Spring 2017

The Impact Of Racial Equity Coaching On White Educators’ Personal Growth And Professional Practice

Gretchen Baglyos
Hamline University

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_all
Part of the Teacher Education and Professional Development Commons

Recommended Citation
Baglyos, Gretchen, "The Impact Of Racial Equity Coaching On White Educators’ Personal Growth And Professional Practice" (2017). School of Education Student Capstone Theses and Dissertations. 4281.
https://digitalcommons.hamline.edu/hse_all/4281
THE IMPACT OF RACIAL EQUITY COACHING ON WHITE EDUCATORS’ PERSONAL GROWTH AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

by

Gretchen Baglyos

A capstone submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Masters of Arts in Education.

Hamline University

Saint Paul, Minnesota

May 2017

Primary Advisor: Jennifer Carlson
Secondary Advisor: Joy Esboldt
Peer Reviewer: Prachee Mukherjee
“Race matters. Race matters in part because of the long history of racial minorities being denied access to the political process…Race also matters because of persistent racial inequality in society – inequality that cannot be ignored and that has produced stark socioeconomic disparities…This refusal to accept the stark reality that race matters is regrettable. The way to stop discrimination on the basis of race is to speak openly and candidly on the subject of race…”

Honorable Sonia Sotomayor (2014)

“If you can show me how I can cling to that which is real to me, while teaching me a way into the larger society, then and only then will I drop my defenses and my hostility, and I will sing your praises and help you to make the desert bear fruit.”

Ralph Ellison

“Out beyond ideas of wrongdoing and rightdoing there is a field. I’ll meet you there.”

Rumi
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

One month into my writing of this capstone, on July 6, 2016, Philando Castile was fatally shot by a police officer at a traffic stop two miles away from the Hamline University campus. The next day, I gathered with fellow racial equity educators for the purpose of increasing our skill in facilitating interracial and intra-racial conversations about race. We entered together in a space of reflection – putting into written word what lived on our hearts that day. In my somber reflection, I recognized that while this murder of a Black man at the hands of police was not a new phenomenon in the United States, Castile’s death stirred in me a fresh grief and urgency to act. I asked myself: What responsibility do I bear, as a White woman, moving forward from this tragedy?

Months later, our nation witnessed the presidential election of a White man whose platform preached a gospel of hate and racist bigotry. On the morning of November 9, 2016, a few hours after learning the final election results, I gathered in a circle of White educators, teachers I serve in my role as racial equity coach. We sat together that morning in a space of shared humanity, speaking to the meaning behind our tears, anger, and confusion. We did not attempt to fill the moments of silence. As I moved through that day, I wondered about how my family and friends were experiencing the news of our imminent president. I asked myself: In light of this election, what responsibility do I bear, as a White sister, daughter, and friend?

American author James Baldwin wrote, “We are trapped in our history and our history is trapped in us.” While I see the truth of Baldwin’s statement as evident in our
horrific racial past and in the current fabric of our systemically racist society, I remain hopeful. My hope comes from the shifts that I’ve begun to notice in conversations about race with my White family, friends, colleagues, and even strangers. Now, more than ever, I am hearing questions being asked, concepts being challenged, and beliefs being reconsidered. Now, more than ever, I believe in the promise of grace to transform willing people from hardened versions of themselves into heart-forward, authentic beings. Now, more than ever, I desire to see others’ full humanity and to be embraced for my own.

To my research participants – Thank you for your vulnerability. For trusting me with your truths and allowing me to push you further. I am humbled by your growth.

To Mom, Dad, and Nathan – Thank you for walking with me on my journey. For your steadfast assurance that my voice matters. For your confidence in my abilities. For your own curiosity and growth as racial beings. And for your critical editing eyes!

To Tonicia, my racial equity coach – Thank you for giving me permission to remove my mask. For helping me heal. For reminding me that I am perfectly flawed and stronger than I ever thought possible.

To my Equity Squad - Devrae, Joy, Prachee, Lee-Ann, Maria, Peter, Cam, Freida, Omar, and Sarah – Thank you for sharing your hearts. For telling your stories. For our sacred team space. In your company, I feel loved, held and seen.

To Anthony – Thank you for pushing me to jump without ever holding my hand. For showing me what it looks like to live and breathe and sleep this work. For reminding me to make time for ramen.
To Maren – Thank you for seeing me. For the gift of your friendship, your listening ear, and your warrior heart. For cheering me on to reach the finish line. For walking me home.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction to the Chapter .................................................................1
Context: My Lived Racial Experience..................................................1
Rationale: A Call for Racial Equity Coaching for White Teachers.............9
Summary...............................................................................................11

Chapter Two: Literature Review...........................................................13

Introduction to the Chapter.................................................................13
Race in Education................................................................................13
White Teachers and Whiteness............................................................21
Racial Equity Coaching.........................................................................33
Summary...............................................................................................46

Chapter Three: Methods.......................................................................49

Introduction to the Chapter.................................................................49
Research Paradigm and Philosophy.........................................................49
Setting..................................................................................................51
Primary Participants.............................................................................53
Additional Participants.........................................................................57
Methods and Data Collection Timeline......................................................57
Data Analysis.........................................................................................63
Special Considerations.........................................................................64
Summary ..............................................................................................................................65

Chapter Four: Results…67

Introduction to the Chapter…67
Impact of Racial Equity Coaching on White Educators’ Personal Growth.............69
Impact of Racial Equity Coaching on White Educators’ Professional Practice…85
Elements of Racial Equity Coaching Partnership for Increased Effectiveness...100
Summary.............................................................................................................................107

Chapter Five: Conclusions.............................................................................................110

Introduction to the Chapter..........................................................................................110
Reflections on the Impact of Racial Equity Coaching .............................................110
Literature Review Revisited.......................................................................................113
Implications of Research Results..............................................................................117
Limitations of Research..............................................................................................119
Recommendations.......................................................................................................121
Future Research..........................................................................................................123
Communicating Results............................................................................................123
Reflections from the Researcher/Coach.................................................................124
Summary......................................................................................................................125

Appendices ..................................................................................................................127

Bibliography................................................................................................................150
CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Introduction to the Chapter

As a racial equity coach, I desire to learn more about the impact of this individualized professional development approach on the personal and professional lives of the educators I mentor. Racial equity coaching offers an ideal model for engaging White educators in critical self-reflection and racial identity development and continues to gain increasing levels of attention and support from school administrators as a viable teacher development structure. Specifically, my own lens as a reflective White educator motivates me to guide fellow White teachers in their journey toward increased racial consciousness and higher levels of effectiveness in the classroom, leading me to my research question: How does racial equity coaching impact White educators' personal growth and professional practice?

This chapter illustrates pivotal events from my personal and professional experience which inspired me to further develop my own racial consciousness and adapt my instructional approach with students using a critical racial lens. I also describe my transition from the classroom into my current role as a racial equity coach. Finally, I provide rationale for educators’ pursuit of racial equity transformation within our public schools and propose racial equity coaching as an ideal model to spur this imperative reform.

Context: My Lived Racial Experience
Chicago, Illinois. I spent my formative years of education in a public school in the Hyde Park neighborhood of south Chicago. As a young White girl, I remember observing my kindergarten classmates as we sat cross-legged on our brightly colored carpet. Of my whole class, I counted three students with white skin like mine. I recall making friends in these first few years with students darker skinned than me and talking openly about the differences we noticed in our speaking, our clothes, and the food we packed for lunch. I loved my earliest years of school in Chicago and believe the friendships I formed with students racially different than myself instilled a curiosity in me to explore how the color of our skin shapes patterns we experience in our lives. My earliest beliefs about my racial identity and my place in school also involved my kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Snyder, who had white skin like mine. Looking back, I wonder what beliefs I constructed about my role and success in school when I saw in Mrs. Snyder a future reflection of myself, in a position of power teaching students of color.

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. After living in Chicago for five years, I relocated with my parents and brother to our home state of Pennsylvania. I spent my middle and high school years attending Susquehanna Township School District in Harrisburg. During these years, my mother served as director of an inner city after school program for students ages nine through twelve. During the summer months, my mother expanded this program to an eight-week full day experience for the students. As I matured into my teenage years and began to speak to my desire to teach, my mother encouraged me to participate in the summer program by chaperoning field trips and leading group activities.
Entering into this inner city setting with students of color made me hyper-conscious of my white skin. Being in the racial minority with Black and Brown youth awakened fresh awareness in me of the differences between us. However, I found familiarity in the leadership of my mother, the White woman in charge, whose organizational planning and expectations of the program I inherently understood. Working under my mother’s leadership with these students provided me deep fulfillment and sense of purpose. My passion for these students ultimately led me to fill the program director role upon my mother’s leave and fueled my vocational aspiration to someday teach students in an urban setting.

As I grew into my role as program director, I felt my initial self-consciousness around being White in a space with people of color fade. While I remained aware of the fact that my skin color set me apart from most of my students and staff, I perceived myself accepted in this setting. I recall a conversation I had with two Black boys, Jamal and Raymond. The word *racism* came up in our dialogue and I asked the boys to describe what they understood about that word. Jamal started to explain, “Well, racism is when White people like you, no offense Ms. Gretchen…,” before Raymond cut him off, saying, “Ms. Gretchen isn’t White, she’s light skinned!” With this, Jamal looked at me, asking, “Wait, are you White?” While the comment surprised me and I felt curious to hear more about Raymond’s reason for thinking of me as a person of color, I quickly answered Jamal’s question, “Yes, I’m White,” and moved on with the conversation. Even though I chose not to ask Raymond any more questions about his comment, I internally allowed myself to construe his impression of me as validation of my acceptance as a “good White
person” by people of color. Without the language or tools to explore my racial identity, I wondered: *Am I somehow different than other White people?*

**Northfield, Minnesota.** Following high school, my desire to become a teacher, passion for choral music, and upbringing in the Lutheran church motivated my choice to attend St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota. I set a goal to pursue a music teaching position in an urban setting after completing the four-year Music Education degree. While working as program director with students of color in Harrisburg made me acutely aware of my own White skin, I palpably felt the scarcity of Black and Brown faces on St. Olaf’s Scandinavian-founded campus in the permeating Whiteness of daily interactions and long-held traditions of this institution. During freshmen orientation, one of my roommates asked, “So…what are you? I mean, what’s your racial background?” I realized her innocent question stemmed from the fact that my darker features distinguished me from so many of our blond haired and blue eyed classmates. Having my race questioned again, this time by another White woman brought me back to the same question I began to ponder months before: *Am I somehow different than other White people?*

During my junior year at St. Olaf, I participated in the Urban Teaching Experience, a January-term course where education majors commuted each day to teach in a Minneapolis public school. I shared my placement, a high school in south Minneapolis, with two fellow music education classmates. Because of my plan to someday teach music in a racially diverse city setting, I looked forward to this experience as the course that most aligned with my own vocational path. Each day, I commuted
forty-two miles with my classmates, often sharing stories of our student interactions at this large public high school. Shortly into our month-long placement, my classmates began to insert disparaging remarks into our conversations with comments like, “I can’t wait to get this month over with so I can go teach in a real school,” and, “These students don’t have any idea what actual music sounds like.” I listened as my classmates described the behaviors of these Minneapolis students, who were mostly students of color, and talked about how their attitudes and taste in music would never be tolerated in the suburban districts they attended as teenagers. Hearing these comments from my White classmates stirred a discomfort and anger in me, yet I remained silent out of fear that my emotions might erupt unproductively and I would not find the words to express how I felt. Lacking the tools to engage with my classmates and inquire more about their perspectives, I remained silent and angry, now shifting my internal question: Do my life experiences make me somehow better than other White people? Not wanting to identify with the negative bias that I heard from my classmates, I projected my energy into a further question: How can I distance myself from these kind of prejudiced White people?

Crystal and Minneapolis, Minnesota. Following my graduation from St. Olaf College, I secured a music teaching position at the FAIR (Fine Arts Interdisciplinary Resource) School in Crystal, Minnesota. I embraced the opportunity to teach in this racially diverse school, with a shared vision for equity, excellence, and the arts. I poured my energy into building a dynamic choral program with my students. As a member of the FAIR community, I began attending professional development trainings geared towards racial equity in education. I grew to learn that the term equity meant providing students
what they need to succeed, as opposed to equality, where each student receives identical resources. I opened my eyes to the unique ways that my students might experience school based on their skin color and pondered what this demanded of me to consider in order to become a racially equitable teacher. I started to practice using tools to engage in conversations about race within my professional and personal life.

A prominent component of my racial equity development asked me to self-reflect on my lived racial experience and racial identity as a White woman. For the first time, I crafted a chronological racial autobiography, examining my life experiences through a racial lens. I returned to critical chapters in my life (growing up in Chicago, directing an inner city summer program, attending a mostly White college institution, suppressing anger towards my St. Olaf classmates) and processed these using my new tools and my increased awareness of my racial identity. In self-reflection, alone and with trusted colleagues, I challenged myself with questions about how my identity as a White woman influenced my expectations of my students, my curriculum design, and my instructional style. In several poignant interactions my first few years at FAIR, students and parents called aspects of my own racial blind spots to my attention. I recall a Black mother of one of my eighth grade students taking me aside and sharing that she hated sitting through my choir concerts. She acknowledged that her daughter loved having me as a teacher but asked, “Could you please have them sing some Black music?” In my perspective, I programmed a variety of musical styles from many cultures and races, including Black culture, into my choral concerts. I successfully followed the formula for multicultural choral music programming that I learned from my well-intentioned music professors at
St. Olaf. Yet, it took several days of vulnerable self-reflection before I dared to consider this parent’s underlying plea, “Can you please help my daughter see herself in your curriculum?” My self-reflection opened up potential gaps in my beliefs and my practice where I previously felt successful from a racial equity standpoint. I realized that my music teacher preparation at St. Olaf failed to equip me in understanding my White racial conditioning and the impact of this on my future White students and students of color. At times, this caused me distress, guilt, and discomfort. Moving through my discomfort, I began to adapt new approaches into my practice as I courageously employed my reflective lens and began to see results in the increased engagement of students of color in my choirs. My realization that my perspective as a White woman inherently created blind spots in my practice convinced me of the necessity for me to seek multiple racial perspectives from colleagues, friends, and students to fully inform my teaching.

I carried my developing racial lens with me when I transitioned to building a new choral program at the FAIR School location in downtown, Minneapolis. This setting presented new challenges for me as students of color comprised the majority of my choir classes and frequently vocalized their desire for me to transform the traditional White choir model into a program reflective of their passions and lived experiences. With courage, I took a critical eye to every detail of this new choral program and sought ways to mold the pedagogies I learned at St. Olaf into an inviting and responsive classroom structure representative of my students’ diverse racial perspectives.

Racial equity coaching. At this time of transition, I began exploring training in racial equity coaching, a model of peer observation and support founded on critical racial
dialogue and self-reflection. Training to become a coach demanded that I delve even deeper into my long-held assumptions of my identity as a White woman. With the help of my own racial equity coach, I started to process my ongoing inquiry about feeling somehow different than other White people and divulge how much energy I spent on distancing myself from White people who I perceived as racially unconscious and prejudiced. My coach pushed me to see myself in my colleagues’ stories, vulnerably share pieces of my own narrative, and use the tools for racial discourse and inquiry to walk with my fellow White teachers on their journey. She also led me to acknowledge that despite my circumstances growing up in urban areas with people of color, I must push myself to continue evolving on my own path towards racial identity development and my fight as an educator for racial equity. Because of this coaching, I now believe that my most impactful work as a White racial equity coach requires me to lean in to the exact conversations with White colleagues that caused me great discomfort and anger years ago.

Last summer, I made the choice to leave my classroom in order to serve as a racial equity coach, initially with the West Metro Education Program (WMEP) and now in St. Louis Park Public Schools. After careful reflection and thought, I chose to leave my choir classroom because of my desire to positively impact a much larger body of students by individually coaching their adult educators. My work not only involves guiding adults to self-reflect on their lived racial experience but helps them build their capacity to notice, name, and interrupt institutional barriers for our students of color. I hope that my coaching inspires fellow educators to consider racial inequities in their beliefs, practice,
and school system where they might have been blind previously and prompts them towards transforming structures that limit student potential and achievement.

**Rationale: A Call for Racial Equity Coaching for White Teachers**

This coming school year, I will work with a small cohort of White educators to explore the research question: *How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice?* My lived experience as a White student, teacher, and racial equity coach brings me to this culminating inquiry. I enter into this area of focus fueled by a belief that authentic perspectives of color remain largely absent in teacher preparation programs and that White educators lack practice with self-reflective tools necessary to effectively *hear* and *respond* to perspectives from people of color. Therefore, I believe White educators must self-reflect on their own experiences and beliefs about race in their vocational field and challenge the implications of these on their practice.

When perusing the current body of standardized curriculum, I see the content centered in a Eurocentric, White perspective with voices of color often incorporated as an anecdote or singular unit of study. This curriculum, taught in Minnesota mostly by White educators, echoes my own upbringing where I learned of the contributions of White explorers, politicians, performers, and scholars from my teachers and professors who shared their same racial positioning. I believe that this curricular approach, centered in the contributions and perspectives of White people, serves to reinforce a false sense of racial superiority in our White students and excludes our students of color from
authentically seeing themselves as key contributors to the landscape of the country in which they live.

Left unchallenged, White-biased curriculum may perpetuate racist beliefs and assumptions in the minds of students and educators. Manifestation of these unfounded racist beliefs surfaced in the professional music education community, my own content licensure area, this past April, in the published remarks of Mr. Michael Butera, then Executive Director and CEO of NAfME (National Association for Music Education). During a professional convening of heads of national arts service organizations hosted by the National Endowment for the Arts, Mr. Butera attributed the lack of racial diversity in NAfME’s educator membership to his belief that, “Blacks and Latinos lack the keyboard skills needed for this field,” further stating, “Music theory is too difficult for them as an area of study” (McCord, 2016). Mr. Butera’s remarks prompted his removal from his CEO position and sparked rebuttals from several other leaders of arts organizations calling immediate action to be taken in addressing inequity in music education. Jesse Rosen, President and CEO of the League of American Orchestras responded,

If the arts community is to accelerate progress in the areas of diversity, inclusion, and equity, we must all, especially national leaders, be prepared to navigate difficult conversations. When it gets uncomfortable you're probably in the right place. But, care must be taken to maintain respect, to listen actively, to ask questions, to assume good intentions, and above all, to remain engaged. The true pursuit of equity requires staying at the table when the conversations get tough. (Rosen, 2016)
Indeed, my role as a racial equity coach calls me to *stay at the table* with my fellow White educators, across content areas, when conversations get tough. Just as I explore critical chapters of my life through a racial lens, I mentor fellow White educators as they explore their own racialized upbringing and challenge them to consider the impact of their long-held beliefs on their instructional practice and with students.

**Summary**

My passion for racial equity work comes from my earliest personal schooling experiences as a young White girl immersed in a racially diverse setting and stems to my professional teaching years in the music classroom with brilliant Black and Brown students. My current professional role as a racial equity coach aligns with my conviction that White teachers must push their fellow White colleagues to develop positive racial identities and skills to engage in tough conversations about race.

Chapter Two examines scholarly literature relevant to the research question: *How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice?* Divided into three sections: Race in Education; White Teachers and Whiteness; and Racial Equity Coaching, the chapter provides an overview of persisting racial gaps in United States public schools, presents a rationale for intentionally focusing on White teachers’ role in this educational context, and formulates a case for racial equity coaching as an ideal support model to increase White teachers’ racial consciousness and instructional effectiveness with all students. Chapter Three outlines methods for conducting this research while Chapters Four and Five present the results of the research
study and offer suggestions for future inquiry into the topic of racial equity coaching for educators.
CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter analyzes scholarly literature relevant to the research question: How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice? I dissect this inquiry into three primary areas: Race in Education; White Teachers and Whiteness; and Racial Equity Coaching. The first section examines the persistent racial gap in United States’ public schools between students of color and their White counterparts and provides context for addressing this troubling phenomenon. The second section explores the role of White teachers in public schools, as this demographic comprises the majority of the nation’s teaching force, tasked with teaching increasing numbers of students of color. The third section offers racial equity coaching as an ideal professional development model for supporting White teachers as they grow into more racially conscious and reflective agents for racial equity transformation.

Race in Education

“In order to get beyond racism, we must first take account of race. There is no other way”

(Justice Harry Blackmun, as cited in Delgado and Stefancic, 2012, p. iix).

The racial gap. Public school educators in the United States consistently face the crisis of racial disparities in student academic achievement and performance. This
troubling racial gap, which illuminates discrepancies in student achievement between White and Asian students and their Black, Brown, and indigenous counterparts, predictably manifests across the United States, in both urban and suburban school settings, from the youngest kindergarten students to graduating high school seniors. Racial gaps in school achievement also appear in drop-out data, suspension records, and student demographic make-up of special education programs, arenas where Black students routinely engage at disproportionately higher rates than their White peers (Ladson-Billings, 2009; Singleton, 2015).

Ladson-Billings (2006) theorized that although educators use the term “achievement gap,” to explain the persistent inequality in schools, solely focusing on this term indicates movement toward a superficial solutions-based approach for solving a much larger, underlying problem. The author proposed that the widely-accepted focus on this gap in education is misplaced and argued that educators must instead expose the educational debt: “…the foregone schooling resources that we could have (should have) been investing in (primarily) low income kids, which deficit leads to a variety of social problems” (p. 5). In comparing these factors, Ladson-Billings suggested that without the educational debt, the achievement gap could be narrowed.

Because student performance data consistently shows evidence of this gap, or debt, between students of different skin colors, educators must address this issue by explicitly and consistently focusing on race. In order to deeply examine racial context in the United States, educators must establish a concrete language for conversing about race through regular self-reflection and dialogue with critical colleagues (Singleton, 2015).
This Race in Education section: unpacks contextual definitions of race, racism, racist, and educational equity; explores foundations of Critical Race Theory as they apply to education; establishes a rationale for explicitly keeping race at the forefront of conversations in education; and outlines a vision for progressing toward racial equity transformation in United States’ public schools.

Defining race, racism, racist, and educational equity. Singleton (2015) urged educators to develop and use common language to engage in critical inter-racial and intra-racial dialogue, specifically around high-voltage words like race, racism, and racist. Race as a social construction in the United States evolved in order to establish and maintain a racial hierarchy, positioning White as superior and thus optimizing experiences of White people. Meanings attached to skin color, eye color, hair texture, and facial features serve to perpetuate a racial hierarchy in the United States, despite a lack of biological or genetic difference between people with distinctly different physical attributes (Alexander, 2016; Hyland, 2005; Singleton, 2015). Race, in the context of this research study, refers to skin color and other physical characteristics by which people remain categorized in the United States. Racial qualifiers such as White and Black appear capitalized in order to equally rank race among ethnic identities such as Asian American or African American.

Singleton (2015) defined racism as “the conscious or unconscious, intentional or unintentional enactment of racial power, grounded in racial prejudice, by an individual or group against another individual or group perceived to have lower racial status” (p. 51). In the context of United States racial hierarchy, racism serves to deny people of color the
benefits offered to White people and, in turn, upholds White dominance. Scholars reiterated that racism does not require intent and extends beyond individual acts of bigotry to collective group and institutional patterns, often invisible to well-meaning people positioned at the top of the racial hierarchy, who may unconsciously re-enforce its existence (Alexander, 2016; Hyland, 2005; Rector-Aranda, 2016; Singleton; 2015).

Singleton (2015) posited that systemic racism, woven throughout the structural fabric of our educational institutions, functions as “the most devastating factor contributing to the lowered academic achievement of students of color and indigenous students…” (p. 44). Because well-meaning educators may remain unconscious of institutional racism operating in organizations such as schools, Singleton implored educators to serve students of color equitably by challenging institutionalized racism and vigilantly working to reduce individual racial prejudices.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) affirmed the permanence of systemic racism in the United States when they noted the lack of existing examples of educational excellence and equity in the nation’s public schools. The scholars observe that arenas where Blacks experience educational success typically lie outside the public school setting. In alignment with Singleton’s (2015) assertions, Ladson-Billings and Tate propose that the cause of African American poverty in conjunction with the circumstances of their school experience lies in institutional and structural racism.

In addition to the racism inherent in institutional structures, individuals also serve to perpetuate racism in the United States through both unconscious and conscious action. A racist, therefore, includes any person who subscribes to racism intentionally or
unintentionally, whether at the systematic, institutional, or individual level (Alexander, 2016; Singleton, 2015). Because the insidious nature of racism shapes individuals’ unconscious beliefs and values, educators must first develop critical awareness of race and racism at the personal level before endeavoring to effectively address racial disparities in the institutionalized school setting.

Working to eliminate racial disparities between students requires educators to distinguish *equality* from *equity*. As referenced by Singleton (2015), DeCuir and Dixson claimed, “Remedies based on equality assume that citizens have the *same* opportunities and experiences. …*equity*, however, recognizes that the playing field is *unequal* and attempts to address the inequality” (p. 56). This distinction becomes critical in examining the experiences of students through a racial lens, acknowledging that the racial hierarchy of the United States creates an un-level playing field for students based on their skin color (Singleton, 2015).

Singleton (2015) envisioned *educational equity* resulting from educators’ raised racial awareness and commitment to improving academic outcomes for students of color. Educational equity involves, “Raising the achievement of all students, while narrowing the gaps between the highest and lowest performing students, and eliminating the racial predictability and disproportionality of which student groups occupy the highest and lowest achievement categories” (p. 55). Raising racial awareness in educators requires consistent and explicit consideration of the role of race in every aspect of the educational setting, a practice that demands the employment of a foundational theoretical framework.
Critical Race Theory serves as one such framework for intentionally examining the
impact of race in public schools.

**Critical race theory in education.** Delgado and Stefancic (2012) defined Critical
Race Theory as a collectivized movement by activists and scholars interested in
analyzing and transforming the relationship between race, racism, and power. Although
originally used in a legal context, scholars of Critical Race Theory apply its five main
tenets to critique educational issues of school discipline, academic tracking, standardized
testing, and curricular content. Similarly, Solorzano and Yosso (2001) maintained that
Critical Race Theory serves to challenge the dominant conversation on race and racism as
it relates to education by examining how educational theory and practice are used to
perpetuate patterns of racial dominance and inferiority.

Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) examined one Critical Race Theory tenet,
Whiteness as property, which insists that Whiteness, possessed by White people, contains
value akin to property. The scholars identified the property functions of Whiteness, which
include: “(1) rights of disposition; (2) rights to use and enjoyment; (3) reputation and
status property; and (4) the absolute right to exclude” (p. 59). Ladson-Billings and Tate
applied this tenet to the context of public schools in the United States, providing
examples of the property functions of Whiteness as evidenced in: school-accepted speech
patterns and dress; White-biased curriculum; racially constructed meanings of words such
as “urban,” and “disadvantaged”; White upheaval away from school districts with
increasing populations of communities of color; and academic tracking in the form of
honors and gifted classes.
Similarly, Rector-Aranda (2016) utilized Whiteness as property and several other tenets of Critical Race Theory to illuminate overt and covert ways that institutional school structures in the United States perpetuate racial inequity. Through a critical racial lens, the author examined aspects of public schooling, from disciplinary policies to curriculum design, arguing that such structures serve to either perpetuate or interrupt patterns of racist history in the United States.

Mickelson (2003) grappled with the question, “When are racial disparities in education the result of racial discrimination?” (p. 1052). In theorizing that racially correlated disparities do not necessarily reflect racial discrimination, Mickelson presented a divergent opinion to the direct correlation fellow scholars drew between racial inequities and patterns of institutional racism in the United States. However, when Mickelson broadened the lens to consider the role of systematic racial differences in students’ opportunities to learn, such as access to effective, licensed educators and placement in academic tracks, he conceded, “The existence of systematic racial disparities over time suggests the school system engages in institutional discriminatory practices” (p. 1057).

**Keeping the focus on race.** Educators routinely steer away from conversations about race, despite evidence-based proof that skin color predicts the likelihood of student success in United States’ schools. As a teacher educator, Ladson-Billings (1996) insisted on keeping the topic of race and racism present in the conversation about multiculturalism in education. Ladson-Billings called for a repositioning of race in the discussion around relevant educational issues. Instead of suggesting race as a substitute...
for other factors impacting student performance in school, such as class and gender, the scholar inquired why race often remains absent in conversations about multicultural education or pitted against other factors impacting student achievement.

Singleton (2015) noted that instead of examining the role of institutional or individually-perpetuated racism, educators tend to focus on factors outside of the school experience when rationalizing students’ low achievement. In order to effectively challenge the tendency to steer away from race, Singleton offered protocol for engaging and sustaining in race-based conversations.

In alignment with Singleton (2015) and Ladson-Billings (1996), Gorski and Swalwell (2015) identified a pattern where school diversity initiatives typically “avoid or whitewash serious equity issues” (p. 35). The authors acknowledged the value in celebrating cultural diversity, yet admitted that these events commonly “mask,” rather than address, racial equity concerns. In order to keep racial equity at the forefront of conversations about transforming classrooms and schools, Gorski and Swalwell offered an equity literacy framework, founded in the belief that educators must first understand issues of equity and inequity before endeavoring to deepen their learning of diverse cultures.

Toward racial equity transformation. The insidious presence of racism in school institutions inevitably manifests in the hundreds of split second decisions educators make each day. Ironically, educators desiring to cultivate educational equity may also unconsciously act in ways that re-enforce patterns of institutional racism in school settings. Rector-Aranda (2016) responded to current racial inequities in public schools
when she stated, “We cannot eliminate racism, but we can still expose it and fight it” (p. 12). Fighting for racial equity transformation in United States’ public education requires that educators understand the historical construction of race rooted in the racist underpinnings of this country and use a critical racial lens to examine normed aspects of schooling and achievement.

Fighting racism also demands that educators confront the racism living in their deeply held beliefs and assumptions about students, of which they may remain unaware. This type of confrontation asks educators to examine their own racial attitudes about their students of color and their White students. Singleton (2015) offered that racial conflict between educators and students, “cannot be resolved when White educators are unaware of their racial culture and people of color and indigenous people feel unsafe to reveal the prevailing characteristics of Whiteness” (p. 195). Thus, when White teachers begin examining race from the context of their personal lived experience and consciousness, they position themselves to more effectively interpret the behavior and engagement of all students.

White Teachers and Whiteness

This section examines current scholarly literature focused on White teachers and the construct of Whiteness. The subsections: make a case for focusing on White educators; define Whiteness and its role in educator mindset and practice; describe Helms’ (1993) model of White Racial Identity Development, Singleton’s (2015) stages of racial consciousness, and Michael’s (2015) notion of racial competence; identify racialized patterns evidenced in White educators’ approach to race-based issues; and
explore current approaches for increasing White teachers’ instructional effectiveness with students of color.

**Current context.** White teachers dominate the population of the United States’ public school teaching body. In 2015, White teachers comprised over 85% of the nation’s public school teaching force and represented 96% of Minnesota’s statewide teaching population. Conversely, Black teachers made up less than 5% of the total public school teaching population. As populations of students of color steadily increase in both suburban and urban school settings, representing over 70% of total school enrollment in the nation’s 20 largest school districts in 2009 and 48% of the total public school population in 2011, the need for teachers with high racial competence becomes even more critical for eliminating racial disparities between students (Educators 4 Excellence, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Marx and Larson, 2012; Michael, 2015).

**Defining whiteness.**

“Analyzing Whiteness is inseparable from a critique of racism because racism is built upon the preservation of Whiteness” (Hyland, 2005, p. 431).

Scholars maintain that just as racial hierarchy developed in the United States to institute an order of privilege and power, Whiteness functions as a social construction to embrace White values, beliefs, culture, ideology, experiences, emotions, and behaviors as the standard against which others are measured, ultimately serving to protect and maintain White institutional advantage (Castagno, 2013; Lea & Griggs, 2005; Matias, 2013; Singleton, 2015). Castagno equated Whiteness to a form of “social amnesia” that allows White people to forget or ignore how they remain implicated in the maintenance
of systems of privilege and oppression, which often translates into their justification of the status quo. In examining its role in public education, scholars theorized that Whiteness: functions to produce inequities like achievement gaps and educational debts; challenges the performance of students of color while shaping and reinforcing the racial perspective of White students; and contributes to oppression of students of color through constructed “in-groups,” as evident in academic tracking (Castagno, 2013; Hyland, 2005; Singleton, 2015). As an example of the Critical Race Theory tenant, Whiteness as property, students with similar behavioral and physical characteristics to their teachers gain acceptance into higher academic tracks while students who fail to look, act, or talk like the teacher risk being placed in lower academic tracks. For this reason, Singleton posed the poignant question, “To what degree, then, do students need to be proficient in White culture to achieve in schools where most teachers are White females?” (p. 195).

White racial identity development, consciousness, and competency. Helms (1993) theorized six stages of White Racial Identity Development (WRID), organized within two overarching phases: 1) the abandonment of racism, and 2) defining a non-racist identity. Helms explained that White people in the early stages of WRID demonstrate a lack of understanding and awareness of the existence of racism, possibly professing a colorblind ideology about race. Poignant life experiences associated with race may propel White people to progress through the stages of WRID, moving toward a deeper awareness of their own White racial privilege and unconscious role in perpetuating racism. Eventually, White people may reach the autonomy status, the most mature stage
of White racial identity. In this stage, White people may demonstrate continual openness to new information and ways of thinking about racial issues (Helms, 1993).

Assessing White teachers according to Helms’ stages of WRID may indicate their capacity to teach students of color. In an education research study, Lawrence (1997) used Helms’ stages of WRID to monitor the racial consciousness of White pre-service teachers. In collecting data with these teachers, the researcher found that many recognized themselves as White, yet often failed to understand the privilege their white skin afforded them and remained unconscious of the role of Whiteness. Lawrence concluded that White teachers who advanced further in their racial identity development demonstrated greater effectiveness in meeting the needs of students of color.

Scholars critiqued and offered adaptations to Helms’ six-stage framework. Malott, Paone, Schaefle, Cates, and Haizlip (2015) posed that White people may exhibit more than one stage of Helms’ (1993) WRID model simultaneously, with one particular stage figuring more dominantly into their lens. The researchers contended that White people’s experiences and constructed meanings of their identity development prove more complicated than what can be named from a singular stage of Helms’ model. Seidl and Hancock (2011) added that White people in the most advanced autonomy stage of Helms’ WRID demonstrate a “double image,” where they show an ability to recognize how their behaviors, responses, and beliefs might be perceived by people of color during interracial interactions. Seidl and Hancock explained that such a mature level of consciousness places White people in an effective place to challenge racism and form relationships across racial lines.
Stages of Helms’ (1993) WRID framework align with Singleton’s (2015) model of the stages of racial consciousness that manifest in White people and people of color. *Unconsciousness* (“I don’t know I don’t know”) forms the first stage, experienced when a person remains unaware of racial implications in their lived experience. When a person acts on un-confirmed racial assumptions, they move to the *dysconscious* stage (“I don’t know but I think I do”). People may move from either the unconscious stage or the dysconscious stage when they become aware of new information they never considered or encounter a perspective that challenges a previously held belief. From here, people move into the *semi-conscious* stage, (“I know I don’t know”) and begin to think critically about the racial knowledge they possess as well as actionable steps they can take to increase this knowledge. Racial *consciousness* (I know I know) represents the final stage where people demonstrate full awareness and a secure feeling that inner beliefs reflect accurate knowledge of those influenced. Singleton’s model offers a framework for educators to identify their current state of consciousness before seeking to learn critical information to advance toward higher stages of racial awareness.

Michael (2015) and Schniedewind (2005) premised that White teachers intending to support students in their developing racial identities must first maintain a positive racial identity themselves. Michael explained that White people with a positive White racial identity possess an understanding of what it means to be White in United States’ society, which “historically, contemporarily, and systemically,” favors Whiteness above other races. In accordance with Seidl and Hancock’s (2011) notion of the “double image,” and Derrick Bell’s concept of racial realism, Michael asserted that a positive White racial
identity requires White teachers’ ability to see how they can be both part of the problem and part of the solution. Michael correlated descriptors of positive White racial identity with characteristics of high racial competence: demonstrating the skills to engage in healthy cross-racial discourse; recognizing and honoring differences without judgement; noticing and analyzing racial dynamics in real-time; confronting racism at the individual and systemic level; cultivating support networks in a commitment to stay engaged in antiracist work amidst conflict or discomfort; and raising questions about the impact of race on personal mindset and professional practice. The scholar asserted that racial competence can be learned, through an ongoing, supportive process.

Utilizing Helms’ WRID framework (1993), Singleton’s stages of racial consciousness (2015), and Michael’s characteristics of racial competence (2015) may help in objectively assessing the current positioning of White educators and provide identifiable indicators of their growth. Analyzing the progression of White educators’ racial identity development also requires an understanding of racialized patterns documented as common responses of White people engaging in race-based issues. Scholars have investigated many of these White racialized patterns, including White Fragility, avoidance, colorblind ideology, deficit mindset, and coded language.

**White fragility.** When asked to explore racism or White privilege in their lived experience, White people routinely respond with silence, anger, fear, withdrawal, emotional incapacitation, guilt, argumentation, and cognitive dissonance (Choi, 2008; DiAngelo, 2011; Helms, 1993). DiAngelo identified these common White responses to addressing racism as White Fragility, “A state in which even a minimum amount of racial
stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves” (p. 54). DiAngelo asserted that White people may use these behaviors, often unknowingly, to reinstate White racial equilibrium. Furthermore, the scholar added that self-proclaimed liberal or progressive White educators may demonstrate their resistance to race-focused professional development with claims that, “I’ve taken a class like this before,” or “I already know this stuff” (p. 55). Some argue that the trainings, themselves, create more racism due to an explicit focus on race. Analyzing scholarly research on Whiteness illuminates the way that these patterns of behavior remain part of a racialized trend shared by many White people in the United States.

**Avoidance.** DiAngelo (2016) asserted, “Many whites believe that not talking about race is evidence that race doesn’t matter to them” (p. 204). Earlier research from Singleton and Hays (2008) confirmed this trend in the observation that candid conversations about race do not come easily for educators. As the authors stated, “Educators experience extraordinary pressure, both implicit and explicit, not to talk about race” (p. 19). Similarly, Ladson-Billings (2009) asserted that fear, discomfort, disbelief of the existence of racism, and unwillingness to acknowledge students’ racial differences often deter White people from explicitly addressing race in conversation. Olsson (1997) attributed White avoidance or silence in addressing racism to: fear of upsetting people of color; fear of violence or losing some privilege; and guilt that White people may disagree with people of color. Mazzei (2008) found that White teachers’ lack of awareness of their own racial privilege and positioning led to noticeable silences in conversations related to race. The scholar explained that this trend most likely results from a common experience
among White educators who were taught, growing up, to not notice or mention one’s skin color for fear of being impolite or racist. Mazzei proposed that “racially inhabited silences” arise when White teachers are asked to examine diversity in education, especially when the focus centers on racial diversity and when the lens shifts away from the racial “other” (people of color) to the racial self, challenging teachers to identify and explore aspects of their White identity.

**Colorblind racism.** As DiAngelo (2016) described, colorblind racism is the “ideology that pretending that we don’t notice race will end racism” (p. 129). The scholar asserted that despite peoples’ positive intentions to remedy racism by not “seeing” color, this colorblind pretense denies racism and therefore serves to maintain it. Ladson-Billings (2009) and Olsson (1997) agreed that White teachers professing such a mentality passively dismiss a critical aspect of students’ experience, unconsciously admit that race does not factor into their choices for curriculum planning or assessment, and indicate their lack of consciousness of Whiteness, which denies the experience of racism and privilege in the United States.

Castagno (2013) observed that many teachers exhibit a “hyper-reluctance” to see and name race as a critical factor influencing students’ experience and learning, resulting in the colorblind nature of their classrooms. When well-intentioned teachers adopt a colorblind mentality, they protect Whiteness by maintaining a belief that race does not matter. Castagno reasoned, “If race does not matter, then there cannot be inequity, privilege, or oppression based on race and, therefore, whiteness neither exists nor is a problem worth examining and changing” (pp. 118-119). The author concluded that
educators’ unconscious awareness of Whiteness and their good intentions result in manifestation of a colorblind approach to education. This ultimately serves to protect Whiteness by privileging the White experience, ignoring the impact of race and institutional racism, and failing to create transformative change. Bloom, Peters, Margolin, and Fragnoli (2015) found that teachers working in racially diverse schools were less likely to adopt a colorblind ideology in relation to their students.

**Deficit mindset and low expectations.** Castagno (2013) connected White teachers’ colorblind approach to a deficit mentality regarding students of color. The author explained, “A deficit model posits a strong and inevitable or natural connection between low academic achievement and students’ supposedly deprived family, economic, and social relations outside of school” (p. 119). Castagno maintained that the deficit model protects Whiteness by claiming that inequity, privilege, and oppression are the fault of specific individuals rather than the result of institutional racism. The deficit mentality manifests in the two most common explanations from teachers as to the low academic achievement of students of color, where the problem is explained as a fault of the children themselves or located in their families (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Landsman (2004) observed the deficit mentality in White teachers’ unconscious assumptions that Black and Latino students struggle to find the answers to deep and complex questions. The author considered these assumptions proof of the racism still infused in many teachers’ belief systems.

Matias (2013) described how White teachers’ deficit views of their students of color translated to lowered expectations of these same students in the classroom. This became
especially troubling as results from numerous studies showed direct correlation between teachers’ expectations of students and student achievement (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

**Coded language.** Nuance in language and terminology reflects White educators’ discomfort with specifically addressing race. In collegial conversations, White teachers regularly employ racially coded language such as, “disadvantaged,” “inner city,” and “urban,” to describe students of color but rarely use “White,” “privileged,” or “advantaged,” when referring to White students (DiAngelo, 2011). Ladson-Billings (2009) proposed that racially nuanced language such as this contributes to the perception that students of color enter schools at a deficit compared to their White peers.

**Approaches for white educators teaching students of color.** Singleton (2013) noted that teachers aiming to transform their learning environments to become more engaging spaces for students of color can benefit from the implementation of culturally relevant pedagogy. Similarly, Ladson-Billings (2009) attested that culturally relevant pedagogy can serve as a way to address racial achievement disparities by requiring teachers to focus their attention on the physical environment, relationships, and instructional methods that mirror the lived experiences and perspectives of the students in their classroom. The scholar described how culturally relevant teachers must work in “opposition to the system that employs them,” by preparing students to question the structural inequality, racism, and injustice of society (p. 140).

Culturally relevant teaching aims to wholly empower students through the integration of students’ cultural references (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Ladson-Billings (1995) identified three criteria which constitute culturally relevant pedagogy: “(a)
Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order” (p. 160). The scholar explained that culturally relevant teaching spurs students to connect with their culture and also serves to counteract the negative influence of the dominant culture. Within a school context, these negative effects may be caused by the absence of people of color as leaders in the school building, commonly positioned in custodial roles, and lack of narratives of color in textbook curriculum.

Matias (2013) added that culturally responsive teaching is a “socially-just” response to teacher education which can reframe teachers’ common deficit perspectives of students of color to views of these students as culturally rich and experts on their own lived experiences. Aligning with Matias’ position, Goldenberg (2014) agreed that White teachers must recognize the cultural capital that students of color bring to the classroom as seen in their actions and rhetoric. Once White teachers recognize aspects of students’ mannerisms as inherent to their culture, not signs of resistance to learning, they must learn how to engage with them pedagogically.

Delpit (2006) offered ten approaches for teachers seeking to transform the public school experience for students of color, many of which align with Goldenberg’s notion of student cultural capital and Ladson-Billings’ ideals of culturally relevant pedagogy. The scholar urged teachers to: maintain high expectations for students of color by teaching “more, not less” content; demand critical thinking; recognize and build on students’ strengths; use familiar experiences from the students’ lives to forge a bridge between
school and home; and foster a sense of students’ connection to their community.

Likewise, Ferguson (2008) proposed that students of color invest the greatest academic effort when teachers exhibit two specific conditions: “high help,” where the teacher communicates a pleasure and willingness to offer support; and “high perfectionism,” where the teacher continually challenges students to strive for full understanding and accuracy in completing assignments. Similarly, Michael (2015) asserted that, often, the most antiracist thing a White teacher can do is connect personally with students. This type of connection requires White teachers to daily recognize and analyze racial dynamics while at the same time constantly examining personal biases and beliefs.

