Relationships Between Teachers' Characteristics and the Implementation Fidelity of the Developmental Designs approach: A Mixed Methods Case Study

by

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“It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men.”

-Frederick Douglass

Dedication

To Isaiah & Lamond

Acknowledgements

I have always believed in the statement, "It takes a village to raise a child," especially when I reflect on my philosophy of education. I have so many people to thank in my life that have truly inspired, and supported my educational endeavors, including this final goal of obtaining a PhD.

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Table of Contents

Dedication ii

Acknowledgements iii

List of Tables vi

List of Figures vii

List of Appendices viii

Abstract ix

Chapter One: Introduction 1

Chapter Two: Review of Literature 19

Chapter Three: Methods 35

Chapter Four: Quantitative Findings 59

Chapter Five: Qualitative Findings 76

Chapter Six: Discussion 121

Appendices 136

References 149

List of Tables

Table 1. Teacher Demographics…… 37

Table 2. Student Demographics……..… 37

Table 3. Teacher Demographics By Typology……...… 62

Table 4. Teacher-Reported Frequency of DD Use (Means, Standard Deviations) by Typology……...… …….. 63

Table 5. Teacher-Reported Motivations of DD Use by Typology …… 64

Table 6. Teacher-Reported Means of DD Beliefs on Implementation …….. 64

Table 7. Mean Differences in Reported DD Beliefs by Implementation Status ……... 66

Table 8. Teachers' Reported Beliefs on the Impact of DD…… 66

Table 9. Student Reports of Implementation……..… 67

Table 10. Correlations Between DD Practices & Variables of Interest in High Implementing/High Engaged Typology…….. 68

Table 11. Correlations Between DD Practices & Variables of Interest in High Implementing/ Low Engaged Typology …… 69

Table 12. Correlations Between DD Practices & Variables of Interest in Low Implementing/High Engaged Typology…… 70

Table 13. Correlations Between DD Practices & Variables of Interest in Low Implementing/Low Engaged Typology…….. 70

Table 14. Mean Differences of Perceived Teacher Support Between 2 Typologies …… 71

Table 15. Mean Differences Based on Collapsed Implementation Status…….. 72

Table 16. Mean Differences Between Collapsed Engagement Statuses…… 73

Table 17. T-test Results Reporting Mean Differences Based on Typology……... 74

Table 18. Student Report of Academic Engagement…….. 75

Table 19. Percentage by Cluster of Teachers' Stated Priorities Coded by Category…….. 89

Table 20. SEL Prioritization Within Low Implementing Teachers. …….. 98

List of Figures

Figure 1. Developmental Designs Program Conceptual Model ……...12

Figure 2. Study Theoretical Model ……....…...31

Figure 3. Analytical Process of Data Reduction……...…..…46

Figure 4. Field note Excerpt of Seating Arrangement in High Implementing/High Engaged Classroom……..……79

Figure 5. Field note Excerpt of Seating Chart in High Implementing/Low Engaged Classroom 79

List of Appendices

Appendix A: Teacher Implementation Survey…….. 136
Appendix B: Student Pre and Post Survey(s) …….. 139
Appendix C: Interview Protocol for Teachers……... 145

Abstract

Although substantial work has been done regarding the effectiveness of social emotional learning (SEL) programming at the elementary level, additional research is needed at the secondary level to investigate factors that impact program implementation and effectiveness within middle school contexts. These factors include classroom structures and teachers' and students' characteristics. In this dissertation, a mixed methods case study design was employed to investigate the roles teachers' characteristics, beliefs, and attitudes play in the implementation of a school-wide SEL approach known as Developmental Designs (DD). This teaching approach specifically addresses the need for relationship- and community-building practices in middle school classrooms through teacher professional development. Classroom observations were matched with teacher interviews to place 24 middle school teachers, identifying as 60% male, 78% white, 18% African American, and 5% Latino, into one of four typologies:

- low-implementing teachers with highly engaged classrooms
- low-implementing teachers with low-engaged classrooms
- high-implementing teachers with highly engaged classrooms
- high-implementing teachers with low-engaged classrooms

High-implementing teachers, regardless of whether they had a low- or highly engaged classroom, held beliefs that SEL was necessary to establish classroom climate for the normative academic

and social development of students; whereas low-implementing teachers expressed a deficit-minded attitudes towards need for SEL initiatives. However, when typologies were collapsed by engagement status (observed highly engaged classroom vs. observed low-engaged classrooms), integrating SEL practices was more salient to teachers with highly engaged classrooms. Additionally, teachers with highly engaged classrooms demonstrated via interviews and observations that relationship building and proactive classroom management were priorities and professional strengths. The key emergent theme among teachers with highly engaged classrooms (regardless of implementation status) was classroom control. Low-implementing teachers with highly engaged classrooms demonstrated more authoritarianism during interviews and classroom observations, whereas high-implementing teachers with highly engaged classrooms were more constructivist in their classroom structure, management, and philosophy. Student surveys (N=325; 50% Free/reduced priced lunch; identifying as 30% white, 30% African American, 17% Latino, 11% Asian, and 9% "Other") substantiated certain qualitative thematic findings: students reported feeling more supported and socially efficacious with high-implementing teachers. However, these findings also called for greater nuanced interpretation of student engagement.

CHAPTER ONE:
INTRODUCTION

While we know that middle school is a time of transition for students, the literature is thin on the integration of social and emotional practices on secondary school students. Work in this area is sorely needed because early adolescents face rapid biological and psychological changes and social pressures that place them at developmental risks. This is especially true for youth of color for whom challenges during this period can foreshadow increased difficulties over the life course. Social emotional learning holds promise for middle school students and warrants rigorous systematic examination. The ultimate objective of my dissertation project is to gain a better understanding of the first year of implementation of the Developmental Designs approach, a school-based social emotional learning (SEL) initiative. More specifically, I aimed to investigate specific teacher characteristics and beliefs that may influence teachers' motivation to implement DD practices and the implications for classroom climate and student engagement.

Schools need to attend to the development of academic skills and strong content knowledge-base, and also to promote and develop students' intra- and interpersonal skills to help them navigate a variety of contexts they will face when adults. This broadened mission proves to be even more important when thinking about American middle school classrooms and how they align (or do not align) to young adolescents needs, academically and socio-emotionally. Research suggests that the tendency of early adolescents (during the middle school grades) to decline in academic performance and school engagement is due to a mismatch in their

developmental stage and the school environment (Eccles, 2004; Eccles & Roeser, 2009). These declines can be seen in students' grades as well as their attitudes and measured beliefs, such as, academic efficacy, motivation, and attitude towards school (Anderman & Maer, 1994).

Analysis of evidence-based school interventions substantiates SEL as an integral component to the healthy development of mental and physical health, moral judgment, citizenship, academic motivation and achievement (Durlak et al., 2011). For this reason, a paradigm shift is needed when thinking about the purpose and mission of American schooling, from a focus on standardized testing and academic-centered environment to one that enriches children holistically, both academically enriching as well as socio-emotionally.

Through developmentally appropriate classroom instruction, and the instruction of social emotional learning (SEL) practices to students, SEL programming builds children's skills to recognize and manage their emotions, appreciate the perspectives of others, establish positive goals, make responsible decisions, and handle interpersonal situations effectively (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning, 2003). It also enhances students' connection to school through caring, engaging classroom and school practices (McNeely, Nonnemaker & Blum, 2002). The majority of studies on SEL programming effects focus on early education (pre-kindergarten/kindergarten) and elementary school classrooms, however, there is a pressing need for such work at the middle and high school levels (Durlak et al., 2011).

Although school and classroom settings must be taken into account for SEL programming at the elementary and middle school level, setting characteristics are highlighted because of the difference in daily structure for elementary and middle school students. The secondary school model is a bit more complex from that of the elementary with middle school students interacting daily with four to eight teachers as opposed to one teacher for the majority of

the day. The variance between teachers and classrooms during the school day needs to be accounted for when thinking about SEL program implementation at this level. For any program to be successful in a school setting, consistency is necessary so that students are receiving the same messages throughout their school day. I aim to better understand and contribute to this literature by understanding the dynamic and processes needed for successful SEL implementation for both teachers and students in middle school classrooms.

Researchers must take into account the possibility that social emotional programming plays a positive role in impacting student motivation, engagement, self-regulation, coping strategies for distress and frustration, and subsequent achievement, and address the embedded questions of the processes by which this sort of programming is implemented in middle schools. Because of my research interests and professional background, my dissertation aims to further the literature on social emotional learning programs within the middle school context by understanding how the characteristics of teachers influence the use of Developmental Designs teaching practices, and subsequently affect classroom climate, and student engagement.

Social Emotional Learning Theoretical Framing

For the purposes of my research, I follow the definition of social emotional learning outlined by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework and I base SEL on the five components or social emotional competencies. While Developmental Designs is an environment-focused SEL approach that targets the teacher as the program provider, these five competencies are embedded in their proximal and distal program outcomes.

- **Self-awareness**—accurately assessing one's feelings, interests, values, and strengths; maintaining a well-grounded sense of self-confidence
- **Self-management**—regulating one's emotions to handle stress, control impulses, and

persevere in overcoming obstacles; setting and monitoring progress toward personal and academic goals; expressing emotions appropriately

- **Social awareness**—being able to take the perspective of and empathize with others; recognizing and appreciating individual and group similarities and differences; recognizing and using family, school, and community resources
- **Relationship skills**—establishing and maintaining healthy and rewarding relationships based on cooperation; resisting inappropriate social pressure; preventing, managing, and resolving interpersonal conflict; seeking help when needed
- **Responsible decision-making**—making decisions based on consideration of ethical standards, safety concerns, appropriate social norms, respect for others, and likely consequences of various actions; applying decision-making skills to academic and social situations; contributing to the well-being of one's school and community

According to CASEL, with regard to *self-awareness*, middle school students should be able to analyze factors that trigger their stress reactions. In terms of *self-management*, middle school students should be able to set and make a plan to achieve a short-term personal or academic goal. In the area of *social awareness*, those in middle school should be able to predict others' feelings and perspectives in various situations. In the area of *relationship skills*, middle school students are expected to demonstrate cooperation and teamwork to promote group goals. Finally, with regard to *responsible decision-making*, middle school students should be able to evaluate strategies for resisting peer pressure to engage in unsafe or unethical activities (CASEL, 2000).

Applied research studies investigating social skills and SEL in elementary and middle school classrooms propose that a student's SEC increases academic performance because these competencies allow students to participate effectively and efficiently in the classroom environment, which then promotes learning (Slavin, 1995). Similarly, Wentzel and colleagues found that evidence of prosocial behavior (such as helping and sharing) of sixth and seventh

grade students significantly predicted GPA and achievement test scores (1993).

An essential theoretical distinction in the SEL literature is whether the social emotional learning program is environment-centered or person-centered (Zins et al., 2004). Person-centered SEL programs focus on the individual students and their personal skill development and social emotional competence. This takes the form of scripted curriculum and is activity-based in order to build students' individual competencies. The key assumption here is that if students are building their own social emotional competencies explicitly, positive behavioral choices, decision-making and attachment to their school and academic motivation will subsequently follow.

An environment-centered approach is one in which the 'learning community' or a 'caring community of learners' is emphasized as the foundation for SEL implementation. This is also referred to as the classroom climate (Hawkins, 1997). The thinking behind this is that with the foundation of positive, caring, and structured supportive systems between teacher and students and among peers, students have opportunities to collaborate with others, as well as to experience autonomy. There is a sense of shared purpose (along with shared norms and practices) among all members of that learning community, which then promotes SEL (Zins, et al., 2004). In such environments, students, faculty and staff look forward to coming to school each day and feel connected to the school itself. This idea is also similar to past research in that the creation of this environment allows students to participate effectively and promotes learning (Slavin, 1995). Researchers have emphasized the importance of school and classroom contexts that enable healthy social-emotional performance and the fact that one cannot simply look at individual students "in a vacuum" considering the many variables that affect students' social behavior. Because of this, researchers have noted the following as possible foci for students' behavior

change: (1) Peer and adult norms that convey high expectations; (2) Caring teacher-student relationships that support academic success; (3) Engaging teaching approaches such as cooperative learning; (4) Safe and orderly classroom environments. I am in agreement with SEL experts in that we cannot look at students "within a vacuum" and should focus on contextual variables that impact their achievement. The focal program of this study, the Developmental Designs approach, is an environment-focused SEL approach aimed at influencing teacher practices. Because of this, I framed my methods and analyses using environment-centered assumptions.

Theoretical Assumptions of Environment-based SEL Programs

Classroom Climate

Environment-based social emotional learning practices have the common assumption that classroom climate enables student motivation, and engagement. Classroom climate is a common metaphor to explain this multidimensional construct. For this study, I use the following definition of classroom climate, "a reflection of the atmosphere, tone, or culture associated with a particular classroom. A classroom's climate arises from the interactions, shared understandings, typical practices and procedures and accepted routines within the classroom" (Chavez, 1984). A healthy classroom climate is defined as low levels of conflict and disruptive behavior, smooth transitions from one activity to another, appropriate expressions of emotions, respectful communication and problem solving, strong interest and focus on task, and supportiveness and responsiveness to individual differences of students' needs (La Paro & Pianta, 2003).

Past work has shown that the classroom social environment explains changes in students'

efficacy relating to their teacher, and accomplishing their schoolwork, self-regulated learning, and disruptive behavior, even after previous motivation, engagement, achievement, and demographics were considered. These findings align with the body of research supporting that young adolescent adjustment is related to the nature of the context that youth experience as well (Maehr, 2008; Anderman & Maehr, 1994; Eccles et al., 1993; Goodenow, 1992). Important dimensions to consider when thinking about classroom climate include students' perception of teacher support and peer support. Students' perceptions of these dimensions within that environment are important in accounting for motivation and engagement (Ryan & Patrick, 2001; Skinner & Belmont 1993).

Teacher Support

There is a growing body of evidence that states supportive teacher-student relationships play a vital role in healthy school, class climate, students' connectedness to school, academic and social emotional outcomes (Abbott et al., 1998; Darling-Hammond, 2002). Teacher support has been defined differently by several researchers (Ryan & Patrick, 2001; Goodenow, 1993; Fraser & Fisher, 1982; Midgley, Feldlaufer, & Eccles, 1989; Skinner & Belmont, 1993), but there is agreement that it is comprised of the following characteristics: caring, friendliness, understanding, dedication, and dependability. Therefore, teacher support refers to the extent to which students believe that teachers value and attempt to establish personal relationships with them. Student perceptions of teacher support have been shown to have a direct effect on their interest and motivation (Wentzel, 1998) while teacher expectations of student achievement influence the way they behave towards their students and affect student motivation, self-perceptions, academic performance (Jussim & Harber, 2005) inducing a reciprocal relationship between teacher and student perceptions. Likewise, when students believed their teacher tried to

understand them and was available to help, they were involved in less off-task and disruptive behavior in the classroom (Ryan & Patrick, 2001). Experts have concluded that a teacher's warmth and sensitivity contribute to healthy teacher-student relationships (Pianta, La Paro et al., 2002), but little research has explored how teachers' support may be associated with greater positive student affect, efficacy and engagement.

Relationships and school connectedness have been shown to be associated to adolescents' social and school competence as well. Pintrich and DeGroot found that belonging and teacher support were related to motivation, influencing middle school classroom achievement (1990). Not only do teachers influence students by how and what they teach but also how they relate to, teach and model social emotional competencies and manage the classroom (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

In Ryan & Patrick's study looking at the social environments of middle school mathematics classrooms, they found students perceptions of teacher caring and support was especially important for students' confidence relating to and communicating with the teacher, self-regulated learning, and disruptive behavior (2001). These findings have implications for the use of classroom management practices in that if students feel that they are supported by their teachers and can communicate with them, their level of engagement would increase while off-task disruptions would decrease. These findings parallel the philosophy behind the Developmental Designs approach that with teacher-employed DD practices comes the development of a communicative, co-constructed environment of learners. Grounded in teacher-student relationships, students should be more engaged in class activities and a well-managed classroom should go hand in hand with their practices.

Student Engagement

For this study, I chose to use Fredricks' and colleagues' definition of student engagement. They state, "Student engagement is a multifaceted construct with three components, behavioral, emotional and cognitive." Behavioral engagement focuses on the idea of student involvement in academic and social activities in the school setting. This factor is pivotal for positive academic achievement but also in prevention. Emotional engagement incorporates the positive and negative reactions to teachers, classmates, academics, and school and is reputed to create a sense of belonging and tie to a school. Cognitive engagement refers to a student's investment in learning and his or her willingness to employ additional effort in class and homework in order to better understand and master difficult skills and ideas (Fredricks et al., 2004). Engagement is assumed to be malleable given that it results from an interaction between the student and the given classroom context (Connell, 1990; Finn & Rock, 1997). A student may exhibit full engagement in all three domains in one classroom but then transition to another classroom in which only one domain is exhibited. Paths to student engagement may be social or academic and may stem from opportunities in the school or classroom for participation, interpersonal relationships, and academic activities.

Research on engagement has demonstrated significant relationships between emotional engagement and attitudes towards schooling, while cognitive engagement has been shown to relate to motivational goals and beliefs. Presently, many interventions aimed at improving school climate (such as Developmental Designs), focus explicitly and implicitly on engagement as a mechanism to facilitate increased. Existing work on student engagement also indicates that students' engagement in learning is influenced both by their perceptions of teachers and directly

by teachers' actual behaviors. Students who experience their teachers as providing clear expectations, and strategic help are more likely to demonstrate increased effort and persistence (Stipek, 1998). Additionally, when students experience teachers as warm and demonstrating positive affect, children feel happier and more enthusiastic in class (Sakiz et al., 2012; Skinner & Belmont, 1993). As one of my variables of interest for the present study, I qualitatively investigate observed behavioral engagement, but also addressed the multidimensional nature of student engagement by collecting student reported data that asks for all three subscales as well.

Environment-based SEL programs and approaches, such as Developmental Designs, assert that SEL practices will impact classroom climate by giving teachers concrete practices to aid their relationship building and classroom management skills. Improved classroom climate, in turn, prompts students' engagement and motivation, improving academic achievement and social emotional competencies.

Developmental Designs Background

Developmental Designs approach (DD) is similar to Responsive Classroom (RC) approach to teaching and learning at the elementary level. The RC approach is now evidence-based given its past evaluations, while Developmental Designs is now undertaking initial evaluation projects, including the current dissertation, which is designed as a case study of the first year of DD implementation.

While RC approach is targeted for elementary school students, the DD approach targets middle school classrooms (grades 5-9). For purposes of background and grounding the DD program in the current study, both RC and DD emphasize a caring classroom environment and incorporate social and academic learning. There are seven important components of the

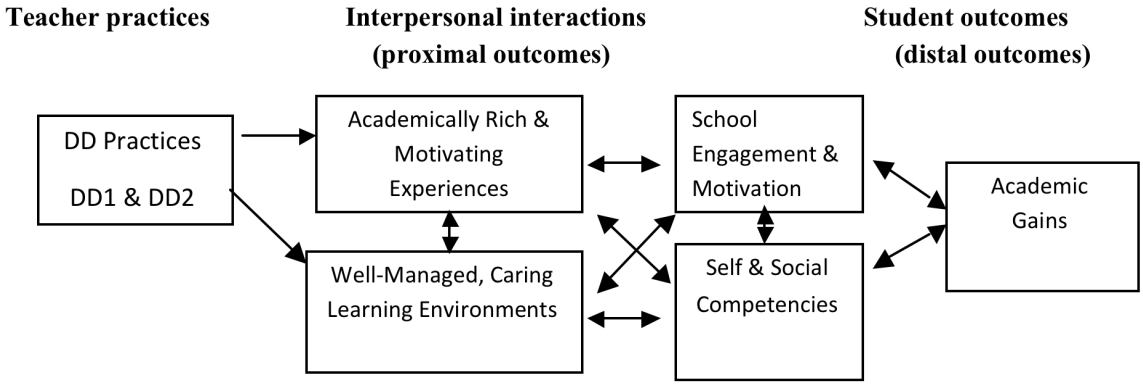
approach: (1) equal emphasis on the social and academic curriculum; (2) focus on *how* children learn as much as *what* they learn; (3) view that social interaction facilitates cognitive growth; (4) emphasis on cooperation, assertion, responsibility, empathy, and self-control as critical social skills for children to learn; (5) emphasis on teachers' knowledge of children's individual, cultural, and developmental characteristics; (6) focus on understanding of children's families; and (7) attention to the way in which adults work together within a school (Rimm-Kaufman, 2007; Northeast Foundation for Children, 2003).

The DD program model is similar to the RC model; however, DD targets the adolescent developmental period in school settings. The program model begins at the level of the teacher implementing DD practices. It is asserted that teachers who use these practices create a well-managed, caring learning environment that motivates students. This learning environment (that DD practices have constructed when all components are fully implemented) produces greater student engagement, and motivation while teaching students social and self-regulation skills, which ultimately lead to stronger academic performance. During my quantitative data collection I relied on measures of engagement and support (teacher and peer) that have been validated in the existing literature.

In the program model, adapted by the RC program model (Figure 1 below), there are bi-directional relationships within the indirect effects portion of the DD program. Specifically, a well-managed caring learning environment fosters students' development of social emotional competencies, in turn; kids with improved social emotional competencies create better learning environments for other students in class (Zins, 2004). Moreover, students who experience more academically rich and motivating experiences become more engaged in school, and will create for themselves more rich/motivating experiences (Gutman & Sulzby, 2000; Pintrich, 2000). For

teachers, the aforementioned environment, based on peer interaction and student support, would also alleviate stress and classroom management issues which cause much of teachers' stress and burnout, thereby positively influencing their use of DD practices. Because this dissertation is not a program evaluation, I aim to investigate the assumptions behind teacher practices below and how beliefs impact their motivation to implement the given approach.

Figure 1. Developmental Designs Program Conceptual Model



Developmental Designs Content

The *Developmental Designs* approach is a middle school-focused SEL program that seeks to support adolescents' academic, social and emotional learning through 1) daily advisories/morning meetings, 2) co-construction and monitoring of individual and class-wide goals, 3) modeling and practicing of classroom routines and procedures, 4) balanced, reflective discipline, 5) empowering teacher language, 6) collaborative problem solving and 7) engaging classroom instructional strategies (e.g., student input and choice, task orientation, active construction, and relevance) (Kwame-Ross, Crawford & Klug, 2011). Over 2,000 teachers in more than 500 schools across 30 states have been trained in the *DD* approach since 2005.

When thinking about implementation fidelity for this project, the first five components of the DD approach explained above were targeted. I chose to solely focus on these first components

of the DD approach because the case study site in which I collected data was in its first year of implementation and the administration specifically targeted these practices "year 1" of implementation. Their thinking behind this was that teachers would solidify these foundational components in their first year and continue to build in following years. These practices are further described below.

During the daily advisory, teachers implementing DD should have their seating arrangement in a circle while students are to know to take their seat in the circle and begin to the Circle of Power of Respect with a greeting. In this model, the teacher gives students a greeting prompt and all students are to greet one another. Once they've greeted one another, the teacher begins the Sharing component in which students share their thoughts or experience with the given prompt. Following this Sharing, students partake in an activity that usually consists of some sort of game or project that allows more interaction between students and teacher. The CPR ends with a daily greeting that students will read on the board so as to redirect students to start their day.

Using the DD approach, teachers should have also co-created a social contract with goals and expectations for the students. If implemented with fidelity, this should be physically present in the classroom and referred to during the school year. Going hand in hand with this, teachers model the appropriate behavior and routines and procedures that students are expected to execute. This modeling of behavior allows students to see their teacher engage in the agreed-upon expectations but also sets the teacher up to engage with students in reflecting on the modeling. For example, if a teacher has developed a new routine for how to transition from individual to group work, he or she would model what this transition would "look like, sounds like and feel like" and then ask students to explain what they observed during this modeling. The reason behind this is that students will then have an active voice in the expectations for this new

procedure and will also have the space to ask questions for clarity and have consistent expectations for the new procedure.

The discipline process that was specifically investigated for this study is called the TAB and TAB out procedure, which is an acronym for the Take A Break system. The DD discipline system is made up of five steps "1) notice, 2) redirect, 3) problem-solve, 4) return & 5) repair (Origins, 2010). This dictates that after the teacher notices the rule-breaking behavior, he/she uses a redirect such as a nonverbal cue or redirecting teacher language to fix the issue on the spot. If that has not sufficed, the teacher can have a child report to the Take A Break chair (TAB) in the classroom or in another classroom, or the lose of a privilege in the classroom. The problem-solving component specifically refers to when a child reports to a TAB chair in a partner classroom. This allows the student to come back into the classroom after having filled out a reflection sheet as to what the problem was and how they aimed to solve it. A one-on-one conference takes place after this TAB out process and students are reinstated back into the classroom.

Teacher language was the last core DD practice that was focused on in this study. The approach facilitators (and DD written resources) state that a teacher's language should be: direct, reinforcing, reminding, redirecting and reflecting. Direct language is defined as fewer, more concise wording, especially when giving directions, while reinforcing language is used to support students and keep spirits and motivation up but not be considered empty praise. This includes specific, explicit feedback that describes what students did well as opposed to "nice job" or "good going!" Reminding and redirecting language are geared more towards asking students clarifying questions to "remind" them of what the expectations or directions are and quickly redirecting behavior before a classroom management issue arises. An example of this

type of language would be the statement, "I hear people talking. This is our silent reading time." The running theme with these various components is the simple, and direct nature of the type of language but with a warm affect (while not being overly "gushy" as described in DD materials). Reflecting language allows teachers to encourage students to think about their behavior in an analytical way to figure out what went well and what needs improvement. For example asking students, "who has thoughts on how we can be more organized next time when transitioning to group work?" is an example of this type of reflecting language. During the professional development workshop that teachers engage in, they are told to stay neutral in their speech and make sure to avoid excessive praise, sarcasm, blaming, guilt and manipulation when speaking with students.

These practices are designed to create classroom social processes that not only adapted to the developmental period that students are in, but also promote learning for all students. For example, a teacher who uses morning meetings, logical consequences, academic choice, and establishes strong relationships with his/her students and among students, reduces discipline/management problems and provides students with guided choice and autonomy. From this, students develop pro-social skills and become engaged and motivated to learn self-regulation competencies and higher levels of engagement in learning (Rimm-Kaufman, 2007).

