuse, heart disease, among others.

We can push back against the never-ending emphasis on more testing, for more accountability, and begin to build upon the seeds of success found in teacher’s beliefs.
about the self. As this study found, the well of the belief in the self of young people runs deep within teachers, and we should honor them.

**Future Research**

As demonstrated in this study and the development of a grounded theory that integrates teacher beliefs with an integrated self theory with intended self system and positive psychology outcomes should be further formulated and tested in a school setting to determine its effectiveness. Outcome measure could be self system and positive psychology attributes used in this study, as well as longer term scales and questionnaires over time.

I would also recommend studying the children of these middle school teachers to see if their beliefs are indeed manifest in the lives of students as developmental outcomes with long lasting impact, or did these teachers empower students to get through the middle school years and survive them. Additionally this would be a good opportunity to include the views of the parents of these children to determine what developmental outcomes were imparted.

A study to explore the role of positive psychology in education, maybe a *Handbook of Positive Psychology in Education* would serve the needs of teachers and teacher educators.

Finally, a study to explore changes to NCLB to include the broader well-being and self system and positive psychology measures and determine if these new standards for well-being help to meet the new type of human being called for in the 21st century
education model by the business community, and potential impact upon mental and physical health expenditures.
References


Murphy, P.K. (in press). The eye of the beholder: The interplay of social and cognitive components in change. *Educational Psychologist.*


Appendix A: Teacher Interviews

Open-Ended Interview Protocol

I. Introduction
a. Name of Interviewer – Henry G. Brzycki
   i. Status or position of interviewer – Graduate Student
   ii. Dissertation study for fulfillment of Ph.D. program of studies
b. K-12 Public School System in Pennsylvania
   i. I am interested in the beliefs and practices of classroom teachers
c. This interview will be transcribed
   i. I will share the interview with my advisor, dissertation committee, and possible
   publishing distribution.
   ii. The interview may also be reviewed by colleagues in professional development
   workshops.
   iii. I will use pseudonyms in the transcriptions
d. You were selected because of your experience and interest in the academic and/or
   well-being outcomes of your students.

II. Biographical Questions
a. What grade(s) have you or do you teach?
b. What school do you teach in? What school district?
c. How many years have you been teaching?
d. What are your certifications?
e. What is your teacher training background and professional development
   coursework?

III. Central Questions
a. Do you believe that schools, schooling, and you in your classroom impact the
   human development of your students; however you define “development”? Human
   development may be defined as: self esteem, adolescent development, child
   development, well-being, or other.
b. Beliefs about teaching, teaching and learning, mission as an educator, etc.
c. Success stories working with children who you have impacted.
d. What are the connections that you see among: self of student, academic excellence,
   and health and well-being?
Appendix B – Positive Psychology Center Scales and Questionnaires

Positive Psychology Questionnaires

This page has information about the following questionnaires, some of which can be downloaded from this page. This list is not intended to be an endorsement of these questionnaires:

- Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ)
- Curiosity and Exploration Inventory (CEI)
- Gratitude Questionnaire – 6 (GQ-6)
- Hope Scale (HS)
- Inspiration Scale (IS)
- Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ)
- Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)
- Older Adults’ Attributional Style Questionnaire (OAASQ)
- Personal Growth Initiative Scale (PGIS)
- Psychological Well-Being Scales
- Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI)
- Satisfaction with Life Scale
- Silver Lining Questionnaire (SLQ)
- State-Trait-Cheerfulness Inventory (STCI)
- Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS)
- Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM)
- VIA Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS)

**QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:**

**Attributional Style Questionnaire (ASQ)**

Martin E. P. Seligman, Ph.D.

**WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:**

The ASQ is a self-report instrument that yields scores for explanatory style for bad events and for good events using three causal dimensions: internal versus external, stable versus unstable, and global versus specific causes. The ASQ presents 12 hypothetical events, half good and half bad, and the test-taker is asked to write down the one major cause of each event and then rate the cause along a 7-point continuum for each of the three causal dimensions. There is evidence that the ASQ is a predictor of depression, physical health, and achievement in various domains (in academics, work, and sports). The ASQ takes an average of about 20 minutes to complete, but there is no time limit.

**KEY REFERENCES:**

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:
Curiosity and Exploration Inventory (CEI)
Todd B. Kashdan, Ph.D., Paul Rose, B.A., & Frank D. Fincham, Ph.D.

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The CEI is a self-report instrument assessing individual differences in the recognition, pursuit, and integration of novel and challenging experiences and information. The CEI is a 7-item scale with two factors. The first factor, Exploration, refers to appetitive strivings for novel and challenging information and experiences. The second factor, Absorption, refers to the propensity to be deeply engaged in activities. Respondents rate items using a 7-point Likert-type scale. The CEI has good internal reliability, and shows moderately large positive relationships with intrinsic motivation, reward sensitivity, openness to experience, and subjective vitality. Moreover, the CEI has shown incremental validity over and above the overlapping constructs of positive affect and reward sensitivity. The CEI takes less than 2 minutes to complete, but there is no time limit. A state version of the CEI has also been validated, demonstrating sensitivity to change.

KEY REFERENCES:

E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Todd B. Kashdan, Ph.D.: tkashdan@gmu.edu

TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Click here: http://mason.gmu.edu/~tkashdan or http://ceicuriosity.tripod.com/

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHORS:
Gratitude Questionnaire – 6 (GQ-6)
Michael E. McCullough, Ph.D., Robert A. Emmons, Ph.D., Jo-Ann Tsang, Ph.D.

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The GQ-6 is a short, self-report measure of the disposition to experience gratitude. Participants answer 6 items on a 1 to 7 scale (1 = “strongly disagree”, 7 = “strongly agree”). Two items are reverse-scored to inhibit response bias. The GQ-6 has good internal reliability, with alphas between .82 and .87, and there is evidence that the GQ-6 is positively related to optimism, life satisfaction, hope, spirituality and religiousness, forgiveness, empathy and prosocial behavior, and negatively related to depression, anxiety, materialism and envy. The GQ-6 takes less than 5 minutes to complete, but there is no time limit.

KEY REFERENCES:

E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Dr. Michael E. McCullough: mikem@mail.smu.edu
Dr. Robert A. Emmons: raemmons@ucdavis.edu

TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Click here: Gratitude Questionnaire
QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHORS:
Adult Hope Scale (AHS)
C. R. Snyder, University of Kansas

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The adult hope scale (AHS) measures Snyder’s cognitive model of hope which defines hope as “a positive motivational state that is based on an interactively derived sense of successful (a) agency (goal-directed energy), and (b) pathways (planning to meet goals)” (Snyder, Irving, & Anderson, 1991, p. 287). The adult hope scale contains 12 items. Four items measure pathways thinking, four items measure agency thinking, and four items are fillers. Participants respond to each item using a 8-point scale ranging from definitely false to definitely true and the scale takes only a few minutes to complete. See Snyder (2002) for a review of hope theory and research.

KEY REFERENCES:

TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Click here: Adult Hope Scale

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHORS:
Inspiration Scale (IS)
Todd M. Thrash and Andrew J. Elliot

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The IS is a brief, face-valid measure of inspiration, a motivational resource that has been under-appreciated by psychologists. The measure consists of 4-item frequency and intensity subscales that may be combined into an overall inspiration scale. The IS has strong psychometric properties: it demonstrates a consistent two-factor structure, internal consistency, temporal stability, and measurement invariance across time and across populations. The IS also demonstrates strong evidence of construct validity and empirical utility: its nomological network includes openness to experience, intrinsic motivation, BAS, and creativity, as well as the holding of U.S. patents; the frequency and intensity subscales predict their corresponding dimensions in daily experience; and the scale predicts a range of positive consequences (openness to experience, work-mastery motivation, creativity, perceived competence, and self-determination) while controlling trait measures of these outcomes and trait positive affect. The IS takes a minute or two to complete.