Despite pedagogical initiatives aimed to enable White teachers to engage students of color more effectively, the pervasive nature of Whiteness can hinder White teachers’ implementation of these structures if they remain unaware of their own unchecked bias. Matias (2013) argued that White teachers who claim to be culturally relevant but remain unaware of their own White racial identity fail to realize the insidious role of Whiteness in their classrooms and school structures. The scholar wrote, “Until White teachers assume the onus of dismantling the White supremacist structures by learning, talking, seeing, and feeling what race, White supremacy, and whiteness entail, they remain complicit in its maintenance,” (p. 76). Furthermore, Matias stated that as long as White teacher educators fall short of reflecting on the role of Whiteness in perpetuating systemic racism in schools, teacher preparation programs will continue to produce more White teachers who unconsciously employ white standards against which they will measure their students of color.
In order to eliminate racial achievement disparities, Singleton (2015) urged educators to be “aggressively anti-racist.” The author defined anti-racism as a “deep, personal, and ongoing” examination of how each of us perpetuates injustice and prejudice toward those who are not members of the dominant White race. Singleton cited Weissglass’ vision of an anti-racist school environment as a “healing community,” where educators: identify their unconscious racial bias; explore how this impacts their belief about students and families; work to notice institutionalized racism in school policies and practices; and critically examine the perspectives, present and missing, of their curriculum and pedagogy.

The racial equity coaching model offers an ideal professional development structure for educators seeking to transform their schools into anti-racist healing communities. White educators dominating the nation’s teaching force and, likely, perpetuating patterns of institutional racism through their unconscious and dysconscious actions, could benefit enormously from individual peer coaching to guide self-inquiry and influence instructional behaviors. The next section explores racial equity coaching as an ideal professional development model for transforming teacher mindset and practice in United States’ public education.

Racial Equity Coaching

“Coaching done well may be the most effective intervention designed for human performance” (Atul Gawande, as cited in Knight et al., 2015).

Educational scholars agree that individual coaching, as opposed to workshops and seminars, proves most effective in promoting adult educator growth (Knight, 2005;
Knight, 2015; York-Barr, 2006). Although scholarly literature describes the skills involved in instructional coaching and its proposed impact on teachers and their students, the topic of racial equity coaching remains virtually non-existent in the field of scholarly research, perpetuating the pattern of educator avoidance of race-based issues. This final section provides an overview of research on instructional and peer coaching; identifies the results of several research studies aimed to examine the impact of educator coaching on a racially diverse student demographic; presents a case for racial equity coaching to motivate White teachers’ personal growth and transform their professional practice; highlights systemic supports that may increase coaching effectiveness; and explores current racial equity coaching models in practice.

Coaching research. Faced with the pressure to improve academic outcomes for public school students, many districts hire instructional coaches to collaborate with teachers and help them implement proven best practices in the classroom. Knight (2005) defined an instructional coach as an on-site teacher educator who collaborates with fellow teachers, identifies proven practices to address teachers’ instructional needs, and guides fellow teachers to implement teaching methods. Knight presented a compelling case for hiring instructional coaches in schools, reporting that this model promotes positive conversations in schools, perhaps making a significant contribution to school reform.

In a 2005 publication, Knight drew attention to the lack of literature defining the impact of instructional coaching experience for students and teachers. However, ten years later, Knight et al. (2015) referred to the research of the Kansas Coaching Project, claiming that an instructional coaching cycle does, in fact, promote effective
improvement in teacher performance. The authors synthesized an effective coaching cycle into three actionable components: 1) identify, where the coach and teacher collaborate to set a goal and select a teaching strategy to try to meet the goal; 2) learn, where the teacher learns how to implement the selected strategy while the coach explains and models this strategy; and 3) improve, where the coach monitors how the teacher implements the strategy and how this impacts student performance.

York-Barr, Sommers, Ghere, and Montie (2006) defined peer coaching as “a confidential process in which two or more professional colleagues work together to reflect on current practices; expand, refine, and build new skills; share ideas; teach one another; conduct classroom research; or solve problems in the workplace” (p. 121). The authors offered several strategies for effective coaching practice including dialogue journals, reflective interviews, and structured conversation. York-Barr et. al also promoted reflective coaching structures to foster equity, where coaches specifically provide educators with opportunities to share their feelings about equity issues and how these may impact their educational practice, lesson plan design, and organizational classroom structure, ultimately seeking to determine the presence of bias in curriculum. The authors concluded that the results of peer coaching “far surpass” traditional workshop and demonstration models of teacher professional development, reasoning that coaching: embodies adult learning principles; emphasizes teachers’ need for learning to be relevant and transferable to professional practice; operates through supported collaboration among peers; and provides an ongoing, intentional process.

Studies of coaching to improve the achievement of students of color. Teemant,
Wink, and Tyra (2011) conducted a study aimed to measure effectiveness of instructional coaching when coaches and teachers implemented the Five Standards Instructional Model. Teachers meeting the standards of this model demonstrate their capacity to: facilitate learning through joint productive activity among teacher and students; develop competence in the language and literacy of instruction across the curriculum; connect teaching and curriculum to the experiences and skills of students’ home and community; challenge students toward cognitive complexity; and engage students through dialogue. The researchers examined the impact of this instructional coaching model on 21 elementary teachers over the course of one academic year, with coaching elements embedded throughout a 30-hour workshop and seven individual sessions. Teemant et al. concluded that teachers coached using the Five Standards Instructional Model demonstrated the instructional and cultural knowledge necessary to accelerate the learning of a diverse body of students. In a later study, Teemant (2014) examined the impact of instructional coaching for “urban teachers of diverse learners” using the same Five Standards Instructional Model. Findings of this study suggest that these five standards serve as an effective guide for equipping instructional coaches to help teachers transform their professional practice.

Estrella-Henderson and Jessop (2015) focused on the impact of coaching for school administrators and leaders seeking to eliminate racial achievement gaps between students. The researchers theorized that instructional leadership coaching for site and district administrators, with a specific focus on improving student achievement and narrowing the achievement gap, would enable all students to succeed in the current
context of the educational system. Estrella-Henderson and Jessop’s research showed that school district leaders benefit from the intensive and individualized support of a coach. Similar to the suggested positive outcomes of individual coaching for classroom teachers, the researchers found one-on-one instructional leadership coaching an effective approach to motivate leaders to set and achieve goals as well as discuss how the results contribute to the success of all students.

The investigation of scholarly research on current coaching models aimed at increasing teachers’ racial consciousness, improving teacher effectiveness with students of color, and enabling teachers to challenge institutional racism warranted very little published literature. As Teemant (2014) noted, “Professional development targeting urban teachers of diverse learners is relatively unexplored” (p. 601). Furthermore, Schniedewind (2005) recognized that limited research currently exists describing the effectiveness of such professional development for impacting student achievement. Nonetheless, numerous scholars offered insight into the type of support and motivation necessary for White teachers to transform their mindset and instructional practice with students (Choi, 2008; Denevi and Pastan, 2006; DiAngelo, 2016; DiAngelo, 2011; Diamond, 2008; Elliot and Schiff, 2001; Goldenberg, 2014; Howard; 2011; Landsman, 2004; Lea and Griggs, 2005; Matias, 2013; Michael, 2015; Yu, 2012). In characterizing these critical supports, scholars called for a reformed approach to teacher education and professional development, one that authentically lends itself to a transformative racial equity coaching model. The next section synthesizes findings from these scholars in order
to craft an argument for racial equity coaching as a highly effective model to transform White teachers’ mindset and professional practice.

**A call for racial equity coaching of white teachers.** Elliott and Schiff (2001) contend that teacher bias and prejudice, whether unconscious or conscious, impacts their instructional methods, curriculum, and assessment, thus reinforcing persisting patterns of racial achievement disparities in our public schools. The scholars assert, “Only by transforming teachers’ attitudes and developing culturally sensitive and relevant ways to interact with and instruct students will we see the changes we want in student learning and close achievement gaps” (p. 39). Elliott and Schiff reasoned that while workshops aimed at issues of racial disparities in our schools serve to increase teacher tolerance of diversity, they do little to impact teacher attitudes and beliefs. For this reason, the authors proposed that effective staff development, and staff developers must help educators examine their deeply-held beliefs regarding racial bias in teaching in an effort to interrupt achievement disparities.

Numerous educational scholars claim that White teachers must first in engage in critical self-reflection before attempting to address the racial gaps that exist in the classroom (Choi, 2008; Denevi and Pastan, 2006; DiAngelo, 2011; DiAngelo, 2016; Diamond, 2008; Goldenberg, 2014; Howard; 2011; Lea and Griggs, 2005; Matias, 2013; Michael, 2015; Yu, 2012). Scholars emphasized the immense value of self-reflection for White teachers as a means for exploring deeply held biases and examining their unconscious role in perpetuating racial disparities. DiAnglelo (2011) asserted that White people must develop racial stamina to engage in and sustain conversations about race,
and therefore, anti-racist education must begin at the personal level before moving to a structural and institutional analysis. In order to effectively explore race and notions of Whiteness, White people often require self-reflection as they process new racial information and *continuous support* as they draw connections between this information and their own lives.

Michael (2015) affirmed the critical need for White teachers to examine race in their professional practice. She wrote, “Because teaching requires teachers to be able to make hundreds of decisions on any given day, developing an antiracist practice involves considering race with each new decision” (p. 8). Lea and Griggs (2005) observed that teachers tend to privilege students who reflect their own race, class, and culture. Thus, they urged teachers to become more conscious of this tendency in order to disrupt the perpetuation of educational inequity. Similarly, Diamond (2008) encouraged teachers to consider the role they play in reinforcing success of one group of students and failure of another. The author claimed, “When teachers in a school feel collective responsibility for their students’ academic success or failure, student achievement is enhanced. When most teachers do not feel responsible, student achievement suffers” (p. 254). Diamond’s call for teachers to consider their role in student achievement disparities supports the case for teachers to engage in reflective coaching centered around equitable growth and practice. Aligning with this belief, Landsman (2004) argued that White teachers must accept their personal experience as just one of many perspectives of a lived experience in the United States in order to become more open and effective to the students of color in their classroom.
Researchers in the field offer actionable approaches to consider in guiding White teachers towards self-reflection around race. Choi (2008) encouraged teachers to self-reflect around the notions that the White experience is universal, examine their own racial lived experiences, and consider their role in unconsciously perpetuating systemic racism before they enter the classroom as professionals. Choi envisioned teacher educators as facilitators who guide educators’ “un/learning” process while at the same time role modeling their own quest to unlearn racism.

Denevi and Pastan (2006) found that White antiracist affinity groups can serve to help White people develop positive White racial identities. In White affinity spaces, educators can pose challenging questions about what it means to be White in the United States and contemplate the role Whites play in systemic racism. White affinity group meetings may take shape around journal prompts and sharing, book studies, or structured dialogue.

Yu (2012) presented the racial autobiography as a valuable tool for White teachers embarking in self-reflection. The racial autobiography asks White teachers to examine their personal experiences of encountering racial differences and describe pivotal events which may have led them to a deepened awareness of their own White racial identity. Yu suggested White educators connect these moments in their racial autobiography to stages of Helms’ (1993) White Racial Identity Development model.

Despite this abundant evidence promoting the value of self-reflection for White teachers, Lea and Griggs (2005) admitted that teachers, most of whom are White, require external motivation in order to commit to the self-reflective work necessary to examine
unconscious beliefs. They argued that knowledge alone is not sufficient for transformative self-reflection, offering that knowledge must be constructed in social interaction. Scholarly research asserts that White teachers will be most effective in their self-reflection under the guidance of a teacher educator who intentionally initiates dialogue and inquiry focused on race. Bloom et al. (2015) encouraged teacher educators to challenge White teachers to reflect on the role of Whiteness in their beliefs and teaching practice. Likewise, Howard (2011) placed responsibility on teacher educators to push colleagues to develop their own racial consciousness. The scholar stated that teacher educators must be willing to move fellow teachers into the uncomfortable spaces where race is the explicit focus for self-reflection.

Elliott and Schiff (2001) also noted the valuable role of staff developers in helping teachers examine their bias. They insisted that effective staff developers: believe all teachers can change their mindsets, provide a safe environment for critical self-inquiry; prepare educators to use equitable instructional practices with all students; guide teachers to critically examine their curriculum for bias; and model non-biased language and behavior. After providing explicit examples of strategies to invite teacher reflection and personal growth, Elliott and Schiff promoted peer coaching as an effective support for professional developers to offer in helping guide teachers to develop equitable practices.

Systemic and structural supports to increase coaching effectiveness. Education researchers agreed that system-wide school reform requires the dedication of a critical mass of staff in order to enact lasting change (Hawley, 2008; Michael, 2015; Singleton; 2013). Michael compared antiracist school reform to “swimming upstream,” where the
majority of teachers must swim against the current over a sustained period of time in order to shift the local climate. Hawley (2008) cited evidence that an entire school faculty and staff must be engaged and prepared in order to prompt effective school-wide reform for addressing disparate racial outcomes for students. Based on research into effective school reform initiatives, Hawley claimed that four types of ongoing conversations must take place, wherein faculty and staff: develop shared understanding about the benefits and challenges of improving the school experience for a diverse student body; collaboratively identify practices for enhancing interpersonal relationships and academic achievement for diverse students; identify the resources needed to implement these practices; and create processes for continuous improvement.

Adding to Michael (2015) and Hawley’s (2008) assertions that school-wide reform requires commitment of the majority of school faculty and staff, Singleton (2013) asserted that transformational change for racial equity requires leadership and “a robust, prioritized equity and excellence strategy” (p. 196). The author states that achieving equity requires the consideration of a whole system, where entire administrative teams, school boards, and site and central-office department leaders must commit to racial equity transformation in order for change to take shape. Once highly-positioned educators commit to racial equity transformation, they can begin to distribute leadership throughout the district in the form of Equity Teams, or E-Teams. Singleton advised that E-teams include a broad sampling of school leaders representing diversity in race, gender, role, and seniority levels. As E-Team members grow in their capacity to address systemic racism within their school district, they can collaboratively plan professional
development opportunities for their colleagues in an effort to create significant impact on the larger school community. When school district leaders choose to take the time to explore underlying causes of racial inequities in school by engaging with their own coach, empower teacher leaders to serve as catalysts for racial equity transformation, and invest in learning tools and protocol for engaging in this courageous work, incredible shifts can take place for students.

Indeed, well-equipped racial equity coaches can serve as “catalysts for racial equity transformation,” as they guide White teachers to self-reflect through a racial lens. Coaches may find resources such as the racial autobiography, White racial affinity grouping, and open-ended inquiry beneficial in engaging White teachers in this process. Coaches can also act as brave guides for fellow teachers into the types of discourse Hawley (2008) described by utilizing protocol to regularly initiate race-based conversations. Building a skilled team of diverse coaches, in alignment with Singleton’s (2013) description of an E-Team, serves to increase the effectiveness of racial equity coaches as their leadership becomes distributed across the district to maximize effective implementation, and institutes an expectation for all faculty and staff to grow in their racial consciousness.

Current models of racial equity coaching. Although racial equity coaching and its impact remain nearly non-existent as a topic in scholarly literature, it poses enormous implications for teachers struggling to interrupt and eliminate racial disparities in United States public schools. Pacific Educational Group aims to address this challenge with the four-session training, “Coaching for Racial Equity: Deepening our Will, Skill,
Knowledge, and Capacity to Coach for Systemic Racial Equity Transformation.”

Versalles (2014) defined racial equity coaching as: “A collaborative relationship of support, reflection, and growth; a reciprocal journey of self-discovery; a process of illuminating the relationship between beliefs, behaviors, and results at the personal, professional, and organizational levels; and the achievement of empowerment by navigating dissonance on one’s ascension to critical consciousness” (Coaching for Racial Equity training, July 14, 2014, p. 30). This training equips teachers to become racial equity coaches by preparing them to implement a cyclical model of coaching support, reminiscent of Knight et al.’s (2015) three-phase instructional coaching cycle and in alignment with a wealth of scholarly literature asserting how effective teacher transformation requires the personalized guidance of a professional developer. According to the racial equity coaching framework, coaches aim to support and challenge educators by: engaging in a cycle of mindful inquiry; shifting beliefs to change behaviors; sustaining productive disequilibrium; and facilitating courageous and critical conversations (Coaching for racial equity training, 2014).

Taking a similar approach to Teemant’s research studies (2011; 2014), which examined the effects of peer coaching on teachers’ professional practice, Michael (2015) focused on the personal growth and reflections of White teachers as she supported them in collective inquiry around their racial identity and implications of this on students in the classroom. Michael defined inquiry as “a process of constant engagement with a question, …the commitment to sit with a difficult query and to keep asking it over time… a rigorous and systematic process of research, experimentation, and community
building around challenging dilemmas” (p. 2). In Michael’s narrative retelling of a year-long collaborative inquiry with six White teachers, the author served in a role akin to racial equity coach by: prompting teachers to reflect on their personal identity and professional practice; using tools for effective racial discourse; and sustaining and shaping ongoing inquiry over the course of one academic year. Michael concluded, “Change requires a depth of engagement that cannot be broached without a sustained process,” and shares specific inquiry questions and methodology in the hopes that fellow educators might use this work as a model for their own transformational journey (p. 121).

Rationale for capstone research study. Michael’s (2015) quest to discover how racial inquiry can change White educators’ teaching practice over a sustained period of time closely aligns with my research question: How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice? The scholar asserted, “Raising race questions involves looking beyond the taken-for-granted roles of the present and imagining what else is possible,” a philosophical approach I intend to adopt in my coaching endeavors with White teachers (p. 120). Michael concluded that sustained, individualized, race-based inquiry impacts White educators in many positive ways. Teachers in the study demonstrated increased levels of racial competence, evidenced in their ability to: engage and sustain race-based conversations with colleagues; examine the presence of White privilege in school structures; question and reflect on aspects of their own teaching practice; build authentic relationships with students and families of color; and adapt curriculum to include multiple racial perspectives.
Reflections from the researcher/coach. The researcher/coach’s choice to explicitly focus on White educators originates from the fact that they comprised the vast majority of the United States’ teaching force at the time of the study and, therefore, bore great responsibility for eliminating racial achievement disparities between White students and students of color. Scholarly research asserted that White people undergo stages of racial identity development specific to a lived White racial experience, thus uniquely impacting their professional role with students and colleagues. Additionally, the researcher/coach found motivation to conduct this research based on her lived experience as a White student and educator.

Exploring literature related to the three main components of the research: Race in Education; White Teachers and Whiteness; and Racial Equity Coaching, widened the researcher/coach’s perspective on existing racial disparities in United States’ public education. The research introduced a wealth of scholarly literature examining the historical factors and current re-enforcers of institutional racism in our nation’s schools yet illuminated a need for more academic studies explicitly focusing on the role of race in education. The researcher/coach felt inspired by the publications of numerous educational scholars who called for teacher educators to provide a sustained, reflection-based approach for increasing teachers’ racial awareness and their capacity to engage in race-based discourse.

Summary

This chapter synthesized scholarly literature relative to three main areas: Race in Education, White Teachers and Whiteness; and Racial Equity Coaching. In order to
address the persistent racial achievement gaps between students of color and their White peers, educators must examine the role of race in education. Such examination requires an understanding of the historical construction of race in the United States and grounding in the framework of Critical Race Theory as it relates to institutional school contexts.

With this foundational knowledge of race, educators must begin deep self-reflection around their lived racial experience and the impact of this in their personal beliefs and professional practice. Because White teachers comprise an overwhelming majority of the nations’ teaching force, particular support must focus on the racial development and consciousness of these teachers.

Many scholars agree that the most effective structure for challenging White teachers to develop racial consciousness and grow into more effective teachers of all students requires long-term, personalized professional development. Racial equity coaching, a relatively new concept in scholarly education literature, presents an ideal professional development model to increase the racial consciousness and instructional effectiveness of White teachers. Well-equipped racial equity coaches can serve as invaluable resources to fellow teachers by offering their knowledge and understanding of: the context of race in United States’ public schools, socially constructed racial hierarchy dynamics and Whiteness; frameworks of racial identity development; patterns of White resistance to race-based topics; protocol for engaging colleagues in conversations about race; and tools for prompting self-reflection and inquiry.

Chapter Three will outline proposed methods for exploring the research question: *How does racial equity coaching impact White teachers’ personal growth and*
professional practice? The chapter articulates the underlying research philosophy, rationalizes the choice to conduct an experience-based research study using qualitative data collection methods and analysis, identifies relevant factors impacting the research setting and participants, details the research timeline, and explores concepts of validity and reliability.
CHAPTER THREE

Methods

Introduction to the Chapter

Chapter Two synthesized scholarly literature relevant to three main areas: Race in Education, White Teachers and Whiteness, and Racial Equity Coaching. This chapter outlines the methodology used to collect and analyze data to answer the research question: *How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice?* The researcher/coach conducted the action research study with a cohort of four White educators. This chapter explains the rationale for conducting a qualitative study, describes the research philosophy, details the research setting and participants, outlines the methods and data collection timeline, identifies data analysis methods used, and offers considerations for validity and reliability of the study.

Research Paradigm and Philosophy

In order to pursue the research question: *How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice,* the researcher/coach conducted a qualitative action research study from November, 2016 to March, 2017. Mills (2014) explained that qualitative research is “quite simply an effort to collect data that increase our understanding of the phenomenon under investigation” (p. 84). Spurred by the fact that the inquiry question remains largely unanswered in scholarly literature and by the belief that teachers play a critical role in helping impact the academic
achievement of all students, the researcher/coach sought to understand more about the impact of racial equity coaching on educators. The study specifically focused on White educators due to the reality that they comprised the vast majority of Minnesota’s teaching force at the time of the study, and, therefore, bore great responsibility for eliminating racial disparities between White students and students of color. Furthermore, researchers attested that White people in the United States undergo stages of racial identity development specific to a lived White racial experience (Helms, 1993; Paone, Schaeffle, Cates, and Haizlip, 2015; Seidl & Hancock, 2011). Thus, racial equity coaching functioned as a potentially significant approach to impact White educators’ racial consciousness as it relates to their personal and professional spheres of influence.

The nature of the capstone study fell within Creswell’s (2014) definition of qualitative research: “an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem” (p. 4). Thus, conducting the research according to experience-based qualitative design methods seemed most appropriate for the inquiry-based nature of the study. In conducting action research with White educators, the researcher/coach: collected observational data in the natural setting (the school building and work spaces of the four participants); triangulated data from a variety of sources, including 1:1 interviews and observational field notes; identified patterns and themes that emerged during the research period; and focused on extrapolating the meanings that the participants discovered and developed during the process. The researcher/coach also reflected on her role in the study by considering how
her own background and experiences as a White educator shaped the interpretation of research findings.

