

FACTORS THAT MAY LEAD INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES TO LEAVE THAT
ROLE: A MIXED-METHOD CASE STUDY

by

Amy L. Lancaster, MS

DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of
The University of Houston-Clear Lake
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON - CLEAR LAKE
MAY, 2016

FACTORS THAT MAY LEAD INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES TO LEAVE THAT
ROLE: A MIXED-METHOD CASE STUDY

by

Amy L. Lancaster

APPROVED BY

Sandra Browning, PhD, Chair

Denise McDonald, EdD, Committee Member

Lillian McEnery, EdD, Committee Member

Elizabeth Beavers, PhD, Committee Member

RECEIVED BY THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION:

Lawrence T. Kajs, EdD, Interim Associate Dean

Mark D. Shermis, PhD, Dean

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

It was many years after graduating with my Bachelor's Degree before I entertained the notion of going back to school for a higher degree. Taking the dreaded GRE was a task that loomed over me like a dark cloud, and I was less than enthusiastic about the idea of taking tests and writing papers in class. My fear of failure was debilitating at times. Despite my misgivings, I jumped into this endeavor with a growth mindset, and here I am finishing this journey. My son Garrett (hence the name Garrett ISD) and husband Keith were, and continue to be my driving force. I have always admired their continuous thirst for knowledge. Since Garrett first began to talk he challenged me to think deeply, and his tenacity in the face of adversity has given me the gift of courage to complete tasks I once thought impossible. The love and support that I received from Keith made this journey possible. He gave me the self-confidence needed to set my educational goals and to persist if I ever doubted myself. If it were not for Keith, I probably would not have taken this path. He has always been my biggest cheerleader, and I cannot imagine life without him.

I would also like to acknowledge two special faculty members at UHCL who patiently guided me through this process. My chairman, Dr. Sandra Browning gave me confidence and direction, and my methodologist Dr. Denise McDonald went above and beyond the call of duty as a committee member. During the writing of Chapter IV, Dr. McDonald kept me safely under her wing, giving me the encouragement and guidance I

needed to fly. As I plodded along, she gave me the affirmations I needed to continue, like a fan in the sidelines of a triathlon. I am truly grateful to these two educators for their dedication to their students.

I also want to extend my gratitude to the district that allowed me to do my research and particularly to the individuals who participated in this study. The instructional coaches allowed me a clear view into their world to see the challenges they endured as well as the successes they celebrated. Without their trust and candor, this research could not have been possible.

ABSTRACT

FACTORS THAT MAY LEAD INSTRUCTIONAL COACHES TO LEAVE THAT ROLE: A MIXED-METHOD CASE STUDY

Amy L. Lancaster
University of Houston-Clear Lake, 2016

Dissertation Chair: Sandra Browning, PhD

In many school districts across the United States, initiatives geared toward improving classroom instruction now include instructional coaching models. The utilization of instructional coaches (ICs) is becoming more prevalent in districts for the purpose of providing job-embedded PD and follow-through with additional coaching sessions to help teachers implement new learning. If utilized correctly, ICs benefit districts by improving instruction, which impacts students' learning (Knight, 2007). In one large suburban school district in Texas, ICs were leaving the profession at an average rate of 26% annually. Frequent changes of ICs on campuses impede progress; therefore, school districts should identify reasons ICs leave the profession. This mixed-method case study provides insight into the factors that lead instructional coaches to leave the coaching role. A survey of 90 instructional coaches from kindergarten-12th grade was conducted to solicit perceptions of the job. Eight interviews were also conducted to delve deeper into the experiences of four coaches who left the field to return to the classroom as well as

four coaches who have remained in the role for at least six years. Utilizing grounded theory, an analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data revealed reasons instructional coaches leave the coaching position as well as the experiences that motivate coaches to remain in the role despite the challenges they face. A lack of a clearly defined instructional coaching model was found to be the root cause of many of the challenges experienced by these coaches. Roles and responsibilities were not clearly defined for coaches, administrators, or teachers, leading to frustration. Instructional coaches were being utilized as data coaches, content specialists, administrators, and even substitute teachers. Recommendations are provided for district and campus administrators to create an instructional coach model that provides adequate training and support necessary to retain ICs in the role.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract	v
List of Tables	x
List of Figures	xii
Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Background of the Study	1
Purpose and Rationale for the Study.....	6
Research Questions	7
Definition of Terms.....	8
II. A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE.....	10
Introduction.....	10
Requirements to Become a Coach	11
Roles and Responsibilities	12
Instructional Coach Scenarios.....	15
Effective Instructional Coaches	16
Instructional Coaches: Educational Benefits to Campuses.....	19
Challenges for Instructional Coaches	23
Needs of Instructional Coaches	26
Professional Development.....	26
How Can District and Campus Leaders Help Coaches to Be Effective?.....	28
What Can Coaches Do to Stay Motivated?.....	30
Challenges for Districts.....	31
Summary	31
III. METHODOLOGY	33
Background of the Study	33
Setting and Sample Selection.....	35

Research Design.....	38
Data Collection Procedures.....	40
Survey	40
Interviews.....	42
Monthly Whole Group Meetings with ICs	44
Data Analysis Procedures	44
Interview Analysis	45
Observing Participant Notes	46
Survey Analysis	46
Memoing	47
Reliability and Validity.....	47
Privacy and Ethical Considerations	48
Limitations of the Study.....	49
 IV. RESULTS	51
The Instructional Coach Survey	52
Quantitative Data.....	53
Qualitative Data	55
Interviews.....	56
Interview and Survey Data Analysis	80
Theme 1: Challenges for Instructional Coaches	81
Introduction to Theme 1.....	81
Subthemes of Theme 1	81
Ambiguity of the Role	81
Unanticipated Aspects of the Job.....	95
Time Constraints.....	105
Work Environment.....	109
Facilitating Change	117
Theme 2: Perceptions of Structure and Hiring	
Practices of ICs	118
Introduction to Theme 2.....	118
Subthemes of Theme 2	119
Theme 3: Impacting Change – What Facilitates the Ability of ICs to Move Forward With the Vision of the Campus and District?.....	123
Introduction to Theme 3.....	123
Campus Support.....	125
District Support.....	137
Theme 4: Motivation to Remain in the Role	146
Summary of the Findings.....	150
 V. SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS	154
Statement of the Problem.....	154
Summary of the Findings.....	156

Limitations of the Study.....	159
Contributions to the Literature.....	161
Implications.....	164
Training.....	165
Administrative Direction and Support.....	165
Considerations for Future Studies.....	166
Conclusions.....	168
 REFERENCES	171
 APPENDIX A THE INSTRUCTIONAL COACH SURVEY	180
 APPENDIX B HUMAN SUBJECTS APPLICATION	186
 APPENDIX C INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM.....	205
 APPENDIX D INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR ICs WHO LEFT COACHING.....	209
 APPENDIX E SIX-YEAR COACH INTERVIEW PROTOCOL.....	212
 APPENDIX F TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW WITH CODING – EX-COACH	214
 APPENDIX G TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW WITH CODING – SIX-YEAR INSTRUCTIONAL COACH.....	226
 APPENDIX H RESPONSES REGARDING UNANTICIPATED ROLES AND/OR RESPONSIBILITIES	244
 APPENDIX I RESPONSES REGARDING GREATEST CHALLENGES	249
 APPENDIX J IC PERCEPTIONS OF ABILITY TO IMPACT SCHOOL CHANGE.....	259
 APPENDIX K RESPONSES REGARDING FACTORS WHICH MAY CAUSE ICs TO LEAVE THE ROLE.....	268
 APPENDIX L RESPONSES REGARDING WHAT ICs PERCEIVE AS NECESSARY TO REMAIN IN THE ROLE.....	273
 APPENDIX M RESPONSES REGARDING MENTORING.....	276

LIST OF TABLES

Table		Page
1	Percentage of U.S. Public Schools Staffing Specialists and Coaches in 2011-12	4
2	Percentage of Instructional Coaches Who Left the Position Per School Year	34
3	Percentage of Student Subpopulations for the District in 2013-2014.....	35
4	Number of Instructional Coaches by Grade Categories and Subject Areas	37
5	Number of Instructional Coaches Who Responded to the Survey by Grade Categories and Subject Areas	54
6	Teaching Experience Prior to Becoming an IC	54
7	Number of Years as an Instructional Coach (not including 2015-2016)	55
8	Highest Levels of Education for Instructional Coaches in Garrett ISD.....	55
9	Snapshot of Participants in Individual Interviews	60
10	Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus A	61
11	Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus B	64
12	Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus C	66
13	Teacher Demographics for Junior High Campus D.....	68
14	Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus E.....	70
15	Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus F	73
16	Teacher Demographics for Junior High Campus I and Junior High Campus J....	75
17	Teacher Demographics for Junior High Campus M	78

18	Roles and Responsibilities for Instructional Coaches in Garrett ISD.....	96
19	Roles Before Becoming an Instructional Coach in Garrett ISD	122
20	Five-year Future Plans for Instructional Coaches in Garrett ISD.....	124
21	Level of Confidence of Garrett ISD ICs Working With Difficult Teachers.....	140
22	Level of Confidence of Garrett ISD ICs Working With Their Content Areas	140
23	Training Desired by Instructional Coaches by Grade Level Bands.....	141
24	Themes in This Study and Related Literature.....	163

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1	Evolution of IC Roles in Garrett ISD.....100
2	Years of Instructional Coach Experience of ICs in Garrett ISD.....155

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This mixed-methods case study examines the perceptions of current instructional coaches (ICs) regarding their roles and ability to effect change within their district and how these perceptions factor in to their intention to remain or leave the position. Perceptions of ICs who left the coaching field will also be examined. The district under study first implemented the instructional coach model with junior and senior high schools. The first year there was one IC for all subjects on a campus. The next year ICs were split between two campuses, but they were content specific. Principals and coaches determined how they managed their time. Some worked two days per campus and then rotated every other Friday. Some had more flexibility as to when they were on each campus, and time on campus was driven by the needs of the campuses. Since 2010, the district has added at least two coaches per elementary campus (one for mathematics/science and one for language arts/social studies). The junior high and high schools have an IC for each of the following subjects: mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies. However, most of the coaches who began in the position are no longer instructional coaches.

Chapter I will introduce the history behind the inception of instructional coaches and provide the purpose and rationale for this study.

Background of the Study

Over the last two decades, public schools in the United States (U.S.) have been under great scrutiny. National tests, such as the National Assessment of Educational

Progress (NAEP), and international tests like Trends in International Mathematics and Science (TIMSS), have exposed deficiencies in U.S. students' knowledge of mathematics, reading, and science, prompting both federal and state legislation focused on improving the effectiveness of schools. The pressure induced by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) and more recent legislation, such as the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, have districts scrambling to increase student achievement. In 2010, President Obama's Administration created a blueprint for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act which extended reforms made in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and focused on four areas: (a) improving teacher and principal effectiveness; (b) upgrading existing state standards in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics so all students would be college and career ready; (c) providing information to families and educators to help them assess and improve their schools; and (d) providing intensive support and interventions to improve student achievement (USDOE, 2010). Most states adopted Common Core as a part of this new initiative; while other states, like Texas, also adopted more rigorous standards than seen in previous years. The new, unfamiliar state standards in the content areas of ELA and mathematics created additional stress for educators. In an effort to positively impact student achievement, districts and campuses are seeking quality professional development (PD) for the purpose of increasing teacher content and curriculum knowledge, thereby improving teacher effectiveness.

Professional development comes in many forms, some more effective than others (Garet et al., 2011). Unfortunately, research has shown that traditional forms of PD can be ineffective due to low implementation rates (Knight, 2007). Traditional PD (TPD),

such as topical professional learning that is usually isolated to a single learning session will be defined as training with no follow-up training, observations, or discussion. There are several reasons why TPD fails. Day to day, teachers are dealing with the pressing issues that are impacting them at that moment; whether it is paperwork, lesson plans, parent correspondence, or dealing with student needs (Knight, 2007). Fatigue and lack of time prevent teachers from implementing what is learned in TPD. A plethora of new strategies and programs promoted by districts in an effort to help schools meet state testing standards is a second barrier to implementation. Training for these programs are often provided without a strategic plan for implementation and without continuous support. In some cases, workshops are offered by outside consultants. These workshops may or may not be aligned to state standards or to district objectives. Often districts provide in-services or staff development utilizing teachers or other district personnel as presenters. Campuses and districts also pay for teachers to attend conferences and institutes. Teachers may experience a myriad of activities to improve their content knowledge or improve their teaching practice without a plan for putting the learning into practice, and a lack of a strategic PD plan can impede school improvement (Garet et al., 2011). Currently, to combat the issue of potentially disjointed, misaligned PD, many districts and schools are initiating coaching models to provide job-embedded professional development (JEPD).

Over the last several years, public school districts have begun to embrace the idea of using ICs as catalysts for school change. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), U.S. Public schools are staffing content coaches and specialists in reading, mathematics, and science (see Table 1). NCES defines specialists

as professionals who work with small groups of students on specific content matter and coaches as professionals who work with teachers in designing lessons, conducting observations, and providing feedback regarding instruction. Knight (2011) defines the IC as an individual who has expertise in content, andragogy, and pedagogy and works with teachers to help them grow professionally.

Table 1

Percentage of U.S. Public Schools Staffing Specialists and Coaches in 2011-12

Staff	Percent of Public Schools
Reading Specialists	71.3%
Reading Coaches	38.4%
Mathematics Specialists	31.2%
Mathematics Coaches	23.5%
Science Specialists	13.4%
Science Coaches	7.7%
General instructional /not subject specific coaches	25.4%

Note. Adapted from “The U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences” [IES], (2012).

The instructional coaching model is gaining popularity because coaches have the potential to provide JEPD and can follow-up with teachers to help with implementation. “Without follow-up such as coaching, most professional learning will have little effect” (Knight, 2011a, p. 21). James, Hord, and Pratt (1988) called traditional PD the *Three Step Fable*. The authors described TPD as “(1) providing teachers with tools and materials, (2) providing a half-day orientation, and (3) bid them Godspeed and good luck” (James et al., 1988, p. 63). In contrast, PD provided by instructional coaches can be strategic based on school and individual teacher needs.

For the instructional coaching model to work, instructional coaches must be

retained in the position long enough for change to take place, and instructional coaching has its challenges. Educational research by Hall and Hord (2011) suggest that it takes three to five years for substantial change to be implemented. One issue is “coaches may tie their own self-worth directly to their success or failure with teachers in school” (Knight, 2007, p. 214). They feel a sense of accomplishment when teachers implement a new practice that helps students to achieve. Too often, however, coaches are met with resistance to change. This resistance can be in the form of passive resistance or something more overt, such as verbal attacks. When resistance is taken personally, the job can be less than rewarding. Coaches also find themselves as outsiders on a campus because they are always trying to change it (Knight, 2007). Without adequate training on dealing with these challenges, the coaching model may fail due to coaches leaving the position.

Districts vary in how coaches are hired and trained. Often teachers are recruited to become coaches due to success within their classrooms (Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio, 2007), and this new role can be uncomfortable. Coaches find themselves with a new professional identity (Chval et al., 2010). They are no longer teachers, but they are also not administrators. The position is not evaluative, yet in some situations, coaches must observe teachers, diagnose issues, and prescribe best practices for improving instruction. There is no authority to enforce changes required in the classroom and observation data are not included in formal evaluations. Furthermore, instructional coaches may have little to no training in androgogy (adult learning) or educational leadership as they enter this new role. The literature is clear, coaches must be able to meet the needs of adult learners, empower teachers, communicate respect, build trust,

help teachers apply new strategies, ask good questions, provide nonthreatening feedback, and reflect and learn alongside the teacher (Chval et al., 2010; Knight, 2011a, 2011b; Scurry, 2010). As districts invest in coaches and specialists, it is critical that coaches themselves are provided training and support needed to be successful (Stock & Duncan, 2010). It cannot be assumed that master teachers will be effective coaches.

Purpose and Rationale for the Study

The literature is clear that effective instructional coaches who provide high quality professional development can bring about school change and improve teacher retention (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 2006; Gallucci, DeVoogt Van Lare, Yoon, & Boatright, 2010; Knight, 2011b). However, in the district being studied, for the last six years there has been an average IC turnover of 26% each year. Some left to become campus assistant principals, a normal job progression for those wanting to become administrators. Yet others took a step back and returned to the classroom. Other coaches returned to campuses as Academic Support teachers to teach small groups of students. Why did these coaches leave the coaching role? When there is a high turnover of coaches on a campus, it is difficult to build and maintain the trust with teachers needed for change to occur. One study found that coaches did not begin making an impact in school change until their second year on a campus (Campbell & Malkus, 2011). Furthermore, districts spend time and money training new ICs; therefore, it is critical to determine how to retain effective coaches in their role. The primary purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of instructional coaches regarding their feelings of efficacy and how it pertains to their retention in the field of coaching.

There is a plethora of research on the retention of teachers (Borman & Dowling,

2008; Ingersoll, 2001; Johnson, Berg, & Donaldson, 2005; Loeb, Darling-Hamond, & Luczak, 2005; Stinebrickner, 2002); however, the literature regarding self-efficacy and retention of coaches is sparse. The current study seeks to extend prior research by examining the perceptions of ICs regarding their roles and ability to effect change and how these perceptions impact their desire to remain in the position.

Research Questions

This study is particularly relevant to school districts that are struggling to retain instructional coaches. The specific research questions that will guide the study are:

Question 1: What perceptions do instructional coaches hold about their roles, responsibilities, and ability to effect change within the district, and how do these perceptions factor in to their intention to remain or leave the position?

Question 2: What roles do instructional coaches assume on their campus, and how did the instructional coaches' expectations of the job differ from what they actually experienced in the role?

Question 3: What do instructional coaches perceive as necessary to increase their satisfaction and perceptions of feeling competent in their role?

By exploring the roles, expectations, and experiences of ICs, the researcher seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of coaches as they work in this role and identify the triggers that might cause them to leave. This understanding can influence how districts offer support and training in an effort to retain instructional coaches.

Definition of Terms

Andragogy - methods used for adult learning (Knowles, 1984).

Implementation fidelity - the degree to which an intervention or program is delivered as intended (Carrol et al., 2007).

Instructional coach - an individual who has expertise in content, pedagogy, and andragogy, and who works closely with teachers to implement new strategies and knowledge (Knight, 2011b).

Job-embedded professional development (JEPD)- “professional development situated in schools that is always about the current work of schools” (Croft, Coggshall, Dolan, & Powers, 2010, p. 5), such as lesson planning with teachers, modeling lessons, providing feedback after observations, and content development activities.

Pedagogy - an adult teacher assists in the education of a learner who is a child (Yonge, 1985)

Professional Learning Communities (PLC) - “structured time for teachers to come together and discuss issues of teaching practice and student learning) can be forums for job-embedded professional development” (Croft et al., 2010, p. 5).

Retention of coaches - Instructional coaches remaining in the role for at least 5 years

Instructional coach identity – IC perceptions of *What should I be doing versus what I am asked to do?*

Self-efficacy - the belief in one’s abilities to accomplish desired outcomes, powerfully affects people’s behavior, motivation, and, ultimately, their success or failure (Bandura, 1997).

Traditional Professional Development (TPD) - training that is generally whole-group and

everyone is learning the same thing, with no follow-up training, observations, or discussion.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of instructional coaches (ICs) regarding their experiences and feelings of efficacy and how those experiences influence the retention of ICs in that role. In an effort to increase student achievement in the U.S., as measured by state, national and international tests, policymakers are seeking ways to change instructional practices to increase teacher effectiveness. High school graduation rates are also under scrutiny. Although graduation rates have increased from 79 percent in 2011, only 81 percent of the Class of 2013 graduated in four years (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2015). No Child Left Behind (NCLB) states that highly qualified teachers will lead classrooms; however, teachers who have earned the label *highly qualified* may not actually be effective when teaching students (Darling-Hammond, 2006). More districts are turning to the instructional coach model to increase teacher pedagogical and content knowledge (IES, 2012). This literature review will examine the different facets of instructional coaching, such as the requirements to become an instructional coach, the fundamental roles of an instructional coach, the characteristics that make coaches effective, and how coaches can benefit school districts in initiatives to increase teacher effectiveness and ultimately impact high school graduation rates. This review will also illuminate challenges faced by instructional coaches and needs of coaches as they take on this role. It is important to examine the professional world of ICs to understand reasons why they may leave or remain in the field of coaching.

Requirements to Become a Coach

There does not appear to be any uniform way districts and/or campuses select instructional coaches; however, researchers offer some guidelines as to competencies and personal characteristics that coaches should possess. For example, Marzano and Simms (2013) propose the following specific guidelines be used when selecting coaches:

- The coach is a master teacher with proven ability to increase student achievement in his or her own classroom.
- The coach has a wide knowledge of curriculum and instruction and the interpersonal skills necessary to interact with others respectfully and professionally.
- The coach agrees with the goals of the coaching program.
- The coach understands and can describe and demonstrate what performance looks and sounds like at each level of the scale.

(Marzano & Simms, 2013, p. 212)

Knight (2011b) also suggests that instructional coaches need knowledge of pedagogy; however, he adds that the following personality traits are necessary as well: a growth mindset; humility; ambition; trustworthiness; informed and adaptive thinking; and emotional intelligence. Knight defines emotional intelligence as the ability to build relationships, listen, read the body language of others, to be supportive, and to see the good in others.

There are many things to consider when choosing an instructional coach. Principals often pick master teachers to take on the role of instructional coaches, yet an effective teacher may not be a competent coach (Chval et al., 2010). Effective teachers

may not be prepared for the challenges of dealing with adult learners and other aspects of the job. There is also some debate on the practice of hiring instructional coaches from within the same campus (Chval et al., 2010); however, there is no formal research to indicate which practices are most effective. Principals are apt to pick teachers with whom they have worked because they have prior and existing knowledge that these individuals possess a commendable work ethic and are instructionally sound. However, this informal selection process may not be best practice as it can be difficult for both coaches and teachers when coaches cross over from peer teacher to peer coach (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Many people, from Theodore Roosevelt to Martin Luther King, have been credited for saying, “People don’t care how much you know until they know how much you care.” This is especially true in education, whether the learner is a child or an adult. Coaches need to be content experts, but they also need to have personalities that breed trust and possess relational skills when training adult learners (Neufeld & Roper, 2003).

Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of ICs vary, and due to the differing experiences of ICs, the literature does not provide a fixed definition of instructional coaching (Neufeld, & Roper, 2003). There are, however, some common themes that emerge. Mraz, Algozzine, and Kissel (2009) identify four roles of coaches: content expert, professional development facilitator, supporter of school-wide learning community, and promoter of reflective instruction. Borman and Feger (2006) divide coaching activities into two categories: classroom-based activities with individual teachers and classroom-focused activities with groups of educators. Classroom-based activities with individual teachers include:

- Demonstrating and modeling instructional practices and lessons
- Observing instruction
- Co-teaching
- Co-planning lessons and units
- Providing feedback and consultation
- Promoting reflection
- Analyzing students' work and progress

Classroom-focused activities with groups of educators include:

- Conducting study groups
- Providing training and professional development workshops
- Organizing and brokering instructional materials
- Administering assessments and monitoring results
- Chairing or serving on school and district committees

(Borman & Feger, 2006, p. 5)

Other responsibilities noted in the literature include: working with teachers to learn or refine specific strategies; helping teachers implement information gleaned from PD; mentoring new teachers; fostering a climate where teachers will collaborate; helping teachers develop leadership skills; helping teachers develop formative and summative assessments to inform instruction; and meeting with principals to set goals and review progress (Borman & Feger, 2006; Knight, 2011b; Marzano & Simms, 2013; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Deussen et al. (2007) grouped coaches into five categories: data-oriented

coaches who spent 45 percent of their week on data related tasks; managerial coaches who spent most of their time on paperwork and facilitating meetings; student-oriented coaches who spent more time with students; and two groups of teacher-oriented coaches, those who worked predominantly with individual teachers and those who worked mostly with groups of teachers. Researchers of Reading First, a state project in which five states participated, found that although coaches were asked to spend 60 to 80 percent of their time with teachers, the average time spent with teachers was only 28 percent (Deussen et al., 2007). The instructional coaches reported they were unable to spend time with teachers due to other duties, such as analyzing data or managing assessments; however, some coaches did not work with teachers due to a lack of self-efficacy. Chval et al. (2010) asserts that instructional coaches develop an *identity* based on the coaches' expectations of this position. However, the duties of the instructional coach vary between districts and even campus to campus within the same district. Instructional coaches may develop a lack of self-efficacy when their identities differ from actual roles and responsibilities (Chval et al., 2010). Too often the role of instructional coach is not clearly defined for the coach, the administrator, or the teachers with whom they are working. Often a coach's identity is not in alignment with the expectations of the administrators and teachers with whom he or she works. It is important for districts to delineate coach roles and responsibilities with principals, and for principals to communicate this information with teachers so that coach identities match the realities of their work (Chval et al., 2010). This role ambiguity can cause confusion and frustration for everyone involved (Gallucci et al., 2010). It is prudent for the district and school administrators to outline guidelines and expectations for coaching relationships (Marzano

& Simms, 2013; Neufeld & Roper, 2003).

Instructional Coach Scenarios

There are several coaching scenarios described in the literature. For example, the work done with a coach is sometimes mandatory and sometimes voluntary for teachers (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). In the voluntary scenario the coach acts in a more consultative role (Borman & Feger, 2006). In this arrangement, teachers initiate a relationship with the coach, set goals for themselves, and view the coach as a resource and a partner in learning. Conversely, teachers may also find themselves working with coaches due to a directive from administrators. Sometimes the district or the campus administrator requires the teacher or group of teachers to work with the coach. These could be new teachers or teachers in need of improvement. The coach is more prescriptive with these teachers in order to increase content knowledge or improve an instructional practice (Borman & Feger, 2006). There are also school or district-wide coaching programs where an instructional coach is required to work with every teacher on campus (Marzano & Simms, 2013). District administration, the campus administrator, or the coaches themselves drive the role a coach takes on a campus.

Assignments of coaches also vary. Some coaches are assigned to a single grade level or content area. In contrast, other coaches are assigned to multiple grade levels and multiple subject areas (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Some coaches can focus on one campus, while others are forced to split their time between two or more campuses. Administrators may also require coaches to split their time between providing remediation for groups of students and coaching teachers (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Other coaches are teacher leaders who are part-time teachers as well as instructional coaches

(Gallucci et al., 2010).

A problem arises when coaches are given the wrong work. Fullan and Knight (2011) describe the results of a survey conducted at a coaches' workshop where 50 coaches were asked how they utilized their time on campus during the previous week. Some had spent no time coaching teachers, and more than 75 percent had spent less than 25 percent of their time coaching. The coaches worked on tasks such as quasi-administrative work, filing documents, copying paperwork, and ordering supplies instead of coaching teachers because their jobs were not clearly defined, and principals did not utilize them properly.

If the role of coach is not clearly defined, it can exacerbate the difficulties in forming the coach identity. Do differences in perceptions of the job coaches are entering versus the reality of the job lead to dissatisfaction and eventually leaving the position? How does self-efficacy in the coach position play a role in the retention of coaches? The following section is dedicated to research regarding effective coaches.

Effective Instructional Coaches

As noted earlier, instructional coach roles and responsibilities are often not clearly delineated. Without this definition, it is even more critical to identify the personality characteristics and duties of an effective instructional coach. Although the roles and responsibilities of coaches are varied, certain duties are correlated with a change in instruction and student learning. One such responsibility is to provide PD and facilitate adult learning. During the last two decades, the federal and state governments have turned their attention to teacher professional development as the means to increase student learning (Desimone, 2009; Knight, 2007; Wayne, Yoon, Zhu, Cronen, & Garet,

2008). Despite this focus, there is a scarcity of rigorous research regarding the effectiveness of PD for teachers as it pertains to student achievement (Yoon, Duncan, Lee, Scarloss, & Shapley, 2007). The U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance (NCEE) began the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) initiative to identify rigorous and relevant research (Yoon et al., 2007). WWC examines several aspects of eligible research: (a) study design, (b) sample attrition, (c) baseline equivalence established for groups in the analytic sample, (d) outcome demonstrates face validity and reliability; and (e) confounding factors. Out of approximately 1,300 studies on instructional initiatives that effect student achievement in mathematics, science, and language arts, Yoon et al. (2007) found nine studies that met the What Works Clearinghouse Evidence Standards (WWC). Their report indicates that the amount of PD received by teachers is indicative of the expected increase in student achievement. The students of teachers who received an average of 49 hours of PD could potentially increase student achievement by 21 percentile points. In contrast, three of the studies examined 5 to 14 hours of PD, which had no significant impact on student achievement. Eight of the nine studies had a follow-up session after the main PD, which could be a variable impacting the results. Research by Tschannen-Moran and McMaster (2009) indicates that TPD does not increase the implementation of new strategies, even when modeling is included. Knight (2011b) also interviewed over 300 teachers and found that traditional forms of PD without follow-up did not increase student learning or impact teaching. Therefore, the answer is not for districts to provide more PD for teachers without examining the effectiveness of the type of PD under consideration. Often districts or campuses offer a myriad of diverse PD sessions, but the challenge for teachers is to

create a plan to put their fragmented learning from these various sessions into practice (Garet et al., 2011). Knight (2011b) suggests that teachers attending workshops, creating instructional targets, and conducting team planning will all be for naught without instructional coaches to help teachers transfer the learning and planning to their classrooms. “Instructional coaches, by providing intensive, focused support for professional learning, do ‘something’ about change” (Knight, 2011b, p. 11). Research reveals that modeling with coaching follow-up sessions increases implementation (Garet et al., 2011; Knight, 2011b; Rivera, Burley, & Sass, 2004; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). In an evaluation of professional development in Los Angeles, Rivera et al. (2004) stated that ongoing coaching related to classroom instruction was more effective than random workshops or large group PD. This concept is not new. In an article in 1995, that was reprinted in 2011, Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) asserted the following in respect to effective PD:

- It must engage teachers in concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, observation, and reflection that illuminate the processes of learning and development.
- It must be grounded in inquiry, reflection, and experimentation that are participant-driven.
- It must be collaborative, involving a sharing of knowledge among educators and a focus on teachers’ communities of practice rather than on individual teachers.
- It must be connected to and derived from teachers’ work with their students.

- It must be sustained, ongoing, intensive, and supported by modeling, coaching, and the collective solving of specific problems of practice.
- It must be connected to other aspects of school change.

(Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011, p. 82)

Neufeld and Roper (2002) found that small group professional learning was more effective than models that relied solely on one-to-one coaching. Coaches were able to impact more people at one time while building a climate of trust, collaboration and continual learning.

Providing PD is an important component to the role of instructional coaching, yet effective coaches must also have personality traits that encourage learning and collaboration (Knight, 2011b). Effective coaches are more attuned to the emotional and psychological needs of those with whom they work. Trusting relationships are built by developing an atmosphere of mutual respect and professionalism. Knight (2011b) asserts that the instructional coach should not be seen as a person of power. The coach should learn and reflect alongside the teachers, and the teachers should be the final decision-makers. When engaging in dialogue, “The goal is for the best idea to win - not for my idea to win” (Knight, 2011b, p. 20). Effective ICs support and foster adult learning by discussing teacher goals, collaborating, and engaging in ongoing dialogue (Knight, 2007; Knight, 2011b; Polly, Mraz, & Algozzine, 2013).

Instructional Coaches: Educational Benefits to Campuses

In 2014, it was reported that approximately half a million teachers either move or leave the profession each year, which costs the U.S. a little over two billion dollars

(Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014). The same report states that attrition rates of teachers with one to five years of experience is up to 50 percent, especially in high-poverty areas. High teacher turnover, especially if the turnover is campus-wide, impacts student learning in that students do not have access to experienced teachers. The report cites the need for teacher collaboration, administrative support, targeted PD, ongoing formative assessments of the teacher's practice, goal-setting, and mentors who focus on instruction and student learning. With this support, attrition rates decline and job-satisfaction rates and commitment rise. This suggests that ICs can have a positive impact on teacher retention when they are given the aforementioned roles and responsibilities.

Coaches can benefit campuses by being content experts, system leaders, and partners in learning (Fullan & Knight, 2011). For example, research on mathematics content knowledge of prospective elementary teachers indicates that they are leaving education programs with little more than basic understanding of mathematics (Lo & Luo, 2012; Richardson, Berenson, & Stanley, 2009; Young & Zientek, 2011). As content experts, coaches can elevate the content knowledge of teachers on a campus and provide resources to help teachers to be more effective in the classroom. Time is a commodity of which teachers have little. As content experts, coaches have the opportunity to collect quality instructional resources for teachers that are aligned with the state curriculum (Blamey, Albert, & Dorrell, 2008; Mraz et al., 2009; Sailors & Shanklin, 2010). Furthermore, coaches are often involved in planning sessions with teachers. During this time they can facilitate discussions regarding the meaning of the learning standards mandated by the state (Polly et al., 2013) and can also help teachers prepare engaging lessons, utilize newly learned instructional strategies, as well as monitor and adjust

instruction (Campbell & Malkus, 2011).

Staff development on content, strategies, and instructional methods is targeted as a major strategy for reforming schools in the U.S. (Gallucci et al., 2010). “Research shows that teacher quality is the single most powerful influence on student achievement, and yet teachers in the United States receive far less professional development, mentoring, and planning time than teachers in the world’s high achieving nations” (Wei, Darling-Hammond, & Adamson, 2010, p. 8). As a result of the national spotlight on professional development as a means to improve teacher quality, the National Staff Development Council (NSDC), a nonprofit organization, created Professional Learning Standards (PLS). These standards were created to improve the quality of professional learning for educators. NSDC wants to make clear that the purpose of professional learning is “for educators to develop the knowledge, skills, practices, and dispositions they need to help students perform at higher levels” (Learning Forward, 2015). The standards include the following areas: learning communities; leadership; resources, data; learning designs; implementation; and outcomes (Vaden-Kiernan, Jones, Hughes, & McCann, 2009). Instructional coaches have the potential to address one or more of these standards in their role as instructional leaders. Research in the Topeka School District revealed that when teachers had follow-up instructional coaching sessions after PD, observers saw evidence of learning from PD implemented during 92 percent of their visits (Knight, 2011b). On the other hand, observers saw evidence of implementation only 36 percent of the time in classes of teachers without coaching. Furthermore, the researchers studied the quality of the instruction of the classes. The observers also reported effective teaching practices were more than twice as common in classes where

teachers received coaching than those who did not. In Wyoming, researchers surveyed 1,644 teachers from 36 districts, and the majority of teachers who worked with an instructional coach indicated that they wanted to continue to work with a coach (Rush & Young, 2011). The teachers reported that working with a coach changed their teaching practices and impacted student learning. They also stated they are four times more likely to implement new practices when working with a coach than if they just attended a TPD (Knight, 2007). The research suggests that effective coaches can significantly impact instructional practices and therefore increase student learning (Campbell & Malkus, 2011; Knight, 2011b; Marzano & Simms, 2013; Polly et al., 2013; Rush & Young, 2011).

Knight (2009b) states, “The key to translating research into practice lies in continuous, job-embedded learning with ongoing support” (p. 18). Job-embedded professional development can take many forms. The NSDC supports coaching as job-embedded professional development (Croft et al., 2010). JEPD may involve co-teaching, book studies, data discussions regarding student strengths and weaknesses, or delving into content (Desimone, 2009). When teachers collaborate in this way, the groups are called professional learning communities (PLCs) (DuFour & DuFour, 2005). As discussed earlier, one of the roles of an instructional coach is to lead learning communities. These learning communities may study topics chosen by groups of teachers, or they may be topics chosen by the coach or principal based on campus data. For example, if a campus is not performing on a specific skill, such as dividing fractions, a coach can focus PD on how to teach the content more effectively. Coaches can also lead data discussions that train teachers to use data to inform their instruction. If teachers are asked to implement new teaching strategies, then coaches and administrators need to

have the knowledge regarding the changes and reasons to justify the change (Neufeld & Roper, 2003).

As system leaders, instructional coaches can facilitate dramatic gains for districts based on student assessment scores. A study was conducted with the York Region District School Board in Ontario, Canada with 192 schools and 130,000 students (Fullan & Knight, 2011). Literacy coaches worked in conjunction with the superintendent of curriculum and instruction and principals of 17 low-performing schools and their teachers. Through the utilization of instructional coaches, systemic changes helped the district improve by more than 20 percent on most assessments. “Next to the principal, coaches are the most crucial change agent in a school” (Fullan & Knight, 2011, p. 50).

Challenges for Instructional Coaches

Instructional coaches face a multitude of challenges that can leave them feeling frustrated and inept. Some of the issues include: teacher resistance to coaching support, scheduling conflicts, ill-defined roles and responsibilities, lack of administrative support, and teacher reluctance to change (Chval et al., 2010; Knight, 2011b; Neufeld & Roper, 2003).

Teacher resistance to coaching support and teacher reluctance to change create some of the greatest challenges for coaches (Borman & Feger, 2006; Deussen, 2007; Knight, 2005, 2007, 2009a). Change produces stress regardless of whether we are the ones initiating or implementing change (Smith, 2008). This stress can lead to unwanted challenges for instructional coaches. “Even when the change appears to be rational or positive, change involves loss and uncertainty” (Smith, 2008, p. 25). If teachers embrace new behaviors and attitudes, then it means suffering the loss of prior practices they once

thought to be effective. Teachers often resist change due to fear of the unknown. They question if the new practice will be better than the methods they have valued thus far. They must now question firmly held beliefs regarding past practices that no longer hold to be true (Smith, 2008). Due to these emotions, people may react negatively toward the change agent and personally attack them or seek to discredit the change agent. “When people resist adaptive work, their goal is to shut down those who exercise leadership in order to preserve what they have” (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, Chapter 2, para. 1). Some coaches suffer verbal attacks while others find that teachers avoid them or covertly talk about them (Knight, 2007). Many coaches are not welcome in teachers’ classrooms (Chval et al., 2010). A more passive-aggressive resistance to change would be what Knight (2007) refers to as the “Attempt, Attack, Abandon Cycle” (p. 200). During this cycle teachers make a feeble attempt to implement the practice being promoted, and then attack the practice before it is implemented fully and effectively. They then abandon the practice and say it did not work. Some teachers do not see the need to embrace new district or campus initiatives because their students’ test scores have generally been high, and their colleagues view them as *experts* (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). When teachers have a *this is how we have always done it* mentality, it can be a great challenge for coaches.

Instructional coaches also report challenges with lack of time and issues with scheduling (Chval et al., 2010; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Depending on the needs of the district, along with many other duties, instructional coaches are often required to provide both large and small group PD to a campus and possibly multiple campuses (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Campuses struggle with scheduling PD before or after school when teachers are busy with job-related tasks or trying to juggle family time. Trying to

schedule PD during the school day brings other challenges. The groups needed for PD need a common planning time, or staff is needed to cover teachers' classrooms. If coverage is provided, instructional time is lost. Furthermore, teams of teachers often create schedules that are identical. During the school day it can be a struggle to get into multiple classes to conduct observations or model lessons if the teachers are all teaching the same subject at the same time (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Time to get into teacher classrooms is limited due to planning with teams of teachers, disaggregating data, planning for PD, meeting with administrators and district personnel, attending PD for personal growth, and any other duties required of the instructional coach. Often coaches find their work with teachers impeded by more menial tasks, such as paperwork and other clerical duties (Rivera, Burley, & Sass, 2004).

Weak leadership and lack of administrative support can impede the work of instructional coaches (Chval et al., 2010). Principals are responsible for building a culture of continuous learning on a campus. For this, they must work with coaches to give the teachers voice and choice in their learning (Knight, 2011b). Principals must also show the importance of coaching by organizing schedules that provide time for PD, coaching, and team planning (Chval et al., 2010). Principals who lack clarity in the roles of the instructional coach or who give them the wrong tasks create issues for coaches.

Another challenge reported by ICs includes a lack of self-efficacy (Chval et al., 2010; Gallucci et al., 2010; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). The lack of self-efficacy can be caused by the challenges mentioned previously. Plus, coaches are often plucked from the classroom with as little training in content or in creating PD as the teachers they are hired to coach. Coaches are often learning content and instructional strategies at the same time

as teachers (Gallucci et al., 2010). The need to stay one step ahead of the teachers they coach can cause additional stress (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). “Good coaching is not the reality for many coaches who operate in systems that are not organized to create, develop, and sustain the conditions for instructional improvement” (Fullan & Knight, 2011, p. 50).

Needs of Instructional Coaches

Professional Development

Coaches have the potential to change the teaching practices of teachers, which can in turn impact teacher efficacy and increase student achievement (Knight, 2011b). However, to be effective change agents, ICs must be experts in their field in content, pedagogy, and andragogy. There is little peer-reviewed research on how individuals are trained to be coaches (Gallucci et al., 2010), and people who become ICs are not necessarily experts in all areas needed to be successful in the role. Potential topics for PD for coaches are the following: andragogy; pedagogy; co-teaching; co-planning; how to help teachers analyze data; how to observe and provide feedback; how to help teachers work with students with special needs, such as special education or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL); as well as the development of their own content knowledge (Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Polly et al., 2013). Coaches may also need assistance with identifying and obtaining quality resources (Polly et al., 2013). Districts cannot assume coaches are familiar with effective PD strategies or have the capability to incorporate knowledge of effective PD into their own PD sessions (Rogers et al., 2006). With varying levels of expertise, districts must be cognizant of the PD needs of ICs and provide coaches with differentiated PD that provides broad and deep content knowledge, information on pedagogies, as well as strategies to work with adult learners (Neufeld &

Roper, 2003). Differentiation is required based on grade levels with which ICs work, content areas, and level of expertise in different aspects of coaching, such as working with teachers who resist change, or learning how to conduct observations and provide feedback. “Coaches must continually acquire relevant content knowledge and must work in conjunction with teachers to continue enriching this knowledge through reading, thoughtful inquiry, and reflection” (Polly et al., 2013, p. 299). This is particularly true during this period of new learning standards in mathematics and language arts. New strategies for teaching mathematics have been embedded in the learning standards of states that have adopted Common Core as well as some states that have not. Without adequate training, coaches may have difficulty guiding teachers with regard to research-based pedagogies and the learning progression of mathematical skills (Polly et al., 2013). Districts must also ensure that coaches are knowledgeable about meeting the needs of students with special needs, such as gifted and talented, ESOL, special education, and those with emotional and behavioral issues (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). This will aid coaches so they can be successful in guiding teachers of these students. It cannot be assumed that effective teachers will know how to be effective coaches.

The literature provides several suggestions for addressing the PD needs of instructional coaches. Neufeld and Roper (2003) suggest a strong, focused new-coach orientation that begins a few weeks before school begins so coaches can become familiar with the expectations of the district and the campus or campuses in which they will be working. Content training could also happen during this period. The new coaches are partnered with a mentor coach so they have a confidant for when they are struggling or just need the camaraderie. Plans also need to be in place for coaches who enter the field

after the year begins. There is a need for all coaches to have a support system with opportunities to share their experiences and strategies for problem-solving (Chval et al., 2010). Coaches are not administrators, and they are not teachers. For this reason, they often feel isolated on their campuses. IC training meetings allow coaches a time and place to collaborate and discuss challenges and ways to address those challenges (Chval et al., 2010).

One practice that is becoming more common is for teachers to observe other teachers and provide feedback (David, 2008). Some research suggests that it is beneficial for coaches to follow the same guidelines and practice coaching with peers in the classrooms (Polly et al., 2013). During this time, the coach is coaching the teacher, and another coach is providing feedback to the coach. Coaches can improve their craft by observing their peers and also receiving feedback from their colleagues on their own work with teachers.

How Can District and Campus Leaders Help Coaches to Be Effective?

There are no clear rules as to how to allocate coaches to campuses and the roles have been described as multifaceted and ambiguous (Gallucci et al., 2010). However, coaches need an adequate amount of time on a campus for significant change to occur. The coaching model is largely dependent upon available district funds. Those districts with less monetary resources may spread their coaches too thinly across multiple campuses reducing the impact of coaching. Working at multiple campuses for one to two days per week has proven unsuccessful (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Teachers lack the continuity that they require, and coaches feel frustrated and ineffective from being stretched too thinly.

According to Marzano and Simms (2013), when coaches begin, there should be clear guidelines as to their roles and responsibilities. These guidelines must be clearly articulated to coaches, teachers and administrators (Chval et al., 2010). Furthermore, ICs and teachers must be told the expectations of who is expected to work with the coach. Depending on the district or campus, some ICs are required to work with all teachers, while others only work with specified teachers. Coaches are not evaluators and have no authority to make teachers change their teaching practices; therefore, coaching is often most effective with teachers who are open to the ideas presented by the coach. Administrators should allow ICs to begin work with those who are willing to learn (Knight, 2011a; Neufeld & Roper, 2003). That is not to say that ICs should only work with teachers who seek out their help; it is just easier to begin with people who are amenable to feedback. Furthermore, administrators should build a climate where continuous learning and improvement is expected of all staff (Croft et al., 2010). Principals need to articulate the importance of continuous learning and model this by portraying themselves as learners regarding their professional practice (Knight, 2011a).

Administrators must articulate their vision to ICs and provide time for coaches to work on the mission of the school. Coaches need to be able to collaborate with teachers at times other than just planning periods (Croft et al., 2010). This time can be used in a multitude of ways. For example, teachers and coaches need time to observe in other teachers' classrooms and discuss the experience. They should also analyze student work samples and discuss student data. These artifacts should be used to drive future PD (Croft et al., 2010). If students are consistently weak in certain skills, it is prudent to examine teaching techniques and strategies taught to students in that area. Coaches and principals

must have a shared vision of what coaching can accomplish.

Knight (2007) suggests the following three practices are the most important predictors of success of a coaching program:

1. Coaches have received appropriate PD in what and how to coach.
2. Coaches have discipline, skills, and personality required to be effective
3. Coaches are working in schools with principals who are effective instructional leaders. (p. 32)

What Can Coaches Do to Stay Motivated?

As discussed previously, instructional coaches face challenges in their role that leave them frustrated and less motivated to stay in the position. The job can be lonely on their campuses because coaches do not fit in as teachers or administrators. Coaches do not have the power to enforce change, and it is a common response to take it personally when teachers resist the changes being proposed. Heifetz and Linsky (2002) caution that when feeling like an outcast people should distinguish themselves from the roles that they play. They state:

By knowing and valuing yourself, distinct from the roles you play, you gain freedom to take risks within those roles. Your self-worth is not so tightly tied to the reactions of other people as they contend with your position on issues (Heifetz & Linsky, 2002, Chapter 9, Distinguish Role from Self).

ICs must accept that ideas will be challenged and that it is the idea that is disliked, not the person. Knight (2007) suggests that coaches find people outside school in which to

confide; therefore, district meetings where coaches can share experiences can be helpful.

Challenges for Districts

Districts face several challenges when implementing instructional coaching programs (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). When allocating instructional coaches, districts must work within their means. Sometimes these limited resources spread coaches too thinly to be effective. In addition, developing high-quality PD for coaches can be a challenge. It can be costly and difficult to find knowledgeable presenters to meet the differentiated needs of instructional coaches regarding content, pedagogy, andragogy, and coaching techniques (Neufeld & Roper, 2003). Inadequate funding and the lack of high quality PD for coaches can hamper the success of instructional coaching programs.

Summary

Federal legislation such as NCLB has placed schools and teachers under more intense scrutiny over the last two decades (Gallucci et al., 2010). A study of professional learning by the NSDC indicates that teachers in the U.S. have a lack of opportunities that provide the ongoing, collaborative learning that substantially impacts student learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2010). To boost student test scores, more focus is now placed on PD for teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2009), but traditional sit-and-get PD has not been effective (Knight, 2007). Although instructional coaches take on diverse roles, the coach model has been introduced so teachers can receive job-embedded training and support when introducing new content or strategies within their classrooms (Knight, 2011a). Instructional coaches face a myriad of challenges when they embark on this new professional role, yet with proper training and support they can be highly effective. Research indicates that with training and administrative support coaches can positively

impact instruction and student learning (Campbell & Malkus, 2011; Knight, 2011b; Polly et al., 2013; Rush & Young, 2011).

