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Teacher Passion as a Teaching Tool

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A dissertation

presented to

the faculty of the Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Analysis

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership, concentration in School Leadership

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by

Brent Palmer

August 2017

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Dr. Renee Moran

Keywords: Passion, Disposition, Intergenerational, Pre-Service Teaching

## ABSTRACT

### Teacher Passion as a Teaching Tool

by

Brent Palmer

The purpose of this phenomenological case study was to understand how passion is used by participating teachers at Hugo High School and if its use is intentional in the classroom. A qualitative research design was used for this study. Case study was determined to be the most appropriate method for this research because it provided an opportunity to get a deeper understanding of the research topic. This study used Fried's definition of passion as one who is "in love with a field of knowledge, deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world, drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people who come into class each day – or captivated by all of these" (Fried, 2001, p. 1).

The research data, about the use of passion in the classroom, were collected from nine teachers. The constant comparative method is an important tool to sort data in the coding process; it was used to take information from the data, compare it to previous data, and sort it into six themes.

The findings indicate that teachers used passion as a teaching tool and that passionate teaching was used by all teachers in the study. Passion was experienced through the care that teachers felt for their students. Teachers who did not plan to use passion used passion when the opportunity was present and realized by the teacher. Using passion was a positive experience for teachers. Teachers who did not plan to use passion recognized changes in their behavior and felt good about themselves as teachers. Teachers who intended to use passion planned many of their own behaviors and felt good about themselves as teachers when experiencing passionate lessons. Teachers' feelings were fueled by positive student feedback and perpetuated passionate teaching moments.

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## DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to my friends and family. I appreciate your patience and willingness to provide me with the opportunity and time to complete this work. To my children, Luke and Ava, I look forward to becoming a better dad. To my wife, Dr. Elizabeth Palmer, I look forward to becoming a better husband.

As for the rest of my family and friends, I look forward to visiting and spending more time with all of you. I look forward to becoming a better son, nephew, brother in-law, and son in-law. I look forward to family gatherings, long trips, and living a little more than I have grown accustomed to lately.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to give a big thank you to my dissertation chair Dr. Virginia Foley; thank you for keeping me on track and thank you for knowing when I needed to talk about band to keep from blowing up inside. Your intellect and drive are an inspiration and a goal, which I strive to achieve.

I would like to thank my dissertation committee for their support and guidance, Dr. Bethany Flora, Dr. Bill Flora, and Dr. Renee Moran. I appreciate your patience and excellent teaching over the past 3 years. You encouraged me to do my best and challenged me to achieve far beyond what I believed I was capable. I could not have had a better committee.

To Dr. Sheila P. Smith and all the teachers who were so willing to work with me on this project. To Jim Barker and Jennifer Wilburn who were willing to help me work out so many dilemmas, I thank you for everything. Thank you all for everything you did for me, and thank you all for what you do for kids every day.

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### Context of the Study

Teachers and administrators have had to shoulder added responsibilities for achievement by local stakeholders, local government, and national governments. These pressures have caused schools and state-level school decision makers to take a closer look at what could be done to create more effective learning institutions. As a result, more rigorous school and teacher accountability systems have been implemented, as well as new and more rigorous state standardized tests, and several other state-mandated programs designed to increase student achievement. Whereas these additions may have been well intended, the unintended consequences were not always conducive to high student achievement. Students have incurred longer testing times, there has been an increased rate of teacher burnