

Fall 2022

# **Social Foundations of Education and the Teacher Development Continuum: A Case Study of a University-Based Induction Program**

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SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF EDUCATION AND THE TEACHER DEVELOPMENT  
CONTINUUM: A CASE STUDY OF A UNIVERSITY-BASED INDUCTION PROGRAM

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in

Educational Foundations and Inquiry

College of Education

University of South Carolina

2022

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## DEDICATION

To my daughter, Aubrey, you were the inspiration I needed to complete this process. I love you to the moon and back.

To my parents, I would not be who I am today without your unwavering love and support. Thank you for instilling in me the belief that with hard work and dedication I have the potential to accomplish anything I set my mind to.

To my husband, I would not have been able to complete this process without your devoted love and support. Thank you for always believing in me even when I did not believe in myself.

To Corey & Holly, thank you for all your positive encouragement and laughs along the way.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you to my dissertation committee, I could not have asked for a better one. You all offered your expertise and support at all steps in the process and for that I am grateful.

Thank you to Dr. Ashlee Lewis for your constant words of wisdom and willingness to serve as my unofficial mentor throughout this process.

Thank you to Dr. Tammiee Dickenson and Dr. Eric Moschella for offering me professional opportunities that were supportive of my pursuit of a doctoral degree. I would not have been able to complete this process without your understanding, flexibility, and support.

Thank you to my best friend, Katie, for your check-ins, encouragement, and tough love throughout this process. Your friendship is invaluable.

And finally, thank you to my family. Your sacrifices during this process did not go unnoticed. I am truly blessed and will be forever grateful for your love and support. I could not have done this without you.

## ABSTRACT

Given the expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools, pre-service and early-career teachers need to develop the cultural competence necessary to navigate an increasingly diverse population of students. To do so, pre-service and early-career teachers must cultivate an understanding of how education and schools are affected by the structure of and issues within society. The field of social foundations of education (SFE) provides an opportunity to assist prospective and current teachers in developing the critical inquiry skills and cultural competence needed to persist in teaching an increasingly diverse population of students.

This study utilizes qualitative case study methodology to investigate a university-based teacher induction program at a predominately white institution (PWI) in the southeastern U.S. to inform teacher induction and teacher preparation policy and practices in a way that assists pre-service and early-career teachers in the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. In seeking to understand how early-career teachers' participation in a university-based teacher induction program supports their exposure to the key tenets of SFE and impacts the development of inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies, nine teachers who participated in the university-based induction program, as well as all three members of the program's leadership team, were interviewed.

This study aspired to fill a research gap, as there is no existing literature that examines the role of a university-based teacher induction program in facilitating the development of a critical perspective of education necessary for early career teachers to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. The study's findings indicate that though participants had a limited understanding of SFE content and principles, they benefited from induction support that mirrored the key tenets of SFE. These findings demonstrate that university-based induction programs provide an opportunity for SFE scholars to locate alternate space within the teacher development continuum for SFE content and principles to be incorporated – building upon the aspects of the field teachers engage with during their pre-service preparation.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

For years I worked as an educator within higher education, specifically with intercollegiate athletes. During this time, many of the students with whom I worked were African American males – a minority population on the institution’s campus of the study and very different from me racially, socio-economically, and culturally. As a white, middle-class educator, I took great pride working with a diverse population of students, often using our shared experience as student-athletes to connect and develop a relationship with them. Yet, it was not until a few years into my career, in having reflective conversations with my students about their previous educational experience, that I realized, although we held being student-athletes in common, our educational experiences as student-athletes were very different. My students would express a disenchantment with education, sharing stories of their negative experiences in schools or with specific teachers. As an educator working with racially, socio-economically, and culturally diverse students, this was the first time I realized that my experiences with education were not like my students’ experiences. Up until that point, I had not considered that educational experiences are different based on race, socio-economic status, and culture. This epiphany about education and schooling was almost four years into my career as an educator.

Looking back, I believe my path from that moment could have gone only one of two ways: (a) the realization could have been overwhelming and consuming to the point I stepped away from my work with students, or (b) I put effort into searching for the

knowledge and tools to help me navigate the realization. Fortunately, working on a college campus afforded me access to the resources I needed to find the knowledge and tools to help me navigate this new awakening to the reality of education. I found myself enrolled as a doctoral student in the Educational Foundations and Inquiry (EDFI) program in the college of education on campus. This program, grounded in the social foundations of education field, pushed me to develop a self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities and ways in which education could be utilized to resist this reproduction. Through my coursework I cultivated an understanding for societal issues and how they affect education and schools, as well as a critical consciousness that allows me to identify power dynamics and recognize systems of oppression within not only our society, but also specifically within our public education system. This undoubtedly made me a better educator and person. Not only was I now aware of the vast differences of educational experiences among my students based on race, socio-economic status, and culture, but I also became aware of the privilege my own demographics afforded me and how that affected my interactions with my students.

Now reflecting on this experience, I wonder what would have happened to the students with whom I worked if I had not made the decision to pursue the knowledge and tools needed to navigate my realization that not everyone experiences education and school the same. Would I have unknowingly reproduced their previous negative experiences with education and schooling? Would I have given up on education and added to the list of educators who had given up on them? Though I was lucky enough to locate the resources I needed to gain the knowledge and tools to persist, this is not the

case for so many educators – specifically for teachers in public education classrooms across the United States (U.S.). So now, I find myself asking – how can public school teachers gain the knowledge and tools I was able to so that they can not only persist in the field of education, but so all students are afforded a positive and equitable educational experience?

Consequently, my dissertation work focuses on how a university-based teacher induction program can incorporate key tenets of the social foundations of education (SFE) to provide an additional opportunity to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to help them persist as educators and engage in positive educational experiences with all their students. Though my dissertation utilizes a university-based teacher induction program as its unit of analysis, the project is not an evaluation of the program, but instead, foregrounds the experiences of participating teachers in the program and how the support they receive connects with SFE. Additionally, the goal of my dissertation is to understand how the incorporation of key tenets of SFE into a teacher induction program enhances the preparation of public-school teachers. This study employs The Council for Social Foundations of Education's (CSFE) *Standards for Academic and Professional Instruction in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies (Standards)* as a framework for identifying the key tenets of SFE; more specifically the five principles within the *Standards* that reflect the field's collective efforts to define SFE terminology, summarize its key tenets, and highlight the field's value to the preparation of both educators and researchers. CSFE principle one states that educators should be able to understand and apply knowledge from the humanities and social sciences in order to determine the meaning of education and schooling across

cultures (CSFE, 2000). CSFE principles two and three state that educators should be able to understand and apply normative and critical perspectives on education and schooling (CSFE, 2000). CSFE principle four states that educators should understand how moral principles related to democracy inform schooling practices and administration (CSFE, 2000). CSFE principle five states that educators should understand the importance of diversity in a democratic society (CSFE, 2000). CSFE principle six states that educators should understand how philosophical and moral beliefs affect evaluation at all levels of schooling practice (CSFE, 2000). Additional details regarding the CSFE principles can be found in Chapter 2. The intent of my work is not to focus on teacher preparation programs or to imply that teacher induction programs can replace teacher preparation programs. Ultimately, I hope to uncover an understanding of the value of SFE in the development of early career teachers; and, in doing so, underscore the importance of the field in the overall preparation and development of public-school teachers.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The landscape of public education across the U.S. suffers from an expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between the increasingly diverse student population entering public schools and the primarily white, middle-class teacher preparation program population preparing to teach in public school classrooms (Anderson & Aronson, 2019; Carson et al., 2020; Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Cross, 2003; Gay & Howard, 2000; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Howard, 2003, 2019; Milner, 2006; Sleeter, 2001, 2008; Sleeter & Milner, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Villegas et al., 2012; Zeichner, 1993). The racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools is exacerbated by the

devaluation of SFE programs within colleges of education across the country (Barbre, 2018; Butin, 2005b; Hartlep & Porfilio, 2015; Hayes & Fasching-Varner, 2015; Neumann, 2009; Pope & Stenhagen, 2008; Swain, 2013). The social foundations of education is an interdisciplinary field seeking to blend the humanities and social sciences to understand education, including schools, in a social context (Provenzo, 2008; Tozer, 2001). Schools are viewed as social institutions that have a social role, and because of this, reflect the culture in which they operate. The goal of the field is to examine interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives on education, identified as particularly important for educators in training to answer the fundamental question, ‘What is the purpose of education in our society?’ (Provenzo, 2008).

Public school classrooms filled with an increasingly diverse student population require teachers, specifically white, middle-class teachers, to question long-held assumptions about education and school. In addition, they must be able to identify inequities within educational practices in their own classrooms, as well as educational policies within their school, district, and the public education system. Teachers need to develop a self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities. To do so, they need to cultivate an understanding for societal issues and how they affect education and schools. Butin (2005b) describes how SFE is key to assisting prospective teachers in developing the critical inquiry skills and cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. In addition, he explains how prospective teachers’ engagement with the field can minimize the “culture shock” many new teachers experience when they enter their own classroom for the first time, and therefore any

attrition related to it, through their development of an understanding of schools as social institutions with a social role (Butin, 2005b).

The interdisciplinary nature of SFE that seeks to understand education, including schools, in a social context is why the founding scholars stressed the importance of the social foundations program in teacher preparation. Engagement with the key tenets of SFE can assist teachers in developing a self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities, as well as foster the skills necessary for them to engage students of any race, socio-economic status, or culture in equitable educational experiences. Yet, the diminishing role of SFE in teacher education program curricula leaves pre-service and early career teachers lacking a foundation in the key SFE knowledge and principles imperative to developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students (Benchik-Osborne, 2013; Butin, 2005b; Hartlep & Porfilio, 2015; Tozer & Miretzky, 2005).

### **Research Purpose**

Given the expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between the increasingly diverse student population entering public schools and the primarily white, middle-class teacher preparation program population preparing to teach in public school classrooms (Anderson & Aronson, 2019; Carson et al., 2020; Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Cross, 2003; Gay & Howard, 2000; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Howard, 2003, 2019; Milner, 2006; Sleeter, 2001, 2008; Sleeter & Milner, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Villegas et al., 2012; Zeichner, 1993), this study investigates a university-based teacher induction program at a predominately white institution (PWI) in the



southeastern U.S. Through this investigation of a university-based teacher induction program, I seek to identify an additional opportunity for the field of social foundations of education to demonstrate its value to teacher development. Furthermore, I attempt to uncover how university-based teacher induction programs can be intentional with embedding aspects of SFE within program structures and processes. The ultimate goal of this study is to inform teacher induction and teacher preparation policy and practices in a way that assists pre-service and early-career teachers in developing a self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities, as well as the cultural competence (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b) necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students.

### **Type of Study and Research Questions**

To contribute to the body of work that addresses the racial, socio-economic and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools, this qualitative case study seeks to better understand how, if at all, a university-based teacher induction program facilitates the development of the critical inquiry skills fundamental to SFE and what value the development of these skills may have for pre-service and early career teachers. Though SFE examines normative, critical, and interpretive perspectives of education and schooling, I am choosing to foreground the critical perspective in my research questions. By doing so this allows me to underscore my interest in how SFE assists teachers in being able to question dominant assumptions about education and society in order to engage in the critical analysis of societal power structures and dynamics, as well as challenge the education and schooling ideologies that privilege specific cultures and lived experiences of some populations within society, while

marginalizing the culture and lived experiences of others (Committee on Academic Standards and Accreditation, 2013). To this end, the following research questions guide the project:

- How does a university-based teacher induction program facilitate the development of a critical perspective of education for early career teachers?
  - a) How does early career teachers' participation in a university-based teacher induction program support their exposure to the key tenets of social foundations of education and impact the development of inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies?
- How does a university-based teacher induction program highlight the value of the field of social foundations of education in the development of pre-service and early career teachers?

### ***Brief Summary of Methodology***

To explore the research questions shared above, this study employs a qualitative case study methodology. For this project, the unit of analysis is a university-based teacher induction program. The subunits of analysis are the induction program participants, as well as the program leadership team. The data sources for this study include interviews with teachers and program leadership, researcher reflection memos, and field notes from program meetings. In seeking to understand how early-career teachers' participation in a university-based teacher induction program supports their exposure to the key tenets of SFE that could facilitate the development of inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies, I

interviewed nine teachers who participated in the university-based induction program, as well as all three members of the program's leadership team. A total of three interviews were conducted with each teacher participant and one interview was conducted with each of the three members of the program leadership team. All interviews were conducted from spring 2021 to spring 2022. Initial data analysis utilized a combination of "a priori" and emergent coding, while I employed a thematic analysis approach in a secondary, detailed review of the data. Given my pre-existing professional relationship with the university-based teacher induction program, I also utilized reflective memos to help inform the research design, data collection, and analysis process.

### **Significance of the Study**

It is my hope to contribute to the literature that addresses the expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools, as well as the growing teacher shortages across the country, while simultaneously highlighting the value of SFE to the development of teachers who persist within the teaching profession. Currently, there is very little literature that investigates the relationship between university-based teacher induction programs and teacher outcomes. The few existing studies do show promising findings in regard to university-based teacher induction support and its effect on teacher retention (Bastian & Marks, 2017; Colbert & Wolff, 1992; Davis & Higdon, 2008; Kelly, 2004; Schaffer et al., 1992; Stanulis & Floden, 2009). Yet, there is no existing literature that investigates how university-based teacher induction programs have the potential to address the racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between students and teachers. Additionally, though researchers have taken up work that examines the value of SFE to teacher development in

place-based learning and teacher residency settings, there is no existing literature examining the value of the field within the context of a university-based teacher induction program (Carson et al., 2020; Roegman et al., 2020). This gap in the literature is explored in further detail in Chapter 2.

Ultimately, this project works to contribute to these gaps in the literature by seeking to understand how, if at all, a university-based teacher induction program facilitates the development of the critical inquiry skills fundamental to SFE and what value the development of these skills may have for pre-service and early career teachers. University-based teacher induction programs provide a unique opportunity to explore pre-service and early career teachers' development of the critical inquiry skills fundamental to the social foundations of education simultaneous to their exposure to the realities of teaching in public schools in the U.S. A deeper exploration of this phenomenon has the potential to highlight the value of the field to teacher induction programs, with the hopes of sparking a renewed urgency, not only for SFE coursework requirements for prospective teachers, but also for the key concepts of SFE as outlined in the CSFE *Standards* to be embedded throughout the entire teacher development process from pre-service to early career teaching.

### **Overview of Dissertation Layout**

This project is organized into six chapters. Following this introduction, the subsequent chapters are a narrative that details the guiding framework, execution, and resulting knowledge of my dissertation. To conclude this introduction of my study, I provide a brief outline of the remaining five chapters. In Chapter 2, I discuss my conceptual framework – organized into three main modules: situated knowledge and

assumptions, theoretical framework, and a review of related studies and relevant literature. Chapter 3 is a description of the methodology and methods used to conduct the study. In addition, I outline the analysis process I employed to engage with the data, as well as discuss further methodological considerations for my study. Chapter 4 provides an overview of the university-based induction program that serves as the unit of analysis for my study and situates the program within the teacher development continuum, particularly as it relates to engagement with the field of SFE. This chapter also explores the data collected from interviews with the program's leadership team members, with a focus on any additional insights it provides into program context, as well as how, if at all, the program engages with the key tenets of SFE. In Chapter 5 I present and discuss the study's findings at both the macro and micro levels. Finally, Chapter 6 explores the implications of these findings and offers possibilities for future research.

## CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The conceptual context for this study utilizes Maxwell's (2013) model for a conceptual framework. Accordingly, my study's conceptual framework is built upon three main modules: a) my situated knowledge and assumptions based upon my academic, personal, and professional experiences, b) a theoretical framing comprised of my onto-epistemological assumptions, as well as existing perspectives and theoretical concepts that inform my approach to my research topic, and c) related studies and relevant literature regarding the focus of the study. According to Maxwell (2013), these modules are the "conception of what is out there that you plan to study, and of what is going on with these things and why— a tentative *theory* of the phenomena you are investigating" (p. 39). Essentially, it is how I am framing my research based on existing knowledge. The sections below provide a detailed explanation of each module of my conceptual framework.

### **Situated Knowledge and Assumptions**

My search for the knowledge and tools to help me navigate my realization that educational experiences in the U.S. are different based on race, socio-economic status, and culture fueled a desire to expand my professional career beyond my work in higher education with intercollegiate athletes. As I progressed throughout the EDFI doctoral program, I made the decision to accept a new position as a research associate for a research, evaluation, and measurement center within the university's college of education. This role affords me the opportunity to further refine my research and

evaluation skills working with projects focused on educational experiences within public schools. It is my current work in this role, combined with my experiences in intercollegiate athletics, that led me to my interest in understanding how a university-based teacher induction program at a PWI in the southeastern U.S. can assist early-career teachers in developing their own self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities, while simultaneously developing an understanding for societal issues and how they affect education and schools.

Currently, I serve as the lead research associate for the evaluation of a university-based teacher induction program that began supporting select new graduates of the college's teacher preparation program in fall 2017. I have worked as part of the evaluation team since the program began. Given the unique nature of this evaluation project where we are conducting a formative evaluation to inform program development and a summative evaluation of program outcomes, the evaluation team has become an integral part of the college's internal development team for the program. Over the past five years, my work with the program has cultivated my conviction university-based teacher induction programs provide an opportunity for educators and researchers to further their understanding of the strengths and challenges beginning teachers face, resulting in more targeted supports for early career teachers. This conviction, along with my continued studies within the EDFI doctoral program, is what led me to my research interest for this study. My development of a self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities cannot be completely set aside in my work as an evaluator. Though I am able to separate my

research interests from my professional obligations, I cannot help but see the overlap between the two. I observe conversations among program participants and program staff that touch upon the racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools. Additionally, I have observed over the past five years how each cohort of new teachers within the program struggle to adjust to teaching in public school classrooms for the first time. Many indicate that their first-year experiences in the classroom are not at all what they expected based on their preparation. These observations developed my interest in understanding how, if at all, a university-based teacher induction program exposes teachers to the key tenets of SFE to facilitate the development of a critical perspective of education for early career teachers – a perspective that, according to Butin (2005b), assists in the minimization of the “culture shock” many new teachers experience, and any attrition related to it. And if so, how does that highlight the value of the field of social foundations of education to the development of early career teachers; and, in doing so, underscore the importance of the field in the overall preparation and development of public-school teachers. To be clear, this study is not an evaluation of the university-based teacher induction program, but instead, the program serves as the vessel in which to study how exposure to the key tenets of SFE facilitates the development of early career teachers’ inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies.

Given my pre-existing professional connection to the university-based teacher induction program the study investigates, it is important for me to remain aware of my biases. Though I have become an integral part of the program’s internal development



team, I have been able to balance my role as a program evaluator by remaining committed to analyzing and presenting all data collected no matter if it is positive or critical in nature. This is also key in my dissertation work. As a member of the program's internal development team, I am pleased by the positive feedback and attention the program has received over the past five years. Emergent data indicate that the program is successful in its goal of keeping early career teachers in the classroom; however, I must remember that my study is not evaluating program outcomes, but is searching to understand how the program supports early career teachers' exposure to the key tenets of SFE and the development of inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies. Though the program has realized success in its early years, that success could not influence my research for this study. To ensure my work as evaluator did not influence this study's research, I engaged in reflective memoing as part of the data collection process. I discuss this in further detail in the *Data Collection* section of Chapter 3.

From the study's onset, I have been aware the data collected may not provide any indication the program supports early career teachers' exposures to the key tenets of SFE, in turn, facilitating the development of a critical perspective of education for participating teachers. Through my work as an evaluator for the program, I am aware that the program's participating teacher population is representative of the teacher preparation program population preparing to teach in public school classrooms. Given that program participants have remained in the classroom at such a high rate, as a researcher I am interested in uncovering whether or not through the intentional or unintentional facilitation of participating teachers' engagement with the field of social foundations of

education assists in minimizing teacher attrition related to the “culture shock” new teachers experience entering public school classrooms with an increasingly diverse student population. This would follow Butin’s (2005b) claim that teachers’ engagement with the field supports teachers in the development of an understanding of schools as social institutions with a social role, and therefore, minimizes the “culture shock” many new teachers experience when they enter their classrooms for the first time. Yet these are assumptions based on my experiences I made at the beginning of the research process and as a researcher, I had to ensure that my assumptions did not influence the data collection and analysis process.

As a program evaluator for the university-based teacher induction program that is the focus of my work, my insider knowledge of the program and experience working with program leadership and program participants both strengthen and limit my study (Lincoln & Guba, 2012; Nakata, 2015). I worked hard to make the familiar strange in conducting my study in an environment with which I am familiar. However, my knowledge of the day-to-day workings of the program did provide me additional insight for my research and analysis. My identity as a former educator at the collegiate level and my identity as a member of the program’s internal development team strengthened my ability to build rapport with participants of the study, providing me with an avenue to establish commonalities and build trustworthiness in hopes of obtaining rich data. Yet they also had the potential to limit my study if I was not able to separate my experience from the experiences of the participants. Throughout my work, I needed to manage my tendency to voice concerns about inequities I observe to keep me off my soapbox and focused on my research questions. It was not my role as the researcher to discuss with

teacher participants how schools work to reproduce inequities in society, but instead to understand how the teacher participants interpreted the education systems role, if at all, in the reproduction of societal inequities. My conviction that university-based teacher induction programs provide an opportunity for educators and researchers to further their understanding of the strengths and challenges beginning teachers face, resulting in more targeted supports for early career teachers, guided me in my persistence throughout the research process, but I continually monitored my subjectivity and positionality in order to understand the preconceptions I brought to the study based on my own personal beliefs and experiences and the influence they had on the research process.

I employed several methods throughout the research process to continually monitor the impact of my subjectivity and positionality. These methods included maintaining a reflexive research journal, attending to triangulation, and engaging in member checking. These methods are discussed in more detail in the *Methodological Considerations* section of Chapter 3.

### **Theoretical Framing**

In terms of existing perspectives in qualitative research, my onto-epistemological approach is influenced by both the constructivist-interpretative and critical paradigms. This combination of influences lends itself to postcritical qualitative approach to research (Noblit et al., 2004). I believe social actors create social phenomena and social meanings; therefore, social phenomena and meanings do not exist without social actors. This perspective lends itself to the tradition of the constructivist approach to research (Lincoln, et al., 2012). In researching social phenomena, I believe it is important to understand each person as an individual with unique experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and identities. These

experiences, attitudes, beliefs, and identities are developed through a person's interaction with others and social institutions. Also consistent with the constructivist approach, my epistemological perspective follows closer to the subjectivist end of the continuum.

Knowledge is based on an individual's perspective and experiences. In gathering knowledge about social reality, it is important to understand that there are differences between people and that the meaning of social action is subjective. A researcher must be able to observe and gather information about the subjective meaning of the social action of those being studied; therefore, information about reality is developed through the senses. Through social interaction and understanding one's experiences through the senses is how knowledge is gathered. Ultimately, knowledge or understanding is co-created in the research process through interactions between researcher and participants.

My critique of the expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between the increasingly diverse student population entering public schools and the primarily white, middle-class teacher preparation program population preparing to teach in public school classrooms, in conjunction with my orientation towards social justice positions my research within the postcritical paradigm (Noblit, et al., 2004). As a researcher, I am concerned with issues of power and oppression. Adopting critical theory as a theoretical perspective allows me to move beyond research for understanding to research for advocacy (Lather, 2004; Murray & Ozanne, 1991, Prasad, 2005). Critical inquires question power and investigate the inequalities created by power in order to better understand how to act against it (Lather, 2004). According to Lather (2004), "Doing critical inquiry means taking into account how our lives are mediated by systems of inequity such as classism, racism, sexism, and heterosexism" (p. 205). The goal of critical

inquiry is to unite research with advocacy to develop knowledge that can contest power imbalances (Lather, 2004).

My belief in multiple realities is consistent with the postcritical approach. This approach not only focuses on the interrogation of power and critique of inequities, but also turns the lens on researchers themselves (Noblit et al., 2004). In doing so, researchers within this paradigm purport that realities are partial in that they are shaped by social, political, economic, and cultural influences and knowledge is not only transactional, but also value mediated (Denzin, 2003, 2017; Noblit et al., 2004). In employing a postcritical approach, I assume all findings value-mediated (Murray & Ozanne, 1991). That is, I cannot separate myself from the research I conduct. There is no value-free social science; facts are not independent of human agency (Lincoln et al., 2012). Due to this belief, by employing a postcritical approach, I give up the idea of neutrality – that engaging in research means engaging from particular positions. I do not believe that there is one reality out there and all knowledge derives from that reality, which can be unaffected or uninfluenced by the researcher and their beliefs. Often, postcritical researchers engage in reflexivity as a way to build credibility and trustworthiness in their work (Noblit et al., 2004). This study does not claim objectivity or neutrality. I hope my engagement in this study contributes to the existing body of research that seeks to address the expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between the increasingly diverse student population entering public schools and the primarily white, middle-class teacher preparation program population preparing to teach in public school classrooms.

Postcritical work, similar to critical inquiry, allows researchers to pursue a variety of research questions. Postcritical qualitative work looks to construct research questions that promote oppressed groups to evaluate specific parts of their lives to stimulate change in society as a whole (Lincoln et al., 2012; Noblit et al., 2004). The research questions that direct this study allow a university-based teacher induction program to be examined in hopes to inform teacher preparation policy and practices in a way that assists pre-service and early-career teachers in cultivating an understanding for societal issues and how they affect education and schools to foster a self-awareness of their role in the reproduction of current inequities within society.

Given the current state of the socio-cultural climate in the U.S., acknowledging the impact of race and racism in the everyday lives of people seems a glaring necessity in any attempt to uncover a deeper understanding of lived experience. It is important to interrogate not only society, but also the individual social institutions within it, such as schools, in a way that recognizes the interconnectedness of race, power, and social structure. Within histories of critical theories is Critical Race Theory (CRT), a field that originated within the critical legal studies movement. CRT is an intellectual and methodological tradition that examines law's relationship to mainstream notions of race, racism, power inequity, and privilege (Bell, 1987; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2021). Ladson-Billings & Tate (1995) are credited with bringing CRT into the field of education, and examining, in an analogous way, education's relationship to race and racism. As a researcher who subscribes to many of the ideas of CRT, I believe the investigation of any phenomenon within society must examine race, racism, power inequity, and privilege within institutions and society. Accordingly, CRT informs how

this project situates the expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between public school teacher/student populations and the growing teacher shortage. An increasingly diverse student population is entering public school classrooms to be taught by a primarily white, middle-class teacher population, reproducing a racial hierarchy of white dominance within the educational system consistent with society at large. Teachers, unable to conceptualize the idea of racialized educational experiences – as a result of lived experiences, existing color-blind racism ideologies, or both – lack the critical inquiry skills to be able to navigate the stress of teaching a classroom of students with a variety of lived experiences different from their own, resulting in higher levels of stress and an increased likeliness of exiting the teaching profession.

More specifically, this study also draws upon the work of CRT scholars who problematize the neo-conservative strategy of “colorblindness” developed in right-wing think tanks the 1970s as a way to constrain civil rights and limit equal protection and forms of redress (Crenshaw, 1988; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Dixson & Rousseau Anderson, 2018). This colorblind view of civil rights was quickly adopted by the Reagan Administration in 1981 in direct opposition to the civil rights policies of the past two decades (Crenshaw, 1988). According to Crenshaw (1988):

Neoconservative doctrine singles out race-specific civil rights policies as one of the most significant threats to the democratic political system. Emphasizing the need for strict color-blind policies, this view call for the repeal of affirmative action and other race-specific remedial policies, urges an end to class-based remedies, and call for the [Reagan] Administration to limit remedies to what it calls ‘actual victims’ of discrimination. (p. 1337)

CRT scholars counter that the ideology of “colorblindness” benefits the white majority and is a deeply rooted political strategy that actively seeks to maintain racial hierarchy in our society (Crenshaw, 1988; Crenshaw et al., 1995; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Dixson & Rousseau Anderson, 2018; Gotanda, 1991; Rousseau & Tate, 2003). The CRT critique of colorblindness and its perpetuation of racial inequity is not limited to simply the lack of acknowledgement of race, but also the failure to locate race within a larger sociopolitical and historical context (Dixson & Rousseau Anderson, 2018). For students of Color entering public school classrooms, race and racism are normalized aspects of their lived experiences. A white teacher’s inability to understand how this results in racialized educational experiences for students is influenced by one’s own whiteness and unawareness of the value it holds. Colorblind ideology’s political influence on educational policy provides the discourse and justification for white teachers to ignore race within their student population and dismiss any notion of racialized educational experiences for students, essentially disregarding the lived experiences of students of Color in their classroom.

A second conceptual lens this study draws upon is culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Over the past 20 years, the concept of CRP has evolved within educational reform pertaining to teacher preparation programs and the attempt to provide equity in education for all students. CRP is a theoretical framework that incorporates both student achievement and the affirmation of students’ cultural identity, assisting students in the development of a critical perspective that challenges societal inequities (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). It is in this criticality where CRP differs from other cultural perspectives of teaching practice, as it actively encourages teachers to interrogate



and disrupt the status quo (Parsons & Wall, 2011). Furthermore, CRP directly contradicts the neo-conservative strategy of “colorblindness” by encouraging teachers to not only identify, but also affirm and incorporate students’ cultural identities within their teaching practice. Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b) identifies three key aspects that comprised what she named as culturally relevant pedagogy (a) a focus on student achievement, (b) a focus on cultural competence, and (c) the development of a critical consciousness. In addition, critical self-reflection by teachers was identified as a necessary step in the process of developing a culturally relevant pedagogy, allowing teachers to build an understanding of how their own cultural identities influence their perceptions of students’ cultural identities. This study situates cultural competence and critical consciousness as crucial aspects in the development of pre-service and early career teachers who are able to navigate the teacher/student socio-cultural gap and persist within the teaching profession. Specifically, it seeks to understand how a university-based teacher induction program facilitates the development of a critical consciousness for participating teachers.

### **Review of Related Studies and Relevant Literature**

To contribute to a better understanding of the role SFE can play in the development of pre-service and early career teachers, this study is situated within several bodies of academic literature. It is my hope as a researcher to add and contribute to the literature regarding the expanding teacher-student demographic divide in public school classrooms across the U.S. The study also draws upon the existing literature that examines the value of SFE to teacher development. Furthermore, the study is informed by work that investigates teacher induction as a support for the development of early-career teachers.

### ***The Racial, Socio-economic, and Cultural Divide***

The expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between the increasingly diverse student population entering public schools and the primarily white, middle-class teacher preparation program population preparing to teach in public school classrooms is well documented in the literature (Anderson & Aronson, 2019; Carson et al., 2020; Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Cross, 2003; Gay & Howard, 2000; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Howard, 2003, 2019; Milner, 2006; Sleeter, 2001, 2008; Sleeter & Milner, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Villegas et al., 2012; Zeichner, 1993). Its origins can be traced back to desegregation when the “whitening of the teaching force” resulted from the closure of African American schools that led to many African American teachers and administrators losing their positions within public education (Milner & Howard, 2004; Sleeter, 2008). As a growing number of students of color were entering integrated public-school classrooms for the first time in the late 1960s and early 1970s, the teaching profession was becoming increasingly dominated by white educators. Yet, it was not until the 1980s when the teacher-student demographic divide began to garner the attention of educational professionals and scholars (Carnegie Forum on Education and the Economy, 1986; Cole, 1986; Graham, 1987; Irvine, 1988; Villegas et al., 2012; Witty, 1986). As predicted by many scholars, this divide has continued to expand over the past forty years. Currently, a majority of teacher preparation programs produce approximately 80% white cohorts of teachers, even though white students comprise less than 50% of the K-12 population (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Though not mutually exclusive, existing literature regarding the teacher-student demographic divide in public education takes one of two approaches to addressing the divide. The first approach focuses on better preparing all teachers, but specifically predominantly white, middle-class teachers, to teach a diverse student population (Aronson & Meyers, 2022; Cross, 2003; Goldenberg, 2014; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Howard, 2003; Sleeter & Milner, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Wachira & Mburu, 2017). Research taking up this approach frequently employs the work of Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b) in which she identifies and names culturally relevant pedagogy. For example, Howard (2003) discusses the importance of critical reflection as a tool for the creation of culturally relevant teaching practices. He utilizes his role as an instructor for a teacher preparation program that prepares teachers to teach in urban school settings to investigate the value in having pre-service teachers critically analyze the concepts of race, ethnicity, and culture in order to develop an understanding of how issues related to these concepts shape students' learning experiences. Ultimately, he provides recommendations of how to engage teachers in critical reflection in a way that leads to culturally relevant teaching (Howard, 2003). In a similar vein, Wachira and Mburu (2017) discuss the theory of constructivism, its connection to culturally relevant pedagogy, and implications for teaching – specifically mathematics. Based on their review of existing empirical studies related to pre-service teacher education, mathematics teacher education, and multicultural education, Wachira and Mburu (2017) posit that in order for teachers to properly employ a culturally relevant pedagogy, they must first understand that students construct their own knowledge based on their individual lived experiences and backgrounds. This constructivist view of knowledge is often inconsistent

with teachers' beliefs, especially mathematics teachers' beliefs, that students must learn a foundation of knowledge from direct instruction and memorization. Subsequently, the researchers recommend that teacher preparation programs assist pre-service teachers in examining their beliefs about knowledge through targeted training and preparation (Wachira & Mburu, 2017).

