

## Relational Trust in Group Coaching with First-grade Teachers: A Single Case Study

Jentry Stoneman Barrett

**Abstract:** Coaching has become a prominent professional development tool for helping early childhood teachers implement curriculum and research-based practices in their classrooms. One of the coaching strategies found to create positive changes in teacher practice and child outcomes is building trust between the coach and teacher(s). Despite what is known in terms of the benefits of these positive relationships, there is limited understanding of the nature of trust-building between coach and teachers, in general, and particularly in group coaching configurations. There is also scant literature exploring the nature of trust between teachers participating in group coaching sessions. Researchers call these two kinds of trust, out-group trust (between an outside coach and the teachers) and in-group trust (between the teachers who already have a relationship). The purpose of this case study was to explore the nature of relational out-group trust between the coach and teachers, and the in-group trust between the two teachers in a group coaching context over a 10-week intervention. The first finding was that high in-group trust between the teachers created a baseline for the development of out-group trust between the teachers and coach. The second finding were the moves the coach used to build and deepen outgroup trust with the teachers, including showing individual care and attention to their students. The third finding was that the coach was eventually able to transform out-group trust into in-group trust, so that by the end of the 10 weeks the teachers saw her as a member of the school staff. The potential of group coaching is also discussed. Implications for future coaching practice and research in addition to limitations are also presented.

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RELATIONAL TRUST IN GROUP COACHING WITH  
FIRST-GRADE TEACHERS: A SINGLE CASE STUDY

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Jentry Stoneman Barrett

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# RELATIONAL TRUST IN GROUP COACHING WITH FIRST-GRADE TEACHERS: A SINGLE CASE STUDY

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Coaching has become a prominent professional development tool for helping early childhood teachers implement curriculum and research-based practices in their classrooms. One of the coaching strategies found to create positive changes in teacher practice and child outcomes is building trust between the coach and teacher(s). Despite what is known in terms of the benefits of these positive relationships, there is limited understanding of the nature of trust-building between coach and teachers, in general, and particularly in group coaching configurations. There is also scant literature exploring the nature of trust between teachers participating in group coaching sessions. Researchers call these two kinds of trust, out-group trust (between an outside coach and the teachers) and in-group trust (between the teachers who already have a relationship). The purpose of this case study was to explore the nature of relational out-group trust between the coach and teachers, and the in-group trust between the two teachers in a group coaching context over a 10-week intervention. The first finding was that high in-group trust between the teachers created a baseline for the development of out-group trust between the teachers and coach. The second finding were the moves the coach used to build and deepen out-group trust with the teachers, including showing individual care and attention to their students. The third finding was that the coach was eventually able to transform out-group trust into in-group trust, so that by the end of the 10 weeks the teachers saw her as a

member of the school staff. The potential of group coaching is also discussed.

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## Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to four dear people who passed while I was working on it,

Allen Bannatyne Stoneman (uncle)

Jordan David William Stoneman (brother)

Julia Lee Lawrence (aunt and violin teacher)

Joleen Williams Freemyer (grandmother)

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Much love,

Jentry

“It’s not about healing the world by making a huge difference. It’s about healing the world that touches you.” Rachel Naomi Remen



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## CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

Early childhood (EC) teachers defined as those who teach children 0–8 years old (National Association of the Education of Young Children, <https://www.naeyc.org/about-us>) need supports to implement curriculum and research-based practices in their classrooms (Sheridan et al., 2009). Coaching is one of the tools used to support teachers in implementing high-quality practice (Egert et al., 2018; Kennedy, 2016; Schachter, 2015; Shidler, 2009). For this dissertation, I define a coach as a specialist who partners with teachers to deliver content via the curriculum (Devine et al., 2013) or helps teachers implement research-based practices in their classroom, usually in a dyadic (one-on-one) format (Amendum, 2014; Crawford et al., 2017; Schachter et al., 2018). It is generally agreed that coaching focused on instruction is intended to create supportive professional development (PD) for teachers and positively impact student academic or social-emotional outcomes (Joyce & Showers, 1982; Vogt & Rogalla, 2009). There are specific coaching strategies that have been found to create positive change in dyadic coaching situations (Artman-Meeker et al., 2015; Elek & Page, 2019). One of these strategies is creating a positive relationship between the coach and teacher (Aikens & Akers, 2011). However, many teachers are attending group coaching sessions, either in addition to dyadic coaching (Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011) or only attending group coaching sessions (Wilson et al., 2012). There is limited understanding of the nature of relationship-building between coach and teachers, in general, and particularly in group coaching configurations. There is also scant literature exploring the nature of relationships between teachers participating in group coaching sessions.

## **Statement of the Problem**

Successful coaching is highly dependent on the development of a relationship between the coach and the teacher, and a vital component of the relationship is trust (Crawford et al., 2017; Feldman et al., 2014; Jayaraman et al., 2015; Knoche et al., 2013; Lofthouse & Leat, 2013; Taylor, 2007). For this study, I will focus on relational trust, a specific type of trust identified as necessary in collaborative working relationships. Relational trust is defined by Tschannen-Moran (2017) as one having “confidence in the other party’s benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence” (p. 4). In a seminal study of the overhaul of the Chicago Public School system in the late 1990s, Bryk and Schneider (2002) found that relational trust between the adults in the school community (administrators, teachers, parents) was the only variable that mattered when it came to changing teacher behavior.

Despite the hypothesized role of relationship building between teacher(s) and coaches as a lynchpin for successful coaching, it has not been explored thoroughly, especially when more than one teacher is present. The concept of trust has emerged rarely in group coaching studies such as Walpole et al.’s (2010) inclusion of collaboration in their coaching effectiveness observation protocol and Gersten et al.’s (2010) measurement of trust between the teachers in their coaching study.

Thus, using a single-case study design (Yin, 2017), I explored the nature of relational trust between Anna, a coach and Kelli and Sara, two first-grade teachers in a group coaching configuration over time (all names are pseudonyms). Anna, Kelli, and Sara participated in a broader randomized control trial, INSIGHTS in Nebraska which

will be explained in fuller detail in the Methods section. The following research questions guided my study:

1. What is the nature of relational trust between the coach and teachers in a group coaching configuration over time? (out-group trust)
2. What is the nature of relational trust between teachers in a group coaching configuration over time? (in-group trust)
3. How do out-group and in-group trust function together in a group coaching configuration over time?

## **CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

The following sections will explore the relevant extant literature from the last twenty years including early childhood (EC) coaching and relational trust. The sections are organized to highlight the need for this study, address a gap in the literature, and inform future work in the field (Osei-Amanfi, 2018). First, I provide a foundational understanding of the current state of coaching by briefly describing coaching in EC classrooms to support PD. Second, I identify where the literature gaps exist, specifically regarding relationship building during group coaching. Finally, I explore relational trust in coaching contexts and between teachers.

### **EC Coaching to Support Teacher PD**

Coaching in EC classrooms is theorized to improve teacher instruction and, in turn, student outcomes. In the literature from the last twenty years, EC coaching has been used successfully to improve teacher practices related to: literacy (e.g., Carlisle et al., 2011; DeBaryshe & Gauci, 2017; Hindman & Wasik, 2012; Landry et al., 2006, 2009, 2011; Matsumura et al., 2012; Powell et al., 2010), interactions with children (e.g., Downer et al., 2011; Early et al., 2017; Hsieh et al., 2009), mathematics (e.g., Clements et al., 2011; Gibbons et al., 2017; Gibbons & Cobb, 2017), general pedagogical practices (e.g., Blazar & Kraft, 2015; Hammond & Moore, 2018), implementing new curriculum (e.g., Lonigan et al., 2011; Wasik, 2010), and provision of behavioral supports (e.g., Cavanaugh & Swan, 2017; Fox et al., 2011; Hershfeldt et al., 2012). Importantly, coaching has been found to improve students' outcomes in the classroom (e.g., Amend, 2014; Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Cavanaugh & Swan, 2017; Clements et



al., 2011; Domitrovich et al., 2009; Elish-Piper & L’Allier, 2011; Gettinger & Stoiber, 2015; L’Allier et al., 2010; Hershfeldt et al., 2012; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009; Powell et al., 2010; Schwanenflugel et al., 2010).

As described previously, empirical evidence appears to confirm that coaching is beneficial to both teachers and students. Two recent meta-analyses support this claim. Kraft et al. (2018) examined the coaching literature from Pre-K–12 classrooms and found that the pooled effect size on impacts of coaching from 60 studies was 0.49 standard deviations on teacher instructional practice and 0.12 standard deviations on student achievement on state standardized tests. Egert et al., in their 2018 meta-analysis on EC in-service training, found that coaching was nearly three times more effective compared with other in-service PD. These analyses found evidence that coaching creates positive change in teacher practice and student outcomes. However, much is still unknown about the underlying processes of coaching. Scholars have charged the field with identifying the elements that make coaching effective (Hamre et al., 2017; Sheridan et al., 2009). Diamond et al. (2013) also echoed this need in their Synthesis of IES Research on Early Intervention and Early Childhood Education stating, "individualized coaching or mentoring has been identified as an effective way for helping teachers learn new and effective teaching practices, yet we know little about elements of effective coaching" (p. 39).

Emerging patterns from three well-cited EC coaching literature reviews suggest key coaching practices include: planning, observation, modeling, reflection, feedback, and relationship building (Aikens & Akers, 2011; Artman-Meeker et al., 2015; Elek &

Page, 2019). These successful coaching practices must be explored in multiple coaching contexts given the variability of EC classrooms' needs, coaches' backgrounds, and the focus of a given PD (Hamre et al., 2017).

To date, most of the EC coaching literature has focused on dyadic coach-teacher configurations (Elek & Page, 2019), yet other coaching configurations exist. For example, the coaches in Gibbons' 2016 study worked in three configurations: a school-level team including the principal and other coaches, grade-level teams of teachers, and the individual coach with the teacher in their classrooms. Similarly, coaches studied by Carlisle and Berebitsky (2011) also led grade-level meetings and worked individually with teachers in their classroom. Thus, it is reasonable to assume that coaches build relationships and create trust with teachers in both dyadic<sup>1</sup> and group coaching configurations.

### **Emerging Literature Base Regarding EC Group Coaching**

A small number of EC studies used only group coaching; however, few reported the specific relationship measures or relationship building strategies used. Wilson et al. (2012) conducted a pilot study seeking to improve preschool teachers' ability to teach children on the autism spectrum, the Advancing Social-Communication and Play (ASAP) intervention. Three groups participated in the study. Two groups of teachers received training through a workshop, and one of the groups also attended a structured monthly

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<sup>1</sup> I am defining group coaching as different from Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) because PLCs are a 'group of people sharing and critically interrogating their practice in an ongoing, reflective collaborative, inclusive, learning-oriented, growth-promoting way, operating as a collective enterprise' (Stoll et al. 2006, p. 233). From this definition, it can be assumed there is not a specialist leading the learning like in a coaching situation.

group meeting with a coach, one group acted as control and received no training or coaching. The goal was to create a group action plan that listed how the group would "improve and support a team's ASAP implementation" (p. 100). Coaches used several successful coaching strategies during the intervention and coaching sessions, including planning, observation, reflection, and feedback, but the authors did not report relationship building as one of the coaching strategies. Despite no specific focus on relationship building, teachers who received coaching in addition to training reported the greatest increase in collaborative team planning and progress monitoring practices compared to a group that only received training but no coaching, and a control group. The coaching group also achieved higher adherence to the ASAP intervention as scored by the research team. Although collaborative team planning is not necessarily a parallel construct to teacher peer relationships; this result supports the idea that the teachers' interactions with each other can change throughout a group coaching experience.

Across studies, the use of group coaching by Reading First coaches has been documented (e.g., DeBaryshe & Gauci, 2017; Deussen et al., 2007; Gersten et al., 2010; Walpole et al., 2010). One study that used group coaching exclusively was DeBaryshe and Gauci (2017). Classroom team preschool teachers (lead and assistant) attended 56 hours of literacy-focused workshops each year and received coaching as a group. Coaches used the successful planning, observation, modeling, reflection, and feedback strategies, but the authors did not report any specific focus on relationship building. Results yielded a significant increase in teacher literacy knowledge and curriculum-specific practices and increased children's alphabet knowledge. The teachers also

reported in focus groups that coaching was a critical part of the intervention. Specifically, despite the coach's lack of reported relationship-building strategies, the classroom team teachers reported bonding with their coach, and that they valued the peer learning community and a better working relationship with their team teacher in the classroom. This study contributes to the emerging evidence demonstrating relationships and trust as being developed in group coaching experiences, and that teachers value those relationships with their coach and fellow teachers.

Gersten et al. (2010) and colleagues developed a PD model called Teacher Study Groups (similar to lesson study) used with first-grade teachers in Reading First schools. Three to eight teachers would meet with a facilitator who would take them through a recursive process of debriefing the previous meeting's goals, learning new research-based strategies, practicing the new strategies, and collaborative planning. The teachers and facilitator met 16 times throughout the year, and the researchers reported the facilitator used two successful coaching strategies: planning and reflection. By the end of the year, teacher practice and knowledge had significantly improved compared to the control group. After the intervention, 97% of the teachers reported in interviews that the Teacher Study Groups were useful and beneficial, especially compared to the other PD they had previously experienced. The element of the Gersten et al. study that sets it apart from the others is the research team's effort to measure the trust teachers had with their teacher colleagues who had also participated in the study groups. They measured the trust between the grade-level treatment and control teachers before and after the intervention and found no significant difference in teachers' trust and respect for each other. Thus,

trust was not statistically increased due to participation in coaching, though it was not diminished either. Even though the trust findings were non-significant, the use of such a measure to examine relational trust within group early childhood education coaching is critical in highlighting that many teachers appreciated the relationships they build with the coach and their colleagues during the coaching intervention (Gersten et al., 2010; Wilson et al., 2013), and this provides a model for future research. EC researchers need to explore trust and relationships between parties in PD research so the field can fully understand all contributing factors to PD success.

Very few EC coaching studies solely use group coaching; the majority of group coaching PD happening in EC classrooms tends to happen in addition to dyadic coaching (e.g., Brown et al., 2009; Buysse et al., 2010; Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Deussen et al., 2007; Gibbons, 2016; Mccollum et al., 2013; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). This combination makes it difficult to tease apart the dimensions and contributions of each configuration of coaching, and how relationships are built in each configuration, and if strategies for building relationships vary across those configurations. The dearth of research surrounding how trusting relationships are created and deepened in dyadic coaching configurations is exacerbated in these combination configurations, in addition to not understanding how the teacher-teacher relationships are influencing the group dynamic. In the following paragraphs, I summarize and synthesize recent relevant EC studies combining coaching formats.

The most common combination of dyadic and group coaching is dyadic coaching in classrooms, with regular group teacher meetings. For example, McCollum et al. (2013)

worked with EC teachers on their classroom literacy skills using biweekly dyadic coaching and three 1.5-hour group meetings during the year, allowing teachers to share experiences with each other about the intervention. Successful coaching strategies mentioned by researchers were all connected to the dyadic coaching experience—planning, observation, and feedback, but no focus on how relationships were built. Results from the overall coaching model indicated that teachers used more skills after the coaching, and the classroom literacy environment improved.

Vanderburg and Stephens (2010) had four days of dyadic coaching during the week and group coaching sessions every other week. They conducted interviews with the teacher participants to understand what coaching strategies the teachers found helpful, and all six successful coaching strategies—planning, observation, modeling, reflection, feedback, and relationship building—were described by teachers with the interviews providing a unique understanding of how the coaching strategies were used across configurations. In the dyadic context, coaches used all six strategies. During the group coaching sessions, coaches used the strategies of reflection, feedback, and relationship building only. Many teachers commented about how, eventually, the group sessions became more like peer-coaching because it allowed them to learn strategies from each other, discuss specific students, and form stronger relationships. The majority of the teachers in the study valued the group meetings. This study highlights how group coaching allowed teachers to construct knowledge through lived experiences and interactions with other teachers during group coaching meetings.

Similarly, the *Getting Ready* intervention employed both dyadic and group coaching to support EC teachers' interactions with parents (Brown et al., 2009). The PD components consisted of an initial 2-day workshop followed by three years of twice a month coaching, one dyadic, and one group meeting with other participating teachers. In interviews teachers remarked that group coaching was beneficial because they usually did not set aside dedicated time to discuss problems with specific families or brainstorm solutions to difficult situations with their colleagues. The researchers suggested that group coaching was an essential component of the teachers' PD. Not surprisingly, one of the three major themes that emerged from Brown et al.'s case study was how critical a trusting relationship between the coach and the teacher was for the coaching intervention to be successful; noting that some participants were ready to drop out of the study entirely because their relationship with their coach was difficult. Although the authors state that the *Getting Ready* PD model is relationship based, and relationships emerged as one central theme in the interviews, the authors did not explicitly state how the coaches developed relationships with the teachers, as a specific strategy, nor was relationship building described as part of the coaching model (p. 486). Brown et al.'s study is an important example of why the field must understand *how* relationships of trust are built during coaching because sometimes an entire study's success is based on how well the coach and the teacher form a relationship.

To understand how coaches spent their time in Early Reading First schools, Deussen et al. (2007), using coach log data, reported that coaches spent 21% of their time in dyadic coaching configurations, and group coaching (usually occurring at grade-level

meetings) took 5% of a coaches' time. This again shows that while group coaching is not happening as often as dyadic coaching, coaches are still participating in group coaching configurations. Although the study was not specific that group coaching was supposed to be part of the coaches' job description, the researchers explained that group coaching happened at schools for several reasons. Some coaches felt that group coaching was less threatening because teachers were receiving general feedback that was not specific to them. Coaches would provide general guidance at grade-level meetings because some teachers refused to let the coach into their classroom to be observed. Other coaches used group coaching as a transition to peer coaching. The teachers would bring problems to the group, and as a group, they would discuss them. The group coaching in the grade-level meetings usually happened in addition to dyadic coaching in the classroom. The successful coaching strategies mentioned for dyadic coaching include planning, observation, modeling, reflection, and feedback. Only feedback was reported as a successful strategy during the group coaching sessions. Again, there was no mention of relationship building in the study, even though coaches were explaining how a lack of trust was interfering with their job duties by not being able to enter teachers' classrooms for observations. Other explanations for this lack of trust with the coach (or the coaching happening at their school)—which was not discussed in the manuscript—could be a lack of trust with the school administration who implemented the coaching, or fear of how the information gained through coaching will be used for evaluative purposes. When coaches are used as evaluators, the coaching or the evaluation becomes compromised (Nolan & Hoover, 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Tschannen-Moran, 2011)



One final study that used both dyadic and group coaching was Buysse et al. (2010). The coach visited the pre-kindergarten programs every other week to conduct dyadic coaching with the teacher, and on the off weeks, facilitated a "community of practice" meeting with the participating teachers they were coaching. The community of practice meetings were modeled after lesson study and provided teachers with "opportunities for feedback, reflection, and collaborative problem-solving" (p. 197). The authors reported that the dyadic coaching involved planning and observation, while the group coaching involved planning, observation, reflection, and feedback, but neither specifically focused on relationship building.

Together, findings from these studies indicate that teachers benefit from coaching, and that building relationships is important to the success of the coaching. However, only two studies in either the group or combination coaching literature described relationship building as a deliberate strategy used by the coach (Brown et al., 2009; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010), and these two research studies did not describe how relationships or trust were developed in coaching situations. However, it appears that just by virtue of learning and collaborating, teachers are building relationships with their coaches and their fellow teachers and these are important dynamics to consider.

### **Relational Trust**

While the literature supports that trust is vital for coaching, researchers do not agree on the definition or conceptualization of trust. Mishra's (1996) definition of trust is based on a person's willingness to be vulnerable, believing that another party is competent, open, concerned, and reliable. Vulnerability in the face of risk, with a positive

expectation of another party's ability, is the common thread in most trust definitions (Van Maele et al., 2014).

Bryk and Schneider (2002) coined the phrase relational trust perspective, which is based on the role relationships each party has within a school (teachers with students, teachers with teachers, parents with teachers, and all groups with the school principal). Relational trust is built when each party understands and executes their obligations, reducing the other parties' vulnerability. Bryk and Schneider (2003) explained that people are always trying to discern the intentions of others' actions and how it affects their interests. Past interactions influence how people interpret current interactions. If an outsider joins the group, people tend to interpret initial intention through general reputation and their commonalities, including race, gender, and age. An outsider coach needs to create an atmosphere of positive expectations, where risk is decreased so vulnerability can exist.