KEY REFERENCES:

E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Todd M. Thrash: thrash@psych.rochester.edu

TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Click here: Inspiration Scale

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHORS:
Meaning in Life Questionnaire (MLQ)
Michael F. Steger, Patricia Frazier, Shigehiro Oishi, and Matthew Kaler

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The Meaning in Life Questionnaire assesses two dimensions of meaning in life using 10 items rated on a seven-point scale from “Absolutely True” to “Absolutely Untrue.” The Presence of Meaning subscale measures how full respondents feel their lives are of meaning. The Search for Meaning subscale measures how engaged and motivated respondents are in efforts to find meaning or deepen their understanding of meaning in their lives. The MLQ has good reliability, test-retest stability, stable factor structure, and convergence among informants. Presence is positively related to well-being, intrinsic religiosity, extraversion and agreeableness, and negatively related to anxiety and depression. Search is positively related to religious quest, rumination, past-negative and present-fatalistic time perspectives, negative affect, depression, and neuroticism, and negatively related to future time perspective, close-
mindedness (dogmatism), and well-being. Presence relates as expected with personal growth self-appraisals, and altruistic and spiritual behaviors as assessed through daily diaries. The MLQ takes about 5 minutes to complete.

KEY REFERENCES:


E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
michael_f_steger@yahoo.com

TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Click here: Meaning in Life Questionnaire

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:
Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)
Kirk Warren Brown, Ph.D. & Richard M. Ryan, Ph.D.

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The MAAS is a 15-item scale designed to assess a core characteristic of dispositional mindfulness, namely, open or receptive awareness of and attention to what is taking place in the present. The scale shows strong psychometric properties and has been validated with college, community, and cancer patient samples. Correlational, quasi-experimental, and laboratory studies have shown that the MAAS taps a unique quality of consciousness that is related to, and predictive of, a variety of self-regulation and well-being constructs. The measure takes 10 minutes or less to complete.

KEY REFERENCE:

E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Kirk Warren Brown at kirk@scp.rochester.edu

TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Click here: Mindful Attention Awareness Scale

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:
Older Adults’ Attributional Style Questionnaire (OAASQ)
Derek M. Isaacowitz, Ph.D.

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The OAASQ is a version of the ASQ modified to be appropriate to the lives of older adults. It is identical in form to the ASQ but contains certain content differences. First, the vignettes from the affiliation domain have been changed slightly to be more appropriate to older populations. Second, the achievement vignettes from the ASQ have been replaced on the OAASQ with vignettes from the health/cognitive domain. Explanatory style in these two domains may predict depression and affect in older individuals, though the relations appear more complex than those found in young adults; in particular, some extremely optimistic older adults may be at higher risk for increases in depressive symptoms than are their more pessimistic peers, especially in the context of several negative life events happening over a short period.

KEY REFERENCES:

E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Derek Isaacowitz: dmi@brandeis.edu
QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:
Personal Growth Initiative Scale (PGIS)
Christine Robitschek, Ph.D.

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The PGIS is a self-report instrument that yields a single scale score for personal growth initiative. Personal growth initiative is a person's active and intentional involvement in changing and developing as a person. The PGIS consists of nine items that are rated on a Likert scale from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree. Item scores are summed to obtain a total PGIS score. There is evidence that the PGIS is strongly positively related to psychological well-being and negatively related to psychological distress. Reliability and validity evidence has been strong. The PGIS takes about 5 minutes to complete, and there is no time limit.

KEY REFERENCES:

E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Christine Robitschek, Ph.D.: chris.robitschek@ttu.edu

TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Click here: [Personal Growth Initiative Scale](#)

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QUESTIONNAIRE AND AUTHOR:
Psychological Well-Being Scales
Carol Ryff, University of Wisconsin Madison

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
Carol Ryff has conceptualized psychological well-being as consisting of 6 dimensions: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life, self-acceptance. She has designed self-report scales to assess individual's well-being at a particular moment in time within each of these 6 dimensions. Three- to 12- item per scale validated versions exist of the measure for use in survey research or other data collection. Individuals respond to various statements and indicate on a 6-point Likert scale how true each statement is of them. Higher scores on each on scale indicate greater well-being on that dimension.

KEY REFERENCES:

E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Carol Ryff: cryff@facstaff.wisc.edu
**QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:**

**Quality of Life Inventory (QOLI)**  
Michael Frisch, Baylor University

**WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:**

The QOLI assesses an individual’s quality of life through self-report of the importance they attach to each of 16 life domains (on a 3-point rating scale) as well as their current satisfaction with each domain (on a 6-point rating scale). Importance scores are multiplied by satisfaction scores for each domain, and then these scores are summed to determine an overall current quality of life for each individual. This measure is very quick to complete, and has been normed in a community sample of adults. It has also been used to track changes in individuals over the course of therapy. Higher scores indicate a higher overall quality of life.

**KEY REFERENCES:**


**E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Michael Frisch: Michael_Frisch@baylor.edu

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**QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:**

**Satisfaction with Life Scale**  
Ed Diener, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign

**WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:**

The Satisfaction with Life Scale was developed to assess satisfaction with people’s lives as a whole. The scale does not assess satisfaction with specific life domains, such as health or finances, but allows subjects to integrate and weigh these domains in whatever way they choose. It takes only a few minutes to complete.

**KEY REFERENCE:**


**TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:**

Click here: Satisfaction with Life Scale

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**QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHORS**

**The Silver Lining Questionnaire**  
Samantha C. Sodergren and Michael E. Hyland

**WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES**

The Silver Lining Questionnaire measures the extent to which people believe their illness has had a positive benefit despite the negative consequences of being ill. Research suggests that this positive interpretation is not due to a form of self-delusion but instead reflects personal growth and that it can be enhanced by the context. Its role in recovery from illness is complex.

**KEY REFERENCES**


EMAIL CONTACT:

Michael E. Hyland: michael.hyland@plymouth.ac.uk
http://www.psycresearch.psy.plymouth.ac.uk/research/mhyland/

TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:

Click here: Silver Lining Questionnaire (pdf version) or Silver Lining Questionnaire (MS Word version)

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:

State-Trait-Cheerfulness Inventory (STCI)
Willibald Ruch, Gabriele Kohler, & Christoph van Thriel

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:

The State-Trait-Cheerfulness-Inventory (STCI) is a self-report instrument measuring the three concepts of cheerfulness, seriousness, and bad mood as both states (STCI-S) and traits (STCI-T). They are 20 and 10 items per scale in the STCI-T and STCI-S, respectively, and both parts utilize a 4-point answer format (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

The concepts are considered to assess the temperamental basis of humor and the scales have been validated in a variety of studies. The trait part is reliable and state part is sensitive to change. The traits are disposition for the activation of the homologous states and it has been demonstrated that trait cheerfulness is not only predictor for getting in a cheerful mood more easily (threshold in), experience that state more strongly, and remain in that state longer, even under adverse circumstances (i.e., of the phenomenon of “keeping” or “losing one’s humor”). The state and state versions of the inventory take approximately 10 and 5 minutes to complete, respectively. More at:
http://www.psychologie.uzh.ch/perspsy/STCI/STCI.php

KEY REFERENCES:


E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:

Willibald Ruch, Ph.D.: willibald.ruch@bluewin.ch

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:

Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS)
Sonja Lyubomirsky, Ph.D.

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:

The SHS is a 4-item scale of global subjective happiness. Two items ask respondents to characterize themselves using both absolute ratings and ratings relative to peers, whereas the other two items offer brief descriptions of happy and unhappy individuals and ask respondents the extent to which each characterization describes them. The SHS has been validated in 14 studies with a total of 2,732 participants. Data has been collected in the United States from students on two college campuses and one high school campus, from community adults in two California cities, and from older adults, as well as from students and community adults in Moscow, Russia. Results have indicated that the SHS has high internal consistency, which has been found to be stable across samples. Test-retest and self-peer correlations have suggested good to excellent reliability, and construct validation studies of convergent and discriminant validity have confirmed the use of this scale to measure the construct of subjective happiness.
KEY REFERENCES:

E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Sonja Lyubomirsky: sonja@citrus.ucr.edu

TO DOWNLOAD THE QUESTIONNAIRE:
Click here: Subjective Happiness Scale

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:
Transgression-Related Interpersonal Motivations Inventory (TRIM)
Michael E. McCullough, K. Chris Rachal, Steven J. Sandage, Everett L. Worthington, Jr., Susan Wade Brown, & Terry L. Hight

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The TRIM is a self-report instrument that assesses the motivations assumed to underlie forgiving: Avoidance and Revenge. Responses to 12 statements referring to a transgression recipient’s current thoughts and feelings about the transgressor are scored on a 5-point Likert-type scale. Recently, a six-item subscale to reflect benevolent motivations toward the transgressor has been under development (contact the first author for details). The TRIM subscales not only correlate with a variety of relationship, offense, and social-cognitive variables, they have also demonstrated strong relationships to a single-item measure of forgiveness. The inventory takes approximately 5 minutes to complete.