These specific practices influence the learning environment that students are in, in the sense that the environment (that DD produces) is well-managed and caring with academically stimulating and motivating activities and experiences. Based on this rich environment and these motivating experiences, students' engagement, and yield strong academic gains.

Findings

Evidence for this approach is based upon the evaluative research done on the Responsive Classroom approach. Researchers evaluating the RC program used the Teacher Demographic Questionnaire (22-item questionnaire asking about basic descriptive information), Pianta's Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (15-item, teacher report) the Social Skills Rating Scale (SSRS; Gresham & Elliot, 1990) and the Mock Report Card (Pierce, Hamm, & Vandell, 1999), which allowed teachers to evaluate the academic performance of each of their students. Past quasi-experimental, longitudinal research has found that RC practices were negatively associated with children's anxious/fearful behavior (Rimm-Kaufman, 2011). Additionally, RC practices mediated children's positive perceptions of school, while also significantly affecting academic performance and social behavior (as defined by and measured by RC researchers). Although it is important to note that the effect sizes in this past work were small to moderate in improving achievement and classroom quality (as sited in Rimm-Kaufman, 2003). One of the main goals of the RC approach is to create classroom systems that are conducive to children's learning. RC evaluations indicate a positive relationship between RC usage and students' growth in reading. For the reading-growth finding, there was a small main effect (accounting for 2% of the variance) of *RC* practices, where teachers' use of more *RC* practices related to greater improvement in reading after controlling for earlier reading performance. In terms of academic outcomes, these teachers who used more RC practices also had students who had higher scores in reading, written language and math (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2007). Teachers, who use the RC approach, also report greater closeness to their students while also reporting students' increase in prosocial behavior and assertion, decrease in anxiousness and greater assertiveness (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2011; 2007).

Pilot work has also been conducted examining the relationships between reported DD practices and in students' perceptions of teacher and peer support. Participants in that study included 271 6th grade students and 18 teachers surveyed from a middle school participating in the approach. Path models (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) indicated significant direct relationships between DD classroom practices and student engagement, as well as indirect effects demonstrating that teachers' and peers' emotional and academic support were significantly related to students' engagement, and academic- and social-efficacy in the classroom (Bedoya-Skoog & Jagers, In preparation).

Conclusions

The current study is informed by stage– environment fit and self-determination theories, which both suggest that early adolescents will thrive in classrooms that support their need for autonomy, relatedness and competence (Eccles et al., 1993; Deci & Ryan, 2002). However, structures, processes and curriculum content of middle schools seldom address these needs. Compared to elementary schools, middle schools tend to have teachers who feel less prepared to meet student's academic and social emotional needs, poorer quality teacher-student relationships, classrooms that feature more control and less opportunity for student choice, decision making and self-management, and stricter curriculum standards and grading that doesn't necessarily reflect student's interests, effort or abilities (Eccles & Roeser, 2012).

A central assumption of my dissertation project is that the DD teaching approach of which the case-study school is employing, supports teachers and students in establishing and maintaining relationships and a sense of classroom community. Through teachers' professional development workshops in DD, they learn to develop a classroom community that builds social

emotional skills and engagement in students. They learn to do this via tailored management and instructional practices that reflect the adolescent developmental period and enhanced student outcomes as compared to "school as usual" (Origins, 2014). High-quality implementation of DD practices foster a classroom community that student's perceive to be supportive of their academic and social growth and development. This study promises to reveal possible characteristics in teachers and their belief systems that that play a role in their motivation to implement the Developmental Designs approach in its initiation as a school-wide initiative.

CHAPTER TWO:
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Due to the importance of implementation fidelity to outcomes of school-based social emotional learning programs, it is important to develop an understanding of the components that influence implementation fidelity. (Elias, Zins, Graczyk, & Weissberg, 2003). Although initial research from social emotional programs has addressed this area of concern, research from the prevention sciences also provides ideas to what factors may influence implementation. Factors at the school, classroom, and teacher level have been linked to implementation fidelity (Buss, 2007). Chapter two of my dissertation presents the necessary background and review of the academic literature that frames my research goals and reveals the gaps in the literature that this study aims to address.

Defining Implementation Fidelity

Implementation refers to what a program *consists of* when delivered in a particular setting, while implementation quality is defined as, *how well* a program is carried out in practice (Durlak & DuPre, 2008; Eckert & Payne, 2009). There are eight different features to note when thinking about implementation: fidelity, dosage, quality, participant responsiveness, program differentiation, control/treatment monitoring, program reach, and adaptation (Dane & Schneider, 1998; Durlak & DuPre, 2008). Fidelity refers to the extent to which the intervention corresponds to the originally intended program while the dosage refers to how much, in terms of quantity, is being delivered during the school day. Participant responsiveness is defined as the degree to

which the program stimulates the interest or holds the attention of those participating. Program differentiation conveys the uniqueness of the particular program and how this distinguishes the program from others. Information regarding the nature of and amount of services received by control (possible contamination) and intervention schools is referred to as implementation monitoring. The program reach is the rate of involvement by program participants (teachers and students). Lastly, the idea of adaptation is used to describe changes made to the original program during the implementation period (Durlak & DuPre, 2008).

The two program features that prove to be consistently related to fidelity are the adaptability (also referred to as program flexibility) and program compatibility (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 2002). Compatibility refers to the fit or match of the program to the given school context. Programs that align with a school's mission, values and norms while being molded to fit the school's preferences, organizational practices and school norms and values are said to have greater program adaptability and capability, yielding greater implementation quality. Additionally, when an integrative partnership is formed between researchers and school administrators and teachers, this leads to a higher implemented program with a built-in evaluative and collaborative process. With these defining features of implementation fidelity, investigating teacher characteristics and classroom-level factors is essential in better understanding the implementation of the given approach.

Teachers as SEL Program Providers

Schools have become one of the most important settings in which wellness-promotion interventions are conducted (Payne & Eckert, 2010). Most of the evidence supporting the effectiveness of SEL programs has been generated through efficacy trials in the prevention

sciences (Greenberg et al., 2005). However, vigilant monitoring is needed to meet the challenge of ensuring the same degree of program effectiveness in diverse school settings under real world conditions (Greenberg, Domitrovich, Graczyk & Zins, 2005). Although experts know that school-based interventions can decrease substance abuse, problem behavior and delinquency (Botvin, 1990, Catalano et al. 1998, Lipsey & Derzon, 1998), implementation quality of these programs and the maintenance of fidelity in programming are important but seldom considered (Gofftfredson et al. 2000). Programs that monitored implementation obtained effect sizes three times larger than programs that reported no monitoring (DuBois et al., 2002). Additionally, whole-school interventions (with a focus on anti-bullying curriculum) obtained twice the mean effects on self-reported rates of bullying and victimization reduction than those programs that did not monitor implementation (Smith et al., 2004).

Contrastingly, poor implementation leads to lower program effectiveness (Greenberg et al., 2005; Battistich et al., 1996). Although it is important to record the various phases of program implementation, only a third of evidence-based mental health prevention studies conducted analyses relating program implementation to proximal and distal outcomes, and less (32%) has been documented when academic contexts are of focus (Greenberg et al., 1999). For these reasons, the monitoring of program implementation is pivotal to both researchers and practitioners in program evaluation.

Researchers rely heavily on the teachers' ability to implement the specified curriculum or SEL approach. For example, evaluators of the Mindup SEL program targeting middle school students, found that that teachers delivered a high percentage of the specified mindfulness exercises each week (72-100%). For this reason, it is pivotal that experts continue to investigate the context variables, teacher characteristics and general practices of implementation when

evaluating social emotional learning programming. There have been several calls to action when describing the need for future work in SEL (and its evaluation) to consider the characteristics of the program implementer. Full integration and sustainability of a classroom program requires teachers to act as implementers if the program is going to become part of everyday school practice (Jagers, Harris & Skoog, In press). Classroom-focused skills-development programs, such as All Stars and Keepin' It Real (KIR) have already begun to consider the importance of teacher's practices in program delivery (Giles, et al., 2008; Harthun, Drapeau, Dustman, & Marsiglia, 2008).

When SEL programming is taken into a "real world" setting, various confounding variables may inhibit a reliable evaluation of the program model. While most work on school-based program implementation quality is within the field of prevention science, there is less research and evaluation within the field of education. I intend to contribute to the academic discourse within the field of education in addressing this dearth of implementation process evidence and documentation at the secondary level.

School Context as a Predictor of Implementation Quality

For most SEL program curricula, classroom teachers are the program implementers/providers. Implementation fidelity is said to be greater when program providers (i.e. teachers) are motivated, have a positive attitude towards the program and have a strong self-efficacy in terms of implementation and delivery (Brink et al., 1995; Rohrback et al., 1996). Also, implementers that display a non-authoritarian delivery style, strong group leadership skills, good overall teaching style and sense of conscientiousness achieve better quality implementation (Gingiss et al., 2006; Tobler 2000; Young et al., 1990). Strong program implementers are

encouraging, well-informed, experienced and feel efficacious at implementing the program.

A related, but often overlooked factor is a teacher's personal beliefs and schemas as to how a classroom should look and run. Because social emotional learning programming is not considered a "content area," it may not be universally thought of as an appropriate addition to the school day. Teachers may have perceptions or views on this sort of program implementation, which may impact their implementation of prescribed content or practices. How teachers think about SEL programming and whether this type of initiative aligns to their teaching style may be embedded elements to the quality of SEL implementation.

Teacher Characteristics & Implementation Fidelity

Evaluation studies of the Responsive Classroom approach, have attended to teacher-level and setting-level factors that inform implementation quality of RC practices. These factors included school administration, coaches, other teachers, and students (Wanless et al., 2012). They found that teachers perceive school administrators to adversely influence implementation and stress the importance of principal buy-in of the program initiative. More importantly, Wanless et al. emphasize the need to identify critical setting-level features that impact SEL implementation from the perspective of program providers, in this case, teachers (Wanless, 2012).

Similarly, Kam and colleagues used a multi-level framework (administrator-teacher; teacher-student), to examine how principal leadership and the quality of teachers' PATHS implementation impact on young children's child outcomes. Although there were not any significant main effects for implementation quality in predicting student outcomes, there was a significant main effect found for principal support on teachers' implementation quality of the

SEL curriculum. When implementation quality was high and principal support high, students showed significantly greater reductions in maladaptive behavior and greater social emotional competence (SEC). This theme of principal/administrator support being a factor for teacher implementation quality is reported in other studies as well (Durlak, DuPre, 2008; Payne & Eckert, 2009). Likewise, the extent to which teachers feel that their school culture (that school leadership helps create) supports SEL programming may influence the impact of that programming, since leadership by school principals is a key component of school culture. Teachers' perception of their administration as supportive school leaders may enable a greater sense of efficacy and positive regard to school culture thereby influencing the ways in which they implement school-wide programs.

Researchers of the 4Rs (Reading, Writing, Respect & Resolution) program, another SEL program targeting elementary-aged students, also investigated certain teacher characteristics that impacted implementation fidelity (Jones et al., 2008). They focused on teacher reports of burnout and emotional ability (Brackett & Mayer, 2003) to measure teachers' social emotional competence and psychological functioning. At the beginning of the school year, teachers rated each of their students on language and literacy skills, SEC, and externalizing problems. They also completed a school climate rating and their own social emotional skills (beliefs on importance of SEL, classroom management strategies, burnout, professional background). In addition to the self-reported classroom climate rating, four 20-minute observations were also done using the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) observational tool. These studies found a significant main effect for teachers' perceived emotional ability; higher levels of teachers' perceived emotional ability at the beginning of the school year was related to higher observer-rated classroom quality at the end of the school year. Teacher burnout was not related

to overall classroom climate. Teachers' emotional ability did not moderate the effect of intervention on classroom climate. There was a significant intervention effect on classroom emotional support (teacher behaviors and CLASS rated classroom emotional support) but not instructional support. Teachers' social emotional competence (SEC) indicators did not appear to moderate the impact of intervention on classroom emotional support. However, teacher emotional support positively affected classroom organization, but not class emotional support or instructional support. Teachers' self-perceived emotional abilities were related to supportive teacher behaviors and student-teacher interactions. This study attempted to capture a more detailed picture of teachers' characteristics by including their self-reported emotional ability.

Teacher Beliefs & Program Implementation

While research on the impact of teachers' beliefs on classroom practice and student achievement dates back decades, the characteristics and belief systems that teachers carry with them when implementing school-based programs is just recently beginning to be examined. We understand that teachers' beliefs influence the type of learning contexts they create, and their students' academic performance and beliefs about their own abilities (Brackett et al., 2012; Fang, 1996; Kagan, 1992). Student performance increases when their teachers believe students will succeed, in part because teachers treat students differently when they hold high expectations for them (Rosenthal, 1994). Brackett (2012) asserts, "the same may be said for the relationship between the success of newly adopted pedagogical approaches or curricula—including SEL programs—and the expectations teachers hold for them".

There have been a handful of widely used methods and patterns of measurement when thinking about teachers' characteristics that may impact school-based SEL program

implementation. Previous work done with the CLASS (focusing on teacher-student relationship and classroom climate building) has investigated characteristics such as teachers' age, years of experience and the highest degree attained by the teacher as they related to program implementation fidelity of teacher professional development supports. They found that teachers with more experience teaching pre-K spent less time engaging in the program implementation professional development coaching sessions, whereas older teachers spent more time engaging with the program consultant and adhering to implementation standards of the program. Additionally, teachers' beliefs were addressed using the Modernity Scale, which differentiates between traditional adult-centered practices in the classroom and those that are more child-centered. Downer and colleagues found that teachers who were more child-centered in their thinking about classroom practices were more responsive and willing to use the coaching and CLASS and teacher professional development (Downer et al., 2009). Using this scale in their study begins to further investigate teachers' beliefs towards students and preconceived beliefs on how one understands the construction of a classroom and how they may impact their use of a professional development tool. I also aim to examine qualitatively, what some of the perceptions and beliefs are that impact whether teachers use specific practices.

There has been a substantial literature examining teachers' sense of efficacy and their self-reported burnout and whether these two characteristics impact implementation fidelity. The idea of efficacy has been the most studied construct in this literature due to the intuitiveness behind it and because it has shown predicative quality. A teacher who believes he/she is confident in his/her practice of SEL program delivery would be predicted to implement a given program with greater quality than a teacher who doubts their ability (ultimately leading to decreased motivation). Past prevention work has demonstrated that teachers feeling confident, or

efficacious in their ability to deliver a program and believing that the approach will be effective increases a provider's enthusiasm to implement an intervention as proposed (Domitrovich & Greenberg, 2000; Elias, Breune-Butler, Blum, & Schuyler, 2000). Additionally, teachers are more likely to implement with fidelity when they feel efficacious with the program and how to accurately teach its components (Rohrbach, Graham, & Hansen, 1993).

Brackett and colleagues also have found in addition to positive and confident beliefs regarding SEL learning in schools, teachers must be committed to developing their ability to integrate SEL into their classrooms via professional development. This commitment is seen as a desire to integrate SEL into academic content areas. This is especially important since there is not yet a universal consensus to teach more holistically or to "the whole child." Some believe that teachers are already pressured to demonstrate student performance through state testing and should be content specialists, focusing on curricular material rather than using valuable instructional time to teach "non-cognitive skills."

Work done on SEL in the early education literature also indicates that many teachers believe that SEL is important, schools should take an active role, receiving training/support from a variety of professionals would be helpful, and current academic demands decrease the opportunity for SEL (Buchanan, 2009). However, more nuanced examination of teachers' beliefs and how these systems function as it relates to implementation quality is needed in the field of SEL programming and practices in the middle school classroom.

Teachers' Belief Systems

Students often forget that their teachers are also community members with personal lives, families, and out-of-school experiences. Researchers may also forget this when thinking about

teachers coming into the classroom as program providers, with little say as to the program being implemented, but with personal beliefs and assumptions about what successful classroom practices are, and what classroom structures should be in place. While teachers' specific program beliefs are valid and important in better understanding why certain teachers implement a given SEL program with more fidelity than other teachers, I am interested in delving deeper than efficacy, burnout and perceptions of programmatic factors. I aim to develop a better understanding of belief systems regarding the Developmental Designs approach, beliefs on the education of the whole child, perceptions of the adolescence developmental period, locus of control when reflecting on their own teaching strengths and weaknesses and what roles these attitudes may play in implementation of SEL programming. Teacher beliefs are key indicators of their perceptions and judgments, which, in turn, affect their teaching practices (Pajares, 1992).

Pajares (1997) states that teacher beliefs are a "messy construct" that lacks an agreed-upon operational definition. However, he goes on to state that beliefs are the best indicators of the decisions individuals make throughout their lives (Pajares, 1992, Bandura, 1986; Dewey, 1933; Nisbett & Ross, 1980; Rokeach, 1968). While there is debate as to whether pedagogical beliefs influence actions or actions influence beliefs, many agree beliefs and attitudes are not only reflected in [teacher] decisions and actions, but that there is evidence that teachers' beliefs and attitudes drive important decisions and classroom practice (Renzaglia et al., 1997; Mansour, 2009; Mansour 2013; Pajares, 1992; Tasar et al., 2010).

Much of the work in this area has focused on how pre-service teachers' beliefs influence their content-area teaching. Studies have found that pre-service teachers form their beliefs about teaching and how students learn early on and those beliefs are resistant to change. Further, it appears that much of their construction of what a teacher is is based on their own schooling

experiences (Löfström et al., 2013; Kagan, 1992). When learning new instructional and learning strategies, these novice teachers are more likely to respond to new information that confirms their preconceptions and anecdotal beliefs on learning (Clark, 1988; Foss & Kleinsasser; Kagan, 1992; Hollingsworth, 1989).

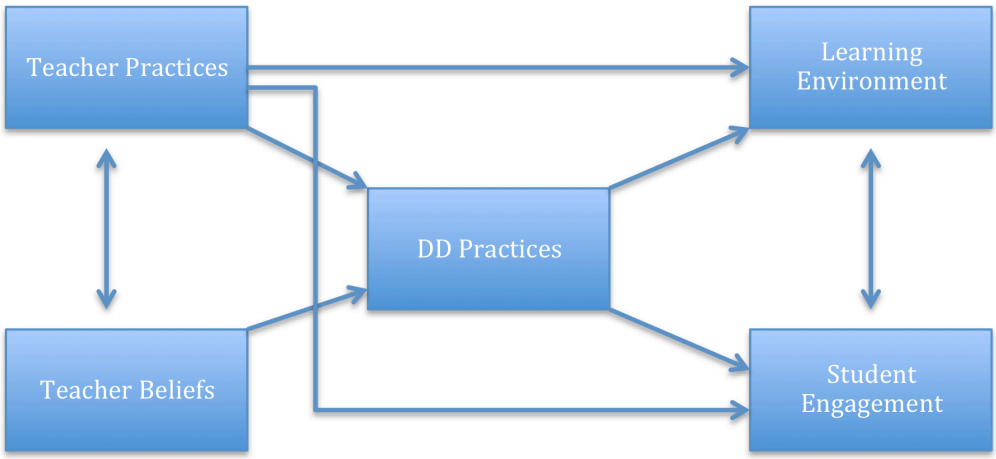
Also, past work has examined teachers' beliefs and their relationship with a content area focus, such as beliefs and science education practices or math education practices (Mansour 2013; Turner 2010). Mansour found that teachers reflected both traditional and constructivist theories of learning and teaching science during interviews. The comparison between each of the teachers' beliefs and practices also showed that the teachers' observed practices were more traditional than their expressed constructivist beliefs, meaning there was discrepancy in how they expressed their beliefs in interviews and the practices in which they were observed to use in their classroom. On the other hand, work done in the secondary science classroom with regards to technology integration demonstrated that teachers' constructivist beliefs on learning and their motivation in integrating technology behind the initiative aligned to their teaching practices (Lefebvre, et al., 2006).

The studies about teacher beliefs about teaching and their actions provide background knowledge for the next step in the further understanding of teaching practices (Kang & Wallace, 2005; Levitt, 2001; Luft, 1999; Tsai, 2002). A cursory review suggests that there is virtually no existing work on middle school teachers' beliefs and their relationship to SEL practices. Not only is it important where a teacher falls philosophically on the education of the whole child versus a master of academic content, but I hypothesize that their beliefs and attitudes they bring to the classroom as teachers and how they perceive their students and their needs influences their implementation of an SEL.

Study Conceptual Model

In terms of theoretical framing for the research aims at hand, I hypothesize there are initial bidirectional relationships between teachers' beliefs and their practices. I define teachers' beliefs by using Tabachnick and Zeichner's definiton (1984) who view beliefs and attitudes as the perspectives of teachers that include both the beliefs teachers have about their work (goals, purposes, conceptions of children, curriculum) and 'the ways in which they give meaning to these beliefs by their behavior in the classroom" (1984). Additionally, the idea of a "belief system" conveys a sense of connectedness in that the given belief of a teacher is connected in some form with other long-held beliefs, which strengthen each other thus creating corresponding attitudes and perceptions. Mansour and colleagues also support this when they note, "Vygotsky (1978) added a social aspect to teacher beliefs by including the interconnected inferences in how a person constructs himself/herself in relation to the world. From his or her own belief constructs, a person will base his/her actions" (Vygotsky, 1978). I used this framing in creating the bidirectional relationship in the model below.

Figure 2. Study Theoretical Model



Because my research questions aim to better understand relationships between these belief systems and practices, I chose to explore relationships between how teachers talked about their classroom structures, management styles, and impressions of DD practices via classroom observations, interviews and survey reports from teachers and students. DD practices are defined using those initial 5 practices explained in Chapter One. These include, morning advisory (CPR-greeting, sharing, activity and daily news), TAB/TAB Out discipline practices, modeling, co-constructing class-wide goals and teacher language.

According to its program theory presented in Chapter One, if all DD practices were to be fully implemented, observers should be able to see a democratic, engaged learning environment that is inclusive and equitable to all its students. Students in this engaged environment would be working and on task together, interacting with one another and with their teacher. It would be evident that the teacher would have established routines and procedures with students via co-constructed goals and expectations. It is important to note that Smith Middle School was only implementing the first several main practices of DD since it was in its first year of implementation. To remain objective, full potential engagement could not be achieved since teachers were not expected to implement all DD practices. While this is a limitation to the study, the timing of the case study was important to the question at hand which was why certain teachers are more inclined (and disinclined) to using the DD approach in their classrooms.

The construct entitled, "Learning Environment" speaks to the type of classroom environment students find themselves in. Within this construct, I used Jennings & Greenberg's definition of classroom climate. A strong classroom climate is defined as low levels of conflict and disruptive behavior, smooth transitions from one activity to another, appropriate expressions of emotions, respectful communication and problem solving, strong interest and focus on task, and

supportiveness and responsiveness to individual differences of students' needs (Jennings & Greenberg, 2011; La Paro & Pianta, 2003). A weak classroom climate in one in which there is much conflict (either between teacher-student or between students), chaotic or disorganized transitions, student resistance and off-task behavior.

Additionally, when observing class management practices in this model as they relate to DD, teachers should appear to be proactive and effective, with the teacher using emotional expressions and verbal support to promote enthusiasm and enjoyment of learning in order to guide and manage student behaviors. Teachers encourage prosocial and cooperative behaviors through establishing warm/supportive relationships and communities, assertive limit setting and guidance and preventative strategies rather than controlling negative behaviors. They also promote students' commitment to school, engagement and achievement. Through the lens of SEL, classroom management is proactive as opposed to reactive, in the sense that classroom practices are not managerial but practices that foster students' capacity for self-regulation and responsible decision-making, which thereby align to the adolescent need and desire for relationship-building and autonomy (Jennings, Greenberg, 2011).

Gaps in the Literature

Previous work on teachers' characteristics that impact SEL implementation fidelity have focused on demographic characteristics, professional burnout, teacher efficacy beliefs (including SEL beliefs), and beliefs on administrative support. However, the extant literature indicates that, teachers' personal attributions, attitudes and beliefs towards SEL programming, student behavior, and classroom climate have not been examined closely. I aim to further illuminate how teachers' beliefs systems and attitudes impact teachers' motivation to use DD practices. This is pivotal for the expansion of this literature because teachers' initial perceptions, buy-in, and goals

when implementing a new program may impact the degree to which they implement. Teachers enter the classroom with (established) belief systems, their own views on how one constructs a classroom environment, and a sense of "how to teach" which I believe account for factors in program implementation. My triangulation of data also furthers the literature by giving us an understanding of what teachers are reporting as to their implementation and attitudes towards students, SEL and DD more specifically, with what students perceive and matching these findings with classroom observations.

Research Aims

This project aims to further the literature detailed above by deeply exploring teachers' individual characteristics and beliefs as program providers and investigating phenomena that may impact the inclination or disinclination in implementing the Developmental Designs teaching approach.

Aim 1: What might teachers bring with them that inclines or disinclines them to make use of DD practices?"

Aims 2: Who is being faithful to the DD approach and who is not, and how does this look in terms of classroom climate?

Aim 3: What are the trends in teacher attitude and perceptions of the DD approach in its first year of implementation? Does this impact implementation or engagement status?

While Aims 1 and 2 are more deductive in nature, their purpose is to gather data systematically in order to better understand which teachers are implementing the DD approach

with fidelity and whether the observed student engagement is present. Upon answering these initial questions, I continue to explore Aim 3 asking which teacher characteristics, perceptions and attitudes were present or absent in the different teacher typologies based on the constructed implementation and engagement status.

CHAPTER THREE:
METHODS

Introduction

The methods I chose to employ in this project were based on my questions at hand. Because my research questions aimed to examine the characteristics and attributions that middle school teachers carry with them that may influence their ability and/or motivation to implement Developmental Designs (DD), I chose to use a case study approach to investigate this phenomenon. In order to most accurately address my questions, the data collection and measurement(s) for this case study employed a mixed methodology of both qualitative and quantitative data and spanned one academic school year. I framed my methods and methodological timeline around my investigation in pulling out what classroom practices and climate might be due to the Developmental Designs program as opposed to the function or contribution of the teacher. For my case study, I partnered with a middle school (grades 6th through 8th) in southeast Michigan who is implementing the Developmental Designs approach.