Indeed, it could be theorized that for most coaching strategies to work—observation, modeling, reflection, and feedback—the coach and teacher would need to be vulnerable with each other (Feldman et al., 2014). Scholars have named this kind of trust (trust between a teacher and coach) as out-group trust because the coach is an outsider (Van Maele et al., 2014). In that situation, the coach must create trust with the individual or the group to access the teaching practices. An example of an absence of out-group trust can be seen in Duessen's (2007) study where some teachers refused to let the coach into their classroom to observe, demonstrating a lack of out-group trust with the coach. Similar to the relationship building literature in general, there is limited research

describing the process of building out-group trust between a coach and a teacher, and even less research when more than one teacher is present.

The scholars studying relational trust in educational coaching contexts have argued that relational trust and building relationships are central to successful coaching interventions (e.g., Brown et al., 2009; Celano & Mitchell, 2014; Elek & Page, 2019; Gardiner, 2012; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009; Netolicky, 2016; Ota & Austin, 2013; Smith, 2014; Tschannen-Moran, 2014; Tschantz & Vail, 2000; Wilson et al., 2012). Feldman et al. (2014) conducted a five-year mixed methods study implementing surveys, interviews, classroom observations, and coaching logs to study the implementation and results of a science instructional coaching intervention. They reported that the relationship between the coach and teacher was the “pivotal element for coaching success, without which work-focus and time spent coaching did not seem to matter” (p. 4). They also found a strong correlation between improvements in teacher practice and the time the teacher and coach spent together, this also emphasizes how important relationships are in coaching contexts.

However, most of these studies detailing components of relationship as a coaching strategy only examined dyadic coaching (e.g., Gardiner, 2012; Knoche et al., 2013; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009; Powell & Diamond, 2011; Slater & Simmons, 2016; Tschantz & Vail, 2000). Indeed, some studies focused on how out-group trust was built between the coach and the teacher; however, they focused on how trust developed during dyadic coaching and did not explore how trust developed when more than one teacher was present, even though some teachers were attending group coaching sessions

with their colleagues in addition to dyadic sessions (Atteberry & Bryk, 2011; Feldman et al., 2014; Woulfin & Jones, 2018).

In addition to a lack of research on how trust is built in dyadic coaching configurations, the EC field lacks a clear understanding of the relationships built between teacher colleagues who have collectively experienced group coaching, what Van Maele et al. (2014) defines as in-group trust. An example of this is in Vanderburg and Stephens' (2010) study wherein teachers reported how much they appreciated the study group meetings and how it built a community within their school. Thus, it is likely that in-group trust can be created or strengthened by group coaching, yet there is limited understanding as to how to build or maintain this between teachers.

Evidence from studies of group coaching indicate that there is an added benefit to group coaching. Teachers report finding value in the collaborative process, getting to know their colleagues, and trying to change practice together (Brown et al., 2009; Gersten et al., 2010; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010; Wilson et al., 2012). However, few scholars studying group EC coaching collected data or operationalized how trust was built between coaches and teachers, even though trust was a key concept in many studies, as evidenced by teacher interviews (Brown et al., 2009; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). In the educational coaching literature, there is a gap in how relationships—and specifically trust—are built during group coaching sessions, even though the teachers are encountering their coach in group settings.

Understanding how both out-group and in-group trust develops and are exhibited during group coaching is important in understanding how because both kinds of trust exist in the group coaching configuration.

In addition to the coach creating a relationship of trust with the teachers, the teachers also have to be open to the changes that the coach suggests. Researchers have found that teacher openness to change is an important variable in educational reform (Lim, 2001), teachers' work engagement (Jeong et al., 2016), and teacher competency in school technology (Baylor & Ritchie, 2002). Understanding a teacher's openness to change is critical because leader-member trust relationships and openness to change influence each other (Miller et al., 1994, Wanberg & Banas, 2000, as cited in Jeong 2016) and if the teacher is not willing to take on the coach's suggestions, the trust relationship will suffer (Tschannen-Moran, 2017).

### ***Measuring Relational Trust***

Even though few researchers are focusing on how out-group trust is built in coaching relationships, these scholars operationalize trust and give a roadmap for measuring trust and relationships. The majority of the trust findings emerged from qualitative or mixed methods studies that used interviews, observation, and surveys to gather data about the coaching (Feldman et al., 2014; Gardiner, 2012; Knoche et al., 2013; Slater & Simmons, 2016; White et al., 2015).

Anderson et al. (2014) used promising methods and data sources to track the status of the coach-teacher relationship. First, the coaching logs had open-ended text boxes where the coaches could comment about the coaching interaction's nature. The

researchers used these entries to “track individual relationship stories” (p. 6) that they referenced in later interviews with the coach. During the interview, the coaches were surveyed about the coaching relationship's health and asked to respond to specific instances happening at the school. The research staff interviewed the coaches and teachers once a year (the intervention lasted five years) about their coaching experience. Finally, the coaches were observed by research staff while they were coaching teachers in dyadic, group, or workshop settings. Trust emerged as a theme in the data, and the authors report that trust became synonymous with relationships between the coach and the teacher(s).

The field is also missing an opportunity when we only explore out-group trust in coaching contexts. In-group trust between teachers who are experiencing coaching together can provide a wealth of information about how coaching could benefit the teacher-teacher relationship (in-group trust) moving forward. In the following section, I will explore how the presence of in-group trust between teachers is beneficial to all parties.

### ***Relational Trust Between Teacher Colleagues (In-Group Trust)***

Little is known about the in-group trust between teachers who collectively experience group coaching. Group coaching could have the added value of increasing in-group relational trust between the teachers because the coaching session gives them extra opportunities to be vulnerable and benevolent with each other (Tschannen-Moran, 2017). This is particularly important because teachers who trust each other are able to accomplish much more than those who do not trust each other (Coleman, 1990; Van

Maele et al., 2014). For example, when teachers rate trust as high between themselves and other teachers in a school, teachers are more efficacious (Forsyth et al., 2006; Goddard et al., 2000). They are also more likely to share information and instructional practices with each other (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000), in essence, becoming a peer coach to each other (Slater & Simmons, 2001). Additionally, high levels of trust can lead to positive student outcomes, as Tschannen-Moran (2014) found—high-trust among teacher colleagues was positively correlated with student achievement in math and reading. If group coaching increases teacher trust between colleagues, it could increase teacher and student performance.

Research on Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) offer important insights into the importance of in-group trust between teachers as part of PD. Researchers have found that the presence of a trusting relationship between teachers is key to successful PLCs because teachers were willing to be vulnerable with each other because there was a reduced risk of negative consequences (Zheng et al., 2018; Moolenaar et al., 2014; Lee et al., 2011; Hallam et al., 2014; Hallam et al., 2015; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000). Hallam et al. (2015) explored in-group trust in the context of a struggling PLC team in a newly formed school (case one) versus three successful PLC teams in another school district (case two). They used multiple focus groups with the PLC members to understand the nature of how in-group trust developed or did not. In both cases, teachers in focus groups reported that in-group trust developed when teachers completed their obligations (reliability) and shared personal information (openness). The successful PLC case also increased their trust by showing kindness and patience (benevolence).

In sum, the kind of out-group trust necessary for dyadic coaching to be successful, and in-group trust that must exist for group-based PD to flourish, is necessary for group coaching to be effective (Tschannen-Moran, 2020). However, the field does not understand how in-group and out-group trust function together in a group coaching situation or how the coach navigates the presence or absence of the teachers' in-group trust in the room.

### **Current Study**

Thus, using a single-case study design (Yin, 2017), I explored the nature of relational trust between Anna, a coach and Kelli and Sara, two first-grade teachers in a group coaching configuration over time (all names are pseudonyms). Anna, Kelli, and Sara participated in a broader randomized control trial, INSIGHTS in Nebraska which will be explained in fuller detail in the Methods section. The following research questions guided my study:

1. What is the nature of relational trust between the coach and teachers in a group coaching configuration over time? (out-group trust)
2. What is the nature of relational trust between teachers in a group coaching configuration over time? (in-group trust)
3. How do out-group and in-group trust function together in a group coaching configuration over time?



### CHAPTER 3 METHODS

This study used a qualitative approach, which was appropriate because I sought to understand the nature of trust in a group coaching configuration in a natural setting (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Osei-Amanfi, 2018). How in-group and out-group trust were built in EC coaching settings merits an in-depth look at the phenomena that qualitative methods provide. Qualitative methods also allow for the researchers' and participants' voices to assign meaning to activities (Lincoln et al., 2018). The participants' voice needs to assign meaning in this work because exploring relationship building is deeply personal, and while as a researcher I coded for trust-building behavior I witnessed, deciding if trust existed between participants and if those behaviors were successful—mostly lied with the participants.

Case study was the most appropriate for my research questions because I wanted to study the phenomenon of relational trust in a contemporary, real-life, bounded system, over time. I did not manipulate any of the variables and cannot generalize the findings beyond these cases. I provide thick descriptions of the cases through multiple sources of information and interpret the findings through themes (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Schwandt & Gates, 2018).

The majority of the coaching studies previously reported used qualitative methods, including interviews, observations, and open comments on surveys (Brown et al., 2009; Feldman et al., 2014; Gardiner, 2012; Knoche et al., 2013; Slater & Simmons, 2016; White et al., 2015). Others have also used case study methodology to study coaching, relationship building, and trust. For example, Woulfin and Jones (2018)

explored how social capital influenced the enactment of Reform-Oriented Instructional Coaching in eleven schools from the same school district. Hallam et al. (2014) used a case study to research how trust is explicitly developed within professional learning communities in a newly formed middle school. Brown et al. (2009) used a case study to understand how EC teachers experienced a coaching intervention study. These examples support the choice to use case study methodology.

### **Theoretical Framing**

The qualitative approach facilitates answering the research questions by taking an in-depth look at the teachers' and coach's experiences, meaning-making activities, and contexts of the coaching situations (Bradshaw et al., 2017; Maxwell, 2013). Situated Learning Theory, rooted in Social Constructivism, provides a useful lens to view how trust is built in group coaching configurations. Situated Learning Theory (Hansman, 2001; Lave & Wenger, 1991) posits that learning is based on social practice; learning happens when the learner participates in a real-world activity with other learners. This theory supports why group coaching has the potential to be so useful, coaching is happening in the real world, and a coach can create social interaction and the chance to learn in context while enacting practice.

Lave and Wenger's Situated Learning Theory (Wenger, 1998) also includes a concept called communities of practice (COP). COPs are a group of people who share a common interest, a common goal of improving, and common experiences. Teachers in schools comprise COPs, and a coach enters the COP to support teaching practices. It may

be that an existing COP could enhance coaching efforts if the coach works within the COP instead of individually with teachers.

### **Research Design**

This study used a single case-study design (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Yin's (2017) *Case Study Research and Applications* and Saldaña's (2021) *The Coding Manual for Qualitative Researchers* were close guides throughout the design, data collection, and analysis process to uphold methodological rigor.

### **Data Sources and Collection**

To understand relational trust, I explored three constructs—out-group trust, in-group trust, and openness to change. I used multiple data sources and used both qualitative and quantitative analyses to build the case; this is typical in case study research (Guetterman & Feters, 2018). The data sources in this study worked together to either confirm, disconfirm, or further elaborate on the construct of relational trust. They were gathered sequentially and triangulated<sup>2</sup> each other at significant time points in the study (pre-intervention, intervention, and post-intervention) and across the entire study, providing dependability and convergence to the findings (Colorafi & Evans, 2016; Saldaña, 2021; Yin, 2017).

I used a combination of qualitative and quantitative data sources and analyses to illustrate the data and support the case. In addition to using qualitative and quantitative data sources and analyses, I also used both deductive (i.e., *a priori* or predetermined

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<sup>2</sup> I am using Yin's (2017) definition of triangulation, "collect information from multiple sources that also can corroborate the same finding" (p. 127).

codes; Saldaña & Omasta, 2018) and inductive (i.e., the codes emerged from the data; Miles, Huberman & Saldaña, 2020) coding schemes to analyze the interviews, open-ended survey questions, and email communication. Using both deductive and inductive coding schemes strengthens the qualitative analysis (Bingham & Witkowsky, 2021). Table 3.1 lists the research constructs, research questions, data sources, analyses, and integration of data across this study. Terms and processes shown in Table 3.1 will be elaborated on throughout the Methods Chapter. Data sources (e.g., surveys, logs interview questions) can be found in Appendix A and the full code book can be found in Appendix C.

Table 3.1

*Research Constructs, Questions, Data Sources, Analysis, and Integration Plan*

Research Constructs	Research Questions	Data Sources	Analysis	Integrating and Triangulating Data
Relational Trust with coach (out-group)	<p>RQ 1: What is the nature of relational trust between the coach and teachers in group coaching configurations over time?</p> <p>RQ 3: How do out-group and in-group trust function together in a group coaching configuration over time?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre- and a post-intervention semi-structured interview with teachers and coach*</li> <li>• Classroom Workshop Teacher Feedback Form (coach satisfaction survey, administered weekly)</li> <li>• Coaching Log (one question was added to the existing log)*</li> <li>• Communication between teachers and coach*</li> <li>• Video of the PD, coaching, and classroom sessions*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deductive thematic coding followed by inductive coding</li> <li>• Inductive coding followed by deductive thematic coding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These data sources all triangulate with each other and provide rigor and trustworthiness to the findings. Out-group trust with the coach is measured and explored in five different but complementary ways. The deductive codes used in the videos were also themes in the interviews and surveys.</li> </ul>
Relational Trust with grade-level teacher (in-group)	<p>RQ 2: What is the nature of relational trust between teachers in the group coaching configuration over time?</p> <p>RQ 3: How do out-group and in-group trust function together in a group coaching configuration over time?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre- and post-intervention interviews with teachers and coach*</li> <li>• Videos of the PD and coaching sessions*</li> <li>• Faculty Trust Survey (Tschannen-Moran &amp; Hoy, 2003) *</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deductive thematic coding followed by inductive coding</li> <li>• Inductive coding followed by deductive thematic coding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In-group trust was investigated using both teacher report and observation measures. Using all three data types allowed me to confirm, disconfirm, and elaborate on the interviews and the survey with observations.</li> </ul>

Research Constructs	Research Questions	Data Sources	Analysis	Integrating and Triangulating Data
Openness to change	RQ 1 and RQ 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre- and post-intervention interviews*</li> <li>• Communication between teachers and coach*</li> <li>• Video of the PD, coaching, and classroom sessions*</li> <li>• Classroom Diary</li> <li>• Openness towards change survey, pre-intervention (Miller, Johnson &amp; Grau, 1994)*</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deductive thematic coding followed by inductive coding</li> <li>• Inductive coding followed by deductive thematic coding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The survey and interview provided a baseline to the teachers' feelings about the possible changes in their teaching, and these responses were confirmed with the observations.</li> </ul>

*Note:* Asterisks indicate additions to or revisions of measures to the broader INSIGHTS study.

### *Interviews*

The first data source were interviews with the coach and teachers. Interviews as sources of data are needed in descriptive case studies to “understand the experiences, perspectives, and worldviews of people in a particular set of circumstances” (Schwandt & Gates, 2018), p. 346). Semi-structured interviews were conducted with the two teachers and the coach before and after the 10-week INSIGHTS implementation. Interview questions (see Appendix A) covered teacher and coach backgrounds, relational trust elements, openness to change. The coach was also asked to compare dyadic and group coaching configurations. Interviews were conducted, recorded, and transcribed via Zoom and saved in Restricted OneDrive Folders<sup>3</sup>.

### *Observations*

The second data source were observations of the interactions between the coach and teachers. Observations are a critical part of qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2018) and a strength of the case study methodology (Yin, 2017). Video recordings were made of the initial INSIGHTS teacher PD (training) sessions via Zoom (2 sessions, 2 hours each, three weeks apart, led by the coach). The coaching sessions (10 sessions, 30-minutes each, once a week for 10 weeks) and classroom sessions (10 sessions, 30-minutes each, once a week for 10 weeks) were recorded by the coach with an iPod using the Swivl app. There was a miscommunication between me and the coach, and the first three weeks of the classroom sessions were not recorded. However, other data sources

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<sup>3</sup>In August of 2021, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln (UNL) transitioned from Box to OneDrive cloud storage. My dissertation data were at first saved in a Restricted Box folder, then transferred to OneDrive. I will only refer to the Restricted OneDrive folder, but the data were kept first in Box, and then in OneDrive restricted folders.

(interviews and surveys) reported what was happening during those sessions. All videos were uploaded securely to the Zoom and Swivl clouds, and then transferred to the Restricted OneDrive folder.

### ***Surveys***

Surveys filled out by the teachers and coach are the third data source, adding to the case study's holistic understanding (Baxter & Jack, 2008). These surveys supported and built upon the interview and video data.

**Teacher Surveys.** Teachers completed two surveys pre- and post-intervention (approximately 10-weeks apart). The first survey was the Faculty Trust Survey (see Appendix A; Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2003) which measured teachers' trust in their colleagues, principal, and students. Teachers completed the entire survey, however only the data on colleague trust was used for this study<sup>4</sup>. Evaluating teacher trust with colleagues before and after the coaching intervention was needed to answer RQ2—what is the nature of relational trust between teachers over time? The second survey was five questions (see Appendix A) adapted from Miller et al. (1994) to measure openness to change (Jeong et al., 2016). Both surveys were additions to the survey battery teachers already filled out for the broader INSIGHTS study. To protect the broader INSIGHTS surveys from participant fatigue, this study's two additional surveys were administered at the end of the pre- and post-intervention batteries.

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<sup>4</sup> School trust research shows that trust between school principals and teachers is a contributing factor in creating teacher change through PD (Hershfeldt et al., 2012; Sarason, 1996). However, because INSIGHTS was not mandated by the principal, and the coaching was not being used for evaluative purposes, I decided that exploring the relationship between the principal and the teachers was beyond the scope of this study.



Teachers also completed surveys during the intervention for the broader INSIGHTS study. Teachers filled out two weekly surveys that I used to inform my study. The first is the Classroom Workshop Teacher Survey (see Appendix A). Teachers rated the usefulness of the information provided by the coach was to them and their students, and their satisfaction with the coach that week. Second, the teachers filled out the Classroom Diary (see Appendix A), a survey measuring how they used the INSIGHTS techniques during the week. These two weekly surveys provided data about the coach's fidelity to the coaching intervention components and the teachers' enthusiasm towards the study. The teachers received links to both surveys via email and completed them via Qualtrics. I emailed the Classroom Workshop Teacher Survey (the coach never saw the individual responses), and the coach emailed the Classroom Diary.

**Coach Survey.** The coach filled out the Classroom Attendance and Session Log survey (see Appendix A), a weekly coaching log that included an open text box where the coach described the teacher's level of engagement, openness to the material, and any notable interactions. This open-response question was added to the coaching log, and only this question was used for this study. The survey responses were downloaded from the secure Qualtrics cloud and put into the Restricted OneDrive folder.

### ***Communication Between Coach and Teachers***

The communication between teachers and coach were all emails that the coach compiled into a document and sent me after the conclusion of the intervention. Most of the emails were scheduling-related. However, as discussed in the Results section, at the

tail-end of the intervention, there were several emails exchanged about a student in Sara's room that needed extra attention and Anna was able to help.

### **Institutional Review Board**

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of UNL approved my minor protocol change form for this study on January 7, 2021. I submitted a minor protocol change under the broader INSIGHTS IRB protocol that included the new data collection for this study. Included in the change form were the following, an asterisk indicates either new or revised data collection sources from the broader INSIGHTS study:

- A revised consent letter for the two participating teachers. The revisions included statements about the addition of two interviews, that the PD, all coaching sessions, and classroom sessions would be recorded for research purposes, and a \$40 stipend for participation in the coaching study (see Appendix B) \*
- Consent letter for the coach (see Appendix B, the coach has not previously signed a consent letter as all their research responsibilities fell within their job description) \*
- Updated Classroom Attendance and Session Log (Coaching Log; see Appendix B) \*
- Study-specific interview questions and coding scheme (see Appendix A) \*
- Video coding scheme (Appendix C) \*
- Recruitment email to coach describing the study and attached consent letter (see Appendix B)

- Recruitment Email to teachers describing the study and attached consent letter (see Appendix B)
- Scheduling email to coach for the interviews (see Appendix C)
- Scheduling email to teachers for the interviews (see Appendix B)

After the IRB approved my change, I reached out to the two participating teachers and coach for consent. The consent letters were sent via DocuSign and were signed electronically. All participants were emailed a copy of their signed letter.