KEY REFERENCES:

E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Michael E. McCullough, Ph.D.: mikem@mail.smu.edu

QUESTIONNAIRE NAME AND AUTHOR:
VIA Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS), © 2005 Values in Action Institute
Christopher Peterson, Ph.D. and Martin E. P. Seligman, Ph.D.

WHAT THE QUESTIONNAIRE MEASURES:
The Values in Action (VIA) Inventory of Strengths (VIA-IS) is a 240-item face-valid self-report questionnaire intended for use with adults in the contemporary United States. The measure uses 5-point Likert-style items to measure the degree to which respondents endorse items reflecting the 24 strengths of character that comprise the VIA Classification (Peterson & Seligman, in preparation). The VIA-IS takes about 25 minutes to complete, although there is no time limit.

KEY REFERENCES:
E-MAIL CONTACT INFORMATION:
Christopher Peterson: chrispet@umich.edu
WEBSITE TO TAKE VIA & GET FEEDBACK ON STRENGTHS: http://www.authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu/
## Appendix C: Middle School Study Site Teacher Evaluation Form

### ARRA SCHOOL DISTRICT

### PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEE OBSERVATION FORM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Performance Rating (Check one)</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Init.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Detailed lesson plans reflecting established curriculum and appropriate instructional goals are available for immediate review.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher's active involvement in grade level/subject area planning meetings is evident in instructional goals and activities.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher conveys genuine enthusiasm for the subject, and students demonstrate consistent commitment to its value.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students accept teacher instruction on work of high quality and demonstrate pride in that work.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional goals and activities, instruction, and the classroom environment convey high expectations for student achievement.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom interactions encourage multiple avenues to learn content with multiple levels of support.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher-student interactions demonstrate general warmth, caring and respect appropriate to developmental and cultural norms.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Student interactions are generally polite and respectful.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tasks for group work are organized, and groups are managed so most students are engaged at all times.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
<th>Evidence</th>
<th>Performance Rating (Check one)</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Init.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Transitions occur smoothly, with little loss of instructional time.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Resources for handling materials and supplies occur smoothly, with little loss of instructional time.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Efficient systems for performing non-instructional duties are in place, resulting in little loss of instructional time.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Volunteers and paraprofessionals are productively and independently engaged during the entire class.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Standards of conduct are clear to all students.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>The teacher is alert to student behavior at all times.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher response to misbehavior is appropriate, successful and respects the student's dignity.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>The classroom is safe, and the furniture arrangement is a resource for learning activities.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher uses physical resources, materials and technology skillfully and learning is equally accessible to all students.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teacher instructional directions and procedures are clear to students and contain an appropriate level of detail.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>All activities reflect an obvious and appropriate connection among the written, taught and tested curriculum.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Summary point writing incorporated according to level expectations and is used to inform instruction.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher's spoken and written language is clear and correct. Vocabulary is appropriate to students' age and interests.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Performance Indicator</td>
<td>Evidence</td>
<td>Performance Rating (Check one)</td>
<td>Dates</td>
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<tr>
<td>Most of teacher's questions are of high quality. Adequate time is available for students to respond.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom interaction represents true discussion, with teacher stepping to the side when appropriate.</td>
<td>Indicator partially demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher successfully engages students in the discussion.</td>
<td>Indicator not demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Representation of content is appropriate and links well with students' knowledge and understanding.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional groups are productive and fully appropriate to the students or to the instructional goals of the lesson.</td>
<td>Indicator partially demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Instructional materials and resources are suitable to the instructional goals and engage students.</td>
<td>Indicator not demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>The lesson has a clearly defined structure around which activities are organized. Pacing of the lesson is appropriate and consistent.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feedback to students is accurate, constructive and provided in a timely fashion.</td>
<td>Indicator partially demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Formal and informal assessments are used to monitor student progress toward meeting learning goals.</td>
<td>Indicator not demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher differentiates instruction and assessment as required for special populations (SSE, Special Education, 504 plans)</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher makes adjustments to lesson as needed based on student responses.</td>
<td>Indicator partially demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher successfully accommodates students' questions and/or interests.</td>
<td>Indicator not demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Teacher continuously seeks alternative instructional approaches for students who have difficulty learning.</td>
<td>Indicator fully demonstrated</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indicator partially demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indicator not demonstrated</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Rating for this observation:

- **Satisfactory**
- **Need for Improvement**
- **Unsatisfactory**

Date ____________
Signature of Employee ____________

Date ____________
Signature of Rater ____________
Appendix D: Learning Focused Schools Description

Source: [http://www.learningfocused.com/](http://www.learningfocused.com/)

TRANSFORMING STANDARDS INTO LEARNING.

CONNECTING STRATEGIES FOR LEARNING.

PLANNING FRAMEWORKS FOR CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT.

Reaching Balanced Achievement

LEARNING-FOCUSED is committed to providing REMARKABLE EXPERIENCES and EXCEEDING EXPECTATIONS.

LEARNING-FOCUSED is a comprehensive continuous school improvement model that:

- provides schools with consistent learning
- provides exemplary strategies instruction
- Integrates research-based exemplary practices

Excellence is a commitment to you from LEARNING-FOCUSED. It is why we are continuously improving our solutions – adding new products and experiences while refining others. We start
with research and higher standards to design practical, innovative products and professional development that focuses on raising student achievement. Your success is our driving force.

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.”
- Aristotle

LEARNING-FOCUSED helps teachers make decisions about:

- Deciding what to teach
- Using what you already know to teach your best
- Connecting and using the most important practices/strategies in every lesson
- Helping your administration observe and understand your professional teaching practices
- Finding instructional time for higher level thinking activities/lessons
- Quickly assessing student learning
- Differentiating instruction easily
- Quickly building background knowledge and moving students from where they are
- Accelerating learning
- Integrating writing, reading comprehension, and higher level thinking
- Focusing on key vocabulary and good vocabulary strategies

LEARNING-FOCUSED helps administrators make decisions about:

- Which (2 – 4) goals to focus on consistently and pervasively
- Monitoring for learning and achievement
- Providing teachers with high levels of support
- Providing substantial planning time
- Providing students with double dose learning
- Providing students with Acceleration
- Lesson and unit planning
- Adapting, not adopting (programs, texts, etc...)

These are not all inclusive lists – just some of the more important points that only a model can provide. Programs can’t do this! LEARNING-FOCUSED acknowledges that educators are professionals with extensive knowledge. It is essential that educators be allowed to make instructional decisions. LEARNING-FOCUSED simply helps put it all together in an exemplary framework and shares what other professional (and fantastic) educators are doing to help all students reach their potential.

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Reaching Balanced Achievement

LEARNING-FOCUSED provides the most comprehensive model for reaching Balanced Achievement using a research-based framework and support solutions focused on learning.

Balanced Achievement:
The point at which all students are on or above grade level in all areas.

In 2006, the USDOE announced reaching a balanced achievement leads to the greatest increases in student performance and closes the achievement gap faster and more long-term than stand-alone solutions.