The second approach focuses on recruiting a more diverse population of pre-service teacher candidates into teacher preparation programs and the teaching profession (Billingsley et al., 2019; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Egalite & Kisida, 2018; Lindsay & Hart, 2017; Osei-Twumasi & Pinetta, 2019; Scott & Profitt, 2021; Sleeter & Milner, 2011; Villegas et al., 2012; Waddell & Ukpokodu, 2012). The literature surrounding this approach often utilizes Irvine's (2003) cultural and racial congruence and incongruence as a framework. For example, Cherng and Halpin (2016) investigate minority student perceptions of minority versus non-minority teachers. In their secondary analysis of longitudinal data from a pre-existing database created from the administration of a survey of students' perceptions of their teachers' instructional strategies, Cherng and Halpin (2016) determine that students' perceptions of teachers vary based on the race and/or ethnicity of teacher. Furthermore, the data indicates that on average Latino and Black teachers were more positively perceived than white teachers across all student groups. Cherng and Halpin (2016) discuss how these findings highlight the importance of having a diverse population of teachers within public school classrooms and in turn, advocate for the strengthening of recruitment efforts of students of color by teacher preparation programs. Egalite and Kisida (2018) also investigate the effects of demographic matches between students and teachers. Their research utilizes student survey data to demonstrate

the positive impact on academic perception students experience when they are matched with a teacher who has similar demographic characteristics. Egalite and Kisida (2018) explain that teacher-student demographic matches, specifically relating to race and gender, influence students' experience in the classroom and provides further evidence to support calls to diversify the public-school teacher population.

Both bodies of literature addressing the expanding teacher-student demographic divide in public school classrooms provide sound evidence and valid points. As Osei-Twumasi and Pinetta (2019) point out, although the recruitment of minority teachers is and should continue to be important, the vast majority of the teacher population now and for the foreseeable future will be white, middle-class teachers. According to Osei-Twumasi and Pinetta (2019), "Teacher preparation should seek to incorporate training in understanding and managing the dynamics of racially mixed classrooms" (p. 25). This fact underscores the importance of training and preparation that assists teachers in being able to draw upon their students' cultural backgrounds, as well as provides them with the knowledge and skills to address racial issues.

### ***Social Foundations of Education***

The field of social foundations of education provides an existing avenue to help prepare pre-service and early career teachers in being able to draw upon their students' cultural backgrounds, as well as provide them with the knowledge and skills to address racial issues. SFE is an interdisciplinary field seeking to blend the humanities and social sciences with education to understand education, including schools, in a social context (Provenzo, 2008; Tozer, 2001). Schools are viewed as social institutions that have a social role and because of this, reflect the culture in which they operate. According to

Tozer (2001), from the beginning the field of social foundations of education, “was committed to a critical, cross-disciplinary analysis of the relations between schools and their social contexts” (p. 288).

**Key Tenets of SFE.** The goal of the field is to develop interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives on education, identified as particularly important for educators in training, to answer the fundamental question, ‘What is the purpose of education in our society?’ (Provenzo, 2008). The interpretive perspective seeks to understand the many social and cultural contexts that shape the educational process, both in schools and beyond. The field makes a clear distinction that education in society takes place both inside and outside of the formal setting of schooling, hence the separate use of the terms education and school (Provenzo, 2008). The normative perspective is a value-based way to understand education, focusing on individual philosophical approaches to schooling and personal ethics and norms. The critical perspective works to develop inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inconsistencies among educational policies (Provenzo 2008). SFE stresses the importance of prospective teachers and educational staff developing these perspectives based on the premise that an individual should not be involved in education without understanding the context of it as a social institution mediated by the dominant culture in society (Provenzo, 2008).

These perspectives are emphasized as defining characteristics of SFE in The Council for Social Foundations of Education’s (CSFE) *Standards for Academic and Professional Instruction in Foundations of Education, Educational Studies, and Educational Policy Studies (Standards)*. Initially published in the 1977-1978 academic

year by the American Educational Studies Association (AESA) and then later adopted in the early 1980s by the Council of Learned Societies in Education (renamed to Council for Social Foundations of Education in 2000), these standards reflect the field's collective efforts to define SFE terminology, summarize its key tenets, and highlight the field's value to the preparation of both educators and researchers. The current *CSFE Standards*, revised and re-published in 1996, were developed into a matrix to assist in the design and evaluation of teacher preparation programs with strong SFE components. The matrix includes six general principles that highlight the key tenets of SFE, along with specific indicators of knowledge, skills, and practical performance for each principle. The six principles are listed in the Table 2.1 below. Refer to the CSFE website for additional details about the *CSFE Standards*, as well as the specific indicators of knowledge, skills, and practical performance related to each principle ([http://www.unm.edu/~jka/csfe/standards\\_matrix.html](http://www.unm.edu/~jka/csfe/standards_matrix.html)).

Table 2.1: Summary of CSFE Standards' Principles

<b>CSFE Standards' Principles</b>	
Principle #1	The educator understands and can apply disciplinary knowledge from the humanities and social sciences to interpreting the meanings of education and schooling in diverse cultural contexts.
Principle #2	The educator understands and can apply normative perspectives on education and schooling.
Principle #3	The educator understands and can apply critical perspectives on education and schooling.
Principle #4	The educator understands how moral principles related to democratic institutions can inform and direct schooling practice, leadership, and governance.

Principle #5	The educator understands the full significance of diversity in a democratic society and how that bears on instruction, school leadership, and governance.
Principle #6	The educator understands how philosophical and moral commitments affect the process of evaluation at all levels of schooling practice, leadership, and governance.

As Benchik-Osborne (2013) explains, the application of these standards is “not to fashion a singular teaching disposition, but instead, offer a shared nomenclature from the democratic tradition” (p. 544). Ultimately, these standards represent SFE’s foundational belief that education is a social institution that is essential to the development and maintenance of a democratic society. The field advocates for schooling in society to be rooted in equitable access and that educational opportunities are just, fair, and democratic for all individuals (Committee on Academic Standards and Accreditation, 2013). SFE scholars seek to develop an understanding of diverse epistemological frameworks, question dominant assumptions about education and society in order to engage in the critical analysis of societal power structures and dynamics. Furthermore, SFE aims to challenge the education and schooling ideologies that privilege specific cultures and lived experiences of some populations within society, while marginalizing the culture and lived experiences of others (Committee on Academic Standards and Accreditation, 2013).

**SFE & Teacher Preparation.** Based on Mills’ (1959) contention that a person cannot understand the complex social forces that affect his or her everyday life and constitute a society just by living in the society, SFE scholars believe that teachers cannot understand education solely based on their experiences in the classroom (Sadovnik et al., 2018). This belief establishes the key role of the field in the preparation of teachers so



that they are able to develop critical inquiry skills and become reflective practitioners in that they are able to question educational assumptions and identify inequities in educational practice (Dewey, 1933; Sadovnik et al., 2018; Schön, 1983). Freire's (2000) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* highlights why, based on the key tenets of SFE outlined in the section above, SFE should be an important aspect of teacher preparation programs, specifically as it relates to the educating an increasingly diverse population of students. His work positions education as the avenue for eliminating oppression. Freire (2000) introduces a pedagogy from which oppressed groups can emancipate themselves from their oppressor and, as a result, increase student success in schools. The basis for this pedagogy is the possession of a critical awareness by students, one which all students possess, but need assistance in developing (Freire, 2000). Herein lies the role of education and schools, and explicitly, the role of the teacher. The key principle of Freire's (2000) pedagogy is found in the teacher/student relationship. The dialogical relationship between the teacher and the student must be one of partnership rather than hierarchy. Freire (2000) introduces the banking concept of education to further explain his point. "In the banking concept of education, knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing" (Freire, 2000, p. 72). It is the banking concept of education that describes a long-held educational assumption about the relationship that exists between the teacher and student. And it is in this hierarchical relationship where the process of inquiry is counteracted (Freire, 2000). Instead of being able to acknowledge that the learning process is one of inquiry, where both the student and teacher learn from one another, the learning process is viewed as a one-way street, where knowledge is simply passed from

the teacher to the student (Freire, 2000). This limits the student's ability to develop a critical consciousness, a consciousness that would allow them to view the world around them as transformable, but instead develops a passive role in a world they view as static.

Freire (2000) calls on educators to establish a space for problem-posing education rather than employing the banking concept. Through this method, a dialogue is established between the teacher and the students, where everyone teaches each other and knowledge is co-constructed, rather than imparted on students from someone in a position of authority. As Freire (2000) explains, "The students – no longer docile listeners – are now critical co-investigators in the dialogue with the teacher" (p. 81). The possession of this critical awareness is what allows students (the oppressed) to emancipate themselves from the oppressor – the teacher at the micro-level, but society at the macro-level – and develop an understanding that the world in which they live is one that can be transformed by their own actions (Freire, 2000). To develop the inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of long-held educational assumptions, such as the one described by Freire's (2000) banking concept, teachers need to develop a self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities. To do so, they need to cultivate an understanding for societal issues and how they affect education and schools. The interdisciplinary nature of the social foundations field that seeks to understand education, including schools, in a social context is why the founding scholars stressed the importance of the social foundations program in teacher preparation. Engagement with the key tenets of SFE can assist teachers in developing this self-awareness and foster the skills necessary for them to engage students in critical thinking about societal issues as well.

Butin (2005b) describes how SFE is key to assisting prospective teachers in developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. In addition, Butin (2005b) explains how prospective teachers' engagement with SFE can minimize the culture shock many new teachers experience, and therefore any attrition related to it, through their development of an understanding of schools as social institutions with a social role. SFE seeks to assist teachers in the development of critical inquiry skills by exposing them to and engaging them with contested positions about what they have come to understand as "normal" in teaching and education (Butin, 2005a). In doing so, it is the hope of SFE scholars to support teachers in their progression towards becoming practitioners who question educational assumptions and are able to identify inequities in educational practice at both micro (individual) and macro (structural) levels.

In an effort to demonstrate the value of SFE to teacher preparation, Carter (2008) investigated the relevancy of SFE to teachers in her study that engaged pre-service and early-career urban teachers who used their SFE coursework to reflect on the current landscape of urban education in the U.S. Through her analysis of open-ended writing responses completed as part of the participating teachers' enrollment in an initial master's level teacher preparation program course covering SFE content, findings indicate that their engagement with SFE knowledge and skills played a significant role in the development of their understanding of the role of the teacher and their framework for situating that role within the context of urban education (Carter, 2008). The teachers expressed that the SFE course was often where they initially began to develop the inquiry skills to critically examine the role of education and schools, particularly as it relates to

teaching, in society. Most importantly the participating teachers acknowledge that, “it is social foundations coursework that helps them to place themselves within current debates about what defines a ‘highly qualified teacher’ (Carter, 2008, p. 222). Based on this, Carter (2008) argues that not only is SFE content and coursework a value to teacher preparation programs, but also that SFE knowledge and skills should be included as part of the definition of what constitutes a highly qualified teacher.

Recently, Carson et al.’s (2020) action research case study of a placed-based learning model for prospective teacher preparation students reaffirmed the importance of SFE to teacher preparation. The placed-based learning model immersed primarily white prospective teachers within local urban schools with diverse student populations simultaneous to their enrollment in an introductory to social foundations of education course – a prerequisite for admission to the university’s teacher preparation program. The prospective teachers’ exposure and engagement with the key tenets of SFE positively influenced their experiences within the urban schools (Carson et al, 2020). Their immersion within the urban schools provided direct context for them to apply the key tenets of SFE within the classroom setting. The prospective teachers expressed an increase in self-awareness of their role as social actors within society and the role cultural backgrounds play in students’ educational experiences. In doing so, the prospective teachers fostered positive, authentic relationships with the students that assisted in improving the students’ academic self-concept and developed an understanding of the value of their work as educators (Carson et al, 2020).

**Devaluation of SFE.** Though there is existing literature that addresses the value of SFE to the development of teachers, the field has continued to experience uncertainty

surrounding its future as a result of its devaluation within colleges of education across the country, as well as by teacher preparation policymakers (Barbre, 2018; Butin, 2005b, 2005c; Hartlep & Porfilio, 2015; Hayes & Fasching-Varner 2015; Neumann, 2009; Pope & Stenhagen, 2008; Swain, 2013). This exacerbates the racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools, as teachers lack the critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students (Butin, 2005b). Hartlep & Porfilio (2015) identify four trends highlighting colleges of education devaluation of SFE programs in the current landscape. The four trends include: (a) fewer Ph.D.'s in the social foundations of education being conferred; (b) Educational Studies Departments, which typically house social foundations of education programs, being closed across the U.S.; (c) educational foundations tenure-lines being closed and replaced with adjuncts with little to no educational foundations training or expertise; and (d) the vast majority of teacher education programs not requiring students in teacher education programs to take a multicultural education or foundations of education course (Hartlep & Porfilio, 2015).

Regarding Hartlep and Porfilio's (2015) fourth trend, the current perspectives guiding teacher preparation and teacher education curriculums across the country present another, greater obstacle facing the field of social foundations of education. Although colleges of education are reducing or eliminating SFE programs, it is the devaluation of the field by teacher preparation policymakers that is often the underlying cause. As Tozer & Miretzky (2005) explain, SFE scholars are caught between two competing movements within the field of teacher education, neither of which align with their critical, cross-disciplinary focus. The first movement, the standards-based movement in the K-12

system is outcomes measures based, promoting standardized testing that aligns with state and federal standards. Alternately, the second movement, which is based on a market-driven orientation, emphasizes the de-regulation of teacher preparation through the establishment of alternate routes to certification (Tozer & Miretzky, 2005). As the two movements struggle against one another to provide evidence that legitimates their claims, both lack space for SFE and the value it brings to teacher education programs all together. The movement in support of de-regulation threatens to diminish teacher education coursework to the bare minimum, while the standards movement's focus on outcome measures for both students and teachers leaves little room in the curriculum for non-standards-based preparation, in turn, severely limiting the opportunity for SFE to be a part of the curriculum on either side (Tozer & Miretzky, 2005).

Even when teacher preparation practitioners understand the value of SFE to the development of pre-service teachers, they are left with little space in the curriculum to include SFE courses and content. The current policy debate in teacher preparation ignores "culture" altogether. Those who support de-regulation believe that the only teacher qualities that directly improve student achievement are verbal ability and content knowledge; therefore, implying that teaching as a profession is impervious to culture, specifically as it relates to larger societal issues (Tozer & Miretzky, 2005). Concurrently, the standards-based movement seeks to align student learning outcomes, teaching standards, and standards-based performance assessments for teacher candidates in such a way that efficiency and accountability neutralize the teaching profession within society. As Butin (2005c) explains:

The most contextual and contested educational issue—“culture”—has become acontextual and neutral. From this perspective issues of inequity in our schools can and should be solved by “colorblind” and neutral policymaking focused on “highly qualified” teachers who have high verbal scores, subject matter competence, and the absence of a criminal record (Hess 2001; Leigh and Mead 2005). (p. 293)

In addition to the pressure from the current economic times resulting in cuts to funding for higher education, college of education administrators are faced with the pressure from teacher preparation policymakers who believe teacher preparation programs need to be standardized for accountability or trimmed down for efficiency (deMarrais, 2013).

Consequently, SFE programs with a small number of course offerings become the target of reduction and elimination. To conform to current trends in teacher preparation policy, colleges of education are forced to prioritize space within teacher education program curriculums. The limited opportunity for SFE in teacher education program curriculums leaves pre-service and early career teachers lacking the key SFE knowledge and skills imperative to developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students.

In Mueller’s (2006) investigation of the importance of the relationship between teacher education and SFE, pre-service teachers’ inadequate engagement with SFE content is emphasized. The longitudinal and phenomenological study examined the experiences of eight pre-service teachers throughout their teacher preparation program. The pre-service teachers initially demonstrated very little self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current

inequalities or an understanding for societal issues and how they affect education and schools. Yet after their first year in the program, the pre-service teachers' self-awareness of the individual/sociocultural dynamic, confronted with contested positions different from their frames of reference, transformed differently (Mueller, 2006). All the pre-service teachers took a required SFE course in the second semester of the preparation sequence. Mueller (2006) argues that the SFE course was a necessary, but insufficient part of the pre-service teachers' preparation. She contends that in addition to requiring focused SFE coursework as part of teacher preparation programs, that SFE should be embedded throughout the entire teacher preparation process. She explains:

An SFE course provides an intentional and deliberate space to include the important content related to the social contexts of education. However, it cannot be the only space where we attend to students' engagement with social contexts and help them to directly connect what this information means for their teaching. (Mueller, 2006, p. 160)

Mueller (2006) suggests that collaboration with education colleagues across the teacher educator community is vital for the teacher preparation process.

In addition, Benchik-Osborne (2013) explored four experienced classroom teachers' understanding of SFE and its influence, if at all, on their classroom practice. All four teachers were required to participate in SFE coursework as part of their teacher preparation program. Benchik-Osborne (2013) utilizes the principles that match teacher beliefs to democratic ideals found within the CSFE *Standards*, along with Murrell's (2002) Activity System (AS) – a list of classroom instructional strategies that assist in preparing students for life in a democratic society, as tools to measure the consistency of



the teachers' beliefs and classroom practices with the key tenets of SFE. She explains how these tools are not meant to standardize the classroom teaching experience, but instead provide a common language for teachers to discuss what happens in their classroom and why as it relates to preparing students to participate in a democratic society. Ultimately, there were distinct inconsistencies among all four teachers' classrooms across both the principles listed within the CSFE *Standards* and the AS instructional strategies (Benchik-Osborne, 2013). These inconsistencies demonstrate the lack of foundational knowledge of SFE and its disconnect with teachers' classroom practice, even for teachers who are graduates of teacher preparation programs that have coursework requirements targeting engagement with the field.

It is important to note the body of literature that addresses the devaluation of the field of SFE at institutions of higher education across the nation, and specifically within teacher preparation programs, acknowledges the lack of empirical research on the value of SFE as a factor that is often cited by individuals who decide to eliminate SFE coursework requirements or SFE content from the teacher preparation curriculum (Butin, 2005c; Neumann, 2010; Pope & Stenhagen, 2008). My current review of the literature regarding the importance of SFE to teacher preparation corroborates that there is limited empirical research on the topic. A contributing factor to this is SFE scholars' rejection of the positivist orientation, which prioritizes a scientific approach to research. SFE scholars subscribe to fundamentally different paradigms than the beliefs that underpin research situated within a positivist approach. Positivism positions research as scientific, objective, and factual in order to obtain concrete, reliable, and generalizable results. These results are a way to uncover a truth that provides an understanding of the world in

a way that can be predicted and controlled (Lincoln et al., 2012). SFE scholars reject the idea that any researcher can be neutral, and instead hold that a researcher's identify, biases, beliefs, and experiences influence their research methods and results. SFE scholars believe all research is value-mediated, localized to time and space, and not universally generalizable (Lincoln et al., 2012). Yet Pope and Stemhagen (2008) caution SFE scholars to refrain from allowing dissensions with positivism to overshadow the value empirical work can have in establishing SFE as an essential component of teacher preparation. In addition to providing SFE scholars with the opportunity to understand how and why their work is beneficial to teachers, being able to provide decision-makers with visible evidence from teachers regarding the benefits of SFE would go a long way in the debate of whether or not to keep SFE courses and content within the teacher preparation curriculum (Pope & Stemhagen, 2008). I am hopeful that this study can contribute to filling this gap in the literature regarding the importance of SFE to teacher preparation and advance a renewed urgency, not only for SFE coursework requirements for prospective teachers, but also for the key concepts of SFE to be embedded throughout the entire teacher development process from pre-service to early career teaching.

### ***Teacher Induction***

**Teacher Attrition.** To contextualize teacher induction programs, the issue of teacher attrition must also be discussed. Along with the numerous detrimental effects researchers have demonstrated the racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide results in for students (Bottiani et al., 2016; Davis & Jordan, 1994; Gregory et al., 2010; Sheets, 1996; Skiba et al., 2002), it is also known to have negative effects for teachers. Specifically, as a result of the vast differences between teachers' and students' social

identities, teachers are known to experience higher levels of stress and burnout and are more likely to leave the teaching profession (Dworkin et al., 1988; Haberman, 2005). This contributes to the growing teacher shortages that are a critical concern across the U.S. In 2015, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) reported novice teachers leave the teaching profession at an alarming rate – citing 30% of new teachers leave their current position within the first five years of teaching. Recruitment practices of new teachers into the profession receives much of the attention in the literature that discusses solutions to teacher shortages; however, some scholars argue that teacher attrition is the underlying cause of current teacher shortages (Butin, 2005b; Ingersoll, 2001, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; NCES, 2004). According to Butin (2005b), “new teachers are not prepared for the bureaucratic and organizational features of an institution charged with the socialization and stratification of 90% of America’s youth” (p. 222). A focus on teacher attrition, particularly the novice teachers who are leaving the profession within their first five years of entering the classroom, must take into consideration how teachers are being prepared and whether or not their preparation is providing the knowledge and skills teachers need to teach an increasingly diverse student population.

**Supporting Early Career Teachers.** In efforts to mitigate teacher attrition, districts and schools across the U.S. have implemented teacher induction programs to provide support to new teachers (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Induction refers to the first three years of teaching that are known to influence the entire teaching career (Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Mager, 1992). These programs vary widely in terms of what type of support is provided and how but are often guided by common objectives such as teacher development, socialization into the profession, assessment of teaching effectiveness, and

support in refining practice (Feimen-Nemser, 2001; Ganser, 2002). Smith and Ingersoll (2004) define a comprehensive induction program as one that provides new teachers the opportunity to collaborate in small learning communities, observe experienced teachers' classrooms, be observed by expert mentors, analyze their own practice, and network with other early-career teachers. With the increasing spotlight on the nation's growing teacher shortage, induction programs have faced growing attention in regard to their effectiveness (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Strong, 2009; Wayne et al., 2005). Recent literature indicates that strong, evidence-based induction and mentoring programs have shown significant promise in improving teacher retention (Bastian & Marks, 2017; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

Despite the positive benefits of district and school-based induction programs, education researchers have also conveyed the benefits of induction programs located outside of districts and/or schools – particularly within institutions of higher education. For example, Bastian and Marks (2017) discuss the benefits university-based teacher induction models can have on the performance and retention of participating teachers. A university-based teacher induction program is one in which a teacher preparation program within a college of education provides induction support for novice teachers. Bastian and Marks (2017) indicate that the pre-existing connection between universities' teacher preparation programs and beginning teachers position the university-based teacher induction programs to have an increased understanding of the strengths and challenges beginning teachers face, leading to more targeted supports. Currently, there is very little literature that investigates the relationship between university-based teacher induction programs and teacher outcomes. The few existing studies do show promising

findings in regard to university-based teacher induction support and its effect on teacher retention (Bastian & Marks, 2017; Colbert & Wolff, 1992; Davis & Higdon, 2008; Kelly, 2004; Schaffer et al., 1992; Stanulis & Floden, 2009). Yet, there is no existing literature that investigates how university-based teacher induction programs address the teacher-student demographic divide, and in doing so, the possible affect this type of support could have on early-career teacher retention.

**Critiques of Teacher Induction.** Though there is existing evidence that teacher induction programs can improve teacher retention, they are not without their critiques. Several areas that have been identified as potential barriers to success for induction programs include (a) having a sole focus on making teachers feel better, without focusing on teacher development, (b) creating an induction program solely based on mandated, minimum requirements, and (c) focusing on the technical requirements of the induction program rather than the overall intent of the induction activities (Huling-Austin, 1986). Many induction programs focus on topics that are easily addressable with early career teachers, such as a school's or district's policies and procedures, rather than engaging with early career teachers on more complex issues, such as student engagement and learning (Kane & Francis, 2013). By doing so, the programs fail to provide the support early career teachers need as a result of the high levels of stress that often arise from teaching in classrooms with vast differences between teachers' and students' social identities (Dworkin et al., 1988; Haberman, 2005). In addition, induction programs that focus on mandated, minimum requirements or technical requirements, specifically school or district-based programs, can serve as a mechanism for conformity and assimilation,

rather than a support that encourages critique and teaching to prepare students for life in a democratic society (Barrett et al., 2009).

In addition, teacher induction programs cannot be expected to take the place of teacher preparation programs or serve as the exclusive means to reform the nation's education system (Huling-Austin, 1986). Teacher induction programs are not meant to serve as additional pre-service training but instead, are designed to support early-career teachers who have received basic teacher preparation training through a teacher preparation program (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Yet in some ways, induction programs are meant to provide teachers with support through the “practice shock” they encounter being responsible for their own classroom for the first time (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004; Kane & Francis, 2013). As Wang et al. (2008) describe, “teacher induction and its components are not isolated structures. Instead, induction is part of a teacher development continuum, whose processes and results are influenced by what and how beginning teachers learn in their initial teacher preparation” (p. 147). It is important for teacher induction practitioners and policymakers to understand the role of induction support in the teacher development continuum and be realistic about what can and cannot be accomplished through teacher induction programs.

**Teacher Induction & The Teacher Development Continuum.** Given the current landscape of teacher education programs across the U.S – with the narrowing of curricula due to a focus on standards-based measures – there has been an increased discussion around the idea of a teacher development continuum. The continuum begins at the time of pre-service preparation and continues through the early years of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Research suggests that traditional teacher education programs in

conjunction with professional development in the early teaching years is not the most effective way to promote complex learning or teacher persistence (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Instead, the focus should be on the establishment of experiences that connect and strengthen the teacher development continuum. As the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) asserted:

Both higher education officials and local school leaders must put aside longstanding turf battles about who is responsible for what part of the teacher development continuum. Because there is a continuum from recruitment through staff development, the parts need to be connected to each other to provide continuity and coherence; preparation programs and school districts both need to be involved across that continuum. (NCATE, 2010, p. 28)

As a result of the identified gap between pre-service preparation and professional development support throughout one's teaching career, existing literature situates teacher induction, particularly university-based teacher induction, as the bridge between teacher preparation and practice; therefore, placing it as the lynchpin to the teacher development continuum. The emphasis is placed on the connection the "bridge" creates between teacher preparation programs and the support teachers receive through professional development opportunities offered throughout their teaching careers. The intent of teacher induction programs is not to supersede pre-service preparation programs or other types of support provided across the teacher development continuum, but instead to build upon the foundation laid during pre-service preparation (Van Zandt Allen, 2014).

### ***Summary of Related Studies & Relevant Literature***

Existing literature regarding the teacher-student demographic divide in public education takes one of two approaches to addressing the divide: (a) a focus on better preparing all teachers, but specifically predominantly white, middle-class teachers, to teach a diverse student population (Cross, 2003; Goldenberg, 2014; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Howard, 2003; Sleeter & Milner, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Wachira & Mburu, 2017) or (b) a focus on recruiting a more diverse population of pre-service teacher candidates into teacher preparation programs and the teaching profession (Billingsley et al., 2019; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Egalite & Kisida, 2018; Lindsay & Hart, 2017; Osei-Twumasi & Pinetta, 2019; Sleeter & Milner, 2011; Villegas et al., 2012; Waddell & Ukpokodu, 2012). Both approaches are imperative to mitigating the teacher-student demographic divide, but the former is of immediate concern given the vast majority of the teacher population now and for the foreseeable future will be white, middle-class teachers. The key tenets of SFE provide an avenue to assist prospective teachers in developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students; yet the field's depreciation in value within teacher preparation programs across the U.S. presents a critical obstacle to pre-service teachers' engagement with SFE. This obstacle is in large part facilitated by the two competing movements currently within the field of teacher education – the standards-based movement and de-regulation (Tozer & Miretzky, 2005). Each of these perspectives on teacher education leave little space for SFE courses or content within the teacher preparation curriculum.

The diminishing opportunities for SFE within the teacher preparation curriculum positions teacher induction programs as an ideal pathway for early career teachers to



continue to engage with the key tenets of SFE – as their engagement with the field continues to be limited in their pre-service preparation. Existing critiques of teacher induction programs cite the lack of willingness to engage early career teachers with complex issues, such as student engagement and learning (Kane & Francis, 2013), as well as a lack of support that encourages the development of critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students (Barrett et al., 2009). The intentional inclusion of SFE content as part of teacher induction support would work to address these critiques while simultaneously providing additional space for early career teachers to engage with SFE. Yet it is imperative to maintain awareness of the role of teacher induction within the teacher education continuum. It is not meant to supplant teacher preparation programs, but instead serve as a source of support as teachers become responsible for their own classrooms for the first time (Achinstein & Barrett, 2004; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Kane & Francis, 2013). As a component of the teacher education continuum, teacher induction programs are influenced by what and how early career teachers learn in their initial teacher preparation program (Wang et al., 2008). Though there is value in teacher induction programs engaging early career teachers with the key tenets of SFE, it has the potential to be most effective when the teachers have an initial understanding of SFE content through their teacher preparation programs.

Though researchers have taken up work that examines the value of SFE to teacher development in place-based learning and teacher residency settings, there is no existing literature examining the value of the field within the context of a university-based teacher induction program (Carson et al., 2020; Roegman et al., 2020). Furthermore, the lack of

empirical research on the value of SFE is a factor that is often cited by individuals who decide to eliminate SFE coursework requirements or SFE content from the teacher preparation curriculum (Butin, 2005b; Neumann, 2010; Pope & Stemhagen, 2008).

Ultimately, this study seeks to contribute to these gaps in the literature in its investigation of how, if at all, a university-based teacher induction program facilitates the development of the critical inquiry skills fundamental to the social foundations of education and what value the development of these skills may have for pre-service and early career teachers.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

### **Introduction**

In this chapter, I discuss my methodology and methods in examining the potential of a university-based induction program to engage program participants with the key tenets of SFE, in turn highlighting the importance of SFE to the development of pre-service and early-career teachers. I begin with a discussion of my methodological commitments. Next, I explain the specific research methodology employed for this study. Finally, I discuss the context and project participants, data collection methods and analysis, trustworthiness of the research, my positionality, and potential limitations and additional considerations for the study.

### **Methodological Orientation**

As an SFE scholar, I generally approach research problems in a way that lends itself towards qualitative inquiry. Though I also regard other methods of inquiry as meaningful to the research process and the production of knowledge, I believe that qualitative inquiry is imperative to understanding the complex nature of human experiences. A focus of qualitative inquiry is on how people make sense of their own experiences and subsequently, the society in which they live (Denzin & Lincoln, 2012). Methods of qualitative inquiry allow for the researcher to understand participants' experiences within natural settings, while also positioning oneself within the study to provide transparency in how the researcher's background informs the interpretation of the participants' experiences (Creswell, 2013). In seeking to understand how a university-

based teacher induction program facilitates the development of a critical perspective of education for early-career teachers, and in turn, highlights the importance of SFE to the development of pre-service and early-career teachers, qualitative inquiry allows me to foreground the experiences of participating teachers in the induction program. In addition, I can be clear about how my own educational experiences inform my interpretation of the participants' experiences.

As Denzin and Lincoln (2012) purported, a key and future moment in qualitative inquiry is one in which “the social sciences and the humanities become sites for critical conversations about democracy, race, gender, class, nation-states, globalization, freedom, and community” (p. 6). Given the expanding teacher-student demographic divide and the importance of teachers' developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students, the context of this study provides an opportunity for the critical conversations Denzin and Lincoln (2012) reference. Ultimately, participating teachers reflect on how the university-based induction program positions, if at all, the roles of race, class, and cultural background in the teacher-student relationship, as well as their views of the role of schools as a social institution within our larger democratic society.

### **Research Approach**

This project employs a qualitative case study methodology. According to Baxter and Jack (2008), the qualitative case study:

...is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not

explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood. (p. 544)

Additionally, Yin (2018) explains case study methodology as inquiry that “investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between the phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (Yin, 2018, p. 15). Yin (2018) explains that a study may favor case study research when these three specific conditions exist: (a) the main research questions are “how” or “why” questions, (b) the researcher has little to no control over behavioral events, and (c) the focus of the study is a current phenomenon – referred to as a “case.” This project meets all three conditions Yin identifies as necessary in order for research to lend itself to the case study approach. To review, the following research questions guide this study:

- How does a university-based teacher induction program facilitate the development of a critical perspective of education for early career teachers?
  - a) How does early career teachers’ participation in a university-based teacher induction program support their exposure to the key tenets of social foundations of education and impact the development of inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies?
- How does a university-based teacher induction program highlight the value of the field of social foundations of education to the development of pre-service and early career teachers?

Both research questions are “how” questions that are explanatory in nature, making them appropriate for a case study design. Furthermore, as a qualitative researcher, I have no control over the phenomena under investigation. The research project seeks to understand how early-career teachers’ participation in a university-based teacher induction program supports their exposure to the key tenets of SFE and impacts the development of inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies. Data collected was based solely on the experiences of the study’s participants, independent of any manipulation for the purposes of the investigation of the phenomenon. Additionally, the phenomenon – if program participants were exposed to key tenets of SFE and what that presence was – is a contemporary phenomenon.

### ***Key Components of Case Study Research Design***

Yin (2018) establishes five important components of case study research design: (a) a case study’s questions, (b) its propositions, if any, (c) its case(s), (d) the logic linking the data to the propositions, and (e) the criteria for interpreting the findings. The first component – my study’s research questions – were reviewed in the previous section. The second and third components as they relate to my study are discussed in detail in the sections below. Components four and five are discussed in detail in the *Data Analysis* section of this chapter.