### **Data Analysis**

Next, I will describe my data analysis process, organized by data source in the order they were collected. I began to descriptively code the data as it came in so that analyses of each source informed the other. The pre-intervention interview transcripts were coded first, then, the pre-intervention surveys were analyzed, followed by the coaching session videos, then the classroom session videos, the post-intervention interview transcripts, and finally the ongoing and post-intervention surveys were scored. As I coded and analyzed the data as it came in, I looked for the data to confirm, disconfirm, or elaborate on the other sources of data. For example, one teacher, Kelli, spoke in her pre-intervention interview about how she was excited for INSIGHTS to begin because she had such a challenging first-grade class, illustrating a high level of openness to change. This stated need for additional social-emotional learning resources triangulated with how Kelli participated in the coaching and classroom sessions I observed, and how she reported in her surveys that INSIGHTS was useful to her classroom.

At the beginning of the coding process, I began with two sets of deductive codes, one for the interview data and one for the observation data. The interview deductive codes came from Tschannen-Moran's (2014) definition of relational trust, specifically practices around, benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence (see Appendix C). These codes were created to capture the relational trust being reported in the interviews. The observation deductive codes were based on the Evaluation Protocol for Instructional Coaching (EPIC; Nugent et al., 2018), FACET Innovations Coding Scheme (Anderson et al., 2014), and Tschannen-Moran's definition of trust. These were used to capture the relationship- and trust-building strategies used by the coach and the teachers. I then created three sets of these identical deductive codes:

1. One set for the coach talking about (in interviews) or to (in person) the teachers (out-group coach to teachers; C-T)
2. One for teachers talking about or to the coach (out-group teacher to coach; T-C) and
3. The final for teachers talking about or to each other (in-group, teacher to teacher; T-T).

I duplicated the codes so I could code the direction of who was speaking. This allowed me to easily see how the relationships were unfolding between all the participants. Thematic codes also emerged from the interview data and were added to the codebook, with the distinction of coach to teacher, teacher to coach, or teacher to teacher.

After I completed coding the pre-intervention interviews, I completed the coding of the observations using the deductive coding scheme and the inductive coding scheme.

Once I began coding the post-intervention interviews, some of the inductive codes that emerged from the pre-intervention interviews evolved. It became clear that the inductive thematic codes captured the same ideas the deductive codes captured, so I refined the codes, removing the redundant thematic codes, and recoding those selections with the deductive coding scheme (see Appendix C, redundant codes have a strikethrough).

### *Interviews*

For both the pre- and post-intervention interviews, I listened to the interviews to edit transcription errors and to format the transcripts for ease of coding. I then sent them back to the participants for member-checking, asking them to provide their edits in a different text color so I could see what they had elaborated on. I advised them that if they did not have edits, they did not need to respond to my request. Only the coach, Anna, provided me with updated transcripts; the teachers did not respond for either interview. In Anna's updated transcripts she provided more context and clarification to her responses and did not strike anything from her original responses to the interview questions, unless she felt it was unclear what she meant. In preparation for publication, I did some light editing for readability, anonymity, and succinctness purposes. I removed linguistic fillers, repeated words, excess elaboration, and non-relevant, or incomplete speech. I signaled all major (non-filler or repeated words) deletions with ellipses, and the meaning of the sentences were never changed (Lingard, 2019).

I uploaded the transcripts to Dedoose (Socio-Cultural Research Consultants, 2021) and thematically coded the interviews, using Tschannan-Moran's (2014) definition

of relational trust and the language of the participants as my guide for creating inductive codes (see Appendix C).

### ***Video Observations***

After the conclusion of coding the pre-interview transcripts, I started watching the PD, coaching, and finally the classroom sessions in Dedoose. I watched the PD and coaching videos multiple times at the beginning of the observation coding process for the purpose of becoming familiar with the data and Dedoose's video coding tool and deciding on a unit of analysis. I decided to create units of analysis in the video data based on who was talking. This seemed like a precise enough unit that when looked at all the videos holistically I could tell what was happening, but not so precise that I lost the larger context (Roller & Lavrakas, 2015). When the coach was speaking, I selected that section of the video to be one codable segment, same with the teachers, if they were speaking alone. I made a new segment when a different person spoke. If the conversation was more back and forth between two or all three people, then I created a segment for the length of the conversation between those people. If one person was speaking and the others in the room were just showing that they were listening by saying things like, "yes," "really?" "right;" then I only coded it as the main speaker talking. It was only when a second person added information that I coded the segment as multiple people talking.

Once I had settled on a unit of analysis, my coding process became more streamlined. The first time I watched a video, I created my segments of analysis based on who was talking. I then watched the video a second time to add in the deductive coding scheme (see Appendix C). Most of the coaching videos were watched a third time to

double-check that I had not missed any codes. I also met with Dr. Nugent, the developer of the EPIC codes, to watch one of the coaching videos together to confirm and refine my coding application based on her experience with the codes. In addition, twenty percent (by time) of each of the coaching videos were watched again by a peer to check for reliability to the deductive codes. I selected the reliability portions of videos where the most back and forth conversations were happening between the coach and teachers. We obtained 97% agreement on the application of the deductive codes.

Inductive codes also emerged from the PD and coaching videos that captured what was happening during the sessions but were only tangentially connected to my RQs. Some codes were for marking the topic of conversation, like INSIGHTS instruction, discussing students, and COVID. I was curious to see if the topic of conversation would be influential to building trust, so I coded them pre-emptively in case they became relevant to the themes I identified in my analysis. As I watched the coaching sessions, patterns emerged of coaching strategies that I was seeing enacted by Anna. I created inductive codes that were not necessarily about building relationships (i.e., engaging the teacher in the classroom, talking about past coaching experiences, using reflection questions). However, I wanted to capture everything that seemed relevant, even though I was not sure how it would fit—or if it would fit—into the final analysis. I also coded when I noticed that the teachers were showing their openness to change like when they would take notes or follow-up on past assignments because this was one of the constructs that I wanted to explore but was not part of the deductive coding scheme.

Because the unit of analysis was the speaker(s), this also allowed me to analyze how much everyone talked during the coaching sessions. I downloaded the coaching session data into an Excel sheet, and I used a SUMIF function to sum the different combinations of speakers: Anna; Kelli; Sara; Anna and Kelli; Anna and Sara; Sara and Kelli; and Anna, Kelli, and Sara. I then divided the totals against the total time of the coaching session to determine proportions. This magnitude coding allowed me to see if there were patterns or shifts in who was talking over time, or if a combination of people were talking more often than others.

The classroom videos were also coded in the same way, with the speaker(s) length creating the units of analysis segments. The classroom videos were far less rich in terms of out-group trust building behaviors because the coach and teachers were addressing the students, and rarely each other. For this reason, these videos rarely had to be watched more than once to code both the speaker(s) and the deductive codes. Because of the scarcity of relationship-building conversation, these videos were not checked for fidelity.

### ***Surveys and Communication***

The final sources of data that I analyzed were the surveys and the communication between the coach and teachers. The two surveys from the literature, the Faculty Trust Survey (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2003), and the Openness to Change Survey (Miller et al., 1994) were collected via Qualtrics. The data were downloaded into a spreadsheet, and then analyzed using the survey authors' instructions. The Faculty Trust Survey pre- and post-intervention results were standardized using instructions emailed to me by Tschannen-Moran, the author of the survey (personal correspondence, 2020). The



Openness to Change Survey results were analyzed by summing the scores (after reverse coding two questions) and dividing the sum by the highest possible score, 30. The higher the score, the more open the teacher is to change. The mean for both teachers was 26.5.

The two surveys that were original to the broader INSIGHTS project, the Classroom Workshop Teacher Feedback Form and Coaching Logs, were also collected via Qualtrics, and the data were downloaded into a spreadsheet for analysis. I focused on the open-ended questions that asked the coach and teachers about how the other party did during that week's coaching and classroom sessions. The participants did not often expound in these open-ended questions; however, I still included these data when they added to the understanding of the status of the relationships between coach and teachers; treating it like the interview data.

The communication documents—the compiled emails—were also coded using the inductive and deductive codes, similar to the interview data. Much of the email communication was about scheduling and data collection. However, after the intervention had finished, Sara reached out to Anna for help with a struggling student. This will be discussed in detail in the Results section. The following sections will describe the setting and participants of this study.

## **Research Context**

### ***INSIGHTS in Nebraska***

The coaching context was within the intervention, INSIGHTS in Nebraska (INSIGHTS). INSIGHTS is an U.S. Department of Education funded randomized control trial implementing the social-emotional curriculum, INSIGHTS into Children's

Temperament (McClowry, 2014) in rural Nebraska elementary schools. INSIGHTS was taught in first-grade classrooms (G1) through a series of 10 manualized lessons co-taught between the coach and the classroom teacher in the spring semester of the school year for 10 weeks. One of the distinguishing features of INSIGHTS is the use of puppets to teach temperament to the students. Beyond the two G1 teachers—Kelli and Sara, and the coach Anna—who participated in the study, three other G1 teachers participated along with another coach in the broader study.

The INSIGHTS classroom curriculum is set up as a gradual release of responsibility model (Collet, 2012). Anna started out by teaching most of the classroom curriculum, and the teacher assisted. As such, each week, the teacher took over more of the curriculum, and by week nine, the teacher was leading the entire lesson and Anna was only assisting.

Usually, the classroom session consisted of reviewing the material from the previous week, and a storyboard, where the students watched a narrated storybook about one of the puppets experiencing and solving a dilemma. In addition to a storyboard, the teacher and coach also presented a dilemma to the students that they solved together as a class. During week eight, after they had solved a dilemma as a class, they divided the class into small groups to solve the same dilemma. In week nine they extended that learning by having the small groups decide on which solution was the most helpful out of the possibilities they had come up with as a class. The coaching sessions were meant as a time to discuss if the teachers had used INSIGHTS strategies during the week, what

INSIGHTS strategies they could employ to help the students in the classroom and prepare for the classroom session that day.

### *Setting*

The study was conducted at CenterPoint school, a public Pre-K–12 building that serves approximately 500 students from over 300 square miles of rural communities. Several school districts merged between the 1960s and 1980s to form CenterPoint Public School District. Its IES local code is designated as Rural: Remote, meaning that it is more than 25 miles from an urbanized area and is also more than 10 miles from an urban cluster ([nces.ed.gov](https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/ipedsonline/)). The community is predominantly White, and the median household income is approximately \$65,000. It is a high-performing school district with ACT results and graduation rates consistently above the state average ([nces.ed.gov/ccd/districtsearch](https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/data/ipedsonline/)).

The building has several wings and similar grade levels are clustered together in hallways. The first-grade classrooms of the teacher participants, Kelli and Sara, are located with the Pre-K and Kindergarten classrooms in the same hallway. In her pre-intervention interview, Sara said that this group of early childhood teachers got along well. “we’re kind of built in wings, like preschool, kindergarten, first grade, are right together in one area, and I think that we all get along really well.”

One of the benefits of a Pre-K–12 building noted by Sara in her pre-intervention interview was that she gets to watch her first graders grow up. She taught early childhood students who are now juniors and seniors in high school that she sees around the school.

Kelli mentioned that she loves it when they have Friday assemblies and members of the high school clubs demonstrate what they are doing for the entire school.

One Friday they'll bring in the basketball team, one Friday they'll bring in the One Act [drama]...And they kind of do interviews with the kids that are involved and say you know, "what do you like about your school," or "what do you guys do in your sport," for the kids who don't know or who have never seen it so that connection from the bigs to the littles is cool to see.

The above description and quote illustrate the culture of the school and how Sara and Kelli see themselves and their students functioning within it. Being in a rural Pre-K–12 building has a specific culture and these descriptions help develop context for the case.

### *Participants*

Participants consisted of one coach, Anna and two first-grade teachers, Sara and Kelli who worked at CenterPoint. These participants were selected because they were participating in the broader INSIGHTS in Nebraska study, participating in group coaching, and Anna was the most experienced coach on the INSIGHTS in Nebraska team. I will now describe each of the participants in detail, including demographics and teaching history.

Kelli has been working at CenterPoint Elementary, teaching first grade for eight years. CenterPoint was her first teaching job out of college, and she calls it a "perfect fit" because she loves being close to her extended family who live in the surrounding area. She grew up in a neighboring rural community, went to a small college to get her degree

in Early Childhood and Elementary Education and teaching certificate, and wanted to raise her own family in a rural community. Kelli is White, non-Hispanic and in her early 30's.

Sara, the other first-grade teacher, has been teaching first-grade at CenterPoint for 11 years. She was previously a preschool teacher at the local parochial school, but when a first-grade teacher position opened, she moved over to CenterPoint. She also grew up in a neighboring rural community and when her youngest child went to kindergarten, she attended a small college to earn her degree in Early Childhood and Elementary Education and teaching certificate. Sara is White, non-Hispanic, and in her late 40's.

Anna, the coach, grew up in a rural school system and received her college degree from the state university in Human Development with endorsements in Early Childhood and Elementary Education. She taught first grade for two years and then was hired by a federal program to be a family support specialist. She stopped working at the federal program to homeschool her children when they were young. When she entered the workforce again, she was hired as a reading interventionist, and implemented Response to Intervention programming in elementary schools. She was drawn to work for the INSIGHTS intervention because she wanted to help children in rural schools like the school she attended. She wanted to bring resources to rural schools and give them tools that could help the students increase their self-regulation, and in turn, improve their academic performance. She was starting her third year as a coach during this study's time period. Anna is White, non-Hispanic, and in her early 50's.

## CHAPTER 4 FINDINGS

This study's research questions were specifically about out-group and in-group relational trust, and the way they interacted. I structured the results section to unpack these findings in overlapping ways. This approach will allow me to be true to the data because in-group and out-group trust did not happen in vacuums; they both were influenced and enacted by the other. Thus, I will build my case by reporting how both types of trust were built and deepened over time, through participant reports and researcher observation.

As I further elaborate in this section, in-group trust between the teachers, Sara and Kelli started high, and ended high, but the out-group trust had to be built over time through specific moves by Anna, the coach. I segmented the case study results into periods of time: pre-intervention, the building of out-group trust (weeks one through three), and the deepening of out-group trust (weeks four through ten), because these seemed to mark the largest shifts in out-group trust. I will finish with overall observations on out- and in-group trust.

Next, I report on what happened during each of these time periods and how trust existed or was built within each time period. I pull more deeply from the coaching session observations, as they were where most of the out-group trust moves happened. I also pull from the interviews where the in-group and out-group moves are described by the participants. Where appropriate, I also include supporting evidence from the other data sources, including surveys and communication between the coach and teachers (see Table 3.1).

## **Pre-Intervention**

### ***Teacher In-Group Trust***

During their pre-intervention interviews, both Sara and Kelli reported a high level of in-group trust with each other. They have been team teachers for eight years, had lunch together every day, stayed in touch on the weekends, and knew each other's personal lives<sup>5</sup>, as stated by Kelli:

Kelli: We don't mean to brag but we're the best team in the building. Like Sara and I get along we have very similar personalities, and we like bouncing ideas off each other all the time...She's been here 10 or 11 years and I have been here for eight, so we've been together for a while, and we just click like our personalities get along. And it just works so there's a lot of teams in our building that have a good working relationship, but like we Snapchat each other on the weekends. It's like we're friends beyond just co-teachers.

Sara echoed these thoughts, saying,

Sara: I guess our relationship, like she knows my home life and everything that's going on, I know that's very close knit... We have lunch together every day so if I don't get home from school, it's because we had an hour conversation about life. Working with Kelli, that's just part of my life.

This kind of close-knit community feel between the teachers was also mirrored in the way Sara and Kelli talked about their students. During interviews and the coaching

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<sup>5</sup> I will use past tense verbs for what happened during the observation semester. However, it is to be assumed that many of these practices are still being implemented.

sessions, they often referred to their students as “our students”; their language around the students gave the connotation that they considered the entire cohort of first graders as one class they were both teaching. During reading time, they grouped the students across the classrooms into small groups based on ability, so some kids from each class would walk into the other teacher’s room to work in their small reading group. They also used to do this across-room ability grouping with math. Kelli had a larger classroom with a big open space at the front, so the two classes met each week to do social-emotional learning (not INSIGHTS) and science together.

This constant merging of classes required a lot of communication between Sara and Kelli, as illustrated in Sara’s quote from her pre-intervention interview. “Kelli, my teaching partner, we, every break that we have or every second we like run our schedule together all the time...We bounce everything off of each other, I mean it.” This consistent communication, checking-in about schedules, having lunch together, talking after school and on the weekends built a high level of in-group trust between these teachers. The high in-group trust was also evident in Sara’s response to the interview question about how she was feeling about completing the coaching as a group with Kelli:

Kelli and I work so well together that like and if we weren't assigned to do it [coaching] together, we would still be talking about it. You know, if only one of us, if it were one teacher like you were doing her class versus mine or whatever, we would be having conversations about it.

While Sara and Kelli reported a high level of in-group trust with each other and their fellow early-childhood teachers, this in-group trust did not extend to all the teachers



in the building. In response to the Faculty Trust Survey, measuring the trust they have with all their teacher colleagues, Sara and Kelli's combined standard score at pre-intervention was 463, whereas the average elementary school standard score is 500. A score in the 400s is lower than 84% of the elementary schools used to norm the Faculty Trust Survey<sup>6</sup> (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2003). The Faculty Trust Survey was meant to serve as a non-observational tool to measure in-group trust between Sara and Kelli, but it wasn't nuanced enough to capture only their in-group trust. This is evident in the discrepancy between the high in-group trust reported between Kelli and Sara, and the below-average in-group trust reported on the Faculty Trust Survey. This finding is also reflected in the way that Kelli and Sara talked about their colleagues in their pre-intervention interviews. Both teachers mentioned that because of different teaching schedules and the way the building is set up, they do not interact often with the upper-grade teachers, even in the elementary grades. Kelli mentioned specifically that this affects trust:

To be honest, I don't even see fifth and sixth grade [teachers] ever; they're in the same building but they're in a different hallway. And then second grade kind of splits and one is good with us, and then the other one kind of clicks in with third and fourth grade. They're their own little clique and, to be honest, I don't trust them. And I don't know that, you know, they don't

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<sup>6</sup> The Faculty Trust Survey has three different standardizing equations and norms, one each for elementary, middle, and high schools. I used the standardizing equation and norms for elementary schools, even though CenterPoint is a Pre-K–12 building. I made this decision because Kelli and Sara only ever talked about interacting with the elementary teachers in their interviews, and so using the elementary equation seemed the most appropriate given the context.

ever come down here so it's, I would say, it's not whole school culture, but it is in your area.

### ***Teacher Openness to Change***

As mentioned in the Data Sources section, measuring openness to change was important for this study because it would gauge how the teachers would possibly react to the coach's suggestions. The teachers' attitudes toward the project would presumably influence their attitude toward the coach, and the trust between the coach and teachers. The teachers' openness to change was measured using both the Openness to Change Questionnaire (Miller et al., 1994) and the pre-intervention interviews which contained questions about the teachers' feelings about participating in the INSIGHTS project. Both teachers rated their openness as high on the survey with Kelli scoring 27/30 and Sara scoring 26/30. Both teachers also said in their pre-intervention interviews that they were excited to participate in the INSIGHTS project.

Kelli, specifically, said that her current first-grade class was the most challenging class she had ever taught. Out of the 16 students, nine had summer birthdays, meaning they were a very young group, and not as mature as other classes she had taught. Her students had also missed an entire quarter of kindergarten because of the COVID-19 shutdowns in the spring of 2020. She felt like a combination of these factors created a very socially immature class:

[My students are] very immature so I'm excited to see what you

[INSIGHTS] can do. Or what I can do for them...Teaching them to

identify those behaviors in themselves. Teaching them skills to be more

mature or to act in a way, that's more respectful because they have—a lot of them still have a toddler mentality. I hate to say that—I have an almost four-year-old at home—and some of these kids still are mimicking some of that behavior of me, me, me, I have to be the loudest, the most obnoxious center stage—more than I've ever had before. So, I'm excited to see them identify the social-emotional piece in themselves, and how to build from that.