What Sequence Does LEARNING-FOCUSED Recommend?
Leadership, Balanced Achievement, and Accountability
Participants: Superintendents, Principals, School Leadership

**LEARNING-FOCUSED** Workshop (Days 1 and 2)
Participants: All Administrators and Instructional Personnel

**Power Curriculum**
Participants: Curriculum coordinators and facilitators, and hand-picked subject area teachers
*Recommended to occur after days 1 and 2 of LEARNING-FOCUSED Training, but may occur at anytime before or after the 4-days of LEARNING-FOCUSED Training

**LEARNING-FOCUSED** Workshop (Days 3 and 4)
Participants: All Administrators and Instructional Personnel

Monitoring for Achievement
Participants: Superintendents, Principals, School Leadership

**LEARNING-FOCUSED** In-School Conferencing
Participants: All Administrators and Instructional Personnel

**LEARNING-FOCUSED** Support Solutions (based on needs)
- School-Based Coaches Training
- Differentiated Assignments
- Vocabulary
- Mathematics
- Extending Thinking
- Literacy (Reading, Writing)
- Acceleration
- Scaffolding
- Making Units Work
Overview of the LEARNING-FOCUSED Schools Model

Many schools and districts are in the process of working very hard to increase achievement scores. Educators, parents, communities, and state legislatures are increasingly disenchanted with “business as usual” schools. Teachers are under extreme pressure to raise the achievement level of all students. Schools are coping with new accountability measures, increased expectations from the public, and new state curriculum standards and state assessments. When new standards and state assessments have been introduced in other states, they have drastically affected student achievement and teacher/school success. The whole process is even more difficult in high schools with the additional criteria of increasing SAT scores, decreasing drop-outs, ensuring students take advanced placement courses, and wide-spread student apathy.

Forty-nine of the fifty states currently are implementing new assessments, introducing new curriculum frameworks, initiating “school-to-work” programs, holding students accountable for performance and content standards, and providing a more focused K-12 program. At the same time, these states are holding schools and teachers to higher accountability standards, acknowledging that you cannot raise students’ standards unless you raise teachers’ and principals’ standards. As school districts across the nation strive to restructure their schools and raise standards for all of education, questions will inevitably be raised concerning “What is the best that we know?” --- the best practices as well as the best process for changing instruction in a school. If we were going to build a new school today, what would be the educational program of that school using the best that we know?

A list of district/school restructuring and staff development activities has been compiled by studying districts across the United States, Canada, Europe, and Asia that have implemented new frameworks and standards. From over 20 years of district and school evaluations, categories of exemplary practice have been documented from over 3100 exemplary schools. This includes data from the over 700 so-called 90 – 90 schools (90% or more of the students on free and reduced meals and 90% or more of the students on or above grade level passing state tests). The single most important criteria of the analyses was that schools’ using and practicing these activities increased achievement significantly.

The list of exemplary practice is arranged into categories in order for districts and schools to see the “big picture” of an overall restructuring process, and, at the same time, be able to see how the categories fit and connect to one another. Successful school restructuring is extremely complex, so schools have to know how to connect many components and efforts in order to actually reach their goals. Therefore, the categories can be seen as a comprehensive 2, 3, or 4 year program, and/or as single focused efforts in various combinations, depending on district/school needs and timeline.

Connections to Learning

The one over-riding theme or focus of the “exemplary practice” list is that all of the successful districts/schools re-conceptualized school around learning rather than coverage of content or teaching activities. Teachers plan and teach differently in schools when the focus is on learning and continuous improvement. Administrators and decision-making teams plan, evaluate, and make different decisions when the focus is on learning and continuous improvement. With this focus on learning, and all the pieces of restructuring listed, it is highly recommended that schools and districts use exemplary practice instead of established practice or “flavor-of-the-month” type of smorgasbord staff development so common in low-performing districts and schools across the nation. It has been especially helpful to
districts/schools under pressure to raise achievement scores, since it provides a comprehensive picture of what it means to focus on learning.

The success of the Learning-Focused Schools Model has evolved over the last 20+ years and is currently the major continuous improvement process for over 3000 schools in 20 states. The Model is based on schools focusing on learning and achievement for all students and implementing all five categories of exemplary practice. Schools and districts that try to confine their restructuring efforts to a minimum (only 1-2 categories) consistently find that their efforts fall far short of their goal. Research and exemplary schools evaluations have shown that all of the categories must be addressed, focused, and connected.

**Exemplary Practice Categories and Critical Factors of Success**

**CATEGORY ONE: Curriculum Frameworks, Benchmarks, and Maps**

- Prioritized Content Standards With K-12 Benchmarks
- Uses the Prioritized Curriculum for Differentiated Pacing, Acceleration, and Remediation
- Grade Level and Course Expectations
- Curriculum Maps of Units (Student Learning Maps)
- Unit Frameworks and Lessons for Key Concepts/Skills On-Line

**CATEGORY TWO: Instructional Strategies For Learning**

- K-12 Content Reading Comprehension and Writing Emphasis
- Cognitive Instructional Strategies Consistent and Pervasive Across School
- Graphic Organizers For Reading/Writing Across the Curriculum
- Differentiated Assignments To Promote Learning At All Levels
- Thinking Skills/Processes for Extending Thinking
- Acceleration and Previewing Strategies For At Risk Students

**CATEGORY THREE: Assessment To Promote and Measure Learning**

- Assessment Used to Increase Learning in Addition to Assigning Grades
- Assessment to Guide Continuous Improvement
- K-12 Comprehensive District-Wide Quarterly Benchmark Assessments
- Rubrics Consistently Used Across All Classrooms

**CATEGORY FOUR: School and Teacher Organization**

- Modified Block, Flexible Schedules K-12
- Multi-Grade Vertical Teams, and/or Teacher Looping K-10 Holding Students In Common --- Consistent at K-5; Focused 6-12
- Shared Decision-Making Teams for Curriculum/Instruction
- Parental Involvement At All Levels

**CATEGORY FIVE: Short and Long-term Planning**

- Specific School Improvement Plan Linked To A Staff Development Plan
• Framework of Three Year School Continuous Improvement Plan
• Pilot, Evaluate, and Revise All Components
• Formative Evaluation Of All Programs On a Yearly or Bi-Yearly Basis; Uses Evaluation Data To Expand or Eliminate Programs
• Comprehensive Plan for Transition

STAFF DEVELOPMENT
The change process in education can be a great deterrent to widely accepted innovations and applying exemplary practice. While individuals may change on a personal choice basis, schools find it very difficult to get entire faculties to adopt or adapt new strategies as a group. Therefore, when trying to achieve change for entire buildings or districts, successful schools/districts found using a phased-in cycle approach to staff development worked best for the change process. This process links to the restructuring plan and allows for “state-of-the-art” staff development that includes:

• Awareness sessions
• Workshop and workplace applications for “trying it out.”
• Follow-up sessions and extending thinking sessions, using:
  o standard workshops
  o teachers as mentors and coaches
  o information resources
  o Piloting strategies in small groups.
  o Small and large group “learning evaluation” both during and after implementation

It is important to target staff development toward our knowledge of the change process. The LEARNING-FOCUSED Schools Model takes into account four processes of adult learning –

  a. readiness for change;
  b. resistance to change;
  c. accountability; and
  d. administrative and teacher leadership.

Districts in many states have already successfully implemented their state and local initiatives by developing comprehensive plans using exemplary practice. The LEARNING-FOCUSED Schools Model can be implemented successfully in one school, in a school district, or in a regional consortium of schools and districts.
Appendix E: Meaning Makers in Language Arts

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)
The overarching intent of language arts instruction in grades 7-12 is for students to value, appreciate, and demonstrate literacy through expressive and receptive language skills, and to understand and investigate the self, others, the culture, and the environment. The Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) describe the goals for language arts skills and attitudes. They are an integral part of the Core, and should be included as part of instruction. Process skills in language arts domains are critical to the development of high levels of literacy and lead to understanding and internalizing ILOs.

1. Demonstrate a Positive Attitude Toward Language Arts Skills and Processes
   a. Develop confidence in the ability to access text.
   b. Enjoy the processes and outcomes of reading and writing.
   c. Develop confidence in the ability to express ideas, emotions, and experiences.