**Propositions.** According to Yin (2018) it is important for explanatory case studies, such as this study, to state the propositions believed to provide explanatory power about the conditions of the case, including theoretical propositions. As a SFE researcher, I am concerned with issues of power and oppression, particularly as they

relate to education and schooling. My onto-epistemological approach, informed by critical theory, purports that realities are shaped by social, political, economic, and cultural influences (Lincoln et al., 2012). According to Glense (2011), the general characteristics of critical theory research design are: (a) a focus on issues of power and domination and to advocate understanding from the perspective of the exploited and oppressed, (b) exposing ways discourses are socially and historically constructed and how they maintain inequality, oppression, and exploitation, and (c) an interest in praxis. Informed by critical theory, this study assumes that participants' experiences with the program are unique in that each participant's experience is influenced by their individual backgrounds and experiences, specifically in relation to positions of privilege they hold within society. A case study methodology allows for these multiple realities to be explored to better understand how early-career teachers' participation in a university-based teacher induction program supports their exposure to the key tenets of SFE and impacts the development of inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies.

Based on my situated knowledge as a researcher, my onto-epistemological approach, as well as existing bodies of literature related to the focus of the project, there are several key propositions that inform the design of this study. These theoretical propositions are as follows:

- a) Engagement with the key tenets of SFE can assist teachers in developing a self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities, as well as foster the skills

necessary for them to engage students of any race, socio-economic status, or culture in equitable educational experiences.

- b) Devaluation of SFE within teacher preparation programs across the country exacerbates the racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools, as teachers lack the critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students.
- c) Induction support provided by a university to early-career teachers who are graduates of its teacher preparation program may informally and unintentionally expose program participants to the key tenets of SFE.
- d) University-based teacher induction programs provide an additional opportunity, beyond teacher preparation coursework, for SFE to demonstrate its value to teacher development.

These propositions address concepts that are examined within the scope of the study.

**“Case” Identification.** A key aspect of a case study approach is the determination of the “case” which is defined by Miles et al. (2014) as “phenomenon of some sort occurring in a bounded context” (p. 28). In other words, the “case” would be the project’s unit of analysis (Miles et al., 2014). Yin (2018) identifies four types of designs for case studies and stresses the importance of researchers deciding prior to data collection on the specific design for a project. This study’s design follows that of an embedded, single-case study design. This methodological decision is based upon Yin’s (2018) *critical case* rationale in that the case “is critical to your theory or theoretical propositions” (p. 49). For this project, the unit of analysis is a university-based teacher



induction program. Given the set of circumstances in which my theoretical propositions are believed to be true – specifically that induction support provided by the university to early-career teachers who are graduates of its teacher preparation program may informally and unintentionally exposes program participants to the key tenets of SFE and university-based teacher induction programs provide an additional opportunity, beyond teacher preparation coursework, for SFE to demonstrate its value to teacher development – it is imperative that the case for the study is a university-based teacher induction program. This is critical in determining whether or not these propositions are supported by evidence. Furthermore, given the project involves units of analysis at more than one level, it is considered an embedded, single-case study. Yin (2018) explains that embedded case study design “occurs when, within a single-case (first level), attention is also given to a subunit or subunits (a second level)” (p. 51). For this study, the first level unit of analysis is the university-based teacher induction program, and the subunits are the induction program participants, as well as the program leadership team. The participants who comprise the subunits of analysis were selected through a sampling technique that is discussed in more detail in the *Participants* section of this chapter.

Additionally, Yin (2018) explains that once a case is defined, being able to provide other clarifications about it – known as bounding – is important. He explains that bounding helps to “distinguish data about the subject of your case study (the ‘phenomenon’) from data external to the case (the ‘context’)” (Yin, 2018, p. 31). Furthermore, bounding solidifies the connection between the case, research questions, and propositions (Yin, 2018). This study’s case is bounded by definition and context, defining a university-based teacher induction support program as one in which a teacher

preparation program within a college of education at a PWI in the southeastern U.S. provides induction support for novice teachers who were program graduates and taught in a school district within the institution's local community. In addition, the case for this study focused on teachers within the induction program who have completed the program or will be completing the program during the timeframe of the study. Accordingly, the current study focuses on teacher's experiences within the induction program from 2017 to 2021. Further details about the study's teacher participants are found in the *Participant* section of this chapter.

### ***Situating the Research Approach***

Though there is no existing literature that examines the role of a university-based teacher induction program in facilitating the development of a critical perspective of education necessary for early career teachers to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students, case study research has been used to examine other pre-service teacher support and its role in assisting teachers in developing the cultural competence necessary to teach diverse groups of students. Carson et al. (2020) recently conducted an action research case study of a placed-based learning model for prospective teacher preparation students that reaffirmed the importance of SFE to teacher preparation. The placed-based learning model immersed primarily white, prospective teachers within local urban schools with diverse student populations simultaneous to their enrollment in an introductory to social foundations of education course, a prerequisite for admission to the university's teacher preparation program. Findings from the study indicate that the prospective teachers' exposure and engagement with the key tenets of SFE positively influenced their experiences within the urban schools (Carson et al., 2020). The study

employed a variety of data collection methods, such as interviews and field notes in order to generate rich, descriptive data consistent with qualitative case study research. A thematic analysis approach was used after triangulating the data, which was of particular interest to me as I considered the analytic approach for my own study. Given that the school district the program partnered with requested a case study be conducted to detail the outcomes of the partnership, the study lacks details regarding case study methodology and how it informed the study design. My study does not overlook this key aspect of the qualitative research process.

Furthermore, though researchers have taken up work that examines the value of the field of SFE to teacher development in place-based learning, there is no existing literature examining the value of the field within the context of a university-based teacher induction support program. Additionally, there is a lack of empirical research on the value of SFE. As a result, I explored studies outside my project's topic to situate it methodologically. Mosley Wetzel et al. (2017) employed a case study methodology and critical discourse analysis to examine the role of reflection in teacher preparation. Findings from the study indicate that mentor relationships in teacher preparation support reflective practice. Study participants included a pre-service teacher and her assigned mentor. Multiple sources of data were used to in the data collection process. Though the study's case study approach as an instrumental case differs from the specific approach my study employs, the analytic approach of the study resonated with me. Critical discourse analysis is an analytic approach that is compatible with my study both theoretically and methodologically. This approach situates power as a central concept to interrogate how the use of language can construct and sustain social inequities (Rogers,

2004). This is consistent with how CRT, CRP, and SFE situate and interrogate power dynamics in society and their impact on social institutions such as education schooling. Similar to Carson et al. (2020), Mosley Wetzel et al. (2017) study helped to inform the analytic approach considerations for my project. At the onset of the study, I anticipated more ideas from CRT being present; yet, with the exception of the myth of colorblindness, these ideas were not present in the data. Therefore, critical discourse analysis as a potential analytic approach for my study was no longer compatible.

### **Contexts**

As previously mentioned, the proposed study's design will follow that of a single-case study design based upon Yin's (2018) *critical case* rationale. For this project, the unit of analysis is a university-based teacher induction program. A university-based teacher induction program is imperative as the case for my study given its role within my theoretical propositions and the critical nature it plays in determining whether or not these propositions are supported by evidence. The university-based teacher induction support program utilized as the case for the project is one in which a teacher preparation program within a college of education at a PWI in the southeastern U.S. provides induction support for novice teachers who are program graduates and teach in a school district within the institution's local community. The institution's local community is predominantly urban, though some districts who participate in the program serve a more rural population.

The program was established in the summer of 2017. Its aim is to empower teachers by growing their comprehensive capacity, cultivating their leadership, and providing a community for continued learning. Its inaugural cohort consisted of 15

teachers across nine schools within four school districts. By 2020, the incoming cohort expanded to include a total of 69 schools within six districts. The model of support for the program is grounded in the belief that teacher preparation programs and school districts have a shared responsibility in not only the development of preservice teachers, but also in the continued support of teachers through their first three years in the classroom. Program support includes a variety of components, including, but not limited to, formal support sessions and individualized coaching. The program is strategically scaffolded to provide three years of support aligned to the stages of development in novice teachers while remaining flexible enough to provide differentiated, individualized support. Additional details about the university-based induction program, including program structure and its key components, will be covered in Chapter 4.

Regarding specific site selection, this study employed a combination of Patton's (2002) convenience sampling and extreme sampling strategies. To purposefully select an information-rich case to review, the extreme sampling strategy focuses on information-rich cases that are extreme or special in some way (Patton, 2002). This strategy looks for special cases of interest to the researcher, which could mean a case is unusually problematic or outstanding. Consistent with the extreme sampling strategy, the university-based teacher induction program identified as the setting for the project is special in that since its inception in 2017, the program has experienced significant success in its goal of retaining early-career teachers in the teaching profession. Although formal retention numbers are not yet available, participating teachers have been providing information about their intent to remain in the classroom to induction program staff.

Based on this, the overall average yearly professional retention rate among teachers participating in the induction program is 97.8% (Montpeirous & Lewis, 2021).

Additionally, I would be remiss to overlook the convenience sampling nature of the project's site selection. Based on my role as a program evaluator for the university-based teacher induction program identified as the setting for the project, the site is one that is easy to access and inexpensive to study – two elements Patton (2002) identifies as part of the convenience sampling strategy. Though Patton (2002) describes convenience sampling as neither purposeful nor strategic, it is not without its benefits within certain contexts. As an outsider to public schools, in that I do not have any experience teaching in public school classrooms, my access to teachers and teacher support programs is limited. Given the relationship I have established with the university-based teacher induction program's leadership over the past several years through my evaluation work, it affords me the opportunity to investigate a program that is not accessible to other researchers at this time. It is important to note that although the site for the project is in some respects convenient, it is the program's early success in retaining participating teachers within the classroom that drew me to the program as a potential research site at the project's conception.

## **Participants**

As previously discussed in the *"Case" Identification* section of this chapter, this study is an embedded, single-case study. Even though this case study is about a university-based teacher induction support program, analysis for the study includes data from elements within the program; therefore, the project involves units of analysis at more than one level (Yin, 2018). For this project, the first level unit analysis is the

university-based teacher induction program, and the subunits are the induction program participants, as well as the program leadership. As a result, the participants for this research project are multi-level and include the following participant groups: (a) a sample of teacher participants in the university-based teacher induction program, and (b) members of the program leadership team.

***Teacher Participant Selection.***

The sample of teacher participants for this study were selected from the inaugural cohort of teachers who began the program in fall 2017 and completed the program in spring 2020, as well as the second cohort of teachers who began the program in fall 2018 and had completed two of the three years of the program at the start of data collection. The decision to include teachers from two different cohorts was intentional, as to allow for teacher participants to be not only multi-level, but also multi-temporal. This provided the opportunity to obtain rich, thick data from multiple elements within the program at multiple points in time throughout the program (Yin, 2018).

The 2017 cohort was a much smaller cohort of teachers given they were the inaugural program participants. The number of teachers within the 2018 cohort significantly increased as a result of planned program expansion – though many ended up leaving the program because they either moved out of state or moved to a district or school not served by the program. Chapter 4 provides a more detailed description of the university-based induction program, including the number of school districts it supports. The inclusion of teacher participants from the 2017 cohort is important, as those teachers are the only ones who had completed all three years of the program at the start of data collection. The inclusion of teacher participants from the 2018 cohort is also important,

given that the program did make significant changes to the support provided based on its infancy and still being in the early stages of development. Including teacher participants across two cohorts allowed the opportunity for patterns in the data to emerge both within and across cohorts.

**Selection Strategies.** To ensure my project had an information-rich case to review, this study employed two of Patton's (2002) purposeful sampling strategies in the selection of teacher participants. For the 2017 cohort, I employed the criterion sampling strategy. According to Patton (2002), criterion sampling is "to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance" (Patton, 2002, p. 238). I identified and invited all teachers from the 2017 cohort who participated in all three years of the induction program to participate in my study.

Additionally, I employed the typical case sampling strategy in the selection of teacher participants from the 2018 cohort. The typical case sampling strategy focuses on what is normal within the identified research site (Patton, 2002). This strategy is useful when a program serves as a unit of analysis for a case study, and it is important for the researcher to identify who is a typical participant within the program (Patton, 2002). In utilizing the typical case sampling strategy, I worked with the induction program's staff to identify participants from the 2018 cohort who would be considered the average teacher within the program. Given that teachers' participation within the program is voluntary, their engagement levels with the program can vary. Some teachers may not attend any of the program's formal support sessions or have very little interaction with their program coach. I wanted to ensure that participants of the study are those who fully engaged with the induction program and the support it provides.



Given that the study aims to contribute to the literature that addresses the expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools and the program's participant population is representative of the university's predominately white, middle-class, female teacher preparation program population, it was also important to identify typical program participants based on race/ethnicity, sex, and socioeconomic status. As a result, this study focuses on white, middle-class, female program participants. Additionally, since a majority of the teachers the induction program supports teach within the area surrounding the university, the study focuses on program participants who teach at schools with demographically diverse student populations.

**Study Invitations.** Letters of invitation to participate in my study were emailed to all 12 program completers of the 2017 cohort in March 2021, as well as to 12 teachers from the 2018 cohort who were identified by induction program staff as average teachers within the program, specifically in terms of level of engagement with the support provided. Given my existing relationship with the potential participants through my work as an evaluator of the program, I felt comfortable reaching out to the teachers through email. The initial email provided a summary of the study in the body of the email, as well as an overview of the anticipated time commitment and timeline for the study. A formal, IRB approved invitation letter for the project with additional details about the study, including the voluntary nature of participation and that no compensation would be provided, was attached to the email (Appendix A). The teachers were asked to respond to my email or call me directly if they were interested in participating in the study or if they had any further questions about the study or their participation.

**Final Teacher Participants.** Ultimately, nine teachers agreed to participate in the study – five teachers from the 2017 cohort and four teachers from the 2018 cohort. All teacher participants are white females ranging in age from 25 to 27. The teachers represent four different school districts within the institution’s local community. Based on the National Center for Education Statistic’s (NCES) locale classifications, three of the school districts are considered large, suburban districts and one is considered a small, city district. A large, suburban district is defined as a “territory outside a principal city and inside an urbanized area with population of 250,000 or more” and a small, city is defined as a “territory inside an urbanized area and inside a principal city with population less than 100,000” (NCES, 2022). Two of the teacher participants are high school teachers, two are middle school teachers, four are elementary school teachers, and one is an early childhood teacher. Below I have included short vignettes of each teacher participant to provide deeper insights into who they are, how they came to the teaching profession, and some of their experiences as an early career teacher. Additional information about the teacher participants’ educational backgrounds and teacher preparation programs will be discussed in Chapter 4.

***Karla.*** Sitting back and smiling, Karla recalls how she always knew she wanted to be a teacher, but never expected she would end up teaching elementary music. Her family, which includes several public-school teachers, obviously impacted her career choice. In her family it was you go to school, and you do well in school. You follow through on your commitments in school. Karla remembers “working so hard”, especially in high school to earn good grades, which she believes was a great thing. It provided her a solid foundation going into college. But unlike her other family members with a public

education background, she was “bitten by the music bug early in high school”. She loved her choir experience and loved the theater experience that went along with being in music in high school. She wanted to be like her high school choir director – teaching show choir at a high school and then doing musical theater for the community. Karla laughs thinking about how certain she was that she wanted to teach high school students when she started her teacher preparation program. By her sophomore year she had already experienced a change of heart, having enrolled in a course focused on elementary music.

Now she’s been teaching elementary music in a large, suburban school district for five years. Taking a few moments to reflect on her first-year teaching in her own classroom, Karla reveals that the biggest thing that stood out to her was how much classroom management can affect learning. She contemplates her preparation and speculates that student teaching can only prepare you so much because the whole time you are teaching, but it is not really your classroom. “You are stepping into somebody else's procedures, consequences, and management strategies that are in place and are hopefully working. You are teaching, but it is not your classroom and not your rule book”.

**Sara.** Growing up, Sara always knew she wanted to be a teacher. She was a teacher cadet in high school. But she had a hard time when she started college. She smiles as she thinks about what a mess it was. She changed majors quite a few times. She even transferred institutions. But eventually she ended up a middle level education major. She recalls having several influential people who taught her in middle school, especially one of her math teachers. Her teacher preparation program allowed her to pick two content areas, so she decided on math and science. Sara liked the school she was placed at for her

student teaching experience, she chose to stay there as she embarked on her teaching career. Ironically, she had decided to teach science for the second part of her internship since she felt it was her weaker content area and she ended up loving teaching science even more than math.

Now she's been teaching eighth grade science at the same middle school in the large, suburban district for four years. But her first year teaching was not without its struggles. Her school hired new administration one week after she signed her teaching contract. This meant she had to prove herself as a new teacher to administrators who had not hired her. Sara frowns when she thinks about some of the challenges she experienced with her students during her first year in the classroom. The students she taught during her internship year, she also had again during her first-year teaching. They all knew she was a first year. That was tough. Just because they were like, "We know you don't know what's going on." And Sara admits they were not wrong – that first-year was definitely a struggle.

**Amy.** Most of Amy's family is in the medical field, so teaching was not something that she originally thought she wanted to do. But she always enjoyed helping people. And she knew she did not want help others in a medical way. So, she sought out a profession where she could help others, "just not in the way the rest of her family does". Smiling, Sara fondly remembers when she fell in love with teaching. She participated in a program in high school where she went and helped elementary students with reading. Ever since then she knew she wanted to be a teacher.

Now she's been teaching fifth grade for four years. Currently she teaches at an elementary school in a small, city school district and loves the experience she has had

teaching so far. But the first day she was left alone in her own classroom, she remembers looking around and seeing her 28 students at the time and thinking, “Okay, who’s going to take over?” She laughs as she shares how she kept looking for someone else to come in and take control. The biggest challenge for Sara her first-year teaching was her confidence in herself. At her first parents’ night, she was bombarded by questions from parents they all hoped she had the answers to. Sara frowns as she thinks back to having to tell them she did not know if they were going to do spelling lists – she just was not there yet. Everything was so new. She views that as one of the most humbling experiences of her life.

**Megan.** Megan always liked math because she was good at it. Her dad liked it. She describes her family as math positive, which she thinks made a big difference in her becoming a math teacher. It definitely laid the foundation. She did not view math as a scary subject, as many of her peers did in middle school and high school. Megan knew she wanted to major in math in college. But she did not know what she wanted to do with it. But one thing she always thought was that she was not going to teach. Teaching was the one thing she knew she was not going to do. She could not have been more wrong. Megan remembers having a conversation with someone about how she did not know what she wanted to do. And they told her she should do a career that helps people, like a nurse or a teacher. And that resonated with Megan. She saw teaching as a career with great job stability, and you get the summers off. She also admits she needs that social interaction with people. Teaching math allows her to do something she loves all day and also provides constant interaction with others. She describes it as the best of both worlds.

Megan becomes more serious as she thinks back to her first-year teaching. With watery eyes, she shares her first year was awful. She felt as if she was on an island with no one around to help her get off of it. Her principal basically told her that if she was as bad as she was her first year in her second year, then she should quit her job. She now realizes it all came down to not having good classroom management. She explains how “you do not really get the chance to form your own classroom management during your teaching preparation because there is really just no way to do that unless you are actually teaching”. So, Megan focused on that for her second year and found a teaching style that worked for her. And things got better. She now has been teaching math at the same high school for the past five years.

**Julie.** As a fourth grader, Julie went to a presentation about string instruments. That day she decided playing a string instrument was so cool and she wanted to do that. She picked out the cello and her parents told her it was too big. She did not want to play the violin because everyone played the violin. It was so ordinary. She wanted to do the weird one – the viola. So, she played the viola all through middle and high school and fondly shares it was the best decision she ever made. In high school, Julie also liked to write. She liked analyzing literature and really digging out meaning behind the interpretations from what she read. Entering college, she knew she wanted to do something related to English or writing or something related to music. Yet, there was not one single experience or exact moment where she thought “I want to be a teacher.” Teaching just kind of fell into place. She liked working with kids. She liked English and liked music. By the time she started college, Julie was dead set on music education. But she was going to go on to be a professor. She wanted to teach at the college level. She

wanted to teach kids who were more advanced — kids who really, really cared about it. But then as she progressed throughout her teacher preparation, she realized how much she really liked public schools. But thought middle schoolers were “disgusting” so she’d teach either high school or elementary school. Yet as more time went by, she realized middle school was the age to work with beginners at a time in their lives where they could fall in love with music around the same time she did. By the end of college, Julie knew middle school was for her.

Now she’s been teaching middle school orchestra in a large, suburban school district for five years. Cringing as she thinks back to her first-year teaching, Julie explains how she was “not prepared to interact with some of the parents of her students”. She recalls that during her first year teaching a parent called her to really complain about her daughter’s grade and asked what she was doing in her classroom to differentiate instruction to make sure she was giving her daughter enough attention. And as a first-year teacher, Julie recalls not having the confidence or even the vocabulary set to communicate eloquently back to that parent that as a professional, she knows what she is doing. And, in reality, Julie felt like she did not know what she was doing.

***Danielle.*** Danielle’s path to teaching was a long and winding journey. She always loved working with kids, even when she was a kid herself. She used to go to her parents’ church and instead of being in service with them, she would go to the daycare and take care of the kids in daycare. That is where she learned how to change diapers and feed babies. But she did not come back to the joy she found during that time until years later. In college, originally, she was in a program that prepares you to teach the deaf and hard of hearing. Danielle is hard of hearing. So that's a big reason why she chose that program.

But then a lot happened in her personal life. She lost her grandmother. She battled with an eating disorder and suffered from severe anxiety. She felt like she needed a change. A big change. So, she transferred institutions and became a retail management major. She loved fashion. It had always been a side hobby for her. But she found herself sitting in one of her classes where the professor was talking about different types of racks for hangers and she said to herself, “What am I doing here?” She looked around and was like, “This is not me; I need to help people like I am called to help people.” She ended up switching majors to early childhood education. And once she started doing her student teaching, she realized the classroom was exactly where she was meant to be. But it was a long journey to get there.

Danielle has been teaching at an early childhood center in a large, suburban school district for the past four years. Even after she began her teaching career it was not without its challenges. Her first year teaching she had a very challenging group of students. Danielle remembers she had one student in her first-year teaching who slapped, kicked, scratched, and tried to bite her. She had one Montessori lesson called the spindle lesson where you have these rods of wood and “you put them with the numbers, so 1 for 1, 2 for 2, etc.”. And he would always take those and just chuck them as hard as he could at her. And if he wasn't doing that he was sleeping. She knew he wasn't learning. That was a rough part of beginning her teaching career – coming to terms with the physical abuse she faced from some of her students given their age.

***Miranda.*** By the time she was applying for colleges, Miranda knew she wanted to be a high school math teacher. She was always really good at math, and she really enjoyed it. She enjoyed helping her friends with it. She would hang out after school with



some of her friends and tutor them. One of her best friends lived a couple blocks away from her, and they rode the same bus. So, they would ride the bus, go to her friend's house, make a snack, put on *That 70s Show* and do their algebra homework. One day they were watching tv and working on homework, and her friend was really stuck on one part of the homework. Miranda laughs as she recalls how she found a way to explain it using an analogy with the characters from the tv show they were watching. And her friend had a light bulb moment. So that was the first time that Miranda thought about teaching. She was a sophomore in high school. The next year for an AP US history assignment, she had to watch the State of the Union and write a paper on it. It was early in President Obama's first term. And he made a very big call for public education and wanting to beef up STEM education and all these opportunities that they wanted to offer federal loan wise to bring high needs educators into the teaching field. At that point Miranda was taking the SAT and the ACT and starting to think about college more. It just really struck a chord with her. And it was at that point she decided she was going to teach.

Miranda has been teaching math at a high school in a small, city school district for five years. When she started teaching, classroom management was definitely the biggest challenge she faced. She just did not realize how much she needed to micro-manage high school students. She was always self-sufficient. Since birth her mom joked that she “popped out of the womb as an adult”. She could take care of herself, she did what she was supposed to do. It just was what it was. And most of her friends were that way as well. She was always in advanced classes. She remembers that at her high school graduation honors graduates were in one color robe and non-honors graduates were in another color. And her and all her friends joked that once they got to the second half of

the graduating class, and they got to the different color robes, they had no idea who those people were – they had never seen them because they were not in their classes. And so suddenly, those were the students in Miranda’s classroom. It was really hard for her to relate to the choices her students made regarding their behavior, which made it harder for her to know how to react to them and know how to manage them.

*Alex.* Alex swore she was never going to be a teacher. Looking back now, she finds this funny because as a kid she would play school and she would always have to be in charge and be the teacher. She laughs as she recalls her family swearing that is what she was going to do. And she would always say no. She knew the pay was not good. She saw what her teachers went through. She was so adamant in telling them it was not going to happen. Alex started college as a biology major and hated it. Her first semester was the worst semester ever. She did not know anywhere else to turn but education for some reason. That's what settled on her heart and she decided to commit to it. So, she changed majors to early childhood education and has been in love with teaching since then.

She’s taught kindergarten for five years at the same elementary school in a large, suburban school district. The biggest challenge Alex faced in her first-year teaching was never feeling like she had enough time to do anything. She always was bringing work home with her. At one point during the year, she became so tired all she could do was cry. She would call her mom on the phone and just cry because that was the only emotion she had left. And she knows that even though she did well her first year, it was not healthy. She did not have any boundaries. She did not know how to take care of herself. She lacked the confidence in ability as a teacher and tried to make up for the lack of confidence by working all the time. Alex knows she very easily could have left the

teaching profession that first year due to being burned out from the exhaustion. So many of her teaching friends did leave the field. She is thankful for her support system that first year and knows that if it was any harder than it was for her, she may not have made it through it.

*Ashley.* Ashley honestly did not want to go to college. She had zero interest in doing school at all past high school. She actually started her college career as a dance major because that is all she wanted to do. During her first few years in college, she switched majors four different times. She ended up doing marine science for a while “because it got her in-state tuition, so she could figure out what she wanted to do”. Then a friend went into education. And Ashley thought that was kind of cool. She always liked kids. She literally did nothing but babysit on the side when she was not dancing or doing all that other stuff. She thought it would be fun. And then as soon as she changed her major to elementary education, her mom told her that is what she said she wanted to do since she was five years old. Alex could not believe she did not tell her that sooner. But her mom told her it was because she would not have listened. She had to let her figure it out on her own. And Ashley knew her mom was right.

Ashley has taught second grade at an elementary school in a small, city school district for five years. Looking back, she describes her first-year teaching as very hectic. The first day of school was the most exhausting day of her life. It was not at all what she expected, but it was so fun. She thought I was prepared. She thought I was ready to go. But she was not in any means. She did not know how to physically teach kids or have classroom management. The most difficult thing for her the first year was the day the teacher across the hall from her was out sick. There were no substitutes. The

administrators had to split her classroom up. Ashley got a brand-new student that day who was a challenge. She had 24 kids in her room that day. There were six kids sitting on the floor all day. She did not have any physical materials for them. She did not have anything for them to do. It was very difficult trying to teach that many kids on such short notice. Ashley still describes it as the most stressful day of her life. She does not consider herself to get overwhelmed easily, but that day she got very overwhelmed.

### ***Program Leadership Team Participants***

The inclusion of program leadership as participants in the study is important to providing additional context about how the induction program – intentionally, unintentionally, informally, or formally – works to support program participants in teaching a culturally diverse group of students, often demographically different than themselves. Additionally, including program leadership as participants provides insight into programmatic decisions, if any, concerning program participants’ engagement with the key tenets of SFE. The select program leadership included as participants in the study are members of the team in charge of the development of program structure and content. There are three members of this leadership team: a program director and two other individuals who serve as lead coaches for the program. All are white, middle-class former classroom teachers. Additional details about each leadership team participant are provided below.

**Program Director.** The program director is a white, middle-class female. She has over twenty years of experience in public education – both as a public-school teacher and instructional coach. She has served as the induction program’s director since its

inception in 2017. In addition to her role with the program, she serves as adjunct faculty within the teacher preparation program at the university.

**Lead Coach 1.** Lead coach 1 is also a white, middle-class female. She is a twenty-year veteran of the classroom. She is certified in elementary education and middle level science. In addition to being a certified SAFE-T Evaluator and a certified NIET 4.0 Mentor, she has presented professional development sessions to groups of teachers at the school, district, and state levels. She was hired as a full-time lead coach with the program for the 2018-2019 school year.

**Lead Coach 2.** Lead coach 2 is a white, middle-class male. He has over thirty years of experience within public education. He is certified as an elementary and secondary principal and has served as a teacher, principal, and professional developer on school, district, and state levels. During the 2017-2018 school year, he served as a consultant to the program and was hired on as a part-time lead coach in the 2018-2019 school year.

### **Data Collection Methods**

Yin (2018) lists six sources of evidence (data sources) that are commonly found in case study research: documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant-observation, and physical artifacts. He explains that no one source is superior to another, but instead good case studies will utilize as many sources as possible in order for the multiple facets of the phenomenon under investigation to be revealed and understood. The data sources for this study include interviews, reflection memos and field notes from program meetings. It is important to note that all data for this study was collected virtually as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. This is consistent with policies

the induction program adopted in providing support to program participants during the pandemic. Throughout all phases of data collection, all support provided to program participants by the induction program was done virtually.

In addition, by virtue of my role as an evaluator for the program, I have access to supplemental data collected as part of the program's formal evaluation process. This supplemental data from the program's inception through spring 2022 includes participating teacher surveys, interviews and focus groups with program staff, and the program's evaluation reports. A document analysis of the supplemental data provides additional context relative to the study's research questions and data from this analysis is included in Chapter 4.

### ***Interviews***

Yin (2018) identifies interviews as one of the most critical sources of case study evidence. Case study interviews are guided conversations with participants that follow a consistent line of inquiry but are intentionally unstructured in nature to promote fluidity and in-depth responses (Rubin & Rubin, 2011; Weiss, 1994; Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018), "Interviews can especially help by suggesting explanations (i.e., the 'hows' and 'whys') of key events, as well as the insights reflecting the participants' relativist perspectives" (p. 118). Given the explanatory nature of my research questions, interviews allow participants' the opportunity to reflect on their experiences within the induction program, particularly those experiences relating to any exposure to the key tenets of SFE. Additionally, interviews provide a space for participants to consider their perspective on education and schooling and how that perspective has evolved, or not, throughout their teaching preparation and initial experiences teaching in public school classrooms. As the

primary data collection method for this study, I conducted a series of three semi-structured, in-depth interviews with each of the teacher participants. In addition, as a secondary data collection method to provide further context about the induction program's structure and support, I conducted an interview with each of the members of the program leadership team. I also interviewed a teacher education program administrator, as well as a faculty member from the SFE department within the college of education at the induction program's institution, in order to provide additional context about both SFE and teacher preparation at the state and institutional levels.

The decision to utilize semi-structured, in-depth interviews as my primary data collection method for this study is grounded in Marshall and Rossman's (2014) contention that this method is "based on a fundamental assumption of qualitative research: The participant's perspective on the phenomenon of interest should unfold as the participant views it (the emic perspective), not as the researcher views it (the etic perspective)" (p. 150). By conducting semi-structured, in-depth interviews with teacher participants, I was able to engage them in conversations that produced rich, thick data about their engagement with the key tenets of SFE, both within the induction program and external to it. In addition, it became evident as I was conducting the interviews, the semi-structured, in-depth format allowed teacher participants to reflect and make meaning of their experiences as a beginning teacher and participant within the university-based induction program. This is consistent with the purpose of the qualitative case study methodology employed by this study, which prioritizes the subjective view – the participants' perspectives on events (Marshall & Rossman, 2014).

**Teacher Participant Interviews.** A total of three interviews were conducted with each of the teacher participants. Informed by Seidman's (2006) in-depth, phenomenologically based interviewing method, I drafted a series of three interview protocols designed to help address the study's research questions. Interviewers who employ this approach use "primarily, open-ended questions. Their major task is to build upon and explore their participants responses to those questions. The goal is to have the participant reconstruct his or her experience within the topic under study" (Seidman, 2006, p. 15). A key point I kept in mind as I was drafting the protocols was Maxwell's (2013) assertion that "there is no way to mechanically convert research questions into methods; your methods are the means to answering your research questions, not a logical transformation of the latter" (p. 100). Therefore, I determined the scope of each interview by considering not only my research questions, but also what I wanted to ask in order to gain an understanding of my research questions (Maxwell, 2013). After determining the scope of each interview and drafting semi-structured interview protocols, I pilot-tested each protocol with a close friend who is a current high school teacher. After participating in the interviews, she helped me think through alternate ways of asking questions in case some of the technical language, I utilized to engage the teacher participants in discussion about the key tenets of SFE proved problematic.

The series of three interviews were ordered in the following manner. The first interview (Appendix B) provided the context of the participant's path to the teaching profession, as well their transition into the classroom as beginning teachers. Additionally, participants were asked to reflect on the purpose of education in our democratic society and consider their definition of what it means to have a critical perspective of education.



Though I did draft the interview protocol for the second interview prior to conducting the initial interviews with participants in order to layout a big picture direction for the entire interview process, I did utilize data collected in the first round of interviews to inform the second interviews. In reviewing the initial interview data, I made note of any follow-up questions I wanted to ask each participant based on their responses, as well took note of any specific language each participant used to discuss any content related to the key tenets of SFE. The second interview (Appendix C) focused on how participants navigate the culturally diverse population of students in their classrooms and how the induction program, or any other type of support, may have helped prepare them for teaching this diverse student population. Similar to my preparation for the second round of interviews, I did utilize data collected in the second interviews to inform the third interviews. In reviewing both the initial and second interview data for each participant, I made note of any follow-up questions I wanted to ask each participant based on their responses, as well took note of any specific language each participant used to discuss any content related to the key tenets of SFE. In the third and final interview (Appendix D), participants were asked more in-depth questions related to the key tenets of SFE, such as how they view their role as a teacher within their classroom, the role of their own social, political, and cultural assumptions in their teaching practice, and how, if at all, they navigate the assumptions they bring to the classroom.