Two embedded questions in my research aims include, "What might teachers bring with them that inclines or disinclines them to make use of DD?" and "Who is being faithful to the DD approach and who is not, and why?" Because my goal was to get a better understanding of teachers' beliefs and practices that may or may not impact program implementation and engagement, I observed classroom, teacher and student characteristics simultaneously as components of the case study.

Because this program is aimed at producing particular form of engagement, (one in which

the classroom expectations and structures are co-constructed with both teacher and student input) the program is supposed to look a different way in these classrooms. A key assumption to teachers' motivation to implement DD is if students look the way the DD program wants them to look but without implementation of recommended practices, what are the other practices and procedures at play that are getting at this ultimate outcome without faithful program implementation? Are the DD practices driving this level of engagement or is the teacher implementing high leverage practices without using the DD approach? In this chapter, I discuss middle school site, reasoning behind its selection, data collection methods and my analytical approach.

Setting

Smith Middle School[1] houses the 6th, 7th and 8th grades and serves approximately 500 students and employs 40 teachers and staff. The staff identifies as the following: 78% white, 18% African American, 5% Latino/a. Approximately 40% of the staff identifies as female. The table below illustrates the breakdown of gender, race and basic demographics of the teaching staff. Interestingly, while the teaching staff range in age from early 20's to 60's, the two ends of the age spectrum are most heavily represented. Roughly 43% of staff is 35 years old and younger and 35% are over 50 years of age. In terms of teaching experience, 35% of staff have been teaching for 10 years or less, while again on the other side of the spectrum a quarter have been teaching for over 21 years. While 15% of the current staff have taught at Smith for five years or less, there proves to be longevity in how long teachers stay at Smith Middle School given that 65% of teachers have been teaching there for more than 11 years.

[1] This is a pseudonym for the school of focus. All names have been changed for confidentiality.

Table 1. Teacher Demographics

	Self-Report Item	Percentage of Staff
Gender	Women	40
	Men	60
Race	African American	17.5
	White	77.5
	Latino/a	5
Teacher Type	General Education	76
	Special Education	24
Total Years Teaching (Years at Smith)	1 year or less	25
	2-5 years	25
	6-10	17.5
	11-15	20
	16-20	7.5
	21 or more years	5

The student racial demographics are approximately 1/3 white, 1/3 African American, 17% identify as Latino, 11% Asian and 9% identified as "of two or more races." Roughly half of the student population qualifies for free or reduced lunch. Students also broke down evenly by grade level, with 32% 6th grade students, 29% in the 7th grade and 31% in the 8th grade. Approximately half of students in each grade are female.

Table 2. Student Demographics

		6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade
Gender	Girls	70	64	82
	Boys	87	69	73
	Total (n)	165	136	162
Race	Asian/Pacific Islander	14	10	13
	African American	44	44	60
	Latino	20	14	22
	Native American	3	0	2
	White	48	37	46
	Other	35	13	17

Historically, Smith Middle School has the greatest racial and economic diversity within its school district. In addition, compared to the other middle schools in the district, Smith has the lowest state test scores and has the highest rate of suspensions and disciplinary action. Based on

informal communication with staff members, including district stakeholders, many community members have a negative opinion of the parent-school relationships at Smith Middle School receive. For this reason, there have been a number of interventions both academic- and behaviorally-focused over the past decade to bolster performance at Smith and decrease behavioral issues. During an interview with a district employee that is assigned to Smith as a literacy specialist he described the context in the following excerpt:

> "I think that um one of important dynamics in understanding the way Smith operates in the district is it's always been seen as the opposite of a school of choice. So it's, and what I mean by that is that it has been perceived as a place where you don't want your kids to go to middle school, without a doubt…You could also make a case that the way our elementary schools boundaries are drawn is the underlying rational" (Hendley, 3/26/13).

Interviews with district employees confirmed the theme presented in the proceeding teacher interviews that Smith Middle School was/is considered a substandard educational setting for students,

> "So one the curious sort of mindsets at Smith Middle has been on the part of the staff, that I've heard articulated over and over and over is our kids can't do what these other kids can do. And there's sort of been a traditional view self-concept among the staff there of we're in really dire straits and this is really a tough school. And so if you've ever worked in Detroit you just go what? And I've heard, [I've] had to deal with parents whose children have been told; 'your kids aren't like, you're not like, you can't do what the other kids in the other middle schools can do. And parenthetically you suck. I mean is the inference there. So you still have some staff members that articulate that to children there" (Hendley, 3/26/13).

In years prior to 2012, district stakeholders along with Smith administrators were motivated to develop and implement initiatives to bolster Smith's school climate, behavioral strategies and academic achievement. In these prior years, there was a high turnover in administration and quite a bit of tumult within teaching staff. This was alluded to when asking about the school culture at Smith:

> "…that absolutely is a part of the culture that it's either we're benevolent in our assumption of you as deficient, or we're a little bit angry about it. And then a part of that conversation had to, and by the way, part of the way that played out was the expectation for the staff. So I remember a former principal there, we had adopted this program that was a writing, computer-based writing program, and I said I want you to, you know to make sure that we take this one prompt and we're gonna use that for our pretest, and then we'll use the same prompt for our posttest, don't use that prompt for the year. And then principal said, 'wait a minute, they're gonna think we're evaluating their teaching.' And I said yeah we are. And that was, that principal could not go there, would not go there, was horrified at the idea" (Hendley, 3/26/13).

For these reasons, the current administrator applied for funding to obtain the necessary budget in order to initiate the professional development of the Developmental Designs approach as a school-wide initiative. Gene, the administrator who set out to initiate the DD approach at Smith gravitated towards the program due to its emphasis on teacher-student relationship building and classroom learning communities. Mr. Hendley recognized this during our interview,

> "There has been some progress and movement at Smith that sort of predates the implementation of Developmental Designs in some way in that Gene has done a remarkable job in my opinion of building a culture of collaboration with teacher, a realistic understanding having worked in Detroit of where they are. What part of the, what part of the universe they actually live in. And he understands, he's not, he's not co-dependently excepting of any behaviors that teachers present. He knows what effective relationships with kids look like, and he has some, his voice is heard about that (3/26/13).

According to administrators, the aim of implementing the Developmental Designs approach was to assist Smith in providing a more equitable environment and education to all of its students. As mentioned, this SEL approach is part of a greater mission in that it is designed to produce a more inclusive and engaged climate for all students.

Site Selection

Smith Middle was selected for this project because teachers and staff were in their first year of implementation of the DD approach. This middle school, and one of its feeder elementary schools, Maiser, is a partnership with the University of Michigan School of Education to "support continuous opportunities for student learning driven by high academic standards and innovations in curriculum, instructional practices, professional learning, and community involvement" (Reischl, SOE.UMICH). This partnership allows for pre-service teachers to observe, and student teach for a semester as well as have university students volunteer, in various capacities, in teachers' classrooms with students. Additionally, out-of-class programming is offered such as an ESL academy, and science workshops. There are various simultaneous initiates in place at this school site

This middle school was a purposeful case in addressing my research questions of interest. Given the aforementioned context of teachers and administrators' attitudes and the frequency of new interventions and initiatives, I was interested in how teachers approached a new school-wide SEL initiative. Because teachers were new to this approach and in the beginning stages of implementation, it was a logical time to address my questions of "why do certain teachers implement an approach that is SEL-focused while others shy away?" and "what are teachers' characteristics and attributions that impact fidelity?" Teachers and administrators attended the professional development DD training session in August 2012 prior to students beginning the school year. The majority of teachers (85%) attended a weeklong training, while 4 teachers took part in a day-long training. A Developmental Designs facilitator conducted this training. This same facilitator returned to Smith in the middle of the school year for a follow-up with teachers

during their staff meeting. He also had conducted classroom observations of high-implementing teachers during this visit.

Because Smith Middle School was in its first year, the administration chose to focus on the basic components that encapsulate the DD approach for the first year of implementation. This includes the following practices that were emphasized: the Circle of Power & Respect (CPR) while in morning advisory, the Take A Break (TAB) discipline process, and Teacher Language. Understanding fidelity in this specific context meant to understand the extent to which teachers were implementing these three core practices. According to the program model, these practices build the foundation in the development of a positive and engaged school climate. Furthermore, because each day is begun with students engaging in the CPR during their morning advisory, the programmatic assumption is that this practice is intended to afford a smooth transition from home to school where students feel supported and heard by their teachers and their peers. This daily practice along with a consistent "Take a Break" discipline procedure and, teacher language should allow for students to feel supported and safe throughout the school day, ultimately leading to higher levels of academic engagement. Given the timing of implementation and the facilitation emphasis on these core DD practices, these three routines were my observable implementation indices and were my foci of analysis. I analyzed both whether these routines were in place as well as the quality of practice.

Developmental Designs aims to produce an engaged and equitable environment via the strategies outlined above. This approach states that through their given teacher practices, students begin to genuinely enjoy school. In my previous pilot work, the executive director of the non-profit organization that facilitates DD implementation was asked about the goals of the approach. He articulated the following regarding the intended impact DD practices were to have on

classroom structures and subsequent student engagement,

> "It's a socio/emotional integrative academic approach. The simple goal of developmental designs is to, have a set of practices that are research based, where teachers employ those in the classroom thinking about everything how developmentally appropriate their environment is, how they set up their classroom, to how they organize the lessons to meet the needs of, this ideal of the adolescents. So, if you want to, specific goals, the outcomes, I mean, one of the things we would like to see is to walk into a classroom, kids are engaged, and, choices about what they do and how they do in terms of um, academic work, they're engaged in terms of having opportunities for social interactions with their peers, with a high sense of accountability and self control, they have been involved in the rule making process, it's democratic, or their negotiation what it means to be a human being, living with each other in the classroom and, and that they're getting real world, responsibility so they can learn accountability…So I think that what the difference between the Developmental Design classroom [and a traditional classroom not employing the approach] would have to do with, that word right in the name is development. So if I went into a particular classroom, and it's Developmental Designs, that classroom in September may look different or will look different in terms of the physical environment, the work the kids are doing, the choices that they're making, the level of conversation."

If Developmental Designs is operating under the above assumptions, then these practices should produce students engaged in classroom activities that are rooted in teacher-peer and peer-peer interaction. In other words, a constructivist-learning environment should be created via this design. I defined constructivist learning as the belief that learning occurs as learners are actively involved in a process of meaning and knowledge construction as opposed to passively receiving information (Taber, 2011; Jonassen, 1999; Vygotsky, 1978).

For this reason, I aimed to find which teachers were closest to the outlined expectations of DD and I analyzed for not only implementation quality but also for student engagement. While DD has a working theoretical model for how these practices induce engagement, they do not have clear behavioral indices for student engagement. Part of my work was to document the extent to which teachers were both adhering to DD and the extent to which diverse (or all)

students appeared to be engaged. In this way, I sought to determine if DD contributed to greater inclusion for all students.

In order to remain systematic and consistent in methods and reporting, the clustered comparative analysis focused on 24 teachers. Only teachers that I observed at all three time points, conducted an interview with, and had obtained student data from were used.

Sampling

The teaching staff at Smith Middle School consisted of 20 general educators and 6 special educators. In order to best answer my research question of why some teachers were more inclined or disinclined to implement this school-wide initiative, I needed to systematically collect data on as many teachers as possible to capture the diversity in thought and belief systems among teachers. For this reason, I chose to use a maximum variation sampling of teachers. Patton states that choosing maximum variation sampling is a "strategy for purposeful sampling that aims at capturing and describing the central themes or principal outcomes that cut across a great deal of participant or program variation. For small samples a great deal of heterogeneity can be a problem because individual cases are so different from each other" (1990). The maximum variation sampling strategy turns that apparent weakness into a strength by applying the following logic: Any common patterns that emerge from great variation are of particular interest and value in capturing the core experiences and central, shared aspects or impacts of a program. When selecting a small sample of great diversity, the data collection and analysis will yield two kinds of findings: (1) high-quality, detailed descriptions of each case, which are useful for documenting uniqueness, and (2) important shared patterns that cut across cases and derive their significance from having emerged out of heterogeneity" (Patton, 1990). Twenty-four of the 26

teachers were included in analysis. Two teachers were excluded because they lacked the adequate number of observations that the other teachers had. This was done to maintain consistency and allow for equal evidence when analyzing teacher typologies.

Research Design

A Mixed Methods Case Study Approach

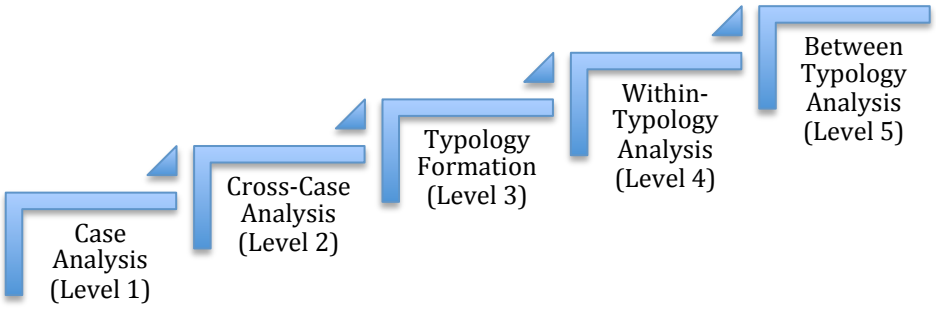
Case studies are defined as "research situations where the number of variables of interest far outstrips the number of data points" (Yin, 1994). Data using this method were collected in several ways and consisted of qualitative research techniques such as interviews, and observation work, as well as the use of quantitative survey data. Various researchers have noted that a key distinguishing feature of case study research is that "case studies do not attempt to control the context" (Christie et al., 2000; Benbasat, 1984; Benbasat, Goldstein & Mead, 1987; Yin, 1994). Accordingly, case studies allow a researcher to study contemporary phenomena in a real-life setting, where boundaries between context and phenomenon tend to be blurred (Yin, 1994; Stake, 1995). For this study, I was interested in better understanding the phenomenon behind certain teachers' beliefs and their relationships with observed implementation quality. I chose to base this study on qualitative methods because qualitative research does not necessarily adress cause and effect relationships of independent and dependent variables but rather with establishing a given phenomenon in a credible manner (Guba & Lincoln 1994; Miles & Huberman 1994; Tsoukas 1989; Yin 1993). Case study research aims to locate mechanisms that assist in determining inferences about real-life experiences (Bhaskar 1978; Merriam 1988; Sykes 1990 and 1991; Tsoukas 1989). For these reasons, this research design aligned with my aims for this study.

Within the vast literature on mixed methods practices and research design, I chose to employ a concurrent design, "in which qualitative and quantitative data are collected concurrently and analyzed together during the analysis phase. Greater weight is given to one kind of data, in the sense that one kind of data is typically embedded in the other" (2009). For my purposes, the quantitative data was embedded into that of the qualitative to find convergence and/or divergence in themes or patterns.

While I collected survey data from both students and teachers in the fall and spring of the school year, I also conducted classroom observations of those same teachers along with semi-structured interviews in order to best match the data. My research questions are rooted in the qualitative methods of this case study, but I deemed it beneficial to supplement my interviews and observations with quantitative data. Because I was the sole investigator on this project, these multiple modes of information allow for more substantiated claims of the observed phenomenon. Again, according to Creswell and colleagues (2011), the strength of using this approach allowed for multiple perspectives embedded in the data.

Additionally, within this design, and as a subsequent form of data reduction and interpretation, I used a data-mixing strategy described by Caracelli and Greene (1993) as "typology development, in which the analysis of one kind of data produces a typology or set of categories that is used as a framework in analyzing the other kind of data" (Harwell, 2011). My analytical approach included the teacher typologies that I created based on these modes of data collection.

Figure 3. Analytical Process of Data Reduction



Measures

Non-Participant Observations

I conducted non-participant classroom observations in order to obtain information on the presence and quality of the Developmental Designs approach in classrooms. Additionally, I documented all observations of student engagement. In order to remain systematic with all of my classroom observations, I emailed teachers a week prior to observation and obtained consent. Each of the 24 teachers was observed at 3 time points during the school year. Each teacher was observed in his or her morning advisory in which he or she was to conduct the DD advisory lesson. They were also observed during a morning class period different from their advisory. Lastly, they were observed during their 5th period class in the afternoon. I wanted to diversify my observations in order to take into account different classes of students, time of day and the consistency of DD usage throughout the day while matching this data with concurrent teachers' and students' survey data.

While conducting observations, questions emerged based on my first observations such as: "Does a classroom with students who look to be disengaged have the same characteristics if one

is implementing the DD approach or not? Is it better to be in a DD classroom no matter engagement level? Do students still feel supported in a low engaged but high implementing classroom? In order to best understand if there was an additive effect of the program, and if the engagement 'looks different' in a "DD" classroom, such as the executive director stated, I looked at indicators that focused on implementation and engagement.

I focused on documenting students' behavioral engagement. This included the following indices: students with raised hands, non-distracting behaviors, attentive physical stances, tendencies to respond and/or comply to teacher's directions, nonresistance, time on task, peer-peer interactions and observable positive affect in the classroom. I did note groupings of students, students' gender and race in each classroom observation and simply recorded all dynamics of engagement (and disengagement) that I observed.

During field note taking, I conducted specific observations that focused my general perception of classroom climate and student engagement, teacher-student interactions, peer-to-peer interactions (all of which are intended outcomes of DD), and to what extent teachers were implementing the focal aspects of the DD approach.

My analysis of implementation fidelity at Smith Middle School revealed highly engaged classes with low fidelity and low engaged classrooms with high fidelity, along with the high implementing classrooms with high engagement and low implementing classrooms with low engagement. I looked for specific indicators of student engagement to further investigate its relationship to the approach and its implementation. I hoped to understand if engagement is a function of the program fidelity, or if it a function of other teacher practices. If a teacher does not need the program to produce engaged students, what are the practices that they are already employing?

For this reason, I felt it was important to further investigate the question, "If the goal of DD is to produce engagement as a proximal outcome, why and how do certain teachers who employ the approach not acquire the expected student engagement? Additionally, what are the mechanisms at play when observing low-implementing teachers who have highly-engaged classrooms? Through this initial documentation of implementation fidelity and student engagement, I further relied on my field notes to capture dynamics at play between teacher and student, and peers.

Interview Methods

Interviews were conducted for the purpose of documenting teachers' personal and teaching histories, their beliefs about students and classroom organization and structure, and their beliefs regarding the DD approach. In order to get a better sense of teachers' beliefs that could possibly impact their observed student engagement and implementation, I read and coded interviews with teachers and then memoed interviews by cluster/grouping. This was done as a subsequent form of data reduction in order to better answer my research question.

Teacher interviews were semi-structured and approximately 1-hour long. I conducted all interviews. For the most part, interviews were conducted in teachers' respective classrooms with the exception of one teacher with whom I completed the interview in her car due to time conflicts. Teachers were also compensated 20 dollars for his or her interview. The interview protocol was broken down into four sections-background history and general teaching beliefs, beliefs on social emotional learning, cultural responsiveness, and DD implementation perspectives. Teachers were asked to give their top priorities as a middle school teacher and subsequently asked about their perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses as well as what

they consider are the greatest stressors and rewards of their job. They were also asked about their belief systems regarding social emotional competencies in students, culturally responsive teaching approaches and how they perceived students' parents and home lives. The last portion of the interview included their perceptions of adolescence as a developmental period and to what extent they were implementing DD and what their general feelings were towards the approach. See appendix for interview protocol. Based on these various interview components, several themes emerged that distinguished among and better defined respective categories of teachers.

I triangulated teacher interview responses (qualitative), with teacher survey answers (quantitative) with classroom observations (qualitative) and student-reported teacher characteristics (quantitative). This method allowed for my research question to confirm emerging themes or phenomenon or to reveal contradictions and deviant cases. Because I was the single investigator in this study, I used triangulation as a key component of my analytical approach, further explained below.

Survey Methods

I surveyed both students and teachers with regards to the reported level of implementation. When thinking about teachers' practices, I was interested in better understanding their self-reporting of implementation and their attitudes and beliefs towards the DD approach. Teachers completed a survey (that was created by the DD program developers) while students were completing their surveys reporting on perceptions of implementation and classroom climate indices of their 5th hour teacher during a morning advisory period in the spring semester.

Items on the Teacher Implementation survey included the following:

Ease of Usage of Approach (α=.78): Teachers were asked, "Given the training and the materials, *how easy is it to implement* the following components of the DD approach? Advisory: Circle of Power and Respect and Activity Plus, Empowering teacher language, Goal setting, Social contract, Modeling and practicing" This 5-item measure included a 6-point Scale comprised of: N/A, Difficult, A Little Difficult, Somewhat Easy, Easy, Very Easy

Ease to Implement Given Scheduling (α=.81); Teachers were asked, How easy is it for you to fit the DD practices into your day *given the demands on your schedule*? "Advisory: Circle of Power and Respect and Activity Plus, Empowering teacher language, Goal setting, Social contract, Modeling and practicing" This 5-item measure included a 6-point Scale comprised of: N/A, Difficult, A Little Difficult, Somewhat Easy, Easy, Very Easy.

Teaching Style Alignment (α=.73): Teachers were asked, "How well do different practices fit with your personal teaching style? Advisory: Circle of Power and Respect and Activity Plus, Empowering teacher language, Goal setting, Social contract, Modeling and practicing." These 5 items had a 5-point Scale included: Not at All, Just a Little, Somewhat, Pretty Much, Very Much.

DD Impact (α=.85): Impact was measured in 2 forms. First, teachers were asked, "Based on your first few months of program use, mark the descriptor that best represents how much of an impact you perceive the DD approach to be having on your students' skill development: Advisory: Circle of Power and Respect and Activity Plus, Empowering teacher language, Goal setting, Social contract, Modeling and practicing" Teachers answered on a 5-point scale from "Virtually None" to "A Great Deal." Impact was also assessed with the following: "How much is the DD approach: improving the behavior of your students? Improving the climate of your classroom? Reducing your need to make referrals to the office for discipline problems?"

Teachers answered on a 5-point scale from "Virtually None" to "A Great Deal"
Lastly, they were asked how often they employed DD practices on average. Answers ranged from "Not at All" to Frequently, 2-3 times a day.

Student Survey Methods

Students completed a Pre/Post battery of measures in the fall and spring of the academic year. I matched student response data by teacher in order to garner students' perception of their teacher's actions and implementation. All students in the school completed the survey during the 35-minute advisory time at the beginning of the school day. Student surveys assessed the frequency of DD practices in homeroom (α=*.73*; 7 items) DD practices in their 5th period class (α=*.79*; 11 items) and DD discipline practices ((α=.61; 9 items) (Kwame-Ross & Crawford, 2006). Students were also asked to report on the following constructs in their 5th hour teacher: their academic efficacy (4 items) and social self-efficacy with classmates (4 items) and teacher (4 items), academic and social support by his/her teacher (8 items) and classmates (8 items; Patrick, Ryan & Kaplan, 1997), school climate (9 items; Developmental Studies Center, 2005) and cognitive, emotional and behavioral engagement in school (15 items; Fredricks, Blumenfeld, Friedel, & Paris, 2005).

Peer Support (α=*.94*): This was defined as the extent to which students believe classmates establish supportive academic and social relationships with them (Patrick, Ryan & Kaplan, 2007). This measure was 7 items on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items included: In class, other students: Are nice to me; Like me; Want me to be successful.

Teacher Support (α=*.96*): This was defined as the extent to which students believe teachers

establish supportive academic and social relationships with them (Patrick, Ryan & Kaplan, 2007). This measure was 7 items on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Sample items included: In class, the teacher is: Are nice to me; Likes me; Want me to be successful.

Academic Efficacy *(α= .86):* This was defined as the student's the confidence in a student's ability to organize, execute, and regulate performance. Sample items included: I can do even the hardest work if I don't give up; I'm certain I can figure out how to do even the most difficult class work. These were also on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 5 strongly agree.

Students' Social Efficacy with Teachers & Peers *(α= .88),* which I defined as the confidence in one's ability to relate effectively and satisfactorily with their teacher and with their classmates respectively. Sample items included: I find it easy to start a conversation with most students in my class; I get along with most students.

Student Engagement (*(α= .77),* items): There were three measured components of school engagement: cognitive, behavioral and emotional with 17 total items (Fredricks, Blumenfeld, & Paris, 2004). Behavioral school engagement requires involvement in academic activities, participation in school-based social activities, positive conduct, and the absence of disruptive behaviors (Fredricks et al., 2004). Emotional engagement includes a student's emotional reactions to the school, the teacher, and schoolmates (Stipek, 2002). The third factor of engagement has been termed Disaffection with sample items such as I cheat on tests and exams. All items are measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale from 1= "not true at all" to 5= "extremely true". Sample items include: I like my class; I pay attention in class. Surveys are attached in Appendix for items and scales.

Analytical Approach

During my non-participant classroom observations I found some teachers were more apt to use DD than were others, demonstrating varying frequency and quality of DD practices. I categorized teachers into 2 groups of fidelity labeled "low implementers" and "high implementers." Additionally, I gave the same type of categorization for engagement. Teachers had either "low-engaged" or "highly-engaged" classrooms after reviewing all field notes. Teachers obtained their implementation status by the following indices: 1) fidelity of CPR practices in morning advisory, including teacher participation in CPR (this included a greeting, sharing, activity and daily news); 2) DD signage that should be co-created by teacher and students (Look/Sound/Feel Charts for routines and procedures; 3) modeling of procedures; and 4) evidence of DD teacher language (or clear use of language that DD explicitly says to avoid, i.e. sarcasm, verbosity). I have gone through the DD professional development training, and based on prior fieldwork felt that I could accurately record what I observed in terms of DD teaching practices.