2. Demonstrate Appreciation for the Role of Language Arts
   a. Recognize that the study of themes and values in texts is preparation for responsible participation in society.
   b. Use language arts skills and strategies to think critically, communicate with others, and understand our culture and common heritage.
   c. Develop thinking and language acquisition together through interactive learning.
   d. Recognize that in studying language arts students will learn the strategies necessary for acquiring academic knowledge, achieving common academic standards, and learning independently.

3. Demonstrate Understanding of the Nature of Language
   a. Understand that language enhances and identifies human beings as meaning makers.
   b. Understand that language is the vehicle for constructing knowledge, acquiring skills, and developing habits of mind.
   c. Understand that language captures and records human aspirations and imagination.
   d. Understand that language is continuously evolving as a reflection of human evolution.
   e. Understand that language acquisition is not a matter of refining skills, but of increasing confidence, insight, and discernment.
   f. Understand that language conveys the depth of human experience, evoking both emotion and reason.

4. Understand and Use Receptive and Expressive Oral Language Skills to Communicate
   a. Give and seek information in conversations, in group discussions, and in oral presentations.
   b. Use questioning techniques to gain information.
   c. Participate in and report on small group learning activities.
   d. Develop and deliver individual presentations.
   e. Plan, present, and critique the oral delivery of information and persuasive argument.
   f. Plan, present, and critique dramatic readings of literary selections.

5. Use the Skills, Strategies, and Processes of Reading
   a. Develop an enjoyment for reading as a lifelong way to learn.
   b. Access background knowledge to prepare to read and enjoy texts.
   c. Use meta-cognition strategies during reading to monitor comprehension.
   d. Improve comprehension by using strategies when meaning breaks down.
   e. Retain information from and respond to text after reading.

6. Use the Skills, Strategies, and Processes of Writing
   a. Develop a distinctive writing voice.
   b. Understand that writing is a process of skills, strategies, and practices for creating, revising, and editing a variety of texts.
   c. Develop reflective abilities and meta-awareness about writing.
   d. Use writing to discover and explore ideas.
   e. Develop collaborative writing skills to prepare for workplace writing.
   f. Understand that writing is a tool for thinking: solving problems, exploring issues, constructing questions, addressing inquiry.
g. Understand that reading and writing are interrelated: writers approach new reading experiences with enhanced appreciation for the text.

h. Appreciate the value of personal writing and writing-to-learn in daily applications of knowledge.

Course Description
The needs of early adolescents are a fundamental concern to eighth grade language arts teachers. Teachers attempt to meet the unique needs of these students by using curriculum concepts such as thematic organization, teaming among teachers, appropriate grouping, and interdisciplinary efforts. At the eighth grade level, the Utah Core focuses on reading and writing experiences that are developmentally appropriate: vocabulary instruction that begins to explore more nuanced meanings of words (connotation, synonyms) and comprehension that focuses on text features and structures, distinguishing fact from opinion, identifying themes in texts, and simple figurative language. Writing emphasizes ordering, comparing and contrasting, basic skills in analytical evaluation and assessment of writing, and editing skills that are specific and clearly delineated. The research or inquiry skills identified focus on gathering information to address a chosen topic and beginning to form results of inquiry.
Appendix F: Responsive Classroom Methods
(From www.responsiveclassroom.org)

About Responsive Classroom

The Responsive Classroom is an approach to elementary teaching that emphasizes social, emotional, and academic growth in a strong and safe school community. The goal is to enable optimal student learning. Created by classroom teachers and backed by evidence from independent research, the Responsive Classroom approach is based on the premise that children learn best when they have both academic and social-emotional skills. The approach therefore consists of classroom and schoolwide practices for deliberately helping children build academic and social-emotional competencies.

Guiding Principles
Classroom Practices
Schoolwide Practices

Guiding Principles

Seven principles, informed by the work of educational theorists and the experiences of exemplary classroom teachers, guide the Responsive Classroom approach:

- The social curriculum is as important as the academic curriculum.
- How children learn is as important as what they learn: Process and content go hand in hand.
- The greatest cognitive growth occurs through social interaction.
- To be successful academically and socially, children need a set of social skills: cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control.
Knowing the children we teach-individually, culturally, and developmentally-is as important as knowing the content we teach.

Knowing the families of the children we teach and working with them as partners is essential to children’s education.

How the adults at school work together is as important as their individual competence: Lasting change begins with the adult community.

Since 1981, thousands of classroom teachers and hundreds of schools and school districts have used the Responsive Classroom approach to help create learning environments where children thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. In urban, rural, and suburban settings nationwide, educators using Responsive Classroom practices report increases in student learning, motivation, and responsibility, and decreases in problem behaviors.

Northeast Foundation for Children, Inc., a non-profit 501(c)3 organization in Turners Falls, Massachusetts, is the developer of the Responsive Classroom approach and offers professional development services and publications for educators.

**Classroom Practices**

At the heart of the Responsive Classroom approach are ten classroom practices:

**Morning Meeting** - gathering as a whole class each morning to greet one another, share news, and warm up for the day ahead

**Rule Creation** - helping students create classroom rules to ensure an environment that allows all class members to meet their learning goals

**Interactive Modeling** - teaching children to notice and internalize expected behaviors through a unique modeling technique

**Positive Teacher Language** - using words and tone as a tool to promote children’s active learning, sense of community, and self-discipline

**Logical Consequences** - responding to misbehavior in a way that allows children to fix and learn from their mistakes while
preserving their dignity

Guided Discovery - introducing classroom materials using a format that encourages independence, creativity, and responsibility

Academic Choice - increasing student learning by allowing students teacher-structured choices in their work

Classroom Organization - setting up the physical room in ways that encourage students' independence, cooperation, and productivity

Working with Families - creating avenues for hearing parents' insights and helping them understand the school's teaching approaches

Collaborative Problem Solving - using conferencing, role playing, and other strategies to resolve problems with students

"The Responsive Classroom approach provides prime evidence that social and emotional teaching strategies, when well constructed, lead to improved classroom behavior and academic growth."

— Roger Weissberg, President, Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), and Professor of Psychology and Education, University of Illinois at Chicago

Schoolwide Practices

Schools implementing the Responsive Classroom approach schoolwide typically adopt the following practices:

Aligning policies and procedures with Responsive Classroom philosophy - making sure everything from the lunch routine to the discipline policy enhances the self-management skills that children are learning through the Responsive Classroom approach

Allocating resources to support Responsive Classroom implementation - using time, money, space, and personnel to support staff in learning and using the Responsive Classroom approach

Planning all-school activities to build a sense of community - giving all of the school's children and staff opportunities to learn about and from each other through activities such as all-school meetings, cross-age recess or lunch,
buddy classrooms, and cross-age book clubs

**Welcoming families and the community as partners** - involving family and community members in the children’s education by maintaining two-way communication, inviting parents and others to visit and volunteer, and offering family activities

**Organizing the physical environment to set a tone of learning** - making sure, for example, that schoolwide rules are posted prominently, displays emphasize student work, and all school spaces are welcoming, clean, and orderly
### Appendix G: Teacher beliefs about their impact upon students’ Psychological development