Sara, like Kelli, was excited about participating in the INSIGHTS intervention, and reported several ways that she was open to change. During her pre-intervention interview, she mentioned that she had already watched the assigned videos to prepare for the upcoming PD. She also had already pulled aside two of her students who consistently blurted out during instruction to discuss possible behavior contracts. The students responded positively to the idea, and she noticed an encouraging difference in their behavior, even though they had not officially signed their INSIGHTS behavior contract yet:

I am excited to learn more about it [INSIGHTS] and I watched both of the training videos for our weekend Zoom [PD]. Today I've had two boys that really feed off of each other, especially during math they sit on opposite sides of the room. But they like try it out do each other. If this one blurts this one's gonna blurt louder and be just a little bit more obnoxious so I pulled him aside today, I talked about the contract, I was like I'm just learning about this and would you be willing to sign this contract that

you're going to work hard, and if you get three stickers—you know—if you can do it without blurting and interrupting.

And they worked so hard today we didn't even sign the contract yet, but just talking about—you know—and the culture of the classroom today. I was like, “You guys, did anybody notice how hard working they were?” and kind of pointed it out to them, and they said, “yeah, we did notice that they weren’t blurting out.” So, I want to learn more.

In summary, Sara and Kelli, because of their longstanding working relationship and friendship, had developed a high level of in-group trust. They saw their students as one large class that they both taught, and frequently throughout the week would teach each other’s students. However, this high level of in-group trust did not necessarily extend to all the teachers in the building. Kelli and Sara were both open to the changes that INSIGHTS could bring to their teaching, and their students’ behavior. This high level of in-group trust and openness to change was the context of the community of practice that Anna, the coach, was entering.

### ***Anna’s Orientation to Coaching***

Anna, the coach, reported a well-developed conceptualization of coaching in her pre-intervention interview. She believed that coaches should come alongside teachers to support and invest in them. She saw herself as someone who would provide an understanding ear or a new perspective when teachers talked about new ideas, struggles, or concerns. She equated her time investment in teachers as pampering for the teachers

because they rarely had designated time on a regular basis to pause and reflect on their teaching practices:

I think it [coaching] is successful because there's just a really good relationship made through coaching and a lot of times, it feels like, if a teacher is struggling it's not so much advice that she needs that is so sophisticated or profound...I feel like I can come alongside with more expertise [in INSIGHTS], but as for some of the other things I am intimidated and nervous...Yes, just coming alongside and having that relationship, like I said, there's an economy to someone investing in you, even if it's just time and listening and I think it can be really empowering just to know you're doing the right thing and press on.

Although Anna was starting her third year as an INSIGHTS coach, and had many years of experience in the classroom, during her pre-intervention interview, Anna expressed concern over her level of teaching expertise compared to the teachers with whom she would work:

I'm always a little nervous because all of them are more experienced and probably more educated than I am...A lot of teachers have opportunities to pursue a master's degree and they do. I have 18 credit hours, but I don't have a master's degree. I feel like a lot of the teachers I interact with have taught out of college, so they have lots of years under their belt. So, for me to come alongside them in a coaching role, it really is humbling and I'm always a little nervous.

In summary, Anna's orientation to coaching sets the stage for the kind of out-group trust that could be built between coach and teachers. Her commitment to investing in teachers, and being a parallel professional, not necessarily a master-teacher, created an environment where out-group trust was built, which I will discuss in the next section.

### **PD Sessions Through the First Three Weeks**

Anna and the teachers interacted with each other five times over the course of the first three weeks of the intervention. There were two PD sessions that happened through Zoom, and Anna visited CenterPoint three times to conduct the coaching and classroom sessions. Teachers reported that specific events happened during these three weeks that showed them that Anna was trustworthy, and their relationship shifted from building trust to sustaining trust after the first three weeks.

The next sub-sections will be organized to first orient the reader to what took place during the first three weeks of the intervention. Then, I will describe the two overarching ways that Anna built out-group trust—with INSIGHTS-specific strategies that were part of the intervention like behavior contracts and solving dilemmas, and coaching strategies like commenting on the teachers' competency, knowledge, and experience that the deductive codes captured. In concert, these two forms of building out-group trust created an environment where teachers reported feeling like they could trust Anna.

### ***Description of Events, First Three Weeks***

The first time Sara and Kelli met Anna was during the first of two, two-hour online PD sessions for INSIGHTS. The PD was led by Anna and had to be moved to an

online format due to COVID-19. The goals of the PD were to let the entire cohort of first-grade teachers get to know each other, introduce the teachers to their coaches, and have the teachers speak about their experience with the information they were presented in the videos. Other INSIGHTS team members also attended the PD including myself, the principal investigator, our data manager, and one of the graduate assistants.

Kelli and Sara were active participants during the PD, offering examples of when they saw certain concepts illustrated in their classrooms, and providing ideas or suggestions to other teachers who were looking for support. After the conclusion of the PD, Anna spoke with Kelli and Sara (and me) to officially introduce herself, and to schedule a time for the coaching and classroom sessions. The PD was held on a Saturday, and she came into their classroom the following Tuesday.

After the PD sessions, Kelli and Sara had weekly 30-minute group coaching sessions with Anna before implementing the classroom curriculum with students. The coaching sessions happened in Kelli's room during the teachers' prep time. The coaching session happened on the same day as the classroom sessions about an hour before the classroom sessions each week and lasted approximately 30 minutes. The teachers and Anna sat on the outside of a U-shaped table that Kelli used to teach small groups of students. During the first coaching session, Anna explained the three purposes of their instructional coaching: first, to talk about their students' undesirable behaviors and how INSIGHTS can help change those behaviors through behavior contracts; second, to practice that week's scripted dilemma with the puppets and decide on a solution that would be most helpful; and third, to create and practice dilemmas that occurred that past

week in the classroom that they could then solve with their classes with the puppets during the classroom sessions. At the end of the first coaching session, Anna asked each of them to think about their students' annoying, repetitive behaviors that could be the basis of behavior contracts that they would create the next week.

### ***INSIGHTS Strategies as a Means of Building Out-Group Trust***

The format for the coaching sessions moving forward was similar from week to week. The beginning of the coaching session was spent with pleasantries while everyone got settled. Then Anna would ask about how the week had gone in general and if they had used the puppets or INSIGHTS-specific strategies during the week. During the second coaching session, both Kelli and Sara were prepared with a list of the students for whom they wanted to create behavior contracts, showing again their high level of openness to change. Sara had two students in mind, Brandon, who blurted out during instruction and usually tried to get a rise out of another student across the room. (These are the students that Sara mentioned in her pre-intervention interview.)

Kelli had a student, Amanda, who would lay down on her desk during math instruction videos each day. Kelli wanted the contract to be about being a 'tall sitter' during the math video each day. Anna made sure that the kids' sticker charts would be accessible for them as teachers and would allow the students to see their progress. The behavior chart for Amanda was the turning point for Kelli and Anna's relationship. The behavior chart was successful, and Amanda was so excited the next week (week three) to tell Anna and show her the chart full of stickers. Anna got down to Amanda's level and praised her for her hard work and persistence. Kelli recalled the moment in her post-



intervention interview when I asked her for specific examples of when she felt like she trusted Anna:

To me it almost gets down to the emotional level versus just the instructional level. She really bought into the [behavior] contracts in those kids like one of my kiddos [Amanda] stopped at the end of class one day was like, I made my days, I got my stickers, I got my prize. And she [Anna] bent down on her level and was really praising her. I'm like okay, she really does care about each individual kiddo and their contract or at least she's faking it really well...Just buying into each kid and really buying into that and supporting me in supporting the kids with those specific, individual praises. Because obviously we're [Kelli and Sara] picking our most challenging kiddos who need more praise and more good things in their life. And she took the extra minute and stopped to spend a minute with that kiddo to praise them. So that to me that was kind of a turning point I'm like okay, she really does care she's not just here because she has to teach this lesson as part of this study, she bought into that kid made it special for her.

As stated in the quote, this special moment between Anna and Amanda during the third week in the classroom was a turning point for Kelli and Anna's relationship. Kelli recalled in her post-intervention interview that she had a difficult time trusting Anna in the beginning. She had only met Anna via Zoom a few days before Anna was in her classroom, and Kelli had a hard time turning over her rambunctious class to someone she

hardly knew. Anna also had a different style of classroom management, compared to Kelli, and so that was stressful watching Anna struggle with her class, and Kelli not knowing how much she should step in to help:

At first, we didn't connect right away. You know, she just kind of did her thing and I'm a pretty flexible go with the flow kind of person, and she got really flustered when things didn't go right and I'm like, just wing it... And she has a very calm, quiet demeanor to her, and my class is very rambunctious this year. So, the management piece like when she was teaching I'd want to jump in and say sit down, and she would be like, would you please find your seat, let the rain fall, it's not working. It was really hard to step back at first and just, okay she's teaching just let her teach. Like, if this kid is wandering around the room I'll quietly try and redirect but I'm not going to stop instruction. So just again a clash of personality there. But by the end, I got used to her and she got used to my kids a little bit more and I felt like strategies to deal with these kiddos. So, as the weeks went on, it got better. But those first couple weeks almost made me anxious, handing over the reins.

This feeling of clashing behavior management styles was also reflected in Kelli's open-ended response to her Coach Effectiveness Survey from the second week:

This is just a challenging class. She tried to use some whole group responses "tootsie roll, lollipop - we were talking now we stop" but the good kids answered and of course the ones off task didn't. I often have to

wait them out. I also feel like she doesn't hold kids accountable for answers if they don't have one, she just skips them instead of "I'll come back to you so think for one more minute" They have learned that a blank stare or "I don't know" gets them off the hook.

Kelli's third week Coach Effectiveness entry appears to capture the change in energy and trust between the two of them, "This week was really good. Lots of new information for us to use and practice." The third week was also when Anna introduced the Dilemma Boards to the teachers and started solving dilemmas in the classroom with the puppets. Possibly the combination of Anna taking the time to interact with Amanda, Kelli's student, and the introduction of a useful tool like a dilemma board—that could possibly help Kelli with her difficult class—prompted the change in the out-group trust between Kelli and Anna.

For Sara, she recalled in her post-intervention interview, that trust grew in the beginning of the coaching sessions because Anna showed that she cared about Sara's students:

When we're having our teachers' meetings [coaching sessions], and that it's all about the relationships and so building the personal relationship and knowing that the other part, the learning about INSIGHTS came easy. Because we knew that Anna cared, I knew that, and she cared about me and about the kids right away.

Anna reflected this care for the students and teachers, in her post-intervention interview, reiterating her view of a coach as someone who works alongside a teacher:

So, it's genuine [Anna's relationship with the teachers], is what I would like to say, and I think when you're in the trenches sincerely trying to help find an answer for what these kiddos that are struggling with, you—both of you—have these goals. You can see it in these kiddos that you just know, you need one another.

The INSIGHTS strategies of behavior contracts and using the dilemma boards was the catalyst for out-group trust to emerge. This allowed Anna to show how INSIGHTS could help the teachers in their classrooms, how Anna cared about their students, and in turn, how she cared about the teachers and their success in the classroom. Kelli confirmed this in her post-intervention interview:

Where it [trust] really started were the contracts, I would say it made it more personable for me and in relation to just here's the general program versus how is this going to work for my kids. And then you know we started talking specific kiddos and how to make it work in this classroom or in this school and so once it got more personal here, I feel like we started connecting, especially during that teacher time right before that teacher meeting time [coaching session] when we could talk individual situations or ideas there that just having those conversations to apply it to our kids and our teaching experiences here. So, I guess making it more personable made it easier and better for both of us.

### ***Coaching Strategies as a Means of Building Out-Group Trust***

Throughout the first three weeks of the intervention, in both the PD and the coaching sessions, Anna used certain coaching strategies that built trust with the teachers. Her four most used strategies in the first three coaching sessions, as captured by the deductive codes, were acknowledging the teachers' competency, knowledge, and experience; acknowledging the teachers' time; displaying integrity/reliability; and working on a common goal (see Table 4.1, see full codebook in Appendix C). Examples of Anna acknowledging teachers' competency, knowledge, and experience include pleasantry-level responses to teachers' ideas like, "I like that idea because...", "I love that idea", or "perfect!" She also went deeper, expressing to teachers that they are the experts in their classroom and validating their labor, "that is a lot of work for you", "Do you think this would be appropriate for your class?"

Many of these codes are under the broader umbrella of Mutual Respect in the EPIC code book. Seeing Anna use these strategies illustrates her conceptualization of coaching: that she wants to be a parallel professional "in the trenches" instead of someone seen as holding more knowledge than the teachers.

Table 4.1

*Code Categories, Codes, Instances of Codes in the First Three Coaching Sessions, and Examples*

Code Category Derived from EPIC Code Book	Code	Number of Instances in Sessions			Examples
		1	2	3	
Mutual Respect, Coach to Teacher	Acknowledging Time	5	1	6	“We will not go late...I will try to keep an eye on the time”, “teachers are so busy and your weekends are so precious”, “I hate to shorten the session”
	Competency, Knowledge, and Experience	3	9	7	“I think that is a great idea”, “I like that idea because...”, “as much as you guys dealt with last week, you have done a great job!”, “does that sound appropriate?”
	Integrity/ Reliability	4	1	5	“I will keep everything in this bag and bring it into your classroom”
Reciprocal Trust Behaviors, Coach to Teacher	Common Goal	2	10	4	The common goal instances were discussing students’ behavior contracts and preparing for the dilemma that they would solve that day during the classroom sessions.

In summary, Anna built initial out-group trust with Sara and Kelli through a combination of specific moves continuously over time. In addition, INSIGHTS-specific strategies like the behavior contracts and dilemma-solving gave Anna opportunities to show how the information she had was fulfilling a need for the teachers, and that she was invested in the success of the students in the classroom. Building this initial out-group trust was a process and took several moves happening in combination over these first three weeks.

### **Weeks Four Through Ten**

After the first three weeks of INSIGHTS, the coaching and classroom sessions seemed to follow a similar structure and it appeared that everyone felt more comfortable with the curriculum and the structure of the coaching and classroom sessions. Anna had built out-group trust with the teachers during the first three weeks, and in the remaining seven weeks of the intervention, she was able to deepen this trust.

The next sub-sections will be organized to first orient the reader to what took place during the final seven weeks of the intervention. Then, I will describe the two overarching ways that Anna deepened out-group trust—by learning more about some of the difficult situations the students were experiencing at home and trying to help and having formal and informal conversations with the teachers about INSIGHTS and non-INSIGHTS topics. I will then describe the in-group trust dynamic between Kelli and Sara. Finally, I will report what the participants thought about group coaching overall.

*Description of Events, Final Seven Weeks*

The coaching sessions in the final seven weeks of the intervention tended to follow a similar pattern. First on the agenda was usually taking student attendance for fidelity purposes. The teachers would also choose which group of students would participate with the puppets in the upcoming classroom session. Then Anna would ask if they had any instances during the week where they were able to use the INSIGHTS strategies. After reflecting on the past week, they turned their attention to what they were going to present to the students that day during the classroom sessions.

Because the classroom sessions were set up in a gradual release of responsibility model, they spent a lot of time planning out who was teaching which sections, and Anna helping the teachers feel comfortable with the details. They also discussed which solutions the teachers would like to see enacted for the dilemmas they presented to the students. The solutions reflected the skills they were working on, and the values of the school.

As the teachers took on more of the responsibility for teaching the curriculum, they also got more comfortable making the curriculum their own. Sara, in particular, spoke up about which dilemmas would be helpful to solve in her classroom, and how to structure the small group work so the students would stretch their skills and independence. Sara's openness to change shown in the beginning of the intervention seemed to create actual change in Sara's teaching.



### ***Helping Struggling Students as a Means of Deepening Out-Group Trust***

Similar to the first three weeks, Anna took an intense interest in the well-being of the students at CenterPoint, and this deepened the trust between Anna and the teachers. During week five, Sara shared the backstory of one of her students, Daniel, who had slept through the classroom session the week before. Daniel's parents both worked swing shifts, his mother working six 12-hour shifts each week, meaning that he only saw her about once a week. He would often wake up in the middle of the night, and not be able to go back to sleep and would start watching TV or playing video games. Daniel would then be very tired while at school, and would take naps in the nurse's office, missing a lot of instruction time. Daniel was mentioned a few other times during the final seven weeks of the intervention. After the intervention was finished, Sara sent an email to Anna, telling her that his behavior had been escalating; his low frustration tolerance was making him lash out at his classmates. After he had taken a nap in the nurse's office, he would come back and be remorseful about lashing out at his classmates. Sara asked Anna what INSIGHTS strategy she could use to help him 'put on his brakes' (i.e., increase his self-regulation so he would not erupt at his classmates).

Anna offered to reach out to Dr. McClowry, the developer of INSIGHTS, and a registered nurse with a private practice. Dr. McClowry suggested that the teacher contact the parents and they would set up a teacher/child/parent behavior contract around his bedtime routine. Anna was hesitant to get the parents involved because of the immense amount of strain they were both under with their work schedules, but Sara contacted them, and they came in to talk about the situation. Sara was so impressed that Anna

would continue working with her after INSIGHTS had finished, in her post-intervention interview she said:

[Anna] has gone above and beyond kind of listening with the kids. And even with Kelli and I, she comes in, she always asks about kids. ... So, she always goes above and beyond to help us with whatever questions we have or what's happening in the room. She's really quite sweet...it's just neat what she brings to the class.

Anna also felt that this experience was an example of the out-group trust that existed between her and Sara. In her post-intervention interview, she stated:

We have this kiddo with some real issues of getting up at night, he is unable to fall back asleep and he gets up and begins playing computer games. ...The behavior contract could help him get to bed on time. ...Sara trusted me enough to let me share all of this with Dr. McClowry and...I felt like I was the intermediary of trust, so that she's going to follow through to ask the parents to come in and do this behavior contract and I know a lot of times calling parents isn't easy. It's hard to call a parent and say there's something wrong going on in the classroom, I'm not sure if that would have happened had she not trusted me enough to reach out to me and trust my resource. ...I was actually honored that she reached out so easily for advice.

Both teachers had specific student examples that they pointed out in their post-intervention interviews where Anna had provided students individual attention. Daniel

was Sara's student, and Amanda was Kelli's student who accomplished her behavior chart and Anna was able to praise her. In both cases, Anna taking the time to ensure the well-being of the students helped build and deepen the trust between the coach and the teachers.

Another example of Anna caring deeply about the students was during week six when the dilemma was about a helping a friend feel better after their grandfather had died. Anna and the teachers discussed in the coaching session who would likely be affected by this dilemma as one student in Kelli's class had recently lost an uncle to suicide, and another boy had recently lost their dog. Anna wrote down the students who would most likely have stories to tell so she would make sure to give them the time they needed. During the classroom session in Sara's class, Sara had to step out of the classroom because one of her students had pulled out a loose tooth and was bleeding. Sara left Anna in charge, and as Anna and the students were talking about solutions, many of the students had stories of loss that they wanted to tell Anna. Anna was a bit blindsided because the students had more to share than she had expected. Because she did not have time to have everyone talk, Anna invited students to come up at the end to talk to her personally if they did not have a chance to share during class.

The next week during the coaching session Anna, Kelli, and Sara debriefed the week six dilemma, and Anna was apologetic that she was not able to give each student that wanted to talk an opportunity to share their story about losing someone. Sara apologized for having to leave the room, and for forgetting the other stories of loss that her students had experienced. Anna kept referring to her notes about each student and

their story, because she had made sure to write down each student and what they wanted to talk about. Anna's showing of competence and reliability left an impression on Sara because in her post-intervention interview, she said the following:

When you talk about a specific student and without ever saying names, Anna would know who I was talking about. ...She would follow through with what she said that she was going to go talk to [students] at the end [of class]. One of the storyboards that dealt with death, and she was kind of blindsided, and it was my fault, because we had a student that had recently lost an uncle. ...That was the one that was standing out in my head. ...I felt horrible because she was put right on the spot and then she would call those students and give them time to share with her personally. So those things, all of our students, in at least my room, I feel that all of them trust her with their deepest feelings and deepest stories.

This interview excerpt illustrates that out-group trust was deepening between Anna and Sara, and Sara's students were also developing out-group trust with Anna as well. In this example, the out-group trust was deepening because Anna exhibited two relational trust behaviors: benevolence by talking to the students after class, and reliability by following through with what she said she was going to do.

Throughout all ten weeks, Anna built and deepened her out-group trust with the teachers by exhibiting relational trust behaviors through her interactions with struggling students. Specifically, in the final weeks, she demonstrated her competence by writing

down what she was learning and reaching out to an outside source to find solutions. And she showed her reliability by following up with the teachers about these difficulties.