If a teacher's classroom observation field notes contained the majority of these indices (roughly over 60% of practices) they were deemed high-implementing teachers. If teachers were missing over half of these indices, they received low-implementation status. Because teachers were somewhat polarized in their implementation, it was evident who was implementing DD and who was not. The same system was established for a teacher's engagement status. Again, based on field notes, I coded teachers' observation notes for students' behavioral engagement (which had 3 time points of data). If the majority of students were engaging in off-task behaviors, side conversations, resistance or passiveness (i.e. head down, sleeping) I placed that teacher in the

low-engaged classroom status category. More specifically, if during an observation, I found that the vast majority of students (roughly ¾) were either passively disengaged, disruptive or simply off-task, that teacher obtained a low-engaged status due to the lack of equity in learning. Again, for teachers to receive a high-engaged status, the majority of students needed to be actively engaged in an activity, lecture, group work and not engaging in disruptive or off-task behaviors.

I believed these categories were critical findings because student engagement was produced absent of the DD approach. Contrastingly, some teachers who were deemed high implementers demonstrated low-engaged classrooms. The four teacher-typologies are identified and defined below.

	Low Implementation	**High Implementation**
High Engagement	These teachers were categorized for implementing little to no DD practices but were classrooms where the majority of students were on task, actively participating, learning and demonstrating positive affect with peers and teachers.	These teachers were categorized for implementing some to most DD practices but were classrooms where the majority of students were on task, actively participating, learning and demonstrating positive affect with peers and teachers.
Low Engagement	These teachers were categorized in this group based on various descriptive instances in my field note observations indicating little to no evidence of DD practices and where students appeared to be passively disengaged, displaying little to no participation, affect or enthusiasm for being in that class or were actively disengaged through active misbehavior.	These teachers were categorized in this group based on various descriptive instances in my field note observations indicating some to substantial evidence of DD practices and where students appeared to be passively disengaged, displaying little to no participation, affect or enthusiasm for being in that class or were actively disengaged through active misbehavior.

I began my analysis using within-group comparison (Miles & Huberman, 1994) observing whether the classroom dynamics differed by teachers labeled within a category. I then continued with a between-group comparative analysis to better understand how typologies converged and diverged thematically from each other. Having divided teachers into these

clusters, I found emerging themes within and between classroom observation field notes which then better informed the analyses of teachers' interviews as well as survey reports from students and teachers.

After my initial deductive work (exploring the frequency of implementation and observed engagement) I found various patterns that were not originally focal points in my analysis but still salient points of commonalities and departure between clusters. Because of this, I continued to inductively explore teachers' interviews to gain further insight as to the choice of implementing the DD approach and if this impacts student engagement. I also analyzed these interviews for teachers' stated belief systems, perceptions of students and perceptions of the DD approach.

While reading interviews, I open-coded for themes in teachers' responses. Once I had coded all interviews, I then organized these codes into a matrix by typology in order to best visualize commonalities and departures in teachers responses within- and between-groups. Based on these various interview components, key themes emerged that differentiated and aligned the four clusters of teachers. These included, teachers' reflections and practices of power and control in the classroom, classroom management, and relational practices with students. Teachers were also asked about their belief systems regarding social emotional learning programs and teaching these competencies to students, and the perceptions of impact of the approach.

Reliability & Validity

With regard to the reliability of qualitative methods and interview data, in particular, Silverman (2005) suggests a number of means for increasing reliability, including: tape-recording all face-to-face interviews, careful transcription, and as much as possible use of fixed-

choice answers. I conducted and recorded all interviews with teachers using the same interview protocol. Interviews were transcribed by outside sources, but all data was cleaned and reviewed before analyses. While a case study can be beneficial in theory development, reliability, and external validity are not as strong since I was examining phenomena occurring within a specific middle school made up of a particular student and teacher population in a specific district with its own historical context.

Because I was cognizant that I was the sole researcher on this project, I attempted to increase validity in several ways. Yin (1993) states,

> "In case study research, internal validity and credibility can be established by the use of case analysis, cross case analysis, pattern matching, assurance of internal coherence of findings, expert peer review, and the development of diagrams, illustration and data matrices to demonstrate the internal consistency of the information collected. Further activities to demonstrate internal validity include precisely distinguishing the unit of analysis, linking of the analysis to prior theory identified in a literature review, and presentation and analysis of pilot case studies."

As previously described, I initially coded observation and interview data by individual teacher (case analysis) and then compared teachers using cross-case analysis. Once I systematically labeled teachers by the four typologies (based on implementation and engagement status), I then merged my coding by typology and created data matrices in order to observe any trends, patterns and deviations both within- and between-typology. I also made sure to critically investigate all data and not engage in anecdotalism by depending on well-chosen interview quotes to substantiate my claims (Silverman, 2005). Themes were only considered for interpretation if the majority of cases within the typology expressed similar viewpoints. I also used constant comparative methods (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) in an attempt to find other cases through which to test provisional hypotheses.

Because I was the only investigator on this project and conducted all observations and interviews independently, I scheduled meetings with my secondary advisor, and my qualitative expert, to discuss some of the emergent themes I found via observation and interview coding and discuss interpretation of interview excerpts. Additionally, I engaged in concurrent methodological triangulation using the interviews, observations, and survey results (teacher and student reports matched by 5th hour class period) to investigate the single phenomenon of teacher beliefs and their role in implementation fidelity. (Greene & Caracelli, 1997). Triangulation allowed me to most rigorously find and interpret patterns in relationships and themes but also allows for deviant cases that may illuminate additional findings. While this dissertation is mostly qualitative, I felt it important to match student reports in order to better understand nuance in relationships and to verify patterns and have quantitative data substantiate what I was observing in classrooms and during interviews. Lastly, as previously illustrated in the measures portion of this chapter, the survey measures used in this dissertation are all validated measures used in previous work on student perceptions of classroom climate. Teachers' measures of implementation and beliefs towards DD come from the Origins non-profit and after running alpha coefficients also proved to be reliable as indicated in *Survey Methods* above.

Structure of Findings

To conclude this chapter, I detail how I will organize my findings for this study. The following chapter will report on the quantitative findings of teachers' and students' reports on implementation, engagement and perceptions of classroom climate. Descriptive narratives will be detailed by typology and further analyzed between typologies. Successively, I will more deeply explore the qualitative findings of my classroom observations and interviews again by

typology while explicating my comparative analysis between typologies. Chapter 6, as my discussion, will yield my interpretation of both sets of results to illustrate how I view emergent relationships between teachers' characteristics and belief systems and their implementation quality of the Developmental Designs approach.

CHAPTER FOUR:
QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

In this chapter, I report on quantitative findings using cross-group comparative analysis while then further triangulating the data in the following chapter (Chapter Five) to obtain a more informed interpretation of findings. This combining of quantitative and qualitative data from multiple informants allows me to better understand the research problem by converging both quantitative numeric trends and detailed qualitative data (Creswell, 2008).

I wanted to consider why some teachers buy in and implement more quickly and with greater fidelity than others. Because I found four different typologies of teachers, more specifically low implementing teachers who had highly engaged classrooms and vice versa, I hoped to better understand the relationships between this SEL initiative and its implementation and students' engagement and perceptions of their classroom context including teacher's and peers' support.

Trends in Demographics by Cluster

Teachers were asked at the beginning of each interview questions regarding background and demographics. These questions included the length of total time teaching and teaching at Smith Middle School, and their teaching certification status. Teachers were also asked via survey format about their race and gender. In Chapter Three, I reported descriptive unconditioned data for the entire teacher sampling. With all of the following data presented in this chapter, I categorized this raw data by the assigned typology and compared the groups of teachers.

When comparing typologies, I found trends in certification status, length of time teaching and diversity in race and gender. In terms of certification status, low implementing/high engagement teachers were all K-8/9 certified, while low implementer/low engagement teachers are all 6-12 certified. The majority of high implementing/high engagement teachers were K-8 certified (N=5) and 2 were certified in secondary education. The high implementing/low engagement teachers were more evenly split in certification in that three were certified in K-8 or elementary education and two were certified in secondary. I postulate that teachers in the low implementing/low engaged group who all have secondary certificates identify more as content leaders and concentrated more on teaching the academic content rather than focusing the social emotional context that they were creating in the classroom. Pre-service education programs focusing on high school classrooms tend to emphasize the delivery of material with the assumption that social emotional needs and classroom climates have already been constructed or that the context may not be a concern. All teachers in the low implementing/high engaged typology had a K-8 certification. This could explain the variations in teachers' comfort level in relationship building and developing that classroom culture either with or without the DD teaching approach. This aspect of teaching and learning may have been more explicitly addressed for those teachers who would be applying to teaching positions in elementary schools. In the state of Michigan a middle school certification does not yet exist in its own form, meaning that all educators can teach middle school since there is that overlap of certification in K-8 and 6-12 grades, but come with different pre-service experiences which may impact their teaching styles in this sort of classroom.

When teachers reported on the length of time teaching at Smith, I found that low implementing/low engagement teachers had taught the longest (*M*=12.8 years) followed by the

high implementing/high engagement (*M*=6.3), followed by the low implementer/high engagement (*M*=6) and the high implementer/low engagement with 5.3 years of teaching at Smith. There seems to be a pattern in length of time teaching and implementation status, which could signify a burnout effect aligning with the previous research finding strong correlations between program implementation fidelity and burnout (Domitrovich, 2000; Maslach, 2003). While the high implementing group with highly engaged classrooms had been teaching for the second longest period of time, there was quite a jump in career length, which differentiates the two groups of teachers. Furthermore, 64% of low implementing/low engaged teachers' careers were at Smith Middle School, while 54% of the high implementing/high engaged teachers were at Smith. There may be contextual influences (as stated in Chapter Three), given Smith's historical context that may also support possible teacher burnout. Additionally, teachers in the high implementation and low engagement cluster were the "newest" teachers as compared to the other three clusters, which could explain the mismatched implementation and engagement pairing. Newer teachers are more likely to adapt and consider new teaching practices but may not have classroom management practices solidified in their teaching (Day & Gu, 2009). These teachers could be making a strong attempt to adopt DD practices but still cannot effectively and efficiently manage a classroom of students, resulting in the observed disengagement.

I also observed some salient features of the breakdown of cluster by race and gender as well. The high implementing/high engaged cluster is the most racially diverse with three teachers identifying as African American, three as White and one at Latino. Contrastingly, all of the teachers in the low implementing/low engagement cluster identifies as White and with only one female in that group. Gender however is pretty evenly distributed in the other three groups but not in the two extreme clusters. When collapsing the typologies by engagement level, low

engaged classrooms all have a White teacher whereas teachers with highly-engaged classrooms demonstrate more racial diversity in teaching staff.

Table 3. Teacher Demographics By Typology

		Hi Imp/ Low Eng N=6	Hi Imp/ High Eng N=7	Low Imp/ Low Eng N=6	Low Imp/ High Eng N=4
Average Years Teaching		9.3	11.7	19.8	12.5
Average Years Teaching at Smith		5.3	6.3	12.8	6
Certification	***Elementary***	2			
	Secondary	3	2	6	
	K-8	1	5		4
Race	***White***	6	3	6	3
	African American		3		1
	Latino		1		
Gender	***Men***	2	3	5	2
	Women	4	4	1	2

Teacher Reports

I initially used my field notes to categorize teachers based on their implementation of DD and the observed behavioral engagement of their students. After I had qualitatively determined the clusters of teachers, I analyzed teacher and student surveys in SPSS that specifically asked about the degree to which teachers are implementing DD, their beliefs about DD and the motivation behind their usage. Because Smith was in its first year of implementation, administrators chose to focus on the first five foundational practices (CPR in Advisory, Teacher Language, modeling, co-construction of a social contract and the TAB discipline procedures) of the approach. For this reason, all of my qualitative and quantitative analyses on implementation fidelity focus only on the frequency and quality of those specific practices.

Teachers reported on the frequency of DD usage and their motivation to continue to use the practices. For the Smith teaching staff as a whole, teachers reported that the DD approach was somewhat aligned to their personal teaching style (M=4.28, SD=.62), while they also

reported that it was somewhat easy to implement (*M*=4.56, *SD*=.76). When asked how pleased they were with the approach and how motivated they were to use it, teachers reported similar means (4.13; 4.23 respectively) with a greater standard deviation (*SD*=1.07; 1.10), indicating that they were "quite a bit pleased and motivated" with regards to the approach. While as a school staff, it seems that there was motivation and positive beliefs regarding the ease of implementation and regard for the program. However, I also conducted descriptive analyses for teacher typologies to investigate possible convergence or divergence of patterns with my qualitative data. I found that these quantitative findings also aligned accurately to the initial qualitative typologies formed.

As shown in Table 4 below, high-implementing teachers with highly-engaged classrooms reported the most usage of DD (*M*=4.33, *SD*=.81) and were the most highly motivated (*M*=4.71, *SD*=.49), followed by high-implementing teachers with low-engaged classrooms (*M*=4.2 *SD*=.83) and with a mean motivation of 4.17 (*SD*=1.6). Low-implementing teachers with highly-engaged classrooms reported a mean of 4.0 (*SD*=0) indicating that they used DD practices "regularly, at least once a day," while low-implementing teachers with low-engaged classrooms had the lowest mean of implementation (*M*=3.8, *SD*=.83) stating they used DD about a few times a week/occasionally.

Table 4. Teacher-Reported Frequency of DD Usage (Means, Standard Deviations) by Typology

	Hi Imp/Low Eng N=6	**Hi Imp/High Eng N=7**	**Low Imp/Low Eng N=7**	**Low Imp/High Eng N=4**
How often do you use do use the DD approach in your classroom?	4.2(.83)	4.3(.81)	3.8(.83)	4.0(0)

1=Not at all; 2= Rarely, a few times a month; 3= Occasionally, a few times a week; 4=Regularly/At least one game a day; 5= Frequently, 2-3 games a day

Teachers' reports of their implementation frequency aligned closely with the cluster in

which they were categorized. Their impressions of the DD approach also seem fairly intuitive in that teachers who did not implement the approach either at all or with little fidelity had more negative or apathetic feelings towards the impact the approach was having on their classroom climate and student behavior with lower motivation levels than those high implementers.

For example, low implementing/low engaged teachers reported a higher mean (*M*=3.88 *SD*=1.4) than their engagement counterpart (*M*=3.67 *SD*=.57). While again, these means map on intuitively to the qualitative typologies I formed, these means differences were not statistically significant between groupings due to the small sample size.

Table 5. Teacher-Reported Motivations of DD Usage (Means, Standard Deviations) by Typology

	Hi Imp/Low Eng N=6	**Hi Imp/High Eng N=7**	**Low Imp/Low Eng N=7**	**Low Imp/High Eng N=4**
How motivated are you to continue using the DD approach in your classroom?	4.17(1.6)	4.71(.49)	3.88(1.4)	3.67(.57)
So far, how pleased are you with the DD approach?	4.0(1.5)	4.57(.53)	3.75(1.3)	4.0(0.0)

1=Not at all; 2=Just a Little; 3=Some; 4=Quite a Bit; 5=A lot

In addition to obtaining teacher-reported DD usage, teachers were also asked about their beliefs on the ease and alignment of DD practices to their teaching practice. The means and standard deviations are illustrated in Table 6.

Table 6. Teacher-Reported Means of DD beliefs on Implementation

	Hi Imp/Low Eng N=6	**Hi Imp/High Eng N=7**	**Low Imp/Low Eng N=7**	**Low Imp/High Eng N=4**
Given the training and the materials, *how easy is it to implement* the following components of the DD approach?	4.46(.79)	5.10(.51)	4.2(.80)	4.45(.40)
How well do different practices fit with your personal teaching style?	4.20(.66)	4.60(.57)	3.88(.61)	4.53(.11)
How much of an impact you perceive the DD approach to be having on your students' skill development	3.70(.90)	4.20(.53)	3.62(.97)	3.8(.35)

1=Not at all; 2=Just a Little; 3=Some; 4=Quite a Bit; 5=A lot

High-implementing teachers with highly-engaged classrooms reported the highest means of the 4 clusters when thinking about the improvement DD was having on behavior, climate and reducing the need for office referrals. These teachers also perceived DD as improving the engagement of students "quite a bit." Contrastingly, classrooms exhibiting disengaged students reported the lowest means (regardless of implementation status) in terms of the improvement of behavior and climate. Interestingly, teachers who were low-implementers but had highly engaged classrooms obtained the lowest means of reducing the need for discipline referrals and engagement. This could be explained however by not needing to write up office referrals in the first place compared to other groups or already perceiving high engagement from their classes even before the DD approach was put into place. Additionally, one-way ANOVAs were run to compare group means, but all were statistically non-significant. A limitation of these quantitative findings is the lack of power that I had in analysis given the case study design. Despite this however, the trends in the mean endorsements corresponded with the clustering of teachers, lending validity to my initial grouping of these teachers.

In order to better understand the broad characteristics of teachers who were high implementers and those who were not, I collapsed the four clusters and dummy-coded them by implementation status in order to run t-tests. When collapsed by implementation status there were significant mean differences in that high implementation teachers felt stronger and more positively than low implementation teachers in how DD aligned to their teaching style and the ease of implementation. This finding also substantiates the initial qualitative clustering of teachers by implementation and engagement. One would assume that high implementing teachers would feel their teaching style was more aligned with DD practices than those who

chose not to implement (or implement very little). This same rationale could be articulated for the perceived ease of implementation as well.

Table 7. Mean Differences in Reported DD beliefs by Implementation Status

	High Implementation Status		Low Implementation Status		t-test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Ease of Implementation	4.05	.75	4.78	.69	-2.12*
Alignment to Teaching Style	4.45	.53	3.90	.60	-2.30*

1=Not at all; 2=Just a Little; 3=Some; 4=Quite a Bit; 5=A lot
*$p<.05$

Table 8. Teachers' Reported Beliefs on the Impact of DD

How much is the DD approach:	Hi Imp/ Low Eng N=6	Hi Imp/ High Eng N=7	Low Imp/ Low Eng N=7	Low Imp/ High Eng N=4
Improving the behavior of your students?	3.5(1.4)	4.0(.57)	3.5(1.2)	3.67(.57)
Improving the climate of your classroom?	3.33(1.21)	3.88(.37)	3.38(1.20)	3.33(.57)
Reducing your need to make referrals to the office for discipline problems?	3.5(1.37)	3.71(1.3)	3.62(1.4)	2.0(1.0)
Improving academic engagement of your students?	3.33(1.36)	3.43(.78)	3.38(1.1)	3.0(0)

1=Not at all; 2=Just a Little; 3=Some; 4=Quite a Bit; 5=A lot

Student Reports

I gathered student-reported data in order to triangulate my findings. Because part of the mission of the DD approach is to allow students to feel more engaged and a greater sense of support and belonging in their middle school classrooms, it was important to match students' perceptions of implementation and classroom climate with that of their teacher.

Both teachers and students were asked how often DD practices were included in classes ranging in answers from never to all the time. Teacher reports were matched with those of students' as well since students were asked to report only on their 5th hour teacher. Again, my

goal in this process was to interpret both sets of findings to obtain a clearer understanding of the phenomenon of teachers' reasoning for implementation to substantiate my conclusions.

In terms of students' responses to whether their 5th hour teacher implements the DD approach in their classroom, there was not a great deal of variance in terms of mean responses. When examined at the level of subscales, a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant mean differences in frequency of DD use by typology.

Table 9. Student Reports of Implementation

	Hi Imp/Low Eng N=34	**Hi Imp/High Eng N=63**	**Low Imp/Low Eng N=50**	**Low Imp/High Eng N=39**
DD in Class Practices	3.03(.53)	2.93(.55)	2.90(.52)	2.94(.53)
DD Discipline Practices	3.09(.43)	2.74(.60)	2.76(.57)	2.7(.49)

1=Never; 2=Once; 3=A Few Times; 4=Many Times; 5=All of the Time

In tandem with investigating students' perceptions of implementation in their classrooms, I analyzed student-reported teacher support, social efficacy with their teacher, and engagement after having observed behavioral engagement in these same classrooms. In order to best examine each teacher cluster and how students perceive their classroom, the following section breaks down quantitative findings by teacher typologies. This matching of data allowed for greater explanation and interpretation of how teachers' behaviors and practices are perceived by students.

<u>High Implementing Teachers</u>

Because I wanted to further investigate how students' perceived the DD implementation practices, I ran bivariate correlations to reveal any differences by teacher typology. I specifically focused on the relationships between DD practices (those in content area classrooms and the TAB discipline process) and perceptions of teacher support, engagement as well as students' social efficacy with their teacher. It seems reasonable given the constructivist philosophy behind

DD socio-emotional practices, to assume that classrooms of high implementing teachers should be supportive, foster student's confidence in their ability to work with their teacher and enhance engagement.

In both high implementing typologies, I found significant positive correlations between average DD practices in classrooms and teacher support and engagement. For high implementing teachers with highly-engaged classrooms, DD classroom practices were significantly correlated with teacher support and engagement with an $r(113) = .46, p < .05$; $r(110) = .42, p < .01$ respectively. Because this was an exploratory and descriptive study, I conducted my analyses to better understand what DD practices looked like as a whole via teacher and student perceptions, but I also felt it was important to break down DD practices by subscale given the setting context and the timing of implementation (Year 1). When teasing apart the DD discipline practices subscale, there were no significant correlations between these specific practices and support or engagement, but there was a weak yet significant correlation with students' reported social efficacy with their teacher.

Table 10. Correlations Between DD Practices & Variables of Interest in High Implementing/High Engaged Typology

High Implementing/High-Engaged Teachers	Average Classroom Practices	Average DD discipline practices (TAB)
Teacher Support	.46**	.16
Student Engagement	.42**	.11
Social Efficacy with Teachers	.48**	.27**

**$p<.01$

While these correlational findings do illustrate significant relationships between DD practice variables and students' reports of support, engagement and efficacy, it is interesting that there was quite a strong association between classroom practices and these constructs. Smith

Middle School made a heavy push towards the implementation of morning advisory practices, even more so than that of daily classroom practices. Again, because students were asked to report on their 5th hour teacher, I correlated those classroom practice items with support, social efficacy and engagement. It is not assumed that these students have the same teacher for their morning advisory, thus cannot accurately report on that matching. The DD discipline subscale only produced significant correlations with teacher support or efficacy in the high implementing/high engaged cluster since it was an aspect of redirection/behavior correction, but again the focus of the TAB was as a practice of self-regulation and self-monitoring as opposed to an explicit punishment.

The last finding to note is that of the significant correlation between the TAB discipline practices and level of teacher support as reported by students. There is a relationship between students' feelings of support with their teacher who implement the TAB practice greatly.

Table 11. Correlations Between DD Practices & Variables of Interest in High Implementing/Low Engaged Typology

High Implementing/Low-Engaged Teachers	Average Classroom Practices	Average DD discipline practices (TAB)
Teacher Support	.51**	.31*
Student Engagement	.35**	.09
Social Efficacy with Teacher	.39**	.05

* $p<.05$ ** $p<.01$

Low Implementation Teachers

In terms of low implementing teachers with highly engaged classrooms, the student-reported usage of DD advisory practices and DD classroom practices were significantly correlated to students perceptions of their 5th hour teacher's support, $r(63) = .66, p < .01$; $r(63) = .66, p < .01$. Additionally, both DD practices were significantly correlated with reported student

engagement, $r(60) = .52, p < .01$; $r(60) = .51, p < .01$. The low implementing teachers with highly engaged classrooms had comparatively stronger correlations with their limited used of DD practices and student reports of support and engagement.

Table 12. Correlations Between DD Practices & Variables of Interest in Low Implementing/High Engaged Typology

Low Implementing/High-Engaged Teachers	Average Classroom Practices	Average DD discipline practices (TAB)
Teacher Support	.66**	-.06
Student Engagement	.51**	.06
Social Efficacy with Teacher	.52**	-.03

* $p<.05$ **$p<.01$

The last teacher typology of low implementing teachers with low engaged classrooms had interesting correlational results, especially around their reports of engagement. This data reported significant correlations between these teachers' DD classroom practices and perceived support, social efficacy and engagement. There also was a significant but weak correlation between the TAB discipline practices and students' reported engagement, which was a distinction when compared to other typologies.

Table 13. Correlations Between DD Practices & Variables of Interest in Low Implementing/Low Engaged Typology

Low Implementing/Low-Engaged Teachers	Average Classroom Practices	Average DD discipline practices (TAB)
Teacher Support	.41**	.07
Student Engagement	.36**	.24*
Social Efficacy with Teacher	.42**	.12

* $p<.05$ **$p<.01$

After finding means and correlations by typology, I conducted an omnibus one-way ANOVA so as to investigate any additional salient differences with these climate indices (support, engagement and social efficacy) by typology. Because of these significant results, I ran

Tukey HSD post-hoc comparisons of the four groups. Students in a highly-engaged classroom with a high-implementing teacher reported significantly higher means of support (M = 3.54, SD=.92) as compared to students with a low-implementing 5th hour teacher in a low-engaged classroom (M=3.13, SD=1.07). Students with a high implementing teacher in a low-engaged classroom reported significantly higher means of teacher support (M=3.58, SD=.97) as compared again to students in a low implementing/low engaged classroom (M=3.13, SD=1.07). Comparisons for student engagement and social efficacy with one's teacher between typology were not statistically significant at $p < .05$.

Table 14. Mean Differences of Perceived Teacher Support Between 2 Typologies

Student Reports of:	High Implementation/High Engagement	Low Implementation/Low Engagement	*F*	*df*	*p*
Average Teacher Support	3.54(.92)	3.13(1.07)	3.78	3	.02
	High Implementation/ Low Engagement	**Low Implementation/ Low Engagement**			
Average Teacher Support	3.58(.97)	3.13(1.07)	3.78	3	.03

After testing by typology, I collapsed the groups by implementation status. I did this to better understand if there were strong relationships with DD implementation, regardless of observed engagement, asking, could it be more advantageous for a student to be in a classroom with clearer DD principles, or is engagement an embedded assumption to the approach? With this collapsing of implementation status, I again tested for mean differences in students' perception of classroom climate indicators such as teacher's support, social efficacy with teachers and student engagement. I ran independent sample t-tests to investigate these differences. A significant mean difference in perception of teacher's support was found in that students rated their high implementing 5th hour teachers as being significantly more supportive as compared to students who were in low-implementing classrooms. Since DD is a SEL

intervention specifically targeted towards teachers and enhancing their practices in addressing adolescents' needs and developing a more "inclusive learning community," students may be seeing the impact of this through high-implementing teachers' actions. However, students reported significantly higher mean levels of engagement when they were in low-implementing classrooms.