The researcher/coach embarked on this qualitative action research inspired by Michael’s inquiry approach with six White teachers, where the scholar clarified an intent to do research with teachers, not on teachers (Michael, 2015). Michael defined inquiry as a process of constant engagement with a question, commitment to sit with a difficult query over an extended period of time, and a rigorous process of research, experimentation, and community building around challenging dilemmas. In the spirit of Michael’s description of inquiry, the researcher/coach served as collegial guide and challenger with her fellow White educators as they ventured together into the critical work of racial equity transformation.

**Setting**

The action research took place within a school district in a western suburb of Minneapolis, Minnesota. In the 2015-2016 school year, district staff and leaders voted to place nine Teachers on Special Assignment (TOSA) in the role of equity coaches for the Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS). Under ATPPS guidelines, equity coaches bore responsibility for conducting a cycle of three observations and 1:1 coaching sessions, helping teachers set and monitor professional goals, and providing site-based professional development, all through a lens of racial equity. In order to fulfill the ATPPS mission, “to build educators’ will, skill, and capacity to disrupt systemic racism in order to impact student achievement and experiences at [school district],” each licensed educator in the district partnered with an equity coach for the duration of the academic
year. Educational scholars attested to the increased possibility for school-wide reform when entire systems engage in such change efforts (Hawley, 2008; Michael, 2015; Singleton, 2013). Because of this, the researcher/coach embarked on the study affirmed by the district’s full-scale implementation of the equity coaching model and envisioned the coaching team embodying Singleton’s description of catalysts for racial equity transformation.

The researcher/coach conducted the action research at her assigned equity coach site, one of four elementary schools located in the school district. During the 2015-2016 academic year, the school served 534 students in kindergarten through fifth grade, averaging 88 students per grade level and approximately 22 students per classroom. Of these students, 59% identified as White, 16% identified as Black, 11% identified as Hispanic, 8% identified as more than one race, 5% identified as Asian/Asian Pacific Islander, and 1% identified as American Indian. The school enrolled increasing numbers of students of color since the 1988-1989 academic year, when 90% of the student population identified as White. In a similar trend, 36% of the student population qualified for free and reduced lunch during the 2015-2016 year, a number which steadily increased from 5% in the 1988-1989 school year. At the time of the action research study, 11% of the total student population received Special Education (SPED) services and 19% of the total student population received English Learner (EL) support.

The elementary school operated under an International Baccalaureate (IB) model and offered additional resources for students such as: Gifted and Talented programming,
Level III Emotional and Behavioral Disorder (EBD) support, Band and Orchestra, Spanish language classes, and Library/Media resources.

Students attending this elementary school either resided within immediate boundaries of the wealthy suburb or commuted by bus into the district through open enrollment offerings in nearby Minneapolis Public Schools. Racially, this created a highly visible divide between the students, where White students largely comprised the immediate suburban population and Black and Brown students transported into the suburb from Minneapolis. Because of the unique nature of school enrollment, school leaders described the student body as the “haves” versus the “have-nots” and “dichotomous.” School leaders also noted the visibility of this racial divide in student make-up of the Gifted and Talented program, populated mostly by White students and Math and Reading Intervention courses, populated mostly by students of color.

Primary Participants

The researcher/coach’s role as equity coach within the school district positioned her to conduct the action research with the educators under her mentorship. The researcher/coach devoted the first two months of the 2016-2017 school year (September and October) to building relationships with licensed staff and observing educators in practice with students and each other. In November, 2016, the researcher/coach introduced her action research study to the 44 educators in her caseload by placing an Informed Consent Letter (Appendix A) in each staff member’s mailbox and emailing a notification to each teacher describing the intended action research process (Appendix B). In the Informed Consent Letter, the researcher/coach invited all White educators to
participate and described the rationale for explicitly focusing on the personal growth and professional practice of these individuals. The researcher/coach also indicated minor potential risks to participants including increased visibility and exposure during the 1:1 coaching process. Additionally, the researcher/coach clarified her research purpose in an email to the two educators of color in her caseload to ensure transparency of the action research proposal (Appendix C).

The researcher/coach asked any interested teachers to return a signed copy of the Informed Consent Letter within a week after receiving the notification and sent an email reminding teachers of this deadline. Thirteen educators indicated their desire to participate in the action research by signing and returning the Informed Consent Letter. The researcher/coach provided each interested teacher with a brief personal inventory (Appendix D) and asked that they complete this form within one week.

Scholarly research studies focused on teacher performance affirmed using a small teacher cohort size in order to collect rich qualitative data and identify patterns (Hyland, 2005; Ladson-Billings, 2009; Michael, 2015; Schniedewind, 2005). Based on these relevant studies, the researcher/coach selected a small cohort of four White educators reflecting a diverse range of teaching experience, role within the school district, and prior racial equity coaching/training. Table 1 shows each participants’ professional role, years in current role and in education, number of years working with a racial equity coach, and most recent attendance at the *Beyond Diversity* workshop.
Table 1: Primary research participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role within school district</th>
<th>Educator A</th>
<th>Educator B</th>
<th>Educator C</th>
<th>Educator D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Education teacher (site-based)</td>
<td>Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) (district-wide)</td>
<td>Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) (district-wide)</td>
<td>4th Grade Classroom Teacher (site-based)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years in current role</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years in education</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of years working with equity coach</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Most recent Beyond Diversity attended</em></td>
<td>November, 2016</td>
<td>2012</td>
<td>August, 2016</td>
<td>2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Note: the two-day Beyond Diversity workshop experience introduced educators to a protocol for engaging in Courageous Conversation About Race (CCAR). The CCAR protocol formed the foundation for engaging and sustaining conversations about race between the researcher/coach and participants throughout the action research study.

As seen in Table 1, the four White participants represented a variety of educational experience and professional roles within the school district. In order to assure confidentiality, the researcher/coach identified primary participants as Educator A, Educator B, Educator C, and Educator D. All audio recordings were transcribed to ensure anonymity in 1:1 coaching sessions. Furthermore, the researcher/coach protected the anonymity of the four participants by storing all electronic data in a password protected folder on a personal computer and keeping all hard copy data in a locked drawer off school grounds.
Educator A (2nd year current role, 7th year in education) identified as a White male. He worked as a Special Education teacher in the school, serving eight students in Kindergarten through 5th Grade under the category of Developmental Cognitive Disability (DCD) through academic and behavioral/social-emotional instruction. In addition to this role, Educator A worked as the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) support person for the school building by providing and developing resources for all students in the building with autism. This was Educator A’s first year working with a racial equity coach. He attended the two-day Beyond Diversity workshop several years ago in a prior educational setting and most recently within the school district in November, 2016.

Educator B (7th year in current role, 15th year in education) identified as a White male. He served as a district-wide Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA) throughout the school district by helping all teachers incorporate technology into their classrooms. Educator B also served as president of the teachers’ union, representing 365 educators in the school district. This was Educator B’s second year working with a racial equity coach. He last attended the Beyond Diversity workshop with a regional cohort in 2012.

Educator C (1st year in current role, 26th year in education) identified as a White female. She worked as a district-wide TOSA by providing support for 32 elementary teachers as they implemented new curricular initiatives and described her participation in grade level meetings, observations of teaching practice, and modeling/co-teaching in classrooms. This was Educator C’s first year working with a racial equity coach. She attended the Beyond Diversity workshop within the school district in August, 2016.
Educator D (2nd year in current role, 9th year in education) identified as a White female. She taught 4th Grade in the school building. Prior to moving into this role, she worked with two equity coaches in a nearby school district. Upon her hire in the current school district, Educator D elected to continue her equity work with the support of a coach. This year, Educator D clarified that the researcher/coach served as her 4th racial equity coach in four consecutive years of teaching. She last attended the Beyond Diversity workshop with a regional cohort in 2014.

Additional Participants

Upon completion of the action research period, the researcher/coach invited the four primary participants and the remaining 38 White educators in her caseload to respond to four final written reflection prompts. The researcher/coach extended this invitation through email correspondence (Appendix E). The researcher/coach opened participation to the other White educators in order to confirm evident patterns and themes that emerged in research with the four primary participants. Of the remaining 38 White educators, five shared final responses with the researcher/coach. Data from these five additional participant responses were included in Chapter Four. In order to maintain anonymity, the researcher/coach referred to the five additional participants as Educator E, Educator F, Educator G, Educator H, and Educator I.

Methods and Data Collection Timeline

The racial equity coaching cycle endured the course of one academic school year while the action research phase consisted of five months (November, 2016 – March,
2017). The following chronological timeline details the research methods and data collection tools used throughout the action research phase.

**Early November, 2016.** Human Subject Committee at Hamline University, school building principal, and school district Director of Assessment, Evaluation, and Research granted permission for researcher/coach to conduct action research study.

**Mid to late November, 2016.** Researcher/coach notified 44 teachers of proposed action research study and invited 42 White teachers in caseload to sign and return Informed Consent Letter.

**Late November, 2016.** Thirteen educators expressed interest in participating in action research and completed brief personal inventory, where they listed their years of teaching experience and recent professional development opportunities related to racial equity. Researcher/coach selected four educators to participate in study.

**November, 2016 to February, 2017.** Researcher/coach designed and facilitated six racial equity-focused professional development trainings (Appendix F). The racial equity-focused professional development sessions consisted of reflective journaling, shared dialogue, and guided practice using Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) protocol and Mindful Inquiry prompts (Appendix G). The researcher/coach incorporated relevant articles, videos, and tools for exploring racial consciousness into the professional development experiences. As Educators A, B, C, and D engaged in this professional development with colleagues, the researcher/coach observed their progress and collected data through field notes. Due to fluctuations in participants’ scheduling availability, the
researcher/coach observed each educator participant as they engaged in two professional development trainings.

**December, 2016 to Early January, 2017.** The researcher/coach conducted first 1:1 coaching session with each participant using the CCAR racial discourse protocol and Mindful Inquiry prompts. The researcher/coach facilitated these coaching sessions in alignment with aspects of a structured formal interview by: using a mixture of open-ended and closed questions, allowing “wait time” to elicit thoughtful responses, creating an audio recording of each session, and interviewing in a private place (Mills, 2014). The researcher/coach used the following prompts in the first coaching session:

- Describe your role in the school/district.
- What is your experience with racial equity professional development and coaching prior to this school year?
- Where do you see your spheres of influence as a racial equity leader? With students, staff, self, etc.?
- How has racial equity coaching impacted your personal life so far this year? Please give one or two examples.
- How has racial equity coaching impacted your professional life so far this year? Please give one or two examples.
- Where would you like to receive coaching support in the next few months?

In this first 1:1 coaching session, the researcher/coach asked each participant to complete a pre-assessment identifying and explaining the components of CCAR protocol. The researcher/coach reviewed this pre-assessment with each participant and used a developmental scale (see Appendices H.1 – H.6) to assess each participant’s current stage of proficiency in utilizing CCAR protocol for racial discourse.
The researcher/coach audio-recorded and transcribed each 1:1 coaching session and provided additional learning resources (articles, podcasts, video clips, etc.) for each participant based on the themes and questions that surfaced in each interview. This approach reflected the individualized nature of an instructional coaching cycle, where the researcher/coach partnered with educator participants to identify areas for growth, learn new approaches for self-reflection and increased racial consciousness, and, in turn, improve instructional practice (Knight, J., Elford, M., Hock, M., Dunekack, D., Bradley, B., Deshler, D. D., & Knight, D., 2015). Table 2 illustrates resources provided to each educator participant.

Table 2: Additional resources provided to each participant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Educator A</th>
<th>Educator B</th>
<th>Educator C</th>
<th>Educator D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*Article: “Raising White Children to Be Anti-Racist Allies” by Rebecca Hains</td>
<td>Book: “What Does it Mean to be White?: Developing White Racial Literacy” by Robin DiAngelo</td>
<td>*Article: “Detour Spotting for White Anti-Racists” by Joan Olsson</td>
<td>Book: “One Crazy Summer” by Rita Williams-Garcia (intended for use with students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison Table: Autism and Emotional Disturbance (ED) (Appendix I)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Racial Discourse Protocol for use with elementary students (Appendix L)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Resource also included in racial equity-focused professional development session
As seen in Table 2, a variety of resources including podcasts, articles, and racial equity-focused activities were provided to each of the four participants. Several of these resources were also included in racial equity-focused professional development sessions with the entire school staff.

**Early January, 2017.** The researcher/coach conducted one observation of each educator participant as they engaged in their role-specific practice (teaching in the classroom, leading a grade level team meeting, etc.). For each observation, the researcher/coach collected data through field notes, following guidelines from Mills (2014): observe and record everything possible; observe and look for nothing in particular; and notice unexpected occurrences in the classroom.

**Mid to Late January, 2017.** The researcher/coach conducted the second 1:1 coaching session with each participant, using the CCAR racial discourse protocol (Singleton, 2015) and Mindful Inquiry questioning (Mun Wah, 2004). The researcher/coach devoted this second coaching session to reflection from the role-specific observation and personal experiences with family and friends during a two-week winter break. The researcher/coach used the following prompts in the second coaching session:

- What came up for you as you reflected on the field notes from our last observation? Use the CCAR compass to locate yourself. What went well? Where were you challenged?

- How has race shown up in your personal life since our last 1:1? You can speak about what you experienced with friends and family over winter break.

- CCAR Protocol practice - Four Agreements
  - What are they?
  - What does each one mean for you?
Which agreement is most challenging for you? Describe a recent experience where you noticed yourself either leaning into or distancing yourself from this agreement.

Mid-February, 2017. The researcher/coach conducted the third and final 1:1 coaching session with each participant, using the Courageous Conversation About Race (CCAR) protocol (Singleton, 2015) and Mindful Inquiry questioning (Mun Wah, 2004). The researcher/coach devoted this third coaching session to reflection from the racial equity-focused professional development trainings and learning from additional resources (articles, podcasts, videos, etc.). The researcher/coach used the following prompts in the third coaching session:

- What came up for you as you reflected on your experience from our racial equity professional development session? Use the CCAR compass to locate yourself. How was your learning deepened? Where were you challenged?

- How has your learning been impacted by exploring the additional resources (articles, videos, podcasts, etc.) provided?

- Protocol practice – Six Conditions
  - What are they?
  - What does each one mean for you?
  - Describe how the conditions showed up for you in a recent conversation or issue dealing with race.

At the conclusion of this final 1:1 coaching session, the researcher/coach asked each participant to complete a post-assessment identifying and explaining the components of CCAR protocol.

Late February to Early March, 2017. Each participant completed three final written reflection prompts describing how racial equity coaching impacted their personal growth and professional practice during the course of the research study. The researcher/coach invited the remaining 38 White educators in the research setting to
respond to the final prompts. Five additional educators provided a response. The final written reflection included the following prompts:

- How has racial equity coaching impacted your personal life over the course of the research study? Please give one or two examples.
- How has racial equity coaching impacted your professional life during the course of the research study? Please give one or two examples.
- What elements of your 1:1 partnership with your racial equity coach do you believe made an impact on your growth?

Data Analysis

Triangulating data from a variety of sources increased the researcher/coach’s objectivity in data collection. The researcher/coach triangulated data from participants’ pre-assessment and post-assessment, observational field notes, audio-recorded and transcribed coaching sessions, and final written reflection.

The majority of the researcher/coach’s data analysis involved identifying themes and patterns that emerged from participants in the study. With the information gained in conducting the literature review, the researcher/coach remained cognizant of common racialized patterns that arose as White educators engaged in race-based conversation and developed more mature racial identities. The researcher/coach used the coding method, “The process of trying to find patterns and meaning in data,” (Mills, 2014, p. 135) to glean patterns that emerged in large amounts of recorded and transcribed data from interviews, coaching sessions, and final written reflections (Appendix M). As Mills suggested, the researcher/coach sought to identify themes in, “events that keep repeating themselves, key phrases that participants use to describe their feelings, or survey responses that seem to “match” one another” (p. 135).
Special Considerations

*Human Subjects Committee.* Careful review of Hamline’s Human Subjects Committee (HSC) Procedures Handbook clarified the researcher/coach’s understanding of the necessary process to receive approval for conducting the research. Following the proposal meeting, the researcher/coach registered with Hamline’s Institutional Review Board (IRB) and completed the appropriate Exempt (Short) application. The researcher/coach created the Letter of Informed Consent for potential research participants adhering to the guidelines listed in the HSC Procedures Handbook. The researcher/coach understood that these requirements served to uphold the honesty and integrity of the research with adult participants.

*Validity.* Numerous variables in the research study challenged the researcher/coach to confirm the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators as opposed to other factors (number of years teaching, individualized needs of students in the classroom, previous experience with racial equity training, etc.). However, the researcher/coach aimed to adhere to Mill's (2014) suggestions in reporting fully on observable data with teachers and documenting all findings in a candid manner. The researcher/coach aimed to work with teachers instead of research on teachers, seeking feedback from participants through open-ended and summative questioning in alignment with Michael’s (2015) philosophy of engaging White teachers in self-inquiry.

*Reliability.* In order to consider the research reliable, the researcher/coach documented as many details as possible about the nature of the 1:1 racial equity coaching, data collection strategies, and research setting. The researcher/coach
considered the research most reliable with the presence of certain conditions. These conditions included: system-wide support for racial equity coaching at the site and district level; teachers willing to participate in racial equity coaching; utilization of CCAR protocol for racial discourse; and implementation of a cyclical coaching model, including interviews, observations, and equity-focused professional development. Other factors that promoted reliability in the research included the researcher/coach’s personal reflection on how her individual experiences shaped the research findings, triangulation of qualitative data from a multitude of sources, and feedback from fellow racial equity coaches related to emergent themes in the 1:1 coaching sessions. Including other racial equity coaches in a similar research study may prevent the researcher/coach from forming conclusions based solely on individual experience and bias.

Summary

Over the course of five months, the researcher/coach conducted an action research study with a cohort of four White educators to explore the inquiry: *How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice?* The research methods, data collection techniques, and data analysis procedures aligned with traits of an experience-based, qualitative study. The researcher/coach worked closely with participants by: conducting pre-research and post-research assessments; implementing a cyclical observation and coaching structure; and facilitating equity-focused professional development. In analyzing data, the researcher/coach identified patterns that surfaced in field notes, audio-recorded and transcribed coaching sessions, and final written reflections. Using a variety of sources aided the researcher/coach in
triangulating data to draw accurate conclusions of the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ personal growth and professional practice. Chapter Four presents thematic analysis and interpretation of the research results.
CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Introduction to the Chapter

Under the guidance of the researcher/coach, four White educators engaged in a five-month action research study to explore the capstone inquiry: *How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice?* Following the research timeline described in Chapter Three, the researcher/coach measured the impact of racial equity coaching by synthesizing multiple sources of data including transcripts of 1:1 coaching sessions, field notes from observations and professional development meetings, pre-assessment and post-assessment data, and final written reflections from each participant.

At the conclusion of the action research phase, the researcher/coach invited the remaining 38 White educators in the research setting to respond to the final written reflection questions. Five of the 38 White educators responded to these questions and the researcher/coach included this data as supplemental evidence of the emergent themes present in the research with the four primary participants. In order to maintain anonymity, the researcher/coach referred to these five additional educators as Educator E, Educator F, Educator G, Educator H, and Educator I and included their feedback in separate data tables from the four primary participants.
This chapter provides thematic analysis and interpretation of results discovered through the action research study. The first section addresses the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ personal growth. As a result of racial equity coaching, educator participants increased their racial consciousness, developed their internalization of the Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) protocol, utilized racial discourse tools to shift intra-racial (between people of the same race) and interracial (between people of different races) conversations within their personal sphere, and pursued additional learning resources. During the journey of increased racial consciousness, the researcher/coach worked with participants to move through their patterned stages of guilt, sadness, and avoidance in order to discover their voice in the struggle for racial equity.

The second section of the chapter addresses the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ professional practice. With the support of the researcher/coach, educator participants identified and explored patterns of systemic racism embedded in school policy, program, and practice. The researcher/coach walked with participants to unpack their underlying beliefs that compelled them to avoid interrupting racist patterns in their professional context. In 1:1 coaching sessions, participants articulated their desire to act as racial equity leaders and strengthened the connection between their racial equity purpose and their positional role in the school district. Each of the four educator participants demonstrated their increased will to act as a racial equity leader by initiating intra-racial and interracial conversations about race with colleagues, students, parents, and others in their professional sphere and intentionally acting to interrupt racist barriers in the school setting.
The third section of this chapter synthesizes educator participant feedback indicating specific qualities of the 1:1 partnership between the researcher/coach and “coachee” that increased the effectiveness of racial equity coaching. Participants recognized that their personal and professional growth increased due to the supportive relationship, reflective conversations, accountability, opportunities for shared learning, modeling, and additional resources provided by the researcher/coach.

**Impact of Racial Equity Coaching on White Educators’ Personal Growth**

Educational scholars asserted that individual coaching, as opposed to professional development workshops, proved most effective in promoting adult educator growth (Knight, 2005; Knight, 2015; York-Barr, 2006). Results of the capstone research study affirm that racial equity coaching significantly impacts White educators’ personal growth and professional practice. During the course of the five-month action research phase, the four White educator participants indicated that their trusting and supportive partnership with the researcher/coach fostered an ideal opportunity for them to self-reflect, practice utilizing racial discourse protocol, role-play conversations, and explore their racial identity development. Educator participants identified that working with the researcher/coach to increase their racial consciousness and unpack their accompanying feelings motivated them to move into anti-racist action in conversations with their family and friends. These results align with Michael’s (2015) research discussed in Chapter Two, where the scholar concluded that individualized race-based inquiry impacts White educators in many positive ways, including increased levels of racial competence and the ability to engage and sustain race-based conversations.
Table 3 illustrates the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ personal growth, specifically focusing on the growth of the four primary research participants. These themes arose organically, as opposed to participants checking these items on a survey or other data collection instrument. Table 3 represents data collected from *multiple sources* including: transcripts of 1:1 coaching sessions, field notes from observations and professional development sessions, and final written reflection questions.

**Table 3: Impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ personal growth**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Educator A</th>
<th>Educator B</th>
<th>Educator C</th>
<th>Educator D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased racial consciousness</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noticing segregation</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorblindness to color-consciousness</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing guilt and sadness</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance in the personal setting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased internalization of CCAR protocol</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting intra-racial conversations with parents</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting intra-racial conversations with children</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting intra-racial conversations with spouse</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting intra-racial</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 depicts the impact of racial equity coaching on the personal growth of the four primary research participants.