***Formal and Informal Conversations as a Means of Deepening Trust***

Anna deepened trust with the teachers through conversations, both formally during the coaching and classroom sessions, and informally before and after the coaching sessions. In this section I will describe these formal and informal conversations, and the proportions and topics of who was talking during the coaching sessions. The proportion and topics of conversation shifted in the final seven weeks of the intervention, and the participants reported these conversations as trust-deepening levers.

During weeks four through ten, Kelli was usually in the classroom with Anna before Sara arrived. They chatted about life, their kids, and what was happening at school. Anna would remember things from week to week and ask follow-up questions like about the high school girls' basketball team that was in the state playoffs, or a student who was not able to see their mom because of a COVID quarantine. Anna also started coming early in the final weeks to set up cameras in the classroom to capture how the students were interacting with the puppets in small groups. While she was setting up, she would also chat with Kelli and Sara during their lunch break. Sara reported in her post-intervention interview that Anna would ask questions about their lives outside of school and that deepened their trust:

[Anna] asked about our families like she knows about my granddaughter, and she knows about my children and my daughter broke her arm, her daughter

broke her [ankle], or we had lots of little connections and so she took an interest in me.

Kelli mentioned in her post-intervention interviews that these informal conversations were trust-deepening experiences as well:

[Anna] would in the couple weeks she came early and sat in on our lunch or was setting up the cameras during lunch and I usually eat with Sara. ...And so that's also kind of our vent session. So, we would have informal coaching sessions. I guess she's like okay, we have to save this part for the coaching session when it's videoed, but let's talk about this now. So, it was some of that, but just ideas of how to handle trouble kiddos or how to relate to them, and you know just jumping into our relaxing informal time as well. And being part of that and helping us with that or just letting us vent or whatever, she really kind of stepped in as a staff member at that point, instead of just as outsider. Being part of that lunch group and even part of our coaching sessions, we would get the stuff done we needed to talk about and sometimes we would just keep talking, so I would say, building that relationship and building that trust through just being open to that communication, of whatever is there that we needed to spill or needed ideas [about].

When Anna started joining them during lunch, Kelli reported a shift in Anna's status "she really kind of stepped in as a staff member at that point, instead of just an

outsider.” Out-group trust was transforming to in-group trust because of these informal conversations that were happening outside of the coaching time.

This idea of Anna becoming a staff member was also reflected in other data. During the week five coaching session, Anna mentioned that an INSIGHTS student had seen her in the hallway while they were going to the bathroom and stopped to talk to her for a long time. Anna told Kelli and Sara that she was trying to get him to go back to class, but he must have felt that she was a teacher, so he would not be in trouble because he was talking to a teacher. Anna promised him that she would write a note to Coretta (one of the puppets) if he went back to class. This again illustrates Sara’s comment that the students trusted Anna as well. Also, Kelli and Sara started treating Anna like a staff member during the classroom sessions because they would leave Anna in charge if they had to leave the classroom for emergencies (student bleeding or needing to go to the office), trusting that Anna would be fully capable of handling the classroom. Kelli mentioned how nice this was during her post-intervention interview:

There were a couple times when she was teaching, and I had to take a student to the office for being completely out of line. And then one time I was teaching, and you know, I wouldn’t expect her to take the student out, like that’s not her role or place, but when I had to, she just stepped in and continued right where I left off so that was nice so the kiddos could keep going with their lesson. The flexibility of that, that she was willing to step in and help.

Anna also mentioned in her post-intervention interview that she thought the teachers leaving her in charge was a sign that they trusted each other:

Sometimes Sara or Kelli would just leave the classroom with an emergency. They would trust that things would continue as planned or if I needed some accommodation like with my schedule, or the technology, they are more than willing to hand me the reins so they could fix the smart board or take over for me so I could fix a jump drive snafu. So, we trusted each other enough so we could move in and out of the primary teaching role as needed.

In sum, the out-group trust that Anna built during weeks one through three, and then deepened during weeks four through ten shifted in the minds of the teachers to in-group trust. This occurred because Anna showed she cared about their students during the coaching and classroom sessions and had informal conversations with them about non-INSIGHTS topics. In addition to the informal conversations that were happening, the formal conversations happening during the coaching sessions also showed a shift between the early intervention, and the later intervention.

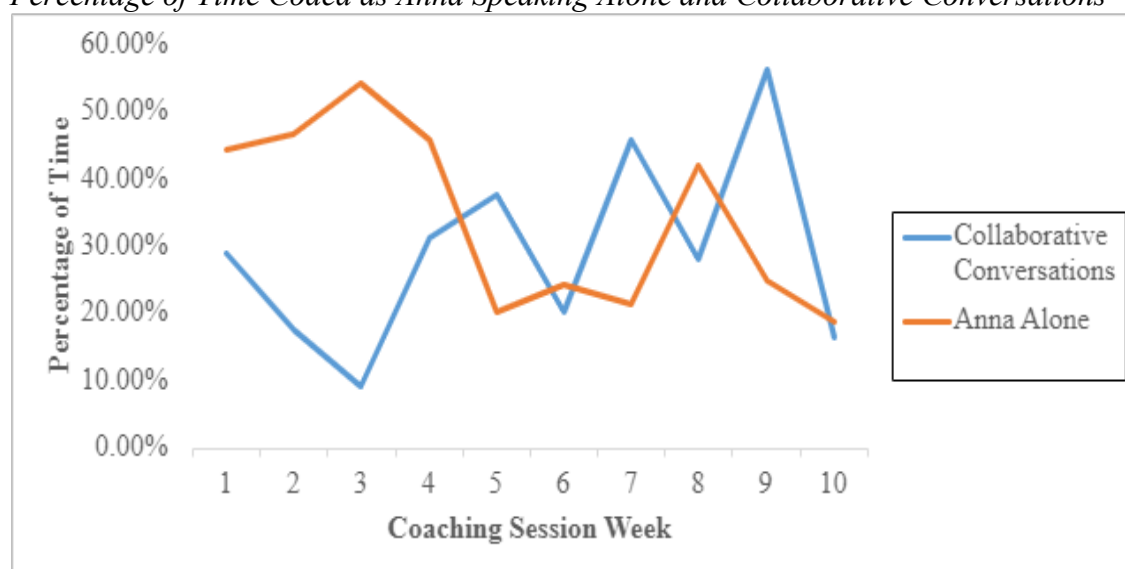
During the formal coaching sessions there was a shift that happened around weeks four and five that the magnitude coding revealed. When I analyzed who was talking and how much during the coaching sessions, it was clear that Anna did the majority of the talking during the first four weeks. This seems reasonable, because she was introducing the curriculum and a lot of information to the teachers during this time. From weeks five to ten, however, the three of them started talking to each other much more, collaborating on the dilemmas they were going to present to the students. Indeed, the orange line in



Figure 4.1 representing Anna speaking alone, and the blue line representing collaborative conversations between the three of them, is almost an inverse. When these two kinds of conversations were not happening, Anna was having a back and forth with one of the teachers while the other teacher listened (not represented in Figure 4.1).

Figure 4.1

*Percentage of Time Coded as Anna Speaking Alone and Collaborative Conversations*

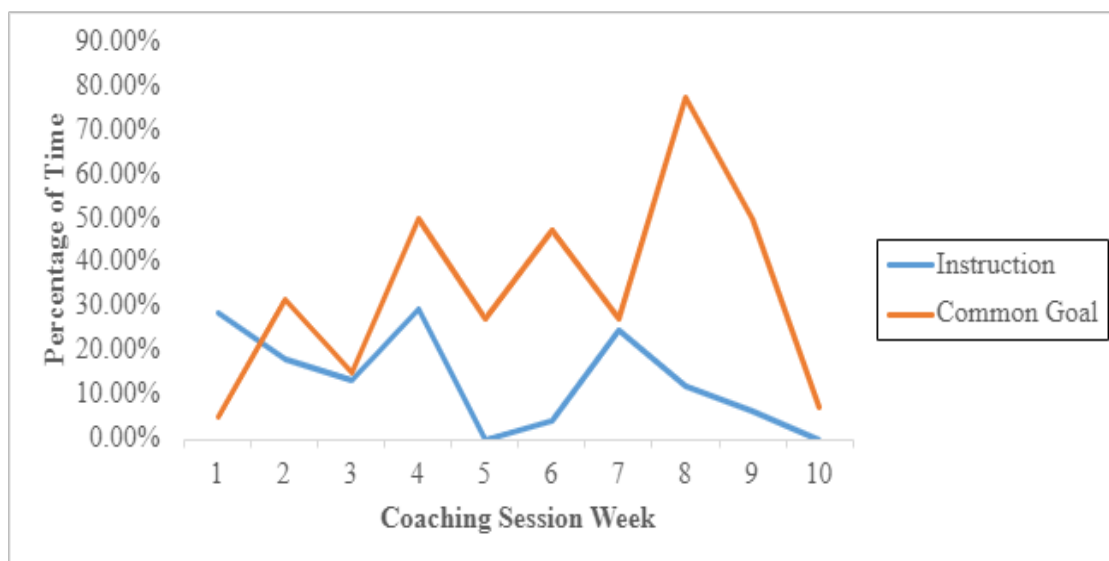


Not only did the proportion of those who were speaking change from the early intervention to late intervention, the topic of conversation also changed. In the first three weeks, Anna spent either more time, or about the same amount of time instructing the teachers as she did engaging in common goal planning with the teachers (see Figure 4.2 and Appendix C). Starting in week four, there was consistently more common goal planning (e.g., planning for that week's storyboard or dilemma during the classroom session, or future classroom sessions). The INSIGHTS curriculum lent itself to this shift, where the first few weeks of the classroom curriculum was about introducing/re-introducing the students (and teachers) to the concept of temperament and the puppet

personalities. The remaining weeks centered around the students solving dilemmas that required planning from the Anna and the teachers. The shift in the curriculum allowed for more dialogic interactions between Anna, Kelli, and Sara, which deepened their trust because of what was being discussed during the common goal planning.

Figure 4.2

*Percentage of Time Coded as Instruction from Anna Versus Common Goal Planning Between Anna and Teacher(s)*



As mentioned before, in addition to planning for the dilemmas during the coaching sessions, they were also discussing students who were struggling and coming up with ideas for behavior contracts or how to make the classroom a better fit for their needs. Kelli talked about how this collaboration was helpful in her post-intervention interview:

The ideas were nice, like when we were bouncing ideas off of each other, I'd be like, I'm thinking about this, and she [would say] 'I've never tried that before, but we can try it!' or 'what do you think about adjusting a little bit to do this.' So, bouncing ideas off of somebody who's been there, done that, was helpful. And she let us take her ideas and go with them, but also kind of helped shape it into something that would work or how to make it work to help the kids be successful those first couple times.

The coaching sessions in the final seven weeks were mainly a combination of Anna having conversations with the teachers about behavior contracts, or successful INSIGHTS strategies used during the week; and the three of them discussing students or planning the dilemma for the week.

In summary, Anna deepened the out-group trust with Kelli and Sara during weeks four through ten by continuing to care about the students and finding solutions to their struggles with INSIGHTS resources, like Dr. McClowry. The conversations also shifted from Anna doing a lot of talking, to collaboration between the three of them, starting in weeks four and five. This collaboration shifted how the teachers saw Anna, from being an outsider, to being part of the CenterPoint staff.

### ***Teacher In-Group Trust Weeks Four Through Ten***

As discussed in the Pre-Intervention section, Sara and Kelli started with very high in-group trust. They were friends outside of the classroom, and treated their students like they were one class. Both reported in their post-intervention interviews that their relationship did not necessarily change because of INSIGHTS, because they had started

out as such great friends. However, they both mentioned that they liked the common language surrounding temperament and problem-solving that they both now knew thanks to INSIGHTS. They felt like having that common language helped them when they were discussing their students with each other. Sara specifically mentioned that she thought INSIGHTS had helped increase her own social-emotional skills and when she talked with Kelli about students she was better at re-framing the situation:

I guess being able to listen to [Kelli], I don't know if it [has] changed because of INSIGHTS. The same things that apply to the kids as far as different problem-solving things that we've talked about probably have come through our relationship. Talking about our students I guess, you know, being more tolerant of the student that yells at a kid, he lashes out, he's angry, he's had a hard day, he doesn't get the sleep that he needs.

When we [Kelli and I] talk about our students, we talked about how hard it is for this one [student] not just complaining about them.

She elaborated later in the interview about how INSIGHTS changed the way she relates with other adults:

I am trying to look at another [adult's] perspective a little bit more before I speak about advice. I really am trying to put myself into that person and maybe that is somewhat because of INSIGHTS I'm not really sure, but you know, trying to think of what [they are] feeling and what [they are] going through.

Kelli reported in her post-intervention interview that she also liked how having common language and common strategies between the two of them because of INSIGHTS:

Honestly, it's helped us, [Sara] has a difficult class too so being able to bounce ideas off of each other to help with contracts or help redirect those kiddos using the same language, and the same system like the dilemma board. Being able to identify like, 'you know you [student] really seem like a Felicity today you're really friendly and you have lots to share.' That kind of stuff and then how to gear that towards what we need to get done. So, we've been able to talk more common language and how to help, especially the difficult kiddos. And brainstorm together instead of just each having our own classroom system, to have one common goal.

These quotes illustrate that even though the in-group trust was high between Sara and Kelli at the beginning of the intervention, and stayed high, INSIGHTS helped them have more common language and perspectives about their students, especially, with the students that struggle. They were able to reinforce the change in their teaching with each other. It was also possibly helping them take on perspectives of the adults around them, expanding their individual social-emotional learning.

### **Overall Perspectives About Group Coaching**

Being aware of the dearth of research surrounding group coaching, in the post-intervention interview I asked if the teachers enjoyed the group coaching experience, or if they would have preferred one-on-one coaching with Anna. Both responded that they liked the group coaching and they thought it was beneficial. Sara talked about how she

thought it was beneficial for the coaching to happen together because it solidified the social-emotional language they were using, and the solutions for the dilemmas. She also mentioned that because the students are taught by both of them at some point during the week, it was helpful to have discussed what was working for certain students as a group, so they could respond to behaviors the same way. Kelli thought that the group coaching worked well for their group because her and Sara got along so well, she was not sure if it would be as successful if the teachers did not get along already:

I think it was helpful together if you get along...Sara and I get along great, so we are in communication with each other constantly as far as how to help this kid...[such as] these are the behaviors I'm seeing, how are you dealing with it? I could see if I didn't get along with my teaching partner, like some pairs in our building...that maybe I'd want my own coaching session...Because if I was doing a little bit different thing than my teaching partner than I think I would get annoyed or frustrated that they just want to do it their way...I think it works well for us, because we do so much together and we also do bounce ideas off of each other a lot, so growing together for us was helpful.

I also observed that it seemed like the teachers reinforced attentive behavior in the other during the coaching sessions. They always came prepared to take notes, Kelli would bring sticky notes that they would both use in their curriculum guides, and they never brought their phones with them to the sessions. As Anna will comment on next, perhaps being in a group allowed the coaching to be more of a conversation instead of an

interview, and it allowed the teachers to not always be “on”. They could listen and absorb the information while Anna or the other teacher was talking, and this allowed their attention to be active the entire time. During the coaching sessions, neither teacher met the criteria of the “not engaged” code defined as “Teacher is accomplishing something else during the intervention presentation or coaching session. i.e. grading papers, cleaning up, stepping out of the classroom.” However, both teachers did need to step outside of their classrooms during certain classroom sessions because of student emergencies. I created the “not engaged” code because in Anna’s pre-intervention interview, she talked about how some teachers in dyadic coaching configurations would multi-task during their coaching sessions, cleaning up the classroom, organizing workbooks, or even building an igloo for an art project. However, Kelli and Sara never multi-tasked during the coaching session, making the code unnecessary. Perhaps the attention that they paid to Anna was also related to Sara and Kelli’s high in-group trust. Just as someone would pay attention to a close friend when they were talking about difficult things, these teachers paid attention to what was happening in the coaching.

When Anna was asked about group coaching, and if she felt like she was able to create relationships with both teachers, she replied that she thought that she was easily able to create relationships with both teachers:

They felt close enough to me to share things about their family, about community. Things that were driving them a little crazy about their family and maybe confidential things on students that teachers just need to share. They each had struggles in their own classrooms and family life that they

shared with me, and they each had joyful things happening in both their classrooms and family life that they shared so I've worked with teachers before that might be a little more reserved or quiet and I feel like I don't really have the rapport with them, and I didn't feel that way with either one of these two teachers. I wondered, maybe if working in the group helped that because you weren't so much on the spot, so to share something going on in the community or with a student, it was more like a conversation instead of an interview, and I wonder if that played a role.

I asked about her past INSIGHTS experience building relationships with teachers in both dyadic and group configurations, and if she felt there was any big difference between the two contexts:

I do feel that the group sessions helped me to build relationships quicker and more intimately. When I'm thinking of my one-on-one sessions I feel like I've had some shy teachers and they weren't maybe quite sure what their role in INSIGHTS was and navigating that. I've also had the opposite very outgoing teachers who would just share so much with me. So, I've had both extremes with my one-on-one times. But I feel like in general, when I have a group, I've gotten to know them quicker in a closer manner and more intimate manner. I believe that almost all of my group sessions, the teachers I've worked with have chosen to have lunch together instead of going down to the teachers' lounge and being with the whole group. I've seen them having lunch, and they will just sit and process and vent



and it's a little bit like a PLC day. Sometimes they'll vent sometimes it's more social, but they choose to be together, so I'm definitely noticed that, with these two women too. It feels more like small town community, but it doesn't always happen in just the small towns.

Anna reported that she thinks it is easier to get to know the teachers in group coaching contexts because the teachers are already used to sharing with each other, so sharing their relationship with another person is not as difficult or perhaps vulnerable. This relates to the Communities of Practice theory (Wenger, 1998) and will be discussed more fully in the Discussion section.

In summary, in the first three weeks of the intervention, Anna built out-group trust through INSIGHTS-specific strategies like using behavior contracts, and planning for dilemmas to show teachers that she cared about the students in their classroom. Anna also used coaching strategies like displaying mutual and reciprocal trust behaviors. In weeks four through ten, Anna continued to show a deep interest in the students in the classroom, and helped find solutions for them beyond the time of the intervention, and beyond the scope of the intervention by contacting outside experts. Finally, Anna deepened trust with the teachers through formal conversations during the coaching sessions, and informal conversations before and after the coaching sessions. The formal conversations during the coaching sessions shifted from Anna and instruction focused, to all three talking and planning focused. The informal conversations before and after the coaching sessions were also trust-deepening as the teachers felt like Anna cared about them, and not just completing the intervention. The teachers and students started seeing

Anna as a member of the CenterPoint staff, Anna was able to create out-group trust than transformed that out-group trust into in-group trust.

## CHAPTER 5 DISCUSSION

EC coaching studies have demonstrated that coaching can be an effective way to support EC teachers in implementing curriculum and research-based practices in the classrooms as summarized three reviews by Aikens and Akers (2011), Artman-Meeker et al. (2015) and Elek and Page (2019). EC teachers are experiencing coaching in varied configurations, group coaching being an alternative or addition to the most used configuration, dyadic (e.g., Buysse et al., 2010; Carlisle & Berebistky, 2011; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Although coaching is becoming a more common professional learning tool, there is still much to learn about what coaching elements make it successful (Diamond et al., 2013). One element that has been identified is a trusting relationship between the coach and teacher(s) (e.g., Brown et al., 2009; Celano & Mitchell, 2014; Elek & Page, 2019). However, there is a dearth of research that explores how trusting relationships are built between the coach and teachers (out-group trust) in group coaching situations. There is also very little research exploring how teachers' relationships with each other are influenced by the group coaching experience, or how their existing relationship influences the success of the group coaching.

Group coaching contexts are complex because both out-group and in-group trust exist (or do not exist) and have implications for the success of the coaching venture. The purpose of this case study was to explore the nature of both out-group and in-group relational trust in a group coaching configuration over time. Importantly, the results point to how imperative both out-group and in-group trust are in coaching contexts, and how group coaching could have potential in EC settings.

Within the group coaching context of this study, all three relationships mattered and needed attention. The relationship Anna had with each of the teachers and the relationship Sara and Kelli had with each other all played a role in the development and deepening of relational trust between all three people. Anna was able to transform her out-group relational trust with both teachers into in-group trust through specific coaching moves. In addition, the context of Sara and Kelli's high in-group trust and the social-emotional nature of INSIGHTS created an ideal context for group coaching. Finally, all participants reported that they enjoyed the group coaching, and that it enhanced the experience. Next, I will discuss these three main takeaways from the findings through the lens of extant literature and discuss the implications of these findings for future coaching practice and research.