There are a multitude of studies regarding the retention of teachers; however, there are no studies regarding the retention of instructional coaches. When coaches leave the position, districts must allocate time and resources to recruit new coaches and pay for additional training. New coaches must begin anew to build the trust of the teachers in the buildings to which they are assigned. With this in mind, it is important to study the retention of instructional coaches.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this case study was to examine the perceptions of Instructional Coaches (ICs) from one large suburban school district in Texas with respect to their roles, responsibilities, and ability to affect change within the district. People who recently left instructional coaching in this district were also included in an effort to gain an understanding about their experiences in the field, why they left, and what factors could have caused them to remain in the position. Coaches who remained in the position since the program began in the Fall of 2009 were interviewed in order to compare their experiences with those who have resigned from the position. These data were also compared with survey data from current ICs. After reviewing the literature, there were limited studies regarding the retention of coaches. This study will help to fill the void in the literature regarding IC perceptions with respect to their roles and responsibilities, as well as provide reasons why ICs stay or leave the position. This chapter includes the background of the study, the setting and sample selection, research design, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures.

Background of the Study

In response to the desire to help all students grow academically, the district under study began piloting the use of ICs in the Spring of 2009 with junior and senior high schools. The IC role at that time was predominantly a data coach. The majority of the job was disaggregating data and providing generic PD dictated by the district. Since that

time, the role of IC has evolved. In 2009-2010 each elementary campus received one coach who supported all major content areas (mathematics, science, social studies, and language arts). In 2010-2011, each elementary school received a second coach so each coach could be more content specific with respect to the support provided. Since then, the IC model evolved into a district-wide coaching system where all teachers are required to work with the coach in some capacity, whether it is planning lessons together, participating in Professional Development (PD), or observing coaches model lessons. The philosophy of the district is that campuses need to be able to design professional learning based on their specific needs. Ultimately, coaches would be able to provide Job-Embedded Professional Development (JEPD) and work with building administration, district level staff, and other ICs to strengthen instruction and increase student learning. ICs serve as a liaison between campus and district staff to implement district instructional initiatives and accomplish specific campus/district goals. They work directly with classroom teachers on the delivery of high quality instruction. However, during the last five years, the average turnover of ICs in this district has been 26 percent.

Table 2

Percentage of Instructional Coaches Who Left the Position Per School Year

School Years	Percentage of coaches that left the position
Between 2009-2010 and 2010-2011	31.57
Between 2010-2011 and 2011-2012	22.80
Between 2011-2012 and 2012-2013	34.02
Between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014	28.82
Between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015	13.74

To fully understand this phenomenon, it is important to explore the perceptions of current and past ICs.

Setting and Sample Selection

The setting for this study was a large suburban school district in Texas that served approximately 67,000 students and had 4,340 teachers. Based on the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) snapshot data for the 2013-2014 school year, student demographics were as seen in Table 3.

Table 3

<i>Percentage of Student Subpopulations for the District in 2013-2014</i>	
Student Subpopulations	Percentage
White	41%
Hispanic	34%
Asian/Pacific Islander	12%
African-American	9%
Limited English Proficient	14%
Bilingual/ESL	14%
Special Education	9%
Gifted/Talented	7%

Forty-five percent of teachers in this district have at least 10 years of teaching experience, with 11 years as the overall district average. Approximately 25 percent of the teachers have advanced degrees. In their elementary school assignments, coaches are responsible for at least two subject areas, such as science/mathematics or language arts (ELA)/social studies. They are responsible for multiple grade levels (pre-kindergarten through 5th

grade) as well. At the junior high and senior high school levels, there are four coaches per campus, one for each major subject (reading, mathematics, science, and social studies). In the IC job description for Garrett ISD, a Master's Degree is preferred but is not required; however, the type of Master's Degree is not specified. Other job qualifications for the IC position include:

- a valid Texas teaching certificate;
- three years successful teaching experience;
- strong content knowledge;
- leadership experience, such as team leader or department chair;
- experience with developing and delivering professional learning
- strong technology skills including technology integration;
- strong data analysis skills; and
- ability to work and lead adult learners

The target population for the study was ICs who serve in elementary or secondary schools. The sample for the quantitative portion of the study acquired through a survey (See Appendix A – *The Instructional Coach Survey*) is comprised of 74 elementary coaches (serving pre-kindergarten through 5th grade), 52 junior high coaches (serving grades 6 through 8), and 28 high school instructional coaches (serving grades 9 through 12), with a total of N = 154. All ICs in the district were selected to participate in the survey. Including all coaches as potential participants increased the potential percentage of participation, thereby enriching the study. See Table 4 for the number of ICs by grade level and subject areas.

Table 4

<i>Number of Instructional Coaches by Grade Categories and Subject Areas</i>							
	Math / Science	Math Science	Science	Reading / Writing / Social Studies	Reading / Writing	Social Studies	Total
Elementary K-5 th grade	37			37			74
Junior high 6 th -8 th grade		13	13		13	13	52
High school 9 th -12 th grade		7	7		7	7	28
Total							154

For the second part of the study, coaches from this group were purposively selected based on the number of years they had been coaches within the district. There were 10 ICs who had been in the position since the 2009-2010 school year, not including the researcher. The researcher wanted to interview six participants from this group (two elementary, two junior high, and two senior high ICs) in hopes of uncovering reasons why these individuals had remained when so many others had left the profession. In reality the participant group was two elementary mathematics/science ICs, two elementary ELA/social studies ICs, and two junior high ICs (one mathematics and one ELA). None of the original high school ICs were still in the position. It was important to gain IC perspectives from different levels and content areas as their training and campus lives differ.

Participants for the third part of the study were purposively selected. A list of ICs who left the position was obtained by the Curriculum and Instruction Department of the

school district. Only ICs who left to return to a teaching position were eligible for this part of the study. People who retired, were promoted, or quit to stay home with children were excluded, as the researcher was interested only in investigating why ICs leave coaching to return to the classroom.

Research Design

To examine the perceptions and experiences of ICs in the district and to gain an understanding as to why some ICs stay in the position while many others leave, this research utilized a mixed-methods case study approach. A mixed-methods design was most appropriate for this study because both qualitative and quantitative data were needed to provide a deeper understanding of the issue. The quantitative research furnished information that addressed the exploratory overview of the research questions within this particular school district setting; whereas, the qualitative research allowed for a more in-depth examination and explanatory aspects of the research questions that provided insight into people's lives, experiences, and perceptions regarding decisions to stay or leave (Johnson & Christensen, 2008); therefore, blending qualitative and quantitative data gave strength to the study. A case study is the study of a bounded system (Creswell, 2006). The researcher sought to understand the experiences and perceptions of ICs within one school district. "Case studies take the reader into the setting with a vividness and detail not typically present in more analytic reporting formats" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 164). The research moved from an exploratory case study design through the use of a survey of current ICs to an explanatory process captured through individual interviews with select participants. "Exploratory research serves to identify important variables for subsequent explanatory or predictive research" (Marshall

& Rossman, 2006, p. 15). The first component of the study included current ICs from Garrett ISD who completed a survey that was both qualitative and quantitative in nature, as some questions yielded descriptive statistics and other questions were open-ended and required lengthier responses. The first part of the survey was descriptive, allowing the researcher to collect profile data such as years of teaching experience and years of coaching experience. The second part of the survey elicited responses concerning sense of efficacy, perceptions of campus climate, opinions or experiences with administrative support, sense of preparedness for or skill alignment with new roles and responsibilities, and other factors that might cause them to leave or remain in the position. The answers from the second part of the survey were analyzed for patterns. These patterns provided direction to the types of questions added to the interview protocol and helped triangulate findings across all data sets. The latter responses involved qualitative analysis through constant comparative methodology.

Another part of the study examined the perceptions of coaches who remained in the position since inception (2009-2010). The researcher interviewed participants who have stayed in the role since the 2009-2010 school year to examine reasons why these individuals have remained and to compare their experiences with those who are no longer in the position.

A third part of the study was also qualitative. This part focused on examining the perceptions and experiences of coaches who left the field of coaching and returned to the classroom. A sample of four coaches who left coaching was purposively selected to gain different perspectives on the research questions of this study. Creswell (2006) suggested that four to five participants should provide adequate data to identify themes and to

conduct cross-theme analysis. Four participants were purposively selected (two from elementary and two from junior high) to gain information from coaches in different grade levels. Those who left for a promotion were not included in this list because moving into administration is a logical next career step. Those who retired or quit to stay at home with children were also excluded. Looking at data from coaches who remained in the position and those who left allowed for the comparison of efficacious experiences of both groups. A holistic analysis was conducted where themes and interpretations related to the whole case were identified (Yin, 2003).

Data Collection Procedures

Approval from the district's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and from the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) at the University of Houston – Clear Lake was obtained (See Appendix B for Human Subjects application) before the collection of data began. Although an IRB through the district was conducted, for anonymity reasons it has not been included as an appendix. Data for this study was collected over one semester, Fall 2015. Creswell (2006) stated that a good qualitative study must employ rigorous data collection procedures by collecting multiple sources of data; therefore, data was obtained through surveys, in-depth interviews, and notes as an observing participant by the researcher during monthly district meetings with coaches. No incentives were given for participating in any portion of the study.

Survey

At the beginning of the study the researcher conducted a survey of all coaches from one suburban school district willing to participate in the study. There were no surveys currently available in the literature that parallel or align with collecting data

required for this study; therefore, the researcher created a survey. Furthermore, in qualitative research it is a common and acceptable practice to create required instruments instead of relying on protocols or instruments created by other researchers (Creswell, 2014). To ensure validity, peers from a doctoral cohort reviewed the survey questions for alignment with the study. A panel of experts in qualitative research also reviewed the survey to ensure alignment with the research questions. An email list of all who were currently coaches was obtained from the district IC Facilitators who work with the coaches. A letter explaining the study accompanied by the link to a Google survey was emailed to all ICs in the district. The survey contained a statement where participants provided informed consent to participate in this portion of the study. The purpose of the survey was to obtain demographic data regarding the coaches, including teaching experience, coaching experience, training regarding content while at the university level, and amount of professional development received by the district. Questions regarding job satisfaction, factors regarding retention, and factors that might cause them to leave the field of coaching were included. As patterns emerged from the data, questions were added to the individual interview protocols. Part of the survey contained open-ended questions. All respondents were promised confidentiality. Names, schools, and district name were not used in any documentation to be viewed by anyone other than the researcher. Participants will be issued a unique number to protect confidentiality throughout the study. Pseudonyms were supplied for interviewees, campus names, and district names as well. Reminder emails were sent twice to encourage a higher rate of participation.

Interviews

Group 1- ICs who left: Face-to-face interviews allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of participants' experiences or perspectives. A list of people who left their position in coaching was obtained through the district's Curriculum and Instruction Department. Four people who left the coaching role were purposively selected to participate in an interview. The researcher hoped to compare and contrast information from people who coached at different grade levels and different content areas to gain a well-rounded picture of the story. These individuals received an email, a phone call, or a face-to-face invitation asking if they would participate. At that time, the study was explained. After a full explanation of the research was given to those individuals, those willing to participate signed a consent form to participate in a semi-structured interview (See Appendix C for Interview Consent Form). A semi-structured interview protocol was preferred so the researcher could be consistent across interviews with some questions but also probe deeper as the story unfolded and individual responses warranted extended questioning (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). The participants were given a choice of where they would like the interview conducted in an effort to make the interviewee more comfortable. All four chose to do their interviews via Skype or Facetime. The purpose of the interview was to determine why the participant left coaching and what might have been done to retain that person. Individual interviews were chosen over focus groups due to the sensitive nature of the questions. Participants may have been more likely to fear a breach of confidentiality if others were present. Creswell (2006) cautions that shy or less articulate interviewees may provide less than adequate data. The interview protocol contained open-ended questions and lasted approximately 45 minutes to one hour (See

Appendix D for Interview Protocol for ICs Who Left Coaching). The interview began with a warm-up question that asked the interviewee about their current position. After that, the researcher delved into their experiences as an IC, reasons they resigned the position, and what, if anything, could have convinced them to remain an IC. With permission of the participants, the interviews were audiotaped using Evernote and transcribed afterward. Technology can fail, so notes were also taken during the interviews. Participants were assured that their names would be kept confidential. As with the surveys, it was explicitly reiterated that all responses would remain anonymous, and pseudonyms would be utilized. Data regarding participant perceptions was obtained and entered into Scrivener, a word processing and project management tool. Follow-up questions were asked of the interviewees during data analysis to gain a better understanding of their experiences.

Group 2 – IC's who stayed: A list of those who have been ICs since the program began six years ago was obtained from the Curriculum and Instruction Department. In the fall of 2009 there were 58 ICs. Of those ICs, only 11 remain, including the researcher (specifically, there are zero at the high school level, two at junior high, and nine at the elementary level). To gain perspectives from different levels and content areas, the junior high ICs were purposively selected to participate in an interview. Only one responded to the request. One mathematics/science IC and two language arts/social studies ICs were purposively selected from the group of elementary ICs. These ICs were called or emailed to ask if they would participate in an interview. Those willing to participate signed a consent form and participated in semi-structured individual interviews (See Appendix E for Six-Year Coach Interview Protocol). The same procedures were followed as those

used with Group 1. Two of the ICs chose to have face-to-face interviews, and the other two were interviewed via Skype.

Monthly Whole Group Meetings with Coaches

Each month coaches attended meetings with the district coordinators every other Friday. During these meetings the coordinators and coaches either worked on building content knowledge, or coaches selected conference-style sessions to attend. The researcher attended the meetings with the elementary ICs. During this time informal interviews were held to gain a deeper understanding of the coaches' perspectives. The researcher also took notes as an observing participant to gain more sources of information, thereby triangulating the data (Creswell, 2006). Field notes included artifacts from meetings as well as nonjudgmental descriptions of what was observed. The observations provided some insight into the attitudes that ICs hold regarding their roles and provided information regarding the training provided by the district. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) describe qualitative research as an activity that

...consists of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible...They turn the world into a series of representations, including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings, and memos to self...This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. (p. 3)

Data Analysis Procedures

A constant comparative method was utilized to analyze the data because this study sought to find any factors that might contribute to ICs leaving or staying in their

role. “The purpose of comparative method is to develop many categories, properties, and hypotheses about general problems instead of to ascertain either the universal proof of suggested causes or other properties” (Heppner & Heppner, 2004, p. 150). The researcher used triangulation of data from in-depth interviews, a survey, and observations to validate findings.

Interview Analysis

Interviews were conducted with people who have left the coaching profession as well as with those ICs who have remained in the field for the last six years. The interviews were audiotaped, transcribed, and entered into Scrivener. The researcher listened to the tapes to check the transcriptions for accuracy. As the inductive process began, clarifying questions and questions probing for further data were asked of the interviewees through a member checking process (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). Unlike deductive analysis, themes and patterns were found in the data, not developed beforehand (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The researcher began with open coding and moved to axial coding as themes emerged (Creswell, 2006). During open coding, the interview transcriptions were placed on a page with two or three columns. The transcription was in the first column; notes were in the second column; and category names were in the third column. General themes or categories that emerged were also color-coded and given descriptive words or category names. Axial coding followed where core ideas were listed and categorized within the general themes in outline form. These ideas were also coded with symbols, descriptive words, and/or category names (See Appendices F and G for examples of transcribed interviews with coding of six-year and ex-coaches). All codes used in the study were organized in a master list. The list contained the code, followed by

the full code name, and a description of the code (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Strauss and Corbin (1990) described axial coding as putting data “back together in new ways by making connections between a category and its subcategories” (p. 97). With each new interview, the responses of the interviewees were entered, coded, and analyzed. New data were continuously compared with previous interview or survey data to form theories, or to discount or enhance themes. This procedure continued until no more themes emerged and saturation of data was achieved. Saturation occurs when no new information, understandings, or concepts emerge from the data (Creswell, 2006; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Throughout this process, the researcher began interpreting the data and wrote analytic memos that summarized key findings from the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Researcher biases could be an issue if the researcher is not aware and diligent about bracketing out their own experiences and perceptions (Creswell, 2006). As patterns in the data emerged, it was important for the researcher to challenge those patterns or explanations that were aligned with the beliefs of the researcher and search for alternative explanations (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The researcher utilized an expert in the field to operate as peer debriefer by reviewing themes identified based on data. This process helped ensure validity during data analysis.

Observing Participant Notes

During monthly meetings with instructional coaches, the researcher acted as an observing participant. The field notes and artifacts from these meetings were entered into a notebook, coded, and cross-referenced with the interview and survey data.

Survey Analysis

Qualitative - Written responses to the surveys were also entered into Scrivener

and coded. Information obtained by the participants was grouped by subject areas and grade categories to see if some phenomena occur in some areas but not in others.

Constant comparative analysis was utilized to analyze extended responses to the specific open-ended questions.

Quantitative – Descriptive statistics (as percentages) were used to report responses to the demographic questions posed.

Memoing

Throughout the analytic process, the researcher was involved in recording ideas and making reflective notes regarding the data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). This included notes on emerging concepts or themes; reflections and insights; and the possible need for more data.

Reliability and Validity

When conducting this study, the researcher took steps to ensure that the instruments used were valid and reliable. To establish validity within both the survey and the interview protocols, prior to implementation both were shared with a panel of experts to gain suggestions for alignment with the research questions. Input was used to amend the survey and interview protocols. The specialists ensured the survey and interview questions aligned with the research questions and would solicit data that potentially answer those questions. To ensure the reliability of the qualitative component of this study, interviews were audiotaped and transcribed verbatim. To achieve interpretive validity, member checks were conducted after interviews are transcribed, a process through which participants could clarify any questions the researcher had regarding responses to questions and to verify the participants' statements and feelings (Heppner &

Heppner, 2004). A qualitative research expert and university professor served as a peer debriefer to analyze the themes identified. Prolonged engagement with the participants during monthly coaches meetings allowed the researcher to study the culture of ICs and develop rapport and trust. Prolonged engagement is defined as: “Spending sufficient time in the field to learn or understand the culture, social setting, or phenomenon of interest” (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006), thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the data. The researcher used data triangulation to improve internal validity.

Privacy and Ethical Considerations

Several potential ethical issues can arise in research, such as: a) informed consent procedures; b) confidentiality issues; c) deception or covert activities; and d) risks to participants outweigh benefits of research (Lipson, 1994). To protect the participants in this study, ethical procedures were put in place. IRB and CPHS approval was obtained from both the district and the university before any data were collected. Once approval was obtained, potential participants were informed of all aspects of the study and asked for informed consent. Participants were informed they had the right to opt out of the study at any time without any adverse effects, and there were no perceivable risks to participating in this study. Participants were assigned aliases to ensure confidentiality. The study utilized audiotaping, and participants were asked for permission before taping. During the interview process, it was important for the researcher to be cognizant that it was an ethical issue to share personal information or stories with the interviewee (Creswell, 2006). Researcher bias is a potential threat to both quantitative and qualitative research (Johnson & Christensen, 2008); therefore, the researcher bracketed out her views and experiences so the experiences of the participant could be viewed through a

less biased perspective. The researcher engaged in reflexivity to control for any biases. Additionally, in the results section of this study, the researcher presents a brief narrative regarding her experience as a long-term IC to assist in bracketing out any potential existing biases. To maintain confidentiality, data will be kept in a locked storage by the researcher's supervisor for three years.

Limitations of the Study

External validity may be a concern with this study. As with most qualitative studies, the participants were purposively selected, making it more difficult to generalize from the sample to a population (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Although this mixed-method study may not be generalizable to the greater population, it is potentially applicable to other settings. This study is limited to instructional coaches in one district. It may not apply to districts that utilize their instructional coaches differently (i.e., coaches responsible for only one subject or grade level, coaches used primarily for data, etc.). However, it may be applicable to districts using coaches in the same manner or who are beginning an IC program.

Another limitation is that the study relies on participant trust, honesty, and accurate self-assessment. Individuals may be reticent to share honest feelings. Creswell (2006) cautions that participants may be hesitant to share difficult aspects of their lives or may not be able to articulate issues that they have experienced. This limitation is offset somewhat by the trusting relationships that the researcher has built over time with many of the participants being interviewed. On the other hand, familiarity with the researcher may also cause participants to say what they perceive is the desired answer. Further, interviewees must be able to be reflective on themselves as coaches. Without

interviewing their administrators and teachers with whom they worked, it is impossible to gain the full story of their coaching experiences.

The researcher is in the district being studied, so there may be biases when analyzing and interpreting the data. To combat this limitation, it was important to be aware of potential biases and seek alternative explanations to current beliefs. An expert in qualitative research served as peer debriefer to help deflect biases by examining and questioning themes and patterns identified in the data.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Chapter IV includes an analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data collected during this mixed-method study. Creswell (2014) asserts “that the combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches provides a more complete understanding of a research problem than either approach alone” (p. 4). The primary purpose of this study was to explore the perceptions of instructional coaches (ICs) regarding their feelings of efficacy and how it pertained to their retention in the field of coaching. As the participants’ stories unfolded, the data became broader, so the researcher studied multiple aspects of IC experiences and how they pertain to their retention.

Rationale for the study: The average IC turnover rate for Garrett ISD has been 26% each year from 2009 to 2015. Three research questions were addressed:

Research Question 1: What perceptions do instructional coaches hold about their roles, responsibilities, and ability to effect change within the district, and how do these perceptions factor in to their intention to remain or leave the position?

Research Question 2: What roles do instructional coaches assume on their campus, and how did the instructional coaches’ expectations of the job differ from what they actually experienced in the role?

Research Question 3: What do instructional coaches perceive as necessary to increase their satisfaction and perceptions of feeling competent in their role?

First, the researcher will briefly review the rationale and methods for conducting *the Instructional Coach Survey* (see Appendix A), and the participants will be described through demographic data attained from the survey. A discussion of the interviews will follow, and readers will be introduced to the interviewees through brief biological sketches. An analysis of qualitative data obtained through the survey and interviews will follow.

The topic of instructional coaching is broad and deep. There are numerous types of instructional coach models, such as data coaching, peer coaching, literacy coaching, and cognitive coaching (Knight, 2009a; Knight, 2011b; Marzano & Simms, 2013; Neufeld & Roper, 2002; Showers & Joyce, 1996). Furthermore, ICs leave the role for various reasons, such as advancement, “pay is not commensurate with the job”, and lack of fulfillment. For the purpose of this study, the focus will remain on the retention of instructional coaches that are focused on subject-specific coaching. The researcher utilized a constructivist approach to generate meaning from data collected in the field (Creswell, 2014).

The Instructional Coach Survey

Conducting a survey was an appropriate method of data collection to make inferences about a population based on data from a smaller sample of people from that group (Creswell, 2014). *The Instructional Coach Survey* provided both quantitative and qualitative data. Some of the demographic data obtained included: the grade levels for which the ICs were responsible (elementary, junior high, high school); the subject areas for which the ICs were responsible (mathematics, science, language arts, social studies); number of years as an instructional coach; years of teaching experience prior to becoming

an IC; highest level of education; how they were hired (from own campus or not); roles and responsibilities; and whether or not they were considering leaving their post as IC.

Additional questions provided qualitative data regarding IC perceptions of their experiences in this role. These questions addressed district support, IC training needed, the IC mentoring program, expectations of the job prior to becoming an IC, perceptions regarding ability to impact change on their campus, and reasons ICs might seek other employment. The following section will describe the participants of *The Instructional Coach Survey*, and how data was obtained.

Quantitative Data

To capture the perceptions of instructional coaches currently in the role and to augment and refine interview protocols, a Google survey was emailed to all elementary, junior high, and senior high ICs in Garrett ISD. After one week, a reminder email was sent to the ICs either thanking them for their participation or reminding them to complete the survey. A second reminder email was sent only to those who did not participate. The participation rate for the survey was better than expected: 67% of elementary ICs, 47% of junior high ICs, and 79% of high school ICs participated in the survey, resulting in a total response rate of 63%. All subject areas, mathematics, science, English and Language Arts (ELA), and social studies were represented in the responses. Table 5, on the next page, shows the instructional coach response rate for *the Instructional Coach Survey*. Data pertinent to the study will be summarized.

Table 5

Number of Instructional Coaches Who Responded to the Survey by Grade Categories and Subject Areas (n = 90; N = 143)

	Elementary	Junior High	High School	Total
Math	24	50.0%	7	35.0%
Science	23	47.9%	4	20.0%
Reading	24	50.0%	6	30.0%
Writing	23	47.9%	6	30.0%
Social Studies	24	50.0%	3	15.0%
Total respondents	48	67.0%	20	47.0%
			22	79.0%
			90	63%

As shown in Table 6, ICs in Garrett ISD had a wide range of teaching experience prior to becoming an IC. The range in number of years of teaching experience was 3 to 30 years.

Table 6

Teaching Experience Prior to Becoming an IC

	Elementary	Junior High	High School
Range in # of years as a teacher prior to becoming an IC	3.5 - 30	3 - 27	4 - 29

Something interesting to note in Table 7 is the range in years in the role of IC.

Elementary coaches range from 0 – 10 years of experience as an IC, and both junior and senior high school ICs have a range of only 0-4 years. Only one person in junior high has been an IC for 3 years and one person for 4 years.

Table 7

Number of Years as an Instructional Coach (not including 2015-2016)

Number of years	Elementary ICs	Junior High ICs	High School ICs
0	2	5	6
1	13	5	4
2	7	8	4
3	9	1	6
4	4	1	2
5	5	-	-
6	4	-	-
7	0	-	-
8	1	-	-
9	2	-	-
10	1	-	-
Total # ICs	48	20	22
Mode	1 year	2 years	0 and 3 years
Range in # of years as an IC (not including current year)	0 – 10	0 - 4	0 - 4

Table 8

Highest Levels of Education for Instructional Coaches in Garrett ISD

Highest Level of Education	Elementary		Junior High		High School	
Bachelors	19	39.6%	10	50.0%	10	45.5%
Masters	27	56.3%	9	45.0%	11	50.0%
Doctorate	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Other	2	4.2%	1	5.0%	1	4.5%

The qualitative information that follows will provide the reader with insight into the experiences of ICs and detail reasons ICs may seek other roles.

Qualitative Data

The three research questions in this study were best answered through qualitative inquiry. Through a survey and interviews, the researcher was able to obtain rich

descriptions of the participants' experiences and perceptions. The following section will provide an outline of the interview process followed by an insight into the interview participants. A brief biography will introduce each person who participated in the interviews, beginning with four instructional coaches who have been in the position since 2009, followed by four people who have left the position. Pseudonyms are utilized to preserve anonymity for people, campuses or districts mentioned in the interviews. These biographies are intended to present context to information gleaned during the process. Then, the researcher will provide an analysis by interweaving the interview data with the survey data.

Interviews

The researcher is an instructional coach in Garrett ISD and has her own potential biases regarding the challenges of ICs. Glaser and Strauss (1967) warn that a researcher "often develops a theory that embodies, without him realizing it, his own ideals and values of his occupation and social class, as well as popular views and myths"(p. 238). To diminish the biases that exist, the researcher did not begin with a theoretical framework. Instead the questions in the survey and the interviews were created to best elicit the stories of the participants in hopes that unanticipated themes would emerge. The researcher obtained a list of coaches who had either been in the position since inception in 2009 or who left to teach from the Curriculum and Instruction Department at Garrett ISD. The researcher used the *Six-Year Coach Interview Protocol* (see Appendix E) or *Interview Protocol for ICs Who Left Coaching* (see Appendix D) to conduct eight individual interviews in December of 2015, either face-to-face, by Skype, or FaceTime. The purpose of the interviews was to delve into the experiences and perceptions of

instructional coaches to reveal the reasons some coaches leave the profession while others remain for at least six years. The participants were offered the option of face-to-face interviews in the location of their choice or interviews via computer. By giving the participants choice of venue, the interviewees had the ability to participate in a comfortable environment, without typical time constraints. Originally, the researcher intended to interview six people from each group, two from the elementary level, two from junior high, and two from high school. Unfortunately, there were no high school ICs remaining in the position and only two junior high ICs remained. The remaining ICs were at the elementary level. Interviews ranged from approximately 30 to 70 minutes in length. The researcher preferred to be able to see the participants rather than conduct phone interviews so nonverbal behavior could be observed and noted. A semi-structured interview format was utilized to allow for in-depth, probing questions. With permission of the participants, all interviews were audiotaped, and the researcher transcribed the conversations verbatim (See Appendices F and G – Transcribed Interview With Coding – Ex-Coach and Six-Year Coach for samples of the transcription and coding notes). Member checks were conducted with a few of the interviewees to gain clarification to questions that arose during the analysis process. The interviews allowed the researcher to delve more deeply into the themes that emerged from the survey. The themes that emerged were:

Theme 1: *Challenges for Instructional Coaches*

Theme 2: *Perceptions of Structure and Hiring Practices of the ICs*

Theme 3: *Impacting Change – What Facilitates the Ability of ICs to Move*

Forward with the Vision of the Campus and District?

Theme 4: *Motivation to Remain in the Role*

A Constant Comparative Analysis method was utilized to analyze data for themes and subthemes, and to identify new themes as they emerged. The Constant Comparative Analysis method is a repetitive process where the researcher begins with open coding and moves to axial coding (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). As new information is obtained, it is compared with existing data and codes. The researcher recodes the data as new categories or themes arise.

As noted previously, the researcher is an instructional coach in Garrett ISD; therefore, the experiences of the researcher could potentially bias the interpretation of the findings. To diminish the possibility of bias, a peer debriefer was utilized to independently analyze the data for themes and subthemes and to check the themes identified by the primary researcher. The peer debriefer is an author and university professor who has taught courses in qualitative research. The themes identified in the survey directly paralleled those in the individual interviews.

Interview participants. Table 9 provides an overview of the eight interviewees in this study. All of the participants were Caucasian females; however, attempts were made to interview people who might have different perspectives. Five of the interviewees were from elementary, while three were from junior highs. Within those grade bands, six of the participants were in charge of mathematics and/or science, and two were from the language arts and/or social studies departments. The researcher also made an attempt to hear from male ICs but was unsuccessful. A male had recently quit as an IC to teach 4th grade mathematics and agreed in person to an interview. Later, he did not respond to requests to set up an appointment for the interview. Despite attempts to interview people

at each level, it was not possible to hear the voices of high school ICs. There were no ICs remaining in the position at the high school level, and the district did not have any knowledge of current positions of the high school ICs who quit. Loss of all high school ICs presents informal data that would need further examination to explain the situational phenomenon. At this time, it is beyond the scope of the study but could serve as the basis for a follow-up research design.

Table 9

Snapshot of Participants in Individual Interviews

Interviewee	Level	Coaching position	Campus When an IC	How Long as an IC	Status
Elaina	Elementary	Math/Science	Campus A	6 years +	Still coaching
Ashley	Elementary	ELA/SS	Campus B	6 years	Still coaching
Haley	Elementary	ELA/SS	Campus C	6 years	Still coaching
Dakota	Junior High	Math	Campus D	6 years	Still coaching
Brandi	Elementary	Math/Science	Campus F	5 years	Went back to a teaching position (academic support)
Dana	Elementary	Math/Science	Campus F	6 years	Went back to a teaching position (ELL)
Pam	Jr. High	Math	Campus J	1.5 years	Went back to a teaching position (classroom)
Darcy	Jr. High	Math	Campus M	1.5 years	Went back to a teaching position (classroom)

Interviewee biography briefs. The first four interviewees were coaches who have continued in the role as IC. The next four participants were ICs that left the role to return to teaching.

Coaches who have remained in the position from 2009 to present.

“Elaina”

Elaina is an elementary school Mathematics/Science Instructional Coach at Campus A.

Table 10

Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus A

	Count/Average	Percent
Professional Staff	83.2	88.3 %
Teachers	71.2	76.0 %
Professional Support	9.0	13.0 %
Administration	3.0	3.0%
Educational Aides	11.0	11.0%
Teachers by Ethnicity and Sex		
Black	1.0	1.4 %
Hispanic	9.0	12.6 %
White	59.2	83.2 %
American Indian	1.0	1.4 %
Asian	1.0	1.4 %
Males	4.0	5.6 %
Females	67.2	94.4 %
Teachers by Highest Degree Held		
Bachelors	58.2	81.7%
Masters	13.1	18.3%
Doctorate	0.0	0.0%
Teachers by Years of Experience		
Beginning Teachers	3.0	4.2 %
1-5 Years Experience	15.4	21.7 %
6-10 Years Experience	8.1	11.4 %
11-20 Years Experience	32.0	44.9 %
Over 20 Years Experience	12.7	17.8 %

Note. 2014-15 Campus Profile Texas Academic Performance Report from Texas Education Association - reference link is not included to retain anonymity

Elaina has had various experiences in the field of education. In college she worked with both Pre-K and kindergarten students. She began her teaching career in the primary grades, teaching second grade and then first grade. After that she became a math instructional coach in her previous district where her principal approached her regarding a mathematics instructional coach position on her campus. There were four ICs on her campus, one for mathematics, one for science, one for primary ELA/SS and one for intermediate ELA/SS. During her time as an IC, she gained experience teaching in third and fourth grades. After five years as an IC, she moved to Garrett ISD, where she could work closer to home and be with her children at her campus. She taught fifth grade mathematics for a couple of years, and then she became a fourth grade mathematics, science, social studies teacher. While she was a classroom teacher, the teachers learned to trust Elaina and respect her knowledge regarding content and pedagogy. She modeled lessons, provided staff development, and served as a lead math teacher for her campus; therefore, the teachers were familiar with her in this capacity and she had proven her competence in such a role. Garrett ISD did not have instructional coaches when she began teaching in the district; however, when the district created an IC position, her principal, who had been an instructional coach in their previous district, created an extra coach position on her campus with Elaina and an ELA/SS person in mind so they could be content specific. Together, the principal, the assistant principal, and the two ICs “outlined what we wanted, still within the framework of what the district expected.” The roles and responsibilities of an IC were clear to the administrators, the ICs, and the teachers on this campus. Although Elaina has multiple responsibilities, her main focus is modeling in the classroom. She is explicit when she tells the teachers that she wants to be

in their classrooms. She loves teaching in their classes, and it benefits her as much as the teachers and students. Because of her prior experience with the teachers, Elaina found it easier to build relationships at the beginning of her career as an IC. Elaina makes it clear to her administrators that she is uncomfortable with any responsibilities that could be perceived as administrator duties. She does not want the teachers to see her in that light because she fears they will view her as evaluative, which will diminish her ability to coach. She assists teams with planning lessons each week. When asked what Elaina aspired to accomplish as a coach, she responded, “ I hope that I inspire other teachers to become coaches. I want my teachers to have just as much passion about math as I do and to love it and enjoy it.”

“Ashley”

Ashley is an elementary school Language Arts/Social Studies Instructional Coach at Campus B. Campus B has approximately 1,000 students.

Table 11

Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus B

	Count/Average	Percent
Professional Staff	79.2	88.8 %
Teachers	67.0	75.1 %
Professional Support	9.2	19.3 %
Administration	3	3.4 %
Educational Aides	10	11.2 %
Teachers by Ethnicity and Sex		
Black	1.0	1.5 %
Hispanic	2.0	3.0 %
White	58.6	87.4 %
American Indian	0.5	0.7 %
Asian	4.0	6.0 %
Two or More Races	1.0	1.5 %
Males	3.0	4.5 %
Females	64.0	95.5 %
Teachers by Highest Degree Held		
Bachelors	51.0	76.1 %
Masters	16	23.9 %
Doctorate	0.0	0.0 %
Teachers by Years of Experience		
Beginning Teachers	1.0	1.5 %
1-5 Years Experience	20.0	29.8 %
6-10 Years Experience	22.6	33.7 %
11-20 Years Experience	15.0	22.4 %
Over 20 Years Experience	8.5	12.6 %

Note: 2014-15 Campus Profile Texas Academic Performance Report from Texas Education Association - reference link is not included to retain anonymity

Ashley has been in the field of education for 23 years. She began teaching first grade for 15 years before becoming a reading intervention (REACH) teacher, providing academic reading support to small groups of students. Her principal asked her to open a new school with him as an instructional coach, and she accepted. At that time, the district allotted just one personnel unit for an instructional coach per campus, so she was responsible for Pre-K through fifth grade in all subject areas. She accepted the job because she saw it as a way to impact 1,200 students by way of helping 100 teachers.

Although, she does not have a degree in administration, Ashley stated that her primary role is instructional coach, but her second role is as an administrator. She and her partner IC are considered a part of the administrative team. She participates in administration meetings every Monday morning for two hours, and has a working lunch with the administrative team every day from 11:20-12:20. Unlike some instructional coaches, Ashley appreciates being on the administrative team and does not believe that it hinders her ability to be a coach with the teachers. Every Monday Ashley plans with two teams, and on Tuesday, she plans with the rest of the teams on her campus. Ashley's goals are to "end the old-school mentality" by encouraging Project –Based Learning (PBL) and challenging the way the system approaches the grading policy. Ashley's goal is to eliminate the factors that "stop excitement in public education."

"Haley"

Haley has been an elementary school instructional coach at Campus C since the inception of the role in 2009. Campus C has approximately 700 students.

Table 12

Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus C

	Count/Average	Percent
Professional Staff	58.7	78.7 %
Teachers	48.0	64.4 %
Professional Support	7.7	10.3 %
Administration	3.0	4.0 %
Educational Aides	15.9	21.3 %
Teachers by Ethnicity and Sex		
Black	2.0	4.2 %
Hispanic	1.0	2.1 %
White	44.0	91.7 %
American Indian	0.0	0.0 %
Asian	0.0	0.0 %
Two or More Races	1.0	2.1 %
Males	0.5	0.9 %
Females	47.6	99.1 %
Teachers by Highest Degree Held		
Bachelors	33.9	70.6 %
Masters	14.1	29.4 %
Doctorate	0.0	0.0 %
Teachers by Years of Experience		
Beginning Teachers	1.4	3.0 %
1-5 Years Experience	9.5	19.8 %
6-10 Years Experience	9.2	19.1 %
11-20 Years Experience	15.0	31.1 %
Over 20 Years Experience	13.0	27.1 %

Note. 2014-15 Campus Profile Texas Academic Performance Report from Texas Education Association - reference link is not included to retain anonymity

Prior to becoming a coach, Haley taught third grade math and science and fifth grade language arts and social studies. Her principal asked her to interview for the position. In the beginning, she was responsible for all subjects kindergarten through fifth grade; however, the district added another IC to all elementary campuses, and at that time Haley became responsible for only language arts and social studies. At first she was concerned about becoming an IC on the same campus where she had been teaching. She did not know how the other teachers would feel about her modeling lessons for them. "Why is

SHE coming in here to show me how to do something?" She thought she had to be perfect. Haley believed that the teachers were not as accepting at first because they did not have a clear understanding of her roles and responsibilities. However, as the role has evolved and become more defined, the teachers have a better understanding of why she is there, and that has helped her to become more confident in her role. Haley explained that in the beginning she was more of a data coach than an instructional coach. District training revolved largely around how to create spreadsheets with testing data. Now, Haley is more content specific. She feels more like a resource for the teachers, and the professional development she provides is more aligned with the needs of the campus. Currently, she is focusing on implementing Reader's Workshop with her new teachers. What she enjoys most about her job is when teachers come to her for help. Her biggest challenge is fitting all she wants to do into the time she has available. She places a lot of pressure on herself because she does not like telling teachers that she can't help them immediately, but she is learning to accept the fact that sometimes she might need to delay working with them for a few minutes. She is also realizing "everyone can't be happy all the time." Haley explained that she stays in this role for a couple of reasons. First and foremost, she stays due to the support she receives from campus administration and the staff. The staff is like a family to her. On her campus, there is a lot of consistency. The teachers tend to return each year, and she is not asked to start new initiatives year after year. They begin a project and continue it into the following years. Haley has no desire to become an administrator, and she described herself as "a creature of habit" that likes a schedule and a routine. She also confided, "I have invested a lot in this. I don't want to ruin that either." As an instructional coach, Haley's goal is to "help with the vision of the

district to where we are doing Workshop, writing and reading, from kinder all the way through fifth grade.”

“Dakota”

Dakota is a Mathematics Instructional Coach at Junior High Campus D and has been an IC since the role began in 2009. At her campus there were approximately 1,900 students.

Table 13

Teacher Demographics for Junior High Campus D

	Count/Average	Percent
Professional Staff	121.8	89.4 %
Teachers	102.4	75.1 %
Professional Support	14.5	10.6 %
Administration	5.0	3.7 %
Educational Aides	14.5	10.6 %
Teachers by Ethnicity and Sex		
Black	3.1	3.0%
Hispanic	5.0	4.9 %
White	91.2	89.1 %
American Indian	0.0	0.0 %
Asian	1.0	1.0 %
Males	15.4	15.0 %
Females	87.0	85.0 %
Teachers by Highest Degree Held		
Bachelors	90.7	88.6 %
Masters	10.7	10.4 %
Doctorate	1.0	1.0 %
Teachers by Years of Experience		
Beginning Teachers	8.0	7.8 %
1-5 Years Experience	31.6	30.9 %
6-10 Years Experience	27.7	27.1 %
11-20 Years Experience	26.8	26.2 %
Over 20 Years Experience	8.2	8.0 %

Note. 2014-15 Campus Profile Texas Academic Performance Report from Texas Education Association - reference link is not included to retain anonymity

Dakota has taught fourth grade, sixth grade math, and seventh grade math in Garrett ISD before becoming an IC. When the district created the job, her principal at Junior High M

approached her to see if she would be interested in the position. She was responsible for only one campus but all subject areas, including Concepts of Engineering, which she described being like Wood Shop. The job was different than she anticipated. She had assumed that everybody liked her, but she learned that was not the case. This was crushing to her, and she did not understand why some people did not like her. The principal explained that people were jealous. They thought she got whatever she wanted. It did not help that she did not interview for the position. She shared that his advice (in her words) was, “You are going to have to come to terms that not everybody is going to always like you, and not everybody wants someone in their room, or wants someone talking to them.” Dakota was shocked by the adult behavior that she witnessed. They would tattle on each other, cry over little things, and not follow the directions that were given to them. Being the only coach on campus was difficult because she did not have a team with which to talk about these frustrations. Now she is on a campus with four ICs and she finds it to be greatly beneficial to have that support system. The district decided to have the coaches specialize by subject matter, so she was split between two schools and focused on mathematics. As more coaching positions were added, she moved back to one campus. The principals decided that she was needed more at Junior High D.

Teachers who left the field of coaching to return to the classroom.

“Brandi”

Brandi was an IC at Elementary Campus E for seven years prior to going back to the classroom. Campus F served approximately 750 students.

Table 14

Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus E

	Count/Average	Percent
Professional Staff	67.8	89.5 %
Teachers	58.8	77.5 %
Professional Support	7.1	9.3 %
Administration	2.0	2.6 %
Educational Aides	8.0	10.5 %
Teachers by Ethnicity and Sex		
Black	1.0	1.7 %
Hispanic	20.4	34.7 %
White	36.4	61.9 %
Two or More Races	1.0	1.7 %
Males	10.5	17.9 %
Females	48.3	82.1 %
Teachers by Highest Degree Held		
Bachelors	49.8	84.7 %
Masters	9.0	15.3 %
Doctorate	0.0	0.0 %
Teaching by Years of Experience		
Beginning Teachers	6.4	10.9 %
1-5 Years Experience	15.5	26.4 %
6-10 Years Experience	11.0	18.7 %
11-20 Years Experience	19.4	33.0 %
Over 20 Years Experience	6.5	11.1 %

Note. 2014-15 Campus Profile Texas Academic Performance Report from Texas Education Association - reference link is not included to retain anonymity

Prior to becoming an IC, Brandi taught kindergarten for two years in another district and then taught 1 year each in kindergarten and first grade in Garrett ISD. Brandi began as a Mathematics/Science IC for grades kindergarten through fifth grade the year the district created the position. After seven years as an elementary school IC, Brandi left the role to become a Mathematics Academic Support teacher at Elementary Campus K in Garrett ISD. Brandi had taken the IC position on the campus where she had been an Instructional Technologist. When the technologist position dissolved due to district budget cuts, Brandi was given the opportunity to return to the classroom or become an IC. When asked why she chose the IC role, she explained, "We had a good camaraderie

there. I knew everybody. I had been there so long already.” Brandi loved working with the teachers and believed that her role as a technologist on the same campus prior to becoming an IC contributed to her ability to assist teachers.

When Brandi began as an IC it was uncharted territory for the district, and the roles and responsibilities were somewhat ambiguous. The expectations and training coming from the administration building fit predominately with the job descriptions of a data coach; however, on paper, the job description included many more roles and responsibilities.

When asked about her biggest challenges, she discussed two main issues: a) difficulties with being caught between administration and teachers; and b) an incompatible relationship with a new language arts /social studies IC partner. Brandi described her position as “sort of that middle ground between teacher and leadership.” She was working with an entirely new leadership team and several new teachers. Her principal had many new initiatives, and the teachers were exhausted as they tried to implement them. She stated, “But my opinion was you can’t do every great idea good, and she wanted to do every great idea. And the teachers, you could see it in their faces, how overwhelmed they were, and how tired they were.” Brandi attempted to discuss her concerns for the teachers with her leadership team, while working to support the teachers with the new initiatives. She lamented, “You don’t want to bad-mouth leadership, and you don’t want to bad-mouth teachers. It was a very delicate balance, and I don’t know that I always succeeded in that.”

Brandi’s second major challenge was creating a positive work environment with her IC partner, Jessica. Jessica was a first year IC, and Brandi sensed hostility and

resentment. She was unclear as to the problem. “I never really understood what happened because one day we got along fine, and the next day we didn’t.” When Brandi would share ideas, Jessica would quickly dismiss them. Jessica also believed her subject area, language arts, was more important than mathematics and science. “ELA quickly became the most important subject. I heard thousands of times probably, not thousands but hundreds, ‘If you can’t read, you can’t do math.’ That was a common thing at the school.” Furthermore, Brandi perceived that her administrators shared the belief that ELA was the most important priority. Despite Brandi’s efforts to explain the need for a full hour of mathematics, the time for mathematics class was cut to 45 minutes per day. Brandi felt a diminished sense of ability to impact change on her campus due to the lack of support for her subject areas. Furthermore, Brandi reached her breaking point when Jessica berated her in front of some teachers. At that point Brandi decided she would leave the position.

Brandi stated she would have considered staying if she did not have to share a room with Jessica. She asked her administrative team if she could move, but the request was denied. She loved the job and would consider working as an IC again, but she said, “It would have to be the right circumstances. I’d have to have somebody that I knew that I could work with. I’d have to trust them enough to open up.”

“Dana”

Dana is currently an ELL teacher at Elementary Campus F, an elementary school in Garrett ISD, where she was previously a Mathematics/Science Instructional Coach for three years. Campus F served about 700 students.

Table 15

Teacher Demographics for Elementary Campus F

	Count/Average	Percent
Professional Staff	55.2	88.7 %
Teachers	46.2	74.4 %
Professional Support	6.9	11.2 %
Administration	2.0	3.2 %
Educational Aides	7.0	11.3 %
Teachers by Ethnicity and Sex		
Black	0.1	0.1 %
Hispanic	1.0	2.2 %
White	43.2	93.4 %
American Indian	0.0	0.0 %
Asian	2.0	4.3 %
Males	1.0	2.2 %
Females	45.2	97.8 %
Teachers by Highest Degree Held		
Bachelors	33.6	72.7 %
Masters	12.6	27.3 %
Doctorate	0.0	0.0 %
Teaching by Years of Experience		
Beginning Teachers	1.0	2.2 %
1-5 Years Experience	4.0	8.7 %
6-10 Years Experience	8.0	17.3 %
11-20 Years Experience	19.5	42.3 %
Over 20 Years Experience	13.7	29.6 %

Note. 2014-15 Campus Profile Texas Academic Performance Report from Texas Education Association - reference link is not included to retain anonymity

Prior to becoming an IC, Dana taught one year in kindergarten, one year in second grade, one year in fourth grade, and three or four years with kindergarten through fifth grade students in the Gifted and Talented program. When the district began the instructional coach position, Dana's principal, James, called her and asked if she would be interested. James knew that Dana was currently working on her Master's Degree in hopes of moving into administration. She eagerly accepted the position, thinking that this job would give her some leadership experience and be a stepping-stone into administration. Elementary level instructional coaches at that time were responsible for kindergarten through fifth

grade and all major content areas. The duties given to her were more administrative than curriculum and instruction. She sat in on Admission, Review, and Dismissal (ARD) meetings, kept track of their substitute teacher allotment, maintained records for school business leave, acted as testing coordinator for campus, district, and state tests, and was in charge of their literacy library. She did provide staff development and modeled in classrooms a limited amount of time “15% of the time.” Modeling in classrooms only occurred when teachers asked for assistance. When a second instructional coach was added to each elementary campus, Dana became the mathematics / science coach, and her partner was the language arts / social studies IC. Dana stated that this was easier; however, their roles and responsibilities on their campus did not change markedly. She reported that they “really weren’t in classrooms as much as other coaches were around the district.” She felt it was unfortunate that campus ICs were not more uniform in their roles and responsibilities. Although Dana felt supported at both the district and campus levels, a major source of frustration was a lack of follow-through by her principal. She said with remorse, “I lost my positive, happy view of school because of that. Just because of seeing something that needed to change that wouldn’t be followed through with, and I thought, you know what? I don’t really know if I want to deal with the grown-ups in this anymore.” Dana was frustrated with working with adults and missed being in the classroom with the children, so she returned to the classroom.