Table 4 illustrates the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ personal growth, specifically focusing on the growth of the five additional research participants. These themes arose organically, as opposed to participants checking these items on a survey or other data collection instrument. Table 4 reflects data collected only from final written reflection questions.

### Table 4: Impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ personal growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Educator E</th>
<th>Educator F</th>
<th>Educator G</th>
<th>Educator H</th>
<th>Educator I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased racial consciousness</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Noticing segregation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorblindness to color-consciousness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Experiencing guilt and sadness</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance in the personal setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased internalization</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of CCAR protocol</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting intra-racial conversations with parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting intra-racial conversations with children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting intra-racial conversations with spouse</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting intra-racial conversations with friends</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased will toward anti-racist action in personal sphere</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking additional learning resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4 shows the impact of racial equity coaching on the personal growth of the five additional research participants.

**Increased racial consciousness.** 1:1 racial equity coaching sessions, professional development trainings, and field observations provided a consistent opportunity for the four White educator participants to explore their own White racial identity and grow in their racial consciousness. Educator A stated that racial equity coaching helped him recognize racially biased systems in society. Educator D noted that working with the researcher/coach helped her to deepen her thinking, identify her internalized beliefs and feelings, and seek to increase her understanding of racial matters. She reflected, “My coaching this year has really opened my eyes to how and where I was raised and the
‘whiteness’ that surrounds me every day . . . I am more aware of what I don’t know and not afraid to ask questions and learn.”

Educator B noted that in coaching conversations, he feels pushed to increase his racial awareness and consciousness. He stated, “Now I think about [race] often. I think about it in my neighborhood and I think about it with my family.” Educator B reflected that living as a White male in a White-dominated community previously allowed him to not pay attention to the presence of race in his daily life. Educator C noted that as her racial consciousness increased, her consideration of the role of race permeated throughout her day and she frequently asked herself, “How does Whiteness show up?”

Educator E also demonstrated how her increased racial consciousness motivated her to ask more questions. She reflected, “Equity coaching has given me a deeper understanding of racism, especially systemic racism, which has led me to define racism in a new way. I now notice ideas like, ‘whose voice is not at the table?’ and am aware of how the dominant system privileges white people.” These examples illustrate how educator participants moved through Singleton’s (2015) wheel of racial consciousness, often identifying themselves moving from the unconscious stage (“I don’t know I don’t know”) to the semi-conscious stage (“I know I don’t know”).

**Noticing segregation.** As participants grew in their racial consciousness, they began to notice and name factors that influenced their White racial identity such as segregation within their personal spheres. Educator D reflected on her experience growing up in an all-White neighborhood and attending a predominantly White school. She noted that she experienced very little racial diversity before her years as a teacher. As
she began to notice the presence of race in her personal life, she reflected on an evening spent at a popular club in downtown Minneapolis, when she realized, “There were no people of color in this whole packed bar. And I was just like, ‘how many places have I been that are like this that I never even realized?’” In a professional development session where the researcher/coach encouraged staff to seek the first-hand perspective of a Black Muslim woman, Educator D reflected, “It made me feel very isolated, where I didn’t have anyone. Where was I supposed to go?” As educator participants shared their observations of segregation, the researcher/coach encouraged them to continue noticing spaces of segregation without placing any indicator of good or bad on their findings.

Colorblindness to color-consciousness. During the course of the action research phase, educator participants progressed through various stages of Helms’ (1993) White Racial Identity Development (WRID). Many participants reflected on their experience in the early stages of WRID, where they embraced a colorblind approach to race and remained unconscious about the existence of racism. Several educator participants reflected on the colorblind ideology they learned from their parents. Educator A reflected that he was raised to not talk about or see race. He remembered, “The way that I was raised was race doesn’t matter … silence and colorblindness were the tools that I was given growing up and so it’s really comfortable for me to fall back into those.” Educator A reflected that now when he encounters colorblindness in conversations with White family and friends, he actively works to interrupt this belief in himself. Educator D spoke about her shift from colorblindness to color-consciousness when she observed, “I thought it was a good thing growing up, that’s how I learned, but now I’ve learned the
term color awareness.” This shift from colorblindness to color-consciousness allowed educator participants to continue exploring their own White racial identity and develop curiosity about the lived racial experience of people of color in their personal and professional lives.

**Experiencing guilt and sadness.** As educator participants worked with the researcher/coach, they moved deeper toward an awareness of their own White racial privilege and unconscious role in perpetuating racism. During this process, participants expressed guilt and sadness, common patterns of White fragility (DiAngelo, 2016) and indicators of a stage of White Racial Identity Development (Helms, 1993). Educator C recalled her experience working in predominantly White school districts before developing a racially-conscious lens. She stated, “I feel very bad that I didn’t have the racial awareness that I have now and I had opportunities to do something.”

Educator B expressed regret at not having engaged in his pursuit of racial consciousness until recently when he stated, “I wish I would have felt the charge to do this sooner, just to think about where it could have led us to be.” In coaching sessions where guilt and sadness arose, the researcher/coach urged participants to move through these feelings to discover how their underlying beliefs prevented them from taking anti-racist action in the past. The researcher/coach also urged educator participants to access their other emotions, besides guilt and regret, to propel them into future action.

**Avoidance.** Each participant reflected on occasions where they chose to avoid speaking about race in the personal setting because of their fear, discomfort, defensiveness, guilt, and helplessness. Educator A noticed that when he attempted to
engage his parents in a conversation about race and the recent presidential election, his mother grew defensive and asked if he thought there was something wrong with her. Educator A responded by shutting the conversation down and telling his mother, “We don’t have to have this conversation.” Educator B wrestled with a recent interaction among an interracial group of friends where a fellow White male shared a deficit narrative about students of color and juvenile detention. He stated, “I still have these moments where I hear people say something and… I just want to tell them something.” Educator B expressed how he felt “awful” when he failed to respond to his peer’s comment and offer his own perspective.

**Increased internalization of racial discourse protocol.** As evidenced in Table 5, Table 6, Table 7, and Table 8, educator participants grew in their understanding and application of the protocol for Courageous Conversations About Race (Singleton, 2015) over the duration of the action research phase. Greater facility with these tools for effective racial discourse motivated participants to engage, sustain, and deepen intraracial and interracial conversations about race with their parents, children, friends, and spouses. Participants spoke to the noticeable shift that occurred in these conversations as a result of racial equity coaching, recognizing that the CCAR protocol propelled them to initiate conversations they previously avoided and helped them sustain conversations that routinely ended in a defensive or hostile manner.

Educator A identified the impact of using CCAR protocol to engage in conversations about race when he reflected, “It has given me language to keep conversations going when I would have otherwise checked out or not stayed engaged. It
has also helped me push to keep others engaged.” Educator B spoke to the role of the CCAR protocol in his life when he stated, “I just think it’s caused me to be a better husband and a better father. In many cases a better friend, to listen intently. And to show that I value other people’s voices.” Educator C stated that racial equity coaching gave her “specific tools” to use when engaging in conversations about race. When she reflected on what it has meant for her to initiate race-based conversations, she said, “I’ve learned that silence and anger does not promote interrupting.”

Similarly, Educator E reflected, “I have appreciated learning the protocol… I feel that both the protocol and the compass have helped me navigate the foggy, uncertain paths of discussing race with people I know and have strong disagreements with.” In many cases, educator participants identified specific aspects of the CCAR protocol that helped them shift conversations about race toward a more compassionate sharing of perspectives.

**Table Key:**
1 – Knowledge
2 – Understanding
3 – Application
4 – Analysis
5 – Synthesis
6 – Interruption
Table 5: CCAR Protocol Development in Educator A

Table 6: CCAR Protocol Development in Educator B
Table 7: CCAR Protocol Development in Educator C

Table 8: CCAR Protocol Development in Educator D
Note: Horizontal axis reflects growth between levels 0-2
Table 5, Table 6, Table 7, and Table 8 illustrate how racial equity coaching helped each of the four primary educator participants increase their internalization of the Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) protocol (Singleton, 2015).

**Shifting intra-racial conversations with parents.** Educator A embraced an opportunity to engage his father in a conversation about the recent presidential election in order to learn more about his underlying beliefs as they relate to race and privilege. Following this conversation, Educator A reflected,

> I don’t think I would have had the conversation with my dad if we hadn’t done our coaching. Maybe it would have happened but definitely not in the same way. Using the [compass], I was using the quadrants in the way I was talking to him, naming that I was feeling sad, what I believe. . . the conversation actually went well . . . we were at least able to talk about it. It didn’t hurt our relationship.

Several other participants spoke to their desire to initiate race-based conversations with their parents and worked with the researcher/coach to explore necessary steps towards this action.

**Shifting intra-racial conversations with children.** Each educator participant expressed a strong desire to walk with their own children in their evolving White racial identity development. Educator A spoke to his urgent quest to give his young White son the gift of racial consciousness, a contrast to the colorblind ideology he learned as a young boy. He said, “I want to make sure that I’m giving [him] the tools that he needs and not just making it silence and colorblindness… he doesn’t have the social constructs yet that I have in relation to it. Making sure he knows that it’s ok to talk about it.”
Educator B welcomed a baby boy during the action research phase and reflected, “I have a two-week old little boy, who I know is a White male that will inherit White privilege from me. . . . I have to shift and shape some of his learning.”

Educator C spoke to the profound impact of racial equity coaching in her personal life as it now surfaces as an ongoing topic of exploration with her adult daughter. She shared that her daughter routinely asks, “So what did you do for racial equity this week?” Together, the two recently attended a racial-equity focused workshop at a university, titled, “Speaking the Unspeakable: A Conversation on Colorblindness and Anti-Racism.”

With a greater sense of empowerment and curiosity, Educator D reflected on recent experiences in naming the presence of race with her young son as they looked through picture books and photographs of authors. She reflected, “I think the coaching has even helped me become a better mother and have more open conversations with my son. Being able to talk openly about different cultures and skin colors with my son will hopefully make him a more open and caring individual.” Although all four educator participants expressed a small amount of uncertainty with their skill in navigating these impactful conversations, they recognized that their will to shape the racial consciousness of their White children outweighed their hesitation and motivated them to continue seeking these opportunities.

Shifting intra-racial conversations with spouse. As a result of racial equity coaching sessions, all four educator participants experienced a shift in conversations with their spouse. Participants increased their capacity to sustain race-based conversations by sharing video resources and articles, posing questions, and speaking vulnerably with their
partners. Educator C found that using the Courageous Conversation About Race (CCAR) protocol (Singleton, 2015) and Mindful Inquiry prompts (Mun Wah, 2004) allowed her to stay engaged with her husband in conversations about reverse racism. She reflected, “I feel that I have improved my ability to use the phrase, ‘tell me more about that,’ instead of being defensive and over-emotional. The [“Detour-Spotting”] article gave me the tools to explain the difference between bias and racism.” Similarly, Educators A, B, and D encouraged their spouses to notice and reflect on the role of race in their lived experience. Educator A reflected on a recent conversation with his wife when he said, “It was just a conversation that we wouldn’t have normally had. I wasn’t even thinking I should ask this, it just kind of came up and came out. I think it’s kind of helped me normalize talking about race.” In each case, educator participants assumed the role of racial equity coach in their efforts to guide, motivate, and walk with their partners towards deeper racial consciousness.

**Shifting intra-racial and interracial conversations with friends.** Educator participants increased their capacity to engage in race-based conversations and discuss racial equity coaching outside of the home, in both intra-racial and interracial conversations with their friends. In several instances, Educator C introduced pieces of the CCAR protocol and shared the impact of racial equity coaching in an effort to empower the anti-racist efforts of her closest White friends. She reflected, “I gave [my friend] some personal examples of how this has impacted me in my work with looking at student achievement and I said, ‘if we can’t create safe spaces for teachers to be able to have the conversations about race, how will we ever get beyond our status quo?’” Educator A
initiated a conversation with a bi-racial friend from high school, intentionally seeking to learn more about his lived experience as a person of color growing up in a predominantly White town. This personal conversation motivated Educator A to think more critically about his White privilege and the positive assumptions that accompany his racial identity. He acknowledged, “As a White male, I don’t really have any judgments that I either have to confirm or disprove when I’m meeting somebody. I think I get the benefit of the doubt as far as my intentions.”

**Increased will toward anti-racist action in personal sphere.** As the four educator participants worked with the researcher/coach to move past their guilt, deepen their racial consciousness, and increase their skill to utilize the CCAR protocol, each discovered a more empowered voice and pronounced desire to use their privilege in actively interrupting patterns of systemic racism within their personal spheres. Educator A reflected, “I think our coaching and talking has helped hold me accountable and given me the permission to think about it for a longer period of time, it’s helped me understand the importance of being an anti-racist ally.”

Similarly, Educator B expressed that racial equity coaching held him accountable to stay engaged in both personal and professional contexts. He reflected, “Prior to this year it was easy for me to compartmentalize my learning and model it as needed in spaces that, as a White male, I deemed necessary and relevant. This year I find myself engaged in racial equity work in all facets of my life.”

As his will to act as a leader for racial equity increased, Educator B began to think about his role in sustaining conversations with White friends who he believes to currently
exhibit patterns of racial unconsciousness. He asked, “What is the best approach for me to start engaging them in understanding the role Whiteness plays? I know I need to take my opportunities when they present themselves, be open to where people are at and where they’re gonna start.”

Educator C reflected that she feels more empowered and confident to speak up in the face of racism and to share the impact of racial equity work within her personal sphere. She asserted, “I feel like I have a new role giving purpose and embracing diversity as an advocate and an ally.” Educator F expressed similar beliefs when she wrote, “I am learning to strengthen my voice as an ally. Rather than waiting for someone to speak up, I am getting better at being the one to say something. I am becoming braver with family and friends to speak up when something related to equity comes up.”

Likewise, Educator H reflected,

Racial equity coaching has helped me gain the courage and confidence to start conversations about race and equity with those around me. It has helped me sustain conversations with those who are like minded and start and engage in conversations with those who have differing opinions.

Seeking additional learning resources. Over the course of the action research phase, several educator participants expressed a desire to accelerate their learning. Educator B affirmed, “This coaching has helped me to better find my voice, increase my racial consciousness, and also enhance my desire to want to learn more on my own.” In conversations with the researcher/coach, Educator B shared articles and news stories that
he discovered in his spare time and made connections between this knowledge and content from equity-focused professional development sessions.

Following a professional development training focused on seeking multiple racial perspectives from Black Muslim women, Educator A asked, “What do I really know about it? So I did a little more research just on Muslim and Islam and Islamic and what all those words mean. I have a better understanding of that now that I did.” After taking the initiative to research Muslim culture, he reflected, “I feel like that’s kind of helped me go a little further in where I probably wouldn’t have done that research.” During the action research phase, educator participants shared their experiences and findings with the researcher/coach with an energized spirit of commitment to continue their personal racial equity journey.

**Impact of Racial Equity Coaching on White Educators’ Professional Practice**

As educator participants strengthened their will to act as anti-racist allies in their personal sphere, they translated their increased racial consciousness, skill in utilizing the CCAR protocol, and desire to interrupt patterns of systemic racism to their respective professional roles. Due to the diversity of professional roles represented in the participant group, educators extended their racially conscious influence at multiple levels throughout the school district setting, including the classroom, professional learning communities, teachers’ union meetings, daily collegial conversations, and regional gatherings of professional educator networks. As educator participants acted to interrupt systemic racism in their professional roles, they embodied Singleton’s (2013) concept of catalysts for racial equity transformation, speaking up and encouraging others to do the same.
Table 9 illustrates the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ professional practice, specifically focusing on the practice of the four primary research participants. These themes arose organically, as opposed to participants checking these items on a survey or other data collection instrument. Table 9 represents data collected from *multiple sources* including: transcripts of 1:1 coaching sessions, field notes from observations and professional development sessions, and final written reflection questions.

**Table 9: Impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ professional practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Educator A</th>
<th>Educator B</th>
<th>Educator C</th>
<th>Educator D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noticing patterns of systemic racism in school policy, program, and practice</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coded language, deficit mindset, and white racial bonding</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance in the professional setting</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased will towards anti-racist action in professional sphere</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting <em>intra-racial</em> conversations with colleagues</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting <em>interracial</em> conversations with colleagues</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shifting <em>interracial</em> conversations with students and parents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 9 depicts the impact of racial equity coaching on the professional practice of the four primary research participants.

Table 10 illustrates the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ professional practice, specifically focusing on the practice of the five additional research participants. These themes arose organically, as opposed to participants checking these items on a survey or other data collection instrument. Table 10 reflects data collected only from final written reflection questions.

**Table 10: Impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ professional practice**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Educator E</th>
<th>Educator F</th>
<th>Educator G</th>
<th>Educator H</th>
<th>Educator I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noticing patterns of systemic racism in school policy, program, and practice</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coded language, deficit mindset, and white racial bonding</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Avoidance in the professional setting</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased will towards anti-racist action in professional sphere</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10 depicts the impact of racial equity coaching on the professional practice of the five additional research participants.

**Noticing patterns of systemic racism in school policy, program, and practices.**

Educator participants demonstrated increased racial consciousness in their professional setting as they began to consider the racial implications of school policies, programs, and practices. In his role as a district-wide Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA), Educator B reflected on the importance of seeking multiple racial perspectives from families of color about policies for digital communication. He reflected, “I think the big part for me in that is hearing the voices of the people that we represent. I think sometimes we have an idea of what they need without really hearing from them.” In a conversation about racial disparities in student achievement data, Educator C said, “We like to think about Minnesota being so progressive but the hidden truth is that we’re one of the most racially
divided states out there when you look at our student achievement data. So it makes me think we have so much ground to cover and to make up.” Propelled by her knowledge of racial achievement disparities within the research setting, Educator C reflected on the racial implications of the mostly White Gifted and Talented program, the lack of race-based conversations in teacher team meetings, and the absence of perspectives of color in district-mandated curriculum.

Experiencing coded language, deficit mindset, and white solidarity. Many educator participants identified instances where they recognized their White colleagues using coded language and maintaining a deficit mindset, attitudes that Castagno (2013) connected to White teachers’ colorblind philosophy and Matias (2013) attributed to White teachers’ low expectations for students of color. Several educator participants noticed patterns of White solidarity present in their intra-racial interactions with colleagues, a pattern that DiAngelo (2016) defined as an unspoken agreement between White people to not talk about race in order to “avoid causing other whites to feel racial discomfort by confronting them when they say or do something racially problematic” (p. 180).

Educator B identified that he often received abundant amounts of information from White colleagues who spoke with him individually, outside of a meeting space, instead of in a full group setting. He considered the purpose behind this behavior when he asked, “Why was that information offered up to me? Is it because I’m a White male?” In another conversation, Educator B reflected on a circumstance where a White teacher used coded language to share a negative narrative about a student of color in her class. He said,
“I was just walking down the hallway. ‘Do you know this kid?’ a teacher said. ‘Well, everybody knows this kid.’ And I didn’t ask the question, but I knew they were insinuating that everybody knows this kid for the wrong reasons.” When the researcher/coach asked Educator B to describe his emotions in response to this interaction, he shared, “I’m scared for wonderful students . . . that some people might let the narrative get to them first and make up their mind about that kid. Scared that it exists in our school system each and every day, that it exists still today, despite our conversations.”

Educator C spoke about a frustrating experience with White solidarity during her previous tenure in another school district. She remembered standing on the school playground, watching several students of color play football, when her White teaching colleague approached her and stated, “We don’t let them play football. They can’t handle it.” Educator C reflected, “She didn’t emphasize the them or the they but I heard it in a that way, and of course it was all our Black boys that were playing football, and I was like, ‘excuse me? What do you mean?’ And she said, ‘well, they can’t handle it, they just get out of control. It’s just gonna erupt in a big brawl, and it’s gonna be a big fight.’

In 1:1 coaching sessions with the researcher/coach, participants role-played conversations using CCAR protocol to reframe instances where coded language, deficit mentality, and White solidarity surfaced.

Avoidance. As the four White educator participants increased their awareness of behaviors and mindsets contributing to the disproportionate achievement between Black
and Brown students and their White peers, they sometimes responded to these patterns with behaviors characteristic of White fragility. The researcher/coach recognized the characteristics of White fragility as they emerged and worked to guide educator participants to identify and interrupt these patterns. This approach aligned with scholarly research asserting that teacher coaches must guide educators through their unlearning process while at the same time role modeling their own quest to unlearn racism (Choi, 2008).

Participants demonstrated awareness of their own avoidance strategies used to detour conversations away from the topic of race. Working with the researcher/coach, participants explored the root cause of their avoidance in initiating or sustaining race-based conversations within the professional setting. In a 1:1 session with the researcher/coach, Educator A unpacked how he avoided talking about race in a recent intra-racial conversation with a White colleague who reacted negatively to her experience in the Beyond Diversity workshop. He reflected,

It’s funny, because after it happened, I just kind of left it and didn’t lean into it… but then after leaving that, I was thinking about it, reflecting on it that night, I was thinking ‘why didn’t I say something? What was that about?’ … if someone else doesn’t do it, that doesn’t mean I shouldn’t or can’t.

As the researcher/coach prompted Educator A to explore familiar aspects of his avoidance, he realized,

It really kind of made me think about how I immediately went back to my personal tool that I’ve always had to not talk about it. And I didn’t engage in the
conversation anymore and I didn’t speak my truth in that moment. I didn’t say, ‘for me, it was really powerful and I really liked it.’ I didn’t do that.

Educator C described instances where she felt reluctant to isolate race when examining student achievement data in meetings with her White colleagues. She stated, “it wasn’t until I reflected afterwards, when we talked about our student achievement, I kind of felt like I was tiptoeing around it.”

When the researcher/coach prompted Educator C to consider the root of her avoidance she responded, “I guess that they will think that I don’t really know what I’m talking about or that I say something that could be viewed as wrong or inappropriate.” In this conversation, Educator C recognized that her own discomfort informed much of her avoidance behavior.

In several circumstances, participants identified fear at the root of their own avoidance behavior. Educator B worked with the researcher/coach to explore his frustrations with the way one of his White colleagues routinely demeaned one of his colleagues of color in professional meeting spaces. When the researcher/coach asked what it would take for Educator B to have a conversation with his White colleague about this pattern, he responded, “Fear! Ah! I’m feeling, um, scared of how that person would react. Scared of the position that that person holds. Scared of the impact on my relationship with a person that is directly connected to my employment.”