Lastly, there proved to be significant mean differences in students' reporting of how socially efficacious they felt with their teacher. Students in the high implementing classrooms, regardless of engagement, felt more highly socially efficacious than those students in low-implementing classrooms. Because these high implementing classrooms were observed to be less authoritarian and more co-constructed in their structure and with how teachers interacted with students, it seems feasible that students in these types of classrooms would feel more able and confident to interact with their teachers more freely than those who were in the low implementing, more traditional authoritarian structured classroom.

Table 15. Mean Differences Based on Collapsed Implementation Status

Student Reports of:	**Implementation Status**		***t***	***df***	***p***
	High	**Low**			
Average Teacher Support	3.55(.93)	3.24(1.07)	-2.827	325	.005
Academic Student Engagement	3.00(.43)	3.11(.50)	2.231	315	.026
Social Efficacy with Teacher	3.13(.65)	2.98(.57)	.45	340	.019

Typologies Based on Observed Engagement

In addition to isolating groups by the qualitatively-formed implementation statuses, I also dummy-coded teacher typologies by engagement level. I did this in order to better understand if there were key aspects of the implementation or classroom climate that could be further explained simply by teachers' ability to engage students as opposed to their ability or

motivation to implement DD. I again ran independent sample t-tests, indicated in Table 15 to determine if there were significant mean differences by engagement status; again to observe any differences by being in a highly-engaged classroom as opposed to one that is low. Students reported significantly higher means of teachers' support in high engaged classrooms, regardless of implementation status, than those in low-engaged classrooms. Students reported their engagement higher in low-engaged classrooms as compared to high-engaged classrooms. While this does not match on to qualitative data, there may be additional forms of engagement that students are drawing from.

Table 16. Mean Differences Between Collapsed Engagement Statuses

Student Reports of:	**Engagement Status**		***t***	***df***	***p***
	High	**Low**			
Average Teacher Support	3.49(.97)	3.30(1.04)	-1.72	342	.08
Academic Student Engagement	3.00(.43)	3.11(.50)	1.84	342	.06
Social Efficacy with Teacher	3.10(.49)	3.00(.45)	-.12	336	.90

$p<.1$

Because students reported feeling more supported when they were in both high-implementing classrooms, and in high-engaged classrooms, I then ran an additional t-test comparing the low-implementing/high engaged typology with that of the high implementing/low engaged. It seemed important to do this to better understand what was at play in a greater way, implementation or engagement. When running this t-test, teacher support was the only statistically significant construct in that students in high engaged classrooms reported more teacher support than those in low engaged classrooms $t(342)-1.73$, $p<.1$.

In terms of reported engagement, I analyzed both within- and between-engagement typologies, thus investigating if there were differences between the two high-engaged typologies and those low-engaged as well. When running T-tests within the two high-engaged clusters, I

found no significant mean differences between reports of teachers' support, social efficacy with his/her teacher, or engagement. On the other hand, the analyses comparing the two low-engaged clusters (presented in Table 17) showed significant mean differences for perceived teacher support and social efficacy.

Table 17. T-test Results Reporting Mean Differences Based on Typology

Student Reports of:	***High Implementation/Low Engagement***	***Low Implementation/Low Engagement***	***t***	***df***	***p***
Average Teacher Support	3.58(.97)	3.13(1.06)	2.70	161	.008
Social Efficacy with Teacher	3.16(.58)	2.99(.60)	1.77	161	.071

Students who were in high implementing/low-engaged classrooms felt significantly more socially efficacious with their 5th hour teacher than those students in low-implementing/low-engaged classrooms t(161)1.77, p<.1. Additionally, those same students felt significantly more supported in high implementing/low engaged classrooms than those in low implementing/low engaged classes. This may indicate that even if classroom management is lacking and students are observed to be behaviorally disengaged, there was still a relationship between greater observable DD practices and students' perception of teacher support. This significant mean difference indicates that there was some aspect of DD or possible inherent teaching style that aligned with teachers demonstrating their support towards their students. It is also important to note that these *p* values were significant at the .1 level, which I made the conscious choice to use because these quantitative findings were intended to supplement and add nuance and/or convergence to my qualitative data analyses.

Students from the 4 different typologies also reported on their engagement in their 5th hour class. Reports found that students were more engaged in low-engaged classrooms than high. This does not support findings from the qualitative section of this study, which focused on

behavioral engagement. It could be that this reflects the use of a multidimensional survey measure that includes cognitive and emotional aspects of engagement.

Table 18. Student Report of Academic Engagement

Student Reports of Engagement	Hi Imp/Low Eng N=34	Hi Imp/High Eng N=63	Low Imp/Low Eng N=50	Low Imp/High Eng N=39
Emotional Engagement	3.28(.83)	3.27(.58)	3.17(.76)	3.29(.90)
Behavioral Engagement	4.11(.52)	3.91(.52)	3.88(.52)	3.94(.56)
Cognitive Engagement	3.10(.74)	3.08(.59)	3.13(.67)	3.21(.69)
Overall Engagement	3.44(.49)	3.33(.39)	3.35(.43)	3.43(.45)

In order to better understand this specific finding, I conducted mean analyses by engagement subscales to observe any disproportionate means. Table 18 illustrates means of students' reported engagement levels by the teacher-type they are in. None of the engagement means were significantly different when comparing means by clusters of classrooms. These findings could also be impacted on the low N that I had when distributing students by classroom typology in which they were.

These initial quantitative findings allowed for a better understanding of the landscape of teacher characteristics that may be impacting what DD implementation at Smith Middle School looks like, along with whether DD implementation is necessary to higher engaged classrooms. These results included teacher reports of their usage, motivation and quantitatively reported beliefs of DD. Additionally, they included matched student reports of frequency and dosage of DD implementation and perceptions of classroom climate and teacher indicators that allow for better, more detailed understanding who is implementing DD and what relationships these practices have to students' feelings of support, engagement and efficacy. The following chapter will detail in greater depth the characteristics of each teacher typology by reporting the qualitative findings via classroom observations and teachers' interviews.

CHAPTER FIVE:
QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Introduction

As indicated in Chapter Two, the DD Approach incorporates comprehensive practices that integrate social and academic learning. Developers of the DD approach believe that student success is gained via the following assumptions:

- Good relationships, social skills and engagement allow for academic and social learning
- The need for a safe, inclusive community of engaged learners is paramount
- DD practices have adolescent needs embedded to effectively teach students

For this project, DD implementation fidelity was analyzed the following 5 components as implementation foci:

1. Advisory: CPR
2. Co-construction of goals and the monitoring of those goals
3. Modeling and practicing routines and procedures
4. Balanced and reflective discipline practices
5. Empowering teacher language

As I was focused on these core components of the DD approach, it is intuitive to also qualitatively investigate the embedded assumptions in implementing these practices. Because DD facilitators ask middle school teachers to not only integrate the CPR model in daily routine but also participate and share in the CPR, I hypothesized that a certain constructivist (or democratic) viewpoint on power and control in the classroom was necessary to successfully implement the first component DD. Similarly, the second element of co-constructing goals and expectations via social contract and monitoring these goals is a democratic process that an educator needs to continue to dialogue through the school year and refer back to when needed.

If and educator is more of an authoritarian teacher, then this style of teaching is dissonant with the perception of how power and control play out in the classroom. This is explained via classroom observation and teacher narratives for this dissertation. The second assumption to be addressed is the belief that classroom management is highly dependent on the modeling, practicing and consistency of routines and procedures established in the classroom (implementation components 3 and 4 above). Teachers who did not exhibit or express these goals as educators or have different viewpoints on how one manages a classroom of students may not align with DD practices in their classroom. Lastly, it is clear through the organization's mission that the development of strong relationships (be it teacher-student or peer) is the central tool by which classroom management is proactively founded.

Because I found that there were 4 typologies of classrooms based on the 2 statuses of implementation and engagement, I intended on inductively teasing apart each cluster to investigate similarities and digressions within and between groups. After deductively coding for implementation and engagement, I inductively found patterns of power and classroom control, inclinations towards socio-emotional practices and relationship building.

When observing the power dynamic and structure of the classroom, classroom management practices that teachers chose to employ, and evidence of teachers' relationship-building practices, there was both convergence and divergence between teacher clusters. In order to more thoroughly explain teachers' characteristics and their belief systems that may influence their motivation to implement DD, observing their classrooms practices was pivotal. These qualitative findings focus on the non-participant classroom observations and their analysis by teacher typology, in addition to my findings based on teaches' semi-structured interviews by emerging theme.

Qualitative Analyses by Typology

High Implementing Teachers

Teachers who were labeled high implementers of the DD approach demonstrated specific patterns in their observed behaviors and their stated beliefs with regards to their power and control in the classroom, their social emotional learning beliefs and practices and their approaches to classroom management and climate development.

Power & Control in the Classroom

When interpreting behaviors of high implementing teachers (regardless of having a low or highly engaged classroom), it became clear that these teachers structured their classroom in a distinct way as compared to the low implementing clusters. I found there to be a phenomenon of power and control in how teachers situated themselves as authority figures in the classroom via classroom structures in physical presence as well as in verbal forms of communication. This was seen through two modes of data collection-classroom observations and behavioral self-reports in teachers' interviews.

High implementing teachers demonstrated classroom practices that emphasized a classroom environment that equally weighted teacher-student and student-to-student interaction in learning and also physically structured the classroom in ways that facilitated these types of interactions. The physical arrangement in this type of classroom and the proximal space used between students and between teacher and students were prominent patterns amongst implementation clusters. In high-implementing classrooms, teachers structured their seating

arrangements in either a U-shape, clusters of desks or two rows of desks facing each other on both sides of the classroom, resembling a debate-style configuration. Figures 5 & 6 below are examples of this type of classroom structure.

Figure 4. Field note Excerpt of Seating Arrangement in High Implementing/High Engaged Classroom

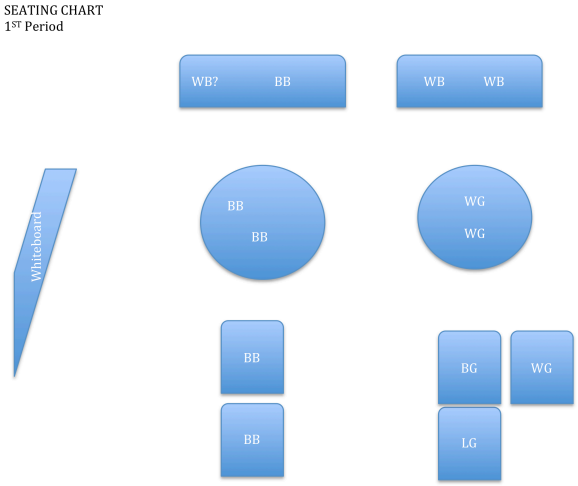
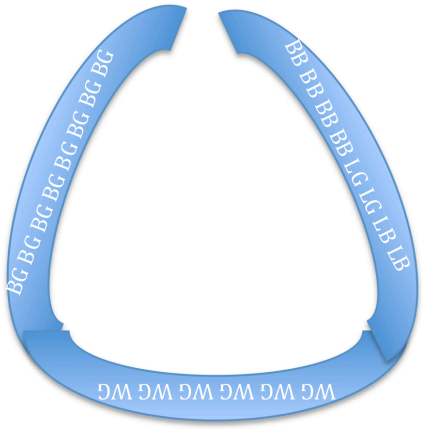


Figure 5. Field note Excerpt of Seating Chart in High Implementing/Low Engaged Classroom



The very structure of the room supported more intimate and consistent interactions between teacher and students and students themselves. That structure facilitated the teacher's ability to do 1-1 check-ins or individual conferences and had students transition into partner (or group) work more easily. Each of these room configurations enabled a greater sense of classroom dialogue between students and between teacher and students and also conveys to students and observers that interpersonal classroom practices are stressed. This can also be referred to a democratic, constructivist structure to which classroom practices encompass the idea of a community of learners, including the educator employing student-centered practices (Wheatly, 2005).

Additionally, these teachers were rarely seen at their desks (due to their constant monitoring and movement) and were often at various spots in the classroom engaging with students. These types of classroom formations also allowed for easier movement for the educator in that they were able to weave in and out and in between desk groups or if in a U-shape form they were able to quickly move from one side of the classroom to the other. Due to this intentional classroom structure, the importance of student interaction and cooperative learning is conveyed.

From what I initially observed, and inductively coded in my field notes, there were verbal power differentials in the classrooms. Most of my field note observations revolved around the idea of teachers' word choice, language and tone. High implementing teachers would use pronouns such as "we" or "us" when speaking with students, particularly when giving directions. For example, Ms. Schmidt was setting up her students to walk from their science classroom to the science lab down the hall. She explained to her students, "**We will** walk quietly to the lab room." This word choice was also heard when redirecting students either during transition or an

activity. Mrs. O'Connell would often correct her students' off-task side conversations with the phrase, "Hey, **we need** to quiet down." The pronoun was also used as a form recognition or praise. Mr. Drake asked his students a call-and-response question during a morning observation and saw that a student's had both her hands up waiting to be called on. He warmly said, "**We have 2 hands up** to answer!" Mr. Barken used the collective pronoun as a motivational tool when he said, "**What we are doing today** is what college kids do!" These teachers emphasized the collective voice by including themselves in the redirection or recognition language they used. This word choice also conveys a more democratic sense of the classroom community, communicating to students that as a group, there are consistent expectations for all community members, including the teacher.

This collaborative 'we' also sets up the cooperative classroom environment. Using this pronoun conveyed symbolically that they were all members of the same community, of which the teacher is also a part. This type of communication was also indirectly demonstrated even when a high implementing teacher was not referring to the class as "we" but was directly engaging with students by collaborating with them on what the directions meant or how the transition would look. Ms. Shelley's 6th grade morning English/Language Arts classroom began with a greeting that resembled a CPR greeting. She began each of her classes (even though they were not in her morning advisory class) with a class greeting as a welcome activity. Her communication to collective classroom expectations for the activity is demonstrated below,

> "Jaia **can you help me demonstrate** (this was a form of modeling she used). They model it once together. Unprompted, 2 female students indicate that they can use sign language to say hello. They both independently show the class how to sign 'hello' in sign language. Basha says, "you could take a piece of paper, write you name on it and show it to your partner. Ms. Shelley responds, "**I like that idea. Let's save it** for when you lead the greeting since it is a little different from silent greeting" (Shelley).

This dialogue between educator and students illustrated the relinquishing of a small amount of control by Ms. Shelley but not enough to derail the lesson. In asking a student to help her demonstrate, she was not only including the student in the expectations and transition in activity but also modeling what a collaborative exchange of ideas looked like. Ms. Shelley never provided herself as the sole model, but partnered with students to model and engaged with them about her idea but still redirected for another class period so as to not disrupt the timing of the activity and lesson. This example was quite illustrative of her general practices with students in her classroom and how she distributed power by allowing students the autonomy to voice opinions and thoughts but also maintain classroom management.

This example of a more collaborative power dynamic is valuable in thinking about how teachers interacted with their students and which of these practices seems more aligned with the implementation of the DD teaching approach. This example is also descriptive of a classroom management technique in that while Ms. Shelley made sure that her student felt heard, she did not allow the student's idea to throw her timing off course in terms of the activity. While this could have been handled with a "now is not the time" reaction, she affirmed the student's idea but tabled it for another time; allowing the student to feel heard but to keep the urgency of their lesson.

High implementing teachers with highly engaged classrooms also revealed how they approached control in the classroom when interviewed. Ms. Shelley indicated the need for group work and collaboration during her interview as a way to address the developmental needs of an adolescent.

> "…I do give them lots of talking time; I try to give them lots of time to muddle through it like as a group. Which then backfires only when you get you know 3 people together who are usually really smart and they all want to work on their own, so then they all get it done really fast.

She specifically addresses the concept of constructivist learning by having her students "muddle through it [work] as a group," but then describes having to also monitor students who chose to work independently. This belief of allowing students to have "talking time" and work as groups aligns to her practice of co-modeling and co-constructing expectations as previously illustrated above. It is evident through her practices and interview responses that philosophically she aligns with that of Developmental Designs.

Ms. Ranser, another high implementing/high engaged teacher, also described her classroom climate as one that was safe for students to take chances in as well as allowing for student autonomy. During her interview as well, she discussed the social emotional needs of her students, and how she created her classroom as a community to foster adolescents' need for belonging. She was asked about her classroom climate when she responded with the following statement,

> "I want them to step out there and say something or we try something—I want them to be able to be comfortable enough with me to say, "Ms. Ranser, you know what? Let's try this this way," and I'll go, "You know, that's a great idea." I learn so much from the kids, I really do. You have to be open and out of the box, and have enough confidence in yourself, for a kid to come up and suggest to you. I have a kid, a sixth grader, right now, if he sees me struggling with something, he'll come up and say, "Ms. Ranser, can I show you how to do that?"

Similar to Ms. Shelley, Ms. Ranser made it a priority to have students engage with her in collaborative efforts in the classroom. Because she was describing her classroom climate when she said:

> "I want them to be able to be comfortable enough with me to say, "Ms. Ranser, you know what? Let's try this this way," and I'll go, "You know, that's a great idea. I learn so much from the kids, I really do."

It was clear constructing a more collective, cooperative work environment for students was most salient to her. She validated that student's suggestion by saying, "you know, that's a great idea" allowing that student to feel like an active member of that learning community. It would be intuitive for a student who feels that they can make a suggestion to a teacher, to feel more socially efficacious with that teacher. Additionally, the fact that Ms. Ranser believed that she learns from the kids ("I learn so much from the kids, I really do") reaffirms a constructivist teaching philosophy in that all classroom members are a part of a collective learning community, including the teacher. Because these teachers were observed as having a more democratic classroom structure in which they co-constructed expectations and norms with students, it seems intuitive that this approach is easier to implement than their counterparts.

High implementing/high engaged teachers indicated that the DD approach aligns very closely with their personal teaching style since DD focuses on classroom community development and social growth via relationship building. Mr. Barken illustrated his commitment to the co-construction of his classroom environment when describing his classroom structure,

> "**I try my best to create an environment. It's constructive; we're going to decide what this class is going to look like together**. And I know that much. I give the kids onus of it. You're the author of your life story. The kids are made to feel that they are in control of how the classroom runs."

This attitude closely parallels DD framing of the classroom as an environment that students take ownership of as adolescents with their teacher. When he says, "I give the kids onus of it…the kids are made to feel that they are in control," it is evident that Mr. Barken identifies more as a guide to students than a transmitter of knowledge. Additionally, he makes sure to say, "made to feel that they are in control." What I interpret as subtext is that he is not relinquishing all control

of his classroom, but is scaffolding autonomy and knows when to actively manage students if too much autonomy is given.

In comparison, high implementing teachers with *low-engaged* classes also described an affect and inclination towards the DD approach but were not fully comfortable in their understanding or practice of DD. During my interview with Ms. O'Connell who is a foreign language teacher to 6^{th}-8^{th} grade students, grappled with the notion of autonomy in the classroom. While believing in the construction of a classroom environment that had novel and fun learning experiences, she also noted her own need for control.

> "Here [in a middle school], I feel like I have to be a little bit more lenient, a little bit more patient, so I might be like... (short laugh) okay, holding up the three fingers. I know my seventh grade class that I just had before this, that even though ---, some of them are like running around and um, not getting started and so I told them to sit down, you know more like five times. **I mean I've said to them; you know I've told you to sit down five times...And so it's a little bit more relaxed but, um, cause I want them to have fun, but I do have to have like this element of control, whereas like, (pause 2 sec.) if you can't control yourselves then I'm sorry I do have to take control.** You know I can't always tab and tab out. If there's like five people that need to tab and tab out, you can't all tab out, so I'm gonna take control, then it will usually be with my loud voice."

While Ms. O'Connell may understand that this type of approach is beneficial to middle school students, she may be grappling with her need for full control in the traditional sense, which may be interfering with her level of observed engagement even though they are implementing the program. While she used the collective 'we' when addressing students in observations, she then uses the phrase, "if you can't control yourselves," which reflects a more divergent mindset from the communicated "we" with students. When Ms. O'Connell said,

> "And so it's a little bit more relaxed but, um, cause I want them to have fun, but I do have to have like this element of control, whereas like, (pause 2 seconds) if you can't control yourselves then I'm sorry I do have to take control"

She does align her priorities for a fun and student-centered environment by stating that her classroom climate is a "bit more relaxed," and her desire for students to have fun. Because she understood the need for fun in learning (and implicitly equates that with the implementation of the DD approach) and had created a "relaxed" environment for "them [kids] to have fun," she apologized rhetorically in the same sentence that she liked to have an element of control. It is as though she is wants to create a student-centered environment in which students are constructing their own learning opportunities, but also has a deficit-mindset in saying, "I mean I've said to them; you know I've told you to sit down five times… If you can't control yourselves, then I do have to take control." In her response, (and the majority of high implementing/low engaged teachers), Ms. O'Connell also demonstrates a sense of external locus of control in why she has had to tell students to sit down five times. Because she is a high implementing teacher with a low-engaged classroom, there may be fundamental classroom management practices that are not in place or inconsistent practices. For example, if she is using more collective language such as "we need to quiet down" but then raising her voice and "taking control" over the classroom in a more authoritarian way, students could be receiving mixed signals as to the classroom structures or practices in place. This is a significant distinction from the high implementing/high engaged group in that their consistency in practice and beliefs were observed in field notes and interviews, while the high implementing/low engaged group demonstrated a bit more grappling with consistency.

This theme of classroom control also presented itself in how teachers felt they should interact with their students. The high implementing/high engagement group had the greatest emphasis on the idea of openness and honesty with students as compared to the three other groups. Mr. Barken explained this when describing why certain teachers gravitate towards the

DD philosophy.

> "I believe you have to have a disposition of again being able to laugh at yourself. Being able to say I messed up and that's okay. I think if you have, if you have this type of disposition if you will about yourself where I'm a teacher, and some people do have this I'm a teacher slash professor slash mentor and this is what I do, and here's my curriculum, and I will tell you whatever you need to know about the curriculum let's go."

Many teachers echoed this thought of how teachers identified when thinking about themselves as professionals. There was embedded subtext to a teacher identifying as an authority figure as opposed to a classroom leader who also takes on the informal role of a mentor, or support. This sort of honesty or transparency in personality also tied into the notion of relinquishing the control of being the omniscient teacher of knowledge for example. Ms. Ranser explained the personality type that was needed to effectively implement DD,

> "You have to have the personality. Everyone doesn't have the personality to do Development Design. **To them, "You're asking me to be stupid, to act stupid, and that's not me."** In front of the kids, but I think, when you do that, the kids connect with you, in the sense that they see a side of you that they rarely see. You have to let them—you have to be transparent, and some teachers are—they have dry personalities. They don't know how to have fun. They're dry with adults. It's for the kids, so you do what's best for the kids, and you have to move self out of the way. Some people struggle with moving self out of the way. Self will get in the way of a lot things being successful" (Ranser)

What is embedded in this group's philosophy is that they are approaching all their classroom practices through relationships with their students and more flexible and willing to adapt their practice based on new strategies and ideas. These high implementing teachers all agreed that there is a sense of authority that needs to be relinquished to effectively implement the DD approach. They also recognized that doing this might not come as naturally to those teachers who have a fixed mindset on what the role of a teacher should look like.

Social Emotional Learning Beliefs & Practices

Through my interview questioning, I found thematic alignment in how teachers understood and perceived SEL programming with the ways they structured their classroom, in terms of control. While the majority of teachers did feel that it is important to integrate this programming with that of academic content, those that are high-implementing did so under the belief that it is simply important to the normative development for early adolescents and a necessary means to develop a collaborative learning environment.

High implementing teachers prioritized social emotional learning practices in order to create a classroom community. Focusing on the two high implementing clusters, there were notable points that aligned to their classroom practices and reflections. First, high implementing/low engaged teachers doubled the rate of "child-centered academic focused" priorities (35%) of high implementing/high engaged teachers (16). 42% of the high implementing/high engaged teachers also reported having a SEL priority compared to 35% of high implementing/low engaged teachers.

Additionally, what set apart the high implementation/high engagement teachers from the three other clusters was that they were the only ones to explicitly state those students' self esteem and confidence to be a key priority as a teacher. Conversely, high implementing/low engaged teachers mentioned the need for students to gain maturity so they did not have to reactively manage negative peer relationships. This was not noted at all in the high implementing/high engaged group. This may be indicative of what management strategies are in place and whether the teacher has established a positive social environment.

Table 19. Percentage by Cluster of Teachers' stated priorities coded by category

Low implementation/high engagement		High implementation/high engagement	
Child-centered academic focus	9%	Child-centered academic focus	16%
Teacher-centered (Personal/mental/professional)	9%	Teacher-centered actions focused (personal/mental/professional)	42%
Child-centered SEL focus	82%	Child-centered SEL focus	42%
Non-cognitive skills: (Grit, perseverance, Internal motivation, delayed gratification)	18%	Non-cognitive skills: (Grit, perseverance, Internal motivation, delayed gratification)	5%
Relationship-building	27%	Relationship-building	16%
Self esteem/efficacy	0%	Self esteem/efficacy:	11%
Character education (Responsibility, teamwork, appreciation)	27%	Character education: (Responsibility, teamwork, appreciation)	11%
Reactive management/'maturity'	9%	Reactive management/'maturity'	0%
Low implementation/Low Engagement		**High implementation/Low Engagement**	
Child-centered academic focus	53%	Child-centered academic focus	35%
Teacher-centered (personal/mental/professional)	0%	Teacher-centered (personal/mental/professional)	29%
Child-centered SEL focus	41%	Child-centered SEL focus	35%
Non-cognitive skills: (Grit, perseverance, Internal motivation, delayed gratification)	29%	Non-cognitive skills: (Grit, perseverance, Internal motivation, delayed gratification)	6%
Relationship-building	5%	Relationship-building	12%
Self esteem/efficacy	0%	Self esteem/efficacy:	0%
Character education: (Responsibility, teamwork, appreciation)	0%	Character education: (Responsibility, teamwork, appreciation)	18%
Reactive management/'maturity'	12%	Reactive management/'maturity'	9%

Teachers also demonstrated clear patterns when asked about the integration of SEL programming during the school day. High-implementing teachers (with the exception of 2 teachers) felt that SEL was important to the schooling experience of students because it was a

way of normative development of early adolescence. More specifically, these teachers felt that SEL programming during the school day would allow students to feel socially and emotionally confident while in school, learn to respect one another, and to feel safe socially in their classrooms. I received responses such as,

> "Students can't learn until they have their social needs met," or "Students need to feel that they belong, feel accepted and safe" or "Need to meet your kids where they're at and try to make that connection."