“Pam”

After serving two years as a mathematics instructional coach for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades at Junior High Campus I and Junior High Campus J, Pam became a

junior high math teacher at Junior High I in Garrett ISD. Junior High Campus H had about 1,300 students, and Junior High Campus J had approximately 760 students.

Table 16

Teacher Demographics for Junior High Campus I and Junior High Campus J

	Junior High I		Junior High J	
	Count/Average	Percent	Count/Average	Percent
Professional Staff	103.0	89.7%	69.9	90.3%
Teachers	86.2	75.0%	53.4	69.0%
Professional Support	12.8	11.1 %	12.5	16.2%
Administration	4.0	3.5 %	4.0	5.2%
Educational Aides	11.9	10.3 %	7.5	9.7%
Teachers by Ethnicity and Sex				
Black	7.3	8.4%	14.2	26.5%
Hispanic	1.0	1.2%	4.0	7.5%
White	72.9	84.6%	34.2	64.1%
American Indian	0.0	0.0%	0.0	0.0%
Asian	3.0	3.5 %	0.0	0.0%
Pacific Islander	1.0	1.2%	0.0	0.0%
Two or More Races	1.0	1.2%	1.0	1.9%
Males	21.0	24.4%	15.2	28.4%
Females	65.2	75.6 %	38.3	71.6%
Teachers by Highest Degree Held				
Bachelors	61.1	70.9 %	37.4	70.0%
Masters	24.1	28.0 %	16.0	30.0%
Doctorate	1.0	1.2%	0.0	0.0%
Teaching by Years of Experience				
Beginning Teachers	0.0	0.0 %	4.9	9.2%
1-5 Years Experience	14.0	16.2 %	16.1	30.2%
6-10 Years Experience	27.7	32.1 %	15.7	29.4%
11-20 Years Experience	35.3	40.9 %	7.4	13.9%
Over 20 Years Experience	9.3	10.7 %	9.2	17.3%

Note. 2014-15 Campus Profile Texas Academic Performance Report from Texas Education Association - reference link is not included to retain anonymity

Prior to becoming an IC in Garrett, Pam taught first grade math, fifth grade math, seventh grade math, and was a mathematics IC in another district. She moved to Garrett and took on a junior high mathematics teaching position to be closer to an elderly parent. After three years she interviewed for the Mathematics IC position that opened up on her

campus. The previous mathematics IC quit in December the year before and had not been replaced. There were three ICs on her campus, one each for mathematics, science, and language arts/social studies. She was responsible for two junior high campuses, for a total of approximately 14 teachers. She provided district-made professional development to her campuses, such as differentiated instruction. She also ran data reports for the teachers. Pam faced several challenges in this position. She shared that it took a full year at one of her campuses to gain enough trust to work with the teachers. Some teachers felt threatened because they thought she would evaluate them, and “If they feel threatened, there’s not going to be much change.” She found that at the other campus it was easier because she had already worked at the campus for two years, and the teachers knew her. Being at two campuses was difficult because she found that she spent all of her time going to all of their planning meetings and running data for them. Her time was limited, so she could not get into classrooms very often. She modeled for some teachers when she was asked to do so by her administrators; however, her work was mostly determined by the expectations of the district. She rarely met with the principals to discuss campus expectations. Pam stated that she met with one of her principals every couple of months and never met with the other principal. The most stressful aspect of her job was developing a compatible working relationship with the other ICs on her campuses. One of her partners continuously scheduled staff development at one campus on days when she didn’t plan to be there, so Pam had to present. All of the instructional coaches shared an office, and that added to the mental strain. It had been better when they alternated days on the campuses, so that they could have their own space. She decided to leave because of the relationship with the other ICs on her campus. Although she would like to be an IC

again under different circumstances, she declared, “When the stress of walking in the office is worse than the job, you just have to do something different.” She would have stayed in the role if she could have been on one campus with different IC partners. She reiterated several times, “It’s a tough job.”

“Darcy”

Darcy is currently a junior high Algebra teacher at Junior High Campus N after a year and a half as a mathematics / science instructional coach for sixth, seventh, and eighth grades at Junior High Campus M in Garrett ISD. Junior High Campus M had approximately 880 students.

Table 17

Teacher Demographics for Junior High Campus M

	Count/Average	Percent
Professional Staff	68.9	81.5%
Teachers	54.1	64.0%
Professional Support	11.8	14.0%
Administration	3.0	3.6%
Educational Aides	15.6	18.5%
Teachers by Ethnicity and Sex		
Black	8.0	14.8%
Hispanic	6.0	11.1%
White	40.1	74.1%
American Indian	0.0	0.0%
Asian	0.0	0.0%
Males	13.0	24.1%
Females	41.1	75.9%
Teachers by Highest Degree Held		
Bachelors	39.0	72.1%
Masters	15.1	27.9%
Doctorate	0.0	0.0%
Teaching by Years of Experience		
Beginning Teachers	3.0	5.6%
1-5 Years Experience	20.0	37.0%
6-10 Years Experience	4.0	7.4%
11-20 Years Experience	13.7	25.3%
Over 20 Years Experience	13.4	24.7%

Note. 2014-15 Campus Profile Texas Academic Performance Report from Texas Education Association - reference link is not included to retain anonymity

After one semester of teaching mathematics at Campus M, an IC position opened up on her campus. The IC moved into an assistant principal position at another campus. After seeing the job posted on the district website, Darcy applied and was given the position. When asked about why she was interested in the position, she stated that when she saw the job description, she was “wishing that that there was someone like that to help me, whether it was with activities, implementing instruction, coming up with, the helpful side of it.” However, Darcy explained that at the time, even though there was a district job

description, principals defined the role and responsibilities based on the needs of the campus. She did not feel like she was helping the teacher because she spent most of her time creating Excel spreadsheets with test data and disaggregating the data. The ICs did not attend the weekly planning sessions or do much modeling in the classroom. When asked about times when she modeled lessons, she remarked, “It’s pretty sad when you can remember them on one hand.” Darcy and her language arts IC partner also created a school-wide tutoring program for their campus. Because that consumed her time, she was unable to assist teachers, as she wanted. Some of her other duties were: approving tests that the teachers created; attending district and campus meetings with the principal; attending brown bag lunches with parents and the principal; and attending after-school functions, such as the school carnival and school dances. She also had daily lunch duty. Darcy enjoyed learning about the role of an administrator and went back to school for her Principal Certification; however, these duties prevented her from working with or being in the classroom with teachers. Spending more time with data disaggregation and administrative duties than modeling in the classroom presented other problems. Darcy stated that because she had only been on the campus for a semester as a teacher it was challenging to build trust with the other teachers as an IC. The teachers were not convinced that she would “not be another administrator and not go back and tattle about a concern.” It was difficult for her to make them see that she was truly there to help them improve their craft. The teachers at her campus also did not have a clear understanding of the role of the instructional coach. Darcy added, “They just don’t think the instructional coaches do anything. They think it’s a cushy job.” The following year, the district changed the instructional coach model to where they were only responsible for one

subject, but they had two campuses. Darcy's child was at one of the junior highs, and she wanted to be near her. She also stated that it was difficult enough to build trust at one campus, much less two campuses. The district also added a technology component to the IC roles and responsibilities. Darcy shared that she felt inadequate with the technology component of the job. Her reasons for leaving were: the change in the model where she would have to be split between two campuses; the inability to see her daughter participating in school activities; and the addition of the technology component to the job description. Darcy shared that she would have stayed in the role if she had been able to work at one campus and responsible for one subject, like it is now.

Biography Briefs Summary

The previous biographies were included to provide context for the following data. The first four people, Elaina, Ashley, Haley, and Dakota remained in the position. The last four biographies, Brandi, Dana, Pam, and Darcy, were participants who were no longer ICs. At the time of the interviews, Dakota was only one of two junior high ICs left since 2009. Shortly after the interview Dakota left to take a higher-level position.

Interview and Survey Data Analysis

The following section will review the themes that emerged through the voices of the participants during face-to-face interviews and data collected through *The Instructional Coach Survey*. By triangulating the data, the themes were justified. The qualitative data were analyzed utilizing Grounded Theory, a methodology developed in 1967 by Glaser and Strauss (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Grounded Theory was an appropriate methodology because it allowed for themes and subthemes to arise. Four general themes emerged through these data sets:

Theme 1: *Challenges for Instructional Coaches*

Theme 2: *Perceptions of Structure and Hiring Practices of the ICs*

Theme 3: *Impacting Change – What Facilitates the Ability of ICs to Move*

Forward with the Vision of the Campus and District?

Theme 4: *Motivation to Remain in the Role*

In the following sections, each of the themes and subthemes will be described in detail.

Theme 1: Challenges for Instructional Coaches

Introduction to Theme 1. In both the survey and interview data, a multitude of challenges for ICs were revealed. The major challenges will be summarized through the subthemes of Theme 1, which include: (a) Ambiguity of the Role, (b) Unanticipated Aspects of the Job, (c) Time Constraints, (d) Work Environment, and (e) Facilitating Change.

Subthemes of Theme 1.

Ambiguity of the role.

At the district level. Both survey and interview data revealed that ICs were facing challenges with role ambiguity from district administration, campus administration, teachers, and within themselves. Instructional coaches who were hired at the beginning of this process discussed a lack of direction and focus from district administration. Their training at the district level was predominately on retrieving and disaggregating data. After a couple of years, the role evolved into a more content specific role, but ICs continued to be responsible for data disaggregation. Training was also provided on research-based practices, such as differentiated instruction and varying levels of questions with students. This training was then supposed to be provided by the ICs at the

campus level. Some interviewees expressed frustration with the lack of ability to go in depth with the teachers on any topic because of the many initiatives from the district. When discussing moving from district initiative to initiative without follow-through, Pam recalled, “Like writing levels of questions and differentiation. It’s only been four years. I don’t hear those words at all.” She provided the analogy, “It’s like a cat with a laser light.” Brandi also touched on a lack of district focus for ICs in the following comments:

In the beginning I don’t think they knew what to do with any of us. I ran reports and disaggregated data so much that that became second nature to me, and then when we switched over to the instructional role, it was like a brand new job. I had to learn something new all over again...Oh, I think in the beginning, with the data, I got so used to that that when we switched over to curriculum it was hard for me to make that switch because there were so many extra duties. I mean it wasn’t really as focused as I would have hoped. Every time we went to a meeting there was something else they wanted us, some sort of new initiative or something, and it was so spread out that we really couldn’t get in depth with the teachers about anything. It was sort of, you were bringing something new back to them every time, so they didn’t have time to absorb what we were doing.

Dana was not sure what to expect when she became an IC. She wished there was district uniformity to the role. This is evident in the following statements:

You know, I think when I initially went into it, I really wasn’t entirely sure what to expect. I remember going to some of the IC meetings, and kind of hearing what other people did, and things like that and thinking, “Wow, that is totally not how we do it at Campus F, AT ALL.” I think I knew that a lot of places around the

district didn't necessarily do it the same, but I thought it was unfortunate that more of them did not follow a similar model. I think maybe they do more so now. Having the idea of what the district wants out of an instructional coach, and having more people do things the same way, because I know some schools, when I was an IC, some ICs never interacted with students. Other schools you would have it to where they were pulling small groups with kids all the time. I think it depends on where you were. And I think it is unfortunate that more of them weren't doing things similarly to one another. I think if you want to maintain that model and have what you define as an instructional coach in Garrett ISD, there probably should be more uniformity in that. I don't think there is.

Comments from elementary survey participants echoed Dana's desire for more uniformity. One participant stated, "We need to decide what the role of the instructional coach should be. It's very difficult to be both an instructional specialist (content knowledge) and an instructional coach (works with teachers on best practices and behavior management)." Another survey participant responded to a question regarding challenges with the following remark, "a lack of understanding from admin about the demands of all that we do as IC's; District lack of understanding about the true role of an IC; District adding so much year after year."¹⁹ The participants' voices highlight the need for district focus regarding initiatives and clarity of roles and responsibilities when creating an IC position. Unfocused work, such as rolling out too many initiatives at once, lead to IC perceptions of ineffectiveness.

Campus administration. For some ICs a lack of district focus was compounded by a lack of administrative focus and direction at the campus level. Many ICs reported that

campus administrators did not know how to utilize them. Some principals would adhere closely to district guidelines, while other administrators would include additional responsibilities. Pam reflected:

We were so new. They didn't quite know what to do with us. Now they seem to have a good idea of what to do with the ICs, but they had just gone from one IC for all subjects to subject specific ICs, and that was a new thing. And we were at two schools, so some of the ICs were hired by one principal and the other ICs were hired by another principal. And so we were all thrown in together, and it was interesting.

On the other hand, all ICs who have remained in the position described working closely with the administrative team to define the position on their campus. By working together to create a common vision for the role, some ICs were able to overcome the challenges presented by the lack of district focus. For example, Elaina, her principal, assistant principal and partner IC had all been instructional coaches in Elaina's previous district, and their focus was on content. Before Garrett ISD created the instructional coach position, Elaina's principal was a maverick and created two spots on her campus for instructional coaches. Together they discussed the focus and details of the IC job. Elaina desired more uniformity at the district level and felt a disconnect between the district vision of the role and the vision of the role created at her campus; however, she was able to overcome her feelings of frustration because she worked closely with her principals to create a common vision of what her job should entail. She explained,

So, on our campus, day-to-day life, we weren't data coaches day-to-day every day. And if you looked at, even from the very beginning, like our meetings,

our coach meetings were very much data meetings. That's all we did during those meetings. And again, a lot of helpful things, you know how to run the programs, how to run the data and the reports. But at the beginning we didn't even really talk about curriculum and instruction at that point. But if you looked at the criteria for coaches, there was still a piece in there that talked about, I don't know if it said modeling specifically in the classroom, but there was still a piece that talked about curriculum and instruction as far as the coach expectations. And so, on my campus, my day-to-day life was not a data coach, even though that's what it looked like at our Friday meetings, and we got information about that. I used that information, but I didn't use that information every single day, all day long. Just like I do now, I use the data for data meetings, during PDR, during our professional development... But my day-to-day life even then, was on curriculum and instruction. And again, that came from my principal agreeing that that needed to be our focus. And because she had created two coaches from the very beginning, and we were split by content area from the beginning, she said, "That's why I did that. That's why I wanted 2 coaches split by content area, so that your focus could be curriculum and instruction." Um, so there was a little bit of a disconnect for me that, that was the frustrating part for me because I wanted those Friday meetings to have a curriculum piece as well. Because I knew that piece was written into our expectations, and on my campus that was a focus...

Even though district expectations had changed through the years, another participant, Haley had a very clear idea of what was expected of her as an IC at the campus level. Her administrators adhered closely to the roles and responsibilities outlined by the district.

I will have to tell you, on our campus, our principal when I first started was Randi and now Mary. They are very much to the do's and don'ts of the IC role. I do what's on that, the PD, the data, the conferences, going into classrooms and modeling, planning. I do not do RTI. I don't do discipline. I don't do any of that...

She added,

It seems like at the beginning I felt more just like the data person at the campus. Anything data came from me. And each year it was just like now we do data. Now we're doing uh supporting the teachers and planning. It just seems like each year we were adding something to what we had already done. I don't feel like I am as much the data person as I was in the beginning. I feel more as a resource for teachers, and they can come to me and talk to me. The professional development that we do on campus, that is for our campus. Teachers are realizing that it is not a cookie cutter thing that we are doing. We really go to what their needs are. So, I'm not sure if that answers your question, but that's how I feel that it has evolved. It's not as broad. I just feel like it is more defined now. I know exactly what my responsibilities are now.

Haley watched her role as an IC evolve. She found it beneficial to have administrators who followed strict adherence to district guidelines. When the district developed more clear-cut roles for ICs, Haley became more comfortable in this position. These data suggest that the direction and focus provided by both the district and campus administrators play a role in IC self-efficacy.

To be or not to be — a part of the administrative team. ICs were on a spectrum when it came to being a part of the administrative team on campus, and they viewed this

aspect of the job quite differently. Some ICs never met with their campus admin team, and other ICs, like Ashley, met with their administrative team daily for working lunches, as well as once a week for a couple of hours on Monday mornings. Ashley enjoyed being a part of the administrative team. She explained,

I do enjoy being a part of admin because I'm in on a lot of the creativity, like "What is our theme for next year? What can we do for that?" I do like that part, but there are some drawbacks to it because as an IC I shouldn't be --- and sometimes in the past I think we were seen as that, but now I think we have crossed that bridge with our new faculty over the last two years, and it hasn't been a problem. But before that it was a problem.

Ashley also stated,

We have a five-year focus plan. And so we know that year 1, year 1 and 2 we are working on this, year 3 and 4 we are working on this, and then year 5 we are working on our little bubble that year. When as being a part of admin and a part of that five-year plan and knowing where we are going. 'Cause I know the plan all the way out. Teachers don't. They only know what we are working on and maybe the next one where we are heading. So because I know that, when I'm in meetings, and they say something, I'll always say, "What keeps you from that?" Because I know we are headed to that bubble down the road.

Because Ashley mentioned that being a part of the administrative team had been problematic in the beginning, she was asked how she gained the teachers' trust. She explained that it took four years to earn their trust, and she was intentional about what she said to the teachers, as shared here:

I tell them at the beginning of every year, I sit on that admin team only to help with certain things. I am not there. If we are talking data and you say, “I am trying. I just don’t know how to do it.” I don’t go back and tell Tim, “Oh she doesn’t know how to do this.” That’s not my thing. My thing is to help you be better at what you want to be at because you might run to him and tell him, “Well, she didn’t know how to do that either, because I don’t know how to do everything.” I trust that by I think the way I crossed the bridge is by vulnerability and letting them know I don’t know everything, and I don’t want you running and tell him everything that I don’t know. And I’m not going to tell him everything you don’t know. And I think when it doesn’t come back to them, they don’t hear it or see it in somebody’s eyes, the expressions, then they can trust you because they haven’t heard it.

On the other hand, Elaina had a strong, positive professional relationship with her administrative team, yet she was adamant about not having any duties that would give teachers the impression she was part of administration. She believed it to be important to be seen as an equal with teachers. She presented her perspective in the following comment,

We have, both my IC partner and I, we have a duty just like classroom teachers do. You know, like someone has car rider duty, or daycare duty or bus rider duty, or hallway duty. So we have those kinds of duties like all year long. My partner and I have a duty like that, just like classroom teachers do, which is fine with me because I want classroom teachers to see me not above them because I am afraid that if I didn’t have a duty like they did, I don’t want them to say, “Who is she

and why don't they have duties?" So I'm happy to do that. But on the flip-side of that, I have also been very vocal, really to all of my principals, even when I was a coach in another district, I let them know that I don't want teachers to see me as an administrator. So any time something comes up, that even a little bit seems like it would be an administrator duty, I let my administrators know that and let them know that I am uncomfortable with that because I am afraid that teachers will take that as me being in an administrator position. So, we don't have, and there's always been the administrators have been very understanding of that. I said, "I'm going to lose the trust. And they're not--I want teachers to see me as one of them." And I say that. I say that to the teachers. "I'm not an administrator. I don't get paid as an administrator. I get paid off of the teacher salary schedule. And at least for me, I can say, my degree is not in administration. My degree is in Curriculum and Instruction. So, I'm very adamant about that. My principals are used to that now, and they'll say that. They'll say, "Are you comfortable doing this or do you think it's going to look like you are an administrator?" And sometimes I'll say, "Oh, it's fine, and it'll be ok." And other times, I'll say, "Yeh, I don't really feel comfortable doing that."

Based on the comments of the participants, some ICs enjoyed being a part of the administrative team, and perceived it to be beneficial, while others were strictly against being on the administrative team and believed it to be detrimental to their relationships and ability to work effectively with teachers. Although conflicting viewpoints were evident, the data did not suggest that one viewpoint was more likely to cause ICs to quit. Instead, what seemed to be important was the common vision between the IC and their

administrators regarding the roles they played on campus. The ICs who remained in the position had a common vision with their administrative team regarding their roles and responsibilities. When Elaina was asked why she remained in the position, she responded,

I have to say, more than anything, it is because of the support of my campus. I think if, really all of my administrators, because I've had several over the years, so I've been really lucky that all of my administrators have had the same vision for what they wanted this position to look like. The expectations for what I do, and for what they want a coach to do, have not really changed from principal to principal. Each one of my principals has embraced what we have already set up, what we were doing. That's not to say they didn't add to it, or say, "Oh, I have an idea or a suggestion," but the expectations have stayed pretty consistent. And that has really helped. I think, if every time a new principal came in, if they each had their own vision and the position drastically changed, that would be very hard because to have a drastic change so many times, it would be hard to know what to expect and what to do. That would be hard for the teachers too. And really it is that more than anything to have the support of the administrators, no matter who it is. They have supported us and our vision. And then, really the teachers. The teachers have supported the position too... I feel overall that our teachers support the position, and support the two of us as coaches. So that also helps. I think that's the biggest reason. I think without the teachers' overall support on my campus, and without the administrators' support, that's who you live with day

to day, all day long every day. So without their support, and if my philosophy was very different from either of those two groups, that would be very difficult to stay in the position. And, also the district changing our Friday meetings. Like we were talking about, they used to be pure data meetings every time we met that's all we did. That's not to say there's not a place for that, but they also shifted their view to what they wanted that role to look like, and so that also helped as well. But really, it comes down to the campus, having the campus support more than anything.

Despite the disconnect between district and campus expectations, Elaina thrived on her campus because she had a common vision of her role with her administrators. The ICs and administrators created the role together and teachers were clear on what to expect. Haley also reported having a strong relationship and common understanding with her principal regarding her roles and responsibilities.

On the other end of the spectrum, some ICs never met with their administrative team. Lack of administrative support and direction at the campus level created strife for teachers and ICs. One junior high survey respondent stated that her greatest challenge was,

Working for an administration that does not understand or support the true role of an instructional coach. On my campus we are not in classrooms at all and were told by admin that we had to be "invited" into the classroom. Teachers on my campus see having an IC come in your room to observe as a punishment not a regular occurrence. We are also not included in any leadership meetings and do not meet with

admin.

Another junior high IC illuminated difficulties created by role ambiguity,

The greatest challenge I have faced in two years is the misunderstanding of the job. When the principal does not give you direction or introduce to the staff as who you are and what you are there to do and help with it is as if the teachers come up with their own job title for you, and there are 12 different ones. Mass confusion follows and relationships are no longer formed.

And yet, another junior high IC responded to a survey question by saying,

Occasionally something will come up that does not fit into my job description. I prefer not to go into specifics. It has made me question whether everyone truly understands the purpose of an instructional coach. I think our roles (what we are here for and what we are NOT here for) needs to be reviewed with administration, counselors, and teachers each school year.

The ability to build relationships and the development of a district focus seemed to help ICs with teacher perceptions of the job. Some ICs were granted more leniencies from their teachers than others; however, most ICs described teachers as reluctant or resistant to any changes at first. As the role became more defined, teachers became more comfortable. As evident through what Brandi shared in this memory:

When I shifted from instructional technologist, and none of us knew what was going to happen, so as we developed the data analysis, I just sort of shifted the technology into the data analysis. So, I would show them how to use Excel spreadsheets to sort of analyze the data and everything, so it was almost the two jobs combined. They [the teachers] sort of saw the old job and the new job sort of

merging. And then when we switched over to curriculum, they had the patience with me, they gave me time to learn what my new role was because they knew that I was trying to figure it out. I would just tell them, I was like, "I don't know what's going on right now guys." We had a relationship, so they understood.

Another IC, Haley commented a similar perspective,

I think at first people weren't as accepting because they didn't know exactly what this position was, but as the years have moved on and the role has been more defined and centralized and people really understanding why I am there...I think that has helped with my confidence. The newer teachers is who I attacked, not attacked but went to first, because I didn't have that history with them, and I think with working with the newer teachers and the other teachers seeing what was going on helped draw them in to ask me to go in their classroom and help them. It also helped build my confidence in getting into classrooms.

The stories shared by these ICs show that role ambiguity can be a major challenge. Some of the issues include: teachers creating their own job description for ICs; principals adding duties which make being in classrooms difficult; teachers not "inviting" ICs into their classrooms; and teachers viewing ICs as evaluative. However, the data also show that if ICs build a strong relationship with teachers, these problems are not insurmountable.

Teachers. ICs also reported issues with teachers who were unclear of IC roles and responsibilities. It was evident that some campus administrators lacked clarity when communicating the roles and responsibilities of ICs to teachers. The ambiguity of the IC role created teacher confusion, resistance, and even anger. Many ICs perceived that

teachers feel threatened by the IC. The role is not supposed to be evaluative in a formal sense (not included in any formal data for principals), yet coaches are to observe and offer suggestions, which is to some extent evaluative. The perception of teachers viewing ICs as a threat was evident in the following comments from the elementary, junior and senior high school ICs. One elementary IC listed four recurring issues that were evident in both interview and survey data:

- Building relationships with those resistant to coaching
- Building trust
- Not feeling supported by administration; and
- Changing the perception of coaches as evaluative versus supportive/true coaching; If you are receiving coaching, it means you're doing something wrong versus a sign that you strive for growth

One participant, Pam, described a few junior high teachers as willing to learn and having no problems with her entering their rooms and sharing new ideas. On the other hand, “Other ones that saw me as, I’m going to evaluate you. I’m a threat... and then there were some that thought they knew it all and didn’t need any help.” Dakota stated that teachers thought ICs had a “cushy job.” This presents a potential divisive perspective between ICs and teachers that could generate resistance. From the quantitative data set, a high school survey respondent stated that her greatest challenge came from:

...the anger/frustration that some teachers have with the role of the IC. Also the fact that the IC really has no power/authority- there are things that you see and want to be able to say, more than just suggestions... but we are not administrators and what we should say and do is limited. It can be tough to find a way to

approach a concern without alienating the teacher.

If roles and responsibilities of the IC are ambiguous, how do ICs know if they are successful? One junior high IC stated, “My other challenge is trying to determine what makes a successful day. While teaching, I knew when I had a good/bad day but it's not as clear-cut in this role.” Not feeling successful can potentially lead coaches to leave the role and venture back into the classroom.

Unanticipated aspects of the job. From speaking with the ICs and reading their responses to the survey, it was clear there was a lack of alignment of IC expectations of the job and tasks given by the district and/or campus-level administrators. Chval et al. (2010) spoke to the idea that coaches develop a lack of self-efficacy if their roles and responsibilities are mismatched with the instructional coach identity. Identity in this case refers to IC perceptions of “What should I be doing versus what I am asked to do?” Table 18 highlights the diversity of roles and responsibilities of instructional coaches in Garrett ISD. As Table 18 shows, some responsibilities are required of 95% - 100% of the coaches in the district, such as: planning and presenting staff development; creating or assisting with creating assessments; observing and modeling lessons; finding resources for teachers; attending lesson planning meetings with teachers; and generating data reports. It is clear, however, that some coaches have responsibilities that others do not have, such as: coordinating district or state assessments; planning and attending curriculum nights; working with students in small groups; substituting for teachers who are absent or in meetings; addressing student discipline issues; attending or facilitating Response to Intervention (RTI) meetings; and any other added duties.

Table 18

Roles and Responsibilities for Instructional Coaches in Garrett ISD

Roles and Responsibilities	Elementary		Junior High		High School	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Planning staff development	48	100.0%	19	95.0%	22	100.0%
Presenting staff development	48	100.0%	19	95.0%	22	100.0%
Creating tests or helping others create tests	47	97.9%	19	95.0%	21	95.5%
Coordinating district or state tests	25	52.1%	5	25.0%	11	50.0%
Generating data reports	48	100.0%	20	100.0%	22	100.0%
Facilitating data meetings	48	100.0%	18	90.0%	20	90.9%
Planning and attending curriculum nights	41	85.4%	9	45.0%	8	36.4%
Modeling lessons	48	100.0%	20	100.0%	21	95.5%
Observing lessons	47	97.9%	19	95.0%	22	100.0%
Providing feedback after observations	43	89.6%	18	90.0%	22	100.0%
Working with students in small groups	25	52.1%	10	50.0%	15	68.2%
Attending Response to Intervention (RTI) meetings	19	39.6%	0	0.0%	3	13.6%
Facilitating RTI meetings	6	12.5%	0	0.0%	5	22.7%
Lesson planning with teachers	48	100.0%	20	100.0%	21	95.5%
Meeting with administration	47	97.9%	19	95.0%	22	100.0%
Substituting for teachers who are absent or in meetings	21	43.8%	11	55.0%	14	63.6%
Attending scheduled IC meetings	48	100.0%	20	100.0%	22	100.0%
Attending professional development of choice	47	97.9%	20	100.0%	22	100.0%
Off campus working with other ICs on projects (not IC meetings)	40	83.3%	18	90.0%	21	95.5%
Finding resources for teachers	48	100.0%	20	100.0%	22	100.0%
Working with individual teachers on strategies, classroom management, etc.	48	100.0%	18	90%	22	100.0%
Addressing student behavior issues	24	50.0%	9	45%	12	54.5%
Extra duties (bus duty, hall duty, lunch duty, etc.)	40	83.3%	12	60%	8	36.4%
Other	29	60.4%	6	30%	8	36.4%

Most jobs have unanticipated aspects and instructional coaching is no different. The researcher wanted to delve deeper into this area to discern if data would emerge as to reasons ICs leave the role. One of the interview questions was, "How do your roles and responsibilities match or differ from your expectations of the job?" Several ICs shared that they chose to be an IC to help teachers grow professionally. However, there were obstacles to overcome. One impediment that emerged from the data was adult behavior. Dakota was shocked by the reality of adult behavior versus what she thought it would be. She shared,

I thought, 'This would be really great working with teachers' and really, you know, helping them. I thought it was going to--I did not think it was going to be what it was. (laughs). It's not what anyone expects it's going to be. You don't know how adults are going to act...I didn't know that they could act like children, and that they tattle on each other, and that they'd cry over the littlest things. Those are the things that really shocked me. That took me about three years, I think, to really absorb. And the backstabbing, And that they don't behave, either. I mean, you know, somebody might wear jeans on a day that they're not supposed to. None of that. That's all minor, minor stuff, but I mean like behave with what they were saying to kids or behave with what they were doing in their classroom with lessons that they weren't supposed to be doing. And I was like, 'Oh my gosh!' I had no idea that people acted that way.

Dakota also had to accept the notion that some teachers did not like her. She could not understand the reasoning behind their disdain. She shared that her "world was kind of shattered" when she learned that teachers did not like her due to jealousy or thinking that

she always got what she wanted. She lamented, “I live in a world where I assume that everyone likes me, and everything is fine.” All ICs who were interviewed and most of the survey participants reported unexpected, difficult relational aspects of the role. Dakota shared another story of an IC who stopped coaching due to the behavior of the adults with which she worked.

She got along OK with administration, but they were a little bit more authoritative, and wanted her to go tell a teacher, “Don’t do that any more. Stop it.” And she said, “I can’t do that.” And then, it opened her eyes to see that all these people she thought were her friends, that were her teaching partners, they didn’t behave, and they didn’t do the lesson plans. They didn’t do all these things that were expected of them. I know that it’s so hard if you, like I have so many teachers who think that everybody just does what they are supposed to do, and it is kind of heartbreaking because a lot of people come into this profession thinking everybody’s going to be a teacher. They are here because they want to. And when you get to be around people who are so negative, it’s really heartbreaking. So Lacy is an example of that because I watched her heart break. She couldn’t believe that people acted so terribly. She felt powerless and she didn’t have the tools to try and do anything to change it with the teachers or the administrators. Ashley also believed that she was entering into a profession where she could impact teaching practices; however, other roles and responsibilities prevented her from working with teachers in their classrooms. This sentiment is clear in her comments:

Well, that’s an interesting question because the evolution of the job itself has

changed. When I first took it, the expectation was I was going to get to work with teachers a lot in the classroom, sharing what I know, sharing what the district wants them to know. But, what it turned out to be was a lot of data disaggregation and spitting things out that the teachers didn't have the ability to chart because of the knowledge. Does that make sense? It wasn't at their fingertips. But they had never had that training. That to me was not an expectation of where I thought I was going, but since then, the job has evolved to where I want to be.

Ashley alluded to changes Garrett ISD had made to the role of IC that helped her feel more successful. The district is currently providing ICs with more content-specific support. As noted earlier, the district has moved the IC role along a continuum from being data-coaches with responsibilities of other generic PD to content specific information. See the following diagram (Figure 1) for the evolution of the role for elementary ICs in Garrett ISD.

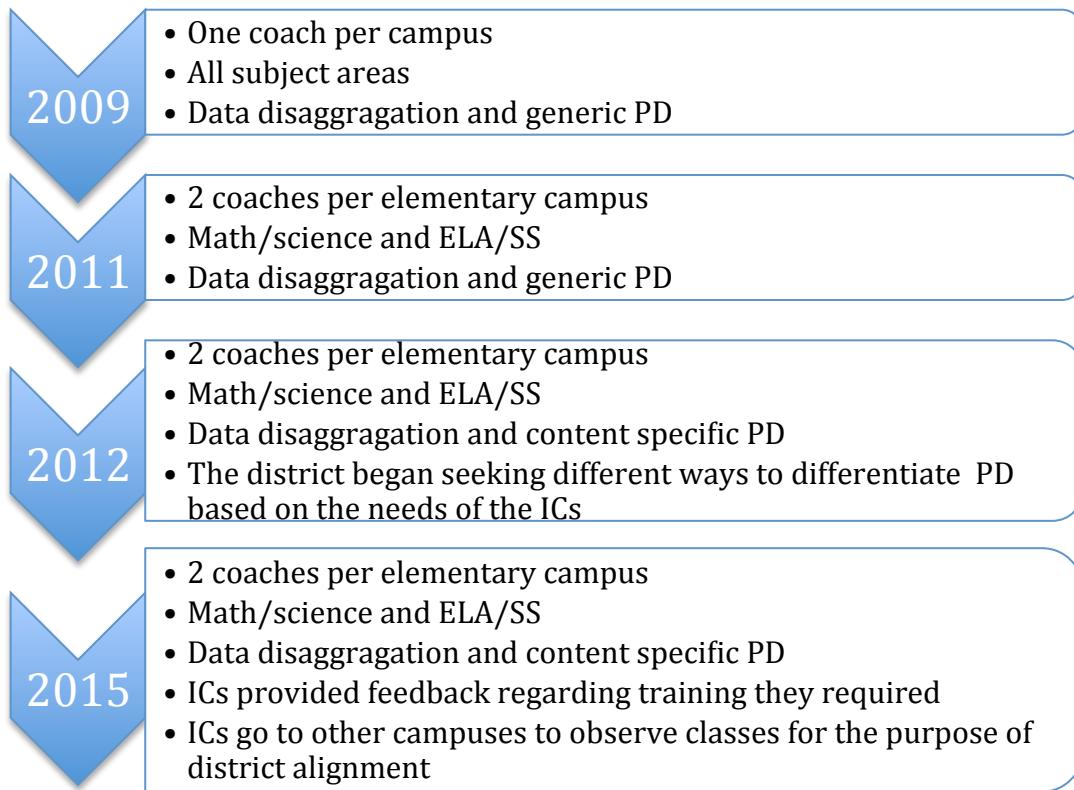


Figure 1. Evolution of IC Roles in Garrett ISD

All eight interviewees shared stories regarding ways the job differed from their expectations. The most difficult aspect appeared to be relational. ICs grappled with the adjustment of working on a team to being an island, all alone. They were no longer trusted members of a teacher team, and most were not a part of the administrative team. They were alone, trying to impact change. Before they could begin the work as change agents, they worked on building trust, overcoming resistance, and learning how to work with teachers who “don’t behave.”

The *Instructional Coach Survey* posed a question about unanticipated experiences and/or responsibilities when beginning the role of IC. One elementary survey participant responded, “I never expected the wide array of responsibilities that accompany this

position." Other participants' responses clarified that response by listing the jobs required of them: preparing and presenting at all staff meetings; ordering materials; substituting for teachers while they attended meetings or if they were absent; coordinating after school programs; handling discipline issues; coordinating testing; monitoring and writing lesson plans; and providing documentation for Title I professional development activities. A full list of responses from elementary, junior high, and senior high school ICs can be found in Appendix H. The following elementary IC survey responses further illustrated frustrations regarding the instructional coach identity:

- I thought that district meetings were places where I would receive information that needed to be brought back to campus. I like our district meetings, and I appreciate the time to collaborate, but sometimes I feel like I leave with even more things piled onto my plate, and it can be overwhelming. I knew that the role of IC would include managing a lot of moving parts. I wanted to have more time to spend in teachers' classrooms, and I feel there isn't enough time to plan those lessons and get into the classrooms to model. Most of the time I feel like I am just barely keeping my head above the water with deadlines - not nearly enough time to do the things that I thought I'd get to do.
- When I first became an IC, the focus was mostly data preparation and analysis, and curriculum alignment, for which I was extremely well prepared. The duties shifted to providing professional development mostly in general teaching, and then moved to providing content specific training. I did not expect to provide professional development to teachers without receiving "high-quality" training by primary sources first. The majority of my training initially came from other

people in the district who were trained by someone else. In my previous districts, I was sent to national conferences or attended trainings by experts, not by someone within my district who had been trained. I also expected the district to have consistency among the elementary campuses and have vertical alignment documents, such as a recommended pacing guide, a Curriculum At a Glance (which was new last year), a TEKS verification document, common unit assessments (not District Level Assessments), etc. I am surprised that a district this large did not have these resources provided. It is a waste of time and energy for each grade level in 37 elementary schools to create a recommended pacing guide (roadmaps) for each unit.

- As an IC there is so much that I do. I understand the importance of everything, but I feel that our main priority should be in the classroom and that is honestly done the least amount of time.
- Between admin meeting, planning and conducting Learning Meetings every Monday, preparing for Curriculum & Instruction Leaders Meeting every other Tuesday, running data reports to go over with my admin team every time a Common Assessment and District Level Assessment has been taken, planning all day Tuesday, helping with AWARE issues, and book studies, there is very little time left to be in the classroom.
- Being a new campus, our teams were working hard on building relationships. I spent a lot of time listening to teachers, validating feelings, mentoring them, and helping to work out relationships. Didn't think I would see so much crying, but it really helped me grow professionally and emotionally. I work with wonderful

people and I value who they are.

- I did not expect:
 - teachers to refuse to do district/administrative directives
 - to do more duties than a classroom teacher or para professional
 - to do at-risk report (I don't have to do this now.)
 - to do various reports that should have been completed by an administrator
 - to be told to do things for a teacher because he/she said it was not his/her responsibility
 - to buy so many resources for teachers because they need the resources but there are no school funds to purchase them

One participant summed up the subtheme of *Unanticipated Aspects of the Job* and her perceptions of ineffectiveness with this statement: "I didn't know what to expect, but everything I do seems to 'apply' to my position. I think there is just not enough of me, or I'm not organized/capable to cover/do it all." These data support the theory that ICs may leave their position if they are given too many roles and responsibilities causing them to feel unsuccessful.

A couple of junior high survey participants shared similar responses to the elementary ICs. For example, one mentioned "filling in for teachers who are on leave," while another IC was not aware of the extra duties that would be expected of her. One major difference emerged in the junior high responses. Junior high ICs assumed the teachers with which they were working knew "best practices" for teaching; whereas, elementary ICs expected to work with teachers on research based strategies. The following are a few junior high responses to the question about unanticipated roles and

responsibilities:

- What to do with a teacher when the instructional practices taking place in their classroom is well below standard. What to do with data when a teacher might be cheating. What to do with a teacher when I have done everything in my power to grow them and there is no improvement. I also love what I do. I love that students still know who I am because of how often I am present in the classrooms and the relationships I have built with teachers to see effective instruction take place.
- Assisting struggling teachers; teaching best practices to teachers - I thought they already knew them
- I was not prepared to deal with the challenge of educators who do not have a passion for student success. Naively, I walked in to this position believing that most, if not all educators had a heart and mind dedicated to building and growing successful learners.

High school survey responses were similar to both elementary and junior high responses. Several junior and high school ICs were surprised by the “massive” amount of time they spent planning STAAR End of Course remediation and intervention for the students on their campuses. Other high school ICs discussed an array of duties including: data disaggregation; test coordination; newsletter writing; video editing; technology assistance; substituting for teachers; and tardy station responsibilities. The relational aspects associated with the job emerged in the following unexpected issues shared by these high school ICs:

- Issues having to enforce/explain district and campus policies to teachers
- I truly wasn't prepared for the type of resistance that you get from some of the

teachers when it comes to following district/state expectations.

- In a sense, I was not expecting to mediate disagreements among team members. I somewhat expected team leaders and /or Department Chairs (DCs) to address these issues.

One high school IC candidly responded, “I had no idea what to expect when I took this job!” The comments of the ICs lend credence to the importance for districts and campus administrators to have distinct roles and responsibilities in place for ICs, and those expectations should be clearly communicated to all personnel involved. By doing so, teachers may be less confused, frustrated and resistant to the help offered by ICs, relieving ICs of some stress and anxiety.

Time Constraints. The lack of time to complete daily tasks and professional goals and the impact on IC self-efficacy came up in every interview and in the survey data. An elementary survey participant shared her feelings of ineffectiveness when she stated, “Being pulled in so many directions makes it very difficult to feel like you are successful.” There were several facets discussed within the subtheme *Time Constraints*. One element discussed was logistical rather than workload. For example, some ICs struggle with when to provide PD. If they present PD before school, after school, or during teacher planning periods, teachers feel that ICs are encroaching on their personal time. This is evident in teacher attitudes during the PD. One elementary IC shared that she did not know ‘how to do staff development in the original school day without a teacher feeling like it’s taking away from their time to plan/decompress, etcetera.’ Another logistical issue involved planning with teams. This was particularly evident at the elementary level where ICs were planning for more than one subject area because this

required more than one day for planning per team. A couple of the elementary survey responses regarding time as a challenge were:

- The job is TOO big for one individual. I am responsible to support 5 grade levels in 3 different subjects. There is very little time for me to meet with teachers to support the district and campus goals. As I stated before I work around the clock and still feel ineffective. I do not have much, if any, time to spend in classrooms to observe or coach. ...I contemplate if this job is purposeful and impactful given the amount of duties the coaches have. I hesitate to leave the position because I am the fourth coach in the last five years. I feel that there can be no change without consistency. I adore my administration and know that they rely on the coaches for so much. If I left, they would have to start all over.
- Trying to do it all really! I have multiple ideas, lots of new learning to share and getting time to share with teachers either through PDs or Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) is very hard. I meet to plan with teachers three days of the week. I need time to study ahead, look for time to be in the classroom, work with new teachers, support teachers with classroom management etc.
- Providing support to grade levels that have trios or quads has been very difficult. They have the same planning & PDR time, but there is only one of me. I'm trying to meet everyone's needs but it seems impossible.
- I feel it is very important to be in the classrooms observing lessons and providing feedback. It is difficult for that to happen on a regular basis with planning and implementing staff development regularly, attending weekly planning for all teams, and completing teacher requests for resources and assessments.

The prior comments addressed logistical issues. Other elementary ICs expressed the frustration of not accomplishing tasks or meeting the needs of teachers. The following bulleted items are elementary IC survey responses:

- Time...there is not enough time in the day!! The demands from our jobs cause an overwhelming level of frustration for ICs and teachers alike. There are many tasks that prevent us from being able to always fulfill the goal we set upon entering this profession, growing/teaching students.
- I would say keeping up with balancing my daily workload for my teachers and any and everything my principal needed me to do. Having to hire staff after the school year started because our enrollment grew so much was difficult because many of the hires were put on growth plans and working with them took so much of my time each week and preparing for state assessments at the same time.
- The lack of structure in this job is very challenging. Many times I have many tasks going on at once and at the end of the day, I have not mastered one of them. That bothers me. Multi-tasking is not time efficient for me. I arrive to work with a plan to accomplish tasks however, something always comes up - admin request to cover duty, teachers needing assistance, behavior issues, etc., and my daily plan is delayed.
- Thinking that you can make a to-do list, but knowing your stuff won't get done.

One survey respondent at the elementary level shared that ICs were contending with the roles and responsibilities of both a content specialist and an instructional coach.

She said,

Trying to be an instructional coach and an instructional specialist is way too much. If you spend time planning with teams, you don't have much time coaching teachers and vice versa. Add collecting and sharing data with teams to your day just makes it overwhelming.

A junior high IC expressed discomfort due to an internal pressure to accomplish more to help the teachers, as can be seen in these remarks,

I feel pulled in so many directions --- I need to assist teachers. I have assignments from admin. I have assignments from the district level, and I have tasks I may be working on with other ICs. I like being involved in many different areas, but sometimes I feel like not everyone realizes that we are doing so much in so many different places and that may be a reason why a 24-hour turn around time is not reasonable. (Not that I've had a problem with that specifically...I just sometimes feel like, "Oh I wish I could get that to you sooner," and feel bad if I can't.)

The junior and senior high ICs presented yet another aspect of the subtheme *Time*. The comments of the participants centered on the idea that implementing change requires time and patience. A junior high respondent said a challenge was "looking at the long term; I can't 'fix' everything now," and a high school IC noted that she had difficulty "having patience with the time it takes to implement instructional change."

As ICs forged ahead through the murky waters of this job, they had to learn how to manage their time differently than when they were classroom teachers. All three levels of ICs shared difficulties managing their time in this unstructured setting. One junior high participant declared, "Time management is my greatest challenge. With so many responsibilities, I find it difficult to squeeze everything into a 10-hour workday." An

elementary survey participant also mentioned, “The greatest challenge is juggling the multitude of responsibilities (in a timely manner) while still maintaining a positive attitude, a flexible schedule to address the immediate needs of the teachers.” A comment from a high school IC paralleled those of the others when she stated her greatest challenge was, “trying to balance the priorities of my curriculum coordinators, my campus principal, and the teams of teachers with whom I work.”

The statements of the ICs provide evidence that several aspects of the subtheme *Time* impacted their perceptions of effectiveness in this role. Those elements included: a heavy and diverse workload; logistical issues; learning new time management skills; and coping with the understanding that change is a process and cannot be accomplished in a short amount of time.

Work Environment. Another subtheme that became apparent within the theme *Challenges* was *Work Environment*. The following data unveiled campus level and district level concerns. Physical environment was not an issue for these ICs. The concerns that emerged were situations that created psychological, emotional, or relational issues.

Campus administrators. A few ICs from all levels reported a challenging work environment due to negative relationships with campus administrators and/or a lack of support or lack of feeling valued. One example presented by ICs was resentment over pay. When the IC role began, they worked the same number of days and had the same pay scale as teachers. Most ICs reported taking a pay cut because they no longer received extra stipends, like the \$1,200 Team Leader stipend. This was an issue that impacted them psychologically because they were still required to attend Team Leader meetings before or after contract hours, yet they were making less money. One elementary IC

debated, “Since I am only on a teacher's salary, I often question why I am spending so much more time doing work outside of school hours than when I was a very dedicated and hardworking classroom teacher.” Another participant responded, “The pay is not commensurate with the knowledge and skill necessary, time demands, or educational level achieved required for the position.” Dakota shared that this year ICs at the junior and senior high levels were able to be athletic coaches after school. She added, “Next year that will be taken away. Because they will lose the money, they will not stay. I lost a \$1200 Team Leader stipend to take this job.” To help show ICs that they are appreciated and valued, the district added five additional workdays to the calendar for ICs and gave them five “Swap Days.” Swap Days are contract days that ICs can take off in exchange for working five days outside of contract time. Campus administrators must approve these days. Dakota described the psychological impact of Swap Days when she said,

When we got the Swap Days added, I thought, “You know what? This makes me feel rewarded for some of the summer work.” And so that helped. And now we have the five additional days that we are being paid for, and that does help. It makes you think like, ‘I am being seen as someone who is doing more than what a teacher is doing.’