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Belief</th>
<th>Number of References/Sources</th>
<th>Teachers’ supporting statements/evidence from transcripts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Happiness</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>“First a happy environment for them to come in, you know, and happy kids when they leave my room” (October_interview_3).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Impact of NCLB     | 34                           | “You know you don’t get in here because you have to teach the stupid test or… The kids aren’t getting what they need to get. I mean there is a reason why a lot of kids are not getting proficient on the PSSA’s. It is because their minds are elsewhere or you know we are not teaching them. I don’t feel personally that we are teaching them what they need. I don’t even know what they need” (Nov7_Interview_3).  
“Speaking in general of schools for schools to get past the academic development because we have so much to keep up with academically wise. I mean we have, we have test scores. Umm… we have the pressures of those tests coming up with in the spring which we do, we do have to stay motivated to keep those scores high and umm but nowhere in those test scores does it test for social development, emotional development or the emotional well-being of the student” (August_Interview_2).  
“How can you produce happy kids? Actually it is funny that you said that because I have said that before. How can all the pressures, and I just focus on this district, how do you expect us to do a good job with the students and motivate them if we feel like we are being Mrs. Downer or you know and I try really hard not to let my feelings show in a classroom but I can remember a kid last year came to me and they were like; Do you really like kids? And I was like I had to step back for a moment” (Nov7_Interview_3).  
“That you can see that too through the years. They don’t care and I don’t have the time to make them care anymore because of you know you got to get it done, got to get it done. I don’t know what to do about it other than you know just keep trying and try and figure out ways around it. How can I, even the little to the littlest thing but it is I can’t even put into words how frustrating it” (November_Interview_7).  
“For teachers, the time and the caring that you can put into helping their development along is giving us smaller and smaller” (November_Interview_7).  
...but one thing is certain we all regardless of position in school can work harder at that social side of development of kids to build their self-esteem, to build their confidence and to make them more kind adults and to prepare them better for treating others as they want to be treated as their time evolves into adulthood. We surely can do a better job” (November_Interview_8).  
“I think there had been more of a closeness” (November_Interview_8). |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>“They need to you know have someone that believes in them” (October_interview_3).</th>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>“I think when they know someone cares and someone believes in them and you can actually express that to them that that does build their self-esteem as a person, as a student” (November_Interview_7).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Character</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>“But I really do think that kids really do look at teachers so the modeling behavior thing as far as the more measurable or active things the teachers are doing I think it is just their daily display of good morality, just being a good person. That probably is just overriding in terms of their portraying an image of how a good citizen should act and be with people” (November_Interview_8).</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“I think our ultimate goal isn’t a test result in a school, it is preparing these young people to be contributing adults in society and the word ‘contributing’ doesn’t always imply in some material way. I mean just setting them up to be a good functioning adult and treating people in their environment respectfully and maturely because they may be parents someday and they are going to have to pass along certain qualities to their own children that makes society function in a very optimum kind of way and if we aren’t the trainers or the helpers in that process we can’t always assume the parents do because of the family breakdown the problematic things that are brought to us virtually every day from kids” (November_Interview_8).</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“So the school has become a haven for a lot of kids having an atmosphere of positiveness so they have adults to look up to so that is our first obligation and it goes well beyond test scores and I think we collectively in this school and I am sure in most schools feel a sense of responsibility in preparing kids for their future and most importantly in non-economic kind of ways” (November_Interview_8).</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“You know how we are treating each other and because obviously the more positive we can be with each other as adults the better functioning we are in a family unit, in a community and society in general, and that is what is so exciting about the middle level education because the kids are so moldable right now and they can go one way or another” (November_Interview_8).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>“I think it is very important. I think that as far as the human development and not just their academic development I think you can’t really reach them academically until you have met their needs in their… as far as their human development” (August_Interview_1).</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“Maybe they understand the teacher is there to help them. Not just to give slam work at them. Then they can care more about what is going on in the class and when the interest is taken in the student by the teacher. I think the student understands that they are, they are being cared for. There worth is being cared for” (August_Interview_2).</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>“And yes I think I do influence and although the academic part is important to me the human development is much more important to me for a lot of reasons” (November_Interview_2).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
|          |     |     | “Definitely. The way society is changing also I think that things
like that with the development in different areas with these kids that you would naturally expect to occur at home does not occur at home anymore. A lot of times parents aren’t home to do that so school is the only place with the teachers that they (November_Interview_7).

“Yes. I do think it does just because I believe it is important and I think that school more than an obligation academically to their students. I think that it is also a social obligation. Especially since a lot of students now often and I know specifically in this district don’t always get that support at home. Just I mean I we only seven weeks into school and already some of the E-mails I have received from guidance counselors, parents, have proven that to me so I really have made an effort to make sure that supportive, calm environment occurs in my classroom. And I also know what this age level, seventh grade that there is so much going on outside of my classroom in their worlds that you can’t separate the two” (October_interview_7).

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<tr>
<th>Well-being Emotional</th>
<th>21</th>
<th>7</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I guess, what I was saying was, no matter what lesson plan or academic plan I have written out and that I am doing. I am still looking out for their self-esteem, their well-being and things like and it is more through my rapport with them. Through my relationship with them” (August_Interview_2).</td>
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<tr>
<td>“This is what you are feeling as a teacher. Our kids are hurting and you want to help. Don’t you” (Nov7_Interview_3)?</td>
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<tr>
<td>“We can play a role in the enhancement or the advancement of a child’s emotional or emotional characteristics or whatever we want to call that, emotional development” (November_Interview_5).</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation</th>
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<tr>
<td>“I think motivation is a big part of it yes. I think they have to see that there is a purpose to it. They have to make an effort. Motivation can come from a variety of sources” (October_interview_5).</td>
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<tr>
<td>“I put on my wall the top five students in each section and that kind of motivates them” (October_interview_2).</td>
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<td>“Absolutely, most definitely. I think the kids should be motivated and want to be here otherwise if this test is so important you might as well make them want to take the test and want to do well on it for themselves because telling them they need to do well on it for the school, that wouldn’t drive me” (November_Interview_6).</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Multiple Selves</th>
<th>2</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“I am in no big of a hurry to label a kid” (October_interview_1).</td>
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<tr>
<td>“. . . it is helping some of these kids that it is possible you can get there. I think that that is amazing” (November_Interview_6).</td>
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<tr>
<th>Potential</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>6</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“You know we knew there was potential” (October_interview_1).</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>“. . . it is helping some of these kids that it is possible you can get there. I think that that is amazing” (November_Interview_6).</td>
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<tr>
<th>Self Esteem</th>
<th>36</th>
<th>17</th>
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<tr>
<td>“My number one priority is to work on the student’s development and their self-esteem. That is what my goal is. That is what my job is. To make them feel good about what they are doing” (October_interview_3).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>“But I think when they know someone cares and someone believes</td>
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</table>
in them and you can actually express that to them that that does build their self-esteem as a person as a student you know whatever the case is” (November_Interview_7).

“I mean it is the game of life and in order to get kids to accomplish that goal they need to feel like they are important. You need to get them on your side. You are the coach you need to get them to play for you. They are going to play for you if you don’t treat them with respect and you don’t make them feel important” (November7_Interview_4).

“I think one of my favorite student’s that I have observed in growth is a student that came into the classroom and spoke little to no English with very poor self-esteem, scared to death to be here. Umm he ended up at the end of the getting out most improved student award, went on to the high school and is currently in the high school and doing major thing, on the honor roll, looking forward to applying for college and being accepted” (October_interview_9).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Count 1</th>
<th>Count 2</th>
<th>Source</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identity</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Not Referenced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affect/Feelings</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Not Referenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dreams</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>“Because every kid has a dream and everyone should be able to attain their dream” (November_Interview_6).</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“It is about their dreams. The purpose of schooling from the districts perspective for the districts dollar is to teach the standards and is to pass the test. My job as a life skills teacher and I am to teach life skills and to get these kids to succeed. My kids aren’t going to go in and take a PSSA and earn this district a dollar. They are going to cost them money” (November_Interview_6).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Purpose in Life</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Not Referenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Satisfaction</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>Not Referenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Meaning</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>Not Referenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Concept</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Not Referenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self Efficacy</td>
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<td>Not Referenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hope and Inspiration</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Not Referenced</td>
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<tr>
<td>Destiny in Life</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>Not Referenced</td>
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Notes: (1.) There are attributes in two theoretical frames; self system and positive psychology that are not represented in teacher interview comments; these are indicated by “0” references, and “0” sources. (2.) NCLB belief that this model and associated administrative requirements are obstacles to teachers’ impacting student development.
State Board of Education

Annex A

TITLE 22. EDUCATION

PART I. STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

Subpart C. HIGHER EDUCATION

CHAPTER 49. CERTIFICATION OF PROFESSIONAL PERSONNEL

Subchapter A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

THE PROGRAM

§ 49.1. Definitions.