All three interviews were conducted with teacher participants in the timeframe of one year. Initial interviews with all teacher participants were conducted during April and May 2021. The second interviews with teacher participants took place in July and August 2021. The third and final interviews with teacher participants were conducted in October

and November 2021. Each interview was conducted and recorded via Zoom, a virtual meeting platform all teacher participants indicated they were familiar with and comfortable using. I took notes on key parts that came up in each interview, each participants' non-verbal reactions to questions, and any thoughts I had about follow-up questions as the interviews progressed.

**Program Leadership Team Participant Interviews.** Though I originally planned to conduct a group interview with the program leadership team participants, I determined that conducting individual interviews with each member of the program leadership team would help to ensure that any hierarchal dynamics within the program leadership team did not affect the data collection process. In addition, based on my experience with the program leadership team as a program evaluator, I forecasted scheduling a time for the interview that was convenient for all three program leadership team participants would prove challenging. Accordingly, I conducted one interview with each member of the program leadership team. The program leadership team participant interview (Appendix E) followed a similar line of inquiry as discussed above for teacher participants; however, interviews with program leadership focused more on their thoughts regarding how the induction program works to support program participants in teaching a culturally diverse group of students, often demographically different than themselves, as well as programmatic decisions, if any, concerning program participants' engagement with the key tenets of SFE. All interviews with the members of the program leadership team took place in spring 2022 after all teacher participant interviews had been completed. This was intentional in that I wanted to be able to utilize the data collected during the teacher participant interviews to help inform the protocol for the program

leadership team participant interviews. Each interview was conducted and recorded via Zoom. In addition, I took notes on key parts that came up in each interview, each participants' non-verbal reactions to questions, and any thoughts I had about follow-up questions as the interviews progressed.

**Additional Contextual Interviews.** After completing my initial data collection and analysis, I found it pertinent to collect additional data regarding the context surrounding SFE and teacher preparation at the state and institutional levels. In order to develop more of an understanding of the trends in SFE at the state and institutional levels, interviewed a faculty member from the SFE department at the induction program's college of education. In addition, to gain further insight into teacher preparation at both the state and institutional levels, I interviewed a teacher education program administrator at the induction program's college of education. Both of these interviews took place in October 2022. The data collected from these interviews assisted me in developing a deeper understanding of the context of the university-based teacher induction program by situating the program within the historical and current contexts of SFE and teacher preparation at both the state and institutional levels.

### ***Reflection Memos & Field Notes***

As a result of my role as an evaluator for the induction program and the evaluation team's integral part of the college's internal development team for the program, I am not solely an outside researcher for this project. In some ways, given my role as an evaluator, I have an emic perspective of the induction program. According to Naekke et al. (2010), "Emic perspectives are those taken by a researcher who is a member of the community being studied" (p. 152). In serving as part of the internal

development team for the program, I do have a role in programmatic decisions, specifically as they are informed by program evaluation. In addition, as a result of my role, I have access to aspects of the program that would be inaccessible otherwise. In these ways, it positions me as an “insider” within the induction program’s community. Yet, given that I am considered an external evaluator, I am not a member of the program’s staff (who are all former teachers) and I am not a participant within the program (who are all teachers). Based on this – and given that I am not a teacher, nor have I ever been a teacher – I also have an etic perspective as a researcher. Naekke et al. (2010) explain etic perspectives as those taken by a researcher who is an outsider to the community being studied. I am an outsider to the program under study, as I have never participated in it. In addition, the program serves as a support for PK-12 teachers, and I have never served as a PK-12 teacher.

My “insider” status as a program evaluator allowed for me to collect data through field notes during internal development team meetings and program staff trainings. Though unable to completely separate myself from either my “insider” or “outsider” status (Lincoln & Guba, 2012; Nakata, 2015), in an attempt to ensure I could focus on my “outsider” status for the purpose of this research, I engaged in self-reflection memos after these meetings and trainings documenting my thoughts as a researcher as they pertain to the phenomenon under study. This also allowed for me to continually engage with my subjectivity and positionality and reflect on my own understanding of the program and its impacts. Maxwell (2008) explains that memos “facilitate your thinking about relationships in your data and make your ideas and analyses visible and retrievable” (p. 239). As someone with a form of insider status, I perceive the workings of the program

differently than from someone who may be completely external to it (Yin, 2018). This perspective is important and according to Yin (2018) many argue “invaluable in producing an accurate portrayal of a case study phenomenon” (p. 124). The data I collected through my insider status as an evaluator for the program provides further understanding of the induction program’s role, if at all, in exposing program participants to the key tenets of SFE and impacting their development of a critical perspective of education. Specifically, data collected through this method provides insight into decisions regarding how the program aims to support program participants in teaching a culturally diverse group of students, often demographically different than themselves. The guided self-reflection memo I engaged with after programmatic trainings and meetings can be found in Appendix F.

### ***Documentation***

Documentation is the collection and analysis of existing records related to the study (Yin, 2018). According to Yin (2018) documentary information, paper or electronic, is pertinent to most case study topics. Data from documentation can be collected from a variety of sources, but the sources most applicable to this project include internal administrative documents, formal program evaluation documents, and news clippings and other articles about the program in the mass media or scholarly community. This data provides context about the induction program, as well as corroborates data collected from interviews and field observations. As Yin (2018) explains, it was important for me as the researcher to keep in mind that the documents I collected were all written for a specific purpose other than that of my study and that the data from these documents reflects “a communication among other parties attempting to achieve some

other objectives” (p. 116). By doing so it helped me from misinterpreting the documentary information and also assist me in maintaining the separation of my role for this project as research from my role as program evaluator. This project is not evaluating the program, but data collected from the evaluation process does provide contextual and procedural understanding about the induction program. This data is covered by a general institutional IRB that has already been submitted and approved for research purposes. Though supplementary data collected as part of the program evaluation, including participating teacher focus groups, participating teacher surveys, interviews and focus groups with program staff, and the program’s evaluation reports, provides key context relative to the study’s research questions and augments evidence collected through other data sources, this data does not take precedence over the study’s primary data collection methods.

In addition, in order to situate the induction program within the historical and current contexts of SFE and teacher preparation at the institutional level, I collected and analyzed course syllabi related to SFE content and culturally relevant pedagogy from teacher education programs at the induction program’s home institution. This also provided insight into the teacher participants previous engagement with SFE content and principles. In October 2022 I emailed each of the program coordinators for the teacher education programs for any syllabi that included content related to culturally relevant/sustaining pedagogy, engaging with diverse student populations, and/or any content directly connected to the social foundations of education. I received syllabi from the early childhood education program; however, I did not receive any syllabi from the elementary, middle level, or secondary level programs. I was able to access some

information regarding course content for the elementary education program from their website. The information collected and analyzed from these documents is discussed in Chapter 4.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis is a complex process and there is no one right way to analyze data (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Additionally, data analysis is reflexive practice that informs data collection, writing, and further collection of the data since a researcher reflects and analyzes data as it is gathered rather than solely at the completion of data collection (Saldaña, 2013). Given this reflexive nature, my decisions regarding data analysis for this study were continuous throughout the research process. My research design, engagement in the data collection process, and subsequent reflection, all informed the direction of data analysis.

Data analysis in qualitative inquiry is typically comprised of reviewing raw data, coding and recoding raw data into themes, and representing the data in a final research report (Creswell, 2013). The coding process itself entails finding words or short phrases (codes) that can represent portions of the data, determining how similar codes are related in order to combine codes into categories, and then identifying patterns that emerge within each category which can be represented as themes within the data (Saldaña, 2013). This is a complex process that is recursive in nature and requires much deliberation. All qualitative data analysis involves interpretation and as a result, influences decisions of representation. “The representation of a project refers to the best form and format that will credibly, vividly, and persuasively document the researchers’ fieldwork experiences

and findings” (Saldaña, 2011, p. 77). Decisions regarding representation also evolved as the study progressed.

### ***Initial Analysis and Coding***

After conducting each round of teacher participant interviews, I transcribed all of the interviews, taking notes about any initial patterns that emerged as I transcribed. I then conducted a brief initial review of each transcript prior to conducting the next round of interviews. In my first review of each transcript, I focused on identifying any follow-up questions I had for each participant so I could make note of them on the subsequent interview protocols. A second examination of each transcript resulted in an initial data analysis that employed a combination of “a priori” and emergent coding. Informed by Benchik-Osborne’s (2013) study, in which she utilizes the principles found within the *Standards* established by the Council of Social Foundations of Education (CSFE) to investigate consistency of language or instructional pattern within teachers relative to SFE, I decided to also use these principles as a guide for identifying the key tenets of SFE that emerged from the interviews. Utilizing the principles within the CSFE *Standards* as a form of “a priori” coding to identify SFE content within the interview data, I concurrently engaged in a form of in vivo coding to generate codes. In vivo coding takes a word or short phrase used by participants in the data and turns them into codes (Saldaña, 2013). According to Saldaña (2013), in vivo coding is particularly appropriate for “studies that prioritize and honor the participant’s voice” (p. 91). Though I considered using Dedoose, an analyzing software, to assist with coding at this point in the process, ultimately, I decided to employ the analyzing software after utilizing a manual coding process for the initial analysis of each round of interviews. In vivo codes can be further analyzed using a



variety of analytic approaches. Upon completion of the interview process, I considered several analytic approaches recommended by Saldaña (2013), eventually determining thematic analysis was best suited for this study.

### ***Thematic Analysis***

Thematic analysis, a method of identifying and analyzing patterns within data, is an analytic approach that is compatible with case study methodology. It is a way of organizing data into themes for the purpose of interpretation. In employing the thematic analysis approach, I was able to further analyze the in vivo codes generated from my initial data analysis, as well as my participant-observation field notes, to identify any patterns that emerged within and across participants. At this point in the analysis process, I uploaded all interview transcripts to Dedoose, which allowed me to code each interview for the patterns that emerged and then identify the connections between those patterns both within and across participants. Throughout the analysis process, the codebook served as a dynamic guide for reviewing transcripts. In maintaining a dynamic approach to the codebook, this allowed for new codes to emerge and existing codes to be revised as needed. Within Dedoose, codes were organized into parent codes (major codes) and child codes (minor codes), where the parent codes represented the most significant concepts and themes within the data (Glense, 2011). This approach assisted me in uncovering consistent aspects of the university-based teacher induction program that exposed program participants to the key tenets of SFE and impacted their development of a critical perspective of education. In doing so, it helped me ensure that the data, across all data sources, were converged in order to understand the overall case, rather than the various parts of the case – a key aspect of case study research (Baxter & Jack, 2008).

### ***Overall Analytic Strategy***

Yin (2018) explains that in case study research it is important to use initial or preliminary data analysis to move toward a general analytic strategy. According to Yin (2018), a general analytic strategy “should follow some cycle (or repeated cycles) involving your original research questions, the data, your defensible handling and interpretation of the data, and your ability to state some findings and draw some conclusions” (p. 168). One such strategy is to link data to the study’s stated propositions. These propositions serve as the basis for the initial objectives and design of the case study, and as a result inform the data collection plan (Yin, 2018). This process leads to analytic priorities. The key propositions that inform the design of the proposed study are as follows:

- a) Engagement with the key tenets of SFE can assist teachers in developing a self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities, as well as foster the skills necessary for them to engage students of any race, socio-economic status, or culture in equitable educational experiences.
- b) Devaluation of SFE within teacher preparation programs across the country exacerbates the racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools, as teachers lack the critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students.

- c) Induction support provided by the university to early-career teachers who are graduates of its teacher preparation program may informally and unintentionally exposes program participants to the key tenets of SFE.
- d) University-based teacher induction programs provide an additional opportunity, beyond teacher preparation coursework, for SFE to demonstrate its value to teacher development.

These propositions, which identify important contextual conditions, as well as explanations to be examined, helped me organize the entire analysis (Yin, 2018). This strategy, influenced by my decision to engage in a thematic analysis approach, was employed after the initial coding utilized in vivo coding. I sought to group words or phrases identified through the initial coding process into categories that related to the propositions shared above. This is what Saldaña (2013) would consider to be *protocol coding* – “the collection and, in particular, the coding of qualitative data according to a pre-established, recommended, standardized, or prescribed system” (p. 175). Once grouped into categories, I looked for key findings that emerged from that data that allowed me to draw some conclusions about my propositions. Given the explanatory nature of the project, these conclusions relate to the “how’s” of my case study – ultimately the study’s research questions.

## **Methodological Considerations**

### ***Trustworthiness***

Trustworthiness, or providing credibility to the writing, occurs when the researcher informs the reader of the research process (Saldaña, 2013). In his discussion of trustworthiness, Maxwell (2013) encourages the researcher to ask, “How might I be

wrong?” Based on this, I consider trustworthiness in qualitative inquiry to mean that the researcher is transparent about the research process and decisions associated with it, in addition to constantly examining the research study for potential deficiencies. I took several steps throughout the research process to strengthen my study’s trustworthiness, including maintaining a reflexive research journal, attending to triangulation, and engaging in member checking, which below I detail. These strategies for addressing potential threats to the project’s trustworthiness are detailed in the sections below.

**Reflexive Research Journal.** Confirmability in qualitative research refers to a researcher being intentional about addressing concerns regarding the impact of her own biases and interests on the study’s findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The primary method I used in monitoring the impact of my subjectivity and positionality throughout the research process was to maintain a researcher journal. In this journal, I documented my feelings and thoughts in regard to my actions, reactions, and interactions with participants throughout the study. Specifically, I paid attention to positive and negative feelings, moments when I found the need to act beyond my role as a researcher, and moments when I found myself passing judgment on others. Through my journaling, I found it was a challenge for me to navigate responses from teacher participants that clearly indicated a lack of SFE content and knowledge. Given my background as an SFE researcher, I found it alarming how many of the teacher participants demonstrated a lack of ability to ground the purpose of education and schools within our larger democratic society. The process of writing about this tension allowed me to be reflective of my extensive engagement with the key tenets of SFE through my doctoral program coursework and the unfair expectation I had that the teacher participants would be able to engage in conversations

about the key tenets of SFE to the same extent I am. I also documented my thoughts and feelings in general about the study as it progressed. This included making memos about decisions I made throughout the study and why I made those decisions, particularly as they related to drafting interview protocols and conducting data analysis. In addition, I constantly reflected on my subjectivity and its impact and engagement throughout the study.

**Triangulation.** In order for a qualitative study to be considered trustworthy, the researcher must be confident in the findings of the study. This is referred to as credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). A key strategy for ensuring credibility is triangulation. In qualitative research, triangulation refers to the use of multiple methods or a variety of data sources to investigate a phenomenon (Patton, 2002). Triangulation is central to case study research. As Baxter and Jack (2008) explain, the qualitative case study “is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a phenomenon within its context using a variety of data sources. This ensures that the issue is not explored through one lens, but rather a variety of lenses which allows for multiple facets of the phenomenon to be revealed and understood” (p. 544). Furthermore, Yin (2018) contends that a key methodological characteristic of case study research is that the study “relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion” (p. 15). The project’s reliance on multiple data sources, including multiple interviews with each participant, my participant-observation field notes, and the documents collected for contextual purposes all contribute to the triangulation of sources. Additionally, by using Dedoose as an analysis software, I was able to document and visualize the patterns that emerged within and across data sources. In qualitative case

study methodology, only those data points that were triangulated across data sources become themes (Yin, 2018). By utilizing Dedoose, I was able to connect data points across participant interviews in order to discover the overarching themes within the data.

**Member Checking.** Maxwell (2005) explains that the solicitation of feedback from both participants and colleagues is considered “a valuable way to check your own biases and assumptions and flaws in your logic or methods” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 124). In qualitative feedback this process is referred to as member checking (Maxwell, 2013). I utilized member checking to gather feedback about the data collected from interviews and participant-observations, as well as the conclusions drawn from the data to safeguard the trustworthiness and rigor of my data. I asked participants to verify transcripts and to review my interpretations prior to any presentation of my work. Employing this method assisted me in avoiding misinterpreting participants’ words and actions. Also, I was able to identify any biases or misunderstandings that may have occurred throughout my observations and the data collection process. In addition, I utilized member checking to gather feedback on the study’s data and conclusions by engaging with my colleague who also serves as an evaluator for the induction program. She is familiar with the program and our evaluation agenda and was able to assist me in identifying any of the biases that occurred as a result of my role as an evaluator for the program.

### ***Positionality***

In a qualitative inquiry, including case study research, the researcher serves as the instrument for data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2012). As a result, my interactions with participants throughout the study were mediated by my identity as a researcher. It was

important for me to remain aware of the aspects of my identity that might influence the study, particularly in my interactions with study participants.

My identity as a white, female, middle-class researcher with experience working with a diverse population of students at the postsecondary level in one way positioned me as an “insider” in relation to the study’s participants. My identity as a former postsecondary educator strengthened my ability to build rapport with participants of the study, providing me with an avenue to establish commonalities and build trustworthiness in hopes of obtaining rich data. I was able to share my own experiences as a postsecondary educator with participants when it was warranted and in doing so, exhibit a sense of understanding to the participants. Yet, this also had the potential to limit my study if I was not able to separate my experience from the experiences of the participants. Although my experiences as a white, female, middle-class educator led me to realize that educational experiences are different based on race, socio-economic status, and culture, I needed to be attentive to the fact that this epiphany about education and schooling is not one I projected onto the participants in my study. Despite the fact that my identity as an SFE scholar informs my belief that exposure to the key tenets of SFE will assist teachers in developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students, I could not assume that this was the case for participating teachers in the study. Maintaining my researcher journal was key in monitoring this and ensuring I was not projecting my experiences onto the experiences of the participants in my study.

In addition, my lack of classroom teaching experience, particularly at the secondary and elementary levels, positioned me as an “outsider” in relation to the study’s

participants. Again, this both strengthens and limits my study. As a result of having no classroom teaching experience at the secondary or elementary levels, I did not have to worry about keeping my own classroom teaching experiences separate from the participants' classroom teaching experiences. Yet, I needed to ensure that my status as an outsider due to my lack of classroom teaching experience did not negatively impact my rapport with the study's participants. It was important for me to ensure I did not come across to participants as someone who was judging their teaching abilities or someone who was asserting to be an expert in teaching. I was especially mindful of this in how I framed the questions I asked during each of the teacher participant interviews.

Finally, and perhaps most pertinent, my identity as an evaluator for the induction program under investigation in the study and my resulting insider knowledge of the program both strengthen and limit the study. I needed to work hard to make the familiar strange in conducting my study in an environment with which I am extremely familiar; however, my knowledge of the day-to-day operations of the induction program provided me additional insight for my research and analysis. In addition, my role as an evaluator for the program was helpful in building rapport with the participants of the study. This is a population I am familiar with in terms of building trusting, open relationships with, in order to facilitate data collection related to program development. Balancing my role as an evaluator for the program with my role as the researcher for this study proved most challenging during the data analysis and writing process. It was important for me to consistently remind myself that this study is not evaluating the induction program and, consequently, the findings should not and were not influenced by my role as a program evaluator.



My passion for improving the educational experiences for all students assisted me in my persistence throughout the research process, but I did need to continually monitor my subjectivity and positionality in order to prevent myself from manipulating the data to find the results I wanted both as an evaluator for the program and as an SFE scholar. Ultimately, I had experience working with the participants of the study and unique contextual knowledge of the overarching environment of the research site. With the continued monitoring of my subjectivity and positionality, I believe as the researcher, I was able to have an understanding of the research environment and access to building rapport with participants that served as assets to uncovering a rich and descriptive understanding of the research questions.

### **Limitations/Considerations**

A limitation of this study is that given the current pandemic related to the coronavirus, the university-based teacher induction program under investigation adapted the typical program support provided to participating teachers. Participating teachers in the program typically attend several focused training and support sessions throughout the academic year, as well as have in person classroom visits and meetings with their induction program coach (which is discussed in further detail in Chapter 4). At the time of data collection, the program could not offer any in person support, and therefore, participating teachers were only provided virtual support from their program coach. This is one reason I identified study participants who have either completed the program or were in their third year of the program at the time of the study to ensure that they have experienced some of the typical support provided by the program. Another limitation of this study is the relationship between the researcher and participants. Given my role on

the evaluation team for the induction program, my positionality has implications for the way the participants shared their experiences during interviews. Though I managed this by maintaining my awareness of the potential impacts and developing strong interview protocols, my pre-existing relationship with the program and program participants undoubtedly impacted the study.

In addition, this study is limited to a university-based teacher induction program offered to teacher preparation program graduates of a PWI in the southeastern U.S. As a result, the study's findings are not generalizable to other contexts or university-based teacher induction programs, nor do they reflect university-based teacher induction programs in the southeastern U.S. Furthermore, this study seeks to understand the experiences of early-career teachers participating in a university-based teacher induction program within a definitive period and only provides a snapshot of the teachers' educational careers. Researchers will need to conduct additional longitudinal studies to gain a more complete picture of early-career teachers' development of a critical perspective of education throughout their entire participation within the induction program, as well as further along in their teaching careers. Finally, as a result of my own personal and professional experiences, as well as current state of the socio-cultural climate in the U.S. this study focuses primarily on race; therefore, it is limited in this choice. Though not part of the scope of this study, research that includes other targeted, marginalized locations and/or identities – such as labels of dis/ability, immigration/refugee status, nationality, gender identity, sexual orientation, and English language learners – are also pertinent considerations for future studies.

This chapter discussed my methodological commitments and the research methodology employed for this study. In addition, I discussed the context and project participants, data collection methods and analysis, trustworthiness of the research, and my positionality. I concluded this chapter with a discussion of the potential limitations and additional considerations for the study. In the next chapter I present a more detailed overview of the university-based induction program under investigation in this study, addressing the context of the study through data collected from interviews with the program leadership team, as well as from programmatic documents.

## CHAPTER 4: INDUCTION PROGRAM OVERVIEW & CONTEXT

In this chapter I discuss in further detail the university-based teacher induction program under examination that serves as the first level unit of analysis for this study. I begin by situating the induction program within the historical and current contexts of SFE and teacher preparation at the state and institutional levels. Subsequently, I present an overview of the study participants' specific teacher preparation program pathways and what each program's inclusion of and engagement with SFE looks like. In addition, I briefly introduce the concept of a teacher development continuum as it relates to teacher preparation and induction support. Next, I provide a detailed summary of the program's structure and specific types of support provided to participating teachers. This is followed by an overview of the program's history – from its inception to spring 2021 when data collection commenced. Finally, I situate the induction program within the teacher development continuum, particularly as it relates to engagement with SFE content.

### **Contexts of SFE & Teacher Preparation at State & Institutional Levels**

In order to develop a deeper understanding of the context of the university-based teacher induction program under examination in my study, it is important to situate the program within the historical and current contexts of SFE and teacher preparation at both the state and institutional levels. As will be discussed later in this chapter, a catalyst for the institution's creation of the induction program was the identification of a gap in the teacher development continuum in institutions of higher education (IHEs) support of new in-service teachers, as well as the growing teacher shortage facing the state in which the

institution resides. Given this, it is also important to contextualize teacher preparation programs at both the state and institutional levels. The investigation of how a university-based teacher induction program can incorporate key tenets of SFE to provide an additional opportunity to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to help them persist as educators and engage in positive educational experiences with all their students must also discern program participants' previous exposure to SFE content. To do so, it is important to understand how historical and current trends at the federal and state levels impact how SFE is valued within the state and the induction program's institution. Accordingly, the sections below detail the recent of history and current trends regarding SFE and teacher preparation within the program's home state and institution.

### ***Brief Historical Context of Modern Educational Reform***

**Federal Level.** This section provides a brief overview of what I consider to be the era of modern educational reform (1983-present). The reform efforts during this timeframe have been propelled by federal legislation and are steeped within bureaucratic debates across political party lines. In looking at modern educational reform, it is pertinent to refer to the 1983 report by the U.S. National Commission on Excellence in Education – *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform (ANAR)*. This Reagan-era report brought the issue of educational reform to the forefront of U.S. society in its declaration that U.S. education was in crisis (Bartels, 1994; U.S. Department of Education, 1983). According to the report, the educational foundations of our society were “presently being eroded by a rising tide of mediocrity that threatens our very future as a Nation and a people” (U.S. Department of Education, 1983, p. 5). Years later, Berliner and Biddle (1996) provided a critical analysis of the report in which they

demonstrated that it misinterpreted the standardized test scores utilized as the basis for many of the report's conclusions and that the report was primarily used for political purposes rather than for the intent of improving the education system. Nonetheless, it is considered to be the spark that has fueled all educational reform well into the 21st century since its publication, as it set off a wave of reform efforts at the federal and state levels (Bartels, 1994; Good, 2010). Specifically addressing the teaching profession, *ANAR* listed recommendations for improving teaching quality, one of which was to develop higher standards for teacher preparation programs as the committee members determined that teachers were not educated enough and called for teacher preparation programs to be evaluated (U.S. Department of Education, 1983). This resulted in increased requirements for how teachers become certified and more rigorous teacher preparation programs (Park, 2004).

In addition to its lasting impact on educational reform efforts, *ANAR* served to further the myth of colorblindness that was being constructed around U.S. education, affirming that the public education system afforded an equal opportunity for all students. The report was utilized to support neoliberal accountability policies in education that are steeped in the myth of colorblindness and fail to take into account the differing educational experiences of marginalized groups (Giroux, 2010; Tonissen, 2019). The push towards standardization, particularly in the form of standardized testing, ignores institutionally structured racial inequity by claims of neutrality and the promotion of an ideology of individual meritocracy (Au, 2016). In conjunction with neo-conservative strategy of “colorblindness,” the Reagan administration employed *ANAR* as a tool to

shift any focus on equity in education to a focus on the connection between education and economic development (Rury, 2012).

Fueled by *ANAR*, the modern era of educational reform is characterized by an attempt to standardize all aspects of the U.S. public school system, including teacher preparation (Roth, 2017). The 1988 *Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary Improvement Act*, one of the first pieces of federal legislation after *ANAR*, required states to develop state-level math and reading assessments, as well as achievement goals – shifting the focus of educational reforms efforts towards standardized testing and setting the groundwork for the ranking of state education systems (Roth, 2017). In addition, the move towards a focus on student achievement via standardized assessments continued to bring scrutiny to teacher preparation and its impact on individual student achievement. The need for more rigorous teacher certification was revisited by federal legislation again, with the *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* that called for “highly qualified” teachers in order to fulfill the mission of U.S. public schools to “build the mind and character of every child, from every background, in every part of America.” *NCLB* defined a “highly qualified” teacher as one that holds at least a bachelor’s degree, full state certification (including through alternate routes) or a passing score on a state teacher licensing exam and demonstrated competence in the subjects they teach. This definition clearly prioritizes subject matter knowledge and dismisses pedagogy and other knowledge and skills, such as SFE principles and content (Cochran-Smith, 2005).

With the passage of *NCLB*, the Bush administration, much like the Reagan administration, continued to assert the myth of colorblindness in its discourse around the U.S. education system – purporting that U.S. public schools are structured to serve all

students no matter their cultural background, socioeconomic status, or race. Specifically, NCLB shifted the responsibility of educational success to the individual and completely ignored any existing inequities as a result of race culture, or socioeconomic status (Tonissen, 2019). As Leonardo (2009) explains:

When the white referent of NCLB is not discussed, these [minority] communities receive the impression that they are failing non-racialized academic standards.

The upshot is that the fault is entirely theirs, a cornerstone of color-blind discourse that conveniently forgets about structural reasons for school failure. On the other hand, when largely white middle class schools and districts meet or exceed their target, they receive a similar but beneficial message: that the merit is entirely theirs. (p. 130)

By placing the school as the unit of improvement, *NCLB* considers only what happens within school buildings as having influence in student achievement and does not take into consideration students' lived experiences outside of schools. School failure is considered to be a direct product of the school itself and not at all a product of any societal structural inequities affecting U.S. public education system (Hollingworth, 2008).

**State Level.** Shortly after the *ANAR* report was released, political leaders in the induction program's home state began to publicly acknowledge the state's public education system was failing (Thomas, 2019). Furthermore, the state was facing decreases in enrollment across their teacher colleges. Reform leaders attributed this to issues related to discipline and motivation, low pay, and an overall poor image of the teaching profession (Bartels, 1994). *The Education Improvement Act of 1984 (EIA)* was passed as a result of political and business leaders work to identify areas within the



state's public education system where reform was needed. It outlined seven goals for education reform across the state, one of which was evaluating the teaching profession (Halloran, 2019). The legislation stressed teaching as a career in high schools and colleges, bolstered teacher recruitment efforts, increased pay and incentive programs to attract and retain quality teachers, and overall increased the standards for the teaching profession (Bartels, 1994; Switzer & Green, 2016). Yet, as a result of this legislation, many teachers across the state lost their jobs due to failing to meet the standards for teaching established by the *EIA*, further perpetuating the teacher shortage facing the state.

Then the *Target 2000 – School Reform for the Next Decade Act* was passed in 1989. This act was the state's attempt to bring itself in line with the federal trends of modern educational reform, which included offering schools, principals, and teachers bonuses for good student scores on standardized tests (Halloran, 2019). Almost a decade later, the *SC Education Accountability Act of 1998* established a performance-based accountability system that sought to improve teaching and student learning. The act founded the Education Oversight Committee, whose goal was to monitor the accountability efforts within the new system, including increased efforts to strengthen teacher quality (Halloran, 2019).

Given the shift in focus towards standardization and accountability that resulted from the above legislation and federal trends in modern educational reform, the induction program's home state passed additional legislation in 2014 that was meant to address the state's persistently low scores on reading assessments. According to the legislation, all students must read on grade level by the end of third grade (Read to Succeed Act, 2014).

Specifically, the legislation mandated all teacher preparation programs, beginning in the 2016-2017 academic year, to require:

All candidates seeking certification at the early childhood or elementary level to complete a twelve-credit hour sequence in literacy that includes a school-based practicum and ensures that candidates grasp the theory, research, and practices that support and guide the teaching of reading. (Read to Succeed Act, 2014)

In addition, beginning in the same academic year, the legislation mandated all middle and secondary level teacher preparation programs to require all candidates “to complete a six-credit hour sequence in literacy that includes a course in the foundations of literacy and a course in content-area reading” (Read to Succeed Act, 2014). These mandates further impacted the curricula for teacher preparation programs across the state, as program administrators had to shift their focus to providing courses that met the new literacy content guidelines. As a direct result of the federal legislation that shifted educational reform efforts towards standardization, along with state-level legislation that followed suit, pre-service teachers in teacher preparation programs are now required to demonstrate content and methodology competencies, as well as take more content specific courses (Jones, 2009). This has impacted how teacher preparation program curricula are structured and is one of the contributing factors that lead to the limited space in teacher preparation program curricula for SFE content and coursework – supporting Tozer & Miretzky’s (2005) claim that the standards-based movement is negatively impacting space for SFE in teacher education curriculums.

### ***SFE Trends within the Surrounding Contexts of the Induction Program***

In Chapter 2 I discussed the recent national trends in the devaluation of SFE. This section examines aspects of those trends within the state and institution in which the induction program operates. One way the national trends in the devaluation of SFE can be seen at the state and institutional levels is in an analysis of faculty departure and hires within the SFE program at the institution that houses the induction program. According to one of the programs' faculty members, over the course of the past seven years, the SFE program at the institution lost a total of four tenured faculty members and one lecturer, resulting in the loss of 19 covered course offerings (personal communication, October 17, 2022). Speaking directly from my personal experience, at the start of my time in the doctoral program during the 2013-2014 academic year, there were six full-time faculty. Currently, there are only three full-time faculty for the program. As a result, graduate students have had to cover more sections of the introductory SFE course that is requirement for nearly all of the undergraduate teacher preparation programs at the institution (which is discussed in more detail in the next section). There are no plans to hire additional full-time faculty for the program. This directly correlates with Hartlep & Porfilio's (2015) identification of the closing of SFE tenure-lines and the replacement with adjuncts with limited SFE expertise as one trend that demonstrates how SFE is being devalued at colleges and universities across the U.S. Though SFE doctoral students are being utilized to cover some of the sections of the introductory SFE course, it is palpable that their limited expertise as students within the field of SFE does not compare with the expertise of SFE scholars who serve as full-time faculty members within SFE programs at institutions throughout the U.S.

Additionally, in order to further contextualize the trends in SFE at the state and institutional levels, I include a section from my qualifying exam I completed in the spring of 2017 for my doctoral program in SFE. In discussing the landscape of SFE today, I wrote:

It has been my observation that within our own institution's college of education, the social foundations program is still on the periphery of teacher education and the college as a whole. Its importance within teacher preparation has been reduced to one three credit course taught by foundations faculty and doctoral students.