Swap Days added a feeling of value for some ICs; however, not all principals approved of Swap Days and denied ICs this opportunity. Three ICs recounted attending a summer PD for coaches and said they were denied a Swap Day for the same PD approved for other ICs by principals at other campuses. This led to IC resentment and feeling devalued, creating an unhealthy work environment.

The following elementary survey responses provide more detailed examples of

relational issues between ICs and campus administrators:

- With my previous principal, district curriculum was not being implemented and teachers were not held accountable for the required number of PDAS/KDAS professional development hours. It simply wasn't a part of her agenda. Therefore, teachers were not expected or required to attend Reading/Writing/Literacy Summit. Because of this, our campus is four years behind. A lack of support from administration presented my biggest challenge.
- Administration does not respect me, or the teachers.
- It is also hard sometimes knowing where I stand with administration. I am a person who needs feedback - good or bad. When you don't often get a lot of that it is really hard to know where you stand or if the decisions you've made are going to be supported or not.
- Lack of understanding from Admin about the demands of all that we do as IC's.

This junior high survey participant echoed the elementary IC's need for administrative follow-through:

I love my school and the admin team, and for the most part I feel very supported by them. Sometimes, however, I think I would feel more supported if there was a bit more follow-through from them. I have limited authority, and the teachers know that, so there are some occasions where I need administrative backup/follow-through.

ICs who lacked support or follow-through from campus administrators perceived themselves to be less effective in bringing about change on their campus than those with support. The feeling of inefficacy can lead to ICs leaving the profession.

Partner ICs. One of the most critical relationships appeared to be between ICs who worked together on a campus. Two of the four ICs interviewed left the position due to irreconcilable differences with the other ICs with whom they worked. Brandi recounted these painful memories:

People tell me they saw it. Like teachers would come to me and say, "We can tell how she is acting towards you," which was sort of embarrassing because you are trying to hide it and knowing you are not doing it well. There were many nights of tears at home for me because it was very stressful. Just the way she treated me, it was sort of, I don't know, what do they call it. I can't even think of the word now. Um, it was that kind of hidden animosity.

Pam also described her experiences with partner ICs:

One was competitive. One was doing it because she liked the title. She had no clue what she was doing, and she didn't want to admit that she didn't know what she was doing. And it was just very uncomfortable for me. She would say things that weren't true, and when it came time to do staff development, she would disappear.

Pam added:

You know, you get to the point that you're used to working by yourself as a teacher. You know, even in my previous district, I was an IC by myself. I was just math, and we only had math ICs at our school. And all of a sudden, I'm thrown into this office. And the first year wasn't bad because we alternated days, like sometimes we were together, but not all of the time. Well, then one principal decided that he didn't want that. He wanted all three of us at the same time

everywhere. And it was just like, "No." And, you know, you put your big girl panties on and deal with it, but if you don't like it, find something else to do.

Dakota explained the importance of the IC partner support system in these remarks:

...you just have to talk it [issues you are having with teachers] out, so either talk it out with another instructional coach or with an administrator. When I was the IC for the whole school in the beginning, it was very difficult because you had, now I have a team. There are four of us at a campus. So we have other ICs. We laugh and talk about all these crazy things that happen, but then I didn't, and I know that is why a lot of ICs did not continue, because they no longer had a support system. They just, it was them and administrators, and they didn't always get along with the administrators. Um, but I got along with mine really well, which made a huge difference. So I could go into their offices and say, "What is going on?" you know and like talk it all out and go, "OK, I'm done," and then leave. You know, that makes a huge difference. And then, when I became split between Junior High D and M, I then gained a Science IC and an ELA IC, so now we had, I had two people that I could talk to. That makes a huge difference, just to have somebody to talk to about it all.

The stories of these interviewees are evidence of the importance of a positive relationship between ICs on a campus. A contentious relationship between these individuals is powerful enough to cause some ICs to return to the classroom. The ICs that left maintained that they would have remained in the position if they could have their own space in which to retreat.

Teachers. A positive IC relationship with teachers was another important element

of the work environment. There were several components to teacher relationships, such as: (a) teacher confusion regarding the IC role; (b) teacher resistance to district or state mandates; (c) teacher ignorance of need for assistance; (d) teacher negativity; and (e) dysfunctional teams.

ICs shared that it took from one year to many years to build the relationships needed to work with teachers on their campuses. Ashley shared that it took four years for her to gain the trust of the teachers on her campus. When asked about greatest challenges, one elementary IC had this to say about the importance of building relationships, “As a teacher, you get to create and cultivate new relationships with a brand new crop of kids each year. As IC it's not the same level of turnover, and relationships are even more crucial.” Other challenges for this IC included, “pushback, comparisons to previous IC, and the realization that not everyone did things the way I did.” Some of the struggles shared by elementary ICs which support this theme are:

- Teachers who do not want to implement the district's vision...Planning PD when some people think that they do not need to grow professionally. What they are doing is "working," why change? Having all of the district PD offered over the summer. Many teachers feel it's voluntary, and then I don't have buy-in. If they don't go to Summit, it is hard to know if we have a common vocabulary. I work around the clock to support the teachers, and I often do not feel valued by teachers. They LOVE me to make things or get resources. They do not value the time spent in PDR, Vertical Teams, or any staff development. Please know that this is not my whole staff. I do have many teachers who seek me out and value my support and experience.

- My greatest challenge is working with teams of teachers who are resistant to school-wide expectations. Knowing how to effectively communicate with people who hate the content that I am talking to them about has been my greatest challenge.
- Working with struggling/expert teachers; building relationships with those resistant to coaching - building trust; not feeling supported by administration; changing the perception of coaches as evaluative versus supportive (true coaching) - coaching means you're doing something wrong versus a sign that you strive for growth.

Adult attitudes posed a problem for many ICs across all grade levels because not all teachers had the same motivation as the IC to grow professionally or to do what was best for students. This is evident in the following survey responses regarding greatest challenges:

- For me, it is the adults' attitudes. Your attitude is everything and while we all have a bad day, if you are a teacher, you have to suck it up and not take it out on the kids. I am very self reflective and I apologize a lot if I think that I came across wrong. Many teachers don't. It is very frustrating for me at times. I am also very passionate, and I am always reading. Not being with a group of self-motivated professional readers is challenging for me!
- Teachers wanting to do what is easiest for them, not what is best for the kids. Learning to work with those that don't have the same motivation for teaching.
- Working with different teacher personalities and methods. I thought everyone did things the same way I did when I was in the classroom. That is NOT the case, in

good ways and bad.

When asked about greatest challenges, one junior high IC responded, “Buy in from other teachers. I am the third IC they have had in the past year, and it has been difficult gaining trust and respect.” This comment illustrates the importance for retention of ICs on a campus. Other junior high responses included:

- Maintaining the balance of teacher advocate and administration representative
- Getting all my teams to trust me and come to me when they have questions or want to grow as professionals
- Working with adults that have various personalities and getting them to work as a team

High school survey respondents echoed the sentiments of both elementary and junior high ICs with respect to working with teachers resistant to change and mediating conflicts between teachers. Some of the ICs also referred to the lack of IC authority to enforce suggested changes, making administrative support and follow-through a necessity. The following survey comments support this challenge:

- The teachers are not given specific goals to work on by administration. There are also not campus goals (Ex: implement Fundamental Five, each teacher create word walls, etc). There is no direction for coaches, or when there is, there is a lack of support or follow up.
- Some teachers claim they want to try a variety of methods, but then when given the opportunity, they claim they don't have time to change the way they teach and revert back to their previous habits. As an IC, I can only make suggestions, but not make demands of my teachers.

- Working with teachers who do not know that they are not being effective.

Without self-knowledge, nothing I say makes sense or is accepted.

Overcoming teacher resistance, negativity, and complacency was iterated more than any other challenge for all three levels of ICs. A full list of responses regarding greatest challenges can be found in Appendix I. The ICs also had to earn teacher trust in that the ICs were knowledgeable, competent, and that their purpose was to help ALL teachers grow in their craft. This is clearly an area where districts should focus training. When asked about future training, 60.4% of elementary, 55% of junior high, and 81.1% of senior high ICs said that they would choose to have more training on dealing with difficult teachers. The combination of lack of administrative support and resistant teachers created a stressful work environment for ICs.

Facilitating change. ICs reported that one of their greatest challenges was impacting change on their campuses. This led to feelings of frustration and ineffectiveness. Some of the issues that impeded change were lack of administrative support or follow-through, lack of time to accomplish goals, and teacher resistance. One elementary IC stated,

Going into the classroom to model strategies here and there can cause a good change but maybe not a consistent change. Making an impact is hard but making an impact where things are not followed through and emphasize the importance of research-based methods in the classroom can get a little frustrating.

Another IC alluded to the quantity of smaller tasks set by the district, campus, or self-impacting the amount of change that occurs on a campus in this remark:

I think maintaining momentum without overwhelming myself or others. I believe

in setting smaller manageable goals and then adjusting, but sometimes the goal gets lost in the minutia. Momentum towards the goal must rise back to the top and that can be exhausting, disappointing, time consuming, and frustrating. I'm always trying to find a way to return to the goal while maintaining a positive outlook for myself and others. It's hard work to be happy even when things aren't going as planned. It's a choice.

ICs also knew that building trusting relationships with teachers was necessary to produce change. Pam spoke to this when she said, "If they feel threatened, there's not going to be much change." Unfortunately, for some ICs, being the change agent "makes you the bad guy."

In summary, Theme 1 discussed the many challenges that ICs shared when participating in this study. Some of the major challenges involved ambiguity of the role, unanticipated aspects of the job, time constraints, work environment, and facilitating change. Despite these challenges many ICs persist; however, many are contemplating leaving the role. A full list of responses regarding factors which may cause ICs to quit can be found in Appendix K.

Theme 2: Perceptions of Structure and Hiring Practices of the ICs

Introduction to Theme 2. Theme 2 presents data regarding instructional coaches' perceptions of the various job structures they experienced. There are a variety of instructional coach structures. This study focuses on the structures utilized in Garrett ISD, following the evolution of the instructional coach position over the last few years: (a) one coach per campus responsible for all subjects; (b) two content coaches split between two campuses (one mathematics/science coach and one language arts/ social studies coach

responsible for two campuses); (c) two content coaches serving one campus (one mathematics/ science coach and one language arts/ social studies coach); and (d) four content coaches on one campus (one mathematics, one science, one language arts, and one social studies). Theme 2 also presents information with respect to IC perceptions of being hired from the same campus where they had been teaching or from another campus.

Subthemes of Theme 2.

Structure. During the Spring of 2009, the district piloted the IC position on junior and senior high campuses with a limited number of personnel. There was one coach per campus, and that coach was responsible for all content areas. At first, the coaches were predominately data coaches; however, principals utilized them in any way they deemed necessary. Some pulled small groups of students for remediation; others were used as additional administrative staff, while a couple spent the majority of their time modeling in classrooms. Training at the district level focused on creating data spreadsheets, and content generic professional development to be brought back to campuses, such as differentiated instruction and levels of questioning. The following year, additional coach positions were added so coaches could be more content specific. The elementary campuses had a mathematics/science IC and a language arts/social studies IC. At the junior and senior high levels they began with one coach per campus. The IC was responsible for all content areas. The following year, there were two coaches per campus, but they were responsible for two campuses. After that, there were four coaches per campus (ELA, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies). Some are still split between two campuses.

Multiple content areas. The structure of the IC model presented problems for many ICs. This theme emerged in both the survey and the interviews. Coaches who had more than one content area expressed angst concerning not knowing the content as deeply as needed. Being responsible for multiple content areas also required more time for planning, and locating or creating resources, which took away time from modeling in the classroom. Some of the elementary IC comments were:

- My greatest challenge is knowing in an instant how to help a teacher when I can't recite ALL six grades TEKS off the top of my head.
- My greatest challenge is meeting the needs for both science and math K-5. I struggle to balance my focus on math and science. Math tends to get most of my attention.

A high school IC shared,

I have taught for many years and have taught several courses; however, there are some I am not 100% comfortable in - being able to be effective for those courses where my knowledge of the curriculum is not as strong as I would like.

Pam summed up the comments of many when she said,

There is no way one person can be an expert in all subjects. I mean it doesn't make sense. It is like having language arts, social studies doing both subjects. Yeh, they are both writing and reading, but they are very different.

Multiple campuses. ICs also expressed distress over the split-campus structure.

As mentioned previously, time was an issue. Being split between two campuses compounded that problem. ICs found it very difficult to be in classrooms due to time constraints. Pam recalled her feelings, "The split was horrible because you'd be two days

here, two days there, and then the fifth day, you'd be at the admin building." The interviewer asked Pam if she felt like it was effective. Her response was, "I worked it, but I was just constantly going from planning, to planning, to planning. That was, and doing data for them. That was basically most of it." If districts want ICs to spend their time coaching, then they need to consider the roles and responsibilities of ICs and the structure in which they are working.

Hiring practices. The researcher wanted to determine how ICs perceived the conditions under which they were hired. Participants were asked if they thought it was easier being hired from the campus where they were teachers or from another campus or district. Coincidentally, everyone interviewed was hired for the IC position from the campus where they had been teaching. Although some had opinions based on experiences of fellow ICs who were hired from a different campus. Each stated that their perception was it was easier to be hired from a campus where they had been working because they knew the people and had already built relationships. Dakota recounted a time when she was conversing with language arts teachers about data. She said that she knew them well enough to read their body language and she readjusted her professional development to meet their needs. She declared that this was a benefit of not being new to a campus. Dakota and Elaina also remarked that coming from the same campus was easier for them than for a stranger because people knew their backgrounds and their qualifications for the job. Because of this it took less time for them to earn respect.

Brandi also confided:

I think because I had had a relationship with the teachers already, they were open to me coming and doing what needed to be done. It wasn't like I was new to the

school, so there was already that trust built in, whereas a lot of ICs had to build that trust because they were coming into that role new. So, they had to take a year to build the trust before they could put anything in. We sort of hit the ground running with the data analysis, which is pretty much nonthreatening if you go about it in the right way. And when we moved into curriculum, they had worked with me so much prior to that I don't think they saw me as a threatening figure.

Pam stated that when she had two campuses, it was more difficult on the campus where she had to begin relationship building from nothing.

As shown in Table 19, based on the *Instructional Coach Survey*, the majority of ICs was chosen from within the district and were teachers on the campus where they are currently ICs. However, at the high school level only 41% of the ICs were chosen from their current campus.

Table 19

Roles Before Becoming an Instructional Coach in Garrett ISD

	Elementary		Junior High		High School	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
I was a teacher in my current building and moved into the IC position.	25	52.1%	10	50%	9	40.9%
I was a teacher from another campus in this district.	14	29.2%	10	50%	5	22.7%
I was a teacher hired from outside the district.	1	2.1%	0	0.0%	5	22.7%
I was a coach from another district.	4	8.3%	0	0.0%	2	9.1%
Other	7	14.6%	0	0.0%	1	4.5%

Prior to the study, the researcher hypothesized that it would be easier to take on the position of IC if you were from another campus. Based on the comments from the participants in this study, this was not the case for these ICs. The IC perceptions were that teachers accepted them more readily than strangers because teachers knew their background, and ICs had already built a foundation of trust and relationships with them. A future study should examine how this hiring practice impacts efficacy.

Theme 3: Impacting Change – What Facilitates the Ability of ICs to Move Forward with the Vision of the Campus and District?

Introduction to Theme 3. Theme 3 addresses Research Question 3: *What do instructional coaches perceive as necessary to increase their satisfaction and perceptions of feeling competent in their role?* It is important to note that when asked if they were likely to stay in their Instructional Coaching position for the next five years, less than half of all respondents stated that they were likely to stay in their position: 50% elementary ICs, 35% junior high ICs, and 43% of high school ICs (See Table 20 for statistics regarding IC future plans). Of the 20 elementary ICs who put something other than “likely to stay”, six are planning to advance, two are likely to retire, and two mentioned personal reasons, such as the desire for more family time or the possibility of moving.

Table 20

Five-year Future Plans for Instructional Coaches in Garrett ISD (n = 90)

	Elementary	Junior High	High School
I am likely to remain in my coaching position for the next 5 years.	24 50.0%	7 35.0 %	9 42.9%
I am not likely to stay in my coaching position for the next 5 years.	7 14.6 %	4 20.0 %	4 19.0%
I have contemplated leaving the role of IC and do not know if I will stay in the position for the next 5 years.	13 27.1%	3 15.0 %	7 33.3%
Other	4 8.3 %	6 30.0 %	1 4.8%
No response	0 0.0 %	0.0 %	1 4.8%
Total participants	48 100.0%	20 100.0%	22 100.0%

Based on IC responses to survey and interview questions, it is essential to examine ways to increase IC satisfaction and perceptions of feeling competent in their role. Data from the survey and interviews highlighted the importance of ICs to feel efficacious in impacting change on their campuses. A full list of responses regarding IC perceptions of how they impact change can be found in Appendix J. Two ways ICs perceived they were impacting change were by building teacher knowledge of content and pedagogy. Theme 3 will address the areas in which ICs require support in order to deem themselves effective. These areas include: (a) campus support, which includes administrative support, partner IC relationships, and support from teachers; and (b) district support, which includes training, alignment, materials and resources, and mentoring.

Campus Support. The sufficiency or deficiency of campus support greatly impacted ICs' perceptions of efficacy regarding impacting change on their campus and their desire to remain in the role. Three areas emerged from the data: support from administration, partner ICs, and teachers. The following sections will examine these areas closely.

Administration. It is imperative for campus administrators to provide support, follow-through with district and campus initiatives, and provide clear direction for ICs. Survey and interview data indicated that principal support ranged from no support to very supportive. The four ICs interviewed who remained in the position had strong support and direction from their campus principals. The ICs who went back to the classroom mentioned frustration with the lack of follow-through by administration, or they had difficult relationships with their administrators. Pam mentioned that she met with the principal at one of her schools every couple of months. She did not remember ever meeting with the principal at her other campus. On the other hand, Dana had a positive relationship with her principal, yet she stated that he relented to teachers who complained. When asked if she believed that she impacted change when she was an IC, she replied:

I do. I think that if there were some things, well, I do to a point. If there were things that I saw as a coach that I felt, you know, changes that needed to be made, teachers using worksheets that they used 20 years ago, or whatever, we would bring those types of things up to our admin team. Occasionally things would change, but sometimes, at the time, James was very, he was a very non-confrontational leader. He just didn't want anybody to be angry with anything. He

was kind of a big teddy bear, and that was his thing, which is good, to a point, but when there are changes that needed to be made, that was a little bit of a frustration, I think. You could try to implement something, but if the team didn't like what you were saying, they could, as a team, go talk to him, and then he'd be like, "Oh, OK, you just keep doing what you always did" kind of thing. So I think implementing and having an impact on change, to a degree, yes.

Dakota also emphasized the importance of campus administrative support. She recounted the story of a fellow IC in this response:

If you don't have a principal that supports you and what kind of change you want to make, then nothing is going to happen. I know of an IC who worked with teachers about having engaging math lessons as opposed to just direct-teach, but the principal told them, told the teachers, "You don't have to have engaging lessons. You can be direct-teach." Yes, and so the IC was like, "So, I give up! Like I can't," and he had the teachers were willing. They were ready because they saw a good, they saw it was going to be good for the kids, but it was harder and took more work. And when the principal said, you know, he was pulling the rug out from under her, he said, "You don't have to do it", well, so no longer, "I'm gonna do it the easy way."

In both of these cases the ICs left their role to go back to the classroom. It is evident that their need for administrative support was not met. The lack of administrative support led to feelings of inefficacy for these ICs causing them to change job positions.

At the junior high level, some ICs discussed issues with administrators giving Department Chairs (DCs) “all the power.” This undermined the ICs as they were bringing back initiatives from the district level. Dakota shared the following story during her interview:

At Junior High D, we’ve had some instances too with, not in math, but different Department Chairs that the principal trusted the Department Chair more than the instructional coach, which causes some big friction with that instructional coach. The instructional coach can not make any decisions, and if the instructional coach goes to a PLC and talks about, “Let’s try this new strategy,” and if the teachers don’t like it, all they have to do is tell the Department Chair they don’t like it. The Department Chair tells the principal, and then the instructional coach is in trouble.

Dakota continued:

At Junior High Campus I, Department Chairs were above instructional coaches, so the principal would meet with the department chairs and make decisions and tell the department chairs to relay the information to the instructional coaches. So when an instructional coach comes to a Friday meeting, and we’re talking about something in particular, and you know, and we’re all going to take it back to our campus, that instructional coach says, “I have to take it back to my Department Chair and see if she will agree with it. If I can convince her because then she’s the one who presents it to the staff.” If the principal puts all the power in that Department Chair, and you have no power, all of your power is gone. Then all you can do is work towards a balance of power. So gaining more and more trust and building more and more relationships. And that takes a lot of energy from a

person, depending on who you are.

Additional survey responses reinforced the importance of administrative support with regard to IC relationships with DCs as a means for ICs to move their campuses forward with district and campus initiatives. One respondent from the survey suggested, “determining the roles of Department Chair and IC to ensure mutual support” as a way to potentially help campuses retain their ICs. Defining these two roles would help eliminate the power struggles endured by ICs and Department Chairs. A junior high IC had this response when asked what it would take for her to remain in this position:

If clear expectations as to what best practices for instruction looked like were communicated to the staff. If there was a change in the current administration. Also, if there were a change in the DC. My current DC openly objects to what are considered the district best practices for instruction. She regularly advocates against it to the rest of the department and the administration does nothing to stop her. They are the ones that put her in the DC position even though they were well aware of her objections. This has made my job virtually impossible in terms of making any strides to improve instruction.

It is evident from these remarks that DCs have the ability to impede IC progress with teachers on their campuses. This frustration has created enough of a burden for some ICs to leave their role.

High school ICs added to the data regarding the theme *Impacting Change*. These ICs clearly address the need for administrative support as it pertains to ICs perceptions of ability to impact change on their campus. The bulleted items below were high school IC responses to the survey question, “If you are considering leaving the position of IC, what

might encourage you to stay?" A full list of elementary, junior high and high school responses to this question can be found in Appendix L.

- My principal knowing my name would definitely help. I've worked for her for 15 months now and she still doesn't put the right name on correspondence to me.

More than that though, I would just like to know that I'm doing a decent job and it is appreciated. Or if I'm not doing a decent job, I'd like to know the expectations of what a good job is.

- Working better with the administration and them seeing a purpose for this position.

More teachers open to working with me, willing to try new things, willing to be vulnerable.

- More support from administration- it's hard to support teachers in change when they see that it is ok to not do what administration wants.
- Better definition of role by district and building. More administrative support at the building level.
- Confidence from the administration and usefulness to teachers. As long as I am effective at helping teachers improve instruction, then I have a purpose in this job.
- Empowerment to continue as a change agent. That would need to come from campus administration
- An open exchange of thoughts to determine the best way to work together and being treated with respect by the Department Chair.

The data from the interviews and survey underscored the significance of administrative support and follow-through as it pertained to the efficacy of ICs. It was evident that ICs

who believed they had a purpose and were change agents were more likely to stay in the position than those who did not.

Other data suggested that administrators should ensure coaches are not hindered by so many other tasks that they cannot work with teachers in the classroom. Darcy stated that she impacted change when she was able to model lessons, but she was not able to model more than a few times while she was an IC due to the many other tasks with which she was charged. Darcy recalls her feelings in the following statements:

I felt like I had a wealth of knowledge with manipulatives, and we had a very young group of teachers who weren't very familiar with manipulatives. That would have been a good thing. I liked doing activities when I had worked with Math Lab. I was always coming up with, doing and making different activities to get the kids up and moving and interacting, and I felt like that was missing in our instruction on our campus. I think I could have helped with that. It just seems like everybody's just peddling backwards and never has enough time. And so I was wanting my role to be one that I could implement but it was always hurry up and teach, but with what? The kids get bored, and the teachers get bored. I was wanting my assistance to enhance their instruction.

From her last sentence, it was clear that Darcy did not believe she was able to engage in activities that would impact change very often. When the researcher prompted her to elaborate, Darcy added:

It's pretty sad when you can remember them [times she was able to model lessons] on one hand. There was a teacher who had been teaching a while, but she had never done algebra tiles, and she was like, "I'm not doing that!" "Oh, you'll

love it, and I'll show you how." And she was just, "Uhhhh." I said, "Tell you what" That's back when we were taught you go in and do it the first period; kind of assist them second period; stay in there while they do it for third, and then they've got it. And she ended it up loving it. The kids loved it, so that was a good. Yeh. You can teach somebody something at a table, but the modeling part of it I think had so much more value.

Darcy yearned to spend more time helping teachers, but other tasks prevented her from modeling in classrooms. This led to perceptions of inefficacy with regard to her role as IC.

It is also necessary for ICs and campus administrators to maintain a positive professional relationship. Pam had little to no contact with her administrators. Her toxic relationship with partner ICs caused her to leave the profession and her administrators were either unaware of the situation, or if they were aware, they did nothing about it. For example, the ELA/SS IC would often set up staff development on days when she planned to be off campus, leaving Pam to do the work. The interviewer asked Pam if her administrators were aware of the situation, and her response was the following:

PAM: I don't know. I never said anything. I'm not, I just took care of my business. I don't know. I don't know. I think if they're not aware of it, shame on them. You know why is a Math IC presenting language arts and social studies?

INTERVIEWER: That would make me ask questions, yes.

PAM: I mean shame on them. The assistant principal is sitting in the presentation. It's not like the administration wasn't there.

It was obvious from these statements that Pam did not have a relationship with her administrators. Pam expected her administrative team to know the issues with which she was dealing with her IC partners without ever telling them. Most ICs reported attending weekly meetings with their administrators. These meetings were to discuss the vision of the principal regarding campus initiatives and the roles and responsibilities ICs would undertake in order to achieve that vision. Pam and her partner ICs did not have this guidance on their campuses. This administrative support could have potentially helped Pam prevent the issues she was experiencing with her partners. Pam confided during the interview that she would have remained an IC if she had IC partners with whom she could work and trust.

These data suggest that administrative support is critical for ICs to impact change on their campuses. The extent to which ICs impact change and their perceptions regarding the degree of impact influenced their perceptions of efficacy in their role as IC.

Partner IC. As mentioned previously, the data suggest the ability to work with one's partner IC(s) is correlated with the desire to remain in the position. All four ICs remaining in the position who were interviewed reported having a positive relationship with their partner ICs. Those with supportive IC partners found them to be beneficial. ICs reported feeling alone when they were the only IC on a campus. The IC position is a middle ground somewhere between that of a teacher and an administrator; therefore, when frustrating situations arose, ICs had no one with whom they could talk. If they discussed frustrations with administration, it may get back to teachers, and they would be perceived as tattling. Furthermore, some ICs did not have a positive relationship with

their campus administration. By the same token, it would be unprofessional for ICs to commiserate with teachers.

Elaina shared how she felt supported by her partner ICs:

We all felt like we could trust each other. And I'd have to say, across the board with all of my coaching partners, we are all hard workers, and every single person will do their part. And so I really think that was kind of the common denominator because we knew that we all had each other's back, no matter what, we had someone that would support us, and we had someone that would share the workload. I never felt like I was doing more of the workload than anyone else. So if it was something that we had to do together, every single one of my coaching partners, we'd split the workload pretty evenly. So, I think that helps. I never felt like I was working with someone who was just there to get a paycheck, or just there for the position. None of my partners took the position, um, for granted. No one was there because they thought it was an easy, cush job, not a single one of us. So I think that helps too. Everyone took the job seriously, and we're hard workers. So, I still keep in contact with them, so it is nice. It was just a nice working relationship overall. So, I am truly grateful for that.

The support Elaina experienced with her partners helped her to feel more successful; therefore, she was more likely to remain in the IC role. She was less burdened because all partners shared the workload. She also enjoyed the trust and emotional support from her fellow ICs, which allowed her to do her job more effectively. In another situation, Ashley handpicked her IC partner before the district gave principals the extra IC position. She shared this story:

He [the principal] hired Jacy the year before there was even a mention of splitting the ICs by subjects. We didn't find out about it until the technology thing. She was in there the year before. I asked him to take her out of the classroom and make her my partner and give up a P.E. position that he had, and he was like, "What would she do?" "Math and science because I can't do all this!" You know. You can't do it all effectively.

This information from Ashley not only suggests that she had a partner with whom she worked well, but Ashley also possessed a power with her principal. She told the principal that she needed assistance, and he gave up a P.E. position to give her what she wanted. Survey data added to findings regarding the beneficial aspects of having a positive relationship with an IC partner. An elementary survey participant had this to say:

Well, honestly, my IC partner has helped me become a more effective coach than the district has. I have the content knowledge and am a self-starter when it comes to learning more about content. We have had beneficial IC meetings related to content but when it comes to the role of a coach and working with adults, I rely on my IC partner.

This comment by the elementary IC added credence to the data that suggests the significant role an IC could play in the job satisfaction of their IC partners, whether it is a negative role or a positive one. Another interview participant, Dakota, stated she was aware of some ICs who left the position after the first year because they didn't have another IC on campus to act as a support system.

Even though most ICs perceived it to be highly advantageous to have partners to share the workload and someone with which to receive consolation and support,

unsupportive partners drove coaches from the job. Pam and Brandi quit and went back to teaching due to a negative relationship with ICs on their campuses. The researcher was told of other ICs quitting due to partner relationships; however, this was not substantiated with other interviews. The potential negative aspects of working with IC partners that emerged in the data was covered in depth in Theme 1.

Teachers. Negative teacher perceptions of the IC role impact the ability of ICs to coach. Teachers need evidence that ICs are there to help, not evaluate. First steps should be statements from campus principals explaining that they will not ask ICs to provide negative reports on teachers. Many ICs reported that teachers viewed them as evaluative or as someone who would “tattle” to administration. Darcy shared her views of teacher perceptions in these remarks:

They just, that mentality that an instructional coach is truly there to help with instruction, whether it is with data, modeling lessons, I just, I don't think there is a true buy-in. Not at the two junior high campuses I've been at. People really, I guess, I guess its a trust, or um, or letting somebody assist them. All teachers think that they're doing the very best that they can, but to understand that they could do better, and that this, this instructional coach is here to help.

She added:

Sure we've had the training on what does an instructional coach do? What do they not do? I still think teachers just think-- I don't like the teacher's perceptions. Even though they are getting help. I don't know how we can change. I guess teachers still think they're the ones doing all the work, and instructional coaches are just sitting in their offices drinking coffee or something.

The interviewer wanted to find out why teachers had these perceptions, so she probed a little further:

INTERVIEWER: Why do, why do you think they have that perception?

DARCY: I think the couple that have said something this year have come from other districts, and it was perhaps done differently there where they were given more stuff. You know, given an activity, where stuff was more made. Where currently, it's kinda, "We'll here's a website. Go see what this says." Or, there's not as much handed to us. And, and this person coming from, I guess they came from Cy-Fair. So much was done for them, and they really felt like it was more of an assistance. It doesn't mean our current person is not helping. It's just, where they come from, they were getting stuff handed to them, or made, or, "You can try this, this, or this" and you could choose, but it was already done. It wasn't a "Go find it and make it yourself."

INTERVIEWER: Ahhh, I see.

DARCY: So this one person will typically say, "Oh yeh, if you ask her, she'll tell you a website you can go look at, but she won't do it for you." So, and you know, people, it doesn't take them long 'til they, and currently, our people are used a lot as mini-administrators.

In Darcy's school building, the teachers expected ICs to act in the capacity of a teacher helper, someone to create their materials for them. This indicated a lack of understanding of the roles and responsibilities of an IC.

Pam recognized the apprehension teachers felt associated with working with ICs. She stated, "You have ego involved. 'Is she saying I'm a bad teacher, or is she saying I'm

going to get fired?" You know, there's a lot of fear there, and working around that fear."

When asked how long Pam thought it took to build the relationship needed to work with teachers, Pam said it took a minimum of a year for teachers to trust.

In order for ICs to perceive that they are effective, they not only need administrative support, but teachers must also be supportive of the role. To gain teacher support, ICs must be seen as a catalyst to help ALL teachers grow professionally. The coaching relationship between teacher and IC should be confidential and separate from any form of evaluation.

District support. District support and direction was viewed favorably by ICs in Garrett ISD. Although the role was not well-defined during the beginning phases of the IC role, and training was disjointed from campus needs, all who participated in the interviews believed the district was moving in the right direction with content training and training on effective coaching techniques. This section focuses on the support districts can provide to help ICs be more effective and feel more successful. Areas that were mentioned in both interviews and the survey were: (a) relationships/environment; (b) training; (c) ideas, materials, and resources; and (d) mentoring.

Relationships/Environment. A safe environment for ICs to build relationships with other ICs is important for augmenting ICs' sense of satisfaction and competence. During the interviews, participants were asked, "What helped you the most in your role as a coach?" ICs viewed meetings at the district level where ICs spent time sharing experiences to be extremely worthwhile. The following comments from Pam support these data:

Meeting with other coaches on Fridays, and finding that I'm really not that

different from the other ones who are actually doing their job. Not just the ones that say they were doing all of these wonderful and amazing things. ‘Cause I would hear them, and I’m like, “Well, I’m not doing that. I’m not doing that. My principals don’t want me to do that.” And I’m like, “What’s wrong with me?” and I would talk to a couple of other ones, and they’re like, “We’re not doing that either.” Ohhh, and then I found out that they weren’t really doing what they said they were doing. So that was ok. It was nice meeting all of the coaches at times, and it was nice meeting with just math teachers, math coaches and finding what their trials and tribulations were. There were, there are some awesome math coaches out there.

Dana also commented on the importance of IC meetings. She shared, “I enjoyed kind of the camaraderie with other coaches. I enjoyed having the opportunity to share things with other coaches. ‘What’s working for you? What’s not worked for you?’ Kind of getting some suggestions with that.” An elementary survey respondent had similar comments:

The vast majority of the training has been invaluable. The network of coaches within the district allows us an environment where we can gain both the insights of others as well as a place to celebrate our successes and bemoan our difficulties with others in similar positions.

The comments from Pam and Dana further confirmed the idea that ICs have the sense they are alone on their campuses and need outside support. District meetings on Fridays validated IC s’ perceptions regarding effectiveness in implementing district and campus goals on their campuses. In some instances it was “misery loves company.” Through

opportunities to commiserate, ICs determined they were not alone in the lack of attainment of the goals that were set out for them or the goals that they created for themselves. This elementary IC eloquently shared the feelings of many, supporting the importance of district support through meetings where ICs can collaborate:

I think I have been lucky enough to find a very close group of IC friends who I can relate to because we all have the same job. It can be very lonely to do this job at times because we are the only ones on campus who do it. Difficult conversations are made more challenging when there isn't anyone to debrief with afterward. My coach friends are always quick to lend a helping hand or a listening ear and just laugh when that is needed. We share stories and struggles and without their support I'd be lost.

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) attribute high rates of attrition of new teachers to feelings of isolation on their campuses. This parallels what the data show regarding the retention of ICs. As mentioned previously, many ICs often suffer alone on their campuses with no one with whom they can confide. They feel ineffective and struggle with the notion of leaving the role. District meetings can be a safe haven where ICs can share experiences and ideas for conquering challenging situations, possibly leading to their retention.

Training. Due to their many roles and responsibilities, ICs must be skilled in relational skills, andragogy, pedagogy, as well as competent in the content to which they are assigned. To determine the confidence level of ICs in these areas, *The Instructional Coach Survey* contained statements for ICs to rate themselves. One statement said, “Describe your level of confidence in working with difficult teachers.” Table 21 captures

the confidence level of elementary, junior high, and high school ICs when working with difficult teachers.

Table 21

Level of Confidence of Garrett ISD ICs Working With Difficult Teachers

	Elementary	Junior High	High School
Not confident	1	2.1 %	1
Somewhat confident	33	68.8 %	11
Very confident	14	29.2 %	8
Total	48	100.0 %	20
		100.0 %	22
		100.0 %	100.0 %

Most ICs rated themselves as “Somewhat confident” when it came to working with difficult teachers. Junior high ICs were most confident with 40% rating themselves “Very confident”. Only 29.2% of elementary ICs were “Very confident” working with difficult teachers. Based on these data, it would be beneficial for districts to provide more training on strategies for dealing with challenging teachers.

The focus of another question was on the confidence level of ICs with their content areas. The survey question was, “To what extent are you prepared to build teachers’ content knowledge for all of the subjects for which you are responsible?” See Table 22 below to examine participant responses.

Table 22

Level of Confidence of Garrett ISD ICs Working With Their Content Areas

	Elementary	Junior High	High School
Not prepared	0.0 %	0.0 %	2
Somewhat prepared	19	39.6 %	9
Very prepared	29	60.4 %	11
Total	48	100.0 %	22
		100.0 %	100.0 %

Overall, the majority of ICs from all grade levels felt either very prepared or somewhat prepared to build teachers’ content knowledge for the subjects for which they are

responsible. Only two high school ICs (1 mathematics, 1 science) responded that they were not prepared. It was interesting to note that only 18% of high school ICs stated they would like more assistance in content training, yet only 50% responded they were very prepared to build teachers' content knowledge, and 41% were somewhat prepared.

On *The Instructional Coach Survey*, current ICs were asked, "In what areas would you like assistance or more training?" Participants were asked to check all areas that applied to their need for training. Table 23 shows the training ICs would like to see offered.

Table 23

Training Desired by Instructional Coaches by Grade Level Bands

	Elementary		Junior High		High School	
Content knowledge	24	50.0%	3	15%	4	18.2%
Strategies for dealing with resistant teachers	29	60.4%	11	55%	18	81.8%
Tips for providing professional development	11	22.9%	7	35%	5	22.7%
Strategies for working with teachers on data analysis	18	37.5%	8	40%	5	22.7%
Strategies for gaining teacher trust and support	14	29.2%	4	20%	5	22.7%
Strategies for gaining administrative support	12	25.0%	5	25%	6	27.3%
Tips for time management	22	45.8%	5	25%	6	27.3%
Other	4	8.3%	4	20%	2	9.1%

The majority of survey participants from all grade level areas responded they would like more strategies with dealing with difficult teachers, the greatest percentage being high school ICs: 82 % of high school respondents; 55% of junior high; and 60% of elementary respondents. This directly corresponded with the challenges ICs depicted in

the interviews. Of the 48 elementary ICs, 50% responded they would like more training in their content areas as compared with only 15% of junior high ICs and 18% of high school ICs.

Several ICs indicated that it was important for district training to be aligned with campus needs. Dakota recalled one IC meeting day, when the position first began, when ICs learned what “color” they were. ICs were asked to do a personality profile self-assessment. Different colors were indicative of different personality traits. Dakota remembered thinking,

“Why am I here?” It was fun, and I still remember my colors, and I remember other people’s colors. (laughs) It was fun and memorable, and I liked it, but I thought, “This doesn’t have anything to do with what I am doing at my school.”

Elaina also shared her frustration with IC meetings in the beginning.

So, on our campus, day-to-day life, we weren’t data coaches day-to-day every day. And if you looked at, even from the very beginning, like our meetings, our coach meetings were very much data meetings. That’s all we did during those meetings. And uh, again, a lot of helpful things, you know how to run the programs, how to run the data and the reports. Uh, but at the beginning we didn’t even really talk about curriculum and instruction at that point. But if you looked at the criteria for coaches, there was still a piece in there that talked about, I don’t know if it said modeling specifically in the classroom, but there was still a piece that talked about curriculum and instruction as far as the coach expectations. And so, on my campus, my day-to-day life was not a data coach, even though that’s what it looked like at our Friday meetings, and we got information about that. I

used that information, but I didn't use that information every single day, all day long.

Elaina continued:

So there was a little bit of a disconnect for me that, that was the frustrating part for me because I wanted those Friday meetings to have a curriculum piece as well. Because I knew that piece was written into our expectations. On my campus that was a focus, but, um, and I'm not saying they weren't helpful. I just wish way back then, there was a balance, that we talked about the data sometimes, AND we talked about the curriculum sometimes because that really was my life on campus. I did both with the emphasis being on curriculum.

Time was a precious commodity for these coaches. The majority of survey respondents and all of the interviewees mentioned that they did not have enough time to accomplish their assigned tasks. Attending frequent meetings that did not meet their needs was an added frustration because the meetings took away more time from what needed to be done on their campuses. Dakota echoed what Elaina shared regarding the need for alignment between district trainings and the focus of the campus:

Every campus was doing something very, very different as it evolved, we got those DI [Differentiated Instruction] lessons that we had to do with the teachers, which seems like a distant memory. Um, and, again, that wasn't a focus at my school, at the time. And I remember thinking, "Every time I go there, these are things that are not a focus that my principal is focusing on." So it felt kind of disconnected, like I'm going to come in and do something from the district office we're not talking about here at school all the time. Now it feels like, because we

are now, of course, content specific, but now it feels like so much of what we talk about are things that are what our focus is at my campus.

As with teachers, these ICs required differentiated training based on the needs of their campuses. On most of their meeting days, Garrett ISD was providing generic training such as methods for data disaggregation; however, ICs believed that their role was to be in classrooms training teachers. For many ICs there was a disconnect between the campus focus and needs, and what they were being trained to do. Based on interviews with ICs who began in 2009 or 2010, as the IC role evolved training changed dramatically. The coaches continued to disaggregate data, yet the training became more content specific. Research-based strategies for pedagogy were discussed at Friday meetings, and ICs reported being more satisfied with the training they received. The following are some of the elementary survey responses that highlight this theme and serve as triangulation of data sources:

- I could not have had a successful day without the support of my district.
- Recently, the district has made a positive change in Coordinator roles to allow much more effectiveness in most of the curriculum that I serve. Meetings are relevant and applicable to my job.
- The trainings and support provided has been immeasurable. Moving into cohorts [ICs grouped by like schools] and having lab sites has been very beneficial.
- The bi-monthly IC meetings have greatly impacted my effectiveness. The content training and coaching techniques we receive has provided me with the tools to assist me in my daily work. I feel well supported by the Coordinators who are available to answer questions and provide guidance when needed.

It is evident from these interview and survey responses that targeted PD for ICs can improve their perceptions of efficacy. Untailored PD can lead to feeling a lack of support and frustration.

Mentoring. When it became evident across the country that incoming teachers were leaving at high rates, mentoring programs were put in place to provide them with support (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Likewise, after the first couple of years with ICs, Garrett ISD introduced a mentoring program for new ICs. To gain information regarding the effectiveness of the mentoring program with reference to increasing IC satisfaction and perceptions of feeling competent in their role, *The Instructional Coach Survey* included the following questions, “Were you assigned a mentor when you first began your coaching assignment? If so, in what way did it impact your effectiveness as an instructional coach?” There were mixed responses to the IC mentoring program at all three levels, elementary, junior high, and senior high. Responses ranged from “I would not have survived or stayed in this position without that first year of support” to “I was, but she never reached out. So a couple of us new ones formed a group and bonded trying to survive in this job.” A little over half of ICs responded that they had a mentor but it had little to no impact while the other half suggested that the support was valuable. The responses suggested that it was most beneficial to have a mentor on the same campus or on a campus with similar needs, such as bilingual. Others suggested that it would be more beneficial to have coaches who had the same content. It could be advantageous to have a lead mentor at the district level to periodically meet with all new ICs and their mentors. More research is needed as to what would make the IC mentoring program more effective. A complete list of responses can be found in Appendix M.

Theme 4: Motivation to Remain in the Role

It is also relevant to examine the data that provides insight into why coaches remain in their position despite all of the challenges discussed previously. During the interviews, the participants were asked what they enjoyed the most about being an IC. The following responses support the concept that impacting change strengthens ICs' perceptions of efficacy.

Elaina shared what she enjoys most:

And I love to see the students making progress. Um, but the other favorite part of my job is to see the teachers learning so much; to see teachers taking ownership of their learning, not just me feeding them information, but teachers wanting to learn more. That's my favorite. I almost get goosebumps when I think about my teachers that get so excited about what they've learned, and then they take it upon themselves to learn more, or ask more questions, or seek out more professional development. So that is the other favorite part of my job.

It is clear Elaina values working with teachers. Elaina can see the impact she is making in the professional growth of teachers and their love for continuous learning. Elaina's administrative team supports her goal of modeling or observing in classrooms 60% of each week and is cognizant of the tasks they give her that may prevent her from reaching her goals. This support helps Elaina to feel effective in her role as IC. Another participant, Haley, added to the data with regard to the importance of working with teachers as it pertains to perceptions of efficacy with the following remarks:

I think what I enjoy the most is when teachers come to me, and they are asking for my help. I am working with several new teachers on our campus with

implementing Reader's Workshop, and they are taking the lead on their teams and they are ready to go to the next step. They came to me. I didn't have to go to them. I think that's the most rewarding to me. That to me is the best part of when teachers come to me.

Haley felt a sense of success when she did not have to nudge teachers to sign up to work with her. Another participant, Ashley, also expressed pride and a feeling of accomplishment with respect to her work with teachers. She stated, "What I enjoy the most are the dynamic conversations between people and collaboration and to watch a teacher get almost a whole renewal for herself because she understands something now."

Ashley added:

It's what keeps you going. Yeh, it's seeing that teacher, seeing that teacher that is on a TINA, and you spend time with her in her room, and you're modeling for her, you're showing her and then all of a sudden its like, "Oh she's got this. Now she's got the next part." And they say when they get to that point, "I can't do this. This is too hard," but if you stay right with them, and work right with them, from the adult learning perspective, that's another key. It's got to be on their level, where they're at. When you see them change and the classroom change, that's what keeps you going; that, that and all of the smiles, and your school doing well.

It is evident that impacting change on her campus is one of the main reasons Ashley remains in the IC position. She repeated, "It's what keeps you going." She indicated that working beside teachers in their classrooms was the key to facilitating that change. Dakota also mentioned the joy of watching teachers grow. Here was her reflection when she was asked why she remains:

And that's a super great question. (laughs) I even got my high school certification 'cause I was ready to leave. I was ready to leave every year for the first five or six years, I think. Every year I was going to leave. Um, it isn't the easy schedule. You know, a lot of people assume that's why you stay, because it is easier. I really felt, yeh, by the end of the year I felt like "Oh man, I really made growth with these teachers. I don't want to leave— what I just started, you know, what I keep finishing. And then, I was having teachers leave too, and then we would hire these new teachers, and I would really want to work with these new teachers that we just hired. So it's always just about the teachers and all of that.

To extend Dakota's positive views of an IC role, the researcher asked her what she enjoyed most about her job, and the following conversation ensued:

DAKOTA: You know, I always say that when I became an IC, my teachers became my students. Just similar, they act like them too. But, it's just like with a child to me, that when they make growth, or when they have a big light bulb moment, or when they try something new and something works, you know, when I see growth with a teacher just like I would with a kid, it's amazing. It's awesome.

INTERVIEWER: It does feel great, doesn't it?

DAKOTA: It does! And some of those first times it happened, it is even a cooler feeling to me just because it's an adult. Like I don't, with a kid, it's expected that they are going to make growth and progress, and it was always so exciting, and you know, euphoric, like, "AHHH," you know. When I had a special ed kid that I taught two years in a row, and he made commended on STAAR M one year, you

know, I just wanted to, I was crying. It was so exciting. But it's the same thing with a teacher that when she has been pretty "red light" and then she does this green light lesson, and she sees progress, and her kids do better, and she's like, "Oh, I feel better. This is a better way to teach, like I enjoy my day better."

You know, it's like I cried. It was insane! It was so exciting!

It was powerful to hear an IC say that she was so excited about the achievement of a teacher that she cried. She remains in this role because her perception is one of success with teacher growth. In the following remarks, Pam also added to the data regarding the importance of ICs working hand-in-hand with teachers. Pam discussed her pleasure in watching teachers grow professionally and referred to the length of time that it takes to make changes as an IC:

Watching the different teachers and the way they teach. And then when a teacher would change, you know, it was nice. You know, I did some change, but it's all small. In two years there's small changes. Um, but I thought if I got them to do something new, every once a semester, once a six weeks, if they would try something different, I thought that would be good. And I've seen after being gone for 2 years, they are still growing. They are not where they were. So I mean there's still room. You know, they are getting used to change.