Participants also identified helplessness and fatigue as the cause of their avoidance. Educator D spoke with the researcher/coach about her struggle to stay engaged with racial equity work during a challenging period of months in her classroom
and her personal life. She reflected, “I’m feeling overwhelmed and tired… I have so many other things on my plate right now.” In a subsequent session with the researcher/coach, Educator D unpacked her challenge to engage several students of color in her class. She acknowledged, “It’s frustrating to me. And I really don’t know what to do with it, I guess. I’m lost.”

Several participants spoke to their experience of being silenced by White supervisors as the cause of their fatigue and resulting avoidance. Educator B reflected, “There’s a direction of my job that’s the path I’m supposed to be on and when I steer off that path, I’m reminded, get back on that path. That makes it tough … exhausting to navigate and cause other people to reflect. I don’t know. When I hear it’s not my job, I want to say, ‘then what the hell is my job?’ That makes it tough to stay engaged.

In circumstances where educator participants avoided initiating conversations about race, the researcher/coach offered support through mindful listening, helping participants identify underlying belief impacting their behavior, and urging participants to stay focused on their greater purpose in the struggle for racial equity.

Increased will toward anti-racist action in professional sphere. Using the CCAR protocol and Mindful Inquiry prompts, the researcher/coach walked with each of the four educator participants to explore possible alternatives for engaging in race-based conversation despite their fear, discomfort, helplessness, and fatigue. Study results indicate that working with the researcher/coach motivated the participants to move through their avoidant behaviors in order to take ownership for shifting both intra-racial
and interracial conversations in their professional sphere of influence. Educator C reflected, “I really am serious about making the racial equity piece of my position meaningful so that I’m not afraid or I’m not going to be intimidated to continually ask or bring it up.”

Educator C articulated her increased will and purpose when she said, “As I’m navigating my way through how the system works and all the different players, I feel like my goal is to get to a place where I can really be that voice ... discussing it in the right place with the right people.”

Similarly, working with the researcher/coach empowered Educators A, B, and D to align their respective roles with their emboldened passion for interrupting patterns of racial inequity in the school setting.

**Shifting intra-racial conversations with colleagues.** Educator A wrote about the impact of racial equity coaching on his willingness to sustain race-based conversations with his White colleagues. He reflected, “I was presented with another opportunity to disengage when another colleague shared their opinion on Beyond Diversity. Instead of walking away, I stayed engaged and asked them why they felt that way and continued the conversation.”

When Educator B unpacked his experience feeling shamed and blamed in his first Beyond Diversity workshop eight years ago, he recognized that his experience as a White male now enables him to relate with compassion to his White colleagues who demonstrate similar feelings. Educator B articulated the significance of his role as a White male in walking with his fellow White colleagues to further their racial
consciousness when he said, “I need to be willing to recognize that that’s a place that a lot of my White colleagues are going.”

Educator C noticed the impact of district-wide racial equity coaching in the nature of conversations between White teachers in team meetings. After observing an exchange between two classroom teachers where one teacher identified patterns of White privilege present in their intra-racial conversation, Educator C stated,

I felt kind of fortunate that they felt comfortable in my presence to have that exchange. I don’t think that kind of talk would happen if the district didn’t put the emphasis on raising our awareness and having support from coaches to help us unpack the things that we encounter.

Shifting interracial conversations with colleagues. Engaging in racial equity professional development with an interracial group of staff motivated several participants to gain confidence in their ability to initiate conversations with their colleagues of color. Educator D expressed feeling accepted because of the reflective and personal nature of staff meetings. She said,

I can say how I feel, what I’m noticing, what I’m thinking. I feel like people are hearing me. I feel like I’m not alone on this journey. I feel like I have support. I feel like I could go up to anybody on staff and have a conversation about racial equity with them.

Educator C expressed similar beliefs as a result of the reflective nature of equity-focused staff meetings. She said,
For me, it reinforces that the intention is not just to be jumping through hoops or talking the talk but that I actually am given time and space to reflect and to think about what happened in my life and then at those meetings being encouraged to turn and talk with a partner to share what’s going on with me and also to listen to what’s going on with them.

Educator B spoke about the noticeable shift in conversations with a female colleague of color in the research setting as a result of his sharing his racial autobiography in a staff meeting. He reflected,

I know in conversations with one of my good friends … who is a person of color, I know our conversations have greater involved racial equity than they did before. I think it was easier for both of us prior to me sharing, we would stay away from it, we avoided it, we never named it, prior to me sharing my racial autobiography.

After the researcher/coach asked Educator B to share more about the nature of his previous interracial conversations with this colleague, he reflected, “As a White male, I treated it like, ‘hey, we aren’t gonna talk about race, we’re just two White friends,’ which again, she’s a person of color. But we’re just gonna go on like there’s nothing different about you, welcome to my white sphere.” Educator B recognized that he learned much more about his colleague’s family and background since initiating race-based conversations with her.

Educator B used his positioning as the president of the teachers’ union to initiate race-based conversations and share his racial autobiography in these meetings. He reflected,
I likely would not have done this without a reflective conversation with my equity coach. …I am more mindful of the presence of whiteness in spaces and feel that the union meetings are a good example of ‘Whiteness.’ After sharing in the meeting, I have noticed more members at the meetings speaking about race and ‘Whiteness.’ I am happy that this first step has grown and developed the conversations at our meetings and intend to foster more growth as the White male president.

**Shifting interracial conversations with students and parents.** Educator D demonstrated her increased will to act as a leader for racial equity in her role as a 4\(^{th}\) Grade teacher facilitating race-based conversations with students. She shared how racial equity coaching equipped her to initiate these conversations when she reflected,

My class this year has had many conversations about race and the impact it has on my students and the world. …one of the best ones was when we talked about presidents of the past. I showed my students pictures of the past presidents and we discussed how they felt about what they saw. …It felt good because some of these kids that normally don’t speak up and share their feelings were sharing their feelings and talking about their race and their experiences.

Several parents of students in Educator D’s class began to reach out through email and phone calls to inquire about the nature of the race-based conversations taking place in the classroom. After Educator D received an email from a White mother of a Black son in her class asking about the purpose of these conversations, she reached out to the researcher/coach to process the best way to respond. Educator D reflected,
I talked with you about it and that helped a lot, gave me the language, gave me the confidence to come to the mother and say, ‘let’s have this conversation,’ and we had the conversation and it was a great conversation and it gave good closure but also good insight as to where she was coming from as a White mother of a Black son.

In a reflective conversation with the researcher/coach, Educator D recognized her willingness to experience discomfort in order to move through her fear and engage in a race-based conversation with parents. She reflected,

“IT made me step forward to say, ‘Ok, I got this email. It scares me. …I’m upset with myself. I had to come to you so I could talk about it and how I felt about it and then I had to step up to the mother…so that’s putting myself in a lot of uncomfortable situations that ended up in a really good way.”

Educator D’s reflection serves as evidence of racial equity coaching to motivate White educators to engage in race-based conversations that they may have previously avoided out of fear or discomfort.

Shifting interracial conversations outside the school building. Several participants used their positioning as leaders in professional education settings to initiate race-based dialogue outside the school building. Educator C considered children’s literature through a lens of racial equity in a blog post for fellow teachers. She wrote about the impact of race on educators’ discussions, beliefs, feelings, thoughts and actions. In Educator C’s reflection on the absence of characters of color in children’s literature, she offered a
hopeful vision for a day when picture books reflecting the lived experiences of children of color become the expectation instead of the exception.

Educator B reflected on his experience naming race in his meetings as a member of a regional network of technology coordinators. He recalled, “I named some culturally relevant tools that could be used and looking at pictures, being hyper-vigilant, not just using a tool without understanding the implications it can have for race.” When the researcher/coached asked Educator B to share an example, he said,

One of the tools I shared was a comic strip. The only depiction they had [on the software] of an African American girl was one with pigtails and missing a front tooth. And in that moment, I actually shared that one for them to see. And then I paused to say, ‘what’s wrong with this?’ And it caused the people in the room … they noted that this was the first time at the conference that race has come up in technology.

Educator B acknowledged his journey with the researcher/coach as the primary factor in motivating him to initiate race-based conversations in this interracial professional learning community. He reflected,

You challenged me as to how I could disrupt what I experienced when I was … with other digital learning coordinators and thankfully… I felt emboldened to stand in front of a group of 40 digital coordinators from around the metro and out-of-state to share what we can do better with using Courageous Conversations to improve the work we’re doing.
Educator E demonstrated her increased racial consciousness and internalization of the CCAR protocol in her volunteer job as a transportation commissioner. She reflected,

In that space, racial equity coaching has given me the confidence to speak my truth about matters such as the incident where an Edina police officer harassed Larnie Thomas for simply walking in the road when there were construction materials blocking the sidewalk. It also helped me participate in a more meaningful way in a discussion about the equity of infrastructure projects.

**Elements of 1:1 Racial Equity Coaching Partnership for Increased Effectiveness**

Inspired by Michael’s inquiry approach with six White teachers, the researcher/coach embarked upon the capstone study intending to research *with* educators, not *on* educators (Michael, 2015). The researcher/coach demonstrated a collaborative approach by building authentic relationships with educator participants, seeking to meet colleagues at the appropriate place in their racial identity development, and gently pushing them to go further with their actions and words. At the conclusion of the action research phase, educator participants identified particular elements of their 1:1 partnership with the researcher/coach that led to their increased racial consciousness and growth as racial equity leaders in their personal and professional spheres.

Table 11 illustrates elements of 1:1 racial equity coaching for increased effectiveness, specifically focusing on feedback from the four primary research participants. These themes arose organically, as opposed to participants checking these items on a survey or other data collection instrument. Table 11 represents data collected from *multiple sources* including: transcripts of 1:1 coaching sessions, field notes from
observations and professional development sessions, and final written reflection questions.

Table 11: Elements of 1:1 Racial Equity Coaching for Increased Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Educator A</th>
<th>Educator B</th>
<th>Educator C</th>
<th>Educator D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supportive relationship</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing CCAR protocol in reflective conversations</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating professional development opportunities for shared racial equity learning</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling the racial equity journey</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing learning resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 11 depicts specific elements of 1:1 racial equity coaching that prompted increased effectiveness of this approach with the four primary educator participants.

Table 12 illustrates elements of 1:1 racial equity coaching for increased effectiveness, specifically focusing on feedback from the five additional research participants. These themes arose organically, as opposed to participants checking these items on a survey or other data collection instrument. Table 12 represents data collected *only* from final written reflection questions.
Table 12: Elements of 1:1 Racial Equity Coaching for Increased Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Educator E</th>
<th>Educator F</th>
<th>Educator G</th>
<th>Educator H</th>
<th>Educator I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Supportive relationship</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Practicing CCAR protocol in reflective conversations</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accountability</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creating professional development opportunities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>for shared racial equity learning</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling the racial equity journey</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing learning resources</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 depicts specific elements of 1:1 racial equity coaching that prompted increased effectiveness of this approach with the five additional educator participants.

Supportive relationship. Educator participants indicated feeling supported and valued by the researcher/coach, conditions that optimized their willingness to share vulnerably and increase their skill as racial equity leaders. Educator C expressed, “I always knew that my coach wanted only to help me grow so it was easy to accept gentle nudging as well as more obvious pushes to become more racially conscious.”

Educator B stated,

I feel extraordinarily comfortable with my equity coach. I feel that having a strong and easy relationship has really helped me engage more fully in the work and
internalize our conversations to affect not only my professional life but also my personal life.

Educator E responded, “[Coaching] has made me feel important! It has been great to feel like it’s ok to consult with my equity coach and to really feel valued and respected when I do.”

Many participants named the importance of the researcher/coach maintaining a non-judgmental approach when engaging in 1:1 reflective conversations of a personal nature. Educator A reflected, “Not feeling judged has been crucial to having honest and open conversations in our partnership.” Educator I echoed a similar feeling when he stated, “When being 1:1 and having conversations … she has allowed me to be me. She never once made me feel as if she was judging me…she truly listens. It is very much appreciated.” Educator G shared a similar belief when she reflected, “She creates a non-threatening environment in which I feel very comfortable and she pushes me to be the best racially conscious teacher I can be.”

Several participants spoke to the importance of the researcher/coach being visible and accessible within the school building in order to provide support around racial equity issues that surfaced during the work day. Educator D reflected,

I think the fact that you’re around. I see you a lot…I feel like I can reach you when I need you. For example, when I had an issue come up in the middle of a day … I got you right away and we could talk right then and that helped. I knew you were here.
Additionally, educator participants recognized that the confidential nature of 1:1 coaching sessions increased the depth and effectiveness of their racial equity journey. Educator F reflected, “There is a strong sense of trust between my equity coach and myself. Because of this trust, I am comfortable and open to constructive feedback and I feel safe sharing my stories and vulnerabilities.” Educator C identified the importance of trust in her 1:1 partnership with the researcher/coach when she described,

I feel I’m in a safe space. What I’m sharing is held in the strictest confidence…it’s been really helpful. I feel like I can tell you anything and I can bounce things off of you and you’re one of my first go-to people.

**Practicing racial discourse protocol in reflective conversations.** Working 1:1 with the researcher/coach in a confidential, non-judgmental environment created greater opportunity for educator growth in utilizing the CCAR protocol. Educator H reflected, “I feel practicing the CCAR protocol with [my coach] one-on-one has helped me grow.” Educator C reflected on the role of CCAR protocol in conversations with the researcher/coach when she stated, “You bring me back because I sometimes get emotional or I get random. You recognize how to facilitate.” Educator C indicated that the researcher/coach’s ability to monitor the CCAR protocol helped increase her own effectiveness in sustaining race-based conversations with colleagues.

**Accountability.** Many educator participants expressed appreciation for the researcher/coach holding them accountable to increase their racial awareness and to actively interrupt patterns of systemic racism. Educator B stated,
After sharing my thoughts and ideas my coach challenged me to go forward with them. I did, but had great (necessary) support along the way from my coach. My coach would check-in with me to see where I was at and would often ask, ‘what would it take to do this?’ That question helped me get past work avoidance and to be okay in disequilibrium.

Several educator participants recognized that feeling held accountable by the researcher/coach motivated them to continue engaging vulnerably in their racial equity journey. Educator D expressed, “I am held more accountable for what I’m doing. And I appreciate the positive support, truthfully. I don’t get a lot of that as a teacher.” Similarly, Educator F reflected, “I hope that she continues to hold me accountable and calls me out when I don’t step up.” The researcher/coach recognized that her authentic relationships with educator participants and her visibility in the school setting promoted this shared accountability for anti-racist action.

Creating professional development opportunities for shared racial equity learning.

Educator participants spoke about the value of professional learning opportunities created and facilitated by the researcher/coach. Educator B stated that these experiences “affirmed my desire and want to deepen my work and also just being mindful of other folks.” Educator B also shared that the reflective nature of the professional development sessions allowed him to engage more vulnerably and honestly than in other professional learning spaces. He shared,
I attended another CCAR session post-election and … to be a part of that and to be mindful. It was nice to just have that space to share where they’re at. To meet everybody in their clear-cut humanity of what had just happened.

When the researcher/coach asked Educator B to articulate the importance of being able to show up in professional spaces in “clear-cut humanity,” he stated,

I was able to break down that concept of ‘I have to act this way and be within this lane when I’m around these people,’ but here, no. I can show the below the line, I can show that I care, I feel, and there’s more to who I am.

**Modeling the racial equity journey.** Many participants spoke to their own increased will to act as anti-racist allies as a result of witnessing the researcher/coach walking in her own racial equity journey as a White woman. As Educator C stated, “It is clear that she ‘walks the walk,’ not just, ‘talks the talk.’” Educator D recognized that she felt more open to sharing vulnerably because she witnessed the researcher/coach modeling this same engagement. She reflected, “I feel like you are knowledgeable and able to share your experiences. You are very open with us, you’ve been very open with me and that makes me want to be more open with you too.” Educator F expressed the value of the researcher/coach walking with her as a fellow White woman when she reflected, “My equity coach is also very good at meeting me where I am and moving with me through my racial equity journey.”

Educator B spoke to the impact of seeing the researcher/coach act to interrupt patterns of systemic racism in the professional setting when he stated,
I have benefitted greatly by seeing my coach model racial consciousness in many different settings and many spaces that could be deemed as uncomfortable. Seeing my coach show up in this manner helped to grow and enhance my practices as an aspiring racially conscious leader.

**Providing learning resources.** Several participants acknowledged that the researcher/coach provided additional learning resources that strengthened their racial equity learning. Educator C felt that her learning deepened because of the “obvious expertise that my coach has around the topic of racial equity.” She stated that the resources, tools, role-playing, and conversations made a significant impact on her growth as she shared many of these resources with family and friends in her personal life. Educator G shared, “I feel racial equity is always on my mind and it is because of my coach. She provides great resources (books, videos, websites) … that have been very helpful in my growth as a teacher.”

**Summary**

This chapter analyzed and evaluated results of the capstone research inquiry according to three themes: Impact of Racial Equity Coaching on White Educators’ Personal Growth, Impact of Racial Equity Coaching on White Educators’ Professional Practice, and Elements of 1:1 Racial Equity Coaching Partnership for Increased Effectiveness. Educator participants attributed their experience with racial equity coaching to their increased racial consciousness, internalization of the Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) protocol (Singleton, 2015), and desire to embody anti-racist practices in their personal sphere. During the course of the action research
phase, the researcher/coach worked with participants to develop the courage and skill to shift intra-racial and interracial conversations with family and friends. Many participants expressed that they gained more confidence to speak out and strengthened their voice in the struggle for racial equity as a result of working with the researcher/coach.

Educator participants transferred their courage and increased capacity for sustaining race-based conversations to their professional roles. As participants began to identify patterns of systemic racism present in school policy, program, and practice, the researcher/coach encouraged them to use their voices and racial discourse tools to initiate race-based conversations. In 1:1 coaching sessions, the researcher/coach guided educator participants to unpack their patterns of avoidance and move through their own detours towards intentional anti-racist interruption. Educator participants demonstrated their increased will to disrupt systemic racism as they shifted intra-racial and interracial conversations with colleagues, students, and families.

Upon completion of the action research phase, the researcher/coach sought to discover which aspects of the 1:1 coaching partnership played a significant role in educator growth, both personally and professionally. Most educator participants indicated that the trusting and supportive relationship with the researcher/coach fostered ideal conditions for their self-reflection and racial identity development. Many educator participants attributed their growth to the 1:1 reflective conversations and sense of accountability they felt from the researcher/coach.

Chapter Five offers conclusions addressing the research inquiry: *How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice?*
The chapter describes the capstone learning process and revisits the Literature Review to explore how the work of educational scholars informed the action research approach of the researcher/coach. Using data-based evidence, the researcher/coach states implications and limitations of the capstone research, offers recommendations, and poses questions for relevant future research.
CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions

Introduction to the Chapter

Spurred by her personal experience as a reflective White educator on the journey towards increased racial consciousness, the researcher/coach sought to explore the inquiry: How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice? This final chapter summarizes the researcher/coach’s desire to explore the capstone research inquiry; revisits the literature review to highlight relevant resources influencing the capstone inquiry and align results with scholarly research; considers implications of research findings; lists limitations of the study; offers recommendations for future racial equity coaching initiatives; and poses future research projects relevant to racial equity coaching in an educational context. The chapter also describes the researcher/coach’s journey as researcher, writer, and learner throughout the capstone research process and proposes a plan to communicate research findings with others in the racial equity field.

Reflections from the Researcher/Coach on the Impact of Racial Equity Coaching

As I recall my conversation from several years ago with a Black mother of one of my choir students, I remember the discomfort I felt to hear her say, “I hate coming to your concerts. Can you please program some Black music?” At the time when that conversation took place, I lacked the tools to explore my feelings that arose in response to
this feedback and failed to see how my initial seeking of absolution from my fellow White colleagues prevented me from leaning into this learning opportunity. For a period of time, I allowed my fear of exploring my racial blind spots and guilt for the impact of my curricular choices on my students of color to paralyze me from taking anti-racist action.

However, initiating race-based conversations with several of my White peers and colleagues of color propelled me to move through my fear and guilt as I considered the following questions:

- How do I make space for this Black girl and my other students of color to see themselves in my classroom?
- Where are my blind spots, as a White female teacher, and how has Whiteness prevented me from exploring these until now?
- How can I take accountability for the impact of how and what I teach my students?
- How do I persist in deepening my own racial consciousness in order to better understand my journey as a White woman, both personally and professionally?

I now recognize how my own need for racial equity coaching surfaced as I sought the critical intra-racial and interracial perspectives of my colleagues in response to this event. In initiating these conversations, I vulnerably shared my experience and accepted my colleagues’ supportive urging to deepen my understanding of my racial conditioning as a White woman. Receiving racial equity coaching from my colleagues gave me space to unpack the racial implications of this event, process my emotions and underlying
beliefs, and take future accountability for my role in reframing curricular choices in an effort to de-center Whiteness in my classroom. While the conversation with the student’s mother initially caused me great discomfort, I now see this and the resulting racial equity coaching I received as a pivotal phase in my journey towards increasing my racial consciousness and capacity for anti-racist practice as a White female educator.

While I continue to investigate my racial conditioning through engagement in professional development workshops, my most significant understandings about my White racial identity and my role as a White woman in the struggle for racial equity occur in reflective conversations with my own racial equity coach and coaching colleagues. Much like the conversations several years ago that motivated me to move through my guilt and stay engaged, the continued dialogue I share with my racial equity coach holds me accountable for exploring the root and racial implications of my deepest held beliefs. I recognize the power of racial equity coaching to hold me accountable for habitual self-reflection and I believe that it propels me to move through my patterns of avoidance in order to strengthen my personal racial equity purpose as a White woman.

Cognizant of my lived experience as a White student and teacher, I endeavored to conduct action research with fellow White educators in their journey toward increased racial consciousness and effective race-based conversations. At the time of the study, White educators comprised the vast majority of Minnesota’s teaching force, and, therefore, bore great responsibility for eliminating racial achievement disparities between White students and students of color (Educators 4 Excellence, 2015). Scholarly research identified stages of White racial identity development, which suggested that the impact of
racial equity coaching for White educators may inform their personal growth and professional practice in patterns uniquely tied to their lived White racial experience in the United States. (Helms, 1993; Singleton, 2015). Emboldened by these implications and my lived experience as a White teacher, I embarked on my capstone research study to investigate: *How does racial equity coaching impact White teachers’ personal growth and professional practice?*

**Literature Review Revisited**

Throughout the action research phase, the researcher/coach remained mindful of the insights gained from investigating scholarly research related to race in education, White teachers and Whiteness, and racial equity coaching. The insights gained in the literature review helped the researcher/coach stay grounded in her purpose for inquiry, identify racialized behavior patterns as they arose in educator participants, and apply practical strategies for individualized coaching support.