When I enrolled in the graduate level SFE course for teacher preparation, which included both foundations doctoral students and graduate level teacher program candidates, many students questioned how the topics discussed in class related to their practice in the classroom. Additionally, students had a hard time even engaging in conversations around diversity and social issues, as they had not encountered many spaces before where they engaged in those types of conversations. (Montpeirous, 2017, p. 11-12)

I continued:

[The SFE program at the institution] has also struggled to stay afloat over the past few years. Faculty members have left due to lack of appreciation, support and opportunity, creating course offering issues due to the faculty shortage. It has taken over a year to engage administration in conversations about hiring additional faculty for the program. The lack of resources also hinders student enrollment in the program, further perpetuating the lack of support from college of education administration. Programs with low enrollment are not making the

college, and therefore university, money, so their return on investment is questioned. The program has worked to recruit new students by soliciting SFE course enrollment from non-SFE program students. Yet, this tactic appears to maintain another long existing challenge faced by social foundations programs – the single-discipline versus interdisciplinary tension. In my opinion, some students who switch to the SFE program do so without a full understanding of what social foundations is and the key tenets of the field, but they do so because they may align with the critical approach of the field, or they identify with some of the theoretical frameworks. In some cases, these students still cling to their prior disciplinary field and have difficulty fully grasping the interdisciplinary nature of social foundations. This generates two concerns, it continues to fuel the interdisciplinary challenges that have faced social foundations scholars throughout history, which in turn creates an identity crisis for the field. (Montpeirous, 2017, p. 12).

In reflecting on this section of my qualifying exam, it is clear that as a doctoral student in SFE, I witness trends in the devaluation of SFE at a very personal level within my own institution's SFE doctoral program.

**Teacher Preparation Program Standards & Curricula.** Another national trend Hartlep and Porfilio (2015) identified that demonstrates the devaluation of SFE is the limited space within teacher preparation programs for SFE courses and content – asserting that many teacher preparation programs do not require pre-service teachers to enroll in an SFE course, or even a course in multicultural education. A more detailed look at teacher preparation program standards at the state level, as well as program

requirements at the institutional level, provide additional insight into how SFE is viewed in the contexts surrounding the induction program. Teacher preparation programs across the U.S. need to be authorized by the state in which their institution resides. Given the trends in modern educational reform for increased requirements for how teachers become certified and the call for more rigorous teacher preparation programs, typically, each state has unique standards based on state law, state regulations, and state board of education policies and guidelines that ensure teacher preparation programs graduate teacher candidates who are prepared to meet these requirements (Coggshall et al., 2012). In addition to state standards, there are also non-profit, non-governmental national accrediting bodies of which teacher preparation programs can seek accreditation. National accreditation is sought after as a form of quality assurance through external review. To be nationally accredited a teacher preparation program must demonstrate it meets standards set by one of these designated bodies (Coggshall et al., 2012).

Some states require teacher preparation programs to meet both state standards, as well as the standards of one of these national accrediting bodies. The induction program institution's state is one of these such states. The state's department of education requires all teacher preparation programs within the state to meet specific state standards, as well as the standards of the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP). It is the national accreditation, as well as the state standards, that historically dictated course specific requirements within teacher preparation programs. However, given the profession's shift towards performance-based standards, as well as the development of new accreditation standards and performance measures as a result of the merging of national accrediting bodies, there are very few states where course specific requirements,

particularly relating to the history, philosophy, and sociology of education, in teacher education remain (deMarrais, 2005). This leaves SFE coursework unprotected in terms of its role within teacher preparation programs. A claim that Tozer & Miretzky (2005) purported in their discussion of the two competing movements that currently exist within teacher education: de-regulation of teacher preparation through alternate certification versus the standards-based movement focused on outcome measures. Neither movement leaves room for SFE and the value it brings to teacher education programs. The formation of new national accrediting bodies and the development of new evidence-based standards is just one example of how the standards-based movement is negatively impacting space for SFE in teacher education curriculums.

The induction program institution's college of education (COE) first received CAEP accreditation in April 2018. Prior to this the COE was accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). In 2013, NCATE merged with another national accrediting body – the Teacher Education Accreditation Council (TEAC) – to form CAEP. In fall 2015, the COE began the process of transitioning to CAEP accreditation, which included a two-year self-study process that culminated in a site visit by state and national reviewers. The induction program, with its commitment to three years of support for the institution's graduates, was one of the key initiatives within the COE CAEP reviewers commended.

CAEP does not refer to SFE at all within its five main standards. In fact, it positions teaching and instruction as separate from the social institutions within which they operate by making no attempt to reflect on public schooling as a social institution within the U.S. (Kelly, 2017). Regarding state standards, the induction program's state

currently has ten overarching standards for teacher education candidates. The standard that most closely references SFE content and language is the eighth standard which refers to “Maintaining and Environment that Promotes Learning.” This standard provides guidance that reads:

Competent professional teachers show an awareness of and sensitivity to individual differences among students, as well as their social and cultural backgrounds. All students are equally encouraged to participate, learn and develop, and to achieve high levels of success. Competent professional teachers create and maintain an environment in which cooperation and teamwork is valued and students learn to respect and appreciate differences among individuals. The beliefs, ideas, opinions, and other contributions of all students are given thoughtful consideration.

This language is consistent with SFE, particularly as it relates to diversity; however, there is no language consistent with the historical, philosophical, or sociocultural areas of SFE that are customarily the foundation of SFE courses (deMarrais, 2005). Furthermore, the standards ignore “culture” altogether. Instead, they seek to align student learning outcomes, teaching standards, and standards-based performance assessments for teacher candidates in such a way that efficiency and accountability neutralize the teaching profession within society. This is exactly what Butin (2005b) was referring to when he explained,

The most contextual and contested educational issue—“culture”—has become acontextual and neutral. From this perspective issues of inequity in our schools can and should be solved by “colorblind” and neutral policymaking focused on



“highly qualified” teachers who have high verbal scores, subject matter competence, and the absence of a criminal record (Hess 2001; Leigh and Mead 2005). (p. 293).

All of which has a direct impact on curricula space within teacher education programs, leading program administrators to prioritize standards-based coursework and minimizing any room for SFE coursework.

Moreover, as discussed earlier in this chapter, the myth of colorblindness in education policy, and specifically in this case teacher preparation policy, is problematized within CRT. Colorblind policy making serves to maintain racial subordination by supporting inequity through a lack of historical and social context (Ladson-Billings, 2021). Furthermore, it lacks an understanding of race as a social construction that has real societal consequences (Thomas & Thomas, 1928) – a key component of CRT. Ignoring the very real consequences of culture, race, and racism in our society perpetuates the system of white privilege. In addition, the focus on colorblind and neutral policymaking within education and teacher preparation programs is in direct opposition to CRP and its potential impact on public education. Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b) specifically identified cultural competence as a key aspect of CRP – a framework explicitly focused on providing equitable education for all students. By neutralizing culture within the teaching profession, and ultimately, the classroom, there is no space for the affirmation of students’ cultural identities or for teachers to develop an understanding of how their own cultural identities influence their perceptions of students’ cultural identities. This means that education policy around teacher preparation directly contradicts a pedagogy that is taught within many teacher preparation programs across the U.S., including the some of

the teacher preparation programs this study's participants completed as detailed in the next section.

**Teacher Preparation Programs at the Institutional level.** A conversation with a college of education administrator at the induction program's home institution was able to provide additional context regarding the specific teacher preparation programs offered by the institution. The administrator joined the college of education at the institution in 2006, shortly after new undergraduate teacher preparation programs had been created. According to the administrator, the creation of these programs was the direct result of the teacher shortage facing the state. In an effort to mediate the shortage, the state department of education asked the institution to produce more teachers by offering teacher preparation programs to undergraduate students (personal communication, October 4, 2022). Within a year, the institution put together undergraduate teacher preparation programs at the early childhood, elementary, middle, and secondary levels. Each program was created separately by faculty within each of those education levels. The institution was able to create the programs in a short time frame to begin to accept and produce more teachers, but the short time frame did not allow for a lot of critical thought in the development of the programs in terms of core content and pedagogy (personal communication, October 4, 2022). As a result, each program has its own curricula requirements and there is no consistency across core content.

The fact that each teacher preparation program at the institution was developed independent of one another means that each program has its own approach to how and when pre-service teachers are exposed to SFE content. It is important to note that all undergraduate teacher preparation programs at the institution, with the exception of

physical education, foreign language and music, do require enrollment in one course classified as a social foundations of education course (personal communication, October 18, 2022). This course is taught by SFE faculty and doctoral students and explores the social, political, and historical aspects of diverse educational institutions in U.S. culture within an emphasis on families, schools, and communities. The course's focus is to assist pre-service teachers in developing an understanding of the role of education and school in society, specifically from a historical, social, philosophical, and political perspective. A sample course syllabus shared by a SFE faculty member outlines the purpose of the course is to assist pre-service teachers in understanding:

...the broad context of teaching in the United States and, in particular, [the state].

This class is about why we teach, why schools exist, and the importance of socio-historical and cultural context in understanding the continued development of education. The goal of this course is to enable [pre-service teachers] to become more aware of and sensitive to the complex dynamics underlying education in the United States. (Brown, 2018, p.1)

The course emphasizes a multiplicity of voices with the hopes of assisting pre-service teachers in developing the critical inquiry skills necessary to navigate major issues and developments in schooling.

Yet, pre-service teachers' exposure to other course content connected to SFE is inconsistent at the induction program's home institution. For example, the early childhood program at the institution requires their pre-service teachers to take a course in culturally relevant pedagogy, a course in supporting linguistic pluralism in the classroom, and a course focused on African and African Diaspora literacies. A review of these

course syllabi demonstrates a direct connection to SFE content and principles. A focus of the culturally relevant pedagogy course is on promoting equity in schools and society by emphasizing the following:

- a. Understanding the role education has played and plays in shaping society
- b. Valuing all students inclusive of race, class, gender, exceptionality, home language or other social, physical, or cultural characteristics
- c. Utilizing social and cultural backgrounds and the variety of ways individuals learn to enhance teaching and learning
- d. Acting as agents of change in classrooms, schools, and communities (Wynter-Hoyte, 2020, p. 1)

Each of these key points of emphasis connect directly to the principles outlined by the CSFE *Standards*. More specifically, understanding education's role in in shaping society correlates with CSFE principle one which asserts that educators should be able to understand and apply cross disciplinary knowledge to determine the meaning of education and schooling across cultures (CSFE, 2000). In addition, valuing the lived experiences of all students across their multitude of identities and utilizing students' social and cultural backgrounds in the learning process aligns with CSFE principle five that states educators should understand the importance of diversity in a democratic society (CSFE, 2000). The course engages pre-service teachers in reflecting deeply about positioning and privilege with regard to identify factors such as race, sexual orientation, faith, language, family structure, socioeconomic status, and physical characteristics.

The course in supporting linguistic pluralism in the classroom builds upon the CRP course by focusing on languages and how they operate with regard to many of the

identify factors previously introduced. The course helps pre-service teachers in learning about and planning for teaching students about legitimacy, history, literary and communicative purpose, and linguistic structure of theirs and other others' languages. It hopes to sharpen pre-service teachers' ability to "walk through the world with a critical eye – alert to examples of privilege, power, and marginalization interpersonally and systemically" (Long, 2018, p. 5). The aim at developing a "critical eye" is largely connected to SFE principles. In particular, CSFE principle three states that educators understand and can apply critical perspectives on education and schooling (CSFE, 2000). A performance indicator for this principle reads, "The educator uses critical judgment to question educational assumptions and arrangements and to identify contradictions and inconsistencies among social and educational values, policies, and practices" (CSFE, 2000). The course goal of assisting pre-service teachers in critically examining issues of power, privilege and marginalization at the interpersonal and systemic levels is exactly what this performance indicator is intending.

The course focused on African and African Diaspora literacies is inspired by pedagogical scholars who urge educators to address the fact that the currently Eurocentric curriculum omits, marginalizes, or distorts thousands of years of contributions to the world's knowledge through curricula that typically start with the enslavement of Africans and the "conquest" of Native Americans and other Indigenous Peoples (Long, 2020). The syllabus states that given that much research in the field of early childhood education makes it clear that:

...children learn bias, stereotype, and misinformation from a very young age, it is essential that this kind of work begins in the education of teachers of young

children by equipping teacher candidates with the tools and abilities to teach these concepts in the early childhood classroom” (Long, 2020, p. 1).

According to the syllabus, the course provides an important foundation from which other courses in the early childhood program (for example, methods courses for teaching literacy, science, social studies, and mathematics) can better prepare teacher candidates to teach in culturally relevant, humanizing, and culturally sustaining ways (Long, 2020).

Again, the aims of this course connect directly to the principles outlined by the CSFE Standards. In particular, similar to the CRP course, being able to value and incorporate the lived experiences of all students aligns with CSFE principle five that states educators should understand the importance of diversity in a democratic society (CSFE, 2000).

Furthermore, interrogating existing Eurocentric curricula to push back against stereotypes and misinformation about marginalized groups connects with the ability to apply critical perspectives of education and schooling as specified in CSFE principle three (CSFE, 2000).

In addition, SFE principles can also be connected to an elective course in teaching social studies offered by the early childhood program. The course:

...supports preservice teachers in developing understandings about social studies as the coordinated, systematic integration of disciplines such as anthropology, archaeology, history, law, philosophy, psychology, religion, sociology, and humanities with an emphasis on history, economics, geography and political science for the purpose of helping young children develop a foundation for making informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world.

The course specifically references key SFE tenets in its assumption that cultural diversity is an important aspect of democratic society. At course completion, it is the hope that students are able to describe the history of Social Studies teaching including issues of marginalization, discrimination, and dominant cultural perspectives, and implications for teaching social studies today, as well as learn from and normalize the accomplishments and expertise of groups traditionally omitted, marginalized, and misrepresented in Social Studies curricula materials. Again, this course is focused on developing pre-services teachers' ability to look at social studies curricula and content critically, a key principle outlined within the CSFE *Standards*.

The elementary education program also requires pre-service teachers to enroll in a culturally sustaining pedagogy course. Though a syllabus for this was not shared with me by the program coordinator, I was able to access some details regarding the course from the department's website and the course bulletin. The course focuses on curriculum design tools and instructional strategies that reflect the diversity of students' cultural backgrounds and languages in elementary classrooms. Pre-service teachers spend time challenging assumptions they have about teaching students from diverse cultural backgrounds, as well as understanding white privilege. In addition, they engage in discussion about what theories and philosophies of education support culturally sustaining teaching, such as Freire and Dewey. Similar to the early childhood education program courses, the course content for this course appears to connect with CSFE principle three and principle five that reference developing critical perspective of education and schooling, and understanding the importance of diversity in a democratic society, respectively (CSFE, 2000).

The middle level and secondary level teacher preparation programs do not appear to require enrollment in any additional courses connected to SFE content beyond the one required course classified as a social foundations of education course. I did reach out to each of the program coordinators for any syllabi that include content related to culturally relevant/sustaining pedagogy, engaging with diverse student populations, and/or any content directly connected to the social foundations of education; however, I did not receive any syllabi from either the middle level or secondary level programs. It does seem pertinent to note that the five-year secondary education program that results in a bachelor's plus master's degree, given that two of the study's participants completed this program, requires enrollment in an equity and community engagement course that explores critical multicultural education, as well as culturally relevant and equity pedagogies. Yet, since I did not receive any syllabi, I cannot provide any further details about the content of the course.

### **Study Participants' Teacher Preparation & SFE**

Though all teacher participants for this study were prepared at the same institution of higher education, given the institutions' inconsistency across core content within teacher preparation programs detailed in the section above, their pathways to certification and exposure to SFE content were different based on the specific teacher preparation program in which they were enrolled. The nine participants in the study were prepared by six different teacher preparation programs within the institution's college of education. These six programs included: early childhood education (birth to grade 3), elementary education (grades 2-6), middle level education (grades 5-8), music education at the



bachelor's level, music education at the master's level, and a five-year bachelor's plus master's degree teaching program for secondary education.

The two participants who completed the early childhood education program engaged in the most coursework with content specific to SFE at four required courses. The two participants from the elementary education program, as well as the two participants who completed the five-year bachelor's plus master's degree in teaching for secondary education, engaged in coursework with content specific to SFE at two required courses. The one participant who completed the middle level education program engaged in only one required course with content specific to SFE. The participant who completed the master's in music education and the one participant who completed her bachelor's in music education did not engage in any required coursework with content to specific to SFE.

Given this analysis of the participants' teacher preparation program coursework, as well as the analysis of teacher preparation program curricula at the institution, it is clear that the teacher participants in the study, with the exception of the two participants who completed the early childhood program, were exposed to a minimal and inconsistent amount of SFE content and principles during their teacher preparation program. This is consistent with the two competing movements in the field of teacher education in the U.S. identified by Tozer and Miretzky (2005) discussed in Chapter 2. As the two movements struggle against one another to provide evidence that legitimates their claims, both lack space for SFE and the value it brings to teacher education programs all together. Specifically, the standards movement's focus on outcome measures for both students and teachers leaves little room in the curriculum for non-standards-based

preparation, in turn, severely limiting the opportunity for SFE to be a part of the curriculum on either side (Tozer & Miretzky, 2005). All of the teacher participants' teacher preparation programs were very standards focused, no doubt in part a reflection of the institution's COE's transition to CAEP accreditation, as well as the national trend towards standardizing the profession. Even when teacher preparation practitioners understand the value of SFE to the development of pre-service teachers, as many do at the induction program's institution, they are left with little space in the curriculum to include SFE courses and content. The limited opportunity for SFE in teacher education program curricula leaves pre-service and early career teachers lacking the key SFE knowledge and skills imperative to developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. Chapter 5 explores in further detail how my conversations with the teacher participants of my study corroborated my presupposition that this limited exposure to SFE in their pre-service preparation has resulted in the teacher participants' minimal understanding of the SFE knowledge and principles.

### **The Teacher Development Continuum**

As previously mentioned earlier in the chapter and discussed in further detail in the next section that details the induction program structure and support, an impetus for the development of the induction program was the institution in which the program is operated identifying the presence of IHEs in supporting new in-service teachers as a gap in the teacher development continuum. Just as IHEs depend on schools and districts to assist in preparing new teachers for the classroom through practicum and internship placements, schools and districts should be able to depend on IHEs to provide support

throughout teachers' induction years. The role of the teacher preparation program should not end when a teacher begins his or her teaching career.

No matter the quality of a teacher's preservice preparation program, there are certain aspects of teaching that only can be learned while doing it (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Given the current landscape of teacher education programs across the U.S – with the narrowing of curricula due to a focus on standards-based measures – there has been an increased discussion around the idea of a teacher development continuum. This continuum would start at the time of pre-service preparation and continue through the early years of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). Research suggests that traditional teacher education programs in conjunction with professional development in the early teaching years is not the most effective way to promote complex learning or teacher persistence. As Feiman-Nemser (2001) purports:

Conventional programs of teacher education and professional development are not designed to promote complex learning by teachers or students. The typical preservice program is a weak intervention compared with the influence of teachers' own schooling and their on-the-job experience. "Sink or swim" induction encourages novices to stick to whatever practices enable them to survive whether or not they represent "best" practice in that situation. Professional development opportunities are usually sporadic and disconnected, rarely tied to teachers' classroom work and lacking any follow up. Unless teachers have access to serious and sustained learning opportunities at every stage in their career, they are unlikely to teach in ways that meet demanding new standards for student

learning or to participate in the solution of educational problems (Ball & Cohen, 1999). (p. 1014)

The concept of a teacher development continuum not only would provide teachers with consistent support at different stages in their learning to teach over time, but it would also provide an opportunity for SFE programs to find additional space for teachers to engage with SFE content and principles so as to provide teachers with multiple points of exposure to the field. Existing literature situates teacher induction as the bridge between teacher preparation and practice; therefore, placing it as the lynchpin to the teacher development continuum. This further emphasizes the significance of the current study in looking at how a university-based induction support program facilitates the development of the critical inquiry skills fundamental to SFE and what value the development of these skills may have for pre-service and early career teachers.

### **Induction Program Structure & Support**

As discussed in Chapter 3, the first level unit of analysis for this project is a university-based teacher induction program. The university-based teacher induction program utilized as the case for the study is one in which a teacher preparation program within a college of education at a PWI in the southeastern U.S. provides induction support for novice teachers who are program graduates and teach in a school district within the institution's local community. The institution's local community is predominantly urban with a large suburban area, though some districts who participate in the program serve a more rural population.

The program was established as a direct result of the critical concern surrounding the growing teacher shortage facing the U.S. and, more urgently, the state in which the

institution resides. Leaders within the institution's college of education identified the presence of institutions of higher education (IHEs) in supporting new in-service teachers as a glaring gap along the continuum of teacher support. The program's leadership purported that just as IHEs depend on schools and veteran teachers to help prepare novice teachers for the classroom, they share a reciprocal responsibility in supporting new teachers through their induction years (Skeen et al., 2020).

### ***Support Model***

The model of support for the induction program is grounded in the belief that teacher preparation programs and school districts have a shared responsibility in not only the development of preservice teachers, but also in the continued support of teachers through their first three years in the classroom. Consequently, the induction program positions itself as one type of support among many across the teacher development continuum. In other words, the program is supplementary support for participating teachers, it is not intended to supplant other forms of early career teacher support provided within and/or outside of school districts.

In alignment with this perspective, the program was designed as a bridge between the university and the classroom, providing support in clinical application of pedagogical theory to novice teachers in partnership with districts and/or schools with the purpose of positively impacting student learning, teacher efficacy, and retention. The program draws on a combination of emotional, instructional, and leadership coaching to grow teachers' comprehensive capacity. The program's goal is to provide teachers with the ability to persevere and thrive in the profession and develop the tools needed to meet the increasingly complex needs of schools and students. The program is strategically

scaffolded to provide three years of support aligned to the stages of development in novice teachers while remaining flexible enough to provide differentiated, individualized support.

### ***Support Structure***

The overall structure for the three years of induction support provided to program participants is outlined using the following terminology: Year 1 – Survive, Year 2 – Stabilize, and Year 3 – Sharpen. Year 1 of support provided by the program is all about surviving the first year of teaching. Year 2 is focused on stabilizing new teachers by providing support specific to instruction and practice. Year 3 moves towards sharpening teachers' skills as teacher leaders. A new cohort is added each year and progresses through the three years of support. Program support includes a variety of components, including, but not limited to, formal support sessions, individualized coaching, and a community support network comprised of novice educators. Through completion of the program and with the guidance of program coaches, it is the program's aim to have participating teachers increase their self-efficacy and build a solid professional foundation.

**Teacher Support Sessions.** Within each year of the program, participants attend approximately four teacher support sessions. Teacher support sessions are organized at the cohort level with specific topics targeting participating teachers' progression through their first three years in the classroom. The support provided in the sessions in Year 1 of the program target the topics of classroom management and reaching and teaching all learners. This is achieved in a variety of ways ranging from exploration of implicit biases to effective implementation of active learning strategies, all within a progressive

continuum aligned to the evolving needs of new teachers. In Year 2 of the program, where the program aims to stabilize new teachers by providing support specific to instruction and practice, sessions target the topics of self-evaluation and reflective practice. The focus of the second year is developing reflective practitioners and helping teachers identify, explore, analyze, and grow their individual teacher identity. Year 3 of the program seeks to help teachers identify and develop their personal leadership skills, both in and out of the classroom. With the aim of Year 3 shifting towards developing teachers as teacher leaders, the sessions target leadership skills.

**Individualized Coaching.** In addition to teacher support sessions, program participants receive personalized classroom support in the form of classroom visits and one-on-one meetings with assigned program coaches. Coaching support is determined by year in the program. The program's coaching model is a teacher-centered model unique from models which focus on students. The key characteristics of the program's coaching model include an emphasis on the coach-teacher relationship, deferring to the teacher's needs, encouraging reflective practice, and coach accessibility. The program's coaching model is intentionally not prescriptive in order to allow each individual coach to incorporate their own strengths and experiences into the support provided.

Part-time coaches with the program do receive training from the program leadership team across the three key components of the program's coaching model: a) coaching skills, b) the coaching process, and c) the coaching way of being. Coaching skills are the skills needed to be a successful coach within the coaching model. Key coaching skills the program has identified as necessary for success as a coach include providing teacher-directed support, confidence building, navigating the demands of

teaching, and strength-focused support. Some of these skills, such as providing teacher-directed support and engaging teachers in reflective practice, are what differentiate the program's coaching from other coaching and mentoring models. The coaching process relates specifically to how coach support is structured based on participants' progression through the program; therefore, the coaching process changes from Year 1 to Year 2 to Year 3. The coaching way of being refers to how a coach interacts with their assigned teachers; in other words, the key characteristics of coach dispositions in their approach to the coach/teacher relationship. Key characteristics of the coaching way of being that have been identified as necessary to be a successful coach within the program's coaching model include being positive and encouraging, providing support that is personalized and relationship-focused, and reinforcing the external nature of the program's support.

### **Brief Program History**

In 2017, with the aim to empower teachers by growing their comprehensive capacity, cultivating their leadership, and providing a community for continued learning, the university-based induction program began supporting teachers. In the summer of 2017, before the program began providing support to teachers, the institution hired a program director. This position was established by the college of education's leadership to coordinate the implementation of the teacher induction model identified as necessary to build partnerships with school districts and help schools and teachers across the state. Upon the hiring of the program director, the role evolved based on her vision for the implementation of the teacher induction model. Primarily, the program director is responsible for the conceptualization and implementation of the overall teacher induction



model program structure. In addition, in 2017, the program director served as the sole coach tasked with providing support to the teachers comprising the inaugural cohort.

### ***2017-2018***

The inaugural 2017 cohort consisted of 15 teachers across nine schools within four school districts. All participants in the 2017 cohort were white females ranging in age from 24 to 26. The cohort consisted of six early childhood/elementary school teachers, three middle school teachers, and three high school teachers. The teachers taught across a variety of subject areas, including English/language arts, science, mathematics, social studies/history, and music. As previously mentioned, the program director provided the coaching support to all teachers in the 2017 cohort. Twelve of the 15 participants moved on to participate in Year 2 of the program in the 2018-2019 academic year.

### ***2018-2019***

Further progress towards the establishment of the program's leadership team and expansion of program staff was made throughout the summer and fall of 2018. A full-time lead coach was hired in the summer of 2018. In addition, a consultant who worked closely with the program director during the 2017-2018 school year was hired on as a part-time lead coach in fall 2018. The lead coaches were assigned teachers to support and began serving as members of the program leadership team. Also, based on the increase in size of the 2018 cohort, three part-time coaches joined the program's staff in fall 2018 to maintain the personalized nature of the coach-teacher relationship. The primary role of part-time coaches is to provide individualized support to assigned teachers.

The program director maintained her dual role as director and coach for the 2018-2019 academic year. She served as the coach for the 12 participants in the 2017 cohort who participated in Year 2 of the program. The new program participants in the 2018 cohort were divided amongst the two lead coaches and the three part-time coaches. The 2018 cohort consisted of 54 new teachers entering their first year of the program in fall 2018. This cohort expanded to include a total of 38 schools within five districts. Of the 53 teachers who provided demographic information, 13 were male and 41 were female. This cohort was originally comprised of 48 White teachers, four Black or African American teachers, one Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander teacher, one Asian teacher, and one American Indian or Alaskan Native teacher. In addition, this cohort consisted of 30 early childhood/elementary school teachers, 14 middle school teachers, and 10 high school teachers. Teachers in this cohort taught across many subject areas.

### ***2019-2020***

By 2019, that year's incoming cohort expanded to include teachers from a total of 63 schools within six districts. Of the 54 teachers who provided demographic information, nine identified as male and 45 identified as female. The cohort was comprised of 49 teachers who identified as white, six teachers who identified as Black or African American, four teachers who identified as American Indian or Alaskan Native teachers, one teacher who identified as Asian, and one teacher who identified as Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander. This cohort consisted of 35 early childhood/elementary school teachers, 18 middle school teachers and 10 high school teachers. Teachers in this cohort taught across many subject areas. In addition, in fall 2019, 12 of the original 15 participating teachers entered the third and final year of the

program, while 37 of the original 54 teachers from the 2018 cohort entered the second year of the program. To support the growing number of participants, the program expanded to hire seven new part-time coaches for fall 2019. This brought the total number of part-time coaches for the program to 10. The part-time coaches, along with the two lead coaches who are also part of the program leadership team, provided support for the 132 program participants in 2019-2020.

### ***2020-2021***

By fall 2020, that start of the program's fourth year, the program welcomed a new cohort of 45 first-year teachers across 69 schools within six districts. The 2019 cohort entered the second year of the program with 58 participating teachers, and the 2018 cohort entered the third year of the program with 28 participating teachers. Teachers within all three cohorts taught at all levels of P-12 education across many subject areas. Regarding the demographics of the remaining 28 teachers in the 2018 cohort, 5 identified as male and 23 identified as female. In addition, 23 teachers identified as white, four teachers identified as Black or African American, and one teacher identified as Asian. Two of the teachers who identified as white, also identified as Latino/Hispanic. In addition, the final 28 participants of the 2018 cohort consisted of 16 early childhood/elementary school teachers, eight middle school teachers, and four high school teachers. The part-time coaching staff expanded to include a total of 12 coaches in order to support the 131 program participants in 2020-2021. The 2020-2021 academic year was the first year the program director did not serve as a coach for any program participants. Coaching support was provided by the 12 part-time coaches and the two lead coaches who are also part of the program leadership team.

This brief program history is provided in part to highlight that at the time of this study, the induction program is still in its infancy. Study participants were members of the 2017 and 2018 cohorts, the first and second cohorts for which the program provided support. Throughout both cohorts' participation in the program, the program leadership team was still working to determine the best structure and delivery of support for program participants. Furthermore, the coronavirus pandemic hit in the midst of the program's third year. The pandemic significantly affected the program's ability to provide support to teachers, as all forms of support were moved to a virtual format. Despite this, the induction program's external evaluation team was able to determine that the program's core values remained intact through shifts made in response to the coronavirus pandemic. Despite these major, though temporary, changes in response to the pandemic, teachers and coaches still experienced the program's central tenets of responsive, relational, and external support as intended.

Additionally, cohort demographics are included to illustrate that the teacher population for which the program provides support is reflective of the overall teacher population within the U.S. – predominately white and female. As previously discussed, the landscape of public education across the U.S. suffers from an expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between the increasingly diverse student population entering public schools and the primarily white, middle-class teacher preparation program population preparing to teach in public school classrooms (Carson et al., 2020; Carter & Goodwin, 1994; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Cross, 2003; Gay & Howard, 2000; Griner & Stewart, 2013; Howard, 2003, 2019; Milner, 2006; Sleeter, 2001, 2008; Sleeter & Milner, 2011; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Villegas et al., 2012; Zeichner, 1993). Given

that the induction program's teacher participant population mirrors the national teacher population demographically, this correlates directly to the study's research questions and its focus on uncovering how a university-based teacher induction program can incorporate key tenets of SFE to provide an additional opportunity to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to help them persist as educators and engage in positive educational experiences with all of their students.

### **Induction Program Context within the Teacher Development Continuum**

In my multiple discussions and interactions with program participants, it was evident that the university-based induction program provided invaluable support to them throughout their transition into the classroom. Participants consistently cited the program's ability to assist them with the practical aspects of teaching that they did not necessarily feel was covered in their teacher preparation programs and many indicated they did not know if they would still be teaching if they had not participated in the program. In looking further at the university-based induction program and how it engages with the key tenets of SFE, participants' responses demonstrated that the ways in which SFE tenets appear within the program are unintentional and ancillary to the program's role of teacher support. This can be attributed to how the program views its role in supporting teachers. The intentional engagement with the key tenets of SFE would focus on praxis, which as referred to by Zuber-Skerritt (2001), "is the interdependence and integration – not separation – of theory and practice, research and development, thought and action" (p. 15). The university-based induction program is primarily focused on the practical ways it can help to support teachers within the classroom by meeting their individual needs. As one of the lead coaches explained in their interview, "All learning

our teachers do can be immediately implemented into their own classrooms. With teacher sessions our goal is to make the knowledge gained practical and able to be put into practice the next day in the teachers' own classrooms." Consequently, the program does not situate its role in teacher support as praxis. Ultimately, the program provides teachers with the practical skills they identify as lacking from what they perceive as their very theoretical-based teacher preparation programs but does not intentionally attempt to connect theory and practice.

Considering the nature of the program's role, conversations with program participants, as well as members of the program leadership team, did identify ways in which the SFE tenets appear within the program. Though participants were unable to name and identify content directly from SFE, they were able to articulate responses in ways that connected both structured and unstructured support within the program with the key tenets of SFE. Participants discussions of structured support around classroom management and instructional strategies most often included content related to SFE tenets, while the unstructured support – in the form of a community of novice teachers and relationships with coaches – often modeled SFE tenets in action. These findings, at both the macro and micro levels, are discussed in further detail in the next chapter.

## CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

The university-based induction program is unique in its position as an external support program for early career teachers, specifically in its structure to provide an additional three years of university-based support to graduates of the institution's teacher preparation programs. By exploring program participants' engagement with the key tenets of SFE and how, if at all, the program facilitates their development of a critical perspective of education, this research seeks to highlight the value of SFE to the development of pre-service and early career teachers. This chapter presents my findings and analysis on how, if at all, a university-based teacher induction program incorporates key tenets of SFE to provide an additional opportunity to equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to help them persist as educators and engage in positive educational experiences with all of their students.

In this chapter I present and discuss findings in relation to the study's research questions. I use data from interviews with participants, interviews with the induction program's leadership team, and I refer to information from the literature. I begin by revisiting the purpose and research questions for this study. Next, I discuss the macro-level findings of my study as they relate to overall induction program structure and SFE. Finally, I explore the salient themes I analyzed within the teacher participant data that relate to the study's research questions and underscore the macro-level findings.