### **Out-Group Trust Can Be Transformed to In-Group Trust**

Anna built and deepened out-group trust, and eventually transformed that out-group trust into in-group trust in three overlapping ways: by caring about individual students, through formal and informal conversations with teachers, and by seeing herself as a parallel professional.

#### ***Caring About Individual Students***

Importantly, the teachers reported how much Anna cared about their students individually and used her time and resources to help students succeed, demonstrating elements of relational trust (Tschannen-Moran, 2017). Anna's benevolence towards the students was interpreted by the teachers as benevolence towards them. Tschannen-Moran (2017) characterizes benevolence as, "a mutual spirit of goodwill and a willingness to

extend oneself in support of the well-being of the other” (p. 4). Anna showed this willingness to extend herself for the well-being of the students by giving them individual attention, taking notes about the students and their individual circumstances, and contacting Dr. McClowry when Daniel needed additional help beyond what Anna could provide. Kelli, in particular, witnessed this benevolence from Anna towards her student Amanda, and reported that it was a turning point in their relationship. Kelli realized that Anna was not just there as part of the research project, but that Anna wanted her students to succeed. Connected to Anna’s benevolence was her competence as an INSIGHTS facilitator and that helped her respond to the students’ needs successfully, also helping to develop out-group trust. Some of these facilitator skills were connected to the INSIGHTS curriculum (e.g., behavior contracts, helping teachers reframe students’ behavior, being prepared to teach the curriculum) and others were her skills as a coach (e.g., ability to empathize, listen, follow-up). Without competence to back up her benevolence, the teachers might not have trusted her to the extent that they did by the end of the ten weeks because what she was suggesting might not have worked for the students.

The context of INSIGHTS created an ideal situation for Anna to showcase her benevolence and competence towards the students because teaching and modeling in the classroom were part of her expected coaching role, in addition to gradually handing off responsibility for the teaching to the teachers. Her affection for the students was able to be displayed, noticed, and reported by the teachers. For example, one of the goals of the coaching sessions was to lessen frequent annoying behaviors of specific students. Anna was able to demonstrate benevolence and competency by planning the behavior contracts

for the students with the teachers, following up on the behavior contracts in subsequent weeks, learning the backstories of the students, and then being able to praise the students during the classroom sessions.

Anna showcasing her benevolence and competence through caring for individual students seems like an obvious coaching practice, however, caring for individual students is rarely discussed in the extant EC coaching literature. Perhaps it is not reported in the literature because how relationships are built between coach and teacher(s) is not usually an outcome measure of coaching studies. While relationship building may be part of coaching models used by EC researchers, there has not been a lot of work in the EC literature to operationalize relationship building moves, like there has been in the K–12 coaching literature (Nugent et al., 2018). Indeed, in Elek and Page’s (2019) review of EC coaching literature, 11 of the 53 included articles reported that there was a focus on the development of a partnership between the coach and teacher(s), and that it was critical for coaching success. However, none of the research questions from those 11 articles were related to how those relationships were created (Friedman & Woods, 2015; Hendrickson et al., 1993; Hsieh et al., 2009; Ivy & Schreck, 2008; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009; Neuman & Wright, 2010; Ota & Austin, 2013; Pianta et al., 2008; Powell et al., 2010; Wilson et al., 2012; Zan & Donegan-Ritter, 2014).

### ***Formal and Informal Conversations***

The second way Anna built trust was through formal conversations during the coaching sessions and informal conversations outside of the coaching sessions with the teachers. During the formal conversations in the coaching sessions, Anna used trust-

building moves like commenting on the teachers' competency, knowledge, and experience, and they worked on common goals together like setting up behavior contracts and solving classroom dilemmas. The teachers also reported that the informal conversations they had outside the coaching sessions, like talking about their families or what was happening at the school, were also trust-building. These findings are in line with what Jayaraman et al. (2015) found when they analyzed coaching conversations as their coaches and Anna used similar moves. It is beyond the scope of this study to document the coaching strategies Anna used to implement INSIGHTS and change teacher practices (e.g., use of feedback, reflective questioning). However, coaching strategies can also function as trust-building moves and can be vehicles for showcasing the coach's benevolence, honesty, openness, reliability, and competence. For example, Sara reported that "bouncing ideas off of each other" while working on behavior contracts and dilemmas developed trust between her and Anna. This is an example of joint planning, which is an established coaching strategy (Rush & Shelton, 2011).

Informal conversations are critical in building out-group trust as Hallam et al. (2014) found when they studied professional learning communities in a new school where the teachers did not necessarily know each other. The authors note that the teachers did not have any professional development around how to function as an effective PLC, so the majority of the trust was built in informal situations. Hallam et al. concludes that repeated opportunities for teachers to be vulnerable with each other is the key to building trust, which can lead to teacher change in practice, which can lead to higher student achievement. Sara and Kelli's pattern of being vulnerable with each other

about their home lives and their students perhaps made it easier for them to be vulnerable with Anna. The difficult situations they were sharing about their home lives and their students were not new information to the other teacher, making it perhaps easier to share with Anna and increasing the likelihood of developing out-group trust.

### ***Positioning as a Parallel Professional***

The third way Anna built trust was seeing herself as a parallel professional and that the expertise she offered was only about INSIGHTS and not about teaching or students in general. She consciously tried to limit the top-down power structure (i.e., the coach exercises power and authority over the teachers) that some in the coaching field report limits the potential of the coach-teacher relationship and ultimately, the success of the intervention (e.g., Robertson et al., 2020). Anna consistently commented on the teachers' expertise about their students and praised them for their ideas on how to apply the INSIGHTS strategies in their classrooms. Robertson et al. (2020) calls this distributed expertise, which "describes the perception of authority or equity in decision-making around which instructional practices can be implemented" (p. 66). Anna was observed giving the teachers agency surrounding which dilemmas they should solve in the classroom, and how they would like the dilemma to be solved. The INSIGHTS classroom curriculum is heavily manualized, but Anna gave as much agency as possible, when possible. Gardiner (2012) reported a similar finding, that trust was built between coaches and teachers when the teachers saw them as supportive partners and not evaluators. Anna positioned herself more as a peer than a teaching expert and perhaps that made it easier for out-group trust to build and then transform to in-group trust.



### **High In-Group Trust and INSIGHTS Created an Ideal Context for Group Coaching**

The in-group trust between Kelli and Sara provided a foundation upon which everything else was built. Perhaps because the teachers had established a high degree of in-group trust, they were confident in each other's adherence to INSIGHTS and reinforced adherence by being accountable to each other in their use of the language and resources of INSIGHTS. For example, when Kelli pulled out a list in one of the coaching sessions of the times that she had used the INSIGHTS strategies during the week, Sara had a list of her instances the next week as well, showing her reliability and competence. The teachers also reported that they liked having the shared language and skills that INSIGHTS taught them, and they used those shared language and skills even when they were not with Anna. Much like Hallam et al. (2014), Ford (2014) emphasizes this idea of being vulnerable with colleagues as a route to in-group trust by suggesting that when teachers have confidence that their colleagues are adhering to the school curriculum and shared goals, that trust develops. Perhaps using INSIGHTS was less risky because they knew the other teacher was using it as well and they had the help of Anna and the other teacher to problem-solve when adherence to INSIGHTS was difficult.

Even with the high level of in-group trust that existed between Kelli and Sara, the social-emotional context of INSIGHTS deepened their in-group trust. It helped them be better friends because of the perspective-taking skills that INSIGHTS helped refine. Part of the INSIGHTS PD curriculum is helping teachers reframe their students' behavior based on temperament aspects. For example, seeing a student who constantly wiggles in

their seats as someone who has high motor activity. Teachers are encouraged to create a “goodness of fit” in their classroom for that student, and help that student stretch their self-regulation so sitting for longer periods of time is not so difficult. Sara reported that this practice of reframing a student’s behavior in terms of resources that the student needs, instead of deficiencies, helped her also reframe adult behavior when speaking about difficult situations with Kelli. It is impossible to know if Sara and Kelli’s trust would have deepened if they were being coached on a non-social-emotional curriculum, and just the consistent opportunities to be vulnerable with each other in a coaching session would have created a deeper trust. However, it seems that, at least in this case, learning a new social-emotional curriculum was instrumental in deepening the in-group trust between them. Perhaps it matters what skills are being coached (i.e., social-emotional, STEM, literacy), if interventions are hoping to increase in-group trust between teachers through group coaching.

### **There is Potential for Group Coaching in EC**

Group coaching was successful in this study in that the coach and teachers reported that they created trusting relationships with each other, and teachers reported that the students benefited from INSIGHTS. It is beyond the scope of this study to determine if INSIGHTS changed teacher practice, or student behavior, and if group coaching influenced those results. However, what the results do suggest is that group coaching has many benefits that have perhaps been overlooked by researchers and practitioners. Anna reported that, compared to the other dyadic coaching contexts that she has participated in, she felt like group coaching helped her establish relationships faster

with the teachers. This seems related to what was discussed previously about the teachers' high in-group trust. Sara and Kelli were comfortable with each other, and were vulnerable with each other often, so perhaps it was not as big of a stretch to be vulnerable with Anna, once initial trust was established. The teachers had constructed a team identity: they thought of their students as one class, they were open to the help that INSIGHTS had to offer because they had difficult classrooms, and they were confident in their relationship with each other. Perhaps this identity of cohesion and openness helped the teachers be vulnerable in the risky situation of coaching. This may have built out-group trust faster with Anna compared to dyadic coaching situations Anna had been a part of dyadic coaching contexts where the teacher was alone in being vulnerable with the coach and it took more time to build the out-group trust. The narrative family therapy literature sheds additional light on this idea of identity and relationships with others. Combs and Freedman (2016) posit that identities are relational and that our identities do not exist outside of the relationships that have formed them. Our experiences with others and how they respond to us in given situations shape how we act and view ourselves. Sara and Kelli both mentioned in their pre-intervention interviews that they had received literacy coaching in the past and that it was a positive experience, so perhaps that experience coupled with their high in-group trust and expressed need for additional training contributed to the group coaching's success.

Anna also reported that perhaps group coaching worked because teachers did not have to be "on" the entire time and that they could take time to think and absorb information while the other teacher spoke. All three individuals were co-constructing the

knowledge in the session, and creating meaning from their own, and others' experiences. Perhaps the information and feedback Anna shared was more general in nature, or felt more general because both teachers were there, and both were working towards change. This idea of group coaching being less threatening, but still helpful was also found in Deussen et al., (2007). Teachers and coaches reported that the feedback in the group coaching sessions was general in nature based on overall trends and it was perceived as less threatening and supported the teachers who would not allow a coach to observe them. The purpose of Anna's coaching was not to observe the teachers and then work on specific changes in practice, like the coaches in the Deussen et al. study, but the results seemed to be similar. The group coaching provided a space for the teachers to be vulnerable; gain new perspectives; ideas, and skills; and support each other in changing practices. Perhaps making the changes in practice was less risky because the teachers knew their team teacher was trying to make the same changes.

Sara and Kelli reported that they thought it was beneficial for them to participate in the coaching together because it gave them shared knowledge and skills and, as was described previously, having shared knowledge, goals, and values helps develop in-group trust between colleagues (Ford, 2014). The INSIGHTS classroom curriculum is highly manualized and, given the teachers' expertise and experience, they most likely could have figured out how to implement the classroom curriculum without Anna. However, the teachers reported that the coaching was a value-added component of the intervention and that Anna's competence helped them see their students through a temperamental lens.

By the end of the ten weeks, the group coaching turned into a micro-PLC, or a peer coaching situation, where Anna positioned herself as a peer and the three of them were learning from each other and the power differential between Anna and the teachers was diffused. This finding aligns with the Deussen et al. (2007) study discussed previously and with what DeBaryshe and Gauci (2017) regarding peer learning. DeBaryshe and Gauci found that when lead and assistant teachers in a classroom received group coaching together, the teachers bonded with their coaches, thought the coaching was invaluable, and they also highly valued the peer learning community that emerged from the coaching. As discussed previously, both out-group and in-group trust exist in group coaching, which also means that both coach-teacher and teacher-teacher learning can also be possible, perhaps enhancing both kinds of knowledge construction.

Something observed in the coaching sessions, and that Kelli touched on in her post-intervention interview, is the idea that instructional group coaching works well if both teachers are okay doing similar things in their classrooms. During the coaching sessions, both teachers gravitated towards doing the same dilemma in their classroom when given the option to act out different dilemmas. Some dilemmas were more pertinent to one teacher's student, but when given the option to choose the same dilemma, or have a different dilemma for their classroom, they chose to do the same. Kelli seemed to defer the most, she tended to be fine with whatever dilemma Sara would like to do in her classroom, even when given the option of choosing a different one for her classroom. Kelli described herself in her pre-intervention interview as someone who 'goes with the flow', and so perhaps this was manifesting itself in the coaching session. Perhaps one of

the downsides of group coaching is a slight loss of customization, that would also be exacerbated if more teachers joined the coaching session.

## **Implications for Research and Practice**

### ***Implications for Coaching Practice***

The first implication for coaching practice is that relational trust seems to be important in coaching contexts and coaches should be intentional about building out-group trust with teachers. Perhaps coaches might also need additional training on how to build out-group trust with teachers, regardless of if they are coaching one or more teachers. Additional training may be necessary because the results from this study show that building relational trust is important and does not automatically happen. The field also needs more information about the moves that coaches use to build and deepen trust because as this study and others have shown, building relationships between coaches and teachers is important (e.g., Brown et al., 2009; Celano & Mitchell, 2014; Gardiner, 2012; Neuman & Cunningham, 2009).

The second coaching practice implication is that coaches need to navigate the in-group trust of the teachers they work with in group coaching settings. Sara and Kelli's high in-group trust set the stage for successful group coaching, but they professed that they were the best team in the building, and that other teams did not necessarily get along well. If coaches are going to work with teachers in a group, they need to understand the level of baseline in-group trust between the teachers, and how to increase and deepen the in-group trust if it is lacking. As demonstrated in this study, many of the elements of coaching lend themselves to developing in-group trust, like teachers consistently being

vulnerable with each other about their struggles in the classroom and their plans for change. However, coaches may need many tools at their disposal for “breaking the ice” with teachers to help them be vulnerable with each other while the teachers get familiar with what the coaching sessions entail, and what is expected of them. Coaches also need to understand that both out-group and in-group trust exist in group coaching contexts, and they are interconnected. Training may be needed to help coaches understand the nuances of these different kinds of relational trust and how to build and deepen both. More research regarding this may be needed, however, as much of the coaching literature addresses the nature of the relationship between the coach and the teacher, or the relationships between teachers without a coach but not the two together (Gersten et al., 2010; Robertson, 2020; Hallam 2014; 2015).

Third, if implementing group coaching, coaches may need to understand how group coaching is different from dyadic coaching and how their role might need to shift from one to the other for the coaching to be successful. As discussed in the literature review, most group coaching happens in addition to dyadic coaching (e.g., Brown et al., 2009; Buysse et al., 2010; Carlisle & Berebitsky, 2011; Deussen et al., 2007; Gibbons, 2016; Mccollum et al., 2013; Vanderburg & Stephens, 2010). Coaches need training on how to set expectations for each kind of coaching and how their role may possibly shift from one context to the other. For example, while in a dyadic coaching situation, the coach’s role may be to provide the teacher with detailed feedback about teaching practices to encourage changing teaching practices. However, in the group coaching

context, the coach's role may be to moderate the discussion while the teachers talk about how they have put the coach's feedback into practice.

### ***Implications for Coaching Research***

Group coaching is unique in that both out-group and in-group trust exists in the context, are interconnected, and the coach and teachers must navigate both. The first overarching idea that future research should explore is how these two constructs interact and influence each other to the betterment or deterioration of coaching success. EC coaching researchers may need to be intentional about measuring out-group and in-group trust in coaching interventions because relational trust plays a role in how teachers respond to the coach, and if they will even let them in the classroom (Deussen et al., 2007).

The second focus may need to be how group coaching works in different contexts. Group instructional coaching was successful in this study, but success might vary depending on the type of coaching (e.g., reflective coaching), the content of the coaching (e.g., social-emotional, STEM, literacy), or when coaches are tasked with improving certain practices in the classroom. Broader randomized control trials might be able to determine if group coaching is more preferred, effective, or efficient, compared to dyadic coaching, or if virtual group coaching is successful in changing teacher practice or student outcomes. Different configurations of teachers also need exploration including team teachers, grade level teachers, or teachers from various grade levels working on similar practices.



## **Limitations of the Study**

### ***Limitations of Scope and Context***

This case study was an in-depth look at the nature of relational trust in a group coaching configuration. Data were gathered from several sources and across time creating a rich data set that allowed for a thorough examination of the construct in the context. Delimitations were made at the outset of the study that are appropriate for case study methodology (e.g., small sample size, only 10 weeks of observation, qualitative data sources, descriptive quantitative data sources, no outcome measures; Yin, 2017), but make it impossible to make larger claims about causality or be able to generalize the findings to other contexts (e.g., teachers, coaches, schools, locales, interventions). The homogeneity of the sample, including the gender, race, and rural upbringing of all three participants, is important to keep in mind when interpreting the findings of this study. People tend to extend trust more easily to those whom they feel share the same values, family backgrounds, and ethnicity (Tschannen & Hoy, 2000). So, Anna already had some level of in-group trust at the beginning of the intervention because she shared so many characteristics with the teachers.

As discussed previously, different kinds of research are needed to make broader claims about trust in group coaching. More case study research is needed in different contexts exploring how trust is made when the participants in group coaching situations do not share a gender, race, or upbringing, in addition to numerous other attributes. This is important because of differing power structures based on racial and gender hierarchies of our social systems (Bell et al, 2014; Halford, 2018), in addition to the power differential coach and teacher(s) that coaching inherently creates (Finkelstein, 2019).

Mixed methods research is needed to understand how group coaching is scaled, while also capturing the experiences of the participants so the field can understand how trust influences the success or failure of group coaching in certain contexts. Quasi-experimental and randomized control trial research is also needed to determine if group coaching is less, just as, or more effective than dyadic coaching in changing teacher practices and child outcomes and in what contexts. Furthermore, these studies could investigate how out-group and in-group trust moderate or mediate those outcomes.

### ***Limitations of Procedures***

There were procedural limitations to this study as well: not all the data sources were utilized by the participants, some data sources were not useful in tracking trust over time or were missing. First, the weekly surveys that the coach and teachers filled out had an open-ended question for the teachers to “provide any additional comments”. The teachers only filled out this question a few times in a way that reflected their relationship with Anna. Anna also did not utilize her open-ended weekly question, “Please describe the teacher overall (level of engagement, openness to the material, any notable interactions, etc.)” often, or filled out the survey a few weeks after the coaching session had taken place. This made it difficult to understand how the teachers and coach felt trust was transforming throughout the 10 weeks, I had to rely on what I was observing in the videos, and from their post-intervention interviews. Future research should consider or incorporate other methods for understanding perspectives during the intervention, perhaps through mid-intervention interviews.

Additionally, not all the data sources were useful in tracking trust over time. The Faculty Trust Survey (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2003) was too broad, as it measured the in-group trust the teachers had with all their colleagues, and not just each other. The results of this survey were not telling about the relationship between Kelli and Sara, especially when compared to their reports about their relationship. Future research should consider modifying this measure, so it only focuses on the relationship(s) in question, or switch to a different measure that only focuses on singular relationships.

The classroom session videos were also not as robust a data source as I thought they would be, namely because Anna and the teacher were mostly talking to the students and not each other. And, because of a miscommunication between me and Anna, the first three weeks of the classroom sessions were not recorded. In the first three sessions Anna did most of the teaching, so I most likely did not miss a lot of interactions between Anna and the teachers. What I was able to witness in the later classroom videos was the transformation of out-group trust to in-group trust as the teachers would leave Anna in charge of the classroom while they had to step out with students, seeing her as a trusted member of the school staff.

## **Conclusion**

This study underscores the importance of relational trust and the potential for group coaching in the context of curricula implementation and should be considered in future professional development. This study explored the moves Anna, the coach, took to build out-group trust, and how she was able to transform it to in-group trust. This study

also explored how the high in-group trust of the teachers, Sara and Kelli, set the stage for successful relationships in the coaching context.