These all emphasize the need for belonging and acceptance to achieve academically. High implementing teachers also indicated that as early adolescents, their students needed a social outlet and their classroom practices allowed for social interaction. Again, these beliefs on adolescence as a developmental period, and the integration of socio-emotional practices in the classroom match closely to the Developmental Designs mission, which may be a prominent reason as to why these teachers were more likely to implement the approach.

Low Implementing Teachers

In comparison with the two high-implementing clusters, teachers who were categorized as "low implementers," (including low implementers/low engagement and low implementers/high engagement) all had classrooms that were coded as hierarchically structured classrooms. In these classrooms, the educator was both the transmitter of knowledge and authority. These teachers always conducted class in the front of the classroom by the whiteboard or in some cases at their desks (which were usually in the front of the classroom). In this observed power structure, all seating arrangements were in an authoritarian setup with chairs all in equal length rows facing the front of the classroom. This structure was set up to have students

engage with the teacher or in independent work as opposed to the student-student interaction and collaboration in high implementing classrooms. Both low implementing groups displayed classroom practices and structures that signified that teachers were the instructors and would impart the necessary skills and knowledge to students given the physical structure of the class and through verbal communication with students.

Low-implementing teachers heavily dominated classroom talk and there was less of an emphasis on student voice and response. For example, vertical power classrooms had teachers who used pronouns such as "you" and "I" as opposed to lateral-power classrooms where one is more likely to hear "us" and "we." During a classroom observation in Ms. Wentz's 7th grade science classroom (low implementing/high engaged cluster) students were transitioning into an independent work activity that required students to answer a series of questions having to do with cells and organelles. Ms. Wentz was setting her expectations for students when the following dialogue was noted:

> Wentz: "What kind of sentences do **you** need to have?
> White male student: (speaks very softly) says 'complete'
> Wentz: **I want** nice complete sentences.

This call and response illustrates an authoritarian classroom in that students are engaged and completing their work to the teacher's expectations and what she deems they should and need to have. Ms. Wentz was not asking for new knowledge from her students but was emphasizing a routine that she felt should be reminded. This form of reminding students of expectations was a common practice in this cluster of teacher typology and demonstrated the top-down management practice. The onus of developing complete sentences was on the student since it was wanted from Ms. Wentz. Embedded in these word choices is the lack of ownership that students are taking for constructing complete sentences. The emphasis is on a procedural

action that is not questioned by either teacher or student. My aim in this analysis is not to articulate a "correct way" of speaking with students, but to illustrate the impact of language as a form of communication of power and control in a classroom. It is important to note that this classroom was clustered as low implementing but with high engagement meaning that while there was this distinct power structure in the classroom that contrasted with DD practices, students were enthusiastically engaged in subsequent classwork.

However, there was a prominent distinction between the two low implementing clusters. Teachers who were low implementers but had highly engaged classrooms demonstrated a similar power structure to that of the low implementers/low engaged classroom teachers but when thinking about the tone and anecdotal banter that teachers demonstrated, those in the low imp/high engagement shared jokes and humor, and would allow some off-task behavior to which was finished the moment the teacher called it over. Students knew that they could banter with one another in low-implementing/high engaged classrooms, including their teacher until the minute the teacher indicated (either verbally or nonverbally) that it was time to stop. Teachers categorized in the low implementation/low engagement cluster did not attempt to 'walk this line.' There were more indicators of frustration, and commanding speech. For example, in many low implementing/low-engaged classrooms the following phrases were used multiple times during multiple observations,

> "Hey guys, c'mon quiet, settle down" (Bexter, Kamen). There are also variations of these redirecting statements such as Shhhhhh. "excuse me, c'mon.' 'We're being disrespectful.' Ladies, please…'

These were somewhat empty and exasperated redirections in which students were not given explicit warnings or redirection in class for off-task behavior. At times, these teachers also gave observational statements in place of a directive to students in order to get a message across.

For example, Mr. Hett, a science teacher, redirected students using the same several phrases:

> "I am talking, you are not talking!" or "Shhhhhh. I have my hand up with 3 fingers and no one is paying attention," and "Can you calm down, man? I'm trying to talk. I can't keep asking you all to do the same thing over and over again."

Within the DD component of Teacher Language, explicit, concise statements are required when reminding and redirecting students' off-task behavior. These teachers lost sight of these practices (or simply chose not to use them) and seemed to be more irritated and frustrated with students. These examples also relay the recurring theme of word choice when speaking to students using more individualistic pronouns such as, "**I am** talking, **you are not** talking!" as well as, "**I can't** keep asking **you all to** do the same thing over and over again." Isolating the word choice from the evident tone of exasperation, independent roles are assigned as the teacher and as the student in terms of what expectations the educator has constructed.

Social Emotional Learning Beliefs & Practices

While the majority of low-implementing teachers did feel that it is important to integrate this programming with that of academic content, those in the two low implementing typologies believed that it was necessary to incorporate SEL into the school day due to a lack of structure, access and/or parental guidance in the home. In short, they framed the need for SEL integration by thinking about students and their families' inadequacies.

When low-implementing teachers were asked whether SEL practices should be implemented in the classroom, answers were geared as a deficit-framed mindset towards students' home lives and what parents were or were not doing in this capacity. Ms. Wentz (described above) was enthusiastic in answering the question, "Should social emotional learning

be integrated into the middle school day?"

> "SEL is where we need to be. I'd take out ½ the curriculum to focus on the social emotional piece. If things are happening at home, we need to talk about it…"
> "If your home situation is bad, then you're not as concerned with school, you've got other things on your mind"

While she does repeat a similar theme in emphasizing not only academic content but also addressing social emotional needs as educators of adolescents, she makes it a point to reference students' "home situation" as reasoning for this. Ms. Radcliffe also similarly explains her affirmative stance on SEL in the classroom, but then offers her own reasoning by comparing her perception of the lives of her students as compared to her own.

> "Absolutely! I think when I went to school as a kid, I focused on school. And maybe my friends… you know some socials like that. But I didn't go to school and ever think about what was happening back home, because it was safe, and I was getting everything I need. We have kids, you know, coming here thinking about the fact that they watched their mom get beat up last night, or they watched their dad do drugs last night, or they're—they don't know where their mom is because she left, or… I mean crazy... I mean, there's all kinds of things—they didn't eat dinner. I don't know how you can expect a 13 year old to focus on their education when all that is happening at home."

Answers such as these above carry the assumption that if children had strong home lives with active parents, there would not necessarily be a need for SEL during the school day. Environment-centered SEL practices seek to obtain outcomes such as on-task behavior, sense of school belonging, and prosocial behavior. SEL is not referred to as a mechanism of reactive counseling or treatment of trauma. Both of these teachers were in the low-implementing/high engaged typology and it is clear that they support the idea behind social emotional practices but have specific conceptions as to their intention in the classroom. Additionally, Ms. Radcliffe, further explains her outlook on relationship-building with students as a form of social emotional

practice, when she describes her practices at Smith Middle School compared to a more affluent middle school in the district,

> "I think when I moved from Rolling Ridge to Smith, not that Rolling Ridge kids don't have issues and need relationship developing, but as a whole, they're not as needy as Smith kids. By a long shot. And I think that's why I like it here so much specifically…"

Her statements in this excerpt demonstrated her own perceived understanding of why relationship building is an important aspect of social emotional learning practices. While she had a positive affect towards Smith, it seems to also come from a charitable perspective since she perceived students at Smith as "need" and "having issues and needing relationship developing." With these distinct beliefs about SEL practices (differing from DD framing) and her students' backgrounds, she still created a highly-engaged classroom, which may indicate that she is using other high-leverage practices that stimulate student engagement. While she is an authoritarian teacher, she does value and prioritize relationship building with students (despite the reasoning), which is evident in her interview reflections and observed classroom practices.

In the other low-implementing cluster (with observed low-engagement), two teachers were more explicit in their thinking about SEL practices by stating

> "Our plate is pretty much full of mastery of academic subject. I put my foot down a long time ago. That is the parents' responsibility" (Bexter).

This excerpt is a stark contrast from other viewpoints on SEL but offers a clear end to the spectrum in which teachers fall on their views of social emotional learning programming. He does articulate, in a more explicit manner than others, that parents should be responsible for the social emotional learning practices of their children

While both sets of low-implementing teachers expressed a lack of desire to integrate the

DD approach fully into their teaching, there was a difference in reasoning behind that lack of desire. Teachers in the LI/HE group discussed the idea that they already did many of the same practices that DD offers, but they did them in their own way. These practices included, "getting to know students really well, sharing experiences and being silly with students, holding everyone accountable for the same expectations and being consistent." These teachers stated they did appreciate the sharing and conversing with students as a part of the morning CPR but felt strongly opposed to implementing the DD discipline procedures such as the TAB and TAB Out process. Mr. Cadish, a social studies teacher (in the low-implementing/highly engaged cluster) explained that he appreciated the relationship building and communication with and between students but also believed that he had done that on his own volition in previous years,

> "I like the CCA thing. I think that was probably the best thing out of it. I like how we share things. Like, my advisory—we had in the middle of the day. That's what we did. It's sort of what you guys [DD] do. There was a day that we spent on talking about social norms and behaviors—that we worked on other days. To start the morning like that sets a better tone for the building, so I think that was really good with this one I think it sets a nice tone for the building. The TAB Out thing I think is ridiculous, to be truthful" (Cadish)

Through my classroom observations, I found that Mr. Cadish had a very strong rapport with students and it was evident that he had established relationships with his students but did not use any DD practices in his social studies classroom. Again, he may be implementing proactive practices that revolve around management and relationship building that are not specific to DD but generally high-leverage practices.

Low implementing teachers with highly-engaged classrooms explained that they wanted the students to stay in their classroom and they, as the educator, would handle it instead of putting that responsibility on the administration. This attitude matches to their more authoritarian

classroom structure as well in that they demonstrate clear expectations of students that they have explicitly mandated. Ms. Radcliffe reiterated these themes when she explained why she does not use the DD discipline procedures,

> "I'm much more inclined to take a kid out in the hall and have a conversation so that it's about our relationship, and me and not about, you know, get out and go talk to this other person about what happened, because I don't think that that path works very well, and I don't—I also think it sends the message that I can't handle you."

Ms. Radcliffe explained that she used practices that were similar to DD practices in that she already built relationships with their students as a form of classroom management. She emphasized the fact that she is more likely to have an individual conference with a student who is struggling behaviorally because it is "about their relationship" and that she is reiterating the message that she can handle the situation and that student. This final statement of using the TAB procedure, "I also think it sends the message that I can't handle you" echoed her identity as an authoritarian who is able to control her classroom; again, demonstrating a philosophical incongruence from the DD approach.

Low implementing teachers with low-engaged classrooms very clearly explained that DD did not philosophically align with their teaching styles. They stated that they are "bored with it," and think, "it is a waste of time, which the students have also picked up on." They stated that students do not enjoy the programming either. These teachers placed most of their explanation of their impressions of the approach on the discipline practices and how they did not think they were effective or efficient. It is interesting to note that these teachers (LI/LE) were most fixated on the discipline component of the approach as opposed to the proactive nature of the DD practices. DD's discipline system is not necessarily supposed to be reactive but should be used as

another tool to teach kids how to regulate themselves in a classroom. These teachers have exhibited high need for control and traditional authoritarian style, so it seems intuitive and this approach, and the discipline practices do not resonate with their teaching personas.

As indicated in the previous Figure 19 between the low implementing groups, the low-implementing teachers with highly engaged teachers reported nearly double the proportion of responses themed around SEL practices (82%) when thinking about their top priorities as a middle school teacher. This aligns to their responses in interviews stating that they already focused much of their energy on relationship building with students as a form of management.

Table 20. SEL Prioritization Within Low Implementing Teachers

Low implementation/high engagement	
Child-centered academic focus	9%
Teacher-centered (Personal/mental/professional)	9%
Child-centered SEL focus	82%
Non-cognitive skills: (Grit, perseverance, Internal motivation, delayed gratification)	18%
Relationship-building	27%
Self esteem/efficacy	0%
Character education (Responsibility, teamwork, appreciation)	27%
Reactive management/'maturity'	9%
Low implementation/Low Engagement	
Child-centered academic focus	53%
Teacher-centered (personal/mental/professional)	0%
Child-centered SEL focus	41%
Non-cognitive skills: (Grit, perseverance, Internal motivation, delayed gratification)	29%
Relationship-building	5%
Self esteem/efficacy	0%
Character education: (Responsibility, teamwork, appreciation)	0%
Reactive management/'maturity'	12%

The greatest difference between the two low-implementation groups is that of teacher-student interaction and relationship building. While both types of classrooms had similar

classroom structures and power dynamics it was evident that teachers in these two groups differed in how they communicated with students, more specifically, the affect demonstrated towards students including humor, enthusiasm and support.

Humor was a recurring theme but took on various forms when thinking about these two teacher typologies. When teachers in the low implementation groups used humor they predominantly use sarcasm towards the students or poked fun at students. The key distinction between these two groups however is that low implementers/high engagement teachers demonstrated that affection and warmth that the low implementation/low engagement did not demonstrate. Mr. Kamens, a 7th and 8th grade science teacher was monitoring students while they were conducting a lab calculating speed using ramps and toy cars. When checking in with a group, he attempts to poke fun at a particular student in a group,

> "Kamens checks in with a group of boys and one girl and asks if they all have the answer. Eric answers 'it's the average' Mr. Kamens looks at the group and asks, 'you trust Eric with the number?!' He asks this in a surprised tone of voice. Eric says 'that was hurtful with a slight smile,' and Mr. Kamens says 'sorry.' Another girl in the group says, "that is Mr. Kamens. He says something mean to you and then he has to say sorry afterwards."

I noted this instance of humor because while that form of banter (lacking confidence in Eric's ability to find the correct answer) seemed somewhat benign to Eric, the other female student noted that this was a pattern that she had noticed with him. This caused me to believe that while Mr. Kamens attempts at humor when interacting with students, there may be cause to believe that this at times is interpreted at "mean" or unkind which may impact students sense of community and classroom environment.

Within this specific cluster (low implementing/low engaged) most of their humor bordered on annoyance or frustration, while the teachers with high-engaged classrooms used

humor as a form of relationship building and relatedness.

Teachers in the low implementation/high engaged group would use humor in their classroom along with sarcasm, but would do so in a warm but teasing manner. The two examples below were from Ms. Radcliffe's class when she noticed that her students were somewhat off-task,

> "I like all the hard academic work going on here. It looks so valuable. This is sarcastic since the kids are obviously talking and off task when she comes in the room. Ms. Radcliffe smiles coyly while saying this. Students chuckle and then quiet down and get back to work" (Radcliffe)

In this instance, it was clear that she and her students had an established rapport since there was positive affect demonstrated via laughter. Her sarcastic statement, "I like all the hard academic work going on here. It looks so valuable" redirected students in that they quickly modified their behavior and were on task again but students also smiled while doing so indicating a known routine or procedure. While DD explicitly states that sarcasm should be avoided in their teacher language, it seemed to have been beneficial to low-implementing teachers with highly engage classrooms in that it was a style of humor that was more genuine that aided these teachers in their relationship-building with their students.

Comparing Engagement Typologies

When comparing clusters of teachers by those with highly engaged classrooms, I found there to be significantly more similarity than difference even though one cluster was implementing DD with greater fidelity than the others. These engagement clusters (low and high) exhibited similar behaviors and beliefs regarding how a classroom environment should be constructed with regards to classroom management strategies, teacher-student relationships and

how they communicated with students in both proactive and reactive ways.

Classroom Management Practices

It was evident that the level of engagement was strongly correlated with the observed effectiveness of classroom management on the teacher's part. Teachers in the highly engaged classrooms utilized various forms of classroom management strategies such as proximity and monitoring, language choice and redirecting approaches and had a general sense of with-it-ness and intuition (Kounin, 1977) when directing the class.

The two typologies with highly engaged classrooms used monitoring strategies such as proximity and active involvement in the lesson as a proactive monitoring and reactive redirecting of students. Additionally, they demonstrated much more movement whether it was walking around the classroom checking for student work, or simply checking in with students who had their hand raised to ask questions. When observing Mr. Barken (HI/HE), I asked where I could sit so as not to be obtrusive, and he told me, "sit at my desk, I'm never there anyway" (Barken, 9/10/12). This excerpt, along with my other observations of his classroom of verbally monitoring by listening and giving feedback during individual students' think-pair-share activities and independent work, was illustrative of his use of physical movement around the classroom engaging with students while monitoring and "checking in." Given prior work by Skinner & Belmont, teachers' guidance and involvement with individual students impact the degree to which students feel motivated and a greater sense of competence and relatedness (1993). Such that monitoring and physical proximity were observed practices in this study, students in these high-engaged classrooms may be feeling more connected to their teacher and peers. Because teachers demonstrated these practices in both high and low implementing

clusters, these teachers could be achieving strong student engagement with or without DD but still using these high leverage practices.

Another classroom management practice I found recurring based a specific indicator that emerged in my field notes and coded it as observed with-it-ness (Kounin, 1977). I use this term to describe teachers who work at being as aware as possible of all events and student behavior in the classroom and actively monitor it (Kounin, 1970). Many know this idea as "the teacher who has eyes in the back of his/her head" phenomenon. There were very clear examples in which teachers demonstrated with-it-ness and teachers who did not demonstrate this ability. For example in my field notes I recorded,

> "While Ms. Radcliffe (low implementing/high engaged) is teaching and looking at the problem set on the overhead, and the side of her body is facing the front of the class, she says, 'If the 1st one is 'yes,' then you have to check the second one. Brooklyn, pick your head up.' There is a very smooth flow from the procedural teaching she is doing in terms of formulas and making sure that all are in engaged. She did not move her body at all, just caught disengagement using her peripheral vision" (Radcliffe, 1 /13).

In the same breath, she was able to go through the problem while redirecting her student who she saw out of the corner of her had her head on the table. Because this verbal warning was clear and fluid, there was no disruption or time off task, which influences the sense of urgency and academic climate of the classroom.

Teachers with highly-engaged classrooms also used non-verbal or discrete hand gestures while teaching so as not to lose time on management but all based on the with-it-ness of the teacher (Pete, 1/30/13). Another example of this is in Ms. Ranser's classroom ELA classroom with 6th grade students.

> "An Asian boy is taping his pen on his desk repeatedly, while teaching, Mrs. Ranser turns around (her body was turned from the boy) and points to him without saying anything but with stern look. He stops immediately" (Ranser, 9/18/13).

It is clear that Mrs. Ranser used that awareness while her back was turned in order to have the student stop his distracting pen taping. Scholars have noted that teaches who demonstrate with-it-ness have the ability to multitask; they notice the behavior of all students and respond quickly to unexpected events. They also pay close attention to students' nonverbal and verbal responses. A teacher who uses with-it-ness interacts with students in an effort to redirect and refocus attention. Ms. Ranser demonstrated her ability to do this in multiple classroom observations. Her ability to continue a lesson while redirecting a student in a nonverbal manner impacted the high level of engagement her students displayed.

In low-engaged classrooms, teachers either do not notice student talk and/or behavior or choose not to address it (which also indirectly demonstrates a lack of urgency in terms of classroom climate building). I documented in my field notes that some teachers simply lack some of this awareness.

> "I [observer] come into Mr. Bexter's class and ask if there are any empty seats. He says, 'I couldn't tell you. We may but I don't know where.' When I asked an African American male student if they had assigned seats, he said they did. I find this to be somewhat odd that he didn't know since they obviously had assigned seats" (Bexter).

If Mr. Bexter had assigned seats in his classroom, he should have been able to know if all the seats would be taken in a given class period. I believe this to be that he either did not have the time or motivation to interact with me in this regard, or that he did not demonstrate the awareness of how he had situated his own classroom. In either instance, a lack of motivation was demonstrated.

> "In a LI/LE classroom an African American girl Katrina and another female student of Muslim decent (?) have their hands raised for a very long time. I would say at least 4-5 minutes. Mr. Hett says, "If he's (Randy an African American boy) the only one with a hand up, I'm going to call on him." The Muslim girl then finally blurts

> out, 'I've had my hand up!' In a frustrated tone. She is sitting in the front left row so I do find this odd since she's had her hand up for at least 4-5 minutes. She then checks out the rest of the class period" (Hett, 4/24/13).

While I do not know if he did not wish to call on this female student purposefully, I believe he did not see her hand raised at all even though she was sitting in the front of the classroom in his line of vision. This lack of with-it-ness impacts students' motivation and engagement as it did with the one female student considering she felt invisible during this situation.

A last point to note would be the sense of urgency that teachers demonstrated towards their students. In highly-engaged classrooms, as soon as the bell rang, teachers were in their classrooms reminding students what needed to be done, or there was a stopwatch started. In low-engaged classrooms, there was a more lax quality to the beginning of class. Students would casually walk into class, or would be in the room socializing with their peers even after the bell had rung. In highly-engaged classrooms, teachers were prompt with their lesson and began with enthusiasm investing their students in the day. For example in "Ms. Shelley's advisory, she stated, 'we want this greeting to go pretty quickly. Your job is to make eye contact.' There is a tone to her voice that is enthusiastic but pressing the time issue" (Shelley, 9/11/12). Teachers also used phrases such as, "what we are doing to day is what college kids do. I know we can do this!" (Barken, 9/20/12).

In low-engaged classrooms, there was a lack of urgency in beginning the class period. For example, during a morning observation, Mr. Bexter walked back into his classroom 2 minutes after the bell has run and says in a low monotone voice, "okay. Here we go" (Bexter). What separates the low-engaged classrooms is that high implementing teachers have a warmth and affect but lack the press and urgency that high-implementing/highly-engaged teachers demonstrate. The low implementing/low engaged cluster simply does not convey that affect or

urgency.

Developmental Designs has a module of what they call "Teacher Language" that focuses on the neutral explicitness needed when reminding, redirecting and assigning consequences for students. Because I found teachers who were demonstrating this ability in teacher language based on engagement status and not implementation status, that furthered my questioning of the implementation of DD and what was needed to create an engaged classroom of students.

Teachers also varied in their language choice when facilitating and redirecting their students for management purposes. In highly-engaged classrooms, teachers used very direct language in the form of statements instead of asking students to complete a task. For example, "it is not talking time. Take a seat" (Ranser-HI/HE) was a directive often used, while in both low engaged classrooms, directions and reminders were often asked as questions, such as "can you take your correct seat please?" (O'Connell).

High implementing/highly engaged teachers conveyed a sense of affect and community when managing students through verbal communication, while also stating their directions and redirections. These teachers also conveyed a sense of ownership that was not displayed in other classrooms. In field notes taken from Ms. Pete's elective choir/music class (high implementation/high engagement) she uses specific language in order to redirect students quickly,

> "I lost ya. I need ya back…I see a lot of extra movement. I know it's distracting for me, so it must be distracting for some of you" (Pete).

There seemed to be a distinction between teachers' nagging versus teachers' reminding of students. What I found Ms. Pete to be doing was implicitly emphasizing a greater sense of purpose in her directive. Ms. Pete noticed that students were talking, and she had recognized

that, and took ownership over "losing them." What was implied was that what she was saying was important and they needed to hear it. The problem was not that students were talking but that students were not paying attention to learning and that it was distracting not only for them but includes herself for which the talking is a distraction. DD emphasizes language and "sweating the small stuff" in order to avoid greater conflict and maintain high expectations. I coded Ms. Pete as not only doing this, but also having taken ownership over her actions and reminding and redirecting students using explicit language in what she had observed and what needs to be done to rectify it.

In contrast, low implementing/high engaged teachers were more dominant in the nature of teacher-talk towards students and did have banter with students but then quickly regulated off-task behavior based on their own expectations of students. They also coupled these statements with the aforementioned humor or affect that was previously described. For example, in Ms. Radcliffe's math class, she redirected a student, who was out of his appropriate seat at the beginning of class,

> "The bell rings, and an African American boy is sitting in the wrong seat, Ms. Radcliffe says in a playful tone and emphasizes each word, 'Not. Your. Seat. Wa-sting-our-time.' Student responds well with a smile and goes to seat quickly" (Radcliffe).

> "Additionally she redirects another student who is off-task playing with Velcro on his jacket, "Luke, you're makin me crazy man, you gotta get that handled" there is a humorous tone but it is also a serious subtext so he stops playing with his Velcro but smiles/lightly laughs with her" (Radcliffe).

Compared to the example above with Ms. Pete, both of these illustrate a different type of redirection using humor as a form of affect to redirect a student. While Ms. Pete said, "I lost ya. I need ya back, and Ms. Radcliffe emphasized the syllables of her words, "wa-sting our time" and "you gotta get that handled," both statements expressed a sense of urgency as a redirection, and

achieved successful reengagement of their students. However, Ms. Radcliffe's (low implementing/high engaged) use of somewhat more assertive and cutting humor is a different form of affect (that relies on a prior relationship building) than that of Ms. Pete's warm and explicit redirection (emphasizing again the collectivity of the class) as a high implementing/high engaged teacher.

In low-engaged classrooms language used for management purposes was quite different than their high-engaged counterparts. There were fewer explicit directions and redirections were fueled more by raw emotion as opposed to a clear urgency as to why students needed to be redirected. Using previous field note excerpts, in many low implementing/low-engaged classrooms the following phrases were used multiple times during multiple observations,

> "Hey guys, c'mon quiet, settle down" (Bexter, Kamen). There are also variations of these redirect such as Shhhhhh. "excuse me, c'mon.' 'We're being disrespectful.' Ladies, please…"

These were somewhat empty and exasperated redirections in which students were not given explicit warning or redirection in class. Often, negative emotion was conveyed towards the redirecting of students as well. Below is an excerpt from Ms. Schmidt's science class in which students were responsible for conducting a lab experiment in groups. This observation illustrated the reactive language choice as a form of classroom discipline in a high implementing/low-engaged classroom.