## **Re-Introduction of Study Purpose & Research Questions**

The focus of this study is on how a university-based teacher induction program supports participants' exposure to the key tenets of SFE and impacts the development of inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policy. The goal of the study is to understand how the incorporation of key tenets of SFE into the support provided by the program enhances the preparation of public-school teachers. The intent of my work is not to focus on teacher preparation programs or to imply that teacher induction programs can replace teacher preparation programs. Ultimately, this study seeks to uncover an understanding of the value of SFE in the development of early career teachers; and, in doing so, underscore the importance of the field in the overall preparation and development of public-school teachers. To this end, the study seeks to understand how, if at all, a university-based teacher induction program facilitates the development of a critical perspective of education for early career teachers and how, if at all, the induction program highlights the value of SFE to the teacher development continuum.

## **Induction Program Structure & SFE**

As discussed in Chapter 2, SFE scholars believe that teachers cannot understand education solely based on their experiences in the classroom (Sadovnik et al., 2018). This belief establishes the key role of the field in the preparation of teachers so that they can develop critical inquiry skills and become reflective practitioners in that they are able to question educational assumptions and identify inequities in educational practice (Dewey, 1933; Sadovnik et al., 2018; Schön, 1983). Although the goal of the induction program is to provide support to early career teachers to assist them in persisting in the profession



and not necessarily intentionally expose teachers to the key tenets of SFE, I find it important to understand how, if at all, the program incorporates SFE content and principles within its support structure. A key aspect of teachers persisting within the teaching profession is the development of an understanding of education and its role within society in order to determine how to successfully navigate their own identity as a teacher within our society (deMarrais, 2005; Tozer & Miretzky, 2005). Therefore, given the induction program's focus on helping early career teachers remain in the teaching profession, it is not unreasonable to speculate that the program may incorporate SFE content and principles, as indirect and unintentional as it may be.

The program's leadership team oversees the development of program structure and content. There are three members of this leadership team: a program director and two other individuals who serve as lead coaches for the program. All are white, middle-class former classroom teachers. It is important to note that no members of the leadership team have significant educational backgrounds in SFE in the form of a doctorate in the field or as an area of concentration in any advanced studies. Additional details about each leadership team participant were provided in the Participants section of Chapter 3. The sections below provide additional details about program purpose and context, specifically as it relates to SFE, gathered during my interviews with each member of the program leadership team.

### ***Program Purpose***

As discussed in Chapter 4, the primary goal of the induction program is to provide supplemental support in partnership with school districts to help novice teachers develop the tools and strategies required to meet their students' needs and the self-efficacy and

emotional resiliency needed to persevere and thrive in the profession. In a conversation with one of the lead coaches, she explained the induction program seeks to “...increase teachers hope, confidence, and capacity so that they believe what we do – that they can have long, productive careers in the classroom” (Lead Coach 1, personal communication, April 2022). When asked about the program’s role, the program director identified its upmost purpose to be to meet teachers where they are and provide responsive support to help them grow in the areas they need to grow in order to impact teacher retention. The program director explained that the primary measure of the program’s effectiveness is teacher retention within the profession. In addition, the program also measures several other factors that have been documented in the literature as influencing teacher retention, these include teacher efficacy, job stress and job satisfaction.

In further discussions about the program’s purpose and role, a lead coach explained that the program tries to be very honest about the profession and what teachers are going to experience and they are currently experiencing. The lead coach shared:

I always feel like sometimes school districts don't want to get into that because it seems to be a negative. I think the negative parts of teaching can be a positive thing, not only as we present it, but as the teachers are feeling it, as they're being coached through it by people who are doing emotional coaching, rather than instructional coaching, and by being in community with one another, I hope, that that's part of what they, you know, it's like everybody else is going through this too, or, or I'm doing better than I thought or let me get some help. (Lead Coach 2, personal communication, April 2022)

The induction program does not shy away from discussing the negative experiences new teachers may be encountering in their classrooms, schools, or within the profession as a whole. The hope is that through program participants' discussion of these experiences and learning to be reflective about their own role in those experiences, it equips them with the tools necessary to effectively navigate these challenges.

Though none of these quotes/excerpts specifically reference SFE, I find it important to point out that a key aspect of SFE is understanding education and schooling within both historical and contemporary political, cultural, and social contexts (Provenzo, 2008; Tozer, 2001). Through developing this understanding, there is the potential to increase self-efficacy as it relates to education and schooling within the U.S., particularly related to teachers' feelings towards affecting change within their classrooms, schools, districts, and the education system as a whole (Roof, 2015). The ability of SFE content to influence teacher efficacy, and potentially job stress and job satisfaction, connects directly to the induction program's purpose – to retain teachers within the profession by increasing teacher efficacy, decreasing job stress, and increasing job satisfaction. In addition, SFE seeks to assist teachers in the development of critical inquiry skills by exposing them to and engaging them with contested positions about what they have come to understand as “normal” in teaching and education (Butin, 2005a). Though SFE content is not directly referenced by any of the program leadership team participants during our conversations about the purpose of the program, it did become clear that the program does not shy away from engaging participants in conversations that address contested educational issues.

### *Classroom Management Support and the Demographic Divide*

All three members of the leadership team indicated the classroom management support provided by the program during the teachers' first year in the classroom as instrumental to participants' development as a teacher and their persistence within the profession. As one lead coach explained, the classroom management course offered by the institution during the teachers' preparation program seems very abstract to the teachers at the point in time they take it during their preparation programs. She continued:

It [classroom management] is across the board the main thing first-year teachers struggle with and often remains a challenge through the second and even third years too. Having poor classroom management wears on a teacher and demoralizes him or her quite quickly, in my experience. Tackling classroom management from session one in [the program] means we confront that issue head on and help them manage it. (Lead Coach 1, personal communication, April 2022)

The support provided in Year 1 of the program around classroom management was identified by leadership team members most often when they were directly asked about how the program aims to prepare participants for teaching across the demographic divide that exists between the student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools. Overall, the consensus from the leadership team is that the program's approach to the demographic differences teachers encounter with the students in their classrooms is to address it and to not leave those differences unexplored or unnamed. Specifically, in the first half of Year 1 of the program, demographic differences within the classroom are

addressed through the lens of classroom management. The second half of Year 1 of the program, referred to as *Reaching & Teaching All Students*, is focused specifically on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Participants are gently led through exercises of self-reflection about the internal biases they bring into their own classrooms.

**Uncovering “Unintentional Biases.”** Members of the leadership team all communicated that they do tread carefully during these exercises with the participants, as they have experienced resistance from teachers if they feel they are pushed too hard into it or feel it is “too in their face.” One lead coach speculated that this tension comes from some teachers’ resistance to naming and identifying educational experiences as different based on students’ demographics. As he explained, “If I name it, I might be guilty of it.” The team admits, the diversity, equity and inclusion topics covered in this part of the program mostly address racial diversity, but they know that teachers encounter many other types of diversity in their student populations. Race is just the most immediately visible one. This resistance by program participants could be in part a result of the myth of colorblindness that has been increasingly perpetuated within educational reform since the Reagan administration adopted the neo-conservative strategy as a way to constrain civil rights and limit equal protection and forms of redress (Crenshaw, 1988; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Dixson & Rousseau Anderson, 2018). The shift towards efficiency and standardization within education, including teacher preparation and development, promotes neutrality and provides a discourse around accountability for school failure at either the school or individual level, instead of acknowledging it as a systemic issue. By doing so, white teachers are indoctrinated to ignore race within their student population and dismiss any notion of racialized educational experiences for students. Accordingly,

the resistance to acknowledging different educational experiences based on student demographics encountered by members of the leadership team is potentially something the teacher participants have internalized as a result of the standards-based movement in teacher preparation.

The program director further explained that the program is intentional with its choice to not be explicit with the intent of the exercises connected to the topics related to reaching and teaching all students. Even though the program is trying to create change within participants' teaching practice directly related to their biases, the program director explained that trying to address it very directly can often have the opposite effect that you want it to have – people dig in or they get defensive. The director explained:

So instead of really phrasing things heavily around inclusion and equity and those very vital topics in education, we'll use phrases such as, what unintentional barriers are there in your classroom? What unintentional barriers do you put in your classroom, or do you bring that you need to address? What unintentional barriers are there that are because of a system or whatever? And so, the intentional use of barriers to student learning or that kind of thing disarms some people who may be defensive around and dig their heels in there. (personal communication, April 2022)

And she went on to point out that the word unintentional is very intentionally used. The program assumes the best in participants – that they are not intentionally being a bigot or being discriminatory or any of those things and instead hopes that they pick up on what is being reflected on to facilitate changed from the inside out. She indicated they have seen program participants go through some really impressive transitions during this time.

What the program director and lead coaches describe, in terms of program participants' receptiveness and reactions to exercises and discussions about inclusion, equity, and biases, are familiar responses to SFE scholars. As Butin (2005a) explains:

Irrespective of students' ideological positioning, though, a consistent theme runs through the discussions [in his SFE course]: issues of, for example, inequity, racism, and privilege always seem to be about someone else. 'Society' is inequitable. 'People' are small-minded. 'We' are all moving slowly but surely toward a better future" (p. 110).

He further references literature within anti-oppressive education and whiteness studies that indicates students consistently push back against notions of their own privileged positions (Butin, 2005a). This resistance, through a CRT lens, demonstrates the teachers' failure to acknowledge their whiteness and the power it holds within society. It is what contributes to white teachers' inability to conceptualize the idea of racialized educational experiences. The program participants' whiteness and unawareness of the value it holds results in resistance and defensiveness around discussions about how their racial identity impacts their teaching practice, particularly when teaching students with different racial identities from their own.

It is at the point where program participants begin to identify and understand the "unintentional barriers" they create or that exist within their own classrooms that connects directly to the key tenets of SFE. These "unintentional barriers" are examples of how societal inequities are systemically a part of our thoughts and actions, making us complicit, as unknowingly as it may be, in the reproduction of them. Yet, given the lack of any intentional inclusion of SFE content as part of this aspect of program support, the

connection to SFE is superficial and any impact on the development of inquiry skills allowing for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies is minimal. Though the induction program staff frame the initial discussion with participants using the “unintentional barriers” language as a way to manage their resistance to the discussion, it does not circle back to address why, as white teachers, the participants’ view these barriers as unintentional and begin to engage them in conversations about why they are not unintentional – just unacknowledged. Without doing so, the participants are not necessarily developing a critical perspective that challenges the societal inequities that are systemically a part of their thoughts and actions, but instead are under the impression their biases are inadvertent and unforeseeable. This approach inadvertently perpetuates the myth of colorblindness CRT scholars have problematized. Rousseau and Tate (2003) maintain that a colorblind approach in the classroom setting prohibits teachers from reflecting on their individual teaching practice and any role it may have in the perpetuation of the underachievement of students of Color. The program does not clearly articulate that any individual – white or nonwhite—who does not intend to be racist, can still make choices and take actions that sustain racism. The way the programmatic support is currently framed, it lacks a key concept tied to both SFE and CRT – it is not enough to acknowledge biases we might have; we must also acknowledge how these biases make us complicit – as white individuals with white privilege – in the reproduction of societal inequities.

It is during these discussions where CRT would serve as a helpful framework to expand upon the programmatic support’s contextual connection to SFE and deepen the participants’ engagement with field. The program participants’ defensiveness indicates a



lack of acceptance of the role of race and racism in the lives of their students of Color – a foundational argument of CRT. The framework emphasizes structural racism – rejecting notions that racism is limited to random, isolated acts of individuals with poor behavior, and instead purports that it is ingrained in societal policies, practices, and norms and institutions like public education in such a way that it works to reinforce racial inequities (Bell, 1987; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2021). Centering a discussion around the myth of colorblindness and the impact it can have when teaching students of Color can assist participants in not only acknowledging their biases but also in understanding how and why these biases make them complicit in the perpetuation of societal inequities. This is a foundational aspect of CRP, a pedagogy that assists in the development of teachers who can successfully navigate the teacher/student socio-cultural gap and leads to more equitable educational experiences for all students. In order for teachers to ensure all students’ cultures and cultural practices are maintained and valued in their classrooms, they must be able to determine when specific teaching techniques are flawed rather than assume the flaws reside within the student(s). A key initial step in this process would be to reject the myth of colorblindness – particularly as it relates to teaching, which teacher participants are already unwittingly being supported in doing as is evidenced by some of the teacher participant interview data presented in more detail later in this chapter. For example, Miranda discusses how the support in classroom management she received from the program helped her take into consideration the social and cultural differences amongst students in her classroom and how those differences may be impacting student behavior (personal communication, July 2021). Rather than placing the onus on the students to conform to classroom practices that may conflict with

their social and/or cultural identities, the induction program engaged Miranda, and other teacher participants, in discussions that assisted them in reflecting on how their classroom expectations could be re-constructed to better serve all students.

**Addressing Demographic Differences.** The program's approach to address the demographic differences participants are seeing in their classrooms and the impact those differences may have on learning and behavior is also reflected in SFE. Again, though SFE content or resources were never directly named or discussed in our conversations, this approach relates directly to principle five in the CSFE Standards, which specifies that educators acknowledge individual differences within a democratic society (Council for Social Foundations of Education, 2000). Adapting instruction based on social and cultural differences a teacher observes in their classroom and understanding how class and race differences affect educational experiences are ways teachers would demonstrate their acknowledgement of the individual differences within their classroom and society in general. The program seeks to assist teachers in being able to develop these skills by providing support that attends to the demographic differences in classroom rather than simply ignoring them. For example, in one of her interviews Miranda explains:

[The program] really was helpful in classroom management. But part of what we talked about was understanding how students view respect and authority and things like that when they come from different cultures and different households in different socio-economic statuses. And how that should impact the way that we react to the way that students act in class, you know, like, thinking that the way that we use language isn't necessarily going to be the same as what these students are used to. And understanding that things that we may traditionally in like a

white centric culture view as being disrespectful or as an outburst or something like that, may mean something completely different to a different student.

(personal communication, July 2021)

As a result of the classroom management support Miranda received from the program, she is able to recognize that culture plays a fundamental role in the structure of social institutions and societal norms.

It is important to note that in the excerpt above, race stays invisible – it stays coded within language referencing “culture.” This is a strong example of the pervasiveness of the myth of colorblindness in education. Miranda makes no mention of student race in her dialogue – something white teachers have been taught as a way to ensure equity masked as neutrality. If they do not “see” race, it cannot impact their classrooms. Despite this, Miranda is able to articulate that what she might deem as “normal” behavior as a white teacher is not necessarily what is considered normal behavior for her students of different cultures. How students learn to view and respect authority is in large part determined by their cultural beliefs. Miranda’s students’ past experiences, particularly those experiences where students of color interacted with white authority figures, impacts their view and respect for all white authority figures. Later on in the interview, she explains how one of her African American students who other teachers in her school viewed as particularly challenging explained to her that he is disrespectful to his white teachers because “they never take the time to learn how to say his name correctly” (personal communication, July 2021). She shared that the student expressed that “they already have a problem with his name, so he believed they were obviously going to have a problem with him in general” (Miranda, personal

communication, July 2021). Miranda is able to acknowledge that the unique lived experiences of the students in her classroom impact each students' behavior in the classroom, and ultimately, their overall schooling experience.

The induction program's approach to addressing demographic differences in the classroom challenges the myth of colorblindness where educators claim to "not see color" in their classrooms and in turn, do not take into account students' experiences as they relate to their racial and/or ethnic identities. The myth of colorblindness has long been problematized by CRT scholars – asserting that colorblindness is an intentional political strategy that was implemented to maintain the societal inequities not only in legal terms, but specifically within education (Crenshaw, 1988; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Dixson & Rousseau Anderson, 2018). Whites in positions of power who have influence over educational policy use the myth of colorblindness to justify the status quo by adamantly claiming that any policies that specifically target improving the educational experiences of students of Color (i.e. affirmative action) discriminate against white people given that there is equality of opportunity in education given education does "not see color" (Crenshaw et al., 1995). Alternatively, CRT scholars argue that color consciousness has the ability to disrupt embedded racial advantages (Ladson-Billings, 2021). Color consciousness is the bedrock of CRP, where cultural differences are not merely acknowledged, but valued within classrooms and schools (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b). Miranda is able to articulate the induction program's role in assisting participants in naming and identifying educational experiences as different based on students' demographics, a step towards disrupting inequities in their classrooms and workings towards more equitable educational experiences for all students.

### ***Inequitable Educational Policies & Practices***

Regarding situations where program participants communicate about their experiences where educational policy or practice has an inequitable impact on student learning or students' educational experience, the leadership team views the program's role as providing a listening ear. One lead coach explained:

We ask questions of the teacher. We attempt to ask questions that help the teacher hear their own thoughts. We strongly believe that the teachers already know what is right. We are trying to help them build their own professional identities. That means we don't supply answers, we just act as thought partners for them. (Lead Coach 1, personal communication, April 2022)

Generally, the program encourages teachers to decide what issues (on behalf of themselves or their students) they are willing to advocate around. Also, the program helps teachers learn how to group their concerns into things they can control, things they just have to deal with, and things they can influence. In terms of concerns or issues in which they identify as having control over, the program helps participants make a plan of action. For concerns or issues participants identify as something they just have to deal with, the program helps them figure out how to mitigate the negative impact of the issue on themselves and their students. In terms of concerns or issues participants identify as being able to influence, the program helps them divide the issue into aspects that they can control and make a plan of action for and aspects that they have to just deal with and figure out how to mitigate the negative impact.

In other words, the program director explained, the program supports participants in these situations the exact same way they handle everything else. The program does not

aim to tell them what to do or what the right answer is. The goal is to ask questions to remove any defensiveness and leave participants more open to truly explore what's going on with the issue and their concerns with it. The program director shared:

Coaches are trained to ask questions such as what impact could this potentially have? What are the pros and cons there? Is this a battle that you are willing to fight right now? Is there a part that you can let be? Is there a part that you can't let be? And if you can't let that be? Okay, well, how do you - what resources or options do you have to do this? What are the potential consequences for each of those options? What are the potential pros and cons? What are the unintended consequences of your actions? (personal communication, April 2022)

She further elaborated that advocacy can come from a place of deep passion, including deep anger sometimes. She explained:

And while the deep passion and the deep anger is righteous and justified in most of the cases, living in that space is not going to get the results you want. There are going to be unintended consequences to that...The program coaches them to their answer in a way they can hear their own thinking and decipher their own solution. And whatever they decide on is what they decide, you know, the program doesn't give credence. Coaches don't say, 'Yes, that's a good choice' or 'No, that's a bad choice.' But the one thing that we will say is the piece of advice I'm going to leave you with is you can fight like hell, but don't fight like a dumbass. (personal communication, April 2022)

One lead coach even shared that he believes in creative insubordination. He explained that although first year teachers are not typically ready for that since they are just trying

to get by and keep their jobs, as teachers grow and gain experience it is important help them know they have voice and agency. He sees his role as assisting them in knowing how to use their voice and agency to change what is happening not only in their own classroom, but what is happening in their school and their district. He views the third year of the program as the time where those types of conversations begin to happen. An ideal point in the program to further program participants' engagement with SFE.

Again, although the leadership teams' responses do not directly reference SFE, the connection to the key tenets of SFE is clear. The program's focus on asking questions of program participants and assisting them in "hearing their own thoughts" is directly aligned with the development of what SFE conceptualizes as a "reflective practitioner." The aim of SFE scholars, particularly those who directly assist in preparing teachers, is to produce knowledgeable teaching professionals who are caring, reflective decision makers in a culturally diverse and democratic society (Butin, 2005). In other words, to produce teachers who continually evaluate the effects of his or her decisions and actions on others and who actively seek out opportunities to grow professionally. If SFE was explicitly integrated into the induction program, it would be supporting program participants in a way that develops their own self-reflection and ability to identify and question inequities within educational policies and practices. Furthermore, there are areas within existing programmatic support that present opportunities to introduce and engage with key aspects of CRT and CRP – an avenue that is explicitly interconnected with SFE. These two theoretical frameworks, similar to SFE, examine power, social organization, structural inequities, and their impacts on democratic principles. As Ladson-Billings (1995b) states, "A culturally relevant pedagogy is designed to problematize teaching and encourage

teachers to ask about the nature of student-teacher relationships, the curriculum, schooling, and society” (p. 483). By doing so, it seeks to develop teachers who interrogate and disrupt the status quo of societal inequities. As a result, self-reflection – like the induction program attempts to engage program participants in – is viewed as an important and necessary skill for educators by SFE and CRP scholars.

### ***Overall Program Structure & SFE***

Conversations with the induction program’s leadership team revealed that although SFE content and principles are not intentionally embedded within the program, there are aspects of SFE that connect in productive ways to the program’s existing structure of support. All members of the leadership identified specific teacher support sessions within Year 1 of the program as integral in supporting first-year teachers in teaching a diverse population of students. Participants are guided through questions and self-reflection activities to help them identify their internal biases and the affect those biases can have in their classroom. The leadership team noted that a key to successfully facilitating these sessions with teachers is to ease into the discussion gently and in a non-accusatory way as to avoid putting the participants immediately on the defensive which would create resistance to the information being shared. The identification of implicit biases is an important step in the key aspect of SFE that is about understanding the inequities and disparities of our schools and society, as well as how these inequities and disparities structure our individual thoughts and actions as members of society.

In addition, the program works with participants to help them understand their own professional identities and how they can best advocate for themselves and their students. Program coaches are trained to use questioning to assist participating teachers in



thinking through issues of inequity they may encounter as a result of specific educational policies or practices. Though coaches validate participants' strong feelings related to issues of inequity, they work to help participating teachers work through their emotions to come to a solution that benefits themselves and their students rather than a making an emotional decision that sometimes can have unintended consequences. This is consistent with the key aspects of SFE that relate to identity development and critical reflection. Through the development of critical inquiry skills, SFE scholars seek to help teachers "exercise sensitive judgements amidst competing cultural and education values and beliefs" (CSFE, 2000).

### **Salient Themes Across Teacher Participant Interviews**

In seeking to understand how, if at all, a university-based teacher induction program facilitates the development of a critical perspective of education for early career teachers and how, if at all, the induction program highlights the value of SFE to the development of pre-service and early-career teachers, four salient themes emerged from the data collected from interviews with teacher participants. These salient themes are the broader, overarching conclusions that emerged from my triangulation of data and thematic analysis. First, the shift to a standards-based focus of teacher education has severely restricted teachers' exposure to SFE content and principles, resulting in a limited use of SFE terminology and resources by teacher participants when engaging in conversations grounded in the key tenets of the field. Most notably, the teacher participants demonstrated a lack of understanding of the purposes of schooling within our democratic society and the societal dynamics within which the act of schooling occurs. Second, even though the inclusion of SFE content and principles within the induction

program is unintentional, inexplicit, and ancillary, this unintentional engagement with SFE throughout the program's structure of support speaks to the value of the field to teacher development, particularly in being able to demonstrate the direct applicability of SFE to teaching tasks. Participating teachers' responses cite the program's support in improving their classroom management and instructional strategies, two areas of program support that most often included content related to SFE tenets. Third, teachers benefit from support that reflects the key tenets of SFE and perceive it as a model for how they want to support students in their classrooms. Lastly, university-based induction programs provide an opportunity for SFE scholars to locate alternate space within the teacher development continuum for SFE content and principles to be incorporated – building upon the aspects of the field teachers engage with during their pre-service preparation.

Each of these themes are discussed in more detail below. Throughout each section, I detail how I coded and analyzed the data from interviews with teacher participants that directly relate to my study's findings. Each teacher participant engaged in three separate interviews with me where they discussed their classroom teaching experiences, their experiences within the university-based induction program, their thoughts about their respective teacher preparation programs given their classroom teaching experience, the purpose of education and schools in society and its role in the democratic process, among various other topics in relation to teaching and schools. Specific protocols for each of the interviews can be found in Appendices B through D.

### ***Limited Use of SFE Terminology & Knowledge***

Early on in the interview process it became clear that the participating teachers did not have the foundation in SFE content to discuss the key tenets of SFE in a manner

that is compatible with terminology found within the field of SFE, specifically as it is outlined within the *CSFE Standards* (Council for Social Foundations of Education [CSFE], 2000). For the purpose of this study, I view the *CSFE Standards*, particularly the principles outlined within them, as a vocabulary for engaging in discussions that detail how teacher beliefs match democratic ideals – a key overarching tenet of SFE. For example, Benchik-Osborne (2013) provided the following example of how principle three of the *CSFE Standards* may be depicted in the language of teacher beliefs:

To modify practices and classroom design so as to facilitate life in a democracy is important to me. Having students learn to think in a community is important because it is critical for self-governance. (p. 546)

The term “democracy” or any of its associated forms were not found in any of the teacher participant responses, even when the interview questions engaged them in discussions about the purpose of education and schooling in our society, the role of the teacher in schools, long-held educational assumptions within our society, effects of the existing socio-cultural climate in our society on schools, and schools’ role in reproduction of the status quo of class, race, and gender oppression in our society. In addition, when asked questions that lent themselves directly to key SFE tenets, the participants did not refer to scholars or content from the field. The teacher participants did not cite scholars, such as John Dewey (1859-1952), Paulo Freire (1921-1997), Gloria Ladson-Billings (born 1947), or Jean Anyon (1941-2013), or theories/content that they would have been exposed to in an introductory SFE course that explores the broad context of teaching in U.S., and more specifically, why we teach, why schools exist, and the importance of socio-historical and cultural contexts in understanding schooling. This is despite the fact that a majority of the

teacher participants do have at least some prior exposure to SFE content. As discussed in Chapter 4, all but two of the nine teacher participants were required to complete an introductory course in SFE as part of their teacher preparation program. The aim of the course is to assist pre-service teachers in developing an understanding of the role of education and school in society, specifically from a historical, social, philosophical, and political perspective. This is consistent with existing SFE research. In her 2013 study, Benchik-Osborne found that for the four teacher participants it was a challenge for them to discuss concepts, themes, and beliefs consistent with the terminology of the principles highlighted within the CSFE *Standards*, even though they had some exposure to SFE content during their pre-service preparation. The study utilized principles two through five to analyze “how, and in what ways, teachers in the United States rely on SFE to frame their beliefs and practices in the classroom” (Benchik-Osborne, 2013, p. 544). By employing a qualitative assessment ranking system, the researcher analyzed the four participants’ responses for evidence comparable to the democratic beliefs from CSFE principles two through five. In using this analysis method as a guide, I also reviewed my study’s teacher participant interview data with a round of protocol coding using the principles outlined in the CSFE *Standards* as a deductive thematic framework.

**The Role of Schools in a Democratic Society.** When asked about the purpose of education – and specifically, schooling –in our society, all of the teacher participants in my study articulated a connection between school and society, which correlates with principle four of the CSFE *Standards*. Principle four states, “The educator can interpret the moral, social, and political dimensions of classrooms, teaching, and schooling within a democratic society. Teaching is seen with a lens of a political act and not merely a skills

driven task activity” (CSFE, 2000). However, when questions solicited a response that required further elaboration about the complex connection between school and our democratic society, many participants did not situate the role of schools in a larger societal context beyond the basic idea that schools prepare students to be successful adults. For example, when I asked how she would describe the purpose of education in our society, Karla explains:

I think education, the purpose of it in our society, is to raise and develop individuals who are active participants in our society and who are aware individuals in our society, um, because I think education, you are learning skills like math and science and reading, and writing and things that you use every day. And I think that the role it has can help people find career paths or even hobbies or things that they enjoy. And I think having a solid education foundation in general in our society helps people be informed and aware of our world. (personal communication, April 2021)

Karla starts out by identifying a connection between school and society, particularly making reference to schools helping to prepare students to become aware and active participants in society. She addresses and values societal “awareness,” but does not connect it to any particular ends— such as in order to participate in a democracy. She knows that “awareness” is important but the connection between it and a democratic society remains abstract. This may be a result of her not having experienced personal crises around education, democracy and access to rights – one reason why SFE scholars believe the field is important in the preparation of teachers. The exposure to and knowledge of the field of SFE assists pre-service teachers in the development of an

understanding that the cultural diversity within our democratic society results in varied lived experiences around education, democracy, and access to rights Karla's teacher preparation program in music education is one of the programs that does not require enrollment in any course related to SFE, including the introductory SFE course offered at the institution. Then, given her subject area of music, she continues to discuss the purpose of music education, once again making a connection between school and society. She shares:

And music education in general creates people, which create the society that is – it teaches a lot of emotional awareness, a lot of creativity, a lot of social constructs like teamwork, and working in a group and working toward a goal. It helps with coordination, which isn't necessarily something that you would think about, but there's a lot of coordination involved in making music. It teaches appreciation for arts and cultures, and other cultures, besides your own.

Awareness of other groups of people, awareness of other places. Appreciation for those cultures and places. (Karla, personal communication, April 2021)

This subject-specific connection between school and society aligns in part with principle five of the CSFE *Standards*. Karla references how music education instruction can assist students in the recognition of social and cultural differences. A performance indicator for principle five reads, "The educator can adapt instruction to incorporate recognition of social and cultural differences to the extent that it does not interfere with basic democratic principle" (CSFE, 2000). In addition, the idea that music education develops emotional awareness and facilitates the development of skills needed to work as a team or work together within a group indicate that the teacher understands her role as a music

educator moves beyond simply teaching students about different types of music and instruments. This relates to principle four in the CSFE *Standards* in that she is referencing a social dimension of teaching that supports life in our society beyond the classroom. Principle four states, “The educator understands how moral principles related to democratic institutions can inform and direct schooling practice, leadership, and governance” (CSFE, 2000). However, a key aspect of knowledge related to CSFE principle four is an understanding of how the foundations of education knowledge base illuminates the conditions which support democracy, democratic citizenship, and education in a democratic society (CSFE, 2000). Karla is able to describe aspects of the broader role of schooling, and specifically music education, in society; yet does not articulate it in a way that utilizes specific SFE terminology or resources. In addition, she does not elaborate on how the aspects of the broader role of schooling she describes directly serve to support democracy or productive citizenship within a democratic society. Again, this could be in part, due to the fact that Karla did not have any required coursework around SFE in her teacher preparation program, resulting in a limited exposure to SFE content and principles prior to this point in time.

Similarly, Danielle, when asked about the purpose of education and school, identifies students’ socio-emotional development as a vital aspect of her role as an educator. She explains:

I think, for me, the purpose of education is to create a well-rounded individual, which includes academics for sure. Social emotional understanding, which includes empathy of others, a love for others, and their surrounding environments. Um creating a human that has their own opinions but can respect others’ opinions

as well. And to create an independent human being, one that has confidence within themselves, no matter who they are, no matter what, you know, race, socioeconomic status, sex, gender, sexual orientation. No matter who they are, they are the best person that they can be. (personal communication, April 2021)

Danielle's response also connects schooling to society, making a connection between her role as an educator and teaching students more than "academics." Though she acknowledges teaching the "academics" is part of her role, she understands that teachers and schools serve a purpose in society beyond academic instruction. This response also aligns with principle four of the CSFE *Standards*. Yet, similar to Karla, Danielle does not reference specific SFE terminology or resources, nor does she provide further details on how the aspects of the broader role of schooling she describes directly correlate to life in a democratic society. Unlike Karla, Danielle's teacher preparation program in early childhood education does require several courses that expose pre-service teachers to SFE content; yet any connection between education and a democratic society remains abstract. Even though both Karla and Danielle were able to identify a connection between school and society, neither of them elaborated on the purpose of schooling and its connection to life in a democratic society. Their responses refer to preparing students to be successful adults, but do not provide any further details about how preparing successful adults aligns with the broader democratic values of society. Their varying levels of exposure to SFE content within their teacher preparation programs, one with no required courses dealing with SFE content to one with four required courses connected to SFE, provide further indication that in order for engagement with SFE content to be effective and impactful, it



must be continuous and comprehensive rather than limited solely to a handful of courses during pre-service preparation.

**Societal Dynamics of Schooling.** Even more striking than the absence of any direct connections between the purpose of schooling and life in a democratic society, many participants – when directly asked about schools serving as a social institution reproducing the status quo of class, race, and gender oppression in our society – did not consider schools to do so or did not view any reproduction of the status quo of inequities within society linked to schools as intentional and/or related to the larger institutional structure of schools in society. Specifically, I asked all participants how, if at all, they believed schools reproduce the status quo of class, race, and gender oppression in our society. For example, Julie speculates:

So, I feel like probably what happens more so than an intentional, like, continuing of the status quo is that teachers don't get out of their comfort zones enough to change their instruction or to change the way they're doing something, or we're so overwhelmed that we don't feel like we have time to make things better. And we end up just doing what we've always done or doing what the people before us have done. And we don't make a change. (personal communication, October 2021)

Instead of being able to view schools or education as a social institution within our larger society that serves to maintain the status quo, Julie believes that any reproduction of inequities within society purported by schools are the unintentional consequence of individual teachers rather than an intentional consequence directly tied to how schools are structured. This lack of awareness of how the structure of schools perpetuates racial,

socio-economic or cultural subordination demonstrates inhibits Julie from being able to implement a culturally relevant pedagogy in her classroom. CRP is different from other cultural perspectives of teaching practice in that it critically and intentionally aims to deconstruct the status quo (Parsons & Wall, 2011). Julie's unawareness of how the structure of schools actively work to reproduce societal inequities has the potential to hinder her ability to deconstruct and disrupt the status quo in her own classroom. This is not surprising given that Julie's path to certification in music education did not require her to enroll in any courses directly related to SFE content. She may not have been afforded the opportunity in her pre-service preparation to interrogate issues of power and inequity as they relate to education and schooling.