The voices of the participants clearly sang with joy over helping and watching their colleagues grow professionally. As Ashley stated, "That's what keeps you going." With this in mind, administrators at the district and campus levels should consider the tasks they require of ICs. Are the tasks allowing coaches to do the work that help

teachers build capacity, or are the tasks activities ICs would perceive to be hindering their progress with teachers?

Summary of the Findings

To gain a deeper understanding of why ICs leave the position, three questions regarding the perceptions of ICs were posed in this study. A triangulation of survey and interview data support the following themes identified and discussed in this chapter:

Theme 1: *Challenges for Instructional Coaches*

Theme 2: *Perceptions of Structure and Hiring Practices of the ICs*

Theme 3: *Impacting Change – What Facilitates the Ability of ICs to Move*

Forward with the Vision of the Campus and District?

Theme 4: *Motivation to Remain in the Role*

The following is a summary of the data obtained for each question.

Research Question 1: What perceptions do instructional coaches hold about their roles, responsibilities, and ability to effect change within the district, and how do these perceptions factor in to their intention to remain or leave the position?

Perceptions regarding IC roles, responsibilities, and ability to affect change within the district unfolded in Theme 1, *Challenges for Instructional Coaches*, and Theme 3, *Impacting Change*. Participant data revealed that ICs generally believed that they impacted change on their campuses. Their perception of the amount of change they affect ranged from minimal to a great amount of change, but they all felt the role was that of a change agent. Several variables impacted the amount of change, including district support, administrative support at the campus level, teacher support, and types of

relationships with partner ICs. The following bullets highlight the data regarding

Question 1:

- ICs were accustomed to being highly successful educators of children. Because they were not feeling efficacious in their jobs, they considered leaving the role of IC.
- Some ICs enjoyed being a part of the administrative team, and perceived it to be beneficial, while others believed being on the administrative team impaired their ability to work effectively with teachers. What seemed to be important was the common vision between the IC and their administrators regarding the roles they played on campus. The ICs who remained in the position had a common vision with their administrative team regarding their roles and responsibilities.
- The majority of ICs reported feeling a lack of efficacy due to the number of roles and responsibilities associated with their jobs. The tasks assigned to ICs prevented them from coaching teachers leaving ICs feeling unfulfilled.
- Several junior and senior high ICs reported difficulty with Department Chairs impeding their progress on their campuses due to a power struggle.

Research Question 2: What roles do instructional coaches assume on their campus, and how did the instructional coaches' expectations of the job differ from what they actually experienced in the role?

The following bulleted items summarize the data regarding how the reality of the IC role differed from their expectations.

- ICs did not expect the different relational aspects associated with the role, such as:
 - (a) dealing with resistant teachers, (b) managing ineffective teams, (c)

approaching teachers who do not know they need to improve, (d) being the lone man between administrator and teachers, and (e) managing incompatible relationships with IC partners.

- ICs did not expect the wide variety of roles and responsibilities. These include: administrative duties, such as discipline of students and administrative paperwork; extra duties, such as lunch duty; and substituting for teachers who are absent or in meetings.
- ICs expected that they would spend more time working with teachers on changing instruction, yet this is where they spend the least amount of time.

Research Question 3: What do instructional coaches perceive as necessary to increase their satisfaction and perceptions of feeling competent in their role?

The answers to Research Question 3 are addressed in Theme 2: *Perceptions of Structure and Hiring Practices of the ICs*, Theme 3: *Impacting Change*, and Theme 4: *Motivation to Remain in the Role*. The following bullets highlight the data regarding the satisfaction of ICs and what they perceive to be necessary to feel competent in their roles:

- Responsibility for a single subject rather than multiple subjects
- Responsibility for a single campus rather than two campuses
- Time to work with teachers in the classroom
- Training based on the individual needs of ICs
- Alignment of the definition of IC roles with district, campus administrators, teachers, and ICs
- Time during district meetings to commiserate and collaborate

Overall, ICs in Garrett ISD believed that the district was moving in the right direction and felt a greater sense of satisfaction than in years past. Many of their challenges were being addressed. As more content coaches were added, ICs were stretched a little less because they are either responsible for fewer subjects or less campuses; therefore, the challenge of time to be in classrooms is addressed. However, all the coaches at the elementary level are still responsible for more than one content area. ICs also perceived that IC training has improved. Training focused more on individual needs than in the past. ICs are visiting other campuses to gain ideas, but also to ensure alignment of district initiatives throughout the district. Chapter V will provide a summary of the research, limitations of the study, contributions to the literature, implications of the research, and considerations for future studies.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND CONCLUSIONS

Chapter V provides a summary of the study of Instructional Coaches (ICs), which examined the experiences and perceptions of ICs in Garrett ISD, the factors that caused high attrition rates, and the motivations behind those who remained ICs. This chapter will discuss the implications of the findings discussed in Chapter IV. Finally, limitations of the study will be discussed, and ideas for future research will be proposed.

Statement of the Problem

Garrett ISD began hiring ICs in 2009. The average annual turnover rate from 2009 to 2015 was 26%. This percentage does not include hiring additional coaches for new campuses. Demographic data from *The Instructional Coach Survey* indicated that most coaches at the junior and senior high levels leave after three years of coaching experience or less while elementary coaches tend to stay in the field slightly longer than secondary coaches.

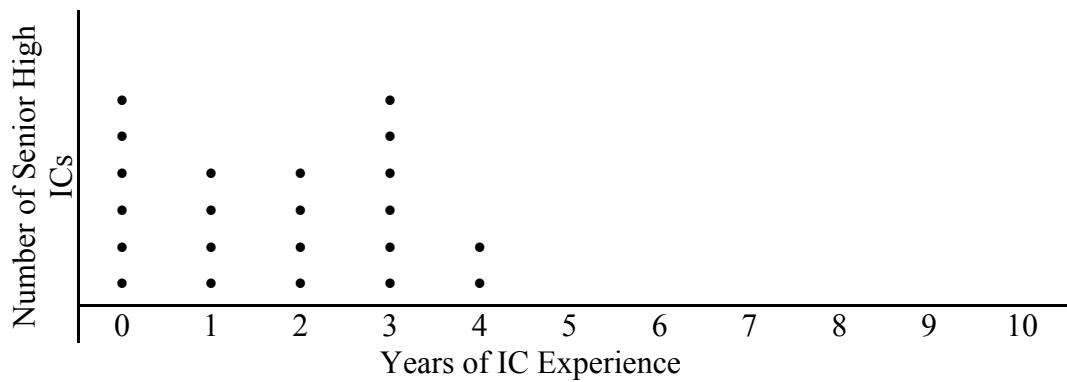
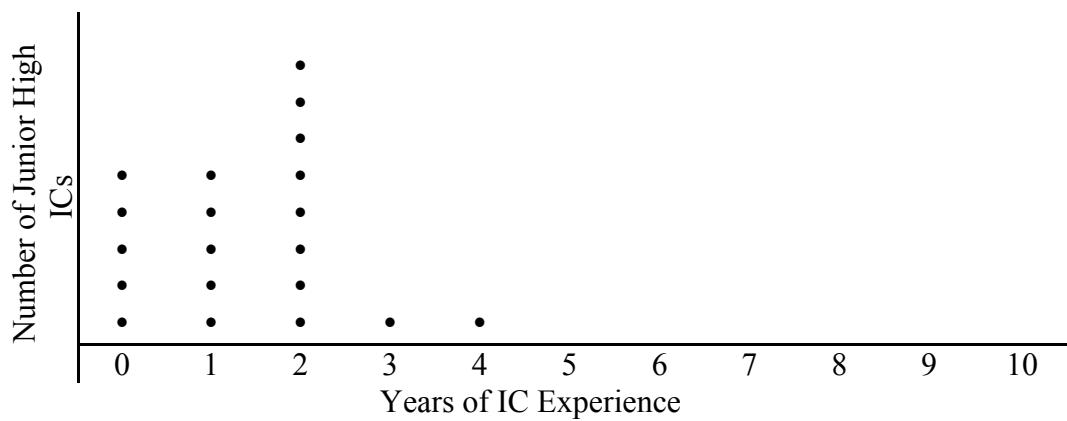
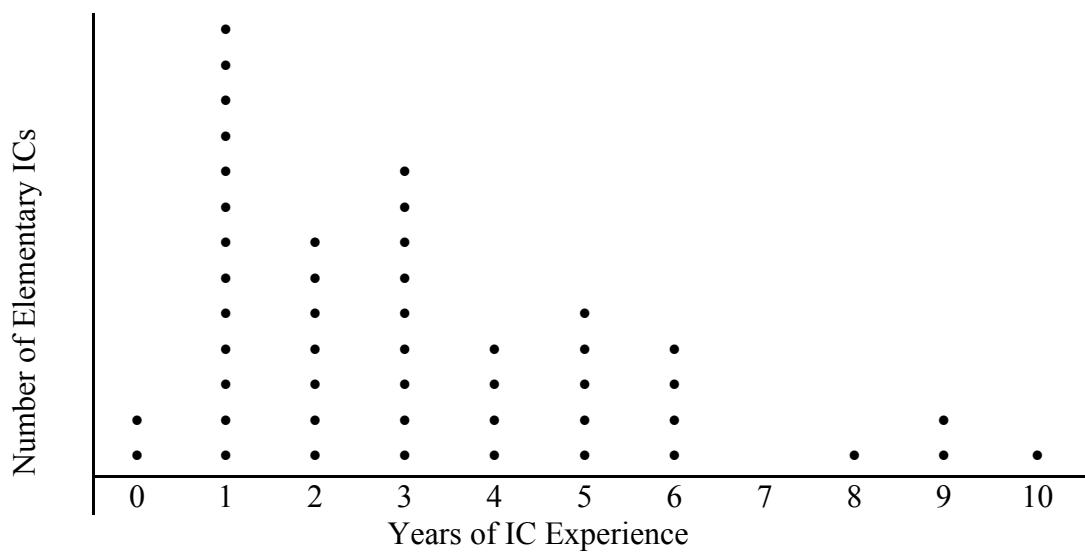


Figure 2. Years of Instructional Coach Experience of ICs in Garrett ISD

Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions of ICs with respect to their experiences in that role, specifically perceptions of their roles and responsibilities; perceptions of their ability to effect change on their campus; and what they thought they needed to be successful. Current ICs, $n = 90$, participated in completing *The Instructional Coach Survey*. This survey provided demographic data as well as qualitative data through the use of open-ended questions concerning their experiences in the field. To gain deeper insight into the patterns that emerged from the survey, individual semi-structured interviews were conducted with four ICs who have been coaching for more than six years in Garrett ISD and four ICs who returned to teaching. The coaching experience of those interviewed who left coaching ranged from one year to six years. The main findings of the data, as reported in Chapter IV, indicated various reasons ICs left their role to return to the classroom to teach as well as the motivations for other coaches to remain in the role. A slight turnover is normal in any occupation, due to advancement or employers determining that employees are not right for the position (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011), so it is inevitable that some ICs will leave because they want to advance into higher leadership positions or other personal reasons; however, the focus of this study was to determine why some coaches return to classroom teaching roles.

Two main reasons coaches returned to the classroom emerged from the data: relational issues, and IC perceptions of lack of efficacy. ICs reported that relational aspects of the job were emotionally and psychologically draining. The data, as discussed in Chapter IV, revealed that relational challenges ICs faced include: stressful

relationships with IC partners, feelings of isolation, and working with teachers who are openly or covertly hostile. Two of the four ICs interviewed left the role due to toxic relationships with their IC partners. One participant left because she missed working with the students and preferred not to deal with the perceived negative behavior of the adults.

The qualitative data also suggested the main reason ICs left their coaching position to return to the classroom was the perception of lack of efficacy. There were many variables that contributed to IC perceptions of inefficacy, including: (a) lack of district or campus support; (b) lack of district or campus definition for the role; (c) resistance from teachers regarding campus, district, or state initiatives; (d) structure of the role (working with more than one campus or subject area); and (e) lack of time to coach teachers in pedagogy due to other tasks assigned by campus principals or the district. ICs reported a myriad of roles for which they assume, such as data coaches, content specialists, lunchroom monitors, and substitute teachers for teachers who were absent or at meetings. When ICs entered the role, most had the expectation they would be working with teachers to enhance classroom instruction; however, ICs reported that they spent the least amount of time devoted to that role due to other responsibilities, suggesting there was a mismatch or misconception of incoming expectations. Because ICs were not working directly with teachers to impact instructional strategies, they felt ineffective, which led to thoughts of leaving the role or actually leaving. The fourth IC interviewed left the role because she was assigned to work at two campuses the following year instead of one and believed that she would not be able to devote the time and attention needed to be effective.

Much of the data provided by ICs parallels research on teacher attrition. In 2014, an attrition rate of teachers with one to five years of experience was up to 50 percent (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014), similar to the attrition rates found in Garrett ISD. Ingersoll and Perda (2010) found that 25% of science teachers who left the profession cited dissatisfaction with teaching due to inadequate planning time, lack of input in campus decision-making, lack of resources, and large class sizes. Similarly ICs in Garrett also reported too little time to complete professional goals leading to dissatisfaction in the job, potentially causing them to leave the profession. Ingersoll (2001) noted lack of administrative support, student discipline (working with challenging people), low salaries, and lack of power to influence decisions as primary reasons for high teacher attrition. This too parallels ICs' reasons for departing.

Why do ICs remain in their role despite all of the challenges they face? When ICs were asked what they enjoyed most about their role, they overwhelmingly stated the feeling of efficacy when teachers were successful in trying something new. The data were clear. When ICs felt empowered and remained in the position when they were provided the proper training and perceived they were impacting change on their campuses. ICs desired training in content, pedagogy, due to the changing skills required by the state, and andragogy. ICs requested that training and initiatives be aligned throughout the district and should be focused around the district's definition of an instructional coach. Through the survey, interviews, and conversations at monthly meetings, participants revealed that bimonthly meetings were beneficial. District meetings were a safe place for ICs to share experiences, collaborate on ways to handle resistant teachers, and conquer feelings of being overwhelmed, possibly leading to their retention.

The primary reason ICs stayed in their role was the progress they were making with teachers. Some reported the excitement they experienced when teachers embraced new learning and implemented that learning in their classrooms. As mentioned earlier, Dakota cried when she saw the joy of a reluctant teacher who was successful with a new way of teaching. ICs also remained out of loyalty to their campuses and the small changes they saw taking place due to their efforts. The ICs who participated in this study remained because they had opportunities to work with teachers in the classroom, and they perceived themselves to be effective because of the impact of their work with teachers. Dakota echoed the sentiment of many coaches when she stated, “There have been a lot of times I’ve wanted to leave, but it’s really all about the growth that I am making with my teachers.”

Limitations of the Study

As with any study, there were limitations. In Chapter III it was noted that external validity might be a concern with this study. Most qualitative studies utilize purposive sampling, making it more difficult to generalize from the sample to a population (Johnson & Christensen, 2008); however, in qualitative research generalizability is not the goal. There were only 154 ICs in the district; therefore, the researcher did not utilize random sampling when choosing participants for *The Instructional Coach Survey*. To increase the sample size, all ICs were asked to participate in the survey. Although a majority of the population, 63%, participated in the survey, response bias was a possibility. Those that did not participate could have told a different story; however, the interview data matched that of the surveys, validating the findings. Furthermore, there were no ICs interviewed from the high school level. None had remained in the position since 2009, which was

telling in itself. Although there were no interview data for high school ICs, survey data from high school ICs indicated similar responses to both elementary and junior high ICs. Also, there are very few male ICs in Garrett ISD; therefore, the male perspective is not adequately present in the data. Although this mixed-method study may not be generalizable to the greater population, it is potentially applicable to other settings. This study is limited to perspectives and experiences of ICs in one district. Creswell (2014) asserts that in qualitative research the sample size does not have to be large; instead, the purpose is to select the participants that will best help the researcher study the issue and the research questions. The findings may not apply to districts that utilize ICs differently (i.e., elementary coaches responsible for only one subject or grade level, coaches used solely for data); however, this study may be useful for districts who are beginning an IC program or who utilize their coaches in a similar manner.

Other possible limitations discussed previously were participant trust, honesty, accurate self-assessment, and potential researcher bias. Although nothing can be done to ensure participant honesty and trust, the participants seemed extremely candid in their responses. To combat researcher bias, a qualitative research expert and university professor served as a peer debriefer to review the coding. The researcher was also cognizant of potential biases and sought alternative explanations to current beliefs.

During the data collection process, other limitations became evident. The researcher went to great lengths to collect a variety of perspectives; however, two groups are not represented in the interview data, high school ICs and male ICs. The researcher was unable to interview anyone from these two groups to gain a more thorough understanding of their perceptions, yet this limitation was offset somewhat by the rich

survey data collected. There is one male elementary IC, and he participated in the survey. Another male IC left to go back to the classroom, but he was unavailable for interviewing. Despite these limitations, this study provides rich data with regard to IC retention.

Contributions to the Literature

This study supports prior research in the following subthemes under the theme *Challenges for Instructional Coaches*: (a) Ambiguity of the Role, (b) Unanticipated Aspects of the Job, (c) Time Constraints, (d) Work Environment, and (e) Facilitating Change. Table 24 highlights the prior research as it pertains to this study.

Table 24

Themes in This Study and Related Literature

THEMES	RELATED RESEARCH
1: Challenges for Instructional Coaches	
<i>Ambiguity of the role</i>	Chval et al., 2010; Gallucci et al., 2010; Marzano & Simms, 2013
<i>Unanticipated Aspects of the Job</i>	Chval et al., 2010;
<i>Time constraints</i>	Chval et al., 2010; Deussen et al., 2007; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Rivera, Burley, & Sass, 2004
<i>Work environment</i>	Borman & Feger, 2006; Chval et al., 2010; Deussen, 2007; Knight, 2005, 2007, 2009a, 2011a, 2011b; Scurry, 2010;
<i>Facilitating change</i>	Hall & Hord, 2011; Cornett & Knight, 2008; Showers, Joyce, & Bennett, 1987
2: Perceptions of Structure and Hiring Practices of the ICs	
<i>Structure</i>	Neufeld & Roper, 2003
<i>Hiring practices</i>	Chval et al., 2010; Deussen, Coskie, Robinson, & Autio (2007);
3: Impacting Change – What Facilitates the Ability of ICs to Move Forward with the Vision of the Campus and District?	
<i>Campus Support</i>	Chval et al., 2010; Croft et al., 2010; Knight (2007); Marzano & Simms, 2013; Neufeld & Roper, 2003
<i>District Support</i>	Gallucci et al., 2010; Knight 2011b; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Polly et al., 2013; Rogers et al., 2006
<i>Training</i>	
<i>Meetings for collaboration and commiseration</i>	Chval et al., 2010
4: Motivation to Remain in the Role	
<i>Ability to impact change on campus</i>	

Note. This is not an exhaustive list of correlated studies but rather represents research cited in this paper.

One of the main challenges ICs reported was the lack of definition of their role and the difficulties that ensued. Administrators need a firm understanding of the IC role

and must clearly articulate the roles and responsibilities for ICs on campus, thus clearing up ambiguity for teachers and ICs (Chval et al., 2010). Some ICs asserted that too often the work assigned to ICs at the campus level is not aligned with the district vision of the role. This misalignment overburdens ICs and prevents them from coaching teachers. ICs struggled with juggling tasks given to them by their principals and finding time to get into classrooms to model and observe lessons. Furthermore, the question must be answered as to who will work with the ICs and why. Teachers need to understand that working with an IC is not punishment for teaching poorly. All teachers can benefit from interactions with ICs (Croft et al., 2010; Knight, 2011a). Time constraints were another challenge reported in this study and found in prior literature (Chval et al., 2010; Neufeld & Roper, 2003; Rivera, Burley, & Sass, 2004). Not only did ICs have difficulty finding time to work in classrooms, ICs struggled with other scheduling issues. They lamented their inability to find time during the day to present professional development so they were not encroaching on teacher planning time. Time constraints were also interwoven in Theme 2: *Perceptions of Structure and Hiring Practices of the ICs*. As noted by Neufeld and Roper (2003), working at more than one campus and working with multiple subjects was another challenge reported by coaches in Garrett ISD. The ICs described feeling frustrated and ineffectual from being stretched too thinly. ICs reported many challenges, yet it was evident from the data that one of the greatest challenges for ICs was teacher resistance to coaching support. The obvious implication is that ICs would benefit from training on not only andragogy (Borman et al., 2006; Deussen, 2007; Knight, 2005, 2007, 2009a) but also training on how to approach adults of different personality types when attempting to effect change.

There were a couple of unique findings from this study that extend previous research and understanding of challenges faced by ICs. One finding included some of the relational aspects of the role, such as the impact of power struggles between Department Chairs and ICs at the secondary levels. ICs asserted that when Department Chairs were given power over ICs by campus principals, it lessened the amount of impact ICs could make on their campuses. This power struggle created feelings of inefficacy for coaches, increasing the chances that ICs would leave the role. Another relational issue that was exposed during this study was the relationship between ICs who worked together on the same campus. Coaches feel alone on their campuses because their role falls between administration and teachers; therefore, the relationship they maintain with their IC counterparts can enhance or diminish their ability to feel successful on a campus. At both elementary and secondary levels, interview and survey participants revealed the devastating effects of poor relationships with partner ICs. Coaches quit and returned to the classroom because of these negative relationships.

This study also contributed to previous research on instructional coaches by examining the motivations behind coaches remaining in the role. The stories of the ICs in Garrett ISD provided rich data regarding why they continue coaching despite the challenges they face. Predominately, ICs remain in their role when they perceive that they effect change on their campus, and they feel valued.

Implications

This study examined the perceptions of instructional coaches regarding their perceptions of their roles and responsibilities, their ability to effect change on their

campuses, as well as reasons they consider leaving the role of IC or staying in the role.

Along with past research, the findings of this study have implications for district and campus administrators when creating or working with an instructional coach program.

Specifically, the results of this study indicate that ICs feel more successful in their role if they have the proper training as well as administrative direction and support. The participants of this study provided specific suggestions for training and support.

Training

Based on the survey and interview data, ICs require more training in the art of coaching, especially with difficult peers, teachers and administrators. One type of training these coaches appreciate is peer-coaching. Coaches spend time coaching their fellow coaches. Teachers in Garrett ISD are beginning to leave the confines of their classrooms to engage in peer-coaching. This practice is encouraged, and in some cases mandated, by campus principals. Teachers are beginning to initiate peer-coaching opportunities that are often facilitated by campus ICs. Some research suggests it is beneficial for coaches to follow the same guidelines and practice coaching with peers in the classrooms (Polly et al., 2013). Garrett ISD has begun this practice with language arts ICs at the elementary level, and the participants that commented on this process claimed it was valuable. In my current role I want to initiate this lab site practice with mathematics and science ICs as well. I also plan to meet with Instructional Coach Coordinators to discuss the findings of training needs of ICs.

Administrative Direction and Support

The root cause of the challenges faced by these ICs was a lack of a true instructional coach model. Although the district suggested some guidelines as to how ICs

should and should not be utilized, campus principals had the ultimate power to determine the roles and responsibilities of the ICs. Districts should create unambiguous guidelines as to the roles and responsibilities of ICs, and these guidelines should be clearly communicated with ICs, administrators, and teachers. Frustrations erupt and confusion ensues when campus administrators have free reign to utilize ICs as they desire. As districts define the IC role, they should ensure that the duties assigned allow ICs time to work in classrooms with teachers. Furthermore, campus administrators must be certain to meet with ICs to clarify their vision and mission for the campus and ensure that ICs know how their role and responsibilities, as defined by the district, will help to accomplish the campus goals. When ICs are implementing the initiatives set out by the district and/or campus, principals must be consistent about supporting the ICs with their mission when teachers experience challenges. For ICs to remain in the position, they must know the direction they are being asked to travel and feel supported in the goals they are trying to accomplish. In my current role, I am planning to meet with the Instructional Coach Facilitator to suggest ideas to be shared with both district and campus administrators regarding the needs of ICs that pertain to administrative direction and support. As an IC, I can be instrumental in leading the effort with other ICs to create a structured instructional coach model for the district.

Considerations for Future Studies

Future research in the area of instructional coaching can be strengthened based on the implications of this study. This study only provides a snapshot of the perceptions of ICs in one district. Many questions are still unanswered in the quest for data pertaining to IC retention. First, future research should explore the average turnover rate for ICs in

other districts and reasons why ICs leave in those districts. It is unclear if the IC retention issue is a district problem or a national one. Second, many of the challenges reported by ICs in Garrett ISD revolved around relational issues and dealing with the needs of adult learners. Additional studies that examine the extent to which training in andragogy impacts efficacy and retention should be considered. Because many of the challenges reported by ICs were relational, and the sample was overwhelmingly female, it would be interesting to examine the male perception. Do men have the same relational issues as women in this role?

An unexpected finding in this study included the data pertaining to how ICs were hired. All the participants who were interviewed happened to be chosen from the campus where they were teaching and thought it was beneficial to come from the same campus. The ICs stated that it required less time to gain trust due to familiarity of the staff with which they worked. With this in mind, the researcher suggests investigating the perspective of those who were hired from outside their campus. How long does it take to build trust on campus if the coach is hired from another campus versus from the same campus? Another potential research topic is the correlation between hiring from the same or different campus and retention? The results of these questions would help campus principals with best practices for hiring ICs.

Finally, much of the data in this study paralleled the research on teacher retention. Teachers and ICs reported similar frustrations, and like teachers, ICs tend to leave the coaching role within five years. Given the similarities between teacher and IC attrition, researchers should examine how effective strategies for retaining teachers impact IC retention.

Conclusions

ICs can be a benefit to campuses and districts (Knight, 2007; 2011a; 2011b; Marzano & Simms, 2013); therefore, this study sought to determine why ICs are returning to the classroom and what can be done to retain them in the coaching field. Based on the data discussed in Chapter IV, several conclusions can be made. First, ICs are leaving or considering leaving the profession in alarming numbers. Over 50% of ICs in Garrett ISD are considering leaving or state they are definitely leaving the position in the next five years; however, it is unclear if this is a single district issue or a nationwide problem. Second, ICs require adequate support and direction from both the campus and district levels in order to feel successful. Third, ICs gain the most satisfaction from working with teachers to improve instruction, yet most ICs spend the least amount of time in classrooms due to other duties assigned by campus principals. Research suggests high quality teachers are one of the most important variables in student achievement (Wenglinsky, 2000), and one way to enhance instruction is through the utilization of high quality PD for teachers that includes follow-up with instructional coaches (Knight, 2007; Showers, Joyce, & Bennett, 1987). ICs can provide job-embedded PD that addresses campus needs as well as follow-up with teachers after district or campus PD to ensure proficient implementation.

Cornett and Knight (2008) point out that the support ICs receive is varied across the country. They suggest that there is a need for research that identifies specific PD needed for coaches (content and frequency). Based on the data from the coaches in this district, training in content, pedagogy, and andragogy are critical to their success. Specifically, coaches requested additional training in working with challenging teachers.

ICs also enjoyed learning activities they could take back to their teachers, but the coaches stressed the importance of receiving these activities immediately prior to when teachers began teaching the subject matter so that the activities could be shared at the most opportune time for teachers. District training also needed to be differentiated to meet the varied needs of the coaches. The district sometimes provided choice in PD sessions, and this was a well-received method of training. The coaches that had been classroom teachers had little to no prior training in instructional coaching or andragogy; therefore, PD in the art of coaching is essential.

Cornett and Knight (2008) also suggested future research that included ways administrators could support coaches. The data from interviews and the survey are evidence of the need for strong administrative support. Principals can support coaches by defining the coach role and articulating that definition with teachers. Furthermore, ICs in Garrett ISD had a better understanding of the vision and mission of the principal if they met weekly with their administrators. This communication provided ICs with a better grasp of the administrator's expectations, and the IC was able to relay information from the district to the principal, adding to the alignment of the district vision for the IC. Weekly meetings with principals also allowed ICs the opportunity to share all they were trying to accomplish and provide updates on their progress. Although weekly meetings with the principal was beneficial, almost all ICs perceived that it was better not to be seen as part of the administrative team or to be responsible for administrative duties. Being a part of the administrative team created unwanted trust issues with teachers.

Administrators can also provide support to ICs by showing consistency with teachers. ICs reported that administrators would acquiesce if teachers complained about

district or campus initiatives ICs were promoting. This lack of support leads to frustration and disillusionment in the role, causing ICs to quit. The most important way administrators can support coaches is by allowing them the time to work in classrooms with teachers instead of weighing them down with paperwork or duties not associated with enhancing instruction. The data showed that ICs viewed themselves as more effective if they had the opportunity to work directly with teachers. ICs said the favorite part of their role was helping teachers improve their craft.

Hall and Hord (2011) suggest that it takes three to five years for substantial change to be implemented on a campus. Further, instructional coaches reported that it often takes years to build the trust needed to work at an optimum level. When ICs leave the role after two or three years, a new coach must begin the cycle anew. For an instructional coaching model to work, ICs must be retained in the position long enough for change to transpire.

REFERENCES

- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2014). *On the path to equity: Improving the effectiveness of beginning teachers*. Retrieved June 13, 2015, from <http://all4ed.org/reports-factsheets/path-to-equity/>.
- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2015). *The big 80s: U.S. national high school graduation rate hits all-time high of 81 percent*. Retrieved June 13, 2015, from <http://all4ed.org/articles/the-big-80s-u-s-national-high-school-graduation-rate-hits-all-time-high-of-81-percent/>.
- Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: W. H. Freeman.
- Blamey, K., Albert, L., & Dorrell, B. (2008). C is for coach: What is it like to be an early childhood literacy coach. *Literacy Coaching Clearinghouse*. Retrieved from <http://www.literacycoachingonline.org>
- Borman, J., & Dowling, N. M. (2008). Teacher attrition and retention: A meta-analytic and narrative review of the research. *Review of Educational Research*, 78(3), 367-409.
- Borman, J., & Feger, S., (with Kawakami, N.). (2006). Instructional coaching: Key themes from the literature. *The Education Alliance at Brown University*. Retrieved from <http://www.alliance.brown.edu>
- Campbell, P. F. & Malkus, N. N. (2011). The impact of elementary mathematics coaches on student achievement. *The Elementary School Journal*, 111(3), 430-454.
- Carroll, C., Patterson, M., Wood, S., Booth, A., Rick, J., & Balain, S. (2007). A

- conceptual framework for implementation fidelity. *Implementation Science* 2(40), 40-49.
- Chval, K. B., Arbaugh, F., Lannin, J. K., vanGarderen, D., Cummings, L., Estapa, A. T., & Huey, M. E. (2010). The transition from experienced teacher to mathematics coach: Establishing a new identity. *The Elementary School Journal* 111(1), 191-216.
- Cohen, D., & Crabtree, B. (2006). *Qualitative Research Guidelines Project*. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.qualres.org/HomeProl-3690.html> <http://www.qualres.org/HomeProl-3690.html>
- Cornett, J. & Knight, J. (2008). "Research on coaching." In Jim Knight, Ed., *Coaching: Approaches and Perspectives*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.
- Creswell, J. W. (2006). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Croft, A., Coggshall, J.G., Dolan, M., Powers, E. (with Joellen Killion). (2010). *Job-embedded professional development: What it is, who is responsible, and how to get it done well*. (Issue Brief). National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality, Mid-Atlantic Comprehensive Center, National Staff Development Council.
- Darling-Hammond, L. & McLaughlin, M.W. (2011). Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 92(6), 81-92.
- Darling-Hammond, L. & Berry, B. (2006). Highly qualified teachers for all. *Educational*

- Leadership*, 64(3), 14-20.
- David, J. L. (2008). What research says about classroom walk-throughs. *Educational Leadership*, 65(4), 81-82.
- Denzin, N.K., & Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.) (2000). *Handbook of qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Desimone, L. M. (2009). Improving impact studies of teachers' professional development: Toward better conceptualizations and measures. *Educational Researcher*, 38(3), 181–199.
- Deussen, T., Coskie, T., Robinson, L., & Autio, E. (2007). "Coach" can mean many things: Five categories of literacy coaches in Reading First (Issues and Answers Report, REL 2007-No. 5). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Northwest. Retrieved January 29, 2015, from
<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=REL2007005>
- DuFour, R., Eaker, R., & DuFour, R. (Eds.) (2005). *On common ground: The power of professional learning communities*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.
- Fullan, M. & Knight, J. (2011). Coaches as system leaders. *Educational Leadership* 69(2), 50-53.
- Gallucci, C, DeVoogt Van Lare, M., Yoon, I.H., & Boatright, B. (2010). Instructional coaching: Building theory about the role and organizational support for professional learning. *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(4), 919-963.
- Garet, M. S., Ludwig, M., Yoon, K., Wayne, A., Birman, B., & Milanowski, A. (2011).

- Making professional development more strategic: A conceptual model for district decision makers.* (Working paper: Presented at The Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association)
- Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. New York: Aldine De Gruyter.
- Hall, G. E., & Hord, S. M. (2011). *Implementing change: Patterns, principals, and potholes*, (3rd Ed.), Upper Saddle, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.
- Heifetz & Linsky (2002). Heifetz, R. A. & Linsky, M. (2002). *Leadership on the line: Staying alive through the dangers of leading*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Heppner, P. P., & Heppner, M. J. (2004). *Writing and publishing your thesis, dissertation, and research: A guide for students in the helping professions*. Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole, Cengage Learning.
- Ingersoll, R. M. (2001). Teacher turnover, teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. *American Education Research Journal*, 38, 499-534.
- Ingersoll, R. M., & Perda, D. (2010). Is the supply of mathematics and science teachers sufficient? *American Educational Research Journal*, 47(3) 563 – 594.
- Ingersoll, R. M., & Strong, M. (2011). The impact of induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers: A critical review of the research. *Review of Educational Research*, 81(2), 201-233.
- James, R. K., Hord, S. M., & Pratt, H. (1988). *Managing change in the science program*. In L.L. Motz & G.M. Madrazo, Jr. (Eds.), *Third Sourcebook for Science Supervisors*. Washington, DC: National Science Supervisors Association &

- National Science Teachers Association, 61-76.
- Johnson, B., & Christensen, L. (2008). *Educational research: Quantitative, qualitative, and mixed approaches*. (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Johnson, S. M., Berg, J. H. & Donaldson, M. L. (2005). *Who stays in teaching and why: A review of the literature on teacher retention*. Boston: Harvard Graduate School of Education, Project on the Next Generation of Teachers.
- Knight, J. (2005). A primer on instructional coaches. *Principal Leadership*, 5(9), 16-21.
Retrieved from <https://www.nassp.org/search-results?q=A%20primer%20on%20instructional%20coaches>
- Knight, J., (2007). *Instructional coaching: A partnership approach to instruction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Knight, J. (2009a). Instructional coaching. In J. Knight (Ed.), *Coaching: Approaches and perspectives* (pp. 29-55). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Knight, J. (2009b). Coaching: The key to translating research into practice lies in continuous, job-embedded learning with ongoing support. *Journal of Staff Development*, 30(1), 18-22.
- Knight, J. (2011a). What good coaches do. *Educational Leadership*, 69(2), 18-22.
Retrieved from <http://www.ascd.org/>
- Knight, J. (2011b). *Unmistakeable impact: A partnership approach for dramatically improving instruction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Knowles, M. (1984). *The adult learner: A neglected species* (3rd Ed.). Houston, TX: Gulf Publishing.
- Learning Forward. (2015). *Standards for professional learning*. Retrieved March 13,

- 2015, from <http://learningforward.org/standards#.VSAZNkuDiTk>
- Lipson, J. G. (1994). Ethical issues in ethnography. In J. M. Morse (Eds.), *Critical issues in qualitative research methods* (pp. 333-355). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Lo, J. & Luo, F. (2012). Prospective elementary teachers' knowledge of fraction division. *Journal of Mathematic Teacher Education, 15*(6), 481-500.
- Loeb, S., Darling-Hammond, L., & Luczak, J. (2005). How teaching conditions predict teacher turnover in California schools. *Peabody Journal of Education, 80*(3), 44-70.
- Loucks-Horsley, S., Love, N., Stiles, K.E., Mundry, S. & Hewson, P.W. (2003). *Designing professional development for teachers of science and mathematics* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research* (4th ed.) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Marzano, R. J., & Simms, J. A. (with Roy,T., Heflebower, T., & Warrick, P.). (2013). *Coaching classroom instruction*. Bloomington, IN: Marzano Research Laboratory.
- Mraz, M., Algozzine, R., & Kissell, B. T. (2009). *The literacy coaches companion: PreK-3*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Neufeld, B. & Roper, D. (2002). *Off to a good start: Year I of collaborative coaching and learning in the effective practice schools*. Cambridge, MA: Education Matters.
- Neufeld, B., & Roper, D. (2003). *Coaching: A strategy for developing instructional capacity, promises, and practicalities*. Washington, DC: Aspen Institute Program on Education and Providence, RI: Annenberg Institute for School Reform.
- Polly, D., Mraz, M., Algozzine, R. (2013). Implications for developing and researching elementary school mathematics coaches. *School Science and Mathematics, 113*(6),

- 297-307.
- Richardson, K., Berenson, S., & Staley, K. (2009). Prospective elementary teachers' use of representation to reason algebraically. *The Journal of Mathematical Behavior*, 28(2), 188-199.
- Rivera, N., Burley, K., & Sass, J., (2004). *Evaluation of school-based professional development (2002-2003)*. Los Angeles Unified School District Program Evaluation and Research Branch Planning, Assessment and Research Division Publication No. 187.
- Rogers, M. P., Abell, S., Lannin, J., Wang, C., Musikul, K., Barker, D. & Dingman, S. (2006). Effective professional development in science and mathematics education: Teachers' and facilitators' views. *International Journal of Science and Mathematics Education*, 5(3), 507-532.
- Rush, L. S. & Young, S. (2011). Wyoming's instructional facilitator program: Teachers' beliefs about the impact of coaching on practice. *National Rural Education Association*, (32)2, 13-22.
- Sailors, M., & Shanklin, N. (Eds.) (2010). Coaching, teaching, and learning. *The Elementary School Journal*, 111(1), 1–6.
- Scurry, S. N. (2010). *Perceptions of instructional coaches in the elementary school setting and their impact on teacher self-efficacy*. (Doctoral Dissertation, The University of Houston – Clear Lake). Available from ProQuest Dissertations and Theses database. (UMI No. 3438286)
- Showers, B., Joyce, B., & Bennett, B. (1987). Synthesis of research on staff development: A framework for future study and a state of the art analysis. *Educational*

- Leadership, 45, 77-87.*
- Smith, L. (2008). *Schools that change: Evidence-based improvement and effective change leadership*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Stinebrickner, T. R. (2002). An analysis of occupational change and departure from the labor force: Evidence of the reasons that teachers leave. *Journal of Human Resources, 37*(1), 192-216.
- Stock, M. J., & Duncan, H. E. (2010). Mentoring as a professional development strategy for instructional coaches: Who mentors the mentors? *Planning and Changing, 41*(1/2), 57-69.
- Strauss, A. L., & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedure and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. & McMaster, P. (2009). Sources of self-efficacy: Four professional development formats and their relationship to self-efficacy and implementation of a new teaching strategy. *The Elementary School Journal, 110*(2); 228-245.
- U. S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Statistics, Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), “*Public School Data File*,” 2011-12. Retrieved from https://nces.ed.gov/surveys/sass/tables_list.asp
- Vaden-Kiernan, M., Jones, D.H., & McCann, E. (2009, February). *Latest evidence on the National Staff Development Council’s standards assessment inventory*. (NSDC Research Brief). Retrieved April 27, 2015, from
http://learningforward.org/docs/pdf/sai_sedlbrieffinal.pdf?sfvrsn=0
- Wayne, A.J., Yoon, K.S., Zhu, P., Cronen, S., Garet, M.S. (2008). Experimenting with

- teacher professional development: Motives and methods. *Educational Researcher* 37(8); 469-479.
- Wei, R.C., Darling-Hammond, L., & Adamson, F. (2010). *Professional learning in the United States: Trends and challenges, Part II of a three-phase study*. (NSDC Executive Summary). Retrieved June 14, 2015 from <http://learningforward.org/docs/pdf/nsdcstudy2010.pdf>
- Wenglinsky, H. (2000). *How teaching matters: Bringing the classroom back into discussion of teacher quality*. Princeton, NJ: Policy Information Center.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and method* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yoon, K. S., Duncan, T., Lee, S. W., Scarloss, B., & Shapley, K. (2007). *Reviewing the evidence of how teacher professional development affects student achievement* (Issues & Answers Report, REL 2007-No. 033). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest. Retrieved from <http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs>
- Yonge, George D. (1985). Andragogy and pedagogy: Two ways of accompaniment. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 35(3), 160-167.
- Young, E., & Zientek, L. (2011). Fraction operation: An examination of prospective teachers' errors, confidence, and bias. *Investigations in Mathematics Learning*, 4, 1-24.

APPENDIX A
INSTRUCTIONAL COACH SURVEY

APPENDIX A
INSTRUCTIONAL COACH SURVEY
Instructional Coach Survey - 2015

Dear Instructional Coach:

Greetings! You are being solicited to complete the Instructional Coach Survey. The purpose of this survey is to obtain demographic data and to examine the roles and responsibilities of instructional coaches (ICs). Questions regarding job satisfaction and factors regarding retention are also included.

Please try to answer all the questions. Filling out the attached survey is entirely voluntary, but answering each response will make the survey most useful. This survey will take approximately 10 - 15 minutes to complete, and all of your responses will be kept completely confidential. Each person will be assigned a number in an effort to maintain confidentiality. Individual, campus, and district names will not be revealed in this study. No obvious undue risks will be endured and you may stop your participation at any time. In addition, there are no perceivable direct benefits from your participation in the study; however, your participation may help districts to understand the challenges instructional coaches face. The data obtained in this study could provide district administrators beneficial data that may facilitate positive changes in instructional coach programs.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated and your willingness to participate in this study is implied if you proceed with completing the survey. Your completion of the Instructional Coach Survey is greatly appreciated. If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact Dr. Sandra Browning or myself.

Thank you!

Amy Lancaster

* Required

The purpose of this study, procedures to be followed, and explanation of risks or benefits have been explained to you. You have been told who to contact if you have questions. You have read this consent form and voluntarily agree to participate as a subject in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Student Researcher or Faculty Sponsor.



Check here if you agree to participate in this study.

Name (This will remain confidential.) *

Number of years as a teacher prior to becoming an instructional coach *

Grades taught (check all that apply) *

- K
- 1st
- 2nd
- 3rd
- 4th
- 5th
- 6th
- 7th
- 8th
- 9th
- 10th
- 11th
- 12th

Number of years as an instructional coach (not including this school year) *

As a coach, which grade levels do you serve? *

- Elementary
- Junior high
- High school

As a coach, what are your subject areas? (Check all that apply) *

- Math
- Science
- Reading
- Writing
- Social studies

Why did you choose to become an instructional coach? *

What was your role before becoming an instructional coach in this district? *

- I was a teacher in my current building and moved into the coach position.
- I was a teacher from another campus in this district.
- I was a teacher hired from outside the district.
- I was a coach from another district.
- Other:

Highest level of education *

- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate
- Other:

What was your major/specialization for that degree? *

Background / experiences that help you to be effective in your role as an instructional coach (include experiences prior to being an IC as well as during your role as IC) *

What roles/responsibilities do you assume as an instructional coach? (Check all that apply) *

- Planning staff development
- Presenting staff development
- Creating tests or helping to create tests with teachers
- Coordinating district or state tests
- Generating data reports
- Facilitating data meetings
- Planning and attending curriculum nights
- Modeling lessons
- Observing lessons
- Providing feedback after observations
- Working with students in small groups
- Attending Response To Intervention (RTI) meetings
- Facilitating Response To Intervention (RTI) meetings
- Lesson planning with teachers
- Meeting with administration
- Substituting for teachers who are absent or in meetings
- Attending scheduled IC meetings
- Attending professional development of choice
- Off campus working with other instructional coaches on projects (not IC meetings)
- Finding resources for teachers
- Working with individual teachers on strategies, classroom management, etc.
- Addressing student behavior issues
- Extra duties (i.e.: Bus duty/ hall duty/lunch duty, etc.)
- Other:

Think about all of your responsibilities and experiences as a coach. Were there any experiences and/or responsibilities/duties that you were not expecting when you assumed the role of IC? If so, what were they? If not, just type, "no". *

As an instructional coach, what are the greatest challenges that you face? *

In what areas would you like assistance or more training? (Check all that apply) *

- Content knowledge
- Strategies for dealing with resistant teachers
- Tips and tools for providing professional development
- Strategies for working with teachers on data analysis
- Strategies for gaining teacher trust and support
- Strategies for gaining administrative support
- Tips for time management
- Other:

Please check one of the following: *

- I am likely to stay in my coaching position for the next 5 years.
- I am not likely to stay in my coaching position for the next 5 years.
- I have contemplated leaving the role of instructional coach and do not know if I will stay in the position.
- Other:

If you stated that you have contemplated leaving or were NOT likely to stay in the position, what factors are most likely to cause you to leave the coaching profession in the next 5 years?

If you are considering leaving the position of IC, what might encourage you to stay?

How would you describe your campus culture (the attitudes, beliefs, and written and unwritten rules that shape how a school functions)? *

In what ways has district support impacted your effectiveness as an instructional coach? *

Were you assigned a mentor when you first began your coaching assignment? If so, in what way did it impact your effectiveness as an instructional coach?

Describe your professional relationship with the teachers and administrators on your campus.

To what extent do you believe you impact school change? In what ways? Has this changed since you began as a coach? *

To what extent are you prepared to build teachers content knowledge for all of the subjects for which you are responsible? *

Describe your level of confidence in working with difficult teachers. *

Submit

APPENDIX B
HUMAN SUBJECT APPLICATION

APPENDIX B
HUMAN SUBJECT APPLICATION

COMMITTEE FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS
Faculty/Sponsor Application for Investigation Involving Human Subjects
 2700 Bay Area Blvd. 281.283.3015 FAX 281.283.2143
 Houston, TX 77058-1098 uhcl.edu/research

DATE:	August 10, 2015
TITLE:	Factors That May Lead Instructional Coaches to Leave That Role: A Mixed Method Case Study
STUDENT RESEARCHER:	Amy Lancaster
FACULTY SPONSOR:	Sandra Browning, Ph.D.
PROPOSED PROJECT END DATE:	April, 2016

All applicants are to review and understand the responsibilities for abiding by provisions stated in the UHCL's Federal-wide Assurance (FWA 00004068), approved by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP) on March 9, 2004: (a) The Belmont Report provides ethical principles to follow in human subject research; and (b) Federal regulations 45 CFR 46 and all of its subparts A, B, C, and D are the minimum standards applied to all of UHCL's human subject research. See <http://www.uhcl.edu/research> -- Protection of Human Subjects, Federal-wide Assurance.

For questions, contact the Office of Sponsored Programs (OSP) at 281-283-3015 or sponsoredprograms@uhcl.edu

Principal Investigator (PI) / Faculty Sponsor (FS) Responsibilities Regarding Research on Human Subjects:

- PI / FS acknowledges reviewing UHCL's FWA (Federal-wide Assurance) (FWA #00004068) approved by the Office of Human Research Protections (OHRP). PI / FS understands the responsibilities for abiding by provisions of the Assurance.
- The PI / FS cannot initiate any contact with human subjects until final approval is given by CPHS.
- Additions, changes or issues relating to the use of human subjects after the project has begun must be submitted for CPHS review as an amendment and approved PRIOR to implementing the change.
- If the study continues for a period longer than one year, a continuing review must be submitted PRIOR to the anniversary date of the studies approval date.
- PI / FS asserts that information contained in this application for human subjects' assessment is complete, true and accurate.
- PI / FS agrees to provide adequate supervision to ensure that the rights and welfare of human subjects are properly maintained.
- Faculty Sponsors are responsible for student research conducted under their supervision. Faculty Sponsors are to retain research data and informed consent forms for three years after project ends.