> "In Ms. Schmidt's class, one of the African American boys dropped a light bulb during the independent lab experiment and it broke on the floor. Ms. Schmidt quickly goes to their side of the room and said to the student (Blake) who apparently broke it (I presume by accident, since he looked quite surprised), "I do blame you all for this." She sounded quite harsh and exasperated at this group (made up of 3 African American boys and one Latino boy) and then looks at Blake and yells at him to go outside in the hall. He does so silently" (Schmidt, 1/11/13).

She was quite reactive and emotionally driven with exasperation during this situation and cleaned up the light bulb before going to speak to the student out in the hall. This example demonstrated not only a heightened reaction but also the language choice of 'blaming' a student for a mistake as opposed using it as a teachable moment or being more explicit in the actions leading up the incident may have implications for the lower level of student engagement in that classroom. While Ms. Schmidt was categorized as a high implementing teacher (due to the necessary DD indicators that I observed), but her management choices and strategies were quite weak. This finding calls to attention the necessary enthusiasm or affect that teachers need when working with their students. An embedded assumption to achieving strong student engagement could be the necessary enthusiasm or affect when interacting with students, whether one uses DD or not. It could be that Ms. Schmidt was simply "going through the motions" of what was expected of her as a teacher.

It was clear during this observation that Ms. Schmidt explicitly placed "blame" on this particular student. During her interview, she also articulated a more external locus of control when discussing her classroom management systems and overall classroom climate. This was a prominent theme that emerged among teachers with low-engaged classrooms. Ms. Schmidt stated,

> "My 1st hour tends to be more put downish. There tend to be more dynamics in the room of kids who are more troubled and they tend to gossip and call each name. You know I mean it's not all of 'em, but certainly there's a few where there seems to be some. And maybe because its 1st hour and they bring the baggage in from home, and that's very possible. My last hour of the day, I've got 5 or 6 kids who are constantly disrupting the whole class. The other three quarters are angels, saints; they do everything they're supposed to do. But the others are so out of control that I have, they're my most disruptive class of the day, but it's only 5 or 6. So I guess it just sort of depends on the class."

Ms. Schmidt, along with other teachers in these typologies believed that classroom climate "depended on the class" of student themselves as opposed to the climate impacting student behavior. Additionally, Ms. Schmidt focused much of her reflection on classroom climate on her perceptions of student personalities and student-centered actions. This was seen in how she described her 1st hour class as "put downish" in that they were more likely to tease and put each other down more than other classes. Additionally, she reiterated the general perception that students "bring their baggage from home" which may also influence the climate in her classroom. Further, she focused on the 5-6 students who were "so out of control" impacting that particular class' dynamic. I found that teachers in these two typologies were much less likely to recognize themselves as the common denominator to all of their classes. There was little to no reflection of how their actions as a teacher could influence their climate or management strategies.

In order to demonstrate the contrast to this theme, Mr. Cadish, a low-implementing teacher with a high engaged classroom answered the same question in a different way,

> "**A lot of your [a teacher's] focus has to be on those really challenged kids early. Once you check them, now your environment is a whole lot safer.** That draws out those other kids and then allows you to get a better focus in the room. Those kids—it makes a safe environment for the most part. **Structured, yes. Organized—Everyone's equal. It's safe, for sure.** That's main. I see a lot of growth—there's growing goin' on. I wanna say regimented, but that's really kind of a restrictive word, but it is regimented. Kids are allowed to interact in a way that's effective for their learning, so I dunno'. I make sure there's no deviation because if there is, now the kids are uncertain as to, "Well, I got away with this. He got away with this. I can get away with this." Now they're always wondering, so in the back of their mind it's like what's gonna happen? See, in here, okay, there's no confusion, no bewilderment. It's like you know if you do this, this happens. If you do this, this happens. **There's consequences and there's rewards—- but they are the same for everyone and they're the same every day, every hour. In terms of discipline: I'll take care 'em. I take care of my own."**

Mr. Cadish began by situating himself in his answer when he stated, "a lot your focus has to be on those really challenged kids early." While he shared the idea that some kids were more troublesome or "challenged" (Ms. Schmidt referred to it as "baggage"), he directly indicated that his focus as a teacher is to "check them" in order to create a safer environment. It is important to note that while Mr. Cadish suggested (in his practice and his interviews) that he did not like the DD approach, he used the word "safe" as a way to describe his classroom climate. Even though he was a low-implementing teacher, he had a highly engaged classroom, signifying that he may not necessarily have needed to implement DD practices, but did agree in the establishment of an environment that DD aims to create. Mr. Cadish also stated that he did not appreciate the TAB discipline system in his classroom and this is further indicated in his last statement in the excerpt, "There's consequences and there's rewards—- but they are the same for everyone and they're the same every day, every hour. In terms of discipline: I'll take care 'em. I take care of my own." While this thought also aligned with his observed hierarchical classroom structure, he explained that he took ownership over all the discipline procedures in his classroom ("I'll take care of 'em. I take care of my own") and did not need external assistance, either via DD or administration. It seemed that Mr. Cadish was quite self aware in his actions and thoughts about his classroom and students, indicating a much more internal locus of control as compared to teachers with low-engaged classrooms.

Each of Mr. Cadish's adjectives to describe his classroom climate, structured, organized, equal and consistent, were more much teacher-centered in terms of actions as opposed to Ms.

Schmidt's in which she was much more focused on her students' personalities and actions. Developmental Designs focuses on teachers' action and language in order to achieve student engagement and motivation. This theme may present an important assumption to how teachers' belief systems could impact climate building and management practices, but also how they implement environment-centered SEL practices.

Social Emotional Learning Beliefs & Practices

Teacher-student relationships are an important indicator of environment-based SEL programming. This concept is also integral to the DD mission and its implementation. Given past work that has shown a decline (from elementary to middle school) in reported affect in teacher-student relationships, it was important to consider how teachers interacted with their students and demonstrated support (Pianta & Hamre, 2003 ;Eccles et al., 1988; Miller, 1970). Students often perceive their middle school teachers to be less warm, caring and supportive as compared to their elementary school teachers, which has shown to impact motivation in the classroom and engagement in the classroom (Pianta, 1992; Wentzel & Asher, 1995).

Because one of the core tenets of the DD program model is community building and the development of bonds between teachers and their students, I hypothesized it to be another significant observable characteristic that could impact an educator's inclination to implement DD in his or her classroom. I found various instances of relationship building in my field notes that exhibited patterns by engagement status as well, which a greater examination of what practices were being used with and without the DD approach.

Teachers categorized in the high engagement classrooms demonstrated significantly more instances of relatedness or "belongingness" (Baumeister & Leary, 1995) when interacting with

students as compared to students in low engaged classrooms. Instances of relatedness included teachers beginning their class period with some sort of greeting such as "good afternoon everyone, it is so good to see you!" or "It is so good to see you guys, I feel like I haven't seen you in forever because of the long weekend!" Teachers in the low-engaged classrooms were either finishing last-minute items right as the bell began or simply began their classes with the agenda for that class period and had a more muted tone. For example, in a low implementation-low engaged classroom, this excerpt was documented,

> "An African American female student comes into class enthusiastically saying "Hi!" to Mr. Bexter, and he responds with a quick look and a flat, monotone "hello" and asks her to sit down to start their classwork" (Bexter, 1/23/13).

Mr. Bexter's lack of enthusiasm (and affect) that reciprocated the student's greeting demonstrated an absence of warmth and regard for interacting with this student. It may be that this teacher has a greater sense of depleted energy when working with students. After this interaction, the student simply sat at her desk and did not attempt to continue interacting with Mr. Bexter for that class period. This was an ongoing pattern, with this teacher specifically, in how he chose to either not interact and bond with students or interact with them in a disrespectful manner. In an earlier observation during his morning advisory session, he had a particularly negative interaction with another male student that again thwarted any sense of interaction with this particular student,

> "Two African American boys are having a side conversation during the sharing portion of the CPR. One of the boys says to his friend, 'Yes he do!" in a friendly, enthusiastic tone. Mr. .Bexter overhears this conversation and inserts himself into it by saying, 'it's yes **he does**.' The student simply responds with an authoritative 'DO.' Mr. Bexter says that students should be speaking properly in school and then the subject gets dropped. The student he was speaking with then puts his head down for the rest of the advisory activity and disengages for the next 20 minutes."

Mr. Bexter made it a point to interject his opinion during this conversation, not to refocus students on the CPR sharing, but to correct the student's language. There was no reflection with the student as to why he felt he should do that, and quite explicitly turned the situation into two opposing parties. This was another instance in which the lack of relationship building between teacher and student impacted student motivation and affect in the class activity. This type of interaction also led to an observable decrease in engagement.

Teachers who were labeled high implementers/high engagement were very warm and nurturing in a loving manner with their students while teachers labeled as low implementers/high engagement demonstrated their warmth through banter, sarcasm and humor with their students. There was less of a traditional loving and nurturing quality in this type of classroom but it is evident that students feel safe and cared for.

In terms of communication, there were similar modes of communication between high engagement clusters. While I previously described the use of humor as a way of communication redirections in management, humor was also closely linked to demonstrations of enthusiasm on the part of teachers in order to start class, motivate students during lecture or independent work time, or keep them engaged towards the end of class. This was most specifically seen in the high-engaged classrooms and little to never done in the low-engaged classes. When starting a lesson, Mr. Barken (high implementation/high engagement) would exclaim in a confident, enthusiastic tone,

"We are about take over the world right now!" (Barken, 9/20/12).

This statement again included the collective 'we,' and was infused with confidence in the students, coupled with the implicit urgency that what they were about to do next was very

impactful, enough to "take over the world." The kids responded to this by looking at him quizzically ready to find out how they were to do this. There was an observed increase in engagement because students were intrigued as to what the lesson was going to be for that day.

Half of the low implementing/high engaged teachers also articulated the importance of relationship building as a means to their classroom management. Ms. Radcliffe discussed this idea when she was talking about how she stresses the relationship management with her "target students" who may be a bit more of a challenge,

> "…the daily trying to manage how to **keep a relationship on target with the kids so that they will work for you**, because I think **the reality is for so many of these kids, they are working for you**, and whether or not that's what we want them to be doing, that is what they're doing, I think. So I think there are like a lot of kids who… (1 sec) I don't want to say I tip-toe around them, but I manage our relationship constantly to keep it at a point where they're going to be successful in the classroom.

Teachers in this typology were very clear in proactively forging positive relationships with students as means of general classroom management, especially those who were more prone to derailing a lesson. She also again reiterated the embedded theme of control when she explains that "many of these kids, they are working for you…" The idea that kids are working for their teacher indicates that hierarchical mentality of students seeking positive assessment or approval in their work. Further, in this statement, she has explicitly indicated that she was referring to "these kids," meaning kids at Smith. She had already expressed her perception of students at Smith as needing to build relationships at school due to turbulent home lives as compared to the more affluent Rolling Ridge students. While she exhibited strong relationship building skills as well as indicating that it was a priority for her, because of her enjoyment in interacting with students and its use in classroom management, her belief system surrounding this practice come

for an authoritarian deficit framing.

Teachers in the low implementation/high engaged group would use humor in their classroom along with sarcasm, but would do so in a warm but teasing manner. The two examples below were from Ms. Radcliffe's class when she saw that her students were somewhat off-task,

> "I like all the hard academic work going on here. It looks so valuable. This is sarcastic since the kids are obviously talking and off task when she comes in the room. Students chuckle and then quiet down and get back to work" (Radcliffe, 2/8/13)

> "Ms. Radcliffe has a word problem on the overhead project that tied into the formation of an algebraic formula. Students need to read the word problem and try to solve the question. This problem has to do with signing a gym membership contract and paying the initial fee and subsequent monthly increments. During the algebra problem, Ms. Radcliffe makes a joke asking the class, "are you 1 of those people who says they'll go to the gym at the New Year but then end up not doing that? (Insinuating she is one of these people), and laughs a lot out loud after her joke" (Radcliffe, 4/30/13).

She used sarcastic humor to redirect students in the first excerpt, but also used a similar type of humor to relate the academic content (solving word problems about a gym membership on the overhead). Because students positively reacted to these two instances, it seemed as though she had communicated with these students that this type of humor was genuine to her character as a teacher. Students appeared to enjoy these interactions during my observations.

One of the reasons I believe Ms. Radcliffe's humor (along with other teachers with highly-engaged classrooms) worked well with students was because they utilized personal honesty and transparency when interacting with their students while others (with low-engaged classrooms) did not disclose as much information about themselves that did not pertain to either academic material or school day logistics. Teachers in both high engagement groups would speak to the students about what they did the weekend prior, about their own families and children or what school was like when they were an adolescent. Several observations included

teachers discussing their own transition from 8th grade to high school with their current 8th grade students. This began a discussion on what sort of expectations students had for their high school experience, and inevitably, students would ask their teacher about what their experiences were as a 9th grader in high school.

Another use of this sense of "teacher honesty" was to hook students into a given lesson or activity. During the first day of his poetry unit, Mr. Barken asked students to recall events in their lives that were emotional. He began the conversation with the following personal anecdote,

> "He talks about the scary movies he saw as a kid with his girl cousins and how that might have caused the heightened emotion in his life. He goes on to explain that each year when he sees his students learning he sighs with emotion and also says that when his male students read poetry every year someone chokes up including himself."

Students were always engaged in Mr. Barken's class in part because students were interested in his personal stories and thoughts, and because he related the majority of activities to relevant aspects of students' lives. Ms. Ranser (HI/HE) also echoed this notion of honesty when she explained how she addressed socio-emotional needs in her classroom community,

> "I think that, in the past, when I would tell them, "My mom is ill, and I'm upset and I'm frustrated, and I don't mean to take it out on you," or "My husband really said something to me this morning that really teed me off, and I haven't gotten over it yet," or "I have a headache," or "I'm in a bad mood." I think it's a give and take…I'm honest and upfront with them, and I, in turn, have received that from them."

When Ms. Ranser gave these examples of very personal feelings, such as "My mom is ill, and I'm upset and I'm frustrated, and I don't mean to take it out on you…" she was sharing with her students in an attempt to be honest with them, especially if these feelings were impacting her own behavior as a teacher on that given day. There is a humanistic quality to this type of teacher

interaction with students that allows for a deeper interaction with students, in turn, impacting the way students perceive their teacher, and his/her support. She also made it a point to note that when she has exhibited this sort of honesty, it is reciprocated towards her as well, which ultimately impacts her classroom climate.

Teachers in the low-implementing/low-engaged classrooms rarely, if ever were documented to engage in this sort of dialogue with students, while the high implementation/low engaged cluster attempted to do this at times, but it was often muted or fell flat. A point to be further explored was the differentiation between the high implementing/highly engaged classroom teachers and the high-implementing/low-engaged classroom teachers. During many of these observations, high implementing/low engaged teachers attempted to use dialogue and build relationships with students via humor, and relatedness, but often did not do so successfully because of the lack of management practices.

Distinguishing the two clusters of high-implementing teachers came down to the lack of follow-through or even authenticity of the affect and relationship building in high implementing/low engaged teachers. Those who were high implementing with highly engaged classrooms demonstrated a sincerity and warmth towards students that came off to others as natural and genuine. For high implementing teachers with low engaged classrooms, these observations of affect and relationship building was somewhat more muted or disingenuous. This can be seen in an interaction documented in my field notes of Mrs. O'Connell's 7th grade afternoon class when she was speaking with a student,

> Female student: I poked my eye. Student's eye is shut and watering.
> O'Connell: Okay, I'm sorry, what would you like me to do? Would you like to go to the office?
> Female student: No.
> O'Connell: No. Then I don't know what to tell you, Lee. You can put your head down.

While Ms. O'Connell was sensitive to this by checking in with the student and giving her the choice to go to the nurse, there was a short interchange ("Then I don't know what to tell you, Lee") when the student did not want to go to the nurse. It did not look like the student was trying to disrupt the activity and had genuinely hurt herself.

There was noticeable intent on engaging with students and attempting to build a sense of relatedness and trust with students, in the high implementing/low engagement cluster. However, It seemed as though teachers did not have student buy-in with high implementing/low engaged teachers attempts at building of relatedness. During a mid-year observation in Mr. Thomas' (HI/LE) 7th grade math class, he had a very clear sense of the frustration that his students were feeling towards the writing of a problem set they were working on in explaining the concept of surface area. He attempted to relate to and invest his students by explaining to them that he also had to write and develop his own writing skills and how important it was to develop this skill,

> "It's important to write in all your classes. I'm in a Masters program and I have to write a lot too, even math teachers write!"

However, after trying to attempt at personal honesty with students, students were still disengaged and did not fully buy into this empathy. Based on this observation and the previous examples, the common denominator that I found when thinking about why these teachers were unsuccessful in their attempts to relate to students similarly to the HI/HE teachers is that of effective classroom management practice. It appears as though in order to effectively get to know one's students and build strong relationships with them, basic classroom management and expectations need to be instilled before you are able to forge a more personal and honest relationship with students. The paradox in this is that many teachers use relationships with students to aid their classroom

management, but for this cluster it seems as though management is first needed before relationship building.

Chapter Discussion

While there was a distinct pattern by implementation status in how teachers situated themselves as authority figures in their classrooms, this authoritarian versus constructivist classroom structure did not impact engagement levels as distinctly. High implementing teachers were more likely to have emphasized (via practice and interview reflections) the co-construction of goals and expectations in their classroom environment, and expressed their identity as a teacher while learning from their students. Low implementing teachers were more likely to have created a traditional classroom in which the educator is the leader of the classroom and had created consistent expectations and goals for their students. Whether a teacher set up his/her classroom in a front-facing row structure and emphasized more teacher-talk; or created a more collaborative, and evenly distributed teacher-student talk did not qualitatively impact the observed behavioral engagement of students.

Scholars have found that teachers exhibit greater decision-making and increase in control in the middle school classroom (Eccles et al., 1988; Midgely et al., 1987). Given the normative development of adolescence and the desire for increased independence and greater allowance of decision-making opportunities, teachers may perceive their need for control and communication of power for various reasons. DD may be more philosophically aligned with high implementing teachers' beliefs and practices because they favor the adolescent development of middle school students and integrating these beliefs in their practices.

Another key distinction between low and high implementing teachers included the

normative versus deficit-based viewpoint on SEL in schools and why it was necessary. The issue was not that the two implementation statuses were from two different camps of whether social emotional learning should be included in the school day, but the reasoning behind why it was important to include. High implementing teachers believed that SEL practices were a part of the development of a middle school student and impacted the classroom environment. Low implementing teachers felt that SEL was important to students because the lack of these skills (along with "troubled home lives") impacted their behavior and academic functioning. This finding may have implications in how programmers and facilitators conduct professional development sessions in given SEL programs.

Both high-engaged clusters demonstrated strong classroom management practices and belief systems surrounding these practices whether they were using DD practices or not. These teachers exhibited more internal locus of control when thinking about their classroom climate and management strategies, while teachers with low-engaged classrooms focused on student attributes and actions that impacted their classroom climate. Through classroom observations, I found while students were engaged (behaviorally) in a more traditional classroom, DD provided opportunities in engagement via student-student collaboration and more distributed teacher-student dialogue. In the more authoritarian classroom, there was still observed engagement but the classroom structures in place were not autonomy supportive to middle school students.

CHAPTER SIX:
DISCUSSION

Introduction

While there has been work done on how teachers' beliefs impact academic core content areas such as science, math and literacy (Manseur 2013; Turner 2010), there is considerably less work done on how these belief systems impact social emotional learning practices. The purpose of this dissertation was to explore middle school teachers' characteristics, including their practices and beliefs systems, and if (or how) they related to the motivation to implement the Developmental Designs teaching approach. I also aimed to find mechanisms by which engagement was produced with and without the use of DD practices. This study adds to the academic literature by addressing what sorts of teaching philosophies and practices align with teachers' motivation to implement social emotional learning approaches.

As previously stated in Chapter One, prior studies have focused on teachers' beliefs and perceptions of setting-level characteristics that may impact SEL implementation fidelity. This study investigated teachers as program providers and what preconceived beliefs teachers were coming into their classrooms with, when thinking about what an optimal classroom environment looked like and whether the given SEL approach mapped on to that archetype. It is intuitive to think that if DD practices did not closely align to how teachers mentally situated themselves

and their students in their classroom that may have impacted the degree to which they implement the approach.

Using mixed methods to collect both quantitative and qualitative data from multiple informants allowed for descriptive analyses of my research question(s). During one academic year, I conducted classroom observations, and interviews with 24 middle school teachers while also surveying those teachers and their students in order to triangulate data. This triangulation allowed me to substantiate patterns that I found in the data and also gave me a more nuanced view on where teachers and their students were converging and diverging in their perceptions of classroom practices as they related to DD.

Teachers' reports of their implementation frequency and motivation aligned closely with the cluster in which they were categorized. High implementing/high engaged classrooms reported the highest means of DD use, with high implementing/low engaged classrooms following, and the lowest reported means being low implementers with low engaged classrooms. These trends served as mean endorsements corresponding with the clustering of teachers, lending validity to my initial grouping of these teachers.

Teachers' impressions of the DD approach also seem fairly intuitive in that teachers who did not implement the approach either at all or with little fidelity had more negative or apathetic feelings towards the impact the approach was having on their classroom climate and student behavior with lower motivation levels as compared to those categorized as high implementers.

High Implementing Teachers

Teachers in these two typologies structured their classroom in a democratic manner and fostered an autonomy-supportive environment for their students. These high implementing

teachers relinquished an appropriate amount of decision-making control and structured their classroom in a more constructivist approach both in how the classroom was arranged and how they spoke to and about students.

In terms of physical structuring of the high-implementing classroom, these classrooms all had seating arrangements that were either in clusters or groups, U-shape, or two rows of students on each of the side classroom facing one another as in a debate form. High implementing teachers were observed to be more constructivist in how they structured their classrooms and how they interacted with their students. In other words, they were less traditionally authoritarian.

These teachers also conveyed a philosophy of co-constructing rules and expectations with their students as to how the classroom should run, while low implementing teachers either did not mention this process of rule building or stated that they created the expectations. This was a strong indicator of how teachers demonstrated and thought about power and control in their classrooms. It became evident that these classroom structures impacted the learning environment as well. In this type of classroom, students were likely to be engaged in partner- or group-work since the seating structure facilitated those transitions. High implementing teachers demonstrated more distributed talk between teacher and students. This was seen through more peer-peer interaction and less of a lecture-style classroom.

While the majority of teachers deemed SEL appropriate, if not necessary, for middle school students, the reasoning behind why it was important differed by implementation status. High implementing teachers based their beliefs on the normative development of their students and felt that the inclusion of SEL practices was necessary simply because students were undergoing social transition and needed additional vocabulary and strategies to gain additional self- and social-awareness. Additionally, they approached SEL as necessary to the type of environment

that they wanted to create in their classroom. Again, because DD is an environment-centered SEL approach focusing on the construction of a safe and fun community of learners, this viewpoint aligned with those reflections stated by high implementing teachers. It was evident that there were philosophical differences in how teachers viewed and structured their classroom in terms of authority and control as well as how they understood social emotional learning practices and their importance in the middle school classroom. These themes were correlated with the degree to which they were implementing the DD approach.

Students who had teachers in both high implementing typologies (whether in a highly-engaged or low-engaged classroom) reported significantly higher means of support as compared to students with a low-implementing 5th hour teacher in a low-engaged classroom. Since DD is a SEL intervention specifically targeted towards teachers and enhancing their practices in addressing adolescents' needs and developing a more "inclusive learning community," students may be seeing the impact of this through high-implementing teachers' actions. Additionally, students in the high implementing classrooms, regardless of engagement, felt more highly socially efficacious than those students in low-implementing classrooms. Because these high implementing classrooms were observed to be less authoritarian and more co-constructed in their structure and with how teachers interacted with students, it seems feasible that students in these types of classrooms would feel more able and confident to interact with their teachers more freely than those who were in the low implementing, more traditional authoritarian structured classroom.

Low Implementing Teachers

Low implementing teachers conveyed a more hierarchical power structure in their classrooms. These classrooms were structured with desks all situated in more of an authoritarian arrangement with even rows all facing the front of the classroom. With this set up, a significant portion of independent work, or lecture-style learning was observed in low implementing classrooms also given the physical structures in place. This structure is quite different from the philosophy and practices that DD assumes. The inclination, in beliefs and practices, to structure a classroom in this way may be a reason as to why teachers may not gravitate to DD's more constructivist practices.

Control and power were also observed in the communication to students. Low implementing teachers conducted their practice in a more traditional way of teaching in which the teacher dominated much of the classroom talk via lecture and call-and-response methods and imparted knowledge to students as recipients. Language choice was also a distinct mode of communicating power in the classroom. Pronouns such as "I" and "you" were more often heard when speaking with students, while high implementing teachers used pronouns such as "we" and "us conveying a more collective and collaborative message to students. This finding was also confirmed when discussing teachers' interactions with students during their interview reflections.

These teachers differed by implementation status in how they approached the need for social emotional learning in school practices. Low implementing teachers conveyed a deficit-based reasoning in that they felt that SEL practices were needed because students were facing issues at home and could not focus on their academic schoolwork without having these issues and needs met. There was embedded subtext that if these children had home lives that were stable and if parents were offering the socio-emotional training, it would not necessarily be as much of a

priority for teachers. This attitude aligned with the background context that district stakeholders also reported on Smith teachers having the proverbial "chip on their shoulder" in how they viewed Smith students as "at-risk and lowest performing" and the stress in teaching the "neediest population" in the district. This viewpoint may be related to their implementation status in that they felt that this SEL initiative would not necessarily address the underlying issues they felt these kids to be facing.