Similarly, Ashley also does not recognize the embeddedness of structural inequities within our society, particularly in the structure of social institutions such as schooling. She maintains that any reproduction of inequities related to schools is a consequence of there being some good schools and some bad schools. When asked the same question as Julie above - how, if at all, she believed schools reproduce the status quo of class, race, and gender oppression in our society - Ashley explains:

It's hard to say. It's like an overall engine-general-thing, you know, I feel like there are some schools who do a great job at not doing that. And then some that are just horrible. And they do that, and it almost feels intentional. So, I feel like that's a really hard question to just give an umbrella. (personal communication, November 2021)

Again, Ashley does not view the system of schooling in general as the source of the perpetuation of inequities, but instead simplifies the issue as one that is tied to individual

schools. A concept that can be directly connected to how accountability for school failure is framed within modern educational reform efforts, particularly *NCLB*. As discussed in Chapter 4, *NCLB* portrays school failure as a direct product of individual schools themselves and not at all a result of structural inequities that exist within the U.S. public education system (Hollingworth, 2008). CRT scholars counter this perspective with the assertion that U.S. society exists only because of its foundation in racial subordination, and it continues to thrive because of the structural racism that is pervasive throughout its social institutions (Bell, 1987; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2021). When asked the same question, Karla's response sought to highlight a shift in awareness of public education's role within a larger societal context but did not explicitly acknowledge the role of schools in the reproduction of the status quo of class, race, and gender oppression. She states:

I think as a as a general trend, I think public education is, is trying to do more to, I think, public education is trying to do more, to be aware of those systems that are in place. I don't think that it's going to be perfect. And that, you know, what we're doing is going to solve everything. And there's definitely a long way to go. But just over the past few years, even since I've started teaching, I've seen a really big effort in recognizing and working to and working to kind of improve – not improve – but recognize and re-evaluate how we're doing things. Um, yeah, I've seen I definitely have seen a shift. (personal communication, October 2021)

These responses indicate that the teacher participants, for the most part, remain unaware of the societal dynamics within which schooling occurs, particularly that schools are a social institution whose structure facilitates the reproduction of societal inequities.

Principle five of the CSFE *Standards* includes the ability of teachers to understand how issues such as “justice, social inequality, concentrations of power, class differences, race and ethnic relations, or family and community organization affect teaching and schools” (CSFE, 2000). The teacher participants in the study did not demonstrate an understanding of how the overall structure of schools in U.S. society work to reproduce power imbalances and inequities as a result of class, race, and gender that are representative of the same power imbalances and inequities that exist in society in general. This is in direct contrast to the field of SFE’s objective to “equip teachers to resist and disrupt anti-democratic social and education processes that systematically develop the capacities and life-chances of some citizens but not others” (Tozer & Butts, 2010, p. 11). Furthermore, the teacher participants’ unawareness of the pervasiveness of structural racism in the U.S. public school system limits their ability to implement CRP, which would assist them in navigating the teacher/student socio-cultural gap and lead to more equitable educational experiences for all students. In order for teachers to ensure all students’ cultures and cultural practices are maintained and valued in their classrooms, they must first be able to interrogate and disrupt the reproduction of racial and cultural subordination that occurs in all classrooms as a result of the embeddedness of racism in the structure of the U.S. public school system. The teacher participants’ responses omit any discourse related to race or racism and its impact on schooling. Again, this is not particularly surprising given the pervasiveness of the myth of colorblindness within modern educational reform efforts outlined in Chapter 4.

**Lack of Exposure to SFE Content and Principles.** As detailed in principle four of the CSFE *Standards*, a key tenet of SFE is the development of an understanding of

how moral principles related to democratic institutions can inform and direct schooling practice, leadership, and governance (CSFE, 2000). My conversations with the teacher participants revealed very simplified discussions around the role of schools within a larger societal context, as evidenced by the data outlining the basic idea that schools prepare students to be successful adults. In addition, in discussions about the reproduction of societal inequities, it became apparent that the teacher participants missed the opportunity to understand the societal dynamics within which the act of schooling occurs. These findings indicate that the teacher participants need further preparation to be able to articulate a distinct connection between democratic values and schooling practice, one of the most foundational SFE tenets. Furthermore, though some concepts from the principles outlined within the CSFE *Standards* were alluded to indirectly, no teacher participants specifically identified any scholars whose work is considered foundational within the field or content compatible with terminology from the field. Principle one of the CSFE *Standards* asserts that teachers understand and apply disciplinary knowledge from the humanities and social sciences to interpreting the meanings of education and schooling in diverse cultural contexts. These findings are consistent with the findings from Benchik-Osborne's (2013) study. She admits that her analysis utilizing the CSFE principles was not deep given the four participants' lack of SFE vocabulary, though she acknowledges the participants were able to identify a connection between school and society but only on the most basic level (Benchik-Osborne, 2013).

Existing literature documents that the ever-increasing economic burdens in the U.S. is resulting in cuts to funding for higher education, leaving college of education administrators facing pressure from teacher preparation policymakers who believe

teacher preparation programs need to be standardized for accountability or trimmed down for efficiency (deMarrais, 2005; 2013; Tozer & Miretzky, 2005). This pressure, fueled by the standards-based movement in the K-12 system that is outcomes measure based and promotes standardized testing that aligns with state and federal standards, directly contradicts the critical, cross-disciplinary focus of SFE. The standards-based movement's focus on outcome measures for both students and teachers leave little room in the curriculum for non-standards-based preparation, in turn, severely limiting the opportunity for SFE to be a part of the curriculum (Tozer & Miretzky, 2005). Consequently, SFE programs with a small number of course offerings become the target of reduction and elimination.

To conform to current trends in teacher preparation policy and attempt to alleviate the ongoing economic burdens they face, colleges of education are forced to prioritize space within teacher education program curriculums (Tozer & Butts, 2010). The limited opportunity for SFE in teacher education program curriculums leaves pre-service and early career teachers lacking the key SFE knowledge and skills imperative to developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b) identified in her framework of CRP as necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. Given the teacher participants' varying and limited exposure to SFE courses in their pre-service preparation outlined in Chapter 4 and the data from the teacher participant interviews discussed above, my study's finding directly supports these assertions within existing literature. A majority of the teacher participants engaged in minimal SFE coursework during their pre-service preparation and when they were asked early on in their teaching careers questions that lent themselves directly to

SFE tenets, many of the participants did not refer to scholars or content that would have indicated their exposure to the field. Furthermore, they did not discuss the key tenets of SFE in a manner that is compatible with terminology found within the field, evidenced by their unawareness of the complex purposes of schooling within our society, and the societal dynamics within which the act of schooling occurs.

***SFE's Value to Teacher Development: Direct Applicability to Teaching Tasks***

My conversations with the induction program's leadership team and teacher participants uncovered that the inclusion of SFE content and principles within the program's support is unintentional, inexplicit, and ancillary. Planned programmatic support does not explicitly refer to specific SFE content or resources, and the support is not intentionally grounded in SFE principles. Yet, the unintentional engagement with SFE throughout the program's structure of support this study uncovered, speaks to the value of SFE to teacher development – particularly in being able to demonstrate the applicability of SFE to teaching tasks. Across my conversations with teacher participants, they identified the program's support as having an integral role in improving their classroom management and instructional strategies, two areas of program support that I discovered most often to be rooted in content related to SFE tenets. As discussed above, their responses did not discuss key tenets of SFE in a manner compatible with terminology found within the field nor did they refer to resources from the field, but a deeper analysis of their responses provides evidence regarding the benefits of SFE content to specific teaching practices related to classroom management and instruction. Many of the descriptions of the benefits they identified from the programmatic support they received in these areas are grounded in SFE's key tenets and were salient themes

across teacher participant interviews. I discuss these salient themes in further detail below.

**Classroom Management Support.** Earlier in this chapter, data from interviews with the induction program leadership team identified classroom management support provided in Year 1 of the program as an aspect of support that aims to prepare participants for teaching across the demographic divide that exists between the student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools. Across conversations with all three members of the leadership team it became clear that the program's approach to the demographic differences teachers encounter with the students in their classrooms is to address it and to not leave those differences unexplored or unnamed. This approach relates directly to principle five in the CSFE *Standards*, which specifies that educators acknowledge individual differences within a democratic society (CSFE, 2000). The program supports teachers in learning to identify the differences that exist amongst students in their classroom and begin to understand how those differences influence their classroom behavior and learning. The induction program does not directly or outwardly connect this approach to the SFE content that it is reflected in, but it is an active programmatic decision to engage teachers in conversations about individual differences within the context of democratic values and responsibilities.

In my conversations with the teacher participants, it was the classroom management support they received from the induction program that they identified as having the most impact on their teaching practice. For example, Miranda explains:

[The program] really was helpful in classroom management. But part of what we talked about was understanding how students view respect and authority and



things like that when they come from different cultures and different households in different socio-economic statuses. And how that should impact the way that we react to the way that students act in class, you know, like, thinking that the way that we use language isn't necessarily going to be the same as what these students are used to. And understanding that things that we may traditionally in like a white centric culture view as being disrespectful or as an outburst or something like that, may mean something completely different to a different student.

(personal communication, July 2021)

Miranda is discussing how the program, in its support around classroom management, helped her step back and consider the social and cultural differences amongst students in her classroom and how those differences may be impacting student behavior. Instead of placing the responsibility on the students to conform to classroom practices that may conflict with their social and/or cultural identities, the program guided teacher participants through discussions that assisted them to reflect on how they could modify or re-construct their classroom expectations to better serve all students. As previously mentioned earlier in the chapter, Miranda's response is reflected in CRT scholars' notion of racial realism and its tenet that contends the social construction of race, and racism with its very real consequences, are normal in the lives of people of color (Bell, 1992; Tate, 1997). Her students' past experiences, particularly the experiences of students of color impact their behavior in her classroom. Miranda is able to acknowledge that the racial, socio-economic, and cultural differences of the students in her classroom impact each students' behavior in the classroom, and ultimately, their overall schooling experience. Miranda continues:

And at first, that kind of was really daunting to me, because I was like, well, how am I supposed to get a good understanding of how things work for the student outside the classroom? Or, you know, my immediate thought was, I feel like that could come across as even more racist if I let a Black student make an outburst, but then penalize a white student for doing the same thing. But the more we talked about it, the more I realized that, regardless of what the action was, one of the most important things that my coach helped me with was setting up a classroom rule – not a rule – but the explanation that these things are off limits in my classroom, your intentions do not matter. I am not here to judge your intentions. I cannot judge what was going through your head when it happened. These are the things that I'm setting a hard line against. But even so, I'm still going to have a conversation with you about it to figure out what was the source, what's going on? How can we handle that better going forward? And that has really helped a lot because for my students who handle conflict and things like that differently outside of the building. It has helped them kind of get a better understanding of the way the world is going to work against them, you know, like preparing them for like, this is the game you got to play, but also taking the time after the fact just to understand where they're coming from, and kind of help them build coping mechanisms or avoidance measures or things that they can do to avoid that happening in the future. (personal communication, July 2021)

It is clear that the classroom management support Miranda received through the program significantly impacted her teaching practice and how she structures her classroom management approach. It assisted her development of an understanding of the

consequences of her teaching practice decisions on the lives of her students, a concept clearly found within the key tenets of SFE (Tozer & Butts, 2010). As a result, she asks herself how and for whom does her classroom management practices facilitate or hinder development? A question that indicates critical inquiry into CRP's tenet of academic excellence. She is beginning to question the status quo as it relates to the conceptualization of classroom behavior and student success by interrogating her role in perpetuating or disrupting it (Parsons & Wall, 2011). Furthermore, Miranda's response connects to SFE scholars' belief that teachers fully engaged with the field "will be more likely to enact choices in their teacher practice that will make a democratic difference in the lives of children, schools, and therefore, communities" (Tozer & Butts, 2010, p. 12). This was the case for Amy as well. She recalls:

And I can't remember if it was something that was talked about at a group session or if it was just one-on-one when my coach was helping me with my specific students, but talking about how to balance you know, like, I know x, y and z is going on in this kid's life. When do they deserve grace? And when do they deserve to be held accountable? Like because I know that if I lower expectations, it is a self-fulfilling prophecy. I don't necessarily always agree with the idea that students will rise to meet your expectations if they're all the way up here [reaching hand way above her head] because you also need to consider where they're starting from, but at the same time, if they're starting here [places hand lower, at stomach level] and my expectations are only here [moves hand to chest level], they're going to take their sweet time bridging that gap. Versus like if I try to push them as far as they can go reasonably. And so, it was a conversation of,

you know, like, when I'm dealing with a student acting out or when I'm dealing with a student who is like not doing what they should be doing academically, like not putting forth the work, how do I know when to say no? And when do I know when to say – okay, I can give you another chance. And I feel like it was completely necessary to have that support, especially given the larger societal issues our students face in terms of cultural and individual differences. (personal communication, May 2021)

Amy discusses how the induction program helped her develop classroom expectations that were suitable for all of her students. She identifies that it is important to have an understanding of her students' lives outside of school and how those experiences may impact classroom behavior. Amy acknowledges that the classroom expectations she puts in place for students must reflect their individual differences in order to ensure those expectations are not set too low yet are still attainable. This is a key tenet of SFE Tozer & Butts (2010) highlight when they explain an objective of SFE is to improve teachers "ability to conceive of choices that are more consistent with the all-around growth of everyone in the school community, adult and child alike" (p. 12). Furthermore, it indicates that Megan, encouraged by the support she received within the induction program, does not take a colorblind approach to her classroom management. As previously discussed, CRT scholars problematize colorblind approaches in education, arguing that colorblind conceptions of equality that result in rules insisting on the same treatment across the board can only remedy blatant acts of racism, but cannot disrupt structural racism (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 2021). Instead, colorblindness works to maintain racial subordination by lacking historical and social

context and an understanding of the very real consequences of racism. Resulting in the preservation of the system of white privilege in U.S. society (Dixon & Rousseau Anderson, 2018). Though race remains coded within Megan's response as "cultural and individual differences," – again a potential impact of the pervasiveness of the myth of colorblindness within modern educational reform— her approach to classroom management allows for the potential to neutralize and disrupt any embedded racial advantages in her classroom in order to establish a classroom environment that promotes academic excellence for all students (Ladson-Billings, 2021). Parsons and Wall (2011) discuss that CRP's fundamental element of academic excellence for all students does not end with simply having high expectations for all students. Teachers must hold "conceptions of themselves and others that enable the successful enactment of the fundamental belief that students are capable of success" (Parsons & Wall, 2011, p. 17). Megan's approach to classroom management reiterates her belief that all of her students are capable of success. She also recalls a personal story her induction program coach shared with her and how that continues to impact her own classroom. Megan shares:

I remember having a conversation with [my coach] once about how she realized that there was a certain demographic that she was having a really hard time reaching and teaching. And it took – she talked about how she had to realize what was going on and why she was having these reactions and learn to grow from that. I remember that story though even now. And I think about it every now and then if I ever have a problem with students or if I feel like I'm having a specific problem with certain types of students, then I'll make sure I remember that story and make sure to be self-reflective in understanding how I am interacting with the

students and what specific things I am doing that may be perpetuating the problems I am experiencing with them. (personal communication, July 2021)

Megan uses the example shared by her coach to guide her own self-reflection in relation to her own classroom. The story the coach shared conveys that a teacher's internal biases can unknowingly impact their interactions with students and highlights the importance of self-reflection to develop an awareness of these biases. Grounded in both CRT & CRP, it is not only important for teachers to recognize the biases they have, but also acknowledge how these biases make them complicit – as white individuals with white privilege – in the reproduction of societal inequities in their classrooms (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 2021).

By sharing that story with Megan, her induction program coach encourages her to ask what characterizes her interactions with students and how do those interactions vary by student or student groups? – a question that critically interrogates what academic excellence looks like for all students (Parsons & Wall, 2011). The coach's story also emphasizes the importance of teachers taking a color conscious approach to their classroom rather than a colorblind one. I discussed earlier in the chapter how a teacher support session in Year 1 of the program is intentionally designed to lead program participants through exercises of self-reflection about the internal biases they bring into their own classrooms. Again, though the program does not directly acknowledge that this support is grounded in SFE, nor go beyond a surface level discussion of “unintentional biases,” its alignment with the key tenets of SFE is undeniable. The ability to reflect on issues of justice, truth, caring, and rights as they apply to educational practice, and specifically being aware of internal biases related to normative perspectives on education

and schooling, is clearly articulated in principle two in the *CSFE Standards*. As Maxine Greene articulated in 1976:

Perhaps it falls most heavily on the foundations specialist in teacher education, since he/she is distinctively obligated to equip teachers-to-be to reflect critically upon and identify themselves with respect to the formalized world...There must be efforts made to reflect critically on the numerous modes of masking what is happening in our society – the numerous modes of mystifying, of keeping people still. (p. 19)

In addition, the development of an understanding of the full significance of diversity in a democratic society and how that bears on classroom instruction is distinctly a key tenet of SFE, directly aligned with principle five in the *CSFE Standards*. This alignment with two key tenets of SFE demonstrates a direct connection between SFE content and its impact on teaching practice. The support in classroom management the teachers receive through the program is directly related to the key tenets of SFE and the data collected from the study's teacher participants shows that programmatic support directly impacted their classroom management approaches and strategies. Furthermore, the aspects of the programmatic support the teacher participants indicated to be most impactful are rooted in SFE content and principles. These aspects of support – specifically as they relate to aspects of CRT and CRP such as racial realism, structural racism, and color consciousness – lay the groundwork for the teacher participants to be able to implement CRP as part of their teaching practice in hopes of leading to more equitable experiences for all of their students. And it is here where the introduction of the myth of colorblindness and discussions around its impact on education and schooling within the

support provided by the induction program would prove beneficial for program participants. Not only would it help illustrate to program participants how the promotion of neutrality through colorblind policies and practices actively veils the structural inequities within the U.S. public education system, but it would also provide an avenue for program participants to discuss their complicity in the perpetuation of those inequities.

**Instructional Strategy Support.** In addition to the support the induction program provided around classroom management, the teacher participants also shared how the programmatic support geared towards instructional strategies impacted their teaching practice. For example, Karla recalls:

I believe it was the second year of [the program] that was focused on intentional planning and intentional instruction. And so, thinking about planning activities that are going to help students be successful later in life as adults. So, let's say, you know, for example, I have a class that really needs help learning how to work together as a team, they just kind of are bickering, and they're not really getting along with each other. And so, with intentional planning, I might find an activity where it's going to kind of force them to use teamwork. And when they're successful with that feeling and they have a successful lesson and they work together and accomplish a goal, we can kind of circle back and talk about, you know, not just the content from the lesson, but that today we used teamwork and cooperation. And how does that make you feel like, you've got this, this, this and this done? Like, think about how you feel right now. And, you know, remember how you feel because you can go back to this outside of the classroom. So just



really being intentional about planning and instruction that it's going to help you reach that goal of teaching students skills that will help them be successful in our society as a whole. (personal communication, April 2021)

Karla acknowledges that it is important to incorporate life skills that reflect democratic values intentionally within her lesson plans. She provides an example of one of those values – teamwork – and explains how she might structure her lesson around it. In a democratic society, being able to work as a team is a key aspect of the group decision-making process, which is a foundational principle of how a democracy functions. Though she does not explicitly identify teamwork as a democratic value necessarily, she considers the induction program as the source for framing her thinking about instruction around the value. Sara discusses how the instruction strategy support she received through the program assisted her in teaching the diverse population of students in her classroom. She explains:

I think [the program] helped me to understand how to be intentional with my instruction in a way that builds upon the diversity in my classroom. It gave me ideas for what I could do in my classroom to help my students to see the similarities and differences within each other and ways to talk about diversity and to incorporate it as part of my lessons. I hadn't really thought about before doing that session in the program. (Sara, personal communication, August 2021)

Sara identifies the importance of structuring her lessons in such a way that they initiate conversations around diversity, yet another democratic value. In a democratic society it is key that its' citizens respect and uphold the dignity of all people, as well as respect all individuals' rights. A key tenet of SFE is valuing democratic forms of association and

supporting the conditions essential to them, which is highlighted in principle four of the CSFE *Standards*. Again, though at this point the program's support around instructional strategies and being intentional about incorporating life skills key to a democratic society is not openly acknowledged as a key tenet of SFE, it is clearly connected to principles from the field. This provides a second facet of teaching practice that is directly impacted by SFE content. Furthermore, it is another example of the how the induction program, by supporting Sara's development of her students' cultural competence, assists in laying the groundwork for participants to implement CRP as part of their teaching practice. Sara shares she not only talks about diversity in general in her classroom but ensures her student's cultural practices are valued by incorporating discussions around students' similarities and differences within her lessons. The instructional support the participants receive through the program is echoed in the key tenets of SFE, as well as aspects of CRP, and the data collected from the teacher participants shows that support directly impacted their instructional strategies and lesson planning. Though the teacher participants responses do not explicitly link the life skills they identify – teamwork and appreciation for diversity as democratic values – this could be in part due to their limited and varying exposure to SFE content throughout their pre-service preparation. The opportunity to purposefully re-introduce the key tenets of SFE through the support provided by the induction program has the potential to build upon a foundational knowledge of SFE acquired during pre-service preparation. This is evidence that supports the imperativeness of embedding SFE content and principles throughout the teacher development continuum.

As previously discussed in Chapter 2, the body of literature that addresses the devaluation of the field of SFE at institutions of higher education across the nation, and specifically within teacher preparation programs, acknowledges the lack of empirical research on the value of SFE as a factor that is often cited by individuals who decide to eliminate SFE coursework requirements or SFE content from the teacher preparation curriculum (Butin, 2005b; Neumann, 2010; Pope & Stemhagen, 2008; Tozer & Butts, 2010). A contributing factor to this is SFE scholars' rejection of the positivist orientation, which prioritizes a hypothetical-scientific approach to research. Yet Pope and Stemhagen (2008) caution SFE scholars to refrain from allowing dissensions with positivism to overshadow the value empirical work can have in establishing SFE as an essential component of teacher preparation. Ultimately, it is necessary to be able to provide decision-makers with visible evidence from teachers regarding the benefits of SFE in order to demonstrate the value of SFE courses and content across the teacher development continuum (Pope & Stemhagen, 2008). Tozer & Butts (2010) acknowledge the gap of empirical evidence in the field that does so. The data from this study, though not explicit in terms of the intentional use of SFE language and concepts, does provide visible evidence from teachers regarding the benefits of SFE content to the development of specific teaching practices. Specifically, my analysis demonstrates how support grounded in the key tenets of SFE helps teachers create more equitable, democratic classrooms.

### ***Teacher Support Grounded in Key Tenets of SFE***

Beyond specific support content provided by the induction program, my conversations with the teacher participants revealed that they identified and valued how

the overarching support model employed by the program was grounded in the key tenets of SFE and utilize how they were supported by the program as a model for how they want to support students in their classrooms. For example, Julie discusses how the relationships her induction program coaches developed with her were ones based on care and valuing her as a person, beyond just a teacher. She recalls:

So, it was my first-year teaching. It was maybe my like second or third session. I had a conversation with [my coach] about journaling and how I'd fallen out of practice a little bit but that I off and on throughout school and college, I would journal my prayers. And so, I remember I was just talking to [my coach] about how I do that off and on and I was in like a really, I was in a phase where I was very into it and I had just gotten back into it. We were talking about that and spirituality in our conversations that led up to the next support session. I sat down my stuff, we did our first part of the session, we had a break and then I came back, there was a journal, like a really beautiful journal, sitting at my place, and it was from [my coach]. Um, and it was one of those things where like, he remembered that conversation and listened and went out and bought that and gave it to me. (Julie, personal communication, October 2021)

Julie values the level of care she felt in the relationship developed with her program coach. The coach used the gesture of gifting her a journal to show that he or she is attentive to their conversations and wants to support her beyond just as a teacher, but as a person. Julie continues:

And last summer, when I was taking the graduate course on instruction with the [program leadership team], there were things that I could just like, reach out and

send a text about, and they would respond. And they read my teacher journey story that just got published. And one of the leadership team members shared it on social media. And she texted me and said I feel like a proud mom and just like little things like that. Those things always made me feel good and fully supported way beyond just like I am going to help you become a better teacher. And I strive to have those same kind of relationships with my students. I don't want to just be someone that they see as just a teacher who gives them information or knowledge, but as someone who helps them become a better person overall. (personal communication, October 2021)

Again, Julie is identifying the level of care she feels in her interactions with the program staff as something that is important to her and something she wants to be able to re-create in her relationships with her own students.

Ashley identifies self-reflection as a skill she wants to teach in classroom and one that the program's support modeled. She explains:

So specifically, I would say my coach was phenomenal during Year 3 of the program. I would just be like, I don't know what to do. Let me lay everything out in front of you. And this is where I'm at, this is what I've done. What do I do next? And [my coach] would never directly tell me what to do, but was so good at leading you to an answer. [My coach] would never directly say it, but would say Hey, this is what I'm seeing and would kind of regurgitate it back to me and be like, is this what you're saying? And tell me more about and [my coach] would just bring it back around to where it helped you see it maybe in a clearer light. So, I felt like my coach was such a great model of what I want to be for my students,

because [my coach] was able to mirror answers back to me without actually giving them to me. And I feel like that's so helpful. (Ashley, personal communication, November 2021)

Ashley values the self-reflection her coach guided her through when she would approach her coach with a challenge or issue she was facing. In addition, she recognizes this self-reflection as a skill she hopes to engage her own students in. Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995) identifies the development of students' sociopolitical consciousness as a key element of CRP. A teacher's ability to engage in reflective practice and engage their students in self-reflection is a step towards developing students' sociopolitical consciousness. Engaging participants in reflective practice is a key skill within the induction program's coaching model, as evidenced earlier in this chapter where an overview of my conversations with the program leadership team highlights it as an important coaching skill. Although the program is not explicit about this skill's connection to SFE, being able to engage in critical self-reflection and/or reflective practice is a key component of being an SFE scholar, as well as in the implementation of CRP. As outlined in principle two in the CSFE *Standards*, educators should be able to recognize the inevitable presence of normative influences in educational thought and practice at the individual, institutional, and societal levels (CSFE, 2000). The program's focus on reflective practice assists participants in beginning to be able to be self-reflective about their individual thoughts and actions, as well as the normative perspectives on education and schooling on a larger scale. As Edmundson and Bushnell Greiner (2005) explain:

We believe it [reflective practice] is a deeper conception, because it asks students to become aware of their intimate social, political, and cultural assumptions and to determine their actions in ethical responses to these assumptions, and because it focuses on conservation as well as change. Reflective practice as we present it here explicitly opens up cultural assumptions of the practitioner and those assumptions operating in the larger situational context of schooling and society. (p. 152)

Ashley identifies reflective practice as a key skill she wants to be able to engage her students in. And though she does not elaborate on why she identifies self-reflection as important within her classroom, it is not out of line to speculate that on some level the teacher understands that critical self-reflection is a necessary skill to successfully participate in a democratic society.

Miranda also made the connection between the support she received through the program and the support she provides in her classroom. She explains:

Program coaches are almost like they're modeling – teaching – for you the way to help you get there in your classroom. It [the program] created a safe space for me to figure out how I needed to become a teacher. And essentially, I'm getting very big picture. But essentially, as a teacher, I want to create a safe space in my classroom for my students to figure out the best way they can become a student. (personal communication, October 2021)

Miranda utilizes the word “modeling” to explain how she took the way she was supported in the program and used it as a model for how she wants to be able to provide support for her students in her classroom. Similar to how the program’s engagement with reflective

practice is not outwardly connected to SFE, the program's decision to ensure the coaching model is providing support that is personalized and relationship-focused can be tied back to the key tenets of SFE. As outlined in a performance indicator of principle two in the CSFE *Standards*, teachers need to be able "to appraise conceptions of truth, justice, caring, and rights as they are applied in educational practice" (CSFE, 2000). The ability to create a space (or relationship) that is steeped in care and to identify that as a key aspect in fostering students' learning in the classroom is very much mirrored in SFE. Although the program is not specifically "teaching" this to program participants or explicitly connecting it to SFE content, it is utilizing its' coaching support model not only to fully support participants, but also illustrate to them the skills necessary to develop an impactful student/teacher relationship.

Modeling student support to teachers through the coaching support they receive in the induction program lends itself to the notion of "doing" social foundations of education rather than just knowing SFE (Dottin, 2010). As Dottin (2010) explains:

Doing social foundations of education in teacher education may be put in the context of the people's interest concerning the importance of the study of social foundations of education to their personal and professional lives if education is seen largely as about asking important questions and finding fundamental answers to those questions. In this context, the central role of formal education, and for that matter, teacher education, is to teach students and candidates the necessary strategies and skills to learn to think and communicate, that is, to receive a "meaningful" (meaning-full) education (p. 400).



The support provided by the induction program seeks to assist teachers in thinking through the challenges and situations they face in their classrooms on their own so that they can communicate not only how they feel about those challenges and situations, but also the actions they take as a result and why they are taking those actions. Alternately, a coaching support model not grounded in SFE may simply tell teachers how they should feel in certain situations or when they face certain challenges and then dictate a plan of action for them, most likely maintaining the narratives allowed to be visible in our educational system. By beginning to help teachers “do” social foundations of education, the induction program sets the stage for its participants to begin to question educational assumptions and identify inequities within educational policies. These critical inquiry skills are necessary for participants to develop in order to successfully implement CRP in their classrooms in hopes of successfully navigating the teacher/student socio-cultural gap and creating equitable educational experiences for all students.

### ***Locating Alternate Space within Teacher Development Continuum for SFE***

A challenge of engaging pre-service and early career teachers in SFE content is the field’s focus on contested educational issues. SFE seeks to assist teachers in the development of critical inquiry skills by exposing them to and engaging them with contested positions about what they have come to understand as “normal” in teaching and education, particularly as it relates to class, race, gender, identity, knowledge, and power (Butin, 2005a). In doing so, this draws on and often unsettles the “lived experiences of students who have largely known schools to be places of achievement and success” (Knight Abowitz, 2005, p. 128). By disrupting the views of what is “normal” in teaching, it creates what Butin (2005a) refers to as the educational double bind. He explains:

To suggest that schools might be repressive institutions is to reject one's own trajectory and life decisions to become a teacher, risking one's sense of place within it. To accept the ideology of betterment, though, silences the dissonance of experience and forecloses any real opportunity to reveal and rework the basic building blocks that undergird our system of schooling. To accept is to be silenced. To reject is to be silenced (Butin, 2005a, p. 191).

SFE courses and content have the ability to undo this double bind, but not without confronting the tension, resistance and all-around strong emotional responses that go along with it.

Given the challenges of confronting contested educational issues, SFE scholars strive to establish an open and safe environment in their classrooms in order to facilitate discussions that remain productive in the presence of tension, resistance, and high emotion. My conversations with the teacher participants for this study uncovered that the induction program establishes a space for teachers that has the potential to navigate these foundational SFE discussions. As referenced by the last teacher participant in the previous section, the induction program created a "safe space" for her to become the teacher she needed to be. The idea of this "safe space" was a theme that came up across teacher participant interviews. Alex explains:

It was very much a safe space. And I never felt judged. Well, I may not work – while may not have been as close with others as I was with some. I never felt uncomfortable to say what I was feeling, which is huge for someone who is anxious because I don't-I don't share things, I don't answer out of turn. And I still don't speak up in meetings sometimes just because I get anxious. And I never felt

uncomfortable to speak up and I never felt uncomfortable to say what I was feeling with [the program staff] and that helped. So much. Because there's some things you need to get off your chest. (personal communication, April 2021)

Alex also identifies the induction program as a “safe space” for vulnerable conversations. Not feeling judged or uncomfortable are key aspects in facilitating honest discussions around contested educational issues. It appears that the induction program already fosters an environment that is ideal for exposure to SFE content, as a majority of the teacher participants acknowledged and valued the safe space established within the program’s structure of support. This is a fundamental aspect of CRP in that a classroom environment where students do not feel judged or uncomfortable for who they are is an ideal environment to promote academic excellence for all students and engage them in discussions that cultivate their critical social consciousness (Ladson-Billings 1995a, 1995b; Parsons & Wall, 2011). In essence, the environment established within the induction program is modeling the benefits of CRP in teaching practice. Moreover, through my conversations with teacher participants, it became clear that the support provided by the induction program – though not explicit in nature – reflected some key tenets of SFE.

Given that the teacher participants did not discuss SFE content in a manner that is compatible with terminology found within the field of SFE – and more specifically within the principles of the CSFE *Standards* – and when they were asked questions that lent themselves directly to SFE, participants did not refer to resources or content from the field, it is clear that their exposure to SFE content and knowledge is limited. As discussed in Chapter 4, only three participants were required to enroll in more than one course

during their pre-service preparation that addressed SFE content. In addition, all but two participants were required to enroll in an introductory SFE course as part of their teacher preparation curricula. Though all but two participants were required to engage in at least some level of coursework where they were exposed to the field of SFE, the missed opportunities throughout our conversations to connect their responses directly to SFE terminology, content, or resources from the field indicate that this exposure is not sufficient.

Considering that support the induction program provides to participants is already grounded in SFE – unintentional as it may be – it highlights the opportunity for SFE scholars to utilize induction programs, specifically university-based ones, as an alternate and additional space within the teacher development continuum for SFE content and principles to be incorporated. This would build upon the aspects of SFE participants engage with during their pre-service preparation. Though the teacher participants were able to identify examples of programmatic support beneficial to developing their teaching practice that I was able to connect with SFE content, the teacher participants themselves were did not discuss the support that was clearly grounded in the key tenets of SFE in a way that utilized terminology or resources compatible with SFE or made any connections at all to the field of SFE. This indicates a clear gap in SFE knowledge and content despite their varying levels of exposure to the field during their pre-service preparation. The induction program has the potential to serve as an opportunity for SFE scholars to continue to engage teachers in their understanding of the key tenets of SFE and uncover how that understanding directly and positively impacts their teaching practice. Given the already existing safe space teacher participants identify as facilitated by the program, the

university-based induction program provides one platform for SFE scholars to continue to engage teachers in the key tenets of SFE beyond in the one to two courses in pre-service preparation and embed it throughout the teacher development continuum.