- PI / FS acknowledges the responsibility to secure the informed consent of the subjects by explaining the procedures, in so far as possible, and by describing the risks and potential benefits of the project.
- PI / FS assures CPHS that all procedures performed in this project will be conducted in accordance with all federal regulations and university policies which govern research with human subjects.

A. DATA COLLECTION DATES:

1. From:	The date of approval from the CPHS Committee and District IRB
2. To:	April 2016
3. Project End Date:	September 2016

B. HUMAN SUBJECTS DESCRIPTION:

1. Age range:	24 to 65 years old
2. Approx. number:	150
3. % Male:	3
4. % Female:	97

C. PROJECT SUMMARY:

Complete application using commonly understood terminology.

1. Background and Significance

Provide a CONCISE rationale for this project, based on current literature, information, or data. Include references as appropriate.

The literature is clear that effective instructional coaches can bring about school change (Knight, 2011). However, in the district being studied, for the last six years there has been an average IC turnover of 26% each year. Some left to become campus assistant principals, a normal job progression for those wanting to be administrators. Yet others took a step back and returned to the classroom. Other coaches returned to campuses as Academic Support teachers to teach small groups of students. Why did these coaches leave the coaching role? If there is a high turnover of coaches, it is difficult to build and maintain the trust with teachers needed for effective training to take place on a campus. One study found that coaches did not begin making an impact in school change until their second year on a campus (Campbell & Malkus, 2011). For the coaching model to work, instructional coaches must be retained in the position

long enough for change to take place, and instructional coaching has its challenges. Educational research by Hall and Hord (2011) suggest that it takes three to five years for substantial change to be implemented. Therefore, it is critical to determine how to retain effective coaches in their role. Currently, there are no studies on the retention of instructional coaches.

Campbell, P. F. & Malkus, N. N. (2011). The impact of elementary mathematics coaches on student achievement. *The Elementary School Journal*, 111(3), 430-454.

Hall, G. E., & Hord, S. M. (2011). *Implementing change: Patterns, principals, and potholes*, (3rd Ed.), Upper Saddle, NJ: Pearson Education, Inc.

Knight, J. (2011). *Unmistakeable impact: A partnership approach for dramatically improving instruction*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

2. Specific Aims

Purpose, Hypotheses/Research Questions, Goals of the Project. **BRIEFLY** describe the purpose and goals of the project (include hypotheses or research questions to be addressed and the specific objectives or aims of the project. Describe or define terms or methods as needed for CPHS reviewer's understanding.

The primary purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of instructional coaches regarding their feelings of efficacy and how it pertains to their retention in the field of coaching.

There is a plethora of research on the self-efficacy of teachers; however, the literature regarding self-efficacy and retention of coaches is sparse. The current study seeks to extend prior research by examining the perceptions of instructional coaches regarding their roles and ability to effect change and how these perceptions impact their desire to remain in the position. This study is particularly relevant to school districts that are struggling to retain instructional coaches. The specific research questions that will guide the study are:

Question 1: What perceptions do instructional coaches hold about their roles, responsibilities, and ability to effect change within the district, and how do these perceptions factor in to their intention to remain or leave the position?

Question 2: What roles do instructional coaches assume on their campus, and how did the instructional coaches' expectations of the job differ from what they actually experienced in the role?

Question 3: What do instructional coaches perceive as necessary to increase their satisfaction and perceptions of feeling competent in their role?

By exploring the roles, expectations, and experiences of instructional coaches, the researcher seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of coaches as they work in this role and identify the triggers that might cause them to leave. This understanding can influence how districts offer support and training in an effort to retain instructional coaches.

3. Research Method, Design and Procedures

- (A) Provide an overview of research methodology and design; e.g., how the data are to be collected, analyzed, and interpreted.
- (B) Provide step-by-step description of procedures and how they are to be applied. Procedures are to begin from CPHS approval and end when data compiled and results reported. Possible information to include: What are participants asked to do? When and where are they to participate? How long will it take to participate? Describe type of research information gathered from participants, i.e., data being collected.

Note that ethical responsibility of researcher to participant does not end until participant's information has been destroyed. Research documentation cannot be destroyed for up to three years after completion of a study.

First, approval from the district's Institutional Review Board (IRB) and from the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (CPHS) at the University of Houston – Clear Lake will be obtained. Data for this study will be collected through April 2016.

Research Design

To examine the perceptions and experiences of ICs in the district and to gain an understanding as to why some ICs stay in the position while many others leave, this research will utilize a mixed-methods case study approach. A mixed-methods design is

most appropriate for this study because both qualitative and quantitative data are needed to provide a deeper understanding of the issue. The quantitative research will provide information that addresses the exploratory overview of the research questions within this particular school district setting, whereas the qualitative research will allow for more in-depth examination and explanatory aspects of the research questions that provide insight into people's lives, experiences, and perceptions regarding decisions made to stay or leave (Johnson & Christensen, 2008); therefore, blending qualitative and quantitative data will give strength to the study. A case study is the study of a bounded system (Creswell, 2006). This study seeks to understand the experiences and perceptions of instructional coaches within one school district. "Case studies take the reader into the setting with a vividness and detail not typically present in more analytic reporting formats" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 164). There are several parts to this study. The research will move from an exploratory case study design through the use of a survey of current ICs to an explanatory process captured through individual interviews with select participants. "Exploratory research serves to identify important variables for subsequent explanatory or predictive research" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p.15). The first component of the study will include participants that are currently ICs in completion of a survey and will be both qualitative and quantitative in nature as some responses to questions will yield descriptive statistics and others responses will be lengthier as respondents answer open-ended questions. The latter responses will involve qualitative analysis through constant comparative methodology. Instructional coaches from one district with at least one year of experience will complete the survey. The first part of the survey will be descriptive, allowing the

researcher to collect profile data such as years of teaching experience and years of coaching experience. The second part of the survey will elicit responses concerning sense of efficacy, perceptions of campus climate, opinions or experiences with administrative support, sense of preparedness for or skill alignment with new roles and responsibilities, and other factors that might cause them to leave or remain in the position. The answers from the second part of the survey will be analyzed for patterns. These patterns will provide direction to the types of questions added to the interview protocol and help triangulate findings across all data sets.

Another part of the study will examine the perceptions of coaches who have remained in the position since inception (2009-2010). The researcher will interview participants who have stayed in the role since the 2009-2010 school year to examine reasons why these individuals have remained and to compare their experiences with those who are no longer in the position.

A third part of the study will also be qualitative. The focus will be on examining the perceptions and experiences of coaches who left the field of coaching. A sample of six coaches who left coaching in the last three years will be purposively selected to gain different perspectives on the research questions of this study. Creswell (2007) suggests that four to five participants should provide adequate data to identify themes and to conduct cross-theme analysis. Six will be selected to gain information from coaches in different subject areas and different grade levels. Those who left for a promotion will not be included in this list because moving into administration is a logical next career step. Those who retired or quit to stay at home with children will also be excluded. Looking at data from coaches who remained in the position and

those who left will allow for the comparison of efficacious experiences of both groups. A holistic analysis will be conducted where themes and interpretations related to the whole case will be identified and presented (Yin, 2003).

Data Collection Procedures

Creswell (2007) states that a good qualitative study must employ rigorous data collection procedures by collecting multiple sources of data. Data will be obtained through surveys, in-depth interviews, and notes as an observing participant by the researcher from monthly district meetings with coaches. No incentives will be given for participating in any portion of the study.

Survey

At the beginning of the study the researcher will conduct a survey of all coaches from one suburban school district who have at least one year of coaching experience and willing to participate in the study. There are no surveys currently available in the literature that parallel or align with collecting data required for this study; therefore, the researcher created a survey. To ensure validity, the survey questions will be reviewed for alignment with the study by peers from a doctoral cohort and also with people who were instructional coaches at one time but are not participating in the study. A panel of experts in qualitative research will also review the survey to ensure alignment with the research questions. An email list of all who are currently coaches will be obtained from the district coordinators who work with the coaches. A letter explaining the study accompanied by the survey will be emailed to all ICs in the district who have been coaching for at least one year. The survey will contain a statement where participants will provide informed consent to participate in

this portion of the study. The purpose of the survey will be to obtain demographic data regarding the coaches, including teaching experience, coaching experience, training regarding content while at the university level and amount of professional development received by the district. Questions regarding job satisfaction, factors regarding retention, and factors that might cause them to leave the field of coaching will be included. As patterns emerge from the data, questions will be developed for the individual interview protocols. Part of the survey will be open-ended questions. All respondents will be promised confidentiality. Names, schools, and district name will not be used in any documentation to be viewed by anyone other than the researcher. Participants will be issued a unique number to protect confidentiality throughout the study. Pseudonyms will be supplied for campus and district names as well. Reminder emails will be sent to encourage a higher rate of participation.

Interviews

Group 1- ICs who left: Face-to-face interviews allow the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of participants' experiences or perspectives. A list of people who have left their position in coaching in the last three years will be obtained through the district's Curriculum and Instruction Department. Six or more people who left the coaching role will be purposively selected to participate in an interview. The researcher hopes to compare and contrast information from people who coached at different grade levels and different content areas to gain a well-rounded picture of the story. These individuals will receive a phone call and the study will be explained. After a full explanation of the research is given to these individuals, those willing to participate will sign a consent form and participate in a semi-structured interview (See

Appendix D for Consent Form). A semi-structured interview protocol is preferred so the researcher can be consistent across interviews with some questions but also probe deeper as the story unfolds and individual responses warrant extended questioning (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). The participants will be given a choice of quiet locations within their school site for conducting the interview in an effort to make the interviewee more comfortable. The purpose of the interview will be to determine why the participant left coaching and what might have been done to retain that person. Individual interviews were chosen over focus groups due to the sensitive nature of the questions. Participants may be more likely to fear a breach of confidentiality if others are present. Creswell (2007) cautions that shy or less articulate interviewees may provide less than adequate data. The interviews will contain open-ended questions and will last for approximately 45 minutes to one hour (See Appendix E for Initial Interview protocol). The interview will begin with a warm-up question that asks the interviewee about their current position. After that, the researcher will delve into their experiences as an IC, reasons they resigned the position, and what, if anything, could have convinced them to remain an IC. With permission of the participants, the interviews will be audio-taped using Evernote and transcribed afterward. Technology can fail, so notes will also be taken during the interviews. Participants will be assured that their names will be kept confidential. As with the surveys, it will be explicitly reiterated that all responses will remain anonymous, and pseudonyms will be utilized. Data regarding participant perceptions will be obtained and entered into Scrivener, a word processing and project management tool. Follow-up interviews may be scheduled if more information is required during data analysis.

Group 2 – IC's who stayed: A list of those who have been ICs since the program began six years ago will be obtained from the Curriculum and Instruction Department. In the fall of 2009 there were 58 ICs. Of those ICs, only 11 remain, including the researcher (specifically, there are zero at the high school level, two at junior high, and nine at the elementary level). To gain perspectives from different levels and content areas, the junior high ICs will be purposively selected to participate in an interview. Two mathematics/science ICs and two language arts/social studies ICs will be randomly selected from the group of elementary ICs and called or emailed to ask if they will participate in an interview. Those willing to participate will sign a consent form and will participate in semi-structured individual interviews (See Appendix F for Six - Year Coach Interview protocol). The same procedures will be followed as those used with Group 1.

Monthly Whole Group Meetings with Coaches

Each month coaches attend meetings with the district coordinators every other Friday. During these meetings the coordinators and coaches either work on building content knowledge, or coaches select conference-style sessions to attend. The researcher will attend the meetings with the elementary ICs. During this time informal interviews will be held to gain a deeper understanding of the coaches' perspectives. The researcher will also take notes as an observing participant to gain more sources of information, thereby triangulating the data (Creswell, 2007). Field notes will include artifacts from meetings as well as nonjudgmental descriptions of what is observed. The observations can provide insight into the attitudes that coaches hold regarding their roles and provide information regarding the training provided by the district. Further

questions for subsequent interviews may be developed based on these observations.

Data Analysis Procedures

A constant comparative method will be utilized to analyze the data because this study seeks to find any factors that might contribute to instructional coaches leaving or staying in their role. “The purpose of comparative method is to develop many categories, properties, and hypotheses about general problems instead of to ascertain either the universal proof of suggested causes or other properties” (Heppner & Heppner, 2004, p. 150). There will be triangulation of data from in-depth interviews, a survey, and observations.

Interview Analysis

Interviews will be conducted with people who have left the coaching profession within the last three years as well as with those instructional coaches who have remained in the field for the last six years. The interviews will be audio-taped, transcribed, and entered into Scrivener. The researcher will listen to the tapes and check the transcriptions for accuracy. Transcriptions will be sent to the interviewees for corrections, clarifications, or additions through a member checking process (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). Once transcriptions are returned, inductive analysis will begin. Unlike deductive analysis, themes and patterns will be found in the data, not developed beforehand (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The researcher will begin with open coding and move to axial coding as themes emerge (Creswell, 2007). During open coding, general themes or categories that emerge will be color-coded and given descriptive words or category names. Axial coding will follow where core ideas will be listed and categorized within the general themes. These ideas will also be coded

with symbols, descriptive words, and/or category names. All codes used in the study will be organized in a master list. The list will contain the code, followed by the full code name, and a description of the code (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Strauss and Corbin (1990) describe axial coding as putting data “back together in new ways by making connections between a category and its subcategories” (p. 97). With each new interview, the responses of the interviewees will be entered, coded, and analyzed. New data will continuously be compared with previous data to form theories, or to discount or enhance themes. This procedure will continue until no more themes emerge and saturation of data is achieved. Saturation occurs when no new information, understandings, or concepts emerge from the data (Creswell, 2006; Johnson & Christensen, 2008). Throughout this process, the researcher will begin interpreting the data and will write analytic memos that summarize key findings from the data (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). Researcher biases can be an issue if the researcher is not aware and diligent about bracketing out their own experiences and perceptions (Creswell, 2007). As patterns in the data emerge it will be important for the researcher to challenge those patterns or explanations that are aligned with the beliefs of the researcher and search for alternative explanations (Marshall & Rossman, 2006). The researcher will utilize a panel of experts in the field to operate as peer debriefers by reviewing themes identified based on data. This process will help ensure validity during data analysis.

Observing Participant Notes

During monthly meetings with instructional coaches, the researcher will act as an observing participant. The field notes and artifacts from these meetings will be

entered into Scrivener, coded, and cross-referenced with other forms of data.

Survey Analysis

Qualitative - Written responses to the surveys will also be entered into Scrivener and coded. Information obtained by the participants will be grouped by subject areas and grade categories to see if some phenomena occur in some areas but not in others. Constant comparative analysis will be utilized to analyze extended responses to the specific open-ended questions.

Quantitative – Descriptive statistics (as percentages) will be used to report responses to the demographic questions posed.

Memoing

Throughout the analytic process, the researcher will be involved in recording ideas and making reflective notes regarding the data (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). This will include notes on emerging concepts or themes; reflections and insights; and the possible need for more data.

Reliability and Validity

When conducting a study, it is critical to ensure that the instruments used are valid and reliable. To establish validity within both the survey and the interview protocols, prior to implementation, both will be shared with a panel of experts to gain any suggestions for alignment with the research questions. Input will be used to amend the survey and interview protocols. The specialists will ensure the survey and interview questions align with the research questions and will solicit data that potentially answer those questions. To ensure the reliability of the qualitative component of this study, interviews will be audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. To

achieve interpretive validity, member checks will be conducted after interviews are transcribed, a process through which participants can clarify any questions the researcher has regarding responses to questions and to verify the participants' statements and feelings (Heppner & Heppner, 2004). A panel of experts will serve as peer debriefers to analyze the themes identified. Prolonged engagement with the participants during monthly coaches meetings will allow the researcher to study the culture of ICs and develop rapport and trust. Prolonged engagement is defined as: "Spending sufficient time in the field to learn or understand the culture, social setting, or phenomenon of interest" (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006), thereby increasing the validity and reliability of the data. Using data triangulation also improves internal validity.

4. Instruments for Research with Human Subject

Indicate instruments to be used.

- (A) Submit copies electronically, if possible.
- (B) Submit copy of copyrighted questionnaire for CPHS review. Copy kept on file by CPHS.
- (C) Examples of instruments are as follows: (1) Educational Tests, (2) Questionnaires/Surveys, (3) Psychological Tests, (4) Educational Materials, i.e., curriculum, books, etc., (5) Interview or Phone Script, or (6) human subjects recruitment advertisements.

Instructional Coach Survey – a consent form will be sent along with the survey via email

Six-Year Instructional Coach Interviews – participants will sign a consent form in person before the face-to-face interview.

Interview Protocol for ICs Who Left Coaching – participants will sign a consent form in person before the face-to-face interview.

The survey and interview protocols are attached.

The study is scheduled to begin immediately following district and CPHS approval and will end in early Spring of 2016.

Setting and Sample Selection

The setting for this study will be a large suburban school district in Texas that serves approximately 67,000 students and has 4,340 teachers. The target population for the study is Instructional Coaches (ICs) who serve in elementary and secondary schools.

The sample for the quantitative portion of the study, acquired through a survey, is comprised of 74 elementary coaches (serving pre-kindergarten through 5th grade), 52 junior high coaches (serving grades 6 through 8), and 28 high school instructional coaches (serving grades 9 through 12), with a total of N = 154. All ICs in the district will be selected to participate and contacted through email. Including all coaches as potential participants increases the potential percentage of participation, thereby enriching the study.

For the second part of the study, coaches from this group will be purposively selected based on the number of years that they have been coaches within the district. There are 10 ICs who have been in the position since the 2009-2010 school year, not including the researcher. Six will be selected and asked to participate in an interview in hopes of uncovering reasons why these individuals have remained when so many others have left the profession. Two will be elementary mathematics/science ICs, two will be elementary language arts/social studies ICs, and two will be junior high ICs. None of the original high school ICs is still in the position. They will be contacted either in person, by email, or by phone.

Participants for the third part of the study will also be purposively selected. A

list of ICs who have left the position in the last three years will be obtained by the Curriculum and Instruction Department of the school district. Only ICs who left to go back into a teaching position will be eligible for this part of the study. People who retired, were promoted, or quit to stay home with children will be excluded, as the researcher is interested only in investigating why ICs leave coaching to return to the classroom. Those who are eligible will be contacted by phone or email.

Participants will be informed that they have the right to opt out of the study at any time without any adverse effects, and there are no perceivable risks to participating in this study.

6. Informed Consent

For more details, see "Federal & University Guidelines" document, "Informed Consent" section.

- (A) Describe procedure for obtaining informed consent.
- (B) Use language that is appropriate for age or understandability of subjects.
- (C) Attach informed consent page.
- (D) If applicable, attach the following documents for review: (1) Parental permission form for participation of minors (under 18 years of age). (2) Assent form for children between ages 7 and 17: (2a) ages 12-17 must sign assent form; (2b) ages 7-11 must have witness sign attesting to child's positive assent.
- (E) **Request CPHS waiver for documentation of informed consent, if appropriate.**
Justification is required. See "Federal & University Guidelines."

Instructional Coach Survey – a consent form will be sent along with the survey via email

Interviews – participants will sign a consent form in person before the face-to-face interview.

Informed Consent form attached

7. Confidentiality

Describe how data will be safeguarded: (a) how confidentiality maintained; use of personal identifiers or coded data; (b) how data collected and recorded; (c) how data stored during project; (d) who has access to data or participant's identifiers; (e) who is to receive data, if applicable; (f) what happens to data after research is completed.

Note that research documentation, including signed informed consent forms, are safeguarded for three years after completion of study for federal audit purposes. Faculty sponsors are responsible for safeguarding research documentation completed by students.

Privacy and Ethical Concerns

Several potential ethical issues can arise in research, such as: a) informed

consent procedures; b) confidentiality issues; c) deception or covert activities; and d) risks to participants outweigh benefits of research (Lipson, 1994). To protect the participants in this study, ethical procedures have been put in place. IRB and CPHS approval will be obtained from both the district and the university before any data are collected. Once approval is obtained, potential participants will be informed of all aspects of the study and asked for informed consent. Participants will be assigned aliases and/or numbers to ensure confidentiality. The study utilizes audio-taping, and participants will be asked for permission before taping. Data will be transcribed and kept on the researcher's personal computer in Scrivener, a word processing program. Participants will be informed that they have the right to opt out of the study at any time without any adverse effects, and there are no perceivable risks to participating in this study. To maintain confidentiality, data and signed consent forms will be safeguarded in locked storage by the researcher's supervisor for three years. During the study, only the researcher and the research committee will have access to the data, which will be kept on the researchers personal computer.

8. Research Benefits

Describe any anticipated benefits to subjects as well as reasonably expected general results.
None, unless the district makes changes that results in greater satisfaction of instructional coaches based on the results of this study.

9. Risks

Describe any foreseeable risks to the subjects, whether physical injury, psychological injury, loss of confidentiality, social harm, etc., involved in the conduct of the research. Explain precautions taken to minimize these risks. If there are any foreseeable risks, provide contact information of organization(s) for professional treatment.

None

10. Other Sites or Agencies Involved in Research Project

Indicate specific site if not UHCL, e.g., school districts or school, clinics.
(A) Obtain written approval from institution. Approval should be signed and on institution's letterhead. Other proof of documentation may be reviewed for acceptance by CPHS.
(B) Institution should include the following information: (B1) institution's knowledge of study

being conducted on its site; (B2) statement about what research study involves; (B3) outline specific procedures to be conducted at site; and (B4) identify type of instrument(s) used to collect data and duration needed to complete instruments; (B5) statement that identities of institution and participants will be kept confidential; (B6) institution's permission granting the use of its facilities or resources; and (B7) include copy of Informed Consent document(s) to be used in recruiting volunteers from the institution.

- (C) If at all possible, electronic copies of letter or other documentation are to be submitted with CPHS application.
- (D) If letters are not available at time of CPHS review, approval will be contingent upon their receipt.

Garrett Independent School District

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

APPENDIX C
INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

You are being asked to participate in the research project described below. Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate, or you may decide to stop your participation at any time. Should you refuse to participate in the study or should you withdraw your consent and stop participation in the study, your decision will involve no penalty. You are being asked to read the information below carefully, and ask questions about anything you don't understand before deciding whether or not to participate.

Title: Factors That May Lead Instructional Coaches to Leave That Role: A Mixed Method Case Study

Student Investigator(s): Amy L. Lancaster

Faculty Sponsor: Sandra Browning, PhD

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this research is to examine the perceptions of Instructional Coaches (ICs) from a large suburban school district in Texas with respect to their roles, responsibilities, and ability to effect change within the district.

PROCEDURES

The research procedures are as follows: After informed consent has been obtained, participants will either complete a survey and/or participate in an interview. The interview with the researcher will last approximately 45 minutes. With permission of the interviewee, the interview will be audiotaped and transcribed in its entirety. Pseudonyms will be utilized to protect the identity of the participants. A transcription will be sent to the interviewee to check for accuracy and clarifications. Surveys will be completed electronically, and participants will be assigned numbers to maintain confidentiality. District and campus names will not be used.

EXPECTED DURATION

The total anticipated time commitment will be approximately 15 minutes if you are taking the survey or 45 minutes if you are participating in an interview.

RISKS OF PARTICIPATION

There are no anticipated risks associated with participation in this project.

BENEFITS TO THE SUBJECT

There is no direct benefit received from your participation in this study, but your participation will help the investigator(s) better understand factors that cause some ICs to return to the classroom while others stay in the coaching field.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF RECORDS

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your study records. The data collected from the study will be used for educational and publication purposes, however, you will not be identified by name. For federal audit purposes, the participant's documentation for this research project will be maintained and safeguarded by the Faculty Sponsor for a minimum of three years after completion of the study. After that time, the participant's documentation may be destroyed.

FINANCIAL COMPENSATION

There is no financial compensation to be offered for participation in the study.

INVESTIGATOR'S RIGHT TO WITHDRAW PARTICIPANT

The investigator has the right to withdraw you from this study at any time.

CONTACT INFORMATION FOR QUESTIONS OR PROBLEMS

The researcher has offered to answer all your questions. If you have additional questions during the course of this study about the research or any related problem, you may contact Amy Lancaster at (###) ### - ##### or by email, L-----@----.edu.

The Faculty Sponsor Sandra Browning, PhD., may also be contacted at phone number (###)### - ##### or by email at B-----@----.edu.

SIGNATURES:

Your signature below acknowledges your voluntary participation in this research project. Such participation does not release the researcher(s), institution(s), sponsor(s) or granting agency(ies) from their professional and ethical responsibility to you. By signing the form, you are not waiving any of your legal rights.

The purpose of this study, procedures to be followed, and explanation of risks or benefits have been explained to you. You have been allowed to ask questions and your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. You have been told who to contact if you have additional questions. You have read this consent form and voluntarily agree to participate as a subject in this study. You are free to withdraw your consent at any time by contacting the Student Researcher or Faculty Sponsor. You will be given a copy of the consent form you have signed.

Subject's printed name: _____

Signature of Subject: _____

Date: _____

Using language that is understandable and appropriate, I have discussed this project and the items listed above with the subject.

Printed name and title: _____

Signature of Person Obtaining Consent: _____

Date: _____

**THE UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-CLEAR LAKE (UHCL)
COMMITTEE FOR PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS HAS
REVIEWED AND APPROVED THIS PROJECT. ANY
QUESTIONS REGARDING YOUR RIGHTS AS A RESEARCH
SUBJECT MAY BE ADDRESSED TO THE UHCL COMMITTEE
FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (281-283-3015).
ALL RESEARCH PROJECTS THAT ARE CARRIED OUT BY
INVESTIGATORS AT UHCL ARE GOVERNED BY
REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE FEDERAL
GOVERNMENT.
(FEDERALWIDE ASSURANCE # FWA00004068)**

APPENDIX D
INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR ICs WHO LEFT COACHING

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL FOR ICs WHO LEFT COACHING

Name:

What is your current position?

What positions did you hold before you began coaching? How long in each position?

Highest level of education

- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate
- Other:

What was your major/specialization for that degree?

Background / experiences that help you to be effective in your role as an instructional coach (include experiences prior to being an IC as well as during your role as IC)

How were you hired for the coach position (within own campus? From another district?
Etc.)?

How long were you a coach?	Subject(s)?	Grade Levels?
----------------------------	-------------	---------------

Why did you choose to be an IC?

What roles and responsibilities did you have as an IC?

How did these roles and responsibilities match or differ from your expectations of the job?

What did you enjoy the most about your role as an IC?

Tell me about a success story.

What were your challenges?

Do you believe that you had the ability to effect change on your campus? Why or why not?

Why did you leave coaching?

Is there anything that would have led you to stay in the role of coach?

Is there anything else that you would like to share?

Other potential questions/ discussion topics:

How did teachers receive your role?

What was your comfort level with your content?

Discuss your perceptions regarding support from your administrators at the campus level?

Discuss your perceptions regarding support from the district administration?

Did the district provide adequate content training?

Did the district provide adequate training on how to be a coach?

What helped you the most in your role as a coach?

Did you feel that you were effective as a coach? Why or why not?

What would have helped you to be more effective?

APPENDIX E
SIX –YEAR COACH INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

APPENDIX E
SIX –YEAR COACH INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

- 1) What positions did you hold before you began coaching? How long in each position?
- 2) Tell me about your experiences as a coach.
- 3) What do you enjoy the most about your role as an IC?
- 4) What challenges do you face in this role?
- 5) Do you believe that you have the ability to effect change on your campus? Why or why not?
- 6) You are one of 11 people who have been in this job from the beginning. Why have you remained in this position?
- 7) What do you aspire to accomplish as a coach (future contributions)?
- 8) Is there anything else that you would like to share?

APPENDIX F
TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW WITH CODING – EX-COACH

APPENDIX F

TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW WITH CODING – EX-COACH

**Interview with “Brandi” (left coaching)
Sunday, November 22, 2015 4:00 via Skype**

	Notes	Code
Current position? Math Academic Support at (campus D Elem.) Was at (Campus B) How long were you a coach? 7 years Subject(s)? M/S Grade Levels? K-5 How were you hired for the coach position (within own campus? From another district? Etc.)? She was an instructional technologist on that campus. When the district had to make cut-backs and cut this position, she was given the opportunity to go back into the classroom, or become an IC.	This information was obtained prior to interview	
INTERVIEWER: Why did you choose to be an IC? BRANDI: We had a good camaraderie there. I knew everybody. I had been there so long already.	Relationship	+TR
INTERVIEWER: O.k. so what were your roles and responsibilities as an IC? BRANDI: Let's see, when we first started is was mainly data, um data responsibilities, talking to the staff about data and running reports. Then, I also did Science Fair. That was something that stayed common through all the years. And as we shifted over, by the third year we went into more of an instructional role, and I became more math oriented as it went. Science always took the back seat to math. INTERVIEWER: I'm glad that you mentioned how the role changed from the first couple of years. BRANDI: In the beginning I don't think they	Data coach in the beginning One subject is neglected more than the other No clear cut roles	

<p>knew what to do with any of us. I ran reports and disaggregated data so much that that became second nature to me, and then when we switched over to the instructional role, it was like a brand new job. I had to learn something new all over again.</p>	<p>in beginning Role has evolved</p>	
<p>INTERVIEWER: Did you have to pull groups or any extra duties</p> <p>2:00 BRANDI: The only time I had to pull groups was after STAAR or TAKS or what was it called TAKS? No. Some other activities were like team leader meetings after school. I had to go to those even though we weren't paid for those. Evening activities, anything like that, leadership positions she wanted us to take, Student Council...the last couple of years I was part of running Student Council, so that was an extra duty that I had. Umm, oh I did technology stuff for Lacey because that was a carry over from years past. So some of the time technology was included in the ICs job description but I think that faded out as they eased in the new technologists that are now going around campuses.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Actually, it is still in the job description.</p> <p>BRANDI: Oh, is it?</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: It is still a major component.</p> <p>BRANDI: Oh, WOW! That's interesting considering they have the technologists coming around. What are they called now? Technology Designers?</p>	<p>No extra pay like team leaders for extra duties</p>	<p>-V</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: Yeh, Ok, so how did your roles and responsibilities differ from your expectations of the job?</p> <p>BRANDI: Oh, I think in the beginning, with the data I got so used to that that when we switched over to curriculum it was hard for me to make that switch because there were so many extra</p>	<p>Role changed from data coach to Instructional Coach</p>	

<p>duties. I mean it wasn't really as focused as I would have hoped. Every time we went to a meeting there was something else they wanted us some sort of new initiative or something and it was so spread out that we really couldn't get in depth with the teachers about anything. It was sort of, you were bringing something new back to them every time so they didn't have time to absorb what we were doing.</p>	<p>Many new initiatives Lack of focus from district</p>	
<p>INTERVIEWER: So, what all did you do with the teachers?</p> <p>4:18 BRANDI: We had PDR. Jessica and I would shift off of PDR. One week it would be her turn to present to the teachers and then the next two weeks would be my turn to present to the teachers. I would any initiatives, like we did FasttMath initiatives at the beginning of the year where I would have to show them remind them of the reports that they could run, things like that. Any DLA analysis, I would do that with them. I would go in and observe. I did some co-teaching. Um, let's see, what else? I'm trying to think back to all the different things we brought back. The STAAR data. The Lead4Ward. A lot of Lead4ward the last couple of years. Um, that last year when Madeline took over, after Lacey went to (campus D), it was sort of hard because it was a lot of her initiatives along with the initiatives from the district. There were a lot of things, plus I was out for a long period of time. Data analysis never really went away, but they added the math and science. The new TEKS, that was a big initiative that I did with for several years. Sort of trying to build up working with K, 1, 2 that couple of years before the new TEKS came out and working with the upper grades to get them used to the new standards after they were initiated.</p>	<p><i>Value – teaching teachers/teachers learn (that value wasn't met). Existing structure did not support her value. Potential identity claim – service oriented (relationship, responsiveness to admin. Directives, and value)</i></p> <p>Change in principal so change in initiatives at campus level as well as district level</p> <p>More new responsibilities along with old</p> <p>Difficult to focus work with K-2 and 3-5 at same time.</p>	
<p>6:00 INTERVIEWER: What about planning with teachers?</p> <p>BRANDI: It was usually spread between Tuesday</p>		

<p>and Wednesday, so I had 3 on Tuesday and 3 on Wednesday that I had to go to, and those were required so I had to be at all those meetings.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Can you think of any other responsibilities that you had?</p> <p>BRANDI: Um, let's see. I had to do Math and Science Night. I was completely responsible for organizing that and getting that put together and bringing in any outside sources that we wanted to have present on that night. There was a geologist from U of H that I used to bring in. I don't know if you have heard of him, but he would come in and talk to 5th grade once a year. I did that. And then last year we brought in, I think the company was called Mad Science. It's this outside after school company that comes in and I arranged for that to happen. I did grant writing. We got a grant last year to move the science lab and um get a whole bunch of new stuff for it because we had a really bad science lab, not bad, but older science lab that wasn't up to what we needed so I wrote a grant with some other teachers for that.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: That's a lot.</p> <p>BRANDI: Yeah (laughs).</p>		
<p>7:50 INTERVIEWER: OK, Um, what did you enjoy most about your role as an IC?</p> <p>BRANDI: I think working with the teachers. I think because I had had a relationship with the teachers already, they were open to me coming and doing what needed to be done. It wasn't like I was new to the school, so there was already that trust built in whereas a lot of ICs had to build that trust because they were coming into that role new, so they had to take a year to build the trust before they could put anything in. We sort of hit the ground running with the data analysis, which is pretty much nonthreatening if you go about it in the right way. And when we moved into curriculum, they had worked with</p>	<p>Hired from own campus made it easier</p> <p>Positive relationship with teachers</p> <p>Trust because not new to campus; however, was not a peer teacher at campus</p>	<p>+TR Hiring practice</p>

<p>me so much prior to that I don't think they saw me as a threatening figure.</p>	<p>Non-threatening</p>	
<p>9:00 INTERVIEWER: So do you think that it was the fact that you had been on campus as a technologist that made it more smooth or do you think that it was that when you became an IC the data analysis role that helped? or both?</p> <p>BRANDI: I think it was both. Because when I shifted from instructional technologist and none of us knew what was going to happen so as we developed the data analysis, I just sort of shifted the technology into the data analysis so I would show them how to use Excel spreadsheets to sort of analyze the data and everything, so it was almost the two jobs combined. They sort of saw the old job and the new job sort of merging. And then when we switched over to curriculum, they had the patience with me, they gave me time to learn what my new role was because they knew that I was trying to figure it out. I would just tell them, I was like, "I don't know what's going on right now guys." We had a relationship, so they understood.</p>	<p><i>Flip - teachers support her</i></p> <p>Relationship</p>	<p>+TR</p>
<p>10:25 INTERVIEWER: Tell me about a success story.</p> <p>BRANDI: Oh gosh, Umm. I think probably the last year I was there, there was a fifth grade teacher and she had resisted the new standards quite a bit and even though I was out for a good bit of the year she finally we had gotten to a point where she had embraced them and she actually allowed the new textbook we adopted to guide her teaching. She didn't teach right by the textbook, but she took the textbook and let it teach her. It brought her to a better understanding, and her scores were actually the highest in fifth grade. Their scores were really low last year, but hers were very good if you looked at her scores when you were comparing them against the rest of the school. Um, I think that is the most recent success story.</p>	<p>Teacher resistance</p>	

<p>INTERVIEWER: What do you think turned her around to your way of thinking?</p> <p>BRANDI: I wonder if sometimes it wasn't just the light bulb finally going off. It took me a while when we were sitting in all those meetings, I was very resistant to the kind of way we look at math and it really took me a long time to absorb it and understand it. Once you finally do get to that understanding it is easier for you to teach them to do it. I don't think the push-back that we are getting from the people, the parents, and the society in general is helping because they are allowing them to keep that resistance from getting to that place of, "Oh I do finally understand where this is going." So</p>	IC resistance to new standards Parental and societal resistance	ICat
<p>12:30 INTERVIEWER: Did you have any push-back from parents that you had to deal with in your role?</p> <p>BRANDI: I haven't. Not yet, but the school I was at there was not a lot of parent participation. I mean, Title I with their low socio-economic the kids didn't do a lot of homework if they were assigned it. And uh, I think that we tried at (campus name) to tell the teachers that if you are going to send something home that you are going to expect the parents to go over, then at least give some sort of directions on how it is done. Don't just give them something and expect them to figure it out because they are not going to be able to do it. And uh, we had long discussions about the homework policy at (campus name) because kids would go home to empty houses there and parents would be at work, so there was no one there to help them do the homework if they needed the help. I think that may have prevented a lot of those parents from actually knowing the new math</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Right, Ok</p> <p>BRANDI: The school I am at now is much different than that.</p>	Parents	

13:52 INTERVIEWER: So what were your challenges? BRANDI: Uh, I think the biggest challenge for me was probably, and it may just be my personality, but I was never, I was sort of that middle ground between teacher and leadership, and I felt for the teachers. That last year especially because Madeline had taken over as principal, and she had a lot of initiatives. She had, I had a difference, we had sort of a difference of opinion. Not that I don't love her. She is a great, great person. She's a great principal. But my opinion was you can't do every great idea good, and she wanted to do every great idea. And the teachers, you could see it in their faces how overwhelmed they were, and how tired they were. It was almost a brand new staff because Lacey had taken a lot of teachers to (campus D). So they were trying to grow accustomed to their new roles in their new jobs, and they were getting all these new initiatives thrown on them. It was a brand new leadership team except for Madeline. We had two new APs. Trying to very delicately say to leadership, "This is too much", and then trying to be there to support teachers when they still had to do it. You don't want to bad-mouth leadership and you don't want to bad-mouth teachers. It was a very delicate balance, and I don't know that I always succeeded in that. That was probably my biggest challenge, and dealing with Jessica was hard.	Challenge Middle ground between teacher and administrator Difference of opinion with admin	A
16:00 INTERVIEWER: You want to expand on that a little bit. BRANDI: I can. I don't and I never really understood what happened because one day we got along fine and the next day we didn't, and that was in the first year she became an IC. And she had a lot of resentment towards me, and she was very I don't want to say bitter, but she was hostile. She didn't like I don't know, I would bring ideas to the table and she would shoot	Relationship with ELA partner Hostile partner who felt	R

<p>them down very quickly. Um, ELA quickly became the most important subject. I heard thousands of times probably, not thousands but hundreds, "If you can't read, you can't do math." That was a common thing at the school. I don't know people tell me they saw it. Like teachers would come to me and say, "We can tell how she is acting towards you," which was sort of embarrassing because you are trying to hide it and knowing you are not doing it well. There were many nights of tears at home for me because it was very stressful. Just the way she treated me, it was sort of I don't know what do they call it. I can't even think of the word now. Um, it was that kind of hidden animosity, and I know there is a term for it. It is right on the tip of my tongue.</p>	<p>resentment Ideas not valued Stress <i>Because she is relational</i></p>	<p>-V</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: Passive aggressive?</p> <p>BRANDI: That's it! Very passive aggressive, thank you. The last straw that probably made me leave the role was we were in our room. I'd come back after Henry's passing. I don't know if I ever told you this. I was in my room and I was getting ready for a meeting after school with a teacher, and she was getting ready for an after-school event that she was in charge of, and she asked me if I would help. And I said that I would. I would be happy to help. I said, "After I meet with this teacher I will come find you and help you finish setting up." She said, "By then it will be too late." She walked out of the room, and slammed the door, and then she came back in and was huffing around and everything. And she started complaining to me you know that I had not thanked her for everything that she had done while I was out with Henry being ill and everything. And I told her, I said, I had apologized, and I told her that I did thank her the first day that I got back. She said, "You haven't thanked me enough." And then I said, I'm sorry, but I'm going to meet with this teacher and then I will be happy to help you. Well, another teacher had walked in during this and she looked at me and said, "Do you really want to do this now?"</p>	<p>Passive aggressive Confrontational Needed own space</p>	<p>R</p>

<p>and she just started berating me. And I was just like, I'm done! I'm just not going to do this anymore. If I have to come into a room every day and share a room with her, I can't do it. So <u>that was the main reason I left</u>, probably. Or I know it was.</p>	<p>from partner</p>	
<p>19:40 INTERVIEWER: Alright, umm, well that answers one of the questions. Why did you leave coaching? Did you believe that you had the ability to affect change on your campus? why or why not?</p> <p>BRANDI: I think I did when Lacey was there until the last year she was there or until the year Madeline was there, and then I think ELA became more important than math. That hindered the amount of change I could make on the campus. When they started cutting back on the amount of time teachers spent in the classroom on math, and gave that time to ELA, it made it very clear that ELA was the most important priority. I think that even math got put on the back burner and ELA became the central focus.</p>	<p>Felt her subjects not valued as much as ELA by admin</p>	<p>C, -V</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: How much class time did they have for math?</p> <p>BRANDI: I believe it was 45 minutes a day.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: OK</p> <p>BRANDI: And I pushed this past summer, I spent a lot of time with the new IC and talked to Madeline in depth about expanding that to an hour trying to explain to her that they needed at least an hour a day. They aren't going to be able to get through all of this material, and she had agreed. But before school started the team leaders decided only to give math 45 minutes a day, and she went with that.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: OK (surprised)</p> <p>BRANDI: Yeah</p>	<p>Admin not valuing opinion</p>	<p>-A</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: Uh, is there anything that would have led you to stay in the role of coach?</p> <p>BRANDI: If they could have guaranteed me</p>		

<p>(pause). I want to say that if I had gotten out of that room with Jessica. If I could have had my own area, my own space to get away, I probably would have considered it more. But the year before, I had tried to get my own room, and they just told me, "No." I would have even housed in the science lab, but they didn't want me that far away from the teachers.</p>	<p>Needed own space from IC partner</p>	<p>R</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: Hmm...anything else? BRANDI: I talked to Sarah over the summer. I loved the coaching job. I love the role. I'm not adverse to going back to it, but it would have to be the right circumstances, you know.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: uh huh BRANDI: I'd have to have somebody that I knew that I could work with. I'd have to trust them enough to open up. INTERVIEWER: Right. All right. Is there anything else that you would like to share? BRANDI: I don't know is there anything that I didn't cover that you need to know about? INTERVIEWER: Maybe one more question. You touched on it a little bit. What was your comfort level with your content? BRANDI: Ohhh, science never as good as math because we never seemed to devote nearly enough time to it. Math, as soon as I felt comfortable with it, they changed the TEKS. Then it became more comfortable. In K-2 I was always more comfortable with it than 3-5 because I spent so many years prepping K-2 for the new.. for the changeover that I feel like I understood those lower grades, but I don't think we ever, I know we did, but maybe it was because I was out, but I never felt as comfortable with the 3-5 standards. INTERVIEWER: All right. That is all I need. BRANDI: All right. INTERVIEWER: Thank you so much. BRANDI: If you need anything else, just let me know.</p>	<p>Not as comfortable with math as science</p>	<p>ICAt P C</p>

Codes:

A – General information about administration, not really positive or negative

+A – Positive information regarding administration

-A – Lack of administrative support

ICAt – Instructional Coach attitude

R - Relationships

+TR – positive teacher relationship

V- feeling of being valued or lack of feeling valued

C – Content

APPENDIX G

TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW WITH CODING – SIX-YEAR INSTRUCTIONAL COACH

APPENDIX G

TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW WITH CODING – SIX-YEAR INSTRUCTIONAL COACH

**Interview with DAKOTA:
Instructional Coach Protocol for Those Who Remained
December 18, 2015 @ 9:00 p.m.**

	Notes / Themes
<p>INTERVIEWER: OK, and you are currently a Math/Science IC or Language Arts?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Just math</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Just math, And, where, where are you? at the junior high?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yeh, Junior High #4</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: OK, and how were you hired for the coach position?</p> <p>DAKOTA: That is a great question. So, um, my principal told me that he needed to talk to me one day during my lunch period. And in his conference room it was him and an assistant principal, and they looked real serious, and they explained that there was going to be this new position because nobody knew about it. And so, he basically described it and asked if I was interested because that's what he wanted to do. So there really wasn't an interview process.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Ohhhh</p> <p>DAKOTA: and I agreed</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Well, that's kind of a nice way to go.</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yes (laughs)</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Much easier (laughs)</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yeh (laughs)</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Um, so</p> <p>DAKOTA: And at that point, I was an instructional coach for the whole school. Junior High #3, the whole junior high.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: OK, so you started off at Junior High #3,</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yes</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: and now you're over at Junior High #4?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Right</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: And what caused that change?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Well, um, we became split, so I began as instructional coach for the entire school. So, I wasn't just math. I worked with everything from the, it's not called Wood Shop, but the class that's Concepts of Engineering. It's like Wood Shop. I helped them with um, everybody in the school. And then they wanted to specialize us, so then they had us split between 2 schools</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: OK</p> <p>DAKOTA: and I, so I did math between Junior High #3 and Junior</p>	<p>Principal recruited her for the position – no interview</p> <p>Was IC for entire campus</p> <p>Then split between 2 junior highs because district wanted them to specialize based on content</p>

<p>High #4. And then, they got it so we could be at one campus, and the principals chose. They needed me more at Junior High #4.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Oh, Ok.</p> <p>DAKOTA: Uh hm</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Do you like it better being content specific?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yeh definitely, definitely</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: I had that similar situation at the elementary level</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yeh, yeh</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: So what made you decide, "Yes, I'm going to accept this role as instructional coach?" What was it that appealed to you?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Well, um, at that point, the only people who ever did staff development for us were principals. And like really rarely even curriculum coordinators. Like we really didn't have a lot of people doing staff development. But when he talked about, you know, working with teachers and helping them with ideas. I thought, whenever I am in a staff development, I always think, "I could do this staff development."</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Ahhh</p> <p>DAKOTA: I thought, "This would be really great working with teachers" and really, you know, helping them. I thought it was going to--I did not think it was going to be what it was. (laughs). It's not what anyone expects it's going to be. You don't know how adults are going to act.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: (laughs) That is true.</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yes</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Well, that was actually one of my questions. How do your roles and responsibilities match or differ from your expectations of the job?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Right, um, my principal at the time, that first year, he did warn me. I live in a world where I assume that everyone likes me, and everything is fine.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: (laughs)</p> <p>DAKOTA: He said, "There are people in this building that don't like you." and I remember looking at him, and I was like, "What? Why?" I was like, "What's going on?" Like, my world was kind of shattered, and I said, " What? Why? I didn't even know. Like who wouldn't --Why? Like nothing-- What's happened?" And he's like, "Because people think you get whatever you want. They think it's not fair. They think you work too hard." You know things like that. And I was like, "I don't understand. Why are those things that?" You know so he really talked to me before that year began. And I was like, and he said, "You are going to have to come to terms that not everybody is going to always like you, and not everybody, um, wants someone in their room, or wants someone talking to them." And I was like that just blew my mind.</p>	<p>Then, they moved to one campus. Junior High #4 needed her more</p> <p>Likes being content specific</p> <p>Wanted to work with/help teachers Not what she expected the job to be</p> <p>Thought everyone liked her.</p> <p>Hard to find out they didn't.</p> <p>+Admin Principal helped prepare her for the role</p>
---	--

<p>INTERVIEWER: (laughs)</p> <p>DAKOTA: Um, but uh, I had no idea how adults would act. Even adults that are old enough to be my mother</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Right</p> <p>DAKOTA: I didn't know that they could act like children, and that they tattle on each other, and that they'd cry over the littlest things. Those are the things that really shocked me. That took me about three years, I think, to really absorb (both laugh). And the backstabbing, and I just, "Whoa!"</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: This is true</p> <p>DAKOTA: Blew my mind! It really did. And that they don't behave, either. I mean, you know, somebody might wear jeans on a day that they're not supposed to. None of that. That's all minor, minor stuff, but I mean like behave with what they were saying to kids or behave with what they were doing in their classroom with lessons that they weren't supposed to be doing. And I was like, "Oh my gosh!" I had no idea that people acted that way.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: So how did you handle that sort of thing?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Well, I think, part of it is, my personality is that you just have to talk it out, so either talk it out with another instructional coach or with an administrator. When I was the IC for the whole school in the beginning, it was very difficult because you had, now I have a team. There are 4 of us at a campus. So we have other ICs. We laugh and talk about all these crazy things that happen, but then I didn't, and I know that is why a lot of IC's did not continue, because they no longer had a support system. They just, it was them and administrators, and they didn't always get along with the administrators. Um, but I got along with mine really well, which made a huge difference. So I could go into their offices and say, "What is going on?" you know and like talk it all out and go, "OK, I'm done," and then leave. You know, that makes a huge difference. And then, when I became split between Junior High #3 and #4, I then gained a Science IC and an ELA IC, so now we had, I had 2 people that I could talk to. That makes a huge difference, just to have somebody to talk to about it all.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Especially if you get along</p> <p>DAKOTA: Exactly, and that (can't understand). It makes a huge difference. (both laugh)</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: You mentioned that you think that getting along with administration and having people to talk to made the difference and that some people left because they didn't have that.</p> <p>DAKOTA: Uh huh</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Do you know of any other reasons why people left?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Well, Lacy, she was an IC for one year at Junior High #5. And super sweet, sweet, wonderful woman. And I remember, I</p>	<p>Shocked that teachers tattle, cry over little things, and don't behave</p>	<p>Personality – talks issues out with admin or other ICs.</p> <p>+Support from fellow campus ICs</p> <p>Many ICs didn't continue due to a lack of campus IC support system</p>	<p>IC at another</p>
---	---	---	----------------------

<p>think it was October, she knew she wasn't going to be doing this again</p>	<p>campus quit because admin wanted her to be directive</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: Really</p>	
<p>DAKOTA: because she got along OK with administration, but they were a little bit more authoritative, and wanted her to go tell a teacher, "Don't do that any more. Stop it." And she said, "I can't do that." And then, it opened her eyes to see that, um, all these people she thought were her friends, that were her teaching partners, they didn't behave, and they didn't do the lesson plans. They didn't do all these things that were expected of them. I know that it's so hard if you, like I have so many teachers who think that everybody just does what they are supposed to do, and it is kind of heartbreaking because a lot of people come into this profession thinking everybody's going to be a teacher. They wanna be, they're here because they want to. And when you get to be around people who are so negative, um, it's really heartbreaking. So Lacy is an example of that because I watched her heart break. Like, she couldn't believe that people acted so terribly.</p>	<p>She thought teachers behaved the way they were supposed to, it broke her heart to see the way teachers behaved.</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: and she probably, so you feel like she felt powerless?</p>	<p>IC felt powerless to change bad behaviors of teachers – didn't have tools to deal with it</p>
<p>DAKOTA: Powerless</p>	
<p>INTERVIEWER: to do that?</p>	
<p>DAKOTA: yes, definitely, that there was nothing she could do, yes. And she didn't have the tools to try and do anything to change it.</p>	
<p>INTERVIEWER: So what do</p>	
<p>DAKOTA: So definitely administration. Another big thing is department chairs. At the junior highs, it just really depends. At Junior High #1, they have a big stress that department chairs were above instructional coaches, so the principal would meet with the department chairs and make decisions and tell the department chairs to relay the information to the instructional coaches.</p>	<p>Administration</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: Ooh</p>	<p>Department</p>
<p>DAKOTA: Listen to THAT one.</p>	<p>chairs given</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: Mmmm</p>	<p>power over ICs</p>
<p>DAKOTA: So when an instructional coach comes to a Friday meeting, and we're talking about something in particular, and you know, and we're all going to take it back to our campus, that instructional coach says, "I have to take it back to my department chair and see if she will agree with it. If I can convince her because then she's the one who presents it to the staff."</p>	<p>– high source of stress</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: And it is that way across all schools?</p>	
<p>DAKOTA: No, that was Junior High #1 for a while. It has changed a little bit. But you can see, a department chair can make or break.</p>	
<p>INTERVIEWER: Yes</p>	
<p>DAKOTA: And at Junior High #4, we've had some instances too with, not in math, but different department chairs that the principal</p>	

trusted the department chair more than the instructional coach, which causes some big friction with that instructional coach. The instructional coach can not make any decisions, and if the instructional coach goes to a PLC and talks about, "Let's try this new strategy," and if the teachers don't like it, all they have to do is tell the department chair they don't like it. The department chair tells the principal, and then the instructional coach is in trouble.