This study contributes to the EC coaching and trust literature by highlighting that there are specific moves that supported building and deepening out-group trust. These are tangible moves that could be taught during coaching training. This study provides initial evidence in support of using more group coaching in EC contexts. The teachers reported that they enjoyed having the coaching as a group and that it provided shared language and skills that improved their practice. Finally, if group coaching is used, findings also indicate the necessity of coaches understanding the status of the in-group trust of the teachers they will be coaching and know how to improve the in-group trust of the teachers during the coaching sessions. However, more research is needed to look at the causal associations between the two, or how it unfolds in different contexts.

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## Appendix A: Measures

### Classroom Attendance and Session Log

*Coach fills this out weekly via Qualtrics for the INSIGHTS project; only one question from the coaching log will be used for this study*

Please describe the teacher overall (level of engagement, openness to the material, any notable interactions, etc.)

### Classroom Diary

*Teachers fill this out weekly via Qualtrics for the INSIGHTS Study; the link is sent by the coach*

Respondents report how many instances of these events took place: 1, 2–4, 5+

Over the past week:

1. How often have you practiced solving dilemmas?
2. How often have your students tried to solve dilemmas independently?
3. How often did you see a student display empathy towards another student?
4. How often did you reframe?
5. How often did you use optimal statements?
6. How often did you use adequate statements?
7. How often did you use counterproductive statements?
8. How often have you seen students using terms and concepts from INSIGHTS appropriately?

### **Classroom Workshop Teacher Survey**

*Teachers fill this out weekly via Qualtrics for the INSIGHTS Project; the link is emailed by me*

Respondents rate each statement from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree

1. The facilitator reviewed material from previous session (e.g., puppets, new terms, workbooks).
2. The facilitator used puppets, videos, and/or workbooks effectively to teach the material.
3. The facilitator effectively managed class time and students' behavior.
4. The facilitator provided feedback to students that was appropriate and helpful.
5. The facilitator was sensitive and responsive to individual students' needs.
6. Overall, the facilitator maximized students' interests, engagement, and ability to learn the material.

How much did you learn?

*Rate from 1 (no new information)–5 (a great deal of new information)*

How useful was the new information you received?

*Rate from 1 (not at all useful) – 5 (extremely useful)*

How effective was your facilitator?

*Rate from 1 (not at all effective) – 5 (extremely effective)*

Please provide any additional comments in the space below:

**Faculty Trust Survey** (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2003)

*This is an addition for this study. Teachers will fill this out via Qualtrics pre- and post-intervention, but only those questions with an asterisk will be used for this study.*

Respondents rate each statement from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (6)

1. Students in this school care about each other.
2. \*Teachers in this school typically look out for each other.
3. The teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of the principal
4. \*Even in difficult situations, teachers in this school can depend on each other
5. The principal in this school typically acts in the best interests of the teachers.
6. Teachers in this school can rely on the principal.
7. \*Teachers in this school trust each other.
8. Teachers can count on parental support.
9. Teachers think that most of the parents do a good job.
10. Teachers in this school trust the principal.
11. \*Teachers in this school are open with each other.
12. Students in this school can be counted on to do their work.
13. Parents in this school are reliable in their commitments.
14. The principal doesn't tell teachers what is really going on.

15. The principal of this school does not show concern for teachers.
16. \*Teachers in this school have faith in the integrity of their colleagues.
17. Teachers in this school trust the parents.
18. \*Teachers in this school are suspicious of each other.
19. Students here are secretive.
20. \*When teachers in this school tell you something you can believe it.
21. \*Teachers in this school do their jobs well.
22. Teachers here believe that students are competent learners.
23. The teachers in this school are suspicious of most of the principal's actions.
24. Teachers in this school believe what parents tell them.
25. The principal in this school is competent in doing his or her job.
26. Teachers in this school trust their students.

### **Interview Questions**

*Interviews will be conducted pre- and post-intervention via Zoom.*

Participant: Coach

Pre-intervention:

1. Tell me about your background and what lead you to work for the INSIGHTS project? Follow-up: where did you go to school, what degrees did you earn? How

did you come to work for the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools?

2. Would you please explain what a typical first-grade INSIGHTS schools visit looks like?
3. What are you feeling about your upcoming cohort of teachers?
4. How do you see the role of relationships in the process of coaching?
5. Is there anything you do to support relationship development?
6. Is there anything else you want to discuss?

Post-intervention:

1. Would you please describe your experience coaching for the project this semester?
2. How did you build relationships with the teachers?
3. Did you notice differences about this process across teachers? Follow-up: Would you explain how you built relationships when there were two teachers in the coaching session?
4. Is there anything else about relationship building with the teachers that you think is meaningful?

Participant: Teachers

## Pre-intervention:

1. Would you tell me about what lead you to work here at (name of school)? Follow-up: where you went to school, the degree(s) you earned, what drew you to this community after you received your teaching license?
2. Would you tell me about a typical day at (name of school)?
3. Would you tell me about the school culture?
  - a. Do you get opportunities to interact with your colleagues?
    - i. What is that like?
  - b. Who do you find yourself talking with or interacting with the most?
4. Would you tell me about how you are feeling about participating in INSIGHTS?
  - a. Follow-up if coaching is not mentioned: How are you feeling about receiving coaching as part of participating in the study?
  - b. Have you ever received coaching before? How did it go?
  - c. Follow-up with group configuration if grade-level teacher is not mentioned: How are you feeling about participating with (grade-level teacher)?
5. Is there anything else you would like to discuss?

Post-intervention:

1. Would you describe your experience with the INSIGHTS Project this semester?
2. Would you tell me about your experiences with your coach?
3. Group Config: Would you tell me about your experiences with (grade-level teacher) during INSIGHTS?
4. Is there anything else you want to discuss?

**Openness Toward Change** (adapted from Miller et al. 1994)

*This is an addition for this study. Teachers will fill this out pre-intervention via Qualtrics*

Respondents will rate each statement from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (6)

1. I would consider myself "open" to the changes INSIGHTS will bring to my teaching
2. Right now, I am somewhat resistant to INSIGHTS in my teaching
3. I am looking forward to the changes in my teaching brought about by the implementation of INSIGHTS
4. In light of the proposed changes in my teaching, I am quite reluctant to consider changing how I now do my work.
5. From my perspective, the proposed changes in my teaching because of INSIGHTS will be for the better



## **Appendix B: Communication Materials**

### **Informed Consent Letter to Coach**

*This is a new consent letter for the coach for this study*

Dear Coach,

You are invited to participate in a research study, Coaching Relationships, being conducted by the Nebraska Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools at UNL. The purpose of the study is to explore how relationships are built during coaching sessions. The following information is provided to help you make an informed decision whether or not to participate.

#### **Key Information:**

In addition to your current responsibilities, you will be asked to:

- Participate in two, 1-hour, semi-structured interviews before and after the 10-week classroom implementation. The interviews will be completed and recorded via Zoom.
- Video-record all coaching sessions and classroom implementation of INSIGHTS with an iPod or Swivl and upload to a restricted Box folder.
- Provide the researcher with any written communication between you and the teachers (i.e., emails, text messages) after the completion of the 10-week implementation via upload to a restricted Box folder.
- Complete an open-ended-prompt about the teachers' level of engagement and openness to the information each week via Qualtrics.

Procedures: You have been chosen to complete these interviews and collect these additional data because you are the coach of some of the teachers participating in the INSIGHTS in Nebraska project. The purpose of these data are to understand the nature of coaching during the project.

Benefits: In participating in this project, you may gain greater understanding of the coaching process and be able to reflect on your coaching practice.

Risks and/or Discomforts: There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this research.

Confidentiality: All electronic data and video will be stored on a secure computer network and only accessible via password protected computers in a restricted access office. The Qualtrics survey will be removed from the Qualtrics cloud and stored in a restricted Box-folder within three months of completion. The video data will only be seen and coded by the research team. Records will be kept for five years following the conclusion of the study. At that time, the raw video data will be destroyed. Information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals, presented at scientific meetings, or used in training sessions, but your identity will be kept strictly confidential. The deidentified data files and transcripts of the interviews may also be shared with other researchers for their own research projects. No personal identifiers will be on these data files and will never be given to any researchers outside of the INSIGHTS in Nebraska project. The de-identified data files will be shared electronically over a secure internet connection.

Compensation: There is no compensation for participating in this project.

Opportunity to Ask Questions: You may ask questions about this research and have those questions answered before, during, or after the study by contacting Jentry Barrett at (402) 217-5265 or jbarrett3@unl.edu. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant that have not been answered by the investigators, or to report any concerns, you may contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board at (402) 472-6965. Freedom to

Withdraw: You are free to decide not to participate or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with the investigators, the INSIGHTS in Nebraska project, CYFS, or the University of Nebraska. Consent, Right to Receive a Copy: You are voluntarily making a decision whether or not to participate in this research study. Your electronic signature certifies that you have decided to participate having read and understood the information presented. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

\_\_\_\_\_ I consent to participate in the Coaching Relationships Study.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Printed Name of Coach

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Coach

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_ I do not provide consent to participate in the INSIGHTS Study.

Name and phone number of investigator: Jentry S. Barrett M.S. 402-217-5265

### **Informed Consent Letter Teacher**

*Highlighted sections are the changes from the original INSIGHTS consent letter*

Dear Teachers,

You are invited to participate in a research study, “INSIGHTS,” being conducted by the Center for Research on Children, Youth, Families and Schools at UNL. The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of a special program designed to improve kindergarten through grade one children’s behavior, critical thinking, attention, and academic skills. The following information is provided to help you to make an informed decision whether or not to participate.

### **KEY INFORMATION:**

- Procedures will include assignment into the INSIGHTS program (treatment group) or business-as-usual (control group). ALL participating teachers, regardless of what program is implemented at your school will complete questionnaires and surveys at different time points throughout the school year, participate in classroom observations including student-teacher interactions. Observations will be videotaped.

- If your school is selected to deliver the INSIGHTS program, the INSIGHTS program will require your attendance at training sessions, coaching sessions, one parent meeting and completion of INSIGHTS surveys.
- These surveys, meetings and sessions will occur over the course of 10 – 12 weeks dependent on when the program begins and may be adjusted based on the need and timing of schedules. A more detailed view of the frequency, timing and length of meetings, sessions and surveys can be reviewed as part of the detailed procedural information below.
- There are/are no risks associated with this study
- You will be paid commensurate for your participation in this study but will be dependent on the school's selection into the INSIGHTS program vs. business-as-usual.
- You will be provided a copy of this consent form

#### **PROCEDURES TO BE COMPLETED BY EVERYONE**

- All participating teachers will complete online questionnaires for approximately seven students in their classrooms. These questionnaires will be assessing achievement, behavior, temperament, and relationship with the teacher. Kindergarten teachers and first-grade teachers will complete the surveys two times.

- All participating teachers will receive \$20 per student each time they complete surveys. Your social security number will be required for payment and will be provided to the UNL Accounting office for payment and storage for tax purposes.
- Classroom observations will also be conducted by a trained research assistant two times to observe classroom structural features, instructional practices, and student-teacher interactions, as well as children's engagement in the classroom. Classroom observations will be videotaped.

#### **PROCEDURES TO BE COMPLETED BY INSIGHTS TEACHERS ONLY**

- Training videos (approximately 8 hours) watched asynchronously and two days of training sessions, (usually occurring on Saturdays, approximately 2 hours each time), learning how to implement the INSIGHTS curriculum in your classroom. If required by your district, these professional development hours will count toward your re-licensure.
- Two semi-structured interviews last approximately 45-minutes, completed and recorded by Zoom. You will receive \$20 for each interview.
- Delivery of the program over 10 weeks in 30-minute classroom sessions along with a trained INSIGHTS project facilitator.
- 30-minute weekly team coaching sessions with the INSIGHTS facilitator and the other participating grade-level teacher(s) in your school. These coaching sessions will focus on the application of INSIGHTS content in the classroom and prep for the next classroom session. All meetings and classroom implementation may be video recorded for fidelity and research purposes.

- Two weekly surveys about how you implemented INSIGHTS during the week, and the efficacy of the INSIGHTS facilitator during the coaching and classroom sessions.
- Attendance at one parent meeting held in the evening to discuss how the children are responding to the INSIGHTS classroom curriculum.
- Treatment teachers will be compensated \$500 for their time spent in the project (not including the payment received for survey completion or interviews). The \$500 will be paid in two installments of \$250, mailed to teachers at the beginning and middle of the 10-week curriculum. If you receive \$600 or more in one calendar year from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, you will need to report this payment as income on your federal and state tax returns.
- The coach will provide all emails between coach and teacher to the researcher team at the end of the INSIGHTS intervention as part of a sub-study.

Although the INSIGHTS program will be delivered to all students in the treatment classrooms, only seven students and their parents from each class will serve as study participants. The parents of these children will also receive special training to support their child's competencies and self-regulation skills.

If your school is *not* selected to participate in INSIGHTS and you select to participate,  
you will *not* be required to deliver the INSIGHTS curriculum in your classroom. Once

the data has been collected for all time points (April of the first-grade year), all teachers who wish to be trained in INSIGHTS will have the opportunity at no cost to them; printed curriculum materials will also be provided.

All data will be kept strictly confidential; electronic data will be stored on a secure computer network and only accessible via password protected computers in a restricted access office. Information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals, presented at scientific meetings, or used in training sessions, but your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

There are minimal risks associated with this research. As a result of this research, we will better understand the factors that improve learning environments and promote school readiness and academic achievement for children. The findings of this study may inform policies, practices, and interventions designed to support learning and development in young children. A summary of results will be provided to parents, teachers, principals, districts, and ESU professionals (regional administrators in the state of Nebraska). All of these stakeholders will have the opportunity to discuss these results with a member of the research team. The teacher will also receive their individual data from the CLASS assessment after all data has been collected from their school. No individual teacher data will be shared with anyone besides the teacher. No individual student data will be shared with any stakeholders.



You may ask questions concerning this research and have those questions answered before agreeing to participate in or during the study. Or you may call the investigator at any time at (402) 472-1009. If you have any additional questions concerning you or your students' rights, you may contact the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Institutional Review Board (UNLIRB) at (402) 472-6965. Your participation in this research project is completely voluntary. If you consent to participate, you are free to decline any assessments and to withdraw from this project at any time without harming your relationship with the researchers, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, or the school at which you work. Your decision will not result in any loss of benefits to which you or your students are otherwise entitled.

YOU ARE VOLUNTARILY MAKING A DECISION WHETHER OR NOT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS RESEARCH STUDY. YOUR SIGNATURE CERTIFIES THAT YOU HAVE DECIDED TO PARTICIPATE HAVING READ AND UNDERSTOOD THE INFORMATION PRESENTED. YOU WILL BE GIVEN A COPY OF THIS CONSENT FORM TO KEEP.

\_\_\_\_ *I consent to participate in the INSIGHTS Study.*

---

Printed Name of Teacher

School

---

Signature of Teacher

Date

\_\_\_\_ *I do not provide consent to participate in the INSIGHTS Study.*

Name and phone number of investigators:

Gwen Nugent, Ph.D., Principal Investigator Office: (402) 472-1009

Susan M. Sheridan, Ph.D., Co-Principal Investigator Office: (402) 472-6941

**Initial Email to Coach**

Dear (coach),

I am emailing you to ask if you would be willing to participate in additional data collection for a complementary project, Relationship Building During Coaching. The purpose of this study is to explore how relationships are built between the coach and teachers during the intervention.

In addition to your current responsibilities, you will be asked to:

- Participate in two, 1-hour, semi-structured interviews before and after the 10-week classroom implementation. The interviews will be completed and recorded via Zoom.
- Video-record all coaching sessions and classroom implementation of INSIGHTS with an iPod or Swivl and upload to a restricted Box folder.
- Provide the researcher with any written communication between you and the teachers (i.e., emails, text messages) after the completion of the 10-week implementation via upload to a restricted Box folder.

- Complete an open-ended-prompt about the teachers' level of engagement and openness to the information each week via Qualtrics.

If you are willing to participate in the complementary research study, **please let me know and I will send you the consent letter via DocuSign and an additional email to schedule your first interview.** If you are not interested in the additional research project, you are not harming your relationship with the researchers, the INSIGHTS in Nebraska project, CYFS, or the University of Nebraska.

Let me know if you have any questions!

Thanks!

Jentry Barrett

### **Initial Email to Teacher**

Dear (teacher),

Thank you for your interest in the INSIGHTS study.

I am emailing you to ask if you would be willing to participate in additional data collection for a complementary project, Relationship Building During Coaching. The purpose of this study is to explore how relationships are built between the coach and teachers during the intervention.

In addition to the INSIGHTS PD, implementation, and surveys, **you would be asked to participate in two interviews (approximately 45-minutes each, before and after the INSIGHTS intervention), and fill out two additional surveys (an additional 5 minutes).**

If you are willing to participate in the complementary research study, please let me know and I will send you the consent letter via DocuSign and an additional email to schedule your first interview. If you are not interested in the additional research project, I will send you the original INSIGHTS consent letter via DocuSign.

If you decide not to participate in the additional research study, you are not harming your relationship with the researchers, the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, and the school at which you work.

Let me know if you have any questions!

Thanks!

Jentry Barrett

#### **Scheduling Email to Coach for Interviews**

Hi (coach)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the Relationships During Coaching study. Please sign up for an interview with the link below:

(Calendly Link)

I anticipate the interview taking approximately 45-minutes. It will be completed and recorded via Zoom. The Calendly invitation will include the Zoom link.

Here are some of the questions I plan on asking:

1. Tell me about your background and what lead you to work for the INSIGHTS project?
2. Would you explain what a typical first-grade INSIGHTS school visit looks like?
3. What are you feeling about your upcoming cohort of teachers?
4. How do you see the role of relationships in the process of coaching?
5. Is there anything you do to support relationship development?

Thank you, and please let me know if you have any questions!

**Scheduling Email to Teachers for Interviews**

Hi (teacher)

Thank you for agreeing to participate in the Relationships During Coaching study. Please sign up for an interview with the link below:

(Calendly Link)

I anticipate the interview taking approximately 45-minutes. It will be completed and recorded via Zoom. The Calendly invitation will include the Zoom link.

Here are some of the questions I plan on asking:

1. Would you tell me what lead you to work here at (name of school)?
2. Would you tell me about a typical day at (name of school)?
3. Would you tell me about the school culture?
4. Would you tell me about how you are feeling about participating in INSIGHTS?