The following words and terms, when used in this chapter, have the following meanings, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

*****

*Community provider*--*A not-for-profit or for-profit organization that operates prekindergarten programs.*

*****

*Core academic subject*--*Includes reading, language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, social studies and the arts.*

*****

*Diverse learners*--*Those students* A student who because of limited English language proficiency or disabilities may have academic needs that require varied instructional strategies to help them the student learn.

*Educational specialist*--*Professional certified personnel whose primary responsibility is to render professional service other than classroom teaching, such as dental hygienist.*
home and school visitor, instructional technology specialist, social restoration specialist, nutrition service specialist, elementary counselor, secondary counselor, school nurse and school psychologist.

*****

Inclusive setting--The placement of a diverse learner in a regular classroom setting.

*****

Prekindergarten--A program operated by a AN EARLY INTERVENTION AGENCY AS DEFINED IN SECTION 101 OF CHAPTER 14, school district or under contract from a school district that is open to children who are 3 [or 4] years of age and who have completed the program prior to the school district's entry age for kindergarten. [A school district may make individual exceptions based upon local policy that would permit enrollment of children under 3 years of age or over 5 years of age.]

*****

§ 49.13. Policies.

*****

(b) The Department will have the following responsibilities with respect to certification and permitting of professional personnel in the schools of this Commonwealth:

*****

(4) Evaluation and approval of teacher education programs leading to the certification and permitting of professional personnel. [Program approval reviews shall be conducted by professional educators from basic and higher education.]

(i) The evaluation by the Department will provide assurance that, on or before January 1, 2010 JANUARY 1, 2011, teacher education programs will require at least 9 credits or 270 hours, or an equivalent combination thereof, regarding accommodations and adaptations for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting. Within the content of these 9 credits or 270 hours, instruction in literacy skills development and cognitive skill development for students with disabilities must be included, as determined by the institution. At least 3 credits or 90 additional hours, or an equivalent combination thereof, must address the instructional needs of English language learners. For purposes of this requirement, 1 credit equals 30 hours of coursework. Applicable hours are limited to a combination of seat hours of classroom instruction, field observation experiences, major research assignments, and development and implementation of lesson plans...
with accommodations and adaptations for diverse learners in an inclusive setting.

(ii) Program approval reviews shall be conducted by professional educators from basic and higher education.

*****

§ 49.14. Approval of institutions.

To be authorized to conduct programs that lead to certificates for professional positions, institutions and any of their off-campus centers engaged in the preparation of teachers shall meet the following requirements:

*****

(4) Follow Department prescribed standards developed from the following principles:

*****

(ii) Institutions are able to demonstrate how instructional and clinical activities provide educator candidates with the capacity to enable the achievement of all students, including diverse learners in an inclusive setting.

*****

§ 49.16. Approval of induction plans.

(a) Each school entity shall submit to the Department for approval a plan for the induction experience for first-year teachers (including teachers in prekindergarten programs, when offered), long-term substitutes who are hired for a position for 45 days or more, and educational specialists. The induction plan shall be submitted as part of the school entity's strategic plan every 6 years as required by Chapter 4 (relating to academic standards and assessments). The induction plan shall be prepared by teacher or educational specialist representatives, or both, chosen by teachers and educational specialists and administrative representatives chosen by the administrative personnel of the school entity. Newly employed professional personnel with prior school teaching experience may be required by the school entity to participate in an induction program.

(b) The Department will establish guidelines and will review for approval induction plans submitted by school entities.

*****

(d) Criteria for approval of the induction plans will be established by the Secretary in consultation with the Board and must include [an element of accommodations and adaptations for] induction activities that focus on teaching diverse learners in
§ 49.17. Continuing professional education.

(a) A school entity shall submit to the Secretary for approval a 3-year professional education plan as part of its strategic plan in accordance with the professional education guidelines established by the Secretary and section 1205.1 of the act (24 P. S. § 12-1205.1).

*****

(7) The continuing professional education plan must include a description of how the school entity will ensure that all professional employees offer opportunities to participate in continuing education focused on teaching diverse learners in inclusive settings.

(8) A school district that contracts with a community provider to operate a prekindergarten program shall address in the school district's professional education plan how the school district will offer professional education opportunities to teachers in the community provider's prekindergarten program.

*****

§ 49.18. Assessment.

(a) The Secretary will institute an assessment program for candidates for certification designed to assess their basic skills; professional knowledge and practice; and subject matter knowledge. Candidates for elementary, K-12 instructional, special education and early childhood certificates shall also be assessed in the area of general knowledge. The following principles will guide the Secretary in the development of an assessment program:

*****

MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

§ 49.62b. Program Endorsement Certificate.

Following approval by the Department, baccalaureate or graduate degree granting institutions, alone or in cooperation with other institutions, community colleges or school entities, may offer short programs (12 credits maximum) that lead to the Program Endorsement Certificate. The Program Endorsement Certificate documents knowledge in new and emerging areas where formal certification does not exist [but would]. The Program Endorsement Certificate is intended to improve [the] a teacher's skills in dealing with complex classroom settings. Areas include, but are not limited to, including teaching gifted students or diverse learners in areas such as inclusive settings.
assistive technology curriculum modification, autism spectrum disorders, assessment, gifted education, classroom management, classroom technology and disruptive youth. These endorsements would be added to existing Level I or Level II Certificates but are not required to perform service in these areas.

Subchapter B. CERTIFICATION OF GRADUATES FROM COMMONWEALTH INSTITUTIONS

INSTRUCTIONAL CERTIFICATES

§ 49.83. Instructional II.

The Instructional II Certificate will be issued to an applicant who has completed:

****

(3) Twenty-four credit hours of collegiate study or its equivalent in credits from the Department, a Pennsylvania intermediate unit or any combination thereof. The Department will publish a Certification and Staffing Policy Guideline that establishes up to the equivalent of six specific course credit HOUR requirements for each NEW INSTRUCTIONAL I certificate ISSUED BY THE DEPARTMENT AFTER (LRB - INSERT EFFECTIVE DATE OF REGULATION).

****

§ 49.85. Limitations.

(a) INSTRUCTIONAL CERTIFICATES ISSUED BEFORE JANUARY 1, 2013 REMAIN VALID FOR THE TERM OF THE CERTIFICATE FOR THE GRADE SPANS AND AGE LEVELS OUTLINED IN ITEMS (1) THROUGH (6). For instructional certificates issued before January 1, 2012 JANUARY 1, 2013, the grade level limitations [of instructional certificates] shall be the following:

(1) Early childhood (prekindergarten, kindergarten, grades one through three or ages 3 to 8).

(2) Elementary (kindergarten, grades one through six or ages 4 through 11).

(3) Middle level (grades six through nine or ages 11 through 15).

(4) Secondary (grades seven through 12 or ages 11 through 21).

(5) Specialized areas (prekindergarten through grade 12 or up to age 21).

(6) Special education (prekindergarten through grade 12 or up to age 21).
[The decision about staffing based on age or grade level rests with the school entity.] For instructional certificates issued on or after January 1, 2012 January 1, 2013, the grade level limitations shall be the following:

(1) Early Childhood (prekindergarten, kindergarten, grades one through three four or ages 3 through 8 9).

(2) Elementary/Middle (grades four through eight or ages 9 through 14). Elementary/Middle certificates permit instruction in any subject in grades four, five and six and in a core academic subject or subjects in grades seven and eight.

(3) Secondary (grades seven through twelve or ages 11 through 21).

(4) Specialized Areas (prekindergarten through grade twelve or up through age 21).

(5) Special Education/Primary (prekindergarten, kindergarten, grades one through eight or ages 3 through 14) with early childhood (prekindergarten, kindergarten, grades one through three or ages 3 through 8), as specified in paragraph (1).

(6) Special Education/Middle (prekindergarten, kindergarten, grades one through eight or ages 3 through 14) with Elementary/Middle (grades four through eight or ages 9 through 14), as specified in paragraph (2).

(7) Special Education/Secondary in a core academic subject (grades seven through twelve or ages 11 through 21).