INTERVIEWER: Oh man!

DAKOTA: Department chairs play a huge, huge factor. You have to get along with them and have trust with them. It's a real big, real big.

INTERVIEWER: mmmm. That's interesting

DAKOTA: Yeh

INTERVIEWER: Huh, I, I never would have known that. (both laugh)

DAKOTA: Yeh, It has been very interesting, um, just trying to like, I mean like to be a comforting shoulder, you know, when you are talking to an instructional coach like some of my fellow ones about, "What should I do? How do I handle this?" At a certain point, if the principal puts all the power in that department chair, and you have no power, all of your power is gone, then all you can do is work towards a balance of power. So gaining more and more trust and building more and more relationships. And that takes a lot of energy from a person, depending on who you are.

INTERVIEWER: Right, so, did you, um, because you were taken from your own campus,

DAKOTA: Right

INTERVIEWER: did that make things easier for you working with the teachers, or did it make it more difficult?

DAKOTA: I don't know. I think if you asked some of my teachers they would tell you that it made it more difficult because they all knew me, so everyone asked me to do everything. Um, but I, 'cause a lot of them have said that, that it was more difficult for me. But I think it was easier because I already knew all of them. So in my world, I thought it was much easier. I already knew all of them, so it was really easy to, like, I've gotten a lot of new ICs on my team. And so, if you just have something really quick that you just want to drop off with the teacher, it can take, but you don't know the teacher, it can take you 20 minutes to do it, because you want to be nice. You know, it's all, "Oh, yeh," and you have to talk and "Here's what it is." and whatever. Since I already knew all of them, I could just walk in and be like, "Here, here, here, here, here. Look at my email. I gotta go."

INTERVIEWER: (laughs)

DAKOTA: because they already knew who I was. Like I felt like it made it easier. And it made it easier for me too. So, when I was

Personality –
she is a
comforting
shoulder for
fellow ICs

Mixed opinion
regarding if it is
easier to come
from campus
where you were
a teacher:
* doesn't take as
long to do tasks
because
relationships are
built

instructional coach for the whole school, I did a data talk with a 7th grade ELA team. I knew every single one of those ladies. Like, I had known them for years. We're doing a data talk, and I looked at all their faces, and I said, "You don't understand a word I'm saying" and they were like, "No, I don't". (both laugh) And I said, I, I said, "It's hitting me right now that to do a data talk with ELA teachers, I'm gonna have to basically like think upside-down." And they all laughed, and they were like, "Uh-huh. Start with what's the difference between a column and a row when we're looking at this data." (both laugh) I'm not kidding, but, but, because I already knew them. Imagine if I didn't already know them. So we laughed and I said, "OK, new plan" and I would tell them, "It is like, I have to think upside-down. Like, I just have to think differently to explain it to you."

INTERVIEWER: That's funny! (both laugh)

DAKOTA: But, so to me, I thought it was easier, but my teachers will tell you that it looked very difficult because everybody asked me for everything.

INTERVIEWER: Did you ever get the, the feeling that some of them were wondering, "Well, why, why is SHE getting to come in DAKOTA: OH yeh, Oh yeh, because I was young. I'm 36 now, and I started this at before I was 30. So I've been doing this since 2008. I think that's right, so twenty-, that's the year I turned 28. So, there were a lot. There were a lot of ladies close to retirement that couldn't believe that—and then they started wondering how I got the job.

You know I told you I didn't interview, right?

INTERVIEWER: Right

DAKOTA: I didn't know. I didn't know that was all going to quite happen the way it did. I didn't, I didn't really explain that to anybody. I just said, "Oh, it just worked out that way." (laughs) Yes, there were a lot of people. But then as the time progressed, and they saw all of the things I was doing, there were a lot of people who have told me, um, over the years, because there are still people who wonder. They think it's going to be a super easy job. And so, I try to be very honest all the time with, like the teachers might say, "I need for you to look over this test for me. I don't know what else to do to it, add to it" whatever. And I respond with, "Of course. I want to do that. It won't happen today because I have a meeting with Jessica. It's going to take like 2 hours. I'm going to be in some classrooms." I said, "So I won't get to look at it today, but tomorrow I'll look at it, and then I'll get with you the next day because I don't have any time to get with you tomorrow. Like my day is booked solid. I'm not going to get to eat lunch." And so, when I am honest like that, and I say, "Is that OK? Can you wait for me to get to that?" Because sometimes, they'll say, "No, I have to send it to be copied tomorrow. I'll just have my team look at it." Like I'm like, "OK, I just wanted

* she could read the teachers because she knew them and could differentiate PD based on their needs
 *teachers took advantage of her because they knew her
 *She was young so older teachers wondered why she was selected

Teachers think it is an easy job Strategy is to tell them all the things she has to do

you to know like I can't get it done in that period of time." But when I'm honest like that, it turns around. They say, "Man, I thought that job was going to be easy, and I thought that would be something I would want, but it doesn't sound easy to me."

INTERVIEWER: (laughs)

DAKOTA: I had one teacher, the first year I was an instructional coach, close to retirement. She likes me a lot. I get along with her really well. We are very friendly. I, but, but when I would go to a PLC, I would carry a bag. I would put all my stuff in a bag, and she assumed I was leaving. She'd stop me in the hall and say, "Where're you going?" "I'm going to Ms. H's room," and I'd open my bag and I'd say, "See all the stuff inside it. I'm not leaving." And she would be like, "Oh, I'm sorry. I just thought."

INTERVIEWER: That's funny.

DAKOTA: But she did it to me all the time because she thought I was just like taking off, having free time.

INTERVIEWER: Eating bon bons

DAKOTA: Yeh, eating bon bons (both laugh)

INTERVIEWER: Ok, so what roles and responsibilities do you have as an Instructional Coach?

DAKOTA: That is a great question! Uh, at my campus now, um, I attend PLCs every week. We have a set day, and when I attend those PLCs I am expected to have data available so that if we are looking at a unit plan, we can look at how we did on STAAR last year on a TEK. I am expected to be knowledgeable about the unit plan, and I help the teachers plan out their little things. I am expected to bring resources if needed, and do like a mini PD if needed on the math content, or something along those lines. Um, I'm expected to help them make their assessments and make sure that they're quality.

I'm expected to follow-up --I'm expected to know what they are teaching every day. Um, at a junior high level, that means I attend a 6th Academic PLC, a 6th Pre-AP PLC, 7 Academic, 7 Pre-AP, 8 Academic, and Algebra, so that is 6 PLCs. In addition, I PLC with the resource teacher. I PLC with math lab teachers, and I have 3 of those. So that is 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 PLCs (laughs).

INTERVIEWER: And that's every week, right?

DAKOTA: Yeh, um. I'm expected to be in classrooms, but there isn't, it's not as strict as some other campuses, but to be in classrooms and know what is going on so that, let's say that a parent calls to complain about a teacher. My principal will come directly to me and say, "A parent called to complain about yesterday's lessons. What were they teaching? What was going on?" and I'm supposed to know all of that. Yeh. So, I have all of their planning calendars, and I'll pull it up and say, "Oh that's the day they were doing this and this", you know like and talk it out, and then, so that she's ready to either respond to the parent. And so sometimes she won't even go

Duties

Duties

to the teacher because she'll, because I'll say, "This is what they were doing, like, I don't know what the parent, I don't know what the parent's" so she can explain it well to the parent. And then sometimes she'll go to the teacher to get a little more detail. Yeh, um, I am also like a mediator because I work to make sure that the teams are getting along at Junior High #4. We're like the size of a high school, so I try to make, we've big teams, six. When you've got six ladies all working together, you know what that's like.

INTERVIEWER: Right

DAKOTA: Um, so I really try and make sure, so like in a planning, we'll talk about a lesson, and I can feel that this person over here hates this idea. So I'll follow up individually and say, "So what were you thinking?" And they are like, "Could you tell that I hated it?" And so I, I try and like mediate because what will happen is that this person who hated the idea will do a terrible lesson in her room, so I'm trying, I really try and mediate and make sure that, I mean, they don't all have to be best friends, but they gotta communicate with each other. Lack of communication also results in one person grading their test differently than another person. (Heavy sigh) Man, we've had all kinds, you know, all kinds of things, but I'm a mediator. Um, also technology is a big focus of my principal. So being up-to-date on technology and bringing that to PLCs too, and helping them. I also, I mean I help them create things for their lessons. And then there are also the other things, the things that aren't written down. (both laugh). So, um, my other ICs, I have another IC who is much better at Googledocs, Google Forms than me, but I am the resident person to ask, so I am like the google secretary. I help people make Google Forms and Googledocs, you know. And I help get things together for the Food Truck lunch for the 12 Days of Christmas, you know, like, stuff like that too.

INTERVIEWER: What about modeling lessons? How often do you model lessons for teachers?

DAKOTA: I don't do that very often. Um, I have, I do have really strong teachers. I do try and get them to see each other teach. So sometimes, I will, like, I had my 6th grade Pre-AP come up with a really cool discovery lesson. It is hard for junior high teachers to want to do discovery lessons. They think they have all the knowledge, and they have to direct teach all the knowledge.

INTERVIEWER: Right

DAKOTA: So, Pre-AP was doing it a week before Academic. And I went in the first class period, and it was amazing. The kids like understood it 10 minutes in. It was amazing. So I ran over to the classroom next door that was Academic and I said, "I'll be in here for a few minutes." and had her go over to watch it. So I try to do more of that because I feel like they a lot of proof from each other too. But I don't do a lot of modeling lessons.

Acts as a mediator to ensure good communication

Helps incorporate technology

"Other duties"

Doesn't model often.
Encourages them to see each other teach

22:36

<p>INTERVIEWER: Do you not do a lot because you feel like they are so strong or because you don't have time to get in?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Because I don't have time. Yeh, I don't have time. I have 18 teachers plus, uh, some resource and special ed. (laughs)</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: What about any kind of um do you meet with administration or have any kind of admin meetings?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Uh, yeh. Yeh</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: How often do you meet?</p> <p>DAKOTA: We meet once a week with our principal, all the 4 ICs and her. Once in awhile our administrators sit in with us, but it's not all the time. And sometimes we meet with her, it's 30 minutes, and sometimes we meet with her, it's two hours. We help her plan the staff development days. We help her plan faculty meetings. We do staff development for that. And like staff development for before school starts, including the New Teacher Day, when they come to campus before everybody else, like we plan that staff development.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: How much staff development do you deliver?</p> <p>DAKOTA: A lot. A lot of it. Um, our principal like she'll do like an intro and start it, and then we break out into grade levels, and we do it. So, for instance, <i>Green Light</i>. We did that a few years ago, the <i>Green Light</i> book. Are you familiar with that?</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: No, no.</p> <p>DAKOTA: It's just a, it just is a, if you look at that book, you'd laugh and wonder why you didn't write it yourself because the man who wrote it is living the pretty great life in St. Lucia. (both laugh) but um, it's all stuff that you know, but he put it in black and white. It's just all about engaging lessons and be engaging. Don't be a red light teacher. Be a green light teacher.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Oh, OK</p> <p>DAKOTA: So, we planned it all. My principal started out a little thing, and then we had the teachers break out into grade levels. I mean if you thought about the day, she did like less than 5%, like 5% of the day, and then we did the rest.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: What about, um, do you have to do discipline, or bus duty, or any of those things?</p> <p>DAKOTA: No discipline. None of us do discipline. Um, we've never had lunch duty either at Junior High #3 or #4. Um, because we are so huge, I did volunteer to help with like morning duty, to have somebody in the hallway, um, but that's not a big deal. It's not required. If we told her we didn't want to do it, she would be fine with it. I just, we just volunteered, but none of that kind of duty stuff.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: That's nice.</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yeh, yeh</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Um, let's see, what do you enjoy most about your role as an IC?</p>	<p>Time</p> <p>Admin meetings once a week</p> <p>Duties</p>	<p>No bus or lunch duty</p> <p>No discipline</p> <p>Volunteered for hall duty in the morning</p>
---	---	--

DAKOTA: You know, I always say that when I became an IC, my teachers became my students. Just similar, they act like them too. But, it's just like with a child to me, that when they make growth, or when they have a big light bulb moment, um, or when they try something new and something works, you know, when I see growth with a teacher just like I would with a kid, it's amazing. It's awesome.

INTERVIEWER: It does feel great, doesn't it?

DAKOTA: It does! And some of those first times it happened, um, it is even a cooler feeling to me just because it's an adult. Like I don't, with a kid, it's expected that they are going to make growth and progress, and it was always so exciting, and you know, euphoric, like, "AHHH," you know. When I had a special ed kid that I taught two years in a row, and he made commended on STAAR M one year, you know, I just wanted to, I was crying. It was so exciting.

But it's the same thing with a teacher that when she has been pretty "red light" and then she does this green light lesson, and she sees progress, and her kids do better, and she's like, "Oh, I feel better. This is a better way to teach, like I enjoy my day better." You know, it's like I cried. It was insane! It was so exciting! (both laugh)

INTERVIEWER: Right, so what challenges do you face in this role?

DAKOTA: Well, challenges are for sure, personalities, are part of it. So, you know, my principal brought teachers over from her previous campus with her, and this is for an example. So she has relationships with some of those teachers, and it makes me quickly know I have to build relationships with them because they'll tattle if there is something they don't like that I say or do. And all of that goes fine, but (can't understand a couple of words) it creates a difficult situation. When you are dealing with everybody's personality, and you've got to make sure everybody's happy, um, 'cause of the way my principal is set up. When I first became an instructional coach that was never a concern because I know that Aaron trusts me because he knew me, but Jessica didn't hire me. Like that's a different, she, you know, she got to choose me when it was split between Junior High #3 and #4, she chose, she wanted me to stay at Junior High #4, but she didn't hire me. So, that's a different situation, but when I first started with Aaron, it's always just, it's always about teacher personalities. It's huge. And my other problem is always gonna be having enough time in the day, to get to see everyone, talk to everyone. I also have a problem with my teachers getting jealous over me working with one more than another, and what I do with one versus what I do with another. For instance, this technology collaborative, that started last year.

INTERVIEWER: mmhmm

DAKOTA: I really encouraged my 6th grade teachers to do it because they are, it is just like perfect for them. And then, I had,

Values seeing teachers make growth

Gets emotional seeing student and teacher successes

Challenges:
 *personalities
 *relationship building with principal pets
 * Time
 * Teacher jealousy over how much time she is spending with one over another
 * Doesn't feel the same sense of trust with current principal as principal who hired her

<p>I knew that this year we were going to have three 7th grade Academic teachers, and I encouraged them to do it because I knew they'd be willing. And my 7th grade Pre-AP teachers, I know that they are not willing to learn new technology, so I didn't encourage them. Well, there was so much jealousy with this, and it was handled very well. Like I wasn't, it wasn't, I didn't in front of, you know like it was all just very handled well, but all of a sudden my 7th grade Pre-AP teacher was all in a huff. And she assumed I encouraged everyone in the building but her. And then, so then she went around to like other people and said, "Did Dakota ask you to do it?" And then, so, one of the people in particular, said, "Are you kidding me? Dakota would not ask me. I don't do anything with technology." And she was like, and then it all got back to me, and then I get to her, you know how this is. Like it's just so crazy. I said, "Sit, listen, talk to me. Don't go around like this. Just let's talk." I said, "Do you want to do all this, and learn on your own?" and she said, "No, I thought I was going to be taught the technology." I said, "Noooo, they're not teaching." I said, "The teachers are going to have to like learn it." But I mean, you know, oh my gosh, just that kind of stuff is just (heavy sigh).</p>	<p>Offers PD based on teacher strengths, personalities</p> <p>Encourages discussion when teachers are upset with her about something</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: Drama</p> <p>DAKOTA: It doesn't matter what you do. Like you can plan and prepare, and be proactive, but still, somebody, people's feelings get hurt over little things. DLA scores come back. "Is it me? Am I the one? It's so bad. Is Jessica upset with me?" "Nooo," you know like, uhhhh, feelings and women</p>	<p>Tries to be proactive about not hurting people's feelings</p>
<p>INTERVIEWER: women</p> <p>DAKOTA: yeh, it's like we used to have a man. Well, he, it helped. (both laugh) Um, the other thing that's difficult is that my principal has a set, she expects, she has like a set, whatever she says is what we have to do. So when we are planning staff development, there might be something we want to do, and she'll tell us, "No." There was something that a curriculum coordinator shared with all of the ICs, and it was shared at some of the other junior highs, but my principal won't let me share it with our teachers. She doesn't like</p>	<p>Challenge: Has ideas that she wants to share or things she learns from the district, and principal may say "No" – wants a little more autonomy in her job (what PD she presents)</p>

INTERVIEWER: I think I remember it, and I can't remember where it is from either.

DAKOTA: But it's so good. And, but the end part is that she let's them retest on all of it for the higher grade. And that's not our retest policy. And I said, "That's not what I want to do. That's not what I'm saying." I said, "At some of the other schools, they're just doing it like even on quizzes. So instead of putting my grade up there, I just highlight, and now let's have a conversation as opposed to just, I got a 52, I'm putting it in my bag, and I'm done."

INTERVIEWER: Right

DAKOTA: But she won't let me share it.

INTERVIEWER: Interesting

DAKOTA: So, those are, we have to do what she wants. We have to follow her lead. Um, some of my ICs on my team have had ideas of different staff developments they'd like to do, and if she doesn't want to do it, she says, "No." So, I mean, those are always going to be the drawbacks, but it doesn't matter, like that would be all principals, you know.

INTERVIEWER: Right

DAKOTA: It's what their focus is for the school.

INTERVIEWER: Um, you, you've been at this from the beginning. How has the role evolved for you? I know you mentioned that you started and you were all subject areas, and then you moved to the two campuses. How else has the job evolved?

DAKOTA: Well, our IC time at the administration building has really evolved in my world. When we first started, remember we were all together in the big rooms. Remember that day we spent learning our colors?

INTERVIEWER: Yes, yes

DAKOTA: So, um, that day we learned our colors, I remember thinking, "Why am I here?" It was fun, and I still remember my colors, and I remember other people's colors. (laughs) It was fun and memorable, and I liked it, but I thought, "This doesn't have anything to do with what I am doing at my school."

INTERVIEWER: Right

DAKOTA: And then, as it evolved, we got those DI (Differentiated Instruction) lessons that we had to do with the teachers, which seems like a distant memory. Um, and, again, that wasn't a focus at my school, at the time. And I remember thinking, "Every time I go there, these are things that are not a focus that my principal is focusing on." So it felt kind of disconnected, like I'm going to come in and do something from the district office we're not talking about here at school all the time. Um, now, it feels like, because we are now, of course, content specific, but now it feels like so much of what we talk about are things that are what our focus is at my campus, you know, at all of our campuses, for the most part, like

District training has become more meaningful – Past meetings did not meet needs of what was going on at the campuses

engaging math lessons, making sure teachers are teaching the TEKS, and understanding the TEKS. Like it's all much more related. I think everybody though, you know, as a whole it's more related to what we're doing on campus. Which now saying that, I guess that means that when we first started all of this, every campus was doing something very, very different from each other.

INTERVIEWER: Right

DAKOTA: mmhmm

INTERVIEWER: Do you believe that you have the ability to effect change on your campus? Why or why not?

DAKOTA: I do. Um, I do think multiple factors play into that because I know ICs-- I do have a way with words, being patient, and working with teachers, and if a teacher says, "I don't want to try doing this." Number routines are a new thing. I say, "Well, let's start small. Which one do you want to start with, and I'm patient, and I work with them, and I follow-up with them, and we talk it out. And all of that, and all of that--I know that I seem to have similar qualities of being patient, and following-up, and making teachers feel supported, and I think that really helps them make change. But, if you don't have a principal that supports, um, you and what kind of change you want to make, then nothing is gonna happen. I know of an IC who worked with teachers about being having engaging math lessons as opposed to just direct teach, but the principal told them, told the teachers, "You don't have to have engaging lessons. You can be direct teach." Yes, and so the IC was like, "So, I give up! Like I can't," and he had the teachers were willing. They were ready because they saw a good, they saw it was going to be good for the kids, but it was harder and took more work. And when the principal said, you know he was pulling the rug out from under her, he said, "You don't have to do it", well, so no longer, "I'm gonna do it the easy way."

INTERVIEWER: Is that coach still there?

DAKOTA: coach is still there, but they have a new principal.

INTERVIEWER: Ahhhh

DAKOTA: Yeh (laughs), and it made a huge difference, and a lot of new teachers

INTERVIEWER: Why would a principal say that?

DAKOTA: I know, and so the IC is like, "So Dakota, all these things you're telling me, all these things are great. And the lessons I was sharing, like even just a card sort, like something super simple. My teachers won't do it because he said they don't have to do stuff like that." So, I think you know, as an IC you have to have a personality- - You have to be willing to be supportive, understanding, um, you know, really patient when working with a teacher, to come back and encourage; when they make mistakes, not freaking out, not making them think that they're dumb. You know, you really have to make

Appreciates meetings focusing on engaging math lessons and understanding the math TEKS

Every campus was doing something different in the beginning

How to effect change:
Be patient;
start small;
follow-up;
making
teachers feel
supported;
Must have
supportive
principal

<p>them feel like they are in a safe place with you. But again, the other huge factor is you have to have principal support with whatever it is you want to make change with.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: I have you seen other ICs who have not been successful have certain personality traits?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yes</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: So what are those traits that have not worked out? You mentioned making them feel dumb.</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yeh, (laughs) I have seen ICs who will say, you know like condescending, so if you are condescending, if you are not patient. I mean, I have seen some that go in they are like, "No, stop doing that. Do this. The end. By now. By tomorrow." and the teachers don't have the tools. They don't know. They're like, "I can't just start doing what you want me to do 'cause I don't know what it is." So, condescending, not being patient, not being understanding, um, even understanding of you know, you get 1st year teachers from Texas A & M. I didn't go to Texas A & M because I looked at math departments at universities, and theirs is not good in the education program. So they come to us, and they've never touched manipulatives</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: hmmm</p> <p>DAKOTA: They don't know what Cuisenaire rods are. They don't know what tiles are. They, so I have to be understanding and know, even though you are a young teacher, um, and you're fresh out of college, I still have to teach you what all of these manipulatives are because you didn't learn any of that. If I get you from Sam Houston or SFA, I know you're going to know how to use manipulatives, but some people don't care. They're like, "I'm an IC, and I don't care. You just do what I say. Use these, and watch all these videos. I'm not going to spend time with you, helping you. So you have to be patient, take, find time, definitely makes a difference. Some ICs think they got this job, and I'm going to take my hour lunch. I'm not gonna—I'm gonna surf the internet. I know who they are (laughs), and I've seen that.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Do you feel like those people rotate out faster than</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yes, definitely</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Because the job isn't what they thought it was, right?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Right. Yeh</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Why have you remained in the position?</p> <p>DAKOTA: And that's a super great question. (laughs) I even got my high school certification 'cause I was ready to leave. I was ready to leave every year for the first 5 or 6 years, I think.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: (laughs)</p> <p>DAKOTA: Every year I was going to leave. Um, it isn't the easy schedule. You know, a lot of people assume that's why you stay,</p>	<p>Must be encouraging; understanding; make them feel safe</p> <p>Traits that are not successful: Condescending; impatient; not being aware of needs of teachers</p> <p>Ready to leave every year for the first 5 or 6 years</p> <p>Not an easy</p>
--	---

<p>because it it easier.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Uh hmm, if they only knew</p> <p>DAKOTA: I really felt, yeh, by the end of the year I felt like "Oh man, I really made growth with these teachers. I don't want to leave— what I just started, you know, what I keep finishing. And then, I was having teachers leave too, and then we would hire these new teachers, and I would really want to work with these new teachers that we just hired. So it's always just about the teachers and all of that. It was Marilyn who I worked with at Junior High #4, before Jessica was hired. Have you heard about Jessica?</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Yes</p> <p>DAKOTA: Do you know who she is?</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Yes,</p> <p>DAKOTA: So when we heard that she was coming, everyone was pretty terrified.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: (laughs)</p> <p>DAKOTA: And, uh, I was ready to leave 'cause I was like, "I don't know if I can do this." Then, I met her and thought, "Well, maybe I can do this for a year." And then um, she really isn't as scary as what everybody says. She can be if you don't do your job is the</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Right</p> <p>DAKOTA: is what it is</p> <p>DAKOTA: Yeh, it totally is. So, there have been a lot of times I've wanted to leave, but it's really all about the growth that I am making with my teachers that makes me, that makes me stay. Um, and then when we did get the swap days added, because I was working so much in the summer, and then when we got the swap days added, I thought, " You know what. This makes me feel rewarded for some of the summer work." And so that helped. And now we have the five additional days that we are being paid for, and that does help. It makes you think like, "I am being seen as someone who is doing more than what a teacher is doing."</p> <p>DAKOTA: But to me, at a certain point, what I came to terms with is, um, either I am going to go backwards, because now that we've had a pay increase and 5 swap days, I'm either going to go backwards, or forwards, or I'm going to stay still. What is it I'm going to do? Every year, is new, so it's not becoming boring or stagnant, 'cause every year is a new challenge. There's always something new added in. Even new Math ICs—like, um, because they call and ask questions, and you are working with them. Like I am always helping the new Math ICs that come in to other campuses also. I always have new teachers. There's always something new happening.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Right</p> <p>DAKOTA: A new principal focus (laughs)</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: So you mentioned, we're almost done, I can tell</p>	<p>schedule</p> <p>Stayed because making progress with teachers; wanted to work w/ newly hired teachers</p> <p>Swap days & 5 extra work days made her feel validated & rewarded</p> <p>Every year is a new challenge</p> <p>Is a mentor for new ICs</p>
--	---

<p>you're tired</p> <p>DAKOTA: (laughs)</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: You mentioned that you have contemplated leaving.</p> <p>DAKOTA: Uh huh</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: What are some other reasons you have contemplated leaving, other than advancement?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Right, right, right, right. Um, disagreements with my administration on what they want to see happening. Um, or how I'm being treated by my administration. Those were some reasons that were very frustrating. Um, at Junior High #3, after Aaron left, we got Lauren.</p> <p>DAKOTA: Um, she came in kinda like a hundred miles per hour with PBL (Project-Based Learning), and that became like a huge tornado of people all around (laughs). She wanted everybody on board, and nobody knew what was going on. It just became this huge mess, so that year, you know, I was like, "I don't know if I can do this again."</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: (laughs)</p> <p>DAKOTA: I mean, oh my gosh! And then, um, she had a new department chair that she chose who she gave every amount of power, 100% power.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: mmmmm</p> <p>DAKOTA: And so that became really difficult like I talked about before with department chairs, so I was like, "I don't think I can do this again." because it became just an unfriendly working environment. So, definitely, like admin, and how, how I was being treated for disagreements, things like that, things of that nature.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: What, what do you aspire to accomplish as a coach?</p> <p>DAKOTA: Um, it goes back to that question that you asked about making change. I just really want for kids to have a great learning environment. So I just want to keep working with teachers to make their classrooms better for kids. Math is something that people typically hate, talk negatively about, and I want it to be a positive experience.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: OK, one more question, I forgot to ask you: What positions did you hold before you were a coach?</p> <p>DAKOTA: What positions like before I was a coach?</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Uh huh, and how long were you in that role.</p> <p>DAKOTA: I taught, I opened Campus L. I taught 4th grade for like 4 or 5 years.</p> <p>INTERVIEWER: Oh, OK</p> <p>DAKOTA: Um, and then I moved to Junior High #3 and I taught 6th grade math and 7th grade math for like 5 years, I think. And I was Department Chair in some of that time (laughs). You can tell</p>	<p>Why thinking about leaving? Advancement; disagreements with admin; treatment by admin; admin giving too much power to dept. chair; unfriendly work environment</p>	<p>Wants kids to have a great learning environment. Wants math to be positive for teachers and students</p>
--	---	---

it's all a little fuzzy. I don't know how long and all of that. (both laugh)

INTERVIEWER: I'm like that too

DAKOTA: And Lead Mentor. I was also Lead Mentor too

INTERVIEWER: OK, um, alright, um, is there anything else that you would like to share?

DAKOTA: Nope

INTERVIEWER: No, you have great insight, and I really appreciate

DAKOTA: OK good

INTERVIEWER: the information you have given me

After the tape was turned off, Dakota shared:

DAKOTA: This year, coaches were able to coach. Next, year that will be taken away. Because they will lose the money, they will not stay. I lost a \$1200 Team Leader stipend to take this job.

APPENDIX H
RESPONSES REGARDING UNANTICIPATED ROLES AND/OR
RESPONSIBILITIES

APPENDIX H

**RESPONSES REGARDING UNANTICIPATED ROLES AND/OR
RESPONSIBILITIES**

Think about all of your responsibilities and experiences as a coach. Were there any experiences and/or responsibilities/duties that you were not expecting when you assumed the role of IC? If so, what were they? If not, just type, "no".

(Elementary IC Responses)

- *The breadth of the literacy library responsibilities from the front-end to the back end inventory - Title 1 documentation that is required for PD activities*
- *STAAR; CTC; Data; Response To Intervention (RTI); Student discipline; Subbing for teachers*
- *Covering classes for Admission Review and Dismissal (ARDs) or parent meetings*
- *Wasn't expecting to have to facilitate and keep track of RTI, wasn't expecting to have to answer calls for removals for discipline.*
- *I was not expecting to "cover" classes for meetings.*
- *Never expected the wide array of responsibilities that accompany this position.*
- *In previous years, my Math IC and I were facilitators for RTI. I was not expecting this responsibility to develop and be in charge of RTI up to Tier III*
- *Some, yes, but I expected there to be some hidden responsibilities as part of this role requires you to be FLEXIBLE! Wasn't expecting to play the role of instant sub for teachers--ARD coverage, sub positions not filled, etc. Also, seems like it is IC responsibility to start/organize student clubs and then we get stuck in that role-permanently.*
- *Read Deed Run Coordinator*
- *I don't think there were any that I didn't expect. It has just been different each year. The first year, when it was just data, I didn't expect it to be totally data. I'm glad it's not like that any more.*
- *I thought that district meetings were places where I would receive information that needed to be brought back to campus. I like our district meetings and I appreciate the time to collaborate, but sometimes I feel like I leave with even more things piled onto my plate and it can be overwhelming. I knew that the role of IC would include managing a lot of moving parts. I wanted to have more time to spend in teachers classrooms and I feel there isn't enough time to plan those lessons and get into the classrooms to model. Most of the time I feel like I am just barely keeping my head above the water with deadlines - not nearly enough time to do the things that I thought I'd get to do.*
- *Sure; supporting support teachers before work hours.*
- *STAAR*
- *Not really.*
- *I assumed this role included many responsibilities, I think what surprised me the most was the amount of time management required to be successful in this role.*

- *I was not expecting to plan and lead staff meetings.*
- *Clerical tasks, i.e., making word study folders for each classroom for 6 grade levels Managerial role*
- *I hadn't anticipated the paperwork (much higher than a classroom teacher).*
- *When I first became an IC, the focus was mostly data preparation and analysis, and curriculum alignment, for which I was extremely well prepared. The duties shifted to providing professional development mostly in general teaching, and then moved to providing content specific training. I did not expect to provide professional development to teachers without receiving "high-quality" training by primary sources first. The majority of my training initially came from other people in the district who were trained by someone else. In my previous districts, I was sent to national conferences or attended trainings by experts, not by someone within my district who had been trained. I also expected the district to have consistency among the elementary campuses and have vertical alignment documents, such as a recommended pacing guide, a Curriculum At a Glance (which was new last year), a TEKS verification document, common unit assessments (not DLA's), etc. I am surprised that a district this large did not have these resources provided. It is a waste of time and energy for each grade level in 37 elementary schools to create a recommended pacing guide (roadmaps) for each unit.*
- *I was not expecting to assist with District Level Assessment planning. I am in charge of forming the small groups for all math and science DLAs. I have to locate RTI, 504, and SPED accommodations and verify with the teachers and administrators. I then have to locate teaching staff members that can assist with administering the small group assessments. The Testing Coordinator does not assist with this task on my campus. Although I do not mind lunch duty, I was surprised by it. There have been many occasions where the teachers are needing my assistance during the time that I am at lunch duty.*
- *No because it says other duties as needed.*
- *Covering for admin with there's just one here. Dealing with the walkie talkie and behavior issues with kids.*
- *I knew that the ICs here at my campus were part of the admin team but I didn't realize that I would be given so much of that responsibility.*
- *Preparing and presenting at all Staff Meetings, Title 1 requisitions and ordering of literacy materials*
- *Behavior response team - spending time responding to severe behavior incidents on campus when administrators are out or when they need assistance*
- *I get handed random responsibilities all the time. I just added two new things today.*
- *No*
- *Cohort groups for other schools twitter book clubs*
- *Covering for ARDS and teachers who are absent*
- *At first, it was more about collecting data and sharing it with teams. Now you add coaching teachers and sharing content knowledge.*

- *As an IC there is so much that I do. I understand the importance of everything but I feel that our main priority should be in the classroom and that is honestly done the least amount of time. Between admin meeting, planning and conducting Learning meetings every Monday, Preparing for Curriculum & Instruction leaders meeting every other Tuesday, running data reports to go over with my admin. team, every time a Common Assessment and DLA has been taken, Planning all day Tuesday, helping with AWARE issues, and book studies, there is very little time left to be in the classroom.*
- *Being a new campus, our teams were working hard on building relationships. I spent a lot of time listening to teachers, validating feelings, mentoring them, and helping to work out relationships. Didn't think I would see so much crying but it really helped me grow professionally and emotionally. I work with wonderful people and I value who they are.*
- *No*
- *I wasn't aware that I would be so involved in day-to-day administration of the campus. I've learned, though!*
- *I did not expect: - teachers to refuse to do district/administrative directives; to do more duties than a classroom teacher or para; to do At-risk Report (I don't have to do this now); to do various reports that should have been completed by an administrator; to be told to do things for a teacher because he/she said it was not his/her responsibility; buy so many resources for teachers because they need the resources but there are no school funds to purchase them*
- *Approving monitor lists, monitor lesson plans and grade book, writing lesson plans for Kindergarten and 4th grade*
- *I didn't know what to expect but everything I do seems to "apply" to my position. I think there is just not enough of me or I'm not organized/capable to cover/do it all.*
- *Junior Achievement*

(Junior High IC Responses)

- *Filling in for teachers who are on leave*
- *Occasionally something will come up that does not fit into my job description. I prefer not to go into specifics. It has made me question whether everyone truly understands the purpose of an instructional coach. I think our roles (what we are here for and what we are NOT here for) needs to be reviewed with admin/counselors/teachers each school year.*
- *Yes. What to do with a teacher when the instructional practices taking place in their classroom is well below standard. What to do with data when a teacher might be cheating. What to do with a teacher when I have done everything in my power to grow them and there is no improvement. I also love what I do. I love that students still know who I am because of how often I am present in the classrooms and the relationships I have built with teachers to see effective instruction take place.*
- *No.*
- *I didn't realize I would still have "extra duties"*

- *Assisting struggling teachers Teaching best practices to teachers - I thought they already knew them*
- *I was not prepared to deal with the challenge of educators who do not have a passion for student success. Naively, I walked in to this position believing that most, if not all educators had a heart and mind dedicated to building and growing successful learners.*
- *No*
- *I can't think of any.*
- *No*

(High School IC Responses)

- *No, at least not yet.*
- *I had no idea what to expect when I took this job.*
- *Helping students in the KOLA lab.*
- *My "Other" - campus End of Course (EOC) Remediation and Intervention*
- *being the point person for campus based technology issues having to enforce/explain district and campus polices to teachers creation of intervention materials*
- *I don't think I realized how much time I would spend organizing intervention for our campus.*
- *I truly wasn't prepared for the type of resistance that you get from some of the teachers when it comes to following District/State expectations.*
- *Aware, excel, testing coordination work*
- *No, simply because I am too new to the position to answer objectively at this time.*
- *Organizing remediation for STAAR EOC testing*
- *Did not expect that I would need to write newsletters or be a video editing expert. Neither of these areas is a strength for me.*
- *no*
- *Massive amounts of time spent planning remediation.*
- *In a sense, I was not expecting to mediate disagreements among team members. I somewhat expected team leaders and /or Department Chairs to address these issues.*
- *No*
- *Extra duties (tardy station), substituting for teachers*

APPENDIX I
RESPONSES REGARDING GREATEST CHALLENGES

APPENDIX I
RESPONSES REGARDING GREATEST CHALLENGES

(Elementary IC Responses)	
As an instructional coach, what are the greatest challenges that you face?	
Responses	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>My greatest challenge is working with teams of teachers who are resistant to school-wide expectations. Knowing how to effectively communicate with people who hate the content that I am talking to them about has been my greatest challenge. It is also hard sometimes knowing where I stand with administration. I am a person who needs feedback - good or bad. When you don't often get a lot of that it is really hard to know where you stand or if the decisions you've made are going to be supported or not.</i> <i>I would say keeping up with balancing my daily workload for my teachers and any and everything my principal needed me to do. Having to hire staff after the school year started because our enrollment grew so much was difficult because many of the hires were put on growth plans and working with them took so much of my time each week and preparing to state assessments at the same time.</i> <i>Trying to do it all really! I have multiple ideas, lots of new learning to share and getting time to share with teachers either through PD's or PLCs is very hard. I meet to plan with teachers 3 days of the week, I need time to study ahead, looking for time to be in the classroom, work with new teachers, support teachers with classroom management etc. Using PLCs time adequately to move teachers ahead is also challenging, because it lacks that inconsistency of following up on the next PLCs either because data comes or is taken over by another cause. So putting these together, I believe is the inconsistency of following things through, from everyone; coaches, & admin.</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>teacher resistance, refusal complaining...sometimes teachers are not nice even when you are trying to help ...use to be lack of administrative support....but not with our new principal (yay)</i> <i>With my previous principal, district curriculum was not being implemented and teachers were not held accountable for the required number of PDAS/KDAS professional development hours. It simply wasn't apart of</i> 	Resistant teams Relationship w/admin Time – workload Time PLC follow through Teacher resistance Value Lack of admin support -Admin

<p>her agenda. Therefore, teachers were not expected or required to attend Reading/Writing/Literacy Summit. Because of this, our campus is four years behind. A lack of support from administration presented my biggest challenge. This has changed since our new principal has stepped in.</p>	<p>Teacher resistance</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not enough time in the day/week to do everything I want to do with and for the teachers. Push back from teachers about PD and implementing current teaching strategies (Guided Math) 	<p>Time Too many duties</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For me, it is the adult's attitudes. You attitude is everything and while we all have a bad day, if you are a teacher, you have to suck it up and not take it out of the kids. I am very self reflective and I apologize a lot if I think that I came across wrong. Many teachers don't. It is very frustrating for me at times. I am also very passionate and I am always reading. Not being with a group of self-motivated professional readers in challenging for me! 	<p>Adult attitude</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> PDR time for teachers- they get bogged down in the everyday tasks in the classroom and have trouble seeing the merit of taking the time to keep current PDR time-honored and given by admin. <u>Do not want to upset the teachers by taking their time.</u> Keeping on top of the data-especially being technology challenged 	<p>Time Resistant teachers</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teachers who do not want to implement the district's vision. Providing support to grade levels that have trios or quads has been very difficult. They have the same planning & PDR time, but there is only one of me. I'm trying to meet everyone's needs but it seems impossible. Planning PD when some people think that they do not need to grow professionally. What they are doing is "working," why change? Having all of the district PD offered over the summer. Many teachers feel it's voluntary and then I don't have buy-in. If they don't go to summit, it is hard to know if we have a common vocabulary. <u>I work around the clock to support the teachers and I often do not feel valued by teachers.</u> They LOVE me to make things or get resources, they do not value the time spent in PDR, Vertical Teams, or any staff development. Please know that this is not my whole staff. I do have many teachers who seek me out and value my support and experience. 	<p>PDR time Too many tasks</p> <p>Admin follow through Mindful of teacher time Do not feel valued Resistant teachers</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Building relationships with resistant teachers. Having content knowledge at all grade levels for all units. Encouraging teachers who feel disrespected by administration. Getting teachers to understand rigor. *sheer number of duties each day *teacher pushback 	<p>Time for planning</p> <p>PD</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>-Admin Too many duties</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> *being told to be the person who is the change agent while it makes you the bad guy • Convincing teachers to try new strategies and not always relying on things they've done in the past • Time to do everything that is expected from me, plus the extra goals I set for myself. • Trying to get everything done. Being pulled in so many directions makes it very difficult to feel like you are successful. Trying to be an instructional coach and an instructional specialist is way too much. If you spend time planning with teams, you don't have much time coaching teachers and vice versa. Add collecting and sharing data with teams to your day just makes it overwhelming. • Trying to align district vision with campus traditions • Every day is a different challenge. I think the hardest thing is time management and managing to find time to get into classrooms. • Time....there is not enough time in the day!! The demands from our jobs cause an overwhelming level of frustration for ICs and teachers alike. There are many tasks that prevent us from being able to always fulfill the goal we set upon entering this profession, growing/teaching students. • I feel it is very important to be in the classrooms observing lessons and providing feedback. It is difficult for that to happen on a regular basis with planning and implementing staff development regularly, attending weekly planning for all teams, and completing teacher requests for resources and assessments. • Learning a new district culture and curriculum. • Mediating when teachers have conflict with team members. Getting teachers to truly change to what's best for kids rather than what's easiest for the teacher. • Working with the LA Coach, so we are on the same page. This is my goal for this year. • The greatest challenge that I face is working with resistant and difficult teachers. 1. Teachers that choose not to be their best at teaching. 2. Teachers that think they know it all however, do not know they can improve their teaching. 3. Teachers that know the content but lack application. 4. Teachers that show up to work without prior planning and preparation. • Helping teachers understand rationale, helping them look long term, plan with end in mind • My greatest challenge is knowing in an instant how to help a teacher when I can't recite ALL 6 grades TEKS's off the top of my head. 2.) How to do Staff development in the 	<p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>Too much to do</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Content knowledge (structure)</p> <p>Time / Too many tasks</p> <p>Time Duties</p> <p>Too much to do</p> <p>Mediator</p> <p>IC Partner relationship</p> <p>Resistant teachers / Unknowing teachers</p> <p>Structure (knowing all content)</p>
--	--

<p><i>original school day without a teacher feeling like its taking away from their time to plan/decompress, etc.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Being there for everyone, it get's hard. Thinking that you can make a to-do list, but knowing your stuff wont get done.</i> • <i>As a teacher, you get to create and cultivate new relationships with a brand new crop of kids each year. As IC- it's not the same level of turnover and relationships are even more crucial. Pushback, comparisons to previous IC, and the realization that not everyone did things the way I did...</i> • <i>Balancing time to accomplish all responsibilities Overcoming resistance & negativity</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Knowing the content forwards and backwards for three areas at six different grade levels. 2. Facilitating Change 3. Working with struggling/expert teachers</i> ○ <i>building relationships with those resistant to coaching - building trust - not feeling supported by Administration - changing the perception of coaches as evaluative versus supportive/true coaching; coaching means you're doing something wrong versus a sign that you strive for growth.</i> • <i>Teachers who resist and push back regarding district and campus initiatives. Acting as a mediator between teachers who are not working well together.</i> • <i>I think maintaining momentum without overwhelming myself or others. I believe in setting smaller manageable goals and then adjusting, but sometimes the goal gets lost in the minutia. Momentum towards the goal must rise back to the top and that can be exhausting, disappointing, time consuming and frustrating. I'm always trying to find a way to return to the goal while maintaining a positive outlook for myself and others. Its hard work to be happy even things aren't going as planned. It's a choice.</i> • <i>Finding enough time...it seems as year progresses I'm finding it harder to fit everything in.</i> • <i>Working with resistant teachers, keeping up with content for K-5</i> • <i>The greatest challenge is juggling the multitude of responsibilities (in a timely manner) while still maintaining a positive attitude a flexible schedule to address the immediate needs of the teachers.</i> • <i>Sometimes in years past, working with other people who were not like-minded was difficult. I have changed and learned A LOT since I started, but there are still those</i> 	<p>Time / understanding needs of teachers</p> <p>Too much to do</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>Adult behavior</p> <p>Time Resistance/negativity Structure</p> <p>Relationships - Admin support</p> <p>Misconception of role</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>Adult behavior</p> <p>Not reaching goals – Facilitating change</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>Time /tasks</p>
---	---