## Appendix C: Code Book

Table C.1

*Table of Video Codes, Definitions, and Examples*

Out-Group Coach to Teacher		Examples
Mutual Respect: Behaviors (verbal statements) exhibited by the coach that demonstrate respect for the teacher's time, competency, knowledge, experience, and effective instructional practices		
Competency, Knowledge, and Experience	Coach acknowledges the teachers' competency, knowledge, and experience (overt, explicit, and direct) "You did a good job in that lesson"	"What do you think about this activity, as the teacher, for your kiddos" Anna, Coaching Session Week 8 "You are definitely the experts!" Anna, Coaching Session Week 8
Acknowledge (Respect) each other's time	The coach acknowledges the teachers' time or keeping to a schedule.	"I looked at the clock and [I realized that] I should have stopped five minutes ago!" Anna Coaching Session Week 5
Apologizing	The coach apologizes for a misunderstanding or forgetting to follow through on a promise like emailing a document	"I apologize, I will try to be better [about time]" Anna, Coaching Session Week 5
Integrity/Reliability (FACET)	Dependably keeping one's word and acting in a way that is congruent with one's expected role. Coach completes the task during the classroom session the teacher and coach have agreed upon during the coaching session, or follows up on a goal/assignment they discussed previously. Coach brings materials needed for the day's lesson.	"We will make sure that we get to it" Anna Coaching Session Week 5

Reciprocal Trust Behaviors (verbal statements exhibited by the coach that demonstrate that they are in this together and trustworthy)		
We language	Encourages an environment of collaboration, statements that indicate the coach and teacher form an alliance “we” “let’s take a look” “us” “ours”	"We will make sure that we get to it" Anna Coaching Session Week 5
Common Goal	Engage in problem-solving to jointly arrive at decisions and goals (can be planning for next time)	"What would be a good way to state a dilemma that we could write?" Anna Coaching Session Week 5
Being open, honest and transparent	Being open, honest, and transparent with negatives, unguarded conversations about needs for improvement Demonstrating vulnerability	"I'm sorry I wasn't more helpful last week. When I called a name, I had no idea who was who." Anna Coaching Session Week 9
Rapport Behaviors exhibited by the coach and teacher that are foundational to building and maintaining a relationship that is pleasant, comfortable, supportive and enjoyable		
Interpersonal Skills	Social pleasantries like hellos and goodbyes, checking for agreement “Am I making sense?” Using humor, and acknowledging teacher’s life outside of the school situation, or their own life outside of the school situation	"Would that be, okay? Is that a helpful solution?" Anna Coaching Session Week 6
Emotional Support	Coach shows empathy and understanding of teacher’s needs and provides general emotional support	"That is so hard to be experiencing that first-hand, it's tricky" Anna Coaching Session Week 5



Out-Group Teacher to Coach		Examples
Mutual Respect: Behaviors (verbal statements) exhibited by the teacher that demonstrate respect for the coach's time, competency, knowledge, experience, and effective instructional practices		
Competency, Knowledge, and Experience	The teacher acknowledges the coach's competency, knowledge, and experience (overt, explicit, and direct) "You did a good job in that lesson"	"I love that idea!" Kelli Classroom Session 8
Acknowledge (Respect) each other's time	The teachers acknowledge the coach's time or keeping to a schedule.	"Did you want to look at the calendar and look at what we have missed?" Kelli Coaching Session Week 5
Apologizing	The teacher apologizes for a misunderstanding or forgetting to follow through on a promise like emailing a document	"I'm sorry, first of all I apologize, we were so worried about the current death situation...we did not think about [student's] dad's death that happened when she was three." Sara Coaching Session Week 7
Integrity/Reliability (FACET)	Dependably keeping one's word and acting in a way that is congruent with one's expected role. Teacher completes the task during the classroom session the coach and teacher have agreed upon during the coaching session, or follows up on a goal/assignment discussed previously	"I wrote them down this time [when we talk about INSIGHTS during the week]" Sara Coaching Session Week 7
Reciprocal Trust Behaviors: verbal statements exhibited by the teacher that demonstrate that they are in this together and trustworthy		
We language	Encourages an environment of collaboration, statements that indicate the coach and teacher form an alliance "we" "let's take a look" "us" "ours"	"We talked about last week that we were going to do [the lying dilemma] this week" Kelli, Coaching Session Week 5
Common Goal	Engage in problem-solving to jointly arrive at decisions and goals (can be planning for next time)	"We talked about last week that we were going to do [the lying dilemma] this week" Kelli, Coaching Session Week 5

Out-Group Teacher to Coach		Examples
Reciprocal Trust Behaviors: verbal statements exhibited by the teacher that demonstrate that they are in this together and trustworthy (cont'd)		
Being open, honest and transparent	Being open, honest, and transparent with negatives, unguarded conversations about needs for improvement, demonstrating vulnerability	" I think early on [INSIGHTS] was a lot of work, getting all the [PD] videos in. But once we got into the groove." Kelli Coaching Session Week 10
Rapport Behaviors exhibited by the coach and teacher that are foundational to building and maintaining a relationship that is pleasant, comfortable, supportive and enjoyable		
Interpersonal Skills	Social pleasantries like hellos and goodbyes, checking for agreement “Am I making sense?” Acknowledges coach’s life outside of coaching, or shares something from their own life outside of coaching, or says something humorous	"[My students are asking for expensive things as rewards] I would like a new RC car!" Sara Coaching Session Week 5
Emotional Support	Teacher shows empathy and understanding of coach’s needs and provides general emotional support	<i>There were not any specific instances of this code in the data.</i>
In-Group Teacher to Teacher Codes		Examples
Mutual Respect: Behaviors (verbal statements) exhibited by the teacher that demonstrate respect for the team teacher’s time, competency, knowledge, experience, and effective instructional practices		
Competency, Knowledge, and Experience	The teacher acknowledges the team teacher’s competency, knowledge, and experience (overt, explicit, and direct) “You did a good job in that lesson”	<i>There were not any specific instances of this code in the data.</i>
Acknowledge (Respect) each other’s time	One teacher acknowledges the other teacher's time or keeping to a schedule.	"Would you be okay with saving this [the math worksheet] until Monday? ...I don't think we will get through it" Sara to Kelli Coaching Session Week 1

In-Group Teacher to Teacher Codes		Examples
Mutual Respect: Behaviors (verbal statements) exhibited by the teacher that demonstrate respect for the team teacher's time, competency, knowledge, experience, and effective instructional practices (cont'd)		
Apologizing	The teacher apologizes for a misunderstanding or forgetting to follow through on a promise like emailing a document to the team teacher	<i>There were not any specific instances of this code in the data.</i>
Integrity/Reliability (FACET)	Dependably keeping one's word and acting in a way that is congruent with one's expected role. Teacher completed a task they said they would do for the other teacher.	"I'm going to send this to you right away" Sara to Kelli Coaching Session Week 2
Reciprocal Trust Behaviors (verbal statements exhibited by the teacher that demonstrate that they as teachers are in this together and trustworthy		
We language	Encourages an environment of collaboration, statements that indicate the teacher and team teacher form an alliance "we" "let's take a look" "us" "ours"	"We have a lot of kids this year that don't care to do [their schoolwork] themselves" Kelli, Coaching Session week 5
Common Goal	Engage in problem-solving to jointly arrive at decisions and goals (can be planning for next time)	"So, we are going to move this to week 7?" Sara and Kelli Coaching Session Week 5
Being open, honest and transparent	Being open, honest, and transparent with negatives, unguarded conversations about needs for improvement, demonstrating vulnerability	"I will just start documenting every time that we little altercations that involve [student]!" Sara to Kelli Coaching Session Week 2

In-Group Teacher to Teacher Codes		Examples
Rapport Behaviors exhibited by the coach and teacher that are foundational to building and maintaining a relationship that is pleasant, comfortable, supportive and enjoyable		
Interpersonal Skills	Social pleasantries like hellos and goodbyes, checking for agreement “Am I making sense?” Teacher acknowledges team teacher’s life outside coaching setting. Says something humorous to the other teacher and not necessarily the coach.	Sara: "They [students] kept correcting [Anna]" Kelli: "Of course they did!" Coaching session, Week 5
Emotional Support	Teacher shows empathy and understanding of team teacher’s needs and provides general emotional support	Sara: "Mr. [music teacher] is pretty stressed and he was a little short with my kids today" Kelli: "Lovely"
Other Video Codes		Examples
COVID	Anything mentioning COVID and its effects on the classroom or their personal lives	"I have a kiddo whose parent is home with COVID, so he is a mess" Kelli, Coaching Session Week 6
Engaging the Teacher	The Coach engages the teacher by asking them a question or asking them to help her do something. Is trying to get them from a state of inactivity to a state of activity when it is there turn to teach.	"Ms. [Sara] has a dilemma like this ever happened in your classroom?" Classroom Session Week 8
Instruction	Coach provides instruction about the INSIGHTS curriculum (i.e., describing dilemmas, puppets, behavior contracts in general) if the coach and teachers are discussing specific behavior contracts, or rehearsing the dilemma for that day, that is coded as common goal	"The vignette [for today] is called 'A Broken Promise'...Coretta and Hilary are playing and Hilary's mom...brings them some jewelry [to play with]" Anna Coaching Session Week 9

Other Video Codes		Examples
Open to Change	Teacher expresses how they are willing to, or have, changed their teaching based on the INSIGHTS intervention (i.e., implemented behavior contracts, used the dilemma board, taken a child's temperament into account)	"I looked at [the lesson plan] last night." Sara Coaching Session Week 9
Not Engaged	Teacher is accomplishing something else during the intervention presentation or coaching session. i.e., grading papers, cleaning up, stepping out of the classroom	<i>This was not apparent during the coaching sessions.</i>
Own Practice	When the coach speaks about what they have done in previous cohorts, their own classroom, or home	"I think [in the NYC trial] teachers met every week after school [for the PD] ...but that wasn't practical, so it got condensed down to Saturdays. And then with COVID [teacher PD] got condensed down to videos."
Reflection Questions	Coach asks a reflection question to the teachers. "How do you feel about this", "what do you think about this"	"What do you think we should model?" Anna Coaching Session Week 9
Students	Speaking about the students in the current participating classrooms, examples include temperament of students, or behavior contracts the teachers are putting into place for students, or the struggles students are facing.	" I could talk to [student] he is having a really good day. And maybe if he is away from [student]" Sara Coaching Session Week 9

Table C.2

*Table of Language Codes, Definitions, and Examples*

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Benevolence Out-group	a mutual spirit of goodwill and a willingness to extend oneself in support of the well-being of the other. It is grounded in the confidence that one's well-being or something one cares about will be protected and not harmed by the person in whom they have placed their trust	"I loved hearing from you and can't wait to bring the new 1st grade puppets to your school!" Anna, email sent to Sara and Kelli pre-intervention	
Honesty Out-group	Honesty is anchored in moral principles and is cultivated through behaviors that demonstrate integrity, authenticity, and accountability for one's actions (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). People earn a reputation for honesty from telling the truth and keeping promises.	"There's a confidence in that aspect because we work within a lot of confidentiality issues. Also because we share confidential information in the hopes of benefitting the student or in hopes of improving the way we reach that student you feel that you can know or shall I say trust that someone is rooting for you Your success in the classroom builds student success and that is good for everyone. You trust your colleges want to see you succeed." Anna post-intervention interview	
Openness Out-group	In being open, people make themselves vulnerable to others by sharing information, influence, and control (Zand, 1997). It entails the sharing of facts, alternatives, intentions, judgments, and feelings.	"Often it is encouraging to just be able to share your feelings." Anna, pre-intervention interview	

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Reliability Out-group	reliability is evidenced by a sense of confidence that the other person or party will come through with what is needed on a consistent basis and that the work will be of sufficient quality to meet joint standards (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Mishra, 1996). The trusting party need not invest energy making mental provisions for how they will manage in case the other person should fail to follow through on agreements.	"I guess believing in what people say if you can believe what they say and their actions follow what their words say. If they tell me that they'll do something and they really do it, then it builds trust. I guess I'm probably a very trusting person, so I tend to be trusting a person until they prove that they're not trustworthy is probably more my case so does that make." Sara, post-intervention interview	Collapsed into Integrity/Reliability C-T (video code)
Competence Out-group	Competence is the ability to perform a task as expected and according to appropriate standards. We trust those whose skill we depend upon, especially professionals, to maintain their expertise and to be honest about their level of skill.	"Lastly, I really enjoyed getting to know you and your students. There are so many issues you are helping them navigate every day. Seeing all the positive things happening in tough situations brings me so much joy. I know how hard some days can be. I applaud you." Anna, email to Sara post-intervention	Coach asks "would this be okay if we did this in your classroom?" Coach says the teachers are the experts of their classroom.

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Own Practice Out-group	When the coach speaks about what they have done in previous cohorts, their own classroom, or home	When I when I went to school in a small rural school, we were a class of 33,34 students, which was really a large rate ratio for a single teacher. And the school districts never really knew what to do with our class because we were such an anomaly, and the classes after us returned to their small sizes and I really felt like in school I could've really gained confidence and could have just used more one on one attention, or even some sort small group work with reading to really solidify the concepts and I think that that is one of the reasons I wanted to make sure my children weren't moving along too quickly and that they were able be to master a subject before moving on." Anna, pre-intervention interview	
<del>Paying attention</del> <del>Out-group</del>	<del>Listening to teachers, asking questions, being a confidant, cheerleader, validating and acknowledging, investing in them,</del>		Collapsed into Emotional Support C-T (video code)
<del>Commitment</del> <del>Out-group</del>	<del>How committed the teachers are to the intervention</del>	"Okay perfect just one and two, [videos for PD] right? I was looking at that, I'm halfway through three but I don't know that I'll get it done with conferences this week I don't know through all of them yep" Kelli pre-intervention interview	Collapsed into Openness to Change (video)
<del>Empathy</del> <del>Out-group</del>	<del>The coach shows understanding towards a teacher because they have experienced a similar situation-I think this is related to Paying Attention, not sure if it needs to be its own code</del>		Collapsed into Emotional Support C-T (video code)



Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Customization Out-group	How the coach is tailoring the coaching or intervention for the teacher/classroom		Differentiation, Individualization
<del>Investment</del> <del>Out-group</del>	<del>The coach is investing in the teachers by being there and coming alongside them</del> <i>I think this is related to Paying Attention, but not sure how yet</i>		Collapsed into Benevolence Out Group
Out-group trust absence	When a coach or teacher talks about the absence of trust between a teacher and coach	"I think I would have liked to meet her, and maybe done, a session or, like, I don't know, Sara and I talked, not like right before this meeting but even with Anna well ahead of time in some of our meetings that because things have gone online, those first like four weeks were a blur, because it was so much information that I think it almost would have been better for us to learn the program, like, a month or two weeks or whatever before we actually started teaching in the classroom." Kelli, Post-intervention Interview	
Out-group trust presence	When a coach or teacher talks about the absence of trust between a teacher and coach	"Anna has I think she just has gone above and beyond kind of listening with the kids and even with Kelli and I she comes in, and she always asks about kids and i've even been emailing her about my Gregory. And she contacted (Dr. McClowry). So she always goes above and beyond, to help us with whatever questions we have or what's happening in the room she's really quite sweet such a quiet, you know just bring it's just neat what she brings to the class." Sara, post-intervention interview	

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Benevolence In-group	The teachers talking to each other  A mutual spirit of goodwill and a willingness to extend oneself in support of the well-being of the other. It is grounded in the confidence that one's well-being or something one cares about will be protected and not harmed by the person in whom they have placed their trust	There were not any specific instances of this code in the data.	
Honesty In-group	Honesty is anchored in moral principles and is cultivated through behaviors that demonstrate integrity, authenticity, and accountability for one's actions (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999). People earn a reputation for honesty from telling the truth and keeping promises.	There were not any specific instances of this code in the data.	
Openness In-group	In being open, people make themselves vulnerable to others by sharing information, influence, and control (Zand, 1997). It entails the sharing of facts, alternatives, intentions, judgments, and feelings.	Okay, Kelli and I work so well together that like and if we weren't assigned to do it together, we would still be talking about it. You know, if only one of us, if it were one teacher like you were doing her class versus mine or whatever. We would be having the conversations about it. We have lunch together every day so if I don't get home from school it's because we had an hour conversation about life. Working with Kelli that's just part of my life." Sara, pre-intervention interview	

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Reliability In-group	Reliability is evidenced by a sense of confidence that the other person or party will come through with what is needed on a consistent basis and that the work will be of sufficient quality to meet joint standards (Butler & Cantrell, 1984; Mishra, 1996). The trusting party need not invest energy making mental provisions for how they will manage in case the other person should fail to follow through on agreements.		Collapsed into Integrity/Reliability T-T
Competence In-group	Competence is the ability to perform a task as expected and according to appropriate standards. We trust those whose skill we depend upon, especially professionals, to maintain their expertise and to be honest about their level of skill.	There were not any specific instances of this code in the data.	
Comparison In-group	One teacher compares their class to the other teacher's	"I have the low half they can't sit in a chair, they can't keep their mouth shut. It is what it is and it just. And they split classes this year I kind of like my what really I got the short end of the stick like for sure, but and then all five of the case studies are in my home room." Kelli, pre-intervention interview	

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Proximity In-group	Relationships with other teachers based on their proximity to each other	"it's hard to get down with the second, third, fourth grade wing because they're clear at the other end of the building and their schedules run different than ours, so we don't see as much of them. So, there's relationships there but they're not very strong because of that. So that kind of thing happens." Sara, pre-intervention interview	
In-group trust-absence	When a teacher talks about the absence of trust between colleagues	<i>There were not any specific instances of this code in the data.</i>	
In-group trust-presence	When a teacher talks about the presence of trust between colleagues	We don't mean to brag but we're team in the building. Like Sara and I get along we have very similar personalities and we will like bouncing ideas off each other all the time. We're a team, and we have been since day one. " Kelli, pre-intervention interview	
Context	Information provided for trustworthiness of findings	I grew up in (blinded) so neighboring town about 20 minutes away...I had cousins that went to CenterPoint so I've always kind of just had a piece in CenterPoint we competed in athletics against them, neighboring town rivals that kind of thing." Kelli, pre-intervention interview	
Relationship building-other	Language that is meant to build rapport, but not necessarily have to do with the content of the interview	<i>There were not any specific instances of this code in the data.</i>	

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Rurality	Speaking about being in a small town or in a small school	"Because we are a preschool through 12th grade school, it's fun to see my kids...that I've had as preschoolers are you know still juniors and seniors But it's fun to be able to see those kids and talk to them in the hallway so that's a cool unique thing I guess about CenterPoint." Sara, pre-intervention interview	
Students	Speaking about the students in the current participating classrooms, examples include temperament of students, or behavior contracts the teachers are putting into place for students.	" But just ideas of how to handle trouble kiddos or how to relate that to them, and you know just jumping into our relaxing informal time as well." Kelli, post-intervention interview	
<del>COVID-19</del>	<del>Anything about how COVID is impacting their classroom</del>		Collapsed into COVID (video code)
Interview Mechanics	Text about pseudonyms, scheduling,	I'm trying to think of why is it so hard [to come up with a pseudonym]...I was just thinking just say any name that pops in your mind so, um, Anna." Anna, pre-intervention interview	
Social-Emotional Learning	Speaking about social-emotional skills, either teaching or children's	"Even now they'll just say you know I'm feeling like Gregory or I'm feeling like Gretchen okay well things are hard yeah and I'm grumpy." Kelli, post-intervention interview	

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Education Philosophy	Anything about how education impacts a child or a community, or their personal beliefs about education, or a school's philosophy	"I also strongly believe that as an educator you owe it to your students and our communities that we are preparing them for the challenges they will face by to engaging them in the critical thought process. Students should cognitively have an opportunity explore topics at length and contemplate subjects through a variety of lenses." Anna, pre-intervention interview	
INSIGHTS	Anything about the INSIGHTS curriculum (puppets, dilemmas), or mechanics of the intervention	"Not every that we're different and things are different in our classrooms but with INSIGHTS, especially if they're used to Problem Solving and those kinds of things. All of the kids have heard those words, so I think it's good to work through and in Kelli's room they might have had something come up that hasn't come up yet in my room, so if we could already talked about it." Sara, post-intervention interview	
Temperament	Anything about temperament	"I know, like one of the dilemmas talks about being a teacher's pet but consistently teachers report that doesn't seem to resonate with a lot of kiddos, but, in this situation, the puppet personality, the puppet profile that's addressed as a teacher's pet is one where she, Hilary the Hardworker likes to answer all the questions and not give anyone else a turn." Anna pre-intervention interview	

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
School culture	Relationships between teachers and teachers, teachers and principal, teachers and students, parents with teachers and students. Developing school pride, school standards or norms	"In years past we've brought in, like events for families to come to school with other families and that's been fun that they can collaborate there and meet other people, and you know hey your kid always talks about this kid in their class but we've met. That the kids don't see each other outside of school very much I guess it's a sad but you know it's also good, because then they are excited to be at school with friends they don't see." Kelli, pre-intervention interview	
Personality	Adult personality	"Trust is hard for me. It really is. I am a very protected person. So to let somebody come in and I'm also all admit a very controlling person. I have a very strong personality, and so it was hard for me like I was open to the idea of, you know, another program and, you know, especially a social emotional program or how to develop the pieces of controlling that and identifying those emotions and stuff." Kelli, post-intervention interview	
<del>Openness to change</del>	<del>How open the teacher is to changing their teaching practices based on the intervention/coach's suggestions</del>		Collapsed into Openness to Change (video code)
Group Coaching	Mention of group coaching either past or present	"I think it [group coaching] was helpful together if you get along, just like teaching partners like I could both ways like Sara and I get along great, so we are in communication with each other, each other constantly. As far as how to help this kid or this kiddo is in your room for reading my room for math like I could see if I didn't get along with my teaching partner...[then] maybe I'd want my own coaching session." Kelli, post-intervention interview	

Code	Definition	Examples	Notes
Dyadic Coaching	Mention of dyadic coaching either past or present	"[If I] look at my one on one sessions I feel like I've had some shy teachers and they weren't maybe quite sure what their role of in insights was and possibly it was difficult navigating their place in research and a the fact this is a replication study; I could see that they wanted to do everything perfectly and then I've had the opposite very outgoing teachers who would just share so much of their life with me both inside and outside the classroom it's just you know." Anna, post-intervention interview	
Time Constraints	When the coach or teachers talk about time constraints	"I always really enjoyed the coaching session and I, I felt like this semester while it was a productive but I always had in the back of my mind a feeling that they were not having the opportunity to explore some of the insights tools, as well as other teachers had in the past, and this was mainly a time issue." Anna, post-intervention interview	

*Note:* The crossed-out sections were the codes that were collapsed into other codes.