**Race in education.** Singleton’s (2015) research as an educational scholar and international racial equity leader provided a critical framework to understand issues of racial equity in public education in the United States. Singleton’s definition of high-impact terms such as race, racism, racist, and educational equity served particularly helpful in pursuing these topics in the larger scope of relevant scholarly literature.

Exploring the five tenets of Critical Race Theory through the writing of Delgado and Stefancic (2012) deepened the researcher/coach’s exploration of the relationship between race, racism, and power. This capstone research inquiry specifically centered on the Critical Race Theory tenet, Whiteness as property, as the researcher/coach witnessed
emergent patterns in the lived racial experience and benefits awarded to White educator participants in the study (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). Applying this tenet within the context of public schools allowed participants to identify how Whiteness dictates school-accepted communication, dress, curriculum, and structural norms. Inspiration for this capstone research originated from Rector-Aranda’s conviction, “We cannot eliminate racism, but we can still expose and fight it” (2016, p. 12). This belief offered a foundational premise for White educator participants engaged in the struggle for racial equity, both in developing a personal purpose in the struggle and in motivating fellow White peers to take a courageous stand toward anti-racism.

White teachers and whiteness. The four White educator participants exemplified stages of Helms’ (1993) White Racial Identity Development model as they moved toward a deeper awareness of their own White racial privilege and unconscious role in perpetuating racism. Similarly, participants noticed and identified their location on Singleton’s (2015) wheel of racial consciousness as they continuously worked to move from unconscious (“I know I don’t know”) or dys-conscious (“I don’t know but I think I do”) toward racial consciousness (“I know I know”). DiAngelo’s (2016) definition of White fragility, “A state in which even a minimum amount of racial stress becomes intolerable, triggering a range of defensive moves,” (p. 247) allowed the researcher/coach to recognize the patterns of avoidance, guilt/shame, helplessness, and fatigue that emerged in conversations with the four educator participants as they described their interactions with White family members, colleagues, and friends. Introducing the language of White fragility with the four White educator participants equipped them to
notice these patterns as they emerged in intra-racial and interracial race-based conversations.

The researcher/coach found hope in Michael’s (2015) vision for a positive White racial identity, where White teachers possess the ability to see how they can be both part of the problem and part of the solution. Michael’s concept of positive White racial identity encouraged the researcher/coach to continue pushing her White colleagues further in their own awareness and agency as powerful interrupters of systemic racism.

**Racial equity coaching.** The fact that racial equity coaching as an effective model for teacher professional development remained virtually unexplored in the field of scholarly research propelled the researcher/coach to pursue this area of study, with a specific aim to focus on the growth of White educators. Teemant (2014) noted, “Professional development targeting urban teachers of diverse learners is relatively unexplored” (p. 601).

Several scholarly publications offered the researcher/coach concrete examples for practical application in her role as a racial equity coach with fellow White educators. For example, many scholars affirmed the immense value of self-reflection for White educators as a means for exploring deeply held biases (Choi, 2008; Denevi and Pastan, 2006; DiAngelo, 2011; Diamond, 2008; Goldenberg, 2014; Howard, 2011; Landsman, 2004; Lea and Griggs, 2005; Matias, 2013; Michael, 2015; Yu, 2012). For this reason, the researcher/coach routinely engaged with the four White educator participants in reflective 1:1 conversation and encouraged each educator to continue developing their personal racial autobiography. The researcher/coach mentored the four White educator participants
to develop their skill in initiating and sustaining race-based conversation through guided practice with Singleton’s (2015) protocol for Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) and reflection on the two-day Beyond Diversity workshop experience to strengthen internalization of these tools. The researcher/coach introduced participants to Lee Mun Wah’s (2004) Mindful Inquiry prompts as educators worked toward shifting their conversations about race to become opportunities for mutual curiosity and authentic understanding. In modeling her own racial equity journey as a White woman and walking with educator participants in critical self-reflection, the researcher/coach strove to embody Choi’s (2008) vision of a teacher educator, guiding colleagues through the unlearning process while at the same time role modeling a personal quest to unlearn racism. 

Michael (2015) and Singleton (2013) described their lived experiences as racial equity leaders in public education which enabled the researcher/coach to anticipate patterns that might arise in her work with White educators. Over the duration of the school year, the researcher/coach recognized Michael’s comparison of antiracist school reform to swimming upstream, as she encouraged educator participants to challenge themselves, their environment, and sometimes, their supervisors, over a sustained period of time in order to shift the local climate. Singleton’s (2013) assertion that the whole system must act in order to enact transformational change for racial equity motivated the researcher/coach to collaboratively create opportunities to invite school board members, parent organizations, and non-licensed school staff to engage in racial equity professional development. Constantly striving to embody Singleton’s (2013) notion of an equity leader as a catalyst for racial equity transformation, the researcher/coach encouraged her
fellow White educators to reimagine their imperative role in interrupting patterns of systemic racism within a much larger system.

Implications of Research Results

Results confirm the power of racial equity coaching to address the persistent racialized gaps embedded in institutions of learning. The research results align with scholarly findings that attested to the significant impact of peer coaching as far surpassing traditional workshop models of teacher professional development (York-Barr et. al, 2006). Furthermore, results support Michael’s (2015) conclusion that sustained, individualized, race-based inquiry enables White educators to significantly increase their level of racial competence.

Racial equity coaching personally benefitted White participants by increasing their racial consciousness, equipping them with tools for effective racial discourse, motivating them to initiate and sustain race-based conversations with their family and friends, and strengthening their voices in the struggle for racial equity. Professionally, racial equity coaching impacted research participants by increasing their will to disrupt patterns of systemic racism in their educational roles, encouraging them to examine the presence of Whiteness in institutional structures, guiding them to question and adapt aspects of their instructional practice, pushing them to seek multiple racial perspectives as a means for increasing their critical consciousness, and walking with them to move through their patterns of avoidance to act as interrupters of racial inequity. Research participants identified specific aspects of their 1:1 partnership with the researcher/coach which significantly impacted their growth, including: a supportive relationship, reflective
conversations, accountability, shared professional learning opportunities, and witnessing the researcher/coach modeling her own racial equity journey.

After working with the researcher/coach for several months, Educator B expressed the power of racial equity coaching in both personal and professional contexts. He shared,

Seeing you as a coach willing to speak up in other meetings, willing to keep us mindful of the protocol, keeping us in the work which to me helps to stay engaged. To know that it’s not something that you choose to turn on and off. [Coaching has] really helped me to better find my voice, increase my racial consciousness and also enhance my desire to want to learn more on my own.

As Educator B shared more about how racial equity coaching has helped him find his voice, he reflected,

My challenge is, what can I do to help [my White colleagues] un-learn or move past or move forward in a way where they can experience some growth? Because I can actually say with the utmost certainty that it’s been extremely healthy for me. … Now it’s continuing that and thinking about the ways that I can start and cause that to happen with people around me.

Educator B’s reflection illustrates the power of 1:1 racial equity coaching to transform White educators’ underlying beliefs in order to become catalysts for racial equity transformation in both personal and professional contexts.

In addition to benefitting the educator participants, results of this study may benefit the team of racial equity coaches in the school district and other educators in the
racial equity field by providing relevant narratives to illuminate the significant impact of racial equity coaching for White educators. Similarly, results of the study may benefit school district stakeholders in the research setting by providing documented evidence of the impact of racial equity coaching as a professional development model. School district leaders regionally and nationally may gain insights from this research study to guide their own racial equity transformation efforts. Lastly, this capstone research may benefit Hamline University’s graduate education community by providing research in alignment with Hamline’s vision for teachers who can “promote equity in schools, build communities of learners, construct knowledge, and practice thoughtful inquiry and reflection” (Retrieved from http://www.hamline.edu/education/maed/).

Limitations of Research

Several variables posed possible limitations to the capstone research study:

- Willingness of the four White educators to participate
- Brevity of the action research timeline and number of 1:1 sessions
- Skill of the researcher/coach
- Interpersonal relationships between the researcher/coach and participants
- Increased exposure of research participants

Willingness to participate. The results of this study reflect the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators willing to voluntarily engage in this deeply reflective work. During the 1:1 coaching interviews and professional development sessions, each of the four participants engaged with a spirit of vulnerability and trust to receive the support of the researcher/coach. At the conclusion of the study, five additional participants
voluntarily offered responses to the final reflection prompts. Results of a similar study might differ if educator participants demonstrated a resistance to engage in racial equity coaching and/or the study teacher participation was mandatory for all White teachers within the school setting.

**Brevity of action research timeline and number of 1:1 sessions.** The five-month timeframe of the action research phase posed possible limitations to the study; all observations, professional development sessions, and 1:1 coaching interviews occurred within the confines of this research timeline. Extending the length of the research phase to a one or several academic years might present a more thorough picture of the impact of racial equity coaching on White educators’ personal growth and professional practice. Similarly, increasing the number of 1:1 coaching sessions within the designated timeline may produce a greater change in the lives of educator participants. Extending the research window and increasing the number of 1:1 coaching sessions might also allow educator participants more time to explore supplemental resources (articles, videos, events, etc.) provided by the researcher/coach. The brevity of the research timeline, in combination with the daily demands of each participants’ role within the school setting, limited the depth to which the participants could explore and reflect on their learning.

**Skill of the researcher/coach.** The research study measured the impact of racial equity coaching with the mentorship of one racial equity coach. The skill and prior experience of this particular researcher/coach may have limited the extent of the impact of this professional development model on the four educator participants. Similarly, the interpersonal relationship between the researcher/coach and the participants may have
limited the candid nature of educator responses in 1:1 coaching sessions and the final written reflection.

**Increased exposure of research participants.** Participants in the research study experienced increased visibility and exposure during the action research phase as they recognized the individualized attention they received from the researcher/coach. Audio-recording the 1:1 coaching sessions may have swayed participants to speak in a more inhibited nature out of fear of misspeaking or negatively impacting the research results. Similarly, participants may have felt hyper-visible and engaged in a more reserved manner during professional development sessions and observations. Despite the anonymous nature of the research study, participants may still feel a sense of exposure when they read the results of the final written capstone.

**Recommendations**

Racial equity coaching offers an ideal professional development model to transform educator bias and mindset in order to impact student achievement and eliminate racial disparities present in United States public school systems. The researcher/coach offers the following recommendations for school stakeholders to foster maximum effectiveness of racial equity coaching on the personal growth and professional practice of White educators:

1. Engage the *entire* school system in racial equity transformation efforts. According to Singleton (2015), entire administrative teams, school boards, and site and central-office department leaders must commit in order for change to take shape.
2. Implement a *mandatory* full-scale racial equity coaching model, aligned with the district’s vision for equity transformation, where each educator partners with an equity coach over the duration of their employment. The depth of engagement necessary for White educators to change beliefs requires this type of sustained process (Michael, 2015).

3. Encourage 1:1 racial equity coaching for district leaders and stakeholders.

4. Embed racial equity professional development into educator contract hours and connect the full-scale equity coaching model to teacher compensation or alternative pay.

5. Invest in ongoing professional development, skill building, and time for shared reflection for racial equity coaching team.

6. Utilize a common language for racial discourse. Commit to practicing the racial discourse protocol with fidelity in all staff conversations and meetings.

7. Build capacity of “coachees” to observe and coach one another. Empower “coachees” to fulfill staff leadership roles and model their own racial equity journey with one another.

8. Educate the entire system to recognize and respond to the symptoms of effective racial equity transformation, including resistance, discomfort, and uncertainty.

9. Partner with nationally recognized racial equity leaders to receive guidance and support during each phase of racial equity transformation.
10. Share knowledge across school sites, between racial equity coaches and “coachees” through shared participation in book clubs, discussions, film viewings, and community events.

11. Determine ideal number of “coachees” per racial equity coach caseload in order to receive maximum support and effectiveness. Expand racial equity coach team if necessary.

Future Research

Pursuing the research inquiry: *How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice?* led the researcher/coach to consider numerous research questions for future research relevant to racial equity coaching in education. This same research question might be applied while adjusting variables in the participant cohort such as:

- Sample size
- Common grade or subject level teams
- Current stage of White Racial Identity Development (WRID)
- Teachers of color

Additional considerations for future research inquiry include:

- What factors contribute to the effectiveness of a racial equity coach?
- How does racial equity coaching impact student achievement and engagement?
- How does racial equity coaching impact school climate and culture?

Communicating Results
Each participating educator will receive a copy of the final written capstone after its completion in May, 2017. The researcher/coach will present research results to the school district’s team of equity coaches, school board, current superintendent, and incoming superintendent. Supplemental copies of the written capstone will be provided to staff within the school setting, the district superintendent, board, and cabinet, and the equity coaching team. The researcher/coach intends to pursue opportunities to publish components of her research in scholarly journals and present at the National Summit for Courageous Conversations About Race. The research will be catalogued in Bush Library Digital Commons at Hamline University. The researcher/coach will consider these results in future educational employment settings to promote racial equity coaching as an ideal approach to building the knowledge, skill, will, and capacity of educators to dismantle barriers that prevent all students from reaching their full humanity and potential.

Reflections from the Researcher/Coach

Undergoing this capstone inquiry process helped me form a new aspect of my identity as an action researcher. Examining texts by scholars Creswell (2014) and Mills (2014) introduced me to the essential components of the action research process, including: different research paradigms; data collection methods; ethical concerns for transparency and protection with research participants; and research synthesis and evaluation. My graduate work at Hamline motivated me to apply theoretical components of action research to my current educational setting as I began to brainstorm ideas for my ultimate capstone inquiry. When I eventually embarked on the action research with
educator participants, I deepened my internalization of the qualitative research process through individualized interaction with colleagues.

My love of writing deepened while I constructed each chapter of the capstone. Each of the five chapters challenged me to refine different elements of my writing voice. I especially enjoyed crafting Chapter One in reflective style, where I narrated the connections between my academic inquiry and my lived experience. Completing Chapter Two honed my skills as an academic writer, where I synthesized a large body of related scholarly research and formed connections between existing academic publications and my own investigative inquiry. Chapter Three required continual revision, as it detailed each step and alteration to my research process. I developed my analytical ability to glean emergent patterns and themes from data as I worked to evaluate research findings in Chapter Four. Throughout the writing process, I received tremendous support from my Hamline advisor, secondary advisor, and several peer reviewers as they offered honest editorial feedback for numerous draft stages of the written capstone.

Summary

This final chapter drew connections between the action research and the work of academic scholars, responded to the capstone inquiry question, outlined possible limitations of the study, offered recommendations for maximum effectiveness of racial equity coaching for White educators, and considered future research endeavors relevant to this topic. Reflecting on the research results, I considered the words of American writer James Baldwin: “Not everything that is faced can be changed, but nothing can be changed until it is faced” (Baldwin, 2016). My capstone research illuminated the power
of racial equity coaching to change the actions of White educators as they faced their beliefs, strengthened their voices in the struggle for racial equity, and courageously fought racism in their personal spheres and professional practice.

I believe that every piece of my journey as a White student, teacher, and racial equity coach prepared me to complete this capstone. Racial equity coaching continues to profoundly inform my understanding of my role as a White woman in our country’s racial landscape. It gives me the language and space to find my voice in the uncertain and troubled terrain of our racialized United States. Racial equity coaching holds me accountable for examining my own beliefs, shifting my behavior, and growing in my capacity to walk with my colleagues, friends, and family on this journey instead of self-righteously distancing myself from others.

Because of the profound ways that racial equity coaching shapes my life, I remain hopeful that this approach will continue to cause shifts in race-based conversations between White educators, colleagues, families, friends, and strangers. Hearing my White colleagues bravely asking questions, challenging concepts, and re-considering beliefs strengthens my hope. I believe in the promise of racial equity coaching to transform willing people from hardened versions of themselves into heart-forward, authentic beings; to help willing people see others’ full humanity and to be embraced for their own.
APPENDIX A: Informed Consent Letter

October 14, 2016

Dear Staff,

I am seeking your participation in a research study as part of my completion of my Masters of Arts in Education (MAEd) degree at Hamline University in St. Paul, Minnesota. This year, I will conduct my Capstone research based on the inquiry: **How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice?** The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of this unique type of professional development model for White educators. The study will explicitly focus on White educators due to the fact that they comprise the vast majority of Minnesota’s teaching force and, therefore, bear great responsibility for eliminating racial achievement disparities between White students and students of color.

Participation in this study is voluntary and open to all White educators in Ms. Baglyos’ caseload. After providing consent, Ms. Baglyos will select a small cohort (2-4) of educators for participation based on factors including: number of years teaching; prior experience in racial equity professional development; and personal willingness to engage in site-based staff meetings. Once selected, staff members will be informed of their participation in the study. **Educators’ identities will be protected through anonymity during the study and all identities will remain anonymous in the final written Capstone.** Participating educators will receive copies of Ms. Baglyos’ final written Capstone after its completion in Spring 2017. This research will be catalogued in Bush Library Digital Commons at Hamline University.

Potential risks to participants are minor in nature and may include increased visibility and exposure in the coaching process during 1:1 coaching sessions and site-based professional development. Participation in this study can be ended at any time without negative consequences.

Participation in this research study aligns with the coaching cycle requirements of [school district’s] Alternative Teacher Professional Pay System (ATPPS). Participating educators will engage in 1:1 coaching sessions with Ms. Baglyos, classroom observations, and site-based professional development. **The time commitment for participating educators falls within district ATPPS guidelines,** including: three 45-minute individual coaching sessions, one 45-minute classroom observation (scheduled during teaching time), and two 30-minute site-based professional development sessions (weekly staff meetings).

Data will be collected using: a pre-research survey/assessment; audio recordings of 1:1 coaching sessions using pre-determined protocol and prompts; field notes from classroom
observations; field notes from site-based professional development sessions; and a post-research survey/assessment.

**Results of this study will benefit participants as they increase their own racial consciousness and capacity to disrupt systemic racism in their personal and professional lives.** Results will benefit the [school district] by providing evidence of the effectiveness of the racial equity coaching model. Results will benefit fellow educators in the racial equity field by providing relevant narratives illuminating the potential impact of racial equity coaching for White educators.

If you wish to participate in this research study, please sign both copies of this letter. Please return one signed letter to Ms. Baglyos’ staff mailbox by Monday, November 21, 2016. You may keep the other letter for your personal records.

Please contact me with any questions about the research study at (952) 928-6676 or email me at baglyos.gretchen@slpschools.org. You may also contact my Hamline Capstone Advisor, Jennifer Carlson at jcarlson17@hamline.edu.

Thank you in advance for your engagement!

Gretchen Baglyos
Equity Coach
[School district]

Yes, I wish to participate in this research study!

Staff Participant Name: _______________________________________________________

Staff Participant Signature: ____________________________________________________

Date: ________________________________
Good morning!

I've shared with several of you that I am currently pursuing my Masters of Arts in Education (MAEd) degree at Hamline University in St. Paul. I am in the final stages of the program, completing my Capstone (thesis) research study.

The central question of my Capstone research is: **How does racial equity coaching impact White educators' personal growth and professional practice?**

In order to deeply explore this research question, I invite you to consider engaging with me in this study!

In your mailboxes, you will find **two copies of an Informed Consent Letter** detailing all of the pertinent information and rationale motivating this research.

If you wish to participate in this study, please **sign both copies** of the Informed Consent Letter. **Please return one signed letter to my staff mailbox (or deliver to me in person) by Monday, November 21, 2016.** You may keep the other copy for your personal records.

If you do not wish to participate in this study, please recycle both copies of the letter.

Thank you in advance for your engagement!

Gretchen
Hello, [Staff Name]!

I am currently pursuing my Masters of Arts in Education (MAEd) degree at Hamline University in St. Paul. I am in the final stages of the program, completing my Capstone (thesis) research study.

The central question of my Capstone research is: **How does racial equity coaching impact White educators' personal growth and professional practice?**

My choice to explicitly focus on White educators is due to the fact that they comprise the vast majority of Minnesota's teaching force and, therefore, bear great responsibility for eliminating racial achievement disparities between White students and students of color. Scholarly research asserts that White people undergo stages of racial identity development specific to a lived White racial experience, thus uniquely impacting their professional role with students and colleagues. Additionally, I am motivated to conduct this research based on my own lived experience as a White student and educator.

I wanted to inform you of my research focus ahead of time because you may hear from colleagues that I have invited all White teachers in my caseload to participate with me in this study.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

I am happy to talk more in person if you wish!

Gretchen
APPENDIX D: Personal Inventory for Prospective Research Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Staff Participant Name</strong></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Are you currently tenured in this district?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your current position?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many years have you been in this position?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many years have you been in education?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How many years have you worked with a Racial Equity Coach?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Have you attended <em>Beyond Diversity</em>?</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If so, when did you last attend?</td>
<td>2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 OTHER:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List any other racial equity training/professional development that you’ve attended in the past five years.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX E: Final Email to White Educators in Researcher/Coach’s Caseload

Hello staff,

Earlier this year, I shared with you my capstone research inquiry: *How does racial equity coaching impact White educators’ personal growth and professional practice?*

After inviting all White educators in my coachee caseload to engage in this study, I selected a small cohort of educators to participate. My research phase has been both exciting and fulfilling and I build my own skill and capacity as an equity coach in collaboration with you, my fellow teachers!

**As I near the end of my action research phase, I would like to open up participation in the study to each of you once again.**

**I am curious to hear your anonymous responses to three open-ended questions:**

- Share an example of how racial equity coaching has impacted your personal growth this year.
- Share an example of how racial equity coaching has impacted your professional practice this year.
- What elements of your 1:1 partnership with your racial equity coach do you believe made an impact on your growth?

Responding to these questions would serve to add to my current research about the impact of racial equity coaching. **I value your voice as part of this research!**

Your response to these questions is voluntary and you may choose your method of response: *You may email me directly or type your responses and leave these in my mailbox (if you prefer to remain anonymous). All identities will remain anonymous and no names will be used in the final written capstone.*

I will place a paper copy of this email and these questions in your mailbox to ensure full transparency in my research process.

**Please provide your responses by Friday, March 3rd.**

Thank you in advance for your continued support and engagement in racial equity!