SPECIAL EDUCATION-PK-8 – PREKINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE EIGHT (AGES 3 THROUGH 14). APPLICANTS FOR THIS CERTIFICATE MUST ALSO OBTAIN CERTIFICATION IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CERTIFICATES:

i) EARLY CHILDHOOD-IN ACCORDANCE WITH (b)(1).

ii) ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE-IN ACCORDANCE WITH (b)(2).

iii) READING SPECIALIST-IN ACCORDANCE WITH (b)(4).

(6) SPECIAL EDUCATION-7-12 – GRADES SEVEN THROUGH TWELVE (AGES 11 THROUGH 21). APPLICANTS FOR THIS CERTIFICATE MUST ALSO OBTAIN CERTIFICATION IN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CERTIFICATES:

i) SECONDARY-IN ACCORDANCE WITH (b)(3).
ii) READING SPECIALIST-IN ACCORDANCE WITH (b)(4).

(8) (7) Special Education Hearing Impaired, Visually Impaired and Speech/Language Impaired Certificates (prekindergarten, kindergarten, grades one through twelve or ages 3 through 21).

(c) The decision about staffing based on age or grade level rests with the school entity.

(d) The Secretary may grant exceptions to the grade and age level limitations between Early Childhood (subsection (b)(1)), Elementary/Middle (subsection (b)(2)), Special Education/Primary SPECIAL EDUCATION-PK-8 (subsection (b)(5)) and Special Education/Middle (subsection (b)(5)) SPECIAL EDUCATION-7-12 (SUBSECTION (b)(6) for individual teachers on a case-by-case basis. The school entity shall submit a written request to the Secretary that provides justification for the exception. The Secretary will set a time limit for each individual exception granted. The Secretary will issue guidelines that outline the circumstances under which exceptions will be granted.

(e) When a school district contracts with a community provider for the provision of prekindergarten services, prekindergarten teachers providing the services shall possess a certificate in early childhood as provided in subsection (a)(1) or subsection (b)(1) within the following time frame:

(i) For contracts in place prior to ______ (Editor's Note: The blank refers to the effective date of adoption of this proposed rulemaking.), ______ (Editor's Note: The blank refers to a date 5 years after the effective date of adoption of this proposed rulemaking.).

(ii) For new contracts, 5 years from the start of services.

(f) The Secretary may grant exceptions in response to shortages of certified personnel that apply Statewide to specific provisions of this section when it is necessary to facilitate transition to the revised provisions scheduled to become effective on January 1, 2012 JANUARY 1, 2013. Exceptions may be granted under the following conditions:

(1) The Secretary will provide a written notification CERTIFICATION to the Board that includes relevant information and justification of the need for the exception. IF THE BOARD DOES NOT DISAPPROVE THE EXCEPTION WITHIN 90 DAYS OF RECEIPT OF THE CERTIFICATION THE EXCEPTION WILL STAND APPROVED.

(2) The exception will be valid for a limited term not to exceed 3 years.

(3) The Secretary will report annually to the Board on the nature and status of
§ 49.86. Accelerated program for Early Childhood and Elementary/Middle level certificateholders.

(a) The Department will establish standards CONSISTENT WITH THE CRITERIA OUTLINED IN SUBSECTION (d) for an accelerated program for Early Childhood and Elementary/Middle level certificate holders to be effective January 1, 2012 January 1, 2013.

(b) Early Childhood Instructional I or Instructional II certificateholders may add the Elementary/Middle Level I Certificate through the successful completion of a Department approved accelerated program of study offered by an approved Commonwealth institution.

(c) Elementary/Middle Level Instructional I or Instructional II certificateholders may add the Early Childhood Instructional I Certificate through the successful completion of a Department approved accelerated program of study offered by an approved Commonwealth institution.

(d) Accelerated programs must include appropriate level academic content aligned with State academic standards, child development and instructional practice appropriate for the developmental level covered by the certificate. Applicants shall demonstrate subject matter knowledge by passing the appropriate assessment under § 49.18 (relating to assessment).

Subchapter C. VOCATIONAL EDUCATION CERTIFICATION

GENERAL PROVISIONS

§ 49.131. Basic requirements for baccalaureate and nonbaccalaureate programs.

*****

(b) Preparation in general education, special education, professional education and specialized studies shall be in accordance with standards established by the Department.

*****

VOCATIONAL INSTRUCTIONAL CERTIFICATES

§ 49.142. Vocational Instructional I.

(a) A single certificate will be issued and titled, "Vocational Instructional Certificate." Individuals qualifying for this certificate shall be authorized to teach in the areas for which they also hold an occupational competency credential. The occupational
competency credential will be issued by the Department or an institution of higher education approved by the Secretary. The applicant shall have:

*****

(3) Completed 18 credit hours in an approved program of vocational teacher education. For Vocational I certificates issued on or after January 1, 2012 JANUARY 1, 2013, the 18 credit hours must include at least 3 credits or 90 hours, or equivalent combination thereof, regarding accommodations and adaptations for diverse learners in an inclusive setting. For purposes of this requirement, 1 credit equals 30 hours of coursework. Applicable hours are limited to a combination of seat hours of classroom instruction, field observation experiences, major research assignments, and development and implementation of lesson plans with accommodations and adaptations for diverse learners in an inclusive setting.

*****

§ 49.143. Vocational Instructional II.

The Vocational Instructional II Certificate shall be a permanent certificate issued to an applicant who has:

*****

(2) Completed 60 credit hours, including at least 6 credits or 180 hours, or an equivalent combination thereof, regarding accommodations and adaptations for students with disabilities in an inclusive setting and at least 3 credits or 90 hours, or an equivalent combination thereof, in teaching English language learners, in an approved program in the appropriate field of vocational education. For purposes of this requirement, 1 credit equals 30 hours of coursework. Applicable hours are limited to a combination of seat hours of classroom instruction, field observation experiences, major research assignments, and development and implementation of lesson plans with accommodations and adaptations for diverse learners in an inclusive setting.

*****
Curriculum Vitae
Henry G. Brzycki

EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania State University – University Park, Pennsylvania 2006-2009
Doctor of Philosophy (Ph.D.) Degree in Education Theory and Policy

Tufts University – Medford, Massachusetts 2001-2003
Master of Arts (M.A.) Degree in Educational Psychology and Educational Philosophy

Babson College – Wellesley, Massachusetts 1974-1979
Bachelor of Science (B.S.) Degree in Economics and Organizational Behavior

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY – College Level Teaching & Courses Taught

Clarion University of Pennsylvania – Clarion, PA
Instructor, College of Education, Teacher Education Program, September 2007 to Present
Courses: Educational Psychology, Human Development & Learning, K-12 Instructional Strategies, Introduction to Education

Pennsylvania State University, University Park, PA
Instructor and Student Teaching Supervisor, August 2005 to May 2006
Courses: Clinical Application of Instruction in Secondary Education, Professional Development Practicum, Understanding by Design, Adolescent Motivation in K-12 classrooms

Franklin Pierce College, Rindge, NH
Adjunct Professor of Education and Psychology, October 2003 to August 2005
Courses: Foundations of Education, Educational Psychology, K-12 Social Studies Methods, Introduction to Psychology, Professional Development Practicum

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY – K-12 Public School Teaching

The Carroll School, Lincoln, MA
Grades K-8 Classroom Teacher and Outward Bound Leader, 1988-89, 1994-95

Waltham High School, Waltham, MA
Grades 9-12 Classroom Teacher, September 2001-July 2002

PROFESSIONAL HISTORY – Educational Consulting and Counseling Practice

Brzycki Group, State College, PA
President, 1983-Present

PUBLICATIONS/PRESENTATIONS

• American Educational Research Association (AERA) 2009 Annual Meeting: Presenter
• Educational Psychology: An Application of Critical Constructivism, Book Review. (Spring 2009). Issues in Teacher Education. (www.CCTE.org)
• Adolescent Well-being Requires Focus Upon the Inner Self, Article published in The Centre Daily Times, August 28, 2006
• Demand More! What Pennsylvania School Superintendents and Principals should expect from Pennsylvania Teacher Education Programs, in press, The Pennsylvania Educational Leadership Journal