This chapter presented and discussed the findings of my study. I re-introduced the purpose and research questions for the study. Next, I discussed the macro-level findings of my study. In addition, I explored the salient themes I analyzed within the data that relate to the study's research questions and underscore my macro-level findings. In the next chapter, I discuss the implications of these findings and offer possibilities for future research.

## CHAPTER 6: IMPLICATIONS & CONCLUSION

This dissertation contributes to the literature that addresses the expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools, as well as the growing teacher shortages across the country, while simultaneously highlighting the value of SFE to the development of teachers who persist within the teaching profession. Ultimately, by conducting an embedded, single-case study that positions a university-based teacher induction program as the unit of analysis, this study informs teacher induction and teacher preparation policy and practices in a way that assists pre-service and early-career teachers in developing a self-awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequalities, as well as the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. In doing so, the study highlights the value of SFE to teacher induction programs, and in turn, sparks a renewed urgency, not only for SFE coursework requirements for prospective teachers, but also for the key concepts of social foundations of education to be embedded throughout the entire teacher development continuum, from pre-service to early career experience.

### **Summary of Key Findings**

This study examined the potential of a university-based induction program to engage program participants with the key tenets of SFE, thus highlighting the importance of SFE to the development of pre-service and early-career teachers. By grounding this study in qualitative inquiry, it allowed for me to foreground the experiences of

participating teachers in the induction program. In addition, I could be clear about how my own educational experiences informed my interpretation of the participants' experiences. The embedded, single-case study where a university-based teacher induction program served as the unit of analysis, aspired to fill a research gap, as there is no existing literature that examines the role of a university-based teacher induction program in facilitating the development of a critical perspective of education necessary for early career teachers to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. In interviews with nine teachers who received support from the induction program, four key salient themes emerged from the data. First, the shift to a standards-based focus of teacher education has severely restricted teachers' exposure to SFE content and principles, resulting in a limited use of SFE terminology and resources by teacher participants when engaging in conversations grounded in the key tenets of the field. Most notably, the teacher participants demonstrated a lack of understanding of the purposes of schooling within our democratic society and the societal dynamics within which the act of schooling occurs. Second, even though the inclusion of SFE content and principles within the induction program is unintentional, inexplicit, and ancillary, this unintentional engagement with SFE throughout the program's structure of support speaks to the value of the field to teacher development, particularly in being able to demonstrate the direct applicability of SFE to teaching tasks. Third, teachers benefit from support that is grounded in the key tenets of SFE and perceive it as a model for how they want to support students in their classrooms. Lastly, university-based induction programs provide an opportunity for SFE scholars to locate alternate space within the teacher development continuum for SFE content and principles to be incorporated – building upon the aspects

of the field teachers engage with during their pre-service preparation. I first discuss the theoretical implications of my study. The remainder of this chapter will discuss the implications of these findings for social foundations of education scholars, teacher induction program administrators, and college of education administrators. In addition, I re-visit the limitations of the study and discuss recommendations for future research. I conclude with my final reflections about the study.

### **Theoretical Implications**

This study highlights and reinforces the dominance of whiteness and the ways in which whiteness continues to impact the teaching profession, and in turn, student learning. The program participants' resistance and defensiveness around pointed discussions of inclusion and equity encountered by the program leadership team demonstrates the participants' unawareness of their whiteness and the power it holds within our society's institutions and practices – no doubt in part a result of the pervasiveness of the myth of colorblindness within modern educational reform. Yet, Amy and Miranda's responses shared in Chapter 5– that did not conform to the patterns of resistance and defensiveness outlined by the program leadership team –demonstrate that the support the induction program provides can assist program participants' in developing an awareness of their whiteness and its influence in the classroom, as well as specific strategies to mediate it within their teaching practice.

In addition, this study provides an illustration of CRT scholars' work that problematizes colorblind approaches to addressing inequities. In an attempt to align student learning outcomes, teaching standards, and standards-based performance assessments for teacher candidates, the standards-based movement in teacher preparation



utilizes efficiency and accountability to make culture acontextual and neutral. In doing so, the myth of colorblindness privileges white culture and the experiences of white students while completely ignoring the culture and lived experiences of students of Color. This means that education policy around teacher preparation directly contradicts CRP, a pedagogy that is taught within many teacher preparation programs across the U.S. Cultural competence is a key aspect of CRP – a framework explicitly focused on providing equitable education for all students (Ladson-Billings 1995a, 1995b). By neutralizing culture within the teaching profession, and ultimately, the classroom, there is no space for the affirmation of students' cultural identities or for teachers to develop an understanding of how their own cultural identities influence their perceptions of students' cultural identities. Yet, as mentioned above, Amy and Miranda's responses indicate there is hope in combatting the acontextual and neutral approach to culture perpetuated by the standards-based movement. The university-based induction program provides one avenue in which early career teachers can learn the importance of acknowledging and affirming the lived experiences of students from all racial, socio-economic, and cultural backgrounds and develop teaching practices that refute the myth of colorblindness.

Given CRT and CRP's productive connection to SFE, the induction program also creates additional space for early career teachers to engage with these key theoretical frameworks. Engagement with CRT and CRP can assist teachers in navigating the expanding racial, socio-economic, and cultural divide between student and teacher populations in U.S. public schools. Opportunities exist within existing induction program support to insert and discuss key aspects of both theoretical frameworks. For example, the program's current approach to classroom management support is ideal for including

pointed discussions around the myth of colorblindness, color consciousness, cultural competence, and academic excellence for all students. A more explicit inclusion of these frameworks as a part of the support provided to program participants would benefit them in their development of critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students.

### **Implications for SFE**

The study's findings provide emerging evidence of the value of SFE to the teacher development continuum. The continuum begins at the time of pre-service preparation and continues through the early years of teaching (Feiman-Nemser, 2001). This study reinforces existing SFE literature that asserts that pre-service teacher's existing exposure to the field is limited and insufficient. Given the teacher participants' limited exposure to SFE courses in their pre-service preparation outlined in Chapter 4 and this study's data that demonstrated missed opportunities to refer to scholars or content that would have indicated even their limited exposure to the field, but also missed opportunities to discuss the key tenets of SFE in a manner that is compatible with terminology found within the field, it is clear that their varying levels of engagement with SFE during their pre-service preparation is inadequate. This does not support the collective goal of the field to develop interpretive, normative, and critical perspectives on education, identified as particularly important for educators in training, to answer the fundamental question, 'What is the purpose of education in our society?' (Provenzo, 2008). Additionally, this demonstrates that an isolated engagement with SFE content, typically through the required enrollment in one introductory course grounded in the key tenets of SFE very early on in a teacher's pre-service preparation, is not sufficient

engagement to impact teaching practice. SFE scholars need to continue to voice the need for pre-service teachers to fully engage with the field and fight for space within teacher preparation curriculums – more space than merely the required enrollment in one introductory course grounded in SFE content. This may take the form of developing partnerships with faculty within teacher preparation programs who teach pedagogical courses that already have connections to SFE content and principles, such as the courses offered by the early childhood education program at the induction program’s institution discussed in Chapter 4. Productive partnerships with teacher preparation faculty create the opportunity for SFE content to be embedded throughout teacher preparation curricula rather presented as a singular course detached from other pre-service preparation.

Furthermore, SFE scholars need to locate additional space across the teacher development continuum for teachers to engage with SFE content and principles. Existing literature situates teacher induction as the bridge between teacher preparation and practice; therefore, placing it as the lynchpin to the teacher development continuum and positioning it as an ideal pathway for early career teachers to continue their engagement with the key tenets of SFE. The intent of teacher induction programs is not to supersede pre-service preparation programs or other types of support provided across the teacher development continuum, but instead to build upon the foundation laid during pre-service preparation (Van Zandt Allen, 2014). Though there is value in teacher induction programs engaging early career teachers with the key tenets of SFE, it has the potential to be most effective when the teachers have an initial understanding of SFE content through their teacher preparation programs.

This study's findings highlight the opportunity university-based induction programs provide for SFE scholars to locate additional and alternate space within the teacher development continuum for SFE content and principles to be incorporated. The university-based induction program that served as the focus for the study already engages with SFE – unintentional as it may be – throughout the program's structure of support and participating teachers identified the support grounded in content related to SFE as playing an integral part in improving their teaching practice. Furthermore, given a theme across participants' interviews that indicated the induction program established what they determined to be a "safe space" to engage in vulnerable conversations, university-based induction programs provide a space for SFE scholars to engage teachers in conversations about the contested educational issues foundational to the field. SFE scholars can capitalize on this existing unintentional engagement and "safe space" by working with induction program leadership teams to name and discuss – intentionally and explicitly – the key tenets of SFE throughout the structured support provided by the programs.

As demonstrated by the teacher participants' responses that indicate a willingness to value and affirm the racial, socio-economic, and cultural identities of all students in their classroom – such as Amy and Miranda's, the study revealed an unintentional engagement with the key tenets of SFE throughout the program's structure of support that speaks to the value of SFE to teacher development – particularly in being able to demonstrate the applicability of SFE to teaching tasks. Teacher participants identified the program's support as having an integral role in improving their classroom management and instructional strategies, two areas of support most often found to be rooted in content related to SFE tenets. SFE scholars need to continue to engage in research that seeks to

demonstrate the value of SFE to the practicalities of teaching. Though there is much research that supports the key tenets of the field as fundamental aspects of preparing teachers for the classroom, it is at an abstract and theoretical level (Butin, 2005b; Neumann, 2010; Pope & Stemhagen, 2008). Being able to demonstrate SFE's direct applicability to teaching tasks, such as classroom management and instructional strategies, is a key to convincing public education leaders and policy makers of the field's value, not only to pre-service preparation, but the entire teacher development continuum.

### **Implications for Teacher Induction Programs**

The teacher development continuum attempts to address the documented tension between theory and practice many teachers entering the classroom for the first-time encounter (Ballantyne, 2007; Kelchtermans & Ballet, 2002), referred to by Shaw (2018) as “praxis shock.” According to Shaw (2018), “In the throes of praxis shock, beginning teachers may disregard their preservice education as being irrelevant and passively allow the school's organizational culture to direct their professional growth” (p. 25). The teacher participants in my study identified a gap in praxis as a major challenge they encountered in their transition into the profession. They described their teacher preparation programs as very theoretical and lacking connections to practical experience. Yet, once they entered the classroom, they identified the university-based induction program as a valuable support that provided practical resources when they were needed the most. This disconnect between theory and practice highlights the value of teacher induction programs to the teacher development continuum.

This study revealed that participants identified programmatic support that was rooted in SFE content and principles as playing an integral role in their development as a

teacher. Though this support did not explicitly align itself with the field, teacher induction programs would benefit from doing so. Induction program staff should seek out SFE scholars to assist them in intentionally embedding the key tenets of SFE within the support they provide to teachers. This would provide the opportunity for participants to engage with SFE content on an even greater level than suggested by the findings of my study. A key tenet of SFE is the development of an understanding of how moral principles related to democratic institutions can inform and direct schooling practice, leadership, and governance (CSFE, 2000). My conversations with teacher participants revealed very simplified discussions around the role of schools within a larger societal context, as evidenced by the data in Chapter 5 outlining the basic idea that schools prepare students to be successful adults. In addition, in discussions about the reproduction of societal inequities, it was apparent teacher participants lacked an understanding of the societal dynamics within which the act of schooling occurs. These findings indicate that the teacher participants fall short in being able to articulate a distinct connection between democratic values and schooling practice, one of the most foundational SFE tenets. In addition, the findings demonstrate the teacher participants' inability to identify how issues such as social inequality, affect teaching and schools. This lack of awareness of how social institutions and social actors within those institutions work to reproduce current inequities, as well as a lack of understanding of the role of schools within a larger societal context, directly impacts teachers' ability to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. Butin (2005b) explains how prospective teachers' engagement with SFE can minimize the culture shock many new teachers experience, and therefore, any attrition related to it, through their development of an understanding of

schools as social institutions with a social role. By working with SFE scholars to explicitly incorporate the key tenets of SFE into support that already unintentionally engages with SFE content will support teachers in developing critical inquiry skills that assists them in teaching a diverse student population, and ultimately positively impact their persistence in the teaching field – one of the goals of teacher induction.

### **Implications for Teacher Preparation Programs**

The findings of this study highlight the effect of the standards-based movement in the K-12 system on pre-service teachers' engagement with SFE. The movement leaves little room in the curriculum for non-standards-based preparation, which severely limits the opportunity for SFE to be a part of the teacher preparation curriculum (Tozer & Miretzky, 2005). The limited opportunity for SFE in teacher education program curriculums leaves pre-service and early career teachers lacking the key SFE knowledge and skills imperative to developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students. Given the study's teacher participants' varying and limited exposure to SFE courses in their pre-service preparation outlined in Chapter 4 and interview data displaying a limited use of SFE terminology and resources by teacher participants when engaging in conversations grounded in the key tenets of the field, the study's findings directly support the assertions that speak to the narrowing of the teacher preparation curriculum within existing literature (deMarrais, 2005; Tozer & Butts, 2010; Tozer & Miretzky, 2005).

It is important for teacher preparation programs to prioritize space for SFE within their curricula. The standards-based movement seeks to align student learning outcomes, teaching standards, and standards-based performance assessments for teacher candidates

in such a way that the focus on efficiency and accountability neutralizes the teaching profession. The focus on outcome measures that produce highly qualified teachers is viewed as an impartial way to address inequities within schools. Yet it reinforces existing color-blind racism ideologies leaving teachers lacking the skills to be able to navigate the stress of teaching a classroom of students with a variety of lived experiences different from their own, resulting in higher levels of stress and an increased likeliness of exiting the teaching profession. Though current economic burdens increase the pressure on college of education administrators from teacher preparation policymakers who believe teacher preparation programs need to be standardized for accountability or trimmed down for efficiency, it is important administrators find ways to engage pre-service teachers with the key tenets of SFE. Though financial strains may limit funds to support stand-alone courses dedicated to SFE, administrators should work with SFE scholars to find ways to embed SFE content within already existing course offerings throughout the teacher preparation curriculum.

In addition, given the pervasiveness of the myth of colorblindness within modern educational reform, it is important for teacher education program faculty to continue to find ways to challenge the dominance of whiteness and the ways in which whiteness continues to impact the teaching profession. Though single courses focused on SFE content or culturally relevant teaching that do persist even through curricular constraints can prove transformative at the time for white pre-service teachers, this study's findings indicate that the long-term impact of these often-isolated courses on teaching practice are inconsistent at best, and completely lacking at worst. This study, particularly when analyzing Amy and Miranda's responses, demonstrates that support connected to SFE



tenets and/or culturally relevant teaching that occurs concurrent to teachers' experience teaching within their own classrooms can have an immediate impact on their teaching practice. Though teacher preparation programs are not able to simulate this experience, programs should consider offering a sequence of courses grounded in SFE content throughout the teacher preparation curriculum, so that as pre-service teachers progress throughout the program, particularly to their practicum and internship experiences, they are able to connect SFE content and key theoretical frameworks related to it to their experiences in the classroom (even if it is not their own classroom). Additionally, teacher preparation program faculty who teach courses with a focus on CRP and/or CRT should consider connecting with current early career teachers who graduated from the program to have them reflect on their teaching experiences in their own classrooms and how the course content may not have seemed pertinent at the time but became much more pertinent when they started teaching. Ultimately, this study's findings indicate that in order to combat the lasting impacts of the myth of colorblindness within educational reform, teacher preparation programs need to embed the key theoretical frameworks that challenge it throughout the teacher preparation curriculum rather than provide isolated courses that can be viewed as separate to their core teaching methods courses.

Furthermore, the inconsistency across teacher education programs within the same institution proves problematic when analyzing teachers' exposure to SFE content. The teacher participants in the study were exposed to varying levels of SFE content based on their specific teacher education program. When analyzing program curricula, and through discussions with college of education administrator, it became clear that the lack of a consistent core curriculum across programs contributed to the wide array of

responses from teacher participants when asked specific questions related to SFE key tenets, education, and teaching practice. Though it is understandable there does need to be some differences across the programs based on education level (i.e. early childhood, elementary, middle, and secondary), it would prove beneficial if all teachers from the same institution received the same core foundation in teaching, particularly as it relates to SFE, culturally relevant teaching, and challenging the myth of colorblindness.

Lastly, college of education administrators should also work to collaborate with local school districts to offer institutionally based teacher induction programs for early career teachers. These programs can not only provide an additional tier of support for new teachers, but they also provide an opportunity for teacher preparation programs to build upon the existing engagement with SFE content within the teacher preparation curriculum. This would allow new teachers to develop a deeper understanding of the key tenets of SFE and uncover how that understanding directly and positively impacts their teaching practice. By doing so, teachers would have sustained and continual support imperative in developing critical inquiry skills and the cultural competence necessary to navigate teaching an increasingly diverse population of students (Benchik-Osborne, 2013; Butin, 2005b; Hartlep & Porfilio, 2015; Tozer & Miretzky, 2005).

### **Limitations & Recommendations for Future Research**

This study is limited to a university-based teacher induction program offered to teacher preparation program graduates of a PWI in the southeastern U.S. As a result, the study's findings are not generalizable to other contexts or university-based teacher induction programs, nor do they reflect all university-based teacher induction programs in the southeastern U.S. Researchers should engage in future work that investigates the

experiences of participants in other university-based induction programs across the U.S. This will provide deeper insights into how teacher induction programs facilitate the development of a critical perspective of education for early career teachers that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequities within educational policies. In addition, research investigating other induction programs has the potential to provide additional evidence that highlights the value of SFE to the development of pre-service and early career teachers.

Given the coronavirus pandemic's concurrent existence during the study, the university-based teacher induction program had to adapt the typical program support provided to participating teachers. Participating teachers in the program typically attend several focused training and support sessions throughout the academic year, as well as have in person classroom visits and meetings with their induction program coach (which is discussed in detail in Chapter 4). At the time of data collection, the program could not offer any in person support, and therefore participating teachers were only provided virtual support from their program coach. Though I identified study participants who either completed the program or were in their third year of the program at the time of the study to ensure that they have experienced some of the typical support provided by the program, this still serves as a limitation of my study. Future studies should seek to build upon the emerging evidence from my initial study by investigating the experiences of participants within the induction program who are able to experience the program in manner that is unaffected by the coronavirus pandemic.

Another limitation of this study is the relationship between the researcher and participants. Given my role on the evaluation team for the induction program, my

positionality has implications for the way the participants shared their experiences during interviews. Though I managed this by maintaining my awareness of the potential impacts and developing strong interview protocols, my pre-existing relationship with the program and program participants undoubtedly impacted the study. Future research should include the investigation of the experiences of teachers within induction programs of which the researcher does not have a pre-existing relationship with.

Additionally, this study seeks to understand the experiences of early-career teachers participating in a university-based teacher induction program within a definitive period and only provides a snapshot of the teachers' educational careers. Researchers will need to conduct additional longitudinal studies to gain a more complete picture of early-career teachers' development of a critical perspective of education throughout their entire participation within the induction program, as well as further along in their teaching careers. A follow-up study with this study's teacher participants that more deeply investigates their exposure to and understanding of SFE content and principles would also provide deeper insight into how to incorporate SFE content across the teacher development continuum. Finally, in order to better understand the role of SFE within the teacher development continuum, future research should focus not only on the experiences of teachers within university-based induction programs, but also the experiences of teachers throughout the entire teacher development continuum from pre-service to veteran teachers. It will be imperative to compare the experiences of teachers with minimal exposure to SFE content and principles to teachers who have engaged more significantly with the field and its key tenets. Researchers should consider identifying

levels of engagement with SFE and what that looks like in order to better understand the impact engagement with SFE can have on teaching practice.

### **Final Thoughts**

My experience as a white, middle-class educator within higher education, working with a diverse population of student-athletes who were very different from me racially, socio-economically, and culturally, led me to an educational awakening in which I came to understand that student demographics inform educational experiences. This awakening, and my subsequent enrollment in a SFE doctoral program, cultivated my understanding of how society's current inequities are reproduced through education and schooling. My SFE coursework facilitated my development of a critical consciousness that allowed me to identify power dynamics and recognize systems of oppression within not only our society, but also specifically within our public education system. In addition, I became aware of the privilege my own demographics afford me and how that affected my interactions with students. As a result of this process, I not only became a better educator, but a better person as well.

As a new SFE scholar, given the current state of the sociocultural climate in the U.S. and the growing teacher shortage facing public education, I find myself contemplating how public-school teachers can gain the knowledge and tools I was able to so they can persist within their educational careers and provide positive and equitable educational experiences for all students. This combined with my desire to connect my doctoral work to my current role as a Research Associate for a research, evaluation, and measurement center led me to this study. In my journey to understand how the incorporation of key tenets of SFE into a teacher induction program enhances the

preparation of public-school teachers, it became apparent that the conceptualization of a fluid teacher development continuum, rather than segmented elements that do not always work in direct collaboration with one another, is a necessary step forward for teacher preparation and persistence. In addition, the incorporation of the key tenets of SFE throughout the teacher development continuum is a vital aspect in preparing teachers with the knowledge and skills to help them persist as educators and engage in positive educational experiences with a demographically diverse student population. The university-based induction program that serves as the focus of this study provides the infrastructure for progression towards this advancement of the teacher development continuum at both a local level – within the university’s surrounding public education community – and a state level. It is my hope that through this research and my future research, as well as my work as an evaluator for the program, I can collaborate with the induction program’s leadership team on decisions to include SFE content and resources intentionally and explicitly as part of the support provided to the teachers it supports. By doing so, I hope to support the development of inquiry skills that allow participating teachers to question educational assumptions and identify inequities within educational policies, leading a more just and equitable educational experience for all of their students.

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## APPENDIX A: FORMAL INVITATION LETTER FOR STUDY

### **Invitation Letter:**

Dear\_\_\_\_,

My name is Bryanna Montpeirous. I am a doctoral candidate in the Educational Studies Department at the University of South Carolina. I am conducting a research study as part of the requirements of my degree in Educational Foundations & Inquiry and I would like to invite you to participate.

I am studying the experiences of early career teachers within a university-based induction program, specifically as they pertain to the development of the critical perspectives of education and exposure to the key tenets of social foundations of education. If you decide to participate, you will be asked to participate in interviews and focus groups about your experiences as an early career teacher within a university-based induction program.

In particular, we will discuss your teacher preparation and development, as well as your early career teaching experiences and support you receive. You may feel uncomfortable answering some of the questions. You do not have to answer any questions that you do not wish to answer. The focus group sessions will take place at a mutually agreed upon time and place and should last about 60-120 minutes. The sessions will be audio and/or videotaped so that I can accurately transcribe what is discussed. The tapes will only be reviewed by members of the research team and destroyed upon completion of the study.

Participation is voluntary and confidential. You are not obligated to participate and you will not receive any compensation for your participation. Study information will be kept in a secure location at the University of South Carolina. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings, but your identity will not be revealed. There will be no negative consequences should you decide to withdraw from the study.

Due to participation in focus groups, others in the group will hear what you say, and it is possible that they could tell someone else. Because we will be talking in a group, we cannot promise that what you say will remain completely private, but we will ask that you and all other group members respect the privacy of everyone in the group.

We will be happy to answer any questions you have about the study. You may contact me at (914) 466-8885 or [bnelson@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:bnelson@mailbox.sc.edu) or my faculty advisor, Payal Shah at [pshah@email.sc.edu](mailto:pshah@email.sc.edu) or (803) 777-4462.

Thank you for your consideration. If you would like to participate, please email me to

notify me of your intent to participate or contact me at the number listed below to discuss participating. If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject please contact the University of South Carolina's Office of Research Compliance at (803) 777-7095.

With kind regards,

***Bryanna L. Montpeirous***

Bryanna L. Montpeirous

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## APPENDIX B: INITIAL TEACHER PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

### Interview 1

1. Can you start by sharing a little about yourself and how you came to the teaching profession?
2. Can you discuss what your first year(s) of teaching was like?
  - a. What positive and/or negative experiences stand out to you looking back at that time?
3. When you began your teaching career, in what ways were you prepared for the realities (challenges) of the classroom? And in what ways were you not prepared for the realities of the classroom? (Wording of question based on participant's responses to questions #1 & #2)
  - a. Why do you think you were not prepared for these realities?
4. Regarding the realities of the classroom you were not prepared for, how did you come to terms with those realities and begin to navigate them?
  - a. Were there ways this was addressed through your participation in the induction program that you now realize helped you come to terms with this reality?
5. As an educator, how do you describe the purpose of education in our society?
  - a. How, if at all, has this description changed over the course of your teaching career? (pre-service/first year teaching/now)
  - b. How, if at all, has your participation in the induction program influenced this description?
6. How do you conceptualize what it means to be a productive citizen within a democratic society? How, if at all, do you see education/teaching connected to this concept?
  - a. What specific teaching practice(s) do you utilize in your classroom to prepare them to be productive citizens within a democratic society?

- b. How did you come to develop these teaching practices?
  - c. How, if at all, has your participation in the induction program influenced these practices?
7. How would you define a critical perspective of education? Do you consider yourself to have a critical perspective of education?
- a. If participant answers no to having a critical perspective of education:
    - i. If not, what is your definition of a critical perspective of education?
    - ii. Do you perceive other educators to have a critical perspective of education and if so, how do you identify it?
  - b. If participant answers yes to having a critical perspective of education:
    - i. What, if anything, has facilitated the development of this critical perspective of education for you in your early teaching career?
    - ii. How, if at all, is this critical perspective of education pertinent to the development of early career teachers like yourself?
8. How do you see your critical perspective of education (or lack thereof) aligning with what you consider to be the purpose of education in society and your role as an educator in preparing students to be productive citizens within society?  
(Wording of question is based on participant's response to question #6)



## APPENDIX C: SECOND TEACHER PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

### Interview 2

*\*Begin with any follow-ups based on participant's responses in initial interview*

1. Public school classrooms are continually being filled with an increasingly diverse student population – how do you as an educator navigate the multiple student identities within your classroom – particularly those identities that may be different than your own?
  - a. What support have you received, or do you receive to be able to successfully navigate the multiple student identities within your classroom?
2. How, if at all, has your participation in the induction program prepared you for teaching across the demographic divide mentioned in the previous question?
  - a. If it has, explain how it built upon your pre-service preparation or filled any gaps in it that may have existed?
3. How has the current state of the sociocultural climate across the country influenced you, specifically in terms of your teaching (approach to teaching)?
  - a. Follow up about sociocultural climate's influence on purpose of education, role of teachers, and critical perspective of education provided in initial interview.
4. How, if at all, has the current state of the sociocultural climate across the country permeated into your classroom? In other words, has it affected your classroom dynamics and if so how?
  - a. If it has, how have you navigated this with your students?
  - b. Describe any training or support you received that you draw or lean on in navigating this with your students?
5. How, if at all, has the current state of the sociocultural climate across the country permeated into your school/district? In other words, has it affected your school/district and if so how?

- a. If it has, how have you navigated this?
  - b. Describe any training or support you received that you draw or lean on in navigating this.
6. Can you discuss what you believe are long-held educational assumptions of our society?
- a. Can you explain how your pre-service preparation either affirmed or refuted these assumptions?
  - b. Can you explain how the support you received through the induction program either affirmed or refuted these assumptions?
  - c. How, if at all, has your view of these educational assumptions changed over the course of your teaching career? (prior to college/pre-service/first year teaching/now)

## APPENDIX D: THIRD TEACHER PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

### Interview 3

*\*Begin with any follow-ups based on participant's responses in second interview*

1. How do you view yourself in relation to your students? (*What do you view your role to be as the teacher of your classroom?*)
  - a. When your students enter your classroom, how do they view your role as a teacher?
  - b. Follow-up on any differences between teacher's view of role and description of student's view of teacher's role

Notes:

*Does the teacher describe themselves as objectively delivering content?  
Do they view students as coming in with prior knowledge that can be  
capitalized on by an exchange of ideas? (Honoring prior knowledge?)*

2. Can you discuss how you navigate your own social, political, and cultural assumptions within your classroom?
  - a. In what ways do these assumptions affect your teaching practice?
  - b. What, if any, adjustments/changes to your teaching practice have you made due to your awareness of your own social, political, and cultural assumptions?
3. Can you share a theoretical assumption about schooling and/or learning you entered the teaching profession with that you believe your experience in the classroom changed your belief in?
  - a. When did you become aware of this change?
  - b. How, if at all, did your teaching practice change as a result of this?
  - c. What role did the induction program play in this process?
4. As you have progressed throughout your teaching career, have you encountered any school, district, or state-level policies or practices that you have disagreed

5. with or have concerns about in any way? If so, what are they? Why did/do you disagree or have concerns?
  - a. How do you/did you handle this dissonance?
  - b. Describe any training or support you received that you draw or lean on to navigate this dissonance.
6. How, if at all, do you believe schools reproduce the status quo of class, race, and gender oppression in our society?
  - a. If so, why do you think this is the case?
  - b. What are some examples of teaching strategies you utilize in your classroom that actively work against this reproduction?
7. Can you discuss what, if any, inequalities (contradictions or inconsistencies) you believe exist within current educational policies or practices?
  - a. If inequalities discussed:
    - i. When and how did you come to identify these inequalities?
    - ii. In what ways, if at all, has your participating in the induction program provided you support in understanding these inequalities and how to navigate them?
8. In thinking about your participation in the induction program, in what ways did it assist you in your development as a teacher?
  - a. How was this different than your development throughout your pre-service preparation?
  - b. In what ways did the program reinforce any of your pre-service preparation?

## APPENDIX E: PROGRAM LEADERSHIP TEAM INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

### **Program Leadership Interview**

1. Can you briefly describe your professional history as an educator and how you came to serve in your current role with the induction program?
2. What is the induction program's role in the teacher development continuum?
  - a. In what ways does the program reinforce participants' pre-service preparation?
  - b. How does the induction program support participants' development as a teacher differently than their pre-service preparation?
3. Discuss the specific aspects of the induction program that support participants' persistence in the teaching profession in their early teaching career?
  - a. Are there any topics or specific knowledge/skills that the induction program engages participants with that stand out as instrumental to their development as a teacher and their persistence within the profession?
  - b. If so, are any of these topics/specific knowledge/skills a part of their teacher preparation program as well? If so, how?
4. Public school classrooms are continually being filled with an increasingly diverse student population, while the public school teacher population remains predominantly white, middle class females similar to the induction program's participant population, how – intentionally/unintentionally or formally/informally – does the induction program aim to prepare participants for teaching across this demographic divide?
  - a. If it does, explain how it builds upon their pre-service preparation or fills a gap in it that may exist?
5. Discuss how the induction program assists participants in navigating situations where they might disagree with or be concerned about an educational policy or practice due to its inequitable impact on student learning or students' educational

6. experience. (one they have encountered personally or one that exists more generally)
7. As an educator, how do you describe the purpose of education in our society?
  - a. How, if at all, has this description changed over the course of your career as an educator? (teaching/instructional coach/administrator/current role)
  - b. How, if at all, do you engage with induction program participants about the purpose of education in our society?
8. How do you conceptualize what it means to be a productive citizen within a democratic society? How, if at all, do you see education/teaching connected to this concept?
  - a. How, if at all, do you engage with induction program participants about how the concept of a productive democratic citizen and its connection to education/teaching?
  - b. How have you assisted program participants in developing teaching practice(s) for their classroom that assist in preparing students to be productive citizens within a democratic society?
  - c. Describe any training or support the induction program provides that participants can draw or lean on to further develop their teaching practice(s) for their classroom assist in preparing students to be productive citizens within a democratic society?
9. How would you define a critical perspective of education? Do you consider yourself to have a critical perspective of education?
  - a. What, if anything, has facilitated the development of this critical perspective of education for you?
  - b. How, if at all, is this critical perspective of education pertinent to the development of early career teachers like those participants within the program?

## APPENDIX F: GUIDED SELF-REFLECTION MEMO

### Self-Guided Reflection Memo

1. How, if at all, did the meeting and/or training handle topics related to diverse student and teacher demographics?
2. How does what discussed and/or presented assist participating teachers in reflecting on issues of justice, truth, caring and rights as they apply to educational practice?
3. How does what discussed and/or presented assist participating teachers in questioning assumptions that relate to classroom and building arrangements as they relate to values, policies, and practices?
4. How does what discussed and/or presented assist participating teachers in interpreting the moral, social, and political dimensions of classrooms, teaching, and schooling within a democratic society?
5. During the meeting and/or training was teaching seen with a lens of a political act and not merely a skills driven task activity? If so, how?
6. How does what discussed and/or presented assist participating teachers in acknowledging individual differences within the context of democratic values and responsibilities?
7. How does what discussed and/or presented assist participating teachers in navigating the multiple student identities within their classrooms – particularly those identities that may be different than their own?
8. Based on what was discussed and/or presented today, how is the role of the induction program positioned within the teacher development continuum?
9. How does what discussed and/or presented assist participating teachers in developing a critical perspective of education?
10. Were there specific key tenets of SFE discussed in the meeting and/or training?
11. Were there specific key tenets of SFE that could have assisted in facilitating the discussion in the meeting and/or training?

12. How does what discussed and/or presented assist participating teachers in developing inquiry skills that allow for the questioning of educational assumptions and identification of inequalities within educational policies?