Gretchen
APPENDIX F: Racial Equity-Focused Professional Development

CCAR Morning (attendance optional) - Wednesday, November 9th
8:15 - 8:50am
- *Grounding:* Researcher/coach gathered with staff in a circle to process their response to the presidential election results
- *Racial Discourse Protocol:* Compass, 4 Agreements, Mindful Inquiry prompts

Staff Meeting - Wednesday, November 30th
8:00 – 8:50am
- *Grounding:* Reflection on sharing racial autobiography with a colleague
- *Racial Discourse Protocol:* Compass, 4 Agreements, Conditions 1 and 2
- *NEW Racial Discourse Protocol:* Conditions 3 and 4
- *Tools/Resources:* Wheel of Racial Consciousness
- *Practice:* Describe a time when you’ve been made aware of your own dys-conscious or unconscious behavior in regards to race. What moved you from that place towards increased consciousness? Share with a partner using C1, C2 and Mindful Inquiry.
- *Homework:* Identify a race-based topic where you are in the semi-conscious stage.
  - Whose perspectives, racially, have informed what you do know?
  - What perspectives, racially, are missing from your narrative?
  - What action steps can you take to increase your consciousness about this topic before our next staff meeting?

CCAR Morning (attendance optional) - Thursday, December 8th
8:15 - 8:50am
- *Grounding:* Locate yourself on the compass in response to the two articles
• **Racial Discourse Protocol**: Compass, 4 Agreements, Conditions 1 and 2

• **Tools/Resources:**
  - Article: “Raising White Children to Be Anti-Racist Allies” by Rebecca Hains
  - Article: “What White Children Need to Know About Race” by Ali Michael and Eleanora Bartoli

• **Reflection**: Respond to each prompt in your Equity Journal.
  - What is my experience talking about race with my white children/students?
  - What are my beliefs about talking about race with my white children/students?
  - What would it look like for me to align my beliefs with my actions?
  - What action can I take **this week** to be more explicit in talking about race with my white children/students?
  - Who can I ask to hold me accountable for my action?

---

**Staff Meeting - Wednesday, January 18th**

8:00 - 8:50am

• **Grounding**: Read quote from Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., “The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy.”
  - How do I show up in times of challenge and controversy?
  - Where do I lean in?
  - Where do I disengage?

• **Racial Discourse Protocol**: Compass, 4 Agreements, Conditions 1, 2, 3, and 4

• **Reflect** on homework from November 30th (see above)

• **Tools/Resources**: Above the Line/Below the Line activity with Black Muslim girls and women at the center
• **Homework:** Increase your Below the Line knowledge and seek multiple perspectives by:
  - Speaking 1:1 with a Black Muslim girl/woman (someone with whom you currently have a relationship)
  - Watching a video
  - Reading an article
  - Listen to a podcast
  - Other

**Staff Meeting - Wednesday, February 1st**
8:00 – 8:50am

- **Grounding:** Reflect on district ATPPS mission statement, “To build educators’ will, skill, and capacity to disrupt systemic racism in order to impact student achievement and experiences at [school district].”
- **Racial Discourse Protocol:** Compass, 4 Agreements, Conditions 1, 2, 3, and 4
- **Partner Check-In:**
  - Where are you entering today? Locate yourself on the Compass.
  - Where do you see yourself in our district mission at this point in the year?
- **Reflect** on homework from January 18th
- **Tools/Resources:**
  - Video: Hamda Yusuf TED Talk
    https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M91vfQ6Ooxw&app=desktop
  - Video: Star Tribune - Voices of local Muslim school girls
- **Homework:**
  - Read pp. 174-179 of Glenn Singleton's *Courageous Conversations About Race*
  - Reflect: What does Whiteness mean to you?
CCAR Morning (attendance optional) - Thursday, February 9th
8:15 – 8:50am

- **Racial Discourse Protocol:** Mindful Inquiry prompts, Compass, 4 Agreements, Conditions 1 and 2

- **Tools/Resources:**
  - Article: “Detour Spotting for White Anti-Racists” by Joan Olsson.

- **Partner Reflection:**
  - What habits/attitudes/behaviors divert *me* from being anti-racist?
  - Why do I use this behavior? What is at the root?
APPENDIX G: Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) Protocol and Mindful Inquiry Prompts

Courageous Conversations is the utilization of the Four Agreements, Six Conditions, and Compass in order to engage, sustain and deepen intra-racial, and inter-racial dialogue about race, racial identity, and institutional racism; and is an essential foundation for examining schooling and improving student achievement.

**Four Agreements:**
1. Stay Engaged
2. Speak Your Truth
3. Experience Discomfort
4. Expect/Accept Non-Closure

**Six Conditions:**
1. Focus on Personal, Local and Immediate
   - What is my own racial experience?
2. Isolate Race
   - What does race have to do with “this”?
3. Normalize Social Construction and Multiple Perspectives
   - My perspective, your perspective, the missing perspective.
4. Monitor Agreements, Conditions and Establish Parameters
   - What parameters do I need to be able to hear the missing perspective?
5. Use a “Working Definition” for Race
   - How is race lived? How do I perceive myself and how I am perceived?
6. Examine the Presence and Role of “Whiteness”
   - What does it mean to be White, and what impact does it have on my life?

**Compass:**
- Believing
- Moral
- Intellectual
- Thinking
- Head
- Heart
- Feeling
- Compass
- Emotional
- Relational
- Body
- Acting

Mindfulness:
- Racialize your own voice.
- Always Start Personal.
- Model yourself as a reflective teacher committed to racial equity.
  - “What I heard you say was…”
  - “Tell me more what you meant by…”
  - “How is that working?”
  - “How does that feel?”
  - “What angered you about what happened?”
  - “What’s familiar about what happened?”
  - “What do you need/want?”

Let’s engage.
How is race showing up in your classroom and practice?
Choose ONE EVENT and work with your coach to deconstruct what happened.
APPENDIX H.1: Courageous Conversation Protocol Developmental Scale

Alignment with Bloom’s Taxonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Synthesis</th>
<th>Interrupt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Adapting Bloom’s Taxonomy for Developing Proficiency in Understanding, Internalizing and Applying the Protocol for Courageous Conversations About Race.

- **Knowledge**: Define, Describe, Recite, Recall, Recognize, Identify, States, Outlines
- **Comprehension**: Comprehends, Converts, Defends, Distinguishes, Generalizes, Gives Examples, Infers, Interprets, Understands
- **Application**: Applies, Changes, Computes, Constructs, Demonstrates, Discovers, Solves, Uses
- **Analysis**: Breaks Down, Compares, Constrasts, Diagrams, Deconstructs, Discriminates, Identifies, Illustrates, Infers
- **Synthesis**: Categorizes, Combines, Compiles, Composes, Creates, Devises, Designs, Modifies, Organizes, Plans, Summarizes
- **Evaluation**: Interrupts

Beyond Diversity II
Courageous Conversation Protocol Developmental Scale
APPENDIX H.2: Courageous Conversation Protocol Developmental Scale

Stay Engaged and Speak Your Truth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stay Engaged</th>
<th>I know that I must agree to stay engaged.</th>
<th>I understand that staying engaged is essential for advancing the conversation and involves full participation of my mind, body and spirit.</th>
<th>I demonstrate engagement by actively listening, engaging and responding to racialized situations or circumstances.</th>
<th>I identify my levels of engagement as well as what triggers my defenses, disconnection and/or search for detours.</th>
<th>I devise a method for recognizing a pathway through possible detours toward heightened engagement.</th>
<th>I engage at the personal, professional and organizational levels as a way of interrupting racism.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Speak Your Truth</td>
<td>I know that I must agree to speak my truth.</td>
<td>I understand that speaking my truth is essential for advancing the conversation and involves getting to know myself as a racial being.</td>
<td>I demonstrate speaking my truth by sharing my racial perspective and asking questions of others about their racial perspective.</td>
<td>I identify my personal truth about my racial experience and deconstruct limiting beliefs I have about speaking authentically about race.</td>
<td>I create space for myself and others to speak truth as a way to raise racial consciousness.</td>
<td>I consistently speak my truth as a way of deepening the conversation and interrupting institutional racism.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H.3: Courageous Conversation Protocol Developmental Scale

Experience Discomfort and Expect/Accept Non-Closure

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Synthesis</th>
<th>Intention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXPERIENCE DISCOMFORT</strong></td>
<td>I know that I must agree to experience discomfort.</td>
<td>I understand that experiencing discomfort is essential for advancing the conversation on race.</td>
<td>I demonstrate my acceptance of discomfort by my continued participation in the conversation though it is difficult.</td>
<td>I identify my discomfort and am willing to look closely at it to better understand what my obstacles are in the conversation about race.</td>
<td>I devise a method for addressing the discomfort that allows me to continue to fully participate in the conversation about race.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **EXPECT/ACCEPT NON-CLOSURE** | I know that I must accept and allow non-closure. | I understand that expecting and accepting non-closure is essential for advancing the conversation on race and involves an ongoing dialogue with ever changing solutions. | I demonstrate non-closure by participating in an ongoing racial discourse where there is no "quick fix," rather the solution is revealed in the process of dialogue itself. | I identify my ways of dealing with racial challenges and my trained desire to find solutions and closure. | I create a method for recognizing a pathway from solutions-thinking to sustaining dialogue on race, recognizing the more I talk, the more I learn and the more promising the intervention. | I expect and accept non-closure at the personal, professional and organizational level as a way of interrupting racism. |
APPENDIX H.4: Courageous Conversation Protocol Developmental Scale

Personal Local Immediate (Condition 1) and Isolate Race (Condition 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Synthesis</th>
<th>Interrupt</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Personal Local Immediate</strong></td>
<td>I know that I must begin with exploring my own personal, local and immediate experiences about race.</td>
<td>I understand that my own experiences provide a foundation for me to make meaning about race and racism.</td>
<td>I demonstrate my personal explorations of race through my evolving racial autobiography.</td>
<td>I identify the aspects of my personal experience that are impacted by race and I am conscious of that impact.</td>
<td>I create opportunities to discuss the racial aspects of situations that I am immediately involved in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Isolate Race</strong></td>
<td>I know that I must isolate race while never failing to recognize that other aspects and forms of diversity continue to impact the racialized scenario.</td>
<td>I understand that by isolating race, I am better able to keep race on the table and not allow for other aspects and forms of diversity to supplant racial meaning and significance.</td>
<td>I demonstrate my understanding of race when I can determine its' meaning and significance in life situations that others may fail to see its' presence and/or impact.</td>
<td>I identify when to isolate race as a way of holding the space for investigation and understanding of the way in which race impacts my own and others' lives.</td>
<td>I combine my deepest analysis of race with an understanding of how other aspects and forms of diversity may be contributing to the process and/or result of a racialized situation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H.5: Courageous Conversation Protocol Developmental Scale

Multiple Racial Perspective (Condition 3) and The Compass

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Comprehension</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Analysis</th>
<th>Synthesis</th>
<th>Interpret</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Racial Perspective</strong></td>
<td>I recognize that race is a social construct and know there are multiple racial perspectives.</td>
<td>I understand how race was socially constructed and comprehend the need to have multiple racial perspectives.</td>
<td>I use the multiple racial perspective to interpret social constructs that have been normalized.</td>
<td>I identify the social constructs that I have normalized about race and compare them to other perspectives.</td>
<td>I combine multiple racial perspectives to modify my own and to reach a critical perspective. Normalized in Whiteness.</td>
<td>I use the process of obtaining the critical perspective to interrupt social constructs normalized in Whiteness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The Compass</strong></td>
<td>I know that there is a Compass; I recognize its components and I can define its purpose in advancing the conversation.</td>
<td>I understand the Compass holistically as well as its components, and how they work independently and in relationship to each other.</td>
<td>I use the Compass to sustain the conversation by locating my response, getting centered and discovering the location of others.</td>
<td>I identify when to use the Compass holistically as a part of the Protocol in order to sustain the conversation.</td>
<td>I combine the components of the Compass as a tool to center myself and others in order to deepen the conversation.</td>
<td>I use the Compass as a tool to interrupt the silence and to progress into a deeper conversation about race.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX H.6: Courageous Conversation Protocol Developmental Scale

Working Definition for Race (Condition 5) and Examining Whiteness (Condition 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Understand</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Analyze</th>
<th>Synthesize</th>
<th>Interact</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORKING DEFINITION FOR RACE</strong></td>
<td>I know that I must have a working definition for race in order to engage in a courageous conversation about race.</td>
<td>I understand that race is different from ethnicity and culture and that parties involved in a courageous conversation must agree on a working definition for race.</td>
<td>I use an agreed upon working definition for race when having a conversation about race.</td>
<td>I identify the nuances that distinguish race from other ethnic/cultural characteristics and place race in a social context.</td>
<td>I compile the social indicators for racial classification in order to capture the ways in which race is operating when I am engaged in a conversation about race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXAMINING WHITENESS</strong></td>
<td>I know that Whiteness is a condition as well as its aspects or levels, and the purpose of recognizing it for deepening the conversation.</td>
<td>I understand that Whiteness is always operating when I engage in a conversation about race.</td>
<td>I use my awareness of Whiteness and can demonstrate its impact on the conversation.</td>
<td>I deconstruct the Presence and Role of Whiteness in my life and can identify ways I challenge my whiteness.</td>
<td>I combine Whiteness as a color, culture and consciousness with White racial identity in order to capture the ways in which Whiteness is operating when I am engaged in a conversation about race.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX I: Comparison Table: Autism and Emotional Disturbance (ED)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AUTISM AND EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE (ED)</th>
<th>AUTISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Both manifest socially, emotionally, and behaviorally</td>
<td>Severe cognitive impairment to “gifted”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both are less than 8% of the total number of students with disabilities</td>
<td>Lowest drop out rate for students with disabilities (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Autism removed from Emotionally Disturbed (ED) label in the 1980’s</td>
<td>Higher than average graduate with a regular high school diploma (65%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMOTIONAL DISTURBANCE</strong></td>
<td><strong>AUTISM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average to above average intelligence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highest drop out rate of all students with disabilities (38%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only half graduate with a regular high school diploma</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black, Brown</strong></td>
<td><strong>Asian, White</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What Does RACE Have to do With It?

APPENDIX J: Racial Autobiography Prompts

Creating Your Racial Autobiography

Getting Started
Start with your Racial Autobiography Bookends: What can you recall about the earliest and most recent events and conversations about race, race relations, and/or racism that may have impacted your current perspectives and/or experiences?

• Earliest: What was your first personal experience in dealing with race or racism? Describe what happened.
• Most Recent: What was your most recent personal experience in dealing with race or racism? Describe what happened.

To help you think about the time between your earliest and most recent racial experiences, jot down notes to answer the questions below. Let the questions guide but not limit your thinking. Note any other memories or ideas that seem relevant to you. When you have identified some of the landmarks on your racial journey, start writing your autobiography. Remember that it is a fluid document, one that you will reflect on and update many times as your racial consciousness evolves.

1. Your Family
• Are your parents the same race as you... as each other? Are your brothers and sisters the same race as you? What about your extended family -- uncles, aunts, etc.?
• Where did your parents grow up? What exposure did they have to racial groups other than their own? (Have you ever talked with them about this?)
• What ideas did they grow up with regarding race relations? (Do you know? Have you ever talked with them about this? Why or why not?)
• Do you think of yourself as White? As Black? As Asian? As Latino? As American Indian? Or just as "human?" Do you think of yourself as a member of an ethnic group? How important is your race to you?

2. Your Neighborhood
• What is the racial makeup of the neighborhood you grew up in?
• What was your first awareness of race -- that there are different "races" and that you are a member of a racial group?
• What was your first encounter with another race? Describe the situation.
• When and where did you first hear the word, "nigger," or other similar racial slurs?
• What messages do you recall getting from your parents about race? From others, when you were little?

3. Your Elementary and Middle Schools
• What was the racial makeup of your elementary school? Of its teachers?
• Think about the curriculum: what Black Americans did you hear about? How did you celebrate Martin Luther King Day? What about Asian Americans, or Latinos, or American Indians?
• Cultural influences: what did you learn about race on TV and in advertisements, novels,
music, movies, etc.? What color God was presented to you? Angels? Santa Claus? The tooth fairy? Dolls?

What was the racial makeup of organizations you were in: Girl Scouts, soccer team, church, etc.?

4. Your High School and Community

- What was the racial makeup of your high school? Of its teachers?
- Was there interracial dating? Racial slurs? Any conflict with members of another race?
- Have you ever felt or been stigmatized because of your race or ethnic group membership?
- What else was important about your high-school years, racially speaking (maybe something that didn’t happen in high school but during that time)?
- What is the racial makeup of your hometown? Of your metropolitan area? What about your experiences in summer camp, summer jobs, etc.?

5. Your Present and Future

- What is the racial makeup of the organization you currently work in? Of your circle(s) of friends? Does it meet your needs?
- Realistically, think about where you want to live (if different from where you are now). What is its racial makeup? Social class makeup?
- Where do you want to work in the next 10 years? What is its racial makeup? Social class makeup?

6. General

- What’s the most important image, encounter, whatever, you’ve had regarding race? Have you felt threatened? In the minority? Have you felt privileged?
APPENDIX K: Some Aspects and Assumptions of White Culture in the United States

SOME ASPECTS AND ASSUMPTIONS OF WHITE CULTURE IN THE UNITED STATES

While different individuals might not practice or accept all of these traits, they are common characteristics of most U.S. White people most of the time.

RUGGED INDIVIDUALISM
- Self-reliance
- Individual is primary unit
- Independence and autonomy highly valued
- Rejection of social dependency
- Individuals assumed to be in control of their environment—"You get what you deserve"

COMPETITION
- Win at all costs
- Winner-take-all mentality
- Action oriented
- Must always "do something" about a situation
- Aggressiveness and domination
- Dog-eat-dog world
- Majority rules (often whites have power)
- Hierarchical

JUSTICE
- Based on English common law
- Protect property and entitlements
- Intent counts

COMMUNICATION
- The King’s English rules
- Written tradition
- Avoid conflict, intimacy
- Don’t show emotion
- Don’t discuss personal life
- Be polite

HOLIDAYS
- Based on Christian religion
- Based on white history and male leaders

HISTORY
- Based on northern European immigrants’ experiences in the United States
- Heavy focus on the British Empire
- Primacy of Western (Greek, Roman) and Judeo-Christian traditions

PROTESTANT WORK ETHIC
- Hard work is the key to success
- Work before play
- “If you don’t meet your goals, you didn’t work hard enough.”

EMPHASIS ON SCIENTIFIC METHOD
- Objective, rational, linear thinking
- Cause-and-effect relationships
- Quantitative emphasis

STATUS, POWER AND AUTHORITY
- Wealth is worth
- Heavy value on ownership of goods, status, property
- Your job is who you are
- Respect authority

TIME
- Adherence to rigid time schedules
- Time viewed as a commodity

FUTURE ORIENTATION
- Plan for future
- Delayed gratification
- Progress is always best
- “Tomorrow will be better.”

FAMILY STRUCTURE
- Nuclear family (father, mother, 2.3 children) is the ideal social unit
- Husband is head of household, and subordinate to husband
- Children should have own rooms, be independent

AESTHETICS
- Based on European culture
- Women’s beauty based on blonde, thin—Barbie doll
- Men’s attractiveness based on economic status, power, intellect
- Steak and potatoes, “bland is best”

RELIGION
- Christianity is the norm
- Anything other than Judeo-Christian tradition is foreign
- No tolerance for deviation from single God concept

JUDITH K. KATZ, THE KALEEL JAMISON CONSULTING GROUP, INC. ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

APPENDIX L: Racial Discourse Protocol for Use with Elementary Students

Agreements
We will share our feelings and experiences
We will listen for understanding without judgement
We will support and stand up for one another
We will stay engaged and take care of ourselves

Compass
I believe... (in my soul)
I feel... (in my heart)
I think/wonder... (in my head)
I want to act by... (with my words, in my hands and feet)

Mindful Inquiry Prompts
• What I heard you say was...
• Can you tell me more about ____?
APPENDIX M: Codes/Themes That Emerged in Data Collection

Impact of Racial Equity Coaching on White Educators’ Personal Growth

- Increased racial consciousness
- Noticing segregation
- Colorblindness to color-consciousness
- Experiencing guilt and sadness
- Avoidance in the personal setting
- Increased internalization of the Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) protocol (Singleton, 2015)
  - Shifting *intra-racial* conversations with parents
  - Shifting *intra-racial* conversations with children
  - Shifting *intra-racial* conversations with spouse
  - Shifting *interracial* conversations with spouse
  - Shifting *intra-racial* conversations with friends
  - Shifting *interracial* conversations with friends
  - Increased will toward anti-racist action in personal sphere
  - Seeking additional learning resources

Impact of Racial Equity Coaching on White Educators’ Professional Practice

- Noticing patterns of systemic racism in school policy, program, and practice
- Coded language, deficit mindset, and white racial bonding
- Avoidance in the professional setting
- Increased will toward anti-racist action in professional sphere
  - Shifting *intra-racial* conversations with colleagues
  - Shifting *interracial* conversations with colleagues
  - Shifting *interracial* conversations with students and parents
  - Shifting *interracial* conversations in outside professional communities

Elements of 1:1 Racial Equity Coaching Partnership for Increased Effectiveness

- Supportive relationship
- Practicing CCAR protocol in reflective conversations
- Accountability
- Creating professional development opportunities for shared racial equity learning
- Modeling the racial equity journey
- Providing learning resources


doi:10.1002/jcad.12031


doi:10.1016/j.tate.2007.02.009


Mickelson, R. A. (2003). When are racial disparities in education the result of racial discrimination? A social science perspective. Teachers College Record, 105(6), 1052-1086. doi:10.1111/1467-9620.00277


687-709.

CA: Corwin Press.

Corwin Press.

M. Pollock (Ed.), *Everyday antiracism: Getting real about race in school* (18-23).

Solorzano, D. G. & Yosso, T. J. (2001). From racial stereotyping and deficit discourse

http://www.schooldigger.com/go/MN/schools/3378001531/school.aspx

http://www.greatschools.org/minnesota/st.-louis-park/1952-Susan-Lindgren-
Elementary-School

http://www.slopschools.org/sl

Teemant, A., Wink, J., & Tyra, S. (2011). Effects of coaching on teacher use of
doi:10.1016/j.tate.2010.11.006

Versalles, L. (2014) *Coaching for racial equity: Deepening our will, skill, knowledge, and capacity to coach for systemic racial equity transformation* (Professional development training, July 14, 2014). Pacific Educational Group, Minnetonka, MN.