<p><i>teachers that are difficult to work with. Maintaining a climate of collaboration and respect with others who don't try the same is difficult.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Working in a very high demanding area with lots of new teachers</i> • <i>Time! There never seems to be enough time to get everything done.</i> • <i>For me, it has been presenting staff development. I'm a naturally introverted person and putting myself out there for adults is difficult.</i> • <i>Getting in to classrooms - not because teachers are unwilling, because time and other demands don't allow me to. Also - we have 2 content areas to be responsible for and that is heavy duty.</i> • <i>One of the greatest challenge is getting the teachers to follow district expectations. An additional challenge is to get teachers to plan effectively together.</i> • <i>Getting into classrooms either because teachers are hesitant to let us in or we simply have too many other responsibilities</i> • <i>Time * How to teach specific math concepts that I've never taught before since I've been out of the classroom for 8 years. *</i> • <i>My greatest challenge is meeting the needs for both science and math K-5. I struggle to balance my focus on math and science. Math tends to get most of my attention. Also, getting in to classrooms often is a challenge due to large teams.</i> • <i>Teachers wanting to do what is easiest for them, not what is best for the kids. Learning to work with those that don't have the same motivation for teaching.</i> • <i>Not enough of myself to go around. It is very hard to be responsible for 3 subject areas, reading writing and social studies for nearly 40 teachers. Just going to planning meetings takes up a large chunk of my week.</i> • <i>Sharing your time with 6 different grade levels on two subjects, and prioritizing your time while on campus to be in classrooms/work with teachers versus taking time to answer emails/pull data/make assessments has been the hardest thing to learn and master.</i> • <i>balancing the "extra duties" with coaching</i> 	<p>Resistant/difficult teachers</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Presenting in front of adults</p> <p>Time Structure</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>Helping teachers to plan effectively</p> <p>Hesitant teachers</p> <p>Time</p> <p>New content</p> <p>Structure</p> <p>Time to get into classrooms</p> <p>Teachers wanting easy way (Adult behavior)</p> <p>Structure / time</p> <p>Structure / time</p> <p>Time /Tasks</p>
Greatest challenges (JH):	
<p>Responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I love my school and the admin team, and for the most part I feel very supported by them. Sometimes, however, I think I would feel more supported if there was a bit more follow</i> 	<p>Notes</p> <p>Support; ability to impact change</p>

<p><i>through from them. I have limited authority, and the teachers know that, so there are some occasions where I need administrative backup/follow through. Other than that, I suppose I could say sometimes I feel pulled in so many directions --- I need to assist teachers, I have assignments from admin, I have assignments from the district level, and I have tasks I may be working on with other IC's. I like being involved in many different areas, but sometimes I feel like not everyone realizes that we are doing so much in so many different places and that may be a reason why a 24-hr turn around time is not reasonable. (Not that I've had a problem with that specifically...I just sometimes feel like "oh I wish I could get that to you sooner" and feel bad if I can't.)</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The greatest challenge I have faced in two years is the misunderstanding of the job. When the principal does not give you direction or introduce to the staff as who you are and what you are there to do and help with it is as if the teachers come up with their own job title for you and there are 12 different ones. Mass confusion follows and relationships are no longer formed.</i> • <i>Dealing with resistant teachers or teachers that have no idea HOW to change their teaching.</i> • <i>Looking at the long term; I can't 'fix' everything now. 2. Pushing myself out of my comfort zone, just as I ask teachers to do!</i> • <i>Time management is my greatest challenge. With so many responsibilities, I find it difficult to squeeze everything into a 10 hour workday. *****</i> • <i>Working with teachers who are resistant to change Working for an administration that does not understand or support the true role of an instructional coach. On my campus we are not in classrooms at all and were told by admin that we had to be "invited" into the classroom. Teachers on my campus see having an IC come in your room to observe as a punishment not a regular occurrence. We are also not included in any leadership meetings and do not meet with admin.</i> • <i>Resistant teachers and teachers who are on a growth plan.</i> • <i>Getting all my teams to trust me and come to me when they have questions or want to grow as professionals</i> • <i>Working with teachers that are unaware that they are doing a poor job providing instruction or are providing poor instruction.</i> • <i>Working with resistant teachers No administrative support</i> • <i>working with adults that have various personalities and</i> 	<p>Many tasks</p> <p>Pressure from self</p> <p>Role confusion; lack of direction from admin.</p> <p>Resistant or teachers who lack awareness</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Comfort zone</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Resistant teachers - Admin support</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>Teachers unaware</p> <p>Trust</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>Resistant teachers - Admin support</p>
--	--

<p><i>getting them to work as a team</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>My greatest professional struggle is trying to help teachers make changes. I don't want to be heavy handed but I also have suggestions from time to time. My other challenge is <u>trying to determine what makes a successful day</u>. While teaching, I knew when I had a good/bad day but it's not as clearcut in this role.</i> • <i>Maintaining the balance of teacher advocate and administration representative</i> • <i>Finding the time to meet individually with teachers Finding the time to get into classrooms on a daily basis</i> • <i>Trying to convince veteran teachers to participate in best practices for students.</i> • <i>Mediating for dysfunctional teams</i> • <i>Buy in from other teachers. I am the 3rd IC they have had in the past year, and it has been <u>difficult gaining trust and respect</u>.</i> • <i>Changing classroom practice, getting teachers to actually use workshop in the ELA classroom.</i> • <i>Time to accomplish all my responsibilities. Working with teachers to manage their stress levels.</i> • <i>helping resistant teachers</i> 	<p>Adult personalities</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>Resistance</p> <p>Self-efficacy</p> <p>Role</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Resistance</p> <p>Mediator</p> <p>Resistant teachers; relationships</p> <p>Resistant teachers – impacting change</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p>
--	---

Greatest challenges (HS):	
Responses	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The teachers are not given specific goals to work on by administration. There are also not campus goals (ex. implement Fundamental Five, each teacher create word walls, etc). There is no direction for coaches or when there is, there is a lack of support or follow up.</i> • <i>Having enough time to do all that is required for the job. Being able to truly help my teachers become better at their craft.</i> • <i>Having patience with the time it takes to implement instructional change. Teachers who are close minded to campus-wide innovations/programs. Determining the roles of DC and IC to ensure mutual support.</i> • <i>Working with teachers who do not know that they are not being effective. Without self-knowledge, nothing I say makes sense or is accepted.</i> • <i>Trying to balance the priorities of my curriculum coordinators, my campus principal and the teams of teachers with whom I work.</i> 	<p>Lack of direction from admin for campus or ICs. No support</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Efficacy</p> <p>Slow changes</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>Roles / DC vs IC</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trying to get buy in from teachers to change • Finding the time to share ideas and strategies with my teams when we meet infrequently. I feel that I can improve this via documents that I send to them, but nothing is as powerful as the face-to-face collaboration. • Helping staff to understand and embrace change • Mediating personality conflicts on PLCs. • See above on resistant teachers. With that is the anger/frustration that some teachers have with the role of the IC. Also the fact that the IC really has no power/authority- there are things that you see and want to be able to say more than just suggestions... but we are not administrators and what we should say and do is limited. It can be tough to find a way to approach a concern without alienating the teacher. • Working with stubborn teachers, teachers who don't realize they need help, teachers who have no idea what is going right or wrong. • Implementing change in a high school environment. • Teacher trust that I know what I am doing, getting teachers to want to change and develop • teachers who are not following protocol • Time Complacency in teachers • Working with different teacher personalities and methods. I thought everyone did things the same way I did when I was in the classroom. That is NOT the case, in good ways and bad. • Some teachers claim they want to try a variety of methods, but then when given the opportunity they claim they don't have time to change the way they teach and revert back to their previous habits. As an IC, I can only make suggestions, but not make demands of my teachers. • Support from administration, working with difficult teachers, and not enough time in the day. I have taught for many years and have taught several courses....however, there are some I am not 100% comfortable in....being able to be effective for those courses where my knowledge of the curriculum is not as strong as I would like. • Mind set • We are going through a nationwide Math Revolution right now. I think the hardest part of my job is getting the teachers on board. The other hardest part of my job is getting the Math Department to take ownership of the EOC remediation kids. As you see from all of the boxes checked above, sometimes it's hard to be really good at 	
--	--

<p><i>something when you are responsible for so many things.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>resistant teachers differences between high school campuses throughout the district one of me to support 20 individual teachers PLCs not being true collaborations not enough hours in the day!</i>• <i>Pleasing the needs of the principal while successfully helping the teachers.</i>	
---	--

APPENDIX J

IC PERCEPTIONS OF ABILITY TO IMPACT SCHOOL CHANGE

APPENDIX J

IC PERCEPTIONS OF ABILITY TO IMPACT SCHOOL CHANGE

To what extent do you believe you impact school change? In what ways? Has this changed since you began as a coach?
Elementary Responses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a leader, I have a direct relationship with decisions and the ability to influence decisions. • My impact is huge. I'm the backbone of my school. • I am trying to be positive and recognize the changes that have happened-- workshop, read alouds, real lesson plans, etc. We have come so far in the last two years. So, I think that I do impact change to a degree. <u>I just feel like I could be so much more powerful if coaching was my only job or if my content scope was reduced.</u> • I greatly impact school change. This has been evident especially this year with a new principal having just stepped in. In addition, bringing my IC cohort/labsite to our campus has helped my teachers feel relieved in beginning Readers'/Writers' Workshop. We started the year off with a book study about Teaching with Intention by Debbie Miller. This book has helped to shift many teachers' mind-set. • I think I can help create change through questioning, educating and inspiring • The previous IC didn't convey much back to the math teachers regarding Math curriculum changes or strategy training. I have made a point to meet with teams right after IC meetings so that I can get the meeting's messages to my teachers when it is fresh on my mind and timely. <u>I now have many teachers that seek me out</u> the following Monday because they enjoy hearing what I can bring back to them. • I play a HUGE impact as a "change agent" on campus. Campus morale, lessons with depth and rigor, reflective practices to enhance student outcomes to name a few. • I hope I'm impacting change. If anything, teachers know they can count on me for motivation, passion and understanding. • I believe I have been able to build teachers' understanding of data and how to use it to improve instruction. I have also helped teachers' move toward more effective use of guided math. • Since implementing rdg workshop 2 years ago we are seeing the rewards in our student work. This is something I strongly pushed for and my principal gave his support so it wasn't an option. • I think I have impacted the things we value as teachers. From grading practices, to instructional models, to reading notebook setup, to reading minute expectations. <u>I see myself as the glue that pieces together each grade level so that we operate in a similar fashion.</u> I set monthly, semester, yearly and several year goals in an effort to create vision. These goals have of course been altered over time, but it's a path for us to attempt. I had to work very hard to gain trust of the administration, there have been 2 principals, 5 APs, 2 counselors, 2 instructional coordinators, and 3 math coaches here during my time. <u>I needed the admin team</u>

to trust my instincts and allow me to fail. I feel I have made a lot of change because I was allowed the ability to work a plan even when the plan wasn't perfect.

- *I think I have impacted this school greatly. When teachers are having a difficult time they will come to ask my advice or ask me to be a sounding board. I have been instrumental in getting our science lab going. I have also served on the PTA board for many years.*
- *I think that my impact is strong, but only as strong as the attitude of the teacher. I know I am in plannings, modeling lessons, and there for support, but I truly do not know for 100% what happens when I am not there. More importantly to me, I do not know if I am helping them grow as professionals or if I am just there to be sure they follow the TEKS to the depth and rigor that I hope for.*
- *I am a huge change agent, if I wasn't there most teachers would probably be doing their own thing and not collaborating and staying on the same page as their team members.*
- *A great impact...more job embedded PD, more technology integration, teachers are becoming more aware of how data is important to drive instruction*
- *I have a lot of effect on campus change through educating teachers so they may the right decisions and or force change through their inquiry. Oh yes it has changed...when I was first an instructional coach there was much discussion but not much change resulted from it.*
- *I feel like my positive relationships with teachers allow me to bring change to our campus that might not have been embraced otherwise. Teachers and I struggle together through the changes and learning the new math curriculum. This team struggle bonds us greatly as a team of planners!*
- *First year I was just observing and supporting teachers in ways I could. Teachers expected me to have all the answers and I didn't. As the years went by I put the emphasis on writing and it worked in some grade levels than in others. I guess that is what is frustrating that I am on my own to make changes happen and I feel that it shouldn't be a one person battle. I do feel overall we have made a few changes but not the impact I was hoping to make.*
- *I think our school is taking baby steps in the right direction. We were without a LA Coach for most of the past three years due to turnover. Our campus felt disconnected during the 3 years because we had little professional development, or support for teachers.*
- *As a new coach to the district this year, I am still in the building relationships role. However, teachers are responding to my requests from the beginning of the year and I'm seeing the desire to change behavior.*
- *School change??? not sure Other than the administrators value my opinion about what I learn at IC meetings and therefore making changes that are necessary in order to impact instruction and do what is good pedagogy.*
- *I believe that if I impact teachers, then I impact change. We have instructional focuses on campus and it is my job to build up and support the teachers as they work in the classrooms. By being in rooms and working along side teachers, I will impact school change. If I am not in classrooms and working with them, then I won't. I am in rooms more this year than any other year but need to keep that a*

focus.

- Since I became coach, lesson planning has improved. As a result, teaching has also improved. Teachers have a better understanding of the TEKS and know how to apply various teaching strategies to meet the needs of their students. Another area of improvement is analyzing data in a positive manner. Through data analysis, the teachers understand that with collaboration and planning, progress will happen.
- I believe I am able to impact change in pockets at my school. My first year was a year of enlightenment, observation and realization. For the teachers that I am working with and that have invited me into their classroom and ask for suggestions/help, we are impacting the learning of students. I don't feel that I can impact a great extent of change until our Admin team functions more cohesively/collaboratively and that I have support from my principal.
- I have a big impact. The things that I bring back to campus are implemented. I am part of the process to change things. I help with it. I share in it.
- I want to think I had made an impact by building teacher capacity in Math/Science, and by bringing more resources and exposing our students to more science/math experiences.
- I believe that I have had a great deal of impact. I am fortunate to have a progressive principal and PTA and that we all share a vision for our school. I have had the opportunity to make decisions about how to grow my teachers towards a common goal and getting there together.
- My job is to impact student success. One of the biggest impact in school change I have seen is vertical alignment. Due to my position I have the ability to "see the big picture" and then to work with teachers to help them see the big picture. It is my job to work with the principal to carry out her vision.
- I think I have a big impact on school change. Administration includes the ICs in discussions and decisions about teachers and curriculum.
- Gradual change of moving from fixed mindset to growth mindset
- I think I impact school change in a small way each day. It is not a drastic overnight change - it is a series of small changes over time. When teachers make adjustments to their instruction based on my coaching, the change is evident.
- I think I have made a huge dent in change on this campus. When I came 3 years ago, no one was doing workshop and know the majority of the campus is on board. Administration has begun to see the light and is willing to help be a change agent as well.
- Provide a vision for the campus. Can lead by example, but it ultimately relies on the teachers to do what is needed.
- Hopefully, my role impacts the school in a positive way and ultimately touches the lives of students. I believe ICs have experienced progress with teachers, it is just slow. We are growing as a professional community. Baby steps!
- They no longer see the coach position as one that people are trying to leave as soon as possible for bigger and better things. We are figures whose opinions are requested and trusted. I no longer feel, when walking into a room or even across the playground, that teachers are expecting me to find fault.
- This school used to be run by the teachers who did their own thing. I have been

working for many years to change the climate and getting the teachers to trust me and support what I am sharing and requesting. It seems to be working.

- *I believe that I have helped people see the importance of the math classroom in the school. I hope that I have opened people's minds to why making math relevant to kiddos can make the most significant and lasting changes! The big ideas that I came into this job with have been narrowed down since I've been in the role. I realized that the world can't be changed overnight and that choosing the things that will generate the most "bang for the buck" is the best way to go. I always leave feeling like there is more to be done - but remember to remind myself on a regular basis that lots of good things are going on here and that we need to just take it one step at a time!*
- *1) yes, to a degree. It is greater with teachers who want to grow, less with those who already know everything. 2) mainly in growing their own understanding of math and how to explain complex topics so that kids understand them. Modelling instruction is probably the most powerful. 3) no.*
- *Helping teachers see the ever changing role of education and being a go-between for questions or frustrations from classroom to the administration.*
- *...better science labs ...more math and science resources for teachersdata and assessments are valued...by some teachers ...more small group instruction*
Response to the last 2 questions: I am always willing to learn about content knowledge to help teachers....I could always use more help with developing lessons, assessments, etc. Some teachers are just impossible to work with...my former principal provided no support for working with challenging teachers; my new principal expects the teachers to meet district standards and does not let certain teachers "tear" me up!
- *I believe I do impact change. What I have realized is that it is S-L-O-W. Some changes needed relationship work that took 2 years before change could be seen. Until teachers knew that I was going to be positive with them, notice their work and encourage them- they would not change to the workshop model. I see the general practices have changed and alignment has happened K-5. They seem to be happier teachers and can hold professional conversations.*
- *I feel that I have had a great impact in the last tow years and have brought Reading and Writing workshop to my building.*
- *I think I can impact school change one classroom at a time. I work by paying attention to teachers and their comfort level. I have begun making change through modeling, observing, and offering small suggestions if they are ready. My first year as a coach I was surviving. This year I feel that I am able to meet the needs of our teachers more easily.*
- *At times I don't think that I've had much impact; so sometimes I have to remind myself of all the positive things that have happened. When I first came to my campus, teachers did not plan together in their grade level or plan with their bilingual counterparts. Teachers now work collaboratively to write their grade level common assessments and write lesson plans. Teachers analyzing their own data and adjusting instruction. Additionally, they are utilizing resources more effectively. Teachers feel more successful.*
- *Yes it has definitely changed since we became content specialized. Being able to*

focus in a content has allowed me to really zoom in on vertical alignment in everything we do. So I believe my role has had a huge impact on school change.

- *Coaches are agents of change. Because we work daily with all grade levels, we have the ability to impact a school culture in a way that few other positions do.*
- *My teachers feel much more comfortable with looking at data and seeing how valuable it is to move students, teachers, and instruction forward. Being able to share best strategies and provide support to teachers when trying new things or modifying instruction.*
- *As a coach I affect school change by supporting teachers in their endeavors and areas of need, implementing district initiatives at the campus level, and supporting the administrations' vision for the campus. I feel that I continue to positively impact school change.*

Junior High IC Responses

- *We greatly impact school change. Because we have a strong voice with our principal and admin team. It has always been this way since starting as IC.*
- *Because I walk the walk, provide examples, and make myself available to teachers, I believe I have an impact within our department. We are growing and slowly, but surely making progress within instruction and student growth. Yes, this has changed since I first began 3 years ago.*
- *My biggest change is to get each department to look at their test and determine their levels. Both campuses are receptive to this. Also, I've shared lesson ideas with both.*
- *Tough question. Again, it depends very strongly on the principal and what he or she sees is your role. On one campus, the ICs are part of professional development for the entire staff, so they see us in that light. As such, they seem comfortable coming to me and asking for actual instructional coaching. However, if you have a principal that does not include ICs in the vision planning and implementation for the campus, then ICs can quickly feel like they have no real place in the campus culture- not teachers, not admin, so what are they? It's that situation that is conducive to a high turnover, in my opinion*
- *I have impact. The administration values my expertise and opinions. I have developed and provide PD for the department and entire staff. I have helped develop guidelines and procedures to improve instruction.*
- *I work for an administrator that utilizes his peoples' strengths. I enjoy working in an environment where my talents and skills can be used across the campus to help build a better place for students. This system fosters a collaborative environment where I can learn from others to help me continue to grow as a coach.*
- *Still so new to the role that it's too soon to tell.*
- *I am there as a immediate support in C&I. I am an immediate support with school knowledge. With the relationships I have with teachers I can be one of great impact. I am a critical piece to the puzzle because I am not a teacher but not an*

appraiser.

- *I believe I effectively impact change by bringing ideas to the campus and helping teachers improve their instruction.*
- *I feel I have been able to reach some of the challenging teachers who were not as open to change. I feel assessments are improving and are focused more on the TEKS for each unit, and I feel more teachers are using their assessments to guide their instruction (backwards design).*
- *I believe that my school has a growth mindset, so I absolutely believe that we can change for the better. Kids can grow, teachers can improve their craft and as a campus we can keep looking for ways to see more student success.*
- *My first year, I tried to focus mostly on building relationships and helping the teachers feel comfortable with me getting into classrooms. I helped when asked, I offered ideas, but I was not pushy or forceful. I think that helped me gain some respect and trust so that in year 2, I was able to see many more of my ideas being implemented in the classrooms. This is my 3rd year, and together with the other IC's, we have slowly started to make some positive campus-wide changes that affect the entire school.*
- *I think I have impacted the teachers somewhat. They are willing to try new strategies along with new technology.*
- *I think my administration has set up an environment that allows me to impact school change significantly.*
- *Some of my suggestions have been implemented and some have been revised to meet the needs of all content areas.*
- *I believe I have changed the entire math department since I became the department chair. Teachers are the happiest they've been in years.*
- *At first, I was making a significant impact because the admin at the time supported me and the fact that I was making some teachers uncomfortable but in a good way because it was making them look at their instruction more closely. I also believed that I had an impact because my ideas were not only welcomed but encouraged. When our admin changed two years ago, all of that stopped. My ideas and input are no longer wanted or valued. When I ask teachers tough questions in PLCs about their instruction, they just lie and go complain to admin behind my back. In truth, I have not felt like a real instructional coach for the last two years. I know the instruction on my campus is weak and I feel powerless to change it. I feel like I keep fighting the same battles over and over again and just when I think I've won, I have to start all over again. It is virtually impossible to be an effective instructional without these three things: 1-clear expectations from admin 2-a competent and forward thinking DC 3-Teachers who are willing to grow. Ultimately, all three of these things are controlled by the administration. The admin chooses the DCs and the admin sets the expectations for the staff for what instruction should look like and for what should expect of their ICs. In getting to know more and more ICs, the most effective ones are those that have an admin that supports them, chooses their department leadership wisely, and sets clear instructional expectations for the staff and how they should utilize their ICs.*
- *I believe that I have a major impact on school change. If our admin. makes a decision, it is up to me to relay that to the teachers in my department. How I*

present the change goes a long way in determining how it is received by teachers. Additionally, if the teachers are in need of a change on campus, I feel like I am an important part in relaying that to admin. I feel that they listen to me and take my opinions into consideration when making decisions.

- *My first year as an IC I focused on building trust because I wanted them to understand that a new role did not imply that I was not on their side; in fact the new role meant just the opposite. This year I feel like the work from last year has paid off. The department I work with is more willing to do things outside their norms to increase student success.*
- *I have helped teachers reexamine their assessments and they have really taken the ball and run. I am hopefully helping them to see the big picture of what we do. I have been much more effective this year than last year.*

High School IC Responses

- *I think there has been some restructuring of teams based on my input. I also think that teachers are more cognizant of teaching strategies and try to incorporate a variety of these due to the needs of students*
- *I think I can influence a handful of teachers at a time to embrace our school culture. I hope this increases with time and I can then take on other initiatives on my campus.*
- *I think my administrators are open to my ideas and listen to me when I discuss how decisions affect teachers in the classroom. When I first started as was just trying to keep up. Now, I feel like I am ahead and can anticipate and bring ideas that help the department or campus.*
- *Moderate change in Social Studies as a result of my coaching teachers*
- *I'm making small differences in how kids learn math--those add up to larger differences. Yes, it has changed. The teachers are more willing to accept suggestions and assistance (except a few). The teachers who said "no way" have mostly retired or left the school.*
- *I was welcomed in by most teachers and our instruction and classroom structures have changed drastically. The admin which was in place prior to this year empowered me and teachers as well to take risks and work hard for students. Admin now is in a change process- too early to tell.*
- *In small ways, in small pockets, here and there. I have taken small steps to change attitudes and teaching ideas and feel that is the best method instead of just steamrolling in to change everything.*
- *By helping teachers reach their potential I can help change the school - high yield strategies, feedback, PD, etc. I don't understand the second question.*
- *Without the leverage of an AP, I believe I have much power to impact. ICs have more power than they think. Some use it incorrectly. Becoming an IC has forced me to lead without leverage. I always say "if you can make a teacher change without being an AP, then you are a true leader".*
- *I was naive when I first started and thought that I would impact great change. However, I now see that most teachers don't change unless they want to and very few of them are interested in changing.*

- *I think I have a much great positive impact on my school now because I have helped almost 15 different teachers become more effective and thus positively affected at least 450 students.*
- *This year I feel like I've impacted more change within my subject area. We have new resources and new TEKS so my teachers are out of their comfort zone and looking to me for guidance. I believe I'm providing them with good advice, ideas, resources, strategies. Last year, I was just the new Rosemary (the former coach). So I feel more like I'm having more of an impact now.*
- *I believe I have the ability to impact all student achievement on my campus. I believe my impact has grown since becoming a coach. Because I am involved with every science PLC and in all classrooms I have the ability to effect greater change.*
- *Impact is slow but sure for a coach. At my school, data is now being used more effectively to hone content issues. In addition, the quality of our assessment instruments are better. Better resources are being used in some areas. Teachers have another avenue to get help and support. That is hard to quantify, but it is a real change.*
- *School change - not much. Department change -- Many teachers have been willing to try new things once I provide them with the resources.*
- *I impact change but change is slow unless supported campus-wide by the principal. I have had influence at the PLC level getting teachers to buy in to content-focused initiatives (like choice reading) that benefit students. This is a change from when I started as a coach.*
- *I have some teams/teachers that I feel I have helped tremendously when it comes to branching out and changing the way that they teach. I have helped create lessons that got them out of their comfort zone and they had success. I think the longer I am in this role, the more the teachers are willing to try things that I bring to them or suggestions.*
- *I think I have been able to improve lessons in the classroom. However, I do not feel I have the impact on how the lesson is taught that I would like to (for example, I might get them to do a station activity instead of a worksheet but cannot get the teacher to not be at their computer or to do checks throughout the lesson).*
- *I don't know if I have had a big impact on school change so far. I do believe that it will be a struggle based on the belief here...the idea of change being uncomfortable for most teachers. I understand....it's hard to change....it's very uncomfortable....but sometimes you just have to force yourself into the cold water to get over the initial shock....only after that do you get used to it and it's comfortable.*
- *I am hoping to help improve the first time instruction of my social studies teachers and that the commended scores can improve.*
- *I can make the social studies teaching teams stronger, more efficient, and a higher level.*
- *I do believe I am impacting change in the Math department at my school. I have teachers wanting me to come see their good lessons they have planned, or come see them try a new technique in their classroom. This has changed since I started.*

APPENDIX K

RESPONSES REGARDING FACTORS WHICH MAY CAUSE ICs TO LEAVE THE ROLE

APPENDIX K

RESPONSES REGARDING FACTORS WHICH MAY CAUSE ICs TO LEAVE THE ROLE

If you stated that you have contemplated leaving or were NOT likely to stay in the position, what factors are most likely to cause you to leave the coaching profession in the next 5 years?

Elementary IC Responses	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nearing retirement Some days I just miss the classroom! My goal is to use my experience/education to advance into a curriculum design position or work in outdoor education. 	Retirement Miss classroom
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I have learned so much in the areas of Reading, writing and Social Studies that I would like to put all into practice (going back to the classroom). Going into the classroom to model strategies here and there can cause a good change but maybe not a consistent change. Making an impact is hard but making an impact where things are not follow through and emphasize the importance of research based methods in the classroom can get a little frustrating. 	Impacting change
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I contemplate leaving for several reasons: * time demand is enormous * massive, broad range of knowledge and skill needed * highly stressed position * pay is not commensurate with knowledge and skill necessary, time demands, or educational level achieved required for position* 	Demand on time Content knowledge Pay
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need to decide what the role of the instructional coach should be. It's very difficult to be both an instructional specialist (content knowledge) and an instructional coach (works with teachers on best practices and behavior management). 	Role ambiguity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I'm hoping to get a position as an assistant principal. Changing jobs because of a promotion, with a principal cert. I know that my next job could be an Instructional Facilitator or Assistant Principal 	Promotion Promotion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The love of working directly with students and high stress levels affecting home life. 	High stress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of structure in this job is very challenging. Many times I have many tasks going on at once and at the end of the day, I have not mastered one of them. That bothers me. Multi-tasking is not time efficient for me. I arrive to work with a plan to accomplish tasks however, something always comes up - admin request to cover duty, teachers needing assistance, behavior issues, etc., and my daily plan is delayed. 	Lack of structure Tasks Feeling ineffective (impact change)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I enjoy the role, the only reason I would leave is for advancement possibilities and pursue my own professional goals.</i> <i>My desire to move into school administration would be the deciding factor for me to move away from being a coach.</i> <i>The job is TOO big for one individual. I am responsible to support 5 grade levels in 3 different subjects. There is very little time for me to meet with teachers to support the district and campus goals. As I stated before I work around the clock and still feel ineffective. I do not have much, if any, time to spend in classrooms to observe or coach. Since I am only on a teacher's salary, I often question why I am spending so much more time doing work outside of school hours than when I was a very dedicated and hardworking classroom teacher. I contemplate if this job is purposeful and impactful given the amount of duties the coaches have. I hesitate to leave the position because I am the <u>fourth coach in the last five years</u>. I feel that there can be no change without consistency. I adore my administration and know that they rely on the coaches for so much. If I left, they would have to start all over.</i> <i>The lack of a higher salary or stipends for different things. Very hard to serve as three subject area coaches and do all of them well.</i> <i>Burnout</i> <i>I'm possibly moving out of state. Also want more family time back considering I'm in grad school at the same time.</i> <i>Personal reasons; I would like to take time to focus on my new family (my husband and I recently had our first baby).</i> <i>retirement</i> <i>Administration does not respect me or the teachers.</i> <i>I would have left at the end of last year because of the work load, lack of administrative support, attitudes of the teachers and their resistance to change.... This year I still have a heavy workload, but it is awesome to have administrative support....</i> <i>Lack of understanding from Admin about the demands of all that we do as IC's. District lack of understanding about the true role of an IC. District adding so much year after year. <u>We don't have enough time to really get information out before they are giving us something new to share. We need to slow down a bit.</u></i> <i>Not being able to achieve personal goals for my position</i> 	<p>Promotion</p> <p>Promotion</p> <p>Structure</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Feeling ineffective (impacting change)</p> <p>Pay</p> <p>Stays out of feeling of loyalty to teachers & admin</p> <p>Pay</p> <p>Structure</p> <p>Burnout</p> <p>Moving</p> <p>Focus on family</p> <p>Retirement</p> <p>- Admin respect</p> <p>Work load</p> <p>-Admin support</p> <p>Role ambiguity</p> <p>Time</p> <p>Feeling ineffective</p>
--	--

<p><i>Not being able to achieve school goals for my position Excessive stress Excessive work load</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Growth or forward movement into an Instructional Coordinator position or AP position</i> • <i>I just have such a deeper understanding of content and instruction that I would love to have my own group of students to work with on a daily basis.</i> • <i>I believe that as a leader of educators <u>I am responsible for staying in touch with the demands of the teachers.</u> I feel like this can best be experienced and understood by walking in their shoes. Therefore, I feel that I may go back to the classroom to maintain an understanding of educators responsible for student learning.</i> • <i>Resistant Teachers; The job itself is really way too big for one person to handle effectively - in my opinion.</i> • <i>As of now, I plan on staying. However, if some kind of consulting job fell in my lap, I would take it!</i> • <i>I am currently getting my Educational Administration degree and may decide to pursue this as an AP.</i> 	<p>due to work load</p> <p>Promotion</p> <p>Practice new knowledge w/ own class</p> <p>Remain in touch w/ demands of teachers</p> <p>Resistant teachers</p> <p>Structure</p> <p>Feeling ineffective</p> <p>Promotion</p>
--	--

Junior High Responses	Notes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>I might consider getting my admin certification, but I don't have plans to do that right now. Right now, I love my campus and the IC's and teachers and admin and students that I work with. If that were to change, I would consider leaving.</i> • <i>Some days are very frustrating because I feel like I am spinning my wheels and not actually changing or coaching anything or anyone. And I am ready to move to an admin role.</i> • <i>I want to become an AP. In this position it is hard to be the middle man. I am lucky that I have a supportive principal and AP that trust me. I am ready for a new adventure and want to learn more and move up. If I got paid the same as an AP I would stay in this position.</i> • <i>The stress of the work load and the negative mindset of some would be the main cause of me leaving the IC role.</i> • <i>I am interested in administration. Also... I am a goal-oriented, results-based person. I like to see that I am having an impact on the success of others. Sometimes, I feel as though I am being used as a band-aid, and I am not a big enough band-aid. Steve Barkley spoke about the effectiveness of coaches depending on how broad their task is (i.e. elementary coaches versus high school coaches).</i> 	<p>Promotion</p> <p>Perception of lack of effectiveness.</p> <p>Promotion</p> <p>Promotion; Money; Middle man</p> <p>Work load; Negativity</p> <p>Promotion: Lack of effectiveness</p> <p>Resistant teachers;</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Burn out from working with resistant teachers with no admin support.</i> <i>I miss the kids and getting to know them. I think I would be a better teacher if I went back into the classroom. I wonder if I will reach my level of effectiveness as an IC.</i> <i>It would have nothing to do with the job. I would stay an IC for the next 5 years if I could. I may be moving this summer.</i> 	<p>Lack of admin support</p> <p>Effectiveness; Miss students</p> <p>Moving</p>
<p>High School IC Responses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I miss the classroom and the students. I came into the IC role with the idea that I would be able to impact more students, and although I might, it doesn't feel that way on most days.</i> <i>I love the teachers I work with and, after four years, know how I can support them (and challenge them to try new things) -we value and respect each other. But my biggest challenge is a department chair who led the department for years before ICs existed and has her sights on being an AP. This person is not open to talking about how the DC and IC can work as a team.</i> <i>I am coming up on retirement years.</i> <i>Job satisfaction. At my campus, no coach has stayed (either by their choice or the principal's) for longer than 2 years. This is my second year at the campus. I don't know if I'll be invited back and depending on the working environment, I don't know if I will stay even if invited back. I don't stay at this campus, I would like to continue being a coach at another campus in district or out if necessary.</i> <i>Promotion</i> <i>This is year 4 for me as an Instructional Coach. I plan on staying another year and then moving into another position.</i> <i>If certain classroom positions became open, I would definitely consider going back to teaching.</i> <i>Change in administration.</i> <i>It does not feel to me like a position that I can keep up for that amount of time. This is my 4th year and I already feel like I am burning out. Many times I do not feel like I am making a difference.</i> <i>Problems with the department head. I am hoping they are resolved now and can continue in my role.</i> <i>I miss the classroom, and I feel like I have learned so much in this job I want to put it into practice sometimes.</i> <i>Becoming an AP at the secondary level.</i> 	<p>Miss classroom</p> <p>Department chair</p> <p>Retirement</p> <p>Job satisfaction</p> <p>Promotion</p> <p>-Admin</p> <p>Self-efficacy</p> <p>Department Chair</p> <p>Miss classroom</p> <p>Promotion</p>

APPENDIX L

**RESPONSES REGARDING WHAT ICs PERCEIVE AS NECESSARY TO REMAIN
IN THE ROLE**

APPENDIX L

RESPONSES REGARDING WHAT ICs PERCEIVE AS NECESSARY TO REMAIN IN THE ROLE

If you are considering leaving the position of IC, what might encourage you to stay?

Elementary IC Responses

- Continuation in district's systematical approach to improving math and science achievement through alignment of curriculum and providing vertical and horizontal training in math content, and setting goals for the future * higher salary
- Administrative support
- I would only leave for an administrative position.
- Seeing a change soon ☺
- a raise
- I think there should be a district definition of what the coach is....data coach? instructional coach? planner? resource getter? I realize that some might overlap, but having a common language from top down may help. I want to get paid more than a teacher's salary. The librarians and counselors are not on teacher pay. The classroom is an appealing alternative right now if I continue to get teacher pay.
- More pay, support for being on a large campus (another person).
- I feel very strongly we should have our contracts extended and pay changed accordingly
- Pay increase to administrator pay.
- Higher salary.
- Recognition; Better pay so I can afford massages and other things that can alleviate the level of stress I'm feeling
- I plan on staying in this position until I retire.
- Decide of the role of the Instructional Coach. We can't possibly be both an instructional specialist and coach. It's way too much, especially with the large number of teachers.
- Being able to do more curriculum stuff – being in classrooms, helping teachers. Less data to be done by IC's – everyone should be responsible enough to pull the data and then share findings with each other. Having a separate IC for Science and Math IC's not being part of Admin teams and having other admin duties.
- You would have to add more administrative responsibility to the position. It is nothing about the position in itself that would cause me to leave.
- A transfer to a different campus.
- Knowing that my sole focus would be math and that I wouldn't have to juggle science as well.
- I love working with my IC partner. She keeps me grounded and builds confidence in me. However, IC's need a stipend like TL's receive. We often are required to attend many meetings that are before and after school and don't receive any compensation. If we were to get a raise, I would consider staying for a while.
- On-campus childcare or part-time position.
- A pay raise, we have SO many responsibilities! Knowing that we could get tailor PD from the ESC.
- Positive work environment
- A daily structure of duties. For example: Monday – administrative meeting discuss priorities; assist teachers as needed Tuesday – assist teachers as needed Wednesday – planning with each team Thursday – curriculum planning (based on Ts needs) and PD planning (no interruptions) Friday – assist teachers as needed

Junior High IC Responses

- I'm not sure.
- If I could be at one campus instead of two.
- If clear expectations as to what best practices for instruction looked like were communicated to the staff. If there was a change in the current administration. Also, if there were a change in the

DC. My current DC openly objects to what are considered the district best practices for instruction. She regularly advocates against it to the rest of the department and the administration does nothing to stop her. They are the ones that put her in the DC position even though they were well aware of her objections. This has made my job virtually impossible in terms of making any strides to improve instruction.

- *If specific, detailed guidelines were given and kept by all, from the top (district) down (campuses), then (maybe) I would stay.*
- *Continued change within the mindset of the campus employees; More time*
- *More pay.*
- *Continued growth. As long as I am of value to my teachers and administrators in a way that supports my original reasons for becoming a coach, I will more than likely stay in the position.*
- *Nothing.*
- *Nothing really. I'm at a great campus and have complete admin support.*
- *Seeing results.*
- *The relationships I have built with my teachers- I would miss that bond.*

High School IC Responses

- *N/A Love my job!*
- *Having success with resistant teachers*
- *A better relationship with my DC.*
- *More support from administration- it's hard to support teachers in change when they see that it is ok to not do what administration wants.*
- *Family and administration*
- *Better definition of role by district and building. More administrative support at the building level.*
- *Confidence from the administration and usefulness to teachers. As long as I am effective at helping teachers improve instruction, then I have a purpose in this job.*
- *Empowerment to continue as a change agent. That would need to come from campus admin*
- *An open exchange of thoughts to determine the best way to work together and being treated with respect by the department chair.*
- *My principal knowing my name would definitely help. I've worked for her for 15 months now and she still doesn't put the right name on correspondence to me. More than that though, I would just like to know that I'm doing a decent job and it is appreciated. Or if I'm not doing a decent job, I'd like to know the expectations of what a good job is.*
- *Working better with the administration and them seeing a purpose for this position.*
- *More teachers open to working with me, willing to try new things, willing to be vulnerable.*

APPENDIX M
RESPONSES REGARDING MENTORING

APPENDIX M
RESPONSES REGARDING MENTORING

<i>Were you assigned a mentor when you first began your coaching assignment? If so, in what way did it impact your effectiveness as an instructional coach?</i>	
Elementary IC Responses	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes. I got to shadow her in day to day activities, very effective! • n/a • My mentor <i>was not helpful at all</i>. • Yes. I appreciated having someone to call with stupid questions. She was a great help to me. • Yes, I called my mentor a few times when I had questions. The first year was overwhelming and honestly I was in such a blur I didn't know what I should have been asking. <i>I would like to have a mentor with a similar campus. (1200 students, bilingual, TWI and regular Ed)</i> • Yes, I was assigned a mentor. <i>In think my mentor had a difficult year last year and was not always available for help. I looked to other coaches for help when I needed it.</i> • <i>No, I wasn't. I came in before</i> mentors were offered to new coaches. • Yes, It was nice to have an experienced coach to talk to if I ever had any questions. • Provided unlimited support, patience, guidance • Yes Can contact person if needed • Yes, but we often find it hard to connect as we are so busy in our respective positions. She is a jewel to answer my questions and provide information. I can't imagine beginning this position without her assistance. • Yes, yes I was. I didn't realize at the time that my "assigned" mentor was my chosen mentor on campus, my IC partner. She has helped and put up with me for 4 years now. Watching her with teachers and learning from her day to day has impacted my job immensely. • Yes. It was great to have someone to call when I had questions. • Yes I had a mentor. I felt supported know that I could reach to her when needed. But I think I had a great advance because the teachers and admin knew me so I could focus in learning the ropes during our IC meetings. • <i>No; I was in the first group of coaches</i> in the district so we mentored each other. • Yes, but <i>we really didn't have much contact. So it had no impact.</i> In fact my friends first year of coaching was very isolated, outside of a small group of "newbies", as my ELA partner left the campus • Yes, I was assigned a mentor but <i>my mentor was too busy with her own campus to follow up with me.</i> I completely understand. The mentor roll is not effective. • No. • Yes. <i>I had very little contact with my mentor.</i> Very nice person but she's just as busy drowning as the rest of us and doesn't have time to mentor. I would have felt bad bothering her!

- *No because I started with the program. We were all new.*
- *Yes, I received a mentor my first year as a coach. I would not have survived or stayed in this position without that first year of support. We still stay in contact!*
- *Yes and it was great to have someone to sit with at meetings, and to email/call when I need help. I always had someone to go to for answers*
- *No, I was not assigned a mentor. There was a district person who was "in charge" of the IC's but not necessarily a mentor.*
- *I wasn't able to connect much with my mentor, wish I was able to but there was not time allocated from the district for connection/meetings.*
- *Yes. It did not impact me in any way. My mentor was very absent. She did not check in with me, and didn't really answer my questions when I had them. To this day, I know that my content knowledge is well beyond hers, and that could be part of the reason.*
- *Yes, initially having a mentor did impact my effectiveness. She provided guidance to coaching and content questions, and helped me ease into the position.*
- *Yes. The IC group is very friendly and supportive so I got support from her as well as many others.*
- *yes. She has been there to answer every question spanning from the simple, daily task to the big picture of coaching*
- *Yes, I could call her whenever I had a question. A small group now uses each other to bounce ideas off of each other or to vent.*
- *Yes. No impact.*
- *yes, easy to reach out and contact when in doubt.*
- *I was, but she never reached out. So a couple of us new ones formed a group and bonded trying to survive in this job.*
- *I was not assigned a mentor.*
- *I was assigned a mentor however, only met with her during several of the Friday IC days. Her schedule is as tight as most ICs and she was never able to come out and visit with me on my campus. She was though, always a phone call and email away and would respond frequently.*
- *No, because I was one of the original ICs when this position began many years ago.*
- *I was assigned a mentor. She served as a point of contact. I did not have a lot of contact with her.*
- *Yes....however, I am not sure that the impact on my effectiveness as a coach was very great.*
- *No*
- *Yes - my mentor has helped with many questions about the district since I spent most of my time in another district. She has also been a good friend and an encouraging peer.*
- *I did and she really reached out to help me quite a bit. I am still in close contact with her when I have questions/concerns.*
- *Yes, I was assigned a mentor. I did not meet with my mentor at all and any questions I had were sent to other coaches that I had a good relationship with. I don't think my mentor was actively ignoring me - I just think this job is so big and*

there is always so much going on that it can be hard to stop everything that you are doing to help someone new. Being new makes you very needy because there are so many pieces and parts that you don't even know you should be concerned about! So, I am sure being a mentor is challenging.

- *I don't recall. I think that speaks for itself.*
- *No, I was not. My ELA counterpart helped where he could. This job has many questions that arise daily and it is helpful to reach out to another IC who has already had that question.*
- *Yes...never really developed a relationship or was reached out to by me mentor*

Yes	17
No	10
Yes, no impact	21

Junior High IC Responses

- *Yes- it was a friend of mine (my previous IC), so I had no problem going to her for help. This only works if the two IC's have had time to build a relationship, in my opinion*
- *Yes. Not at all. She would have helped willingly if I had asked, but I found better support from my fellow ICs.*
- *I was assigned a mentor when I began. She was not in the same subject area as me nor was she on the same campus. I received an email at the beginning of the year welcoming me.*
- *Yes I have been assigned. I rarely speak with her.*
- *Yes. I did not interact much with her in the role as mentor. However, I knew she was there if I needed advice. The entire team of ICs (both in my content and on my campus) supported me and made my first year easier than it would have been otherwise.*
- *Yes, she was very helpful in giving me advice as to how to work with difficult teachers and to learn to not take things personally.*
- *No. I am one of the original coaches when we became subject specific.*
- *I had a mentor for a week or so, but then she left the position and I was not assigned another one. It's okay though, I relied on my wonderful co-worker IC's as mentors.*
- *Yes- she has been absolutely invaluable. She had so much insight in how to handle reluctant teachers and how to get them to buy-in. She also checks in on me, and makes sure that I am not being overwhelmed by the position.*
- *No, it may have been more helpful*
- *Yes. She provided me with a conduit to ask questions and get resources.*
- *Yes I have a mentor, and she is an effective resource for me. I feel comfortable going to her with any concerns I have.*
- *Yes, a mentor was provided. It is nice to have a person to ask questions if you feel unsure of something.*
- *Yes and there was no impact.*
- *I was. She is who I go to if I have any questions or need any ideas.*
- *yes, did not impact my effectiveness*

- yes, we never met.
- Yes I had a mentor. I was able to use my mentor as a sounding board to set procedures and respond to events.
- My mentor sent emails periodically to check on me and always offered encouragement. Those times when I felt like I was in the boat alone, she reminded me that there were several of us experiencing the same challenges.
- Yes, I was assigned a mentor. My mentor gave me encouragement and listened to my concerns and offered advice. Also, although I have an extensive background in higher level mathematics, I struggled with the 6th grade content on how to use manipulatives, what strategies to use, etc., my mentor was a big help in that area as she was a 6th grade math teacher prior to becoming an IC.

Yes	9
No	2
Yes, no impact	8

High School IC Responses

- Yes, but it has not impacted me whatsoever or been helpful.
- Yes, I think I was. There wasn't much of a mentor relationship, so there was no impact.
- Yes! Always available for questions, checks in regularly and offers lots of advice.
- Yes. He was my go-to person - shared many many documents and ideas that could help me as I determined the best way to develop relationships with the teachers and learned how to pull data. He kept me grounded and sane as I realized I couldn't "do it all" in year one!
- Having an experienced IC who was more than willing to help anyway she could allowed me to step in and take chances!
- yes, very encouraging and helpful in what to find where
- Yes, very little impact
- No.
- Yes. Great sounding board for ideas but that was it. I got more support from my ICs on campus than a curriculum IC.
- I was assigned a mentor, and feel that this was done as meeting a requirement as opposed to being assigned to someone who would actually check up ion me and assist me when possible. I rely on my campus IC cohort and hardly consult with my mentor.
- I was assigned a mentor, but only saw her on IC Fridays. She's a great coach, but we had minimal time together. But, I don't know that additional time would have made a difference. Our campuses and leadership are very different. What works for her and her leadership expectations for her are very different from my campus.
- My mentor did not impact my effectiveness as a coach.
- NA
- Yes, when I need something I know I can always ask my mentor. They are always there for me day or night.
- Yes, we talk and meet often. She is very helpful
- Yes, but we had very little interactions. What was more helpful were the other 3

ICs on my campus and our content time on IC Fridays.

- Yes I was, and honestly, N, C, and T have had a greater impact on my effectiveness. My mentor and I have very difference campuses and our roles are equally different. She is a successful and seasoned IC on a campus with a very small and established science team.
- I was assigned a mentor and could go to her with any problems or questions I had. I did not access that relationship much as she was on another campus. I tended to use the other content coaches on my own campus more for help and support. We were all new, but we were pretty good at brainstorming solutions.
- No. We were all brand new, we supported each other.
- Yes, I was assigned a mentor. It helped as she was my security blanket when in doubt.
- Yes. She has helped me with Aware and by setting up DOK sheets.

Yes	9
No or N/A	3
Yes, no impact	9