Teachers with Highly Engaged Classrooms

There was notably more alignment of both practices and beliefs when typologies were collapsed by engagement status. Even though there were differences in the reasoning behind why SEL should be integrated in the school day, both sets of teachers with highly-engaged classrooms made a priority of building strong relationships with students both as a form of creating a sense of relatedness and belonging, but also for classroom management purposes. A common theme demonstrated in both classroom observations and in interviews with teachers was that the relationship building with students during the course of the year was not only one of the rewards of teaching at this level, but was also considered a top priority for them as teachers. Also, Integrating social emotional learning practices was more salient to these teachers as compared to low-engaged teachers. This theme indicated that teachers with highly engaged classrooms reported prioritizing SEL in their practice and considered it important to the school experience of students, but this did not necessarily mean that teachers wanted (or needed) to implement DD as an SEL initiative. It is possible that teachers in the low-implementing/high engaged typology already implemented high leverage practices, such as relationship building as a form of proactive classroom management, and did not feel they need DD as a framework.

Both high engaged clusters also demonstrated strong classroom management practices whether they were DD practices or not. This was a key distinction between the two sets of engagement clusters. Low-engaged classrooms all demonstrated lack of consistent (or equitable) classroom management practices. Teachers in high-engaged clusters were more likely to actively monitor students, demonstrate strong with-it-ness, and reported their classroom management strategy revolving around their actions of consistency of expectations, routines and procedures compared to those teachers with low engaged classrooms.

Additionally, when asked to reflect on their classroom management and its impact on classroom climate, teachers with high engaged classrooms all indicated that the maintenance of expectations and procedures was what drove their management, while teachers with low-engaged classrooms indicated much of their management was dependent on the class of students. For example, low-engaged teachers would quickly indicate that their classroom management practices would "depend on the class of students," whereas teachers with high-engaged classrooms indicated that their level of consistency was universal for all of their classes. The implication was that certain teachers (with low-engaged classrooms) felt that their management was dependent on their students' actions and not vice versa.

An embedded programmatic assumption to DD may be that of a baseline ability to create and maintain classroom management. Because of this, teachers who were low-implementers but who had highly engaged classrooms may not have needed the DD approach, while high implementing teachers with low-engaged classrooms felt that DD could help their classroom culture and management. However, there was nuance in how teachers achieved this high level of engagement, with or with DD practices. Teachers in the low-implementing/high-engaged typology did not co-construct goals and model behaviors like the high-implementing/high

engaged teachers, but they had set very clear expectations for students which enabled a well-managed, safe environment, albeit more hierarchical in that these teachers had more power and control. High-implementing/high engaged teachers had relinquished traditional authoritarian control to still obtain a safe, well-managed environment, but had obtained that via a more constructivist approach (more aligned with DD) in the co-construction of classroom structures, and expectations.

In common with these teachers, high implementing/low engaged teachers exhibited efforts towards implementing DD with fidelity but had not mastered the classroom management practices/teacher-student relationship building necessary to fully implement the approach with success. As previously mentioned, these high implementing/low-engaged teachers grappled with their views on classroom management and were more externally focused the descriptions of their students when describing how they managed their classroom. There was also a recurring theme of sincerity and honesty when interacting with students and building that sense of relatedness as discussed in Chapter Five. This may be an underlying explanation as to why their management practices, and ultimately their classroom climate is less engaged than their counterparts. Student surveys also added insight to these distinctions and links between engagement typologies.

When comparing teacher typologies against one another, there were no significant mean differences in student-reported engagement between each typology. While this aligns with the qualitative work done on observed engagement in this study within engagement clusters, we would expect there to be significant mean differences between the low-engaged (both high and low implementing teachers) and the high engaged clusters. With this divergence from the qualitative work done, this does allow for additional thinking on what was driving observed behavioral engagement and how that deviated from students' reporting of behavioral, emotional

and cognitive engagement.

The two clusters of high-engaged classrooms also did not show significant mean differences in perceived teacher support or social efficacy with his/her teacher either. This indicates that again, it may not matter that a student is in a more constructivist learning environment or a more traditional authoritarian environment but that the emphasis is more so placed on teacher-student relationships (since that is the key distinction between low implementing/low engaged and low implementing/high engaged classrooms and what the two high-engaged clusters have in common). What again should be noted however is that students in high implementing/low engaged classrooms did feel significantly more socially-efficacious with their teacher than those in low implementing/high engaged classrooms. This finding may be speaking to this philosophical aspect of classroom structure and how students perceived their classroom culture and climate, which may have implications for motivation.

Qualitatively, low implementing teachers with low engaged classrooms were one extreme of this study considering they were not adhering to DD practices and also had observably disengaged classrooms. This typology was useful however in comparing what the DD approach had to offer teachers specifically struggling with disengagement. Mean differences in engagement were not significant which aligns with qualitative findings, however both feelings of teacher support and social efficacy with one's teacher were significantly higher for those in high implementing classrooms. This finding calls for future research in what DD may be adding to classroom environments; even if teachers do not have strong management or relationships with students, a social context in which students still feel supported and socially efficacious may have implications again for social emotional competency building and/or motivation, ultimately having some impact on academic outcomes.

Teachers' attitudes in this low implementing/low engaged cluster specifically, in this study, affirmed previous work done that a school's history of implementing SEL programs affect how school personnel perceive a new initiative. They state, "Teachers often view a new program as simply the latest in a long, never-ending series of initiatives introduced but then soon forgotten and replaced by the next fad an administrator learns about at a conference. School personnel falsely may have attributed either disappointing results or the failure of a program altogether to the program itself, when, in reality, flaws in how the program was implemented may have been the cause" (Domitrovich & Greenberg, 2010).

As noted in Chapter Two, Vygotsky added a social aspect to the literature on teacher beliefs by including the interconnected inferences in how a person constructs himself/herself in relation to the world. From his or her own belief constructs, a person will base his/her actions (Vygotsky, 1978). I used this framing in when thinking about my study aims and findings. Because my research questions aim to better understand relationships between these belief systems and practices, I chose to explore relationships between how teachers talked about their classroom structures, management styles, and impressions of DD practices.

Ultimately, when interpreting these findings, I saw that students in this study could be engaged in a more traditional classroom, but also demonstrate engagement in a more democratic classroom emphasizing interaction within the classroom community. DD provided the latter opportunity in engagement with student-student collaboration. In the former classroom there was still engagement but the classroom structure did not privilege student autonomy. The difference lies within how teachers structured their classrooms and how students engaged with one another and with their teacher.

Teachers' beliefs and practices on how much control they are to have in their classroom has

implications when thinking about the decline (from elementary to middle school) in reported affect and support in teacher-student relationships (Pianta & Hamre; Eccles et al., 1988; Ryan & Patrick, 200; Miller, 1970). Students often perceive their middle school teachers to be less warm, caring and supportive as compared to their elementary school teachers, which has shown to impact motivation in the classroom and engagement in the classroom. However studies have linked interpersonal relationships between teachers and students to motivational outcomes and social emotional competencies (Pianta, 1992; Wentzel & Asher, 1995).

DD's approach to learning and engagement may be an impactful approach to resisting this decline. Because one of the core tenets of the DD program model is community building and the development of bonds between teachers and their students (and between students), teachers who are more apt to use DD practices may already have addressed the developmental needs of their students creating classrooms that foster not only community but autonomy and decision-making. These types of classrooms may be theoretically more aligned with stage-environment fit theoretical model, giving students increased autonomy and decision-making while collaborating with their teachers and peers. Future work investigating DD and students' perceptions of teachers' how autonomy-support, with measures of motivation and engagement could be helpful in addressing these questions.

While I found that students could be engaged in both types of classrooms and teachers could be using high leverage practices, regardless of DD usage, the distinction in how class structures were set up surrounding control and classroom community are the key characteristics I found driving the implementation statuses of teachers. Additional work, including rigorous summative program evaluations would be helpful in furthering the question of how teachers conceptualize their classrooms and how this relates to the implementation of social emotional learning

programs and approaches.

Limitations

Because this dissertation was using a case study design, there are several limitations to the project. The aim of this dissertation was not to find causality but to explore possible phenomena when thinking about teachers' characteristics and implementation. For this reason, the external validity and generalizability is low. As a case study, the degree to which the results can be generalized to and across individuals, settings, and times is limited. More specifically, I cannot generalize by population or ecology since this was a specific middle school with its own demographics that was implementing DD practices in its first year. Also, when thinking about student and teacher survey data, the external validity is low since the sample size was quite small, not allowing for substantial statistical power. The relationship between DD practices and teacher support should be further investigated in future studies with a greater sample for stronger power. However, if other mixed methods studies focusing on teachers' beliefs around classroom management and SEL practices are done, cross case study analyses could assist in theory development to what types of relationships teacher beliefs' have with SEL implementation fidelity.

Internal validity and reliability could have also been compromised in this study for a number of reasons. First, I was the only investigator on this project and did not have inter-rater reliability for the qualitative coding of interview transcripts and observation work. Additionally, I conducted all interviews throughout the school year due to scheduling obstacles, so the timing of the interviews could have lessened the systematic nature of interviews. For example, interviewing a teacher and asking about his/her beliefs and history in September (at the very

beginning of the school year) could yield different results than interviewing a teacher in April (right before spring break and towards the end of the school year).

Along with timing, there could have been extraneous or confounding variables that may have impacted implementation fidelity of teachers that I my have been unaware of, ultimately skewing findings. One of these variables could also have been students' maturation due to normal developmental processes operating within the subject as a function of time.

Implications for Future Research & Practice

The integration of social emotional learning programs into the school day has been building momentum to the point that legislation in several states is mandating state-wide benchmarks to assess SEL practices in the classroom and integrate SEL as an aspect of pre-service teacher education. The Collaborative for Social Emotional Learning recently wrote,

> "On April 29, 2014 U.S. Rep. Susan Davis (D-Calif.) introduced a new bill in the House of Representatives, HR 4509, that provides strong support for social and emotional learning. Known as the Supporting Emotional Learning Act, HR 4509 amends the Higher Education Act (HEA) to make sure students preparing to be teachers learn about SEL in their coursework" (casel.org)

For this to continue in an effective manner, greater attention should be paid to teachers' role in providing the program to students. The present study provided a preliminary descriptive step in understanding how teachers' beliefs and practices relate to their motivation in SEL program implementation. Developing a better understanding as to how teachers perceive and believe classrooms should be structured, and whether (and why) SEL practices should be a part of content area curriculum could have implications for obtaining teacher buy-in for these sorts of school-wide initiatives, professional development practices, and the monitoring of

implementation to obtain program sustainability.

While scholars have noted that teachers' lack of ''buy-in'' to a program's model may negatively affect the provider's enthusiasm toward the program and how well they implement it (Mihalic, 2002; Rohrbach et al., 1993), it may be helpful to consider teachers' philosophies for evaluation purposes in professional development in order to better invest them in programmatic efforts. Teachers also must see the value of fostering their students' social and emotional development and must have the necessary background knowledge to do so (Adalbjarnardottir & Selman, 1997). Teachers need to be aware of the particular social and emotional needs of their students to choose and successfully apply the interactive types of teaching strategies called for in SEL programs. However, if teachers' beliefs of how a classroom should be constructed do not align with the more democratic assumptions of many environment-based SEL approaches and programs, professional development workshops and booster sessions could have the potential to address those issues.

This type of study also has implications to the ways in which programmers provide professional development opportunities to teachers. Various leaders and prominent stakeholders within the education reform movement are targeting their efforts on building teachers' mindsets from those that are considered fixed to more growth mindsets. Charter management organizations are making this a priority when planning their charter-wide professional development courses for novice and veteran teachers. If professional development sessions first invested teachers on the given program they were to implement and collected data on baseline beliefs, this may impact the degree to which teachers implement programming. The emergent themes in this study substantiated with student data confirmed the need to address what beliefs teachers are walking into their classrooms with and how that impacts the degree to which they

implement a given SEL program.

Conclusions

Effective SEL programs are those that lead (indirectly and directly) to enhanced academic performance and social emotional competence (CASEL, 2003). By building safe, caring, and productive learning environments, SEL programming promotes greater student attachment to school, which is associated with a reduction in risky behavior and an increase in academic success. These types of school and classroom climates alter the way students experience and perceive schooling, which improves their academic and social development as well as their school adjustment and performance. Due to the nature of the teacher role, teachers impact student academic, social, and emotional learning (Elbertson et al., 2010). Inarguably, teachers are instrumental in the execution and impact of SEL programming. With this said it is important to integrate implementation monitoring and research in order to allow for rigorous research as well as best practices for educators.

As we gain an understanding of how social emotional learning programs, and teachers' implementation practices impact students' engagement, socio-emotional development and academic performance, we will better understand the complexity of learning within schools. Further work is pivotal to advancing the various social emotional processes needed for adolescent students' academic success.

Appendix A

Teacher Implementation Survey

Initial Use of the DD approach

Directions: Based on your first few months of using the Developmental Designs (DD) approach, mark the descriptor that best represents your experiences with the approach.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The DD training gave me the knowledge and skills I needed to begin implementing the DD approach.	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Given the training and the materials, *how easy is it to implement* the following components of the DD approach?	**N/A**	**Difficult**	**A little difficult**	**Somewhat easy**	**Easy**	Very easy
Advisory: Circle of Power and Respect and Activity Plus	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	6
Empowering teacher language	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	6
Goal setting	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	6
Social contract	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	6
Modeling and practicing	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	6

How easy is it for you to fit the DD practices into your day *given the demands on your schedule*?	**N/A**	**Difficult**	**A little difficult**	**Somewhat easy**	**Easy**	**Very easy**
Advisory: Circle of Power and Respect and Activity Plus	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Empowering teacher language	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Goal setting	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

Social contract	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**
Modeling and practicing	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	**6**

How well do different practices fit with your personal teaching style?	**Not at all**	**Just a little**	**Somewhat**	**Pretty much**	**Very much**
Advisory: Circle of Power and Respect and Activity Plus	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Empowering teacher language	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Goal setting	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Social contract	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Modeling and practicing	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

	Not at all	**Just a little**	**Some**	**Quite a bit**	**A lot**
So far, how pleased are you with the DD approach?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
How motivated are you to continue using the DD approach in your classroom?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Developmental Designs Effectiveness

Directions: Based on your first few months of program use, mark the descriptor that best represents how much of an impact you perceive the DD approach to be having on your students' skill development:

	Virtually none	**A little**	**Some**	**Quite a bit**	A great deal
Advisory: Circle of Power and Respect and Activity Plus	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5
Empowering teacher language	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5
Goal setting	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5
Social contract	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5

Modeling and practicing	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5

How much is the DD approach:	**Not at all**	**Just a little**	**Some**	**Quite a bit**	**A lot**
improving the behavior of your students?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5
improving the climate of your classroom?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5
reducing your need to make referrals to the office for discipline problems?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5
improving academic engagement of your students?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5

On average, since the DD workshop, how often do you use DD practices? (Circle one)

- **Not at all**
- **Rarely, a few times a month**
- **Occasionally, a few times a week**
- **Regularly, at least 1 game a day**
- **Frequently, 2-3 games a day**

<u>Administrative Support for Developmental Designs</u>

In addition to your own experiences with Developmental Designs, we are interested in how other people have supported your implementation since you began using Developmental Designs.

	Not at all	Just a little	Somewhat	Pretty much	Very much
How much does your principal value the goals of the DD approach?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5
How strongly does your principal express to teachers the need to use DD practices?	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	5
To what extent does your principal promote school-wide implementation of the DD approach?	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix B

Student Pre and Post Survey

Study ID: _____ **DD-Pre/Post Survey 12-13**

Instructions:
Please mark a response or write an answer to each question to the best of your knowledge and let us know if you have any questions!

First, a little bit about you:

1. I am a:
    - Young Woman
    - Young Man

2. I am: (circle only one or write in)
    - Asian/Pacific Islander
    - African American/Black
    - Latino/Hispanic
    - Native American
    - White
    - Other: _____

3. I am _____ years old (circle only one answer):
    - 10
    - 11
    - 12
    - 13
    - 14

4. I am in the _____ grade (circle only one answer)
    - 6^{th}
    - 7^{th}
    - 8^{th}

5. Overall, I would rate last school year as _____ (circle one answer below)
    - Pretty Good
    - Okay
    - Not so Good

6. Last year, I went to a morning meeting each day:
    - Never
    - Sometimes
    - Everyday

7. Last year, I made class rules with my teacher and classmates:
    a. Yes
    b. No

8. Last year, I made Hopes & Goals with my classmates and teacher:
    - Yes
    - No

Now we would like to ask you about the things you have been doing in school this year.

In *CCA*, how often have you:	**NEVER**	**ONCE**	**A FEW TIMES**	**MANY TIMES**	**ALL OF THE TIME**
1. Participated in a CPR (circle of power & respect)	1	2	3	4	5
2. Led at least part of a CPR (circle of power & respect)	1	2	3	4	5
3. Set goals for myself for the school year	1	2	3	4	5
4. Checked on my progress in reaching the goals I set for this year	1	2	3	4	5
5. Helped set classroom rules	1	2	3	4	5
6. Practiced new routines for doing things in class (examples: entering class, handing in assignments)	1	2	3	4	5
7. Met individually with my teacher	1	2	3	4	5

We are now asking you about the types of activities you do in your classroom. We want you to think about a specific class. For this of this survey, think about your FIFTH HOUR class.

Subject: _____
Teacher: _____

In this 5TH HOUR class, how often do you:	**NEVER**	**ONCE**	**A FEW TIMES**	**MANY TIMES**	**ALL OF THE TIME**
1. Choose what I want to learn about and work on	1	2	3	4	5
2. Share what I am learning with other students	1	2	3	4	5

3. Work on projects or experiments that I plan	1	2	3	4	5
4. Participate in class discussions	1	2	3	4	5
5. Work on assignments alone	1	2	3	4	5
6. Work on assignments or projects with in small groups	1	2	3	4	5
7. Do worksheets	1	2	3	4	5
8. Work on assignments or projects with other students	1	2	3	4	5
9. Ask other students when you need help with your work	1	2	3	4	5
10. Apply what you do in class to the real world	1	2	3	4	5
11. Have example used from your interests or experiences (examples: music you like, websites you visit)	1	2	3	4	5

When you or a classmate do something wrong in this 5TH HOUR class, how often does:	**NEVER**	**ONCE**	**A FEW TIMES**	**MANY TIMES**	**ALL OF THE TIME**
1. Your teacher remind a student about a class rule	1	2	3	4	5
2. Your teacher tell a student to "take a break" (sit alone to calm down or regroup) in the classroom	1	2	3	4	5
3. Your teacher gives a student the chance to make up for or fix what was done wrong	1	2	3	4	5
4. Your teacher take away a privilege	1	2	3	4	5
5. Your teacher has an individual meeting with a student to talk about rule-breaking	1	2	3	4	5
6. Your teacher sends a student to another classroom to "take a break" (calm down or regroup)	1	2	3	4	5
7. Teacher and student make a plan so that the problem doesn't happen again	1	2	3	4	5
8. Teacher sends a student to the office or detention room	1	2	3	4	5
9. Teacher lets a student get away with rule-breaking	1	2	3	4	5

Now we would like to know how you think and feel about your relationship with the teacher and students in this class.

In this 5TH HOUR class, my teacher:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Shows me that he/she cares about me:	1	2	3	4	5
2. Tries to help me when I am sad or upset	1	2	3	4	5
3. Can be counted on to help me when I need it	1	2	3	4	5
4. Values my opinions	1	2	3	4	5
5. Helps me value my abilities	1	2	3	4	5
6. Makes me feel as though I belong in the class	1	2	3	4	5
7. Cares about how much I learn	1	2	3	4	5
8. Makes me feel successful	1	2	3	4	5

In this 5TH HOUR class:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I can explain my point of view to my teacher	1	2	3	4	5
2. I find it hard to get along with my teacher	1	2	3	4	5
3. If my teacher gets upset with me I can usually work it out with him/her	1	2	3	4	5
4. I find it easy to just go and talk to my teacher	1	2	3	4	5

In this 5TH HOUR class, other students:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Are nice to me	1	2	3	4	5
2. Like me	1	2	3	4	5
3. Care about my feelings	1	2	3	4	5
4. Really care about me	1	2	3	4	5
5. Want me to do well in school	1	2	3	4	5
6. Want me to be successful	1	2	3	4	5
7. Care about how much I learn	1	2	3	4	5
8. Want me to come to class everyday	1	2	3	4	5

In this 5TH HOUR class:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I find it easy to start a conversation with most students	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can explain my point of view to other students	1	2	3	4	5

3. I get along with most students	1	2	3	4	5
4. I can work well with most students	1	2	3	4	5

In this school:	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1. Students help decide what they will work on in classes	1	2	3	4	5
2. Teachers and students plan things together at this school	1	2	3	4	5
3. The teachers and students here usually decide together what the class rules will be	1	2	3	4	5
4. Students at this school get to help plan special activities and events	1	2	3	4	5
5. The principal and teachers really rule things here	1	2	3	4	5
6. There is a student council here that gets to decide on some really important things	1	2	3	4	5
7. Students help to decide what goes on at this school	1	2	3	4	5
8. Students have the chance to start up their own clubs at this school	1	2	3	4	5
9. Students have little chance to have their ideas heard at this school	1	2	3	4	5

The final set of questions is about you!

When I think about myself:	**Strongly Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Neutral**	**Agree**	**Strongly Agree**
1. I'm sure I can master the skills being taught	1	2	3	4	5
2. I can do even the hardest work if I don't give up	1	2	3	4	5
3. Even if the work is hard, I can learn it	1	2	3	4	5
4. I'm certain I can figure out how to do even the most difficult classwork	1	2	3	4	5

In general, when thinking about how I feel, act and think in school:	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I enjoy what I do in school	1	2	3	4	5
2. I obey school rules	1	2	3	4	5
3. I study at home even when I don't have a test	1	2	3	4	5
4. I hate being in class	1	2	3	4	5
5. I cheat on tests and exams	1	2	3	4	5
6. I talk to people outside of school about what I am learning in class	1	2	3	4	5
7. I like my classes	1	2	3	4	5
8. I disrespect (ignore, talk back to) my teachers	1	2	3	4	5
9. I check my homework for mistakes	1	2	3	4	5
10. I feel excited by the work in my classes	1	2	3	4	5
11. I pay attention in classes	1	2	3	4	5
12. I try to watch TV shows or read more about things we do in class	1	2	3	4	5
13. I try my best in class	1	2	3	4	5
14. I complete my work on time	1	2	3	4	5
15. If I don't understand something I read, I go back over it again	1	2	3	4	5
16. when I'm in class, I just pretend I am working	1	2	3	4	5
17. I ask questions when I don't understand something	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you for taking the time to take our survey! ☺

Appendix C

Interview Protocol for Teachers

Teacher Interview Protocol

Hi Mr./Ms. _____. My name is _____ I'm from the University of Michigan School of Education and we are working with the staff at Origins Developmental Designs to get a better understanding of the Developmental Designs approach and figure out some of the strengths and weaknesses to their method.

Because I taught for a while, I know some of the rewards and challenges I experienced so we think it very important to get your perspective on teaching more generally and the Developmental Designs approach in particular.

I want to thank you for taking the time to talk with us today, since we know how busy a school day is.

This is a confidential interview that is recorded so your answers will not be shared with anyone at your school or at Origins. I may jot down an occasional note or two just to better remember your thoughts. Did you have any questions of me before we begin?

Teacher characteristics: Background & Beliefs

How long have you been at Scarlett? Have you taught in other schools?

How would characterize your teaching career thus far?

How rewarding has it been? What has made it rewarding?

How stressful/challenging has it been? What has made it stressful?

When personally reflecting, what are your strengths as a teacher?

What are your weaknesses?

What are the 3 big goals for you as a teacher?

What do you feel are the 3 most important characteristics and skills a teacher needs to be successful?

Are there specific needs of adolescents in the classroom?

What are these developmental needs?

How important do you think social and emotional factors are to student success?

Do you feel like you can trust your students?

What would you say is your classroom management style?

How would you describe your classroom *climate*? Is it the same in all of your classes?

How would you describe the students in your classes? Major strengths and challenges?

How would you describe your relationships with your students?

How do you think your students would describe their relationship with you?

Cultural Responsiveness

What are some of the major needs of the students in your school?
Can you speak to the diversity of your students at Scarlett?

Are there any sorts of diversity initiatives at Scarlett?

Do you feel that school culture/norms align well with your students home culture/home norms?

What are some your strategies for family-school partnerships?

Collaborative Efforts

What sort of collaboration, if any, do you take part in at Scarlett?

Do you think Scarlett is a collaborative environment? Why/why not?

Teacher Perspective: implementation, thoughts on DD approach generally

I'd like to now shift the focus of our conversation to DD at SLP

What would you say is the mission or purpose of the Developmental Designs approach?

Did you undergo the DD 1 training this past summer? Tell me about that experience.

Were there things about it that were fairly straightforward for you?

Were there things that were more difficult?

Teacher language

How easy/intuitive was it for you?

Reinforcing/directing/reminding/redirecting/reflecting

Sarcasm, praise, verbosity, blaming, manipulation, guilt and

Can you tell me about the current strengths and weaknesses of implementing DD at Scarlett?

Probe: strengths/weaknesses at student, teacher and leadership/administrator levels

Do you think there are specific attitudes or skills that a teacher should have that makes DD easier to use?

Can you give an example?

Can you describe a typical day in your classroom now?

Probe based on response to get the clearest picture and what aspect of their classroom was emphasized

Use of morning meeting (cpr and a plus)

Use of language (reinforcing, reminding, redirecting)

Behavioral management strategies

Learning strategies

Do you think the DD 1 approach works equally well for all of your students? Why or why not?

Are there any practices of Developmental Designs that you think your kids particularly enjoy or benefit from?

How can you tell?

Student engagement

Classroom discipline

Relationships with your students

What are the key skills that you gained using Developmental Designs?

Can you give me an example of this?

Do you think the program is "doing what is it supposed to do?" Any outcomes that you were not expecting?

What are some recommendations or suggestions you have for program directors?

What do you consider strengths of the Developmental Designs program?

What are its weaknesses? Why?

Closing Remarks

Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about your experiences with or implementation of Developmental Designs?

Thank you again for taking the time out to speak to us today! We really do appreciate it since we know that your days are packed with tons of different obligations!

While going over our interview, I may come upon some additional clarifying questions I have. Is it okay to contact you in the near future? Thank you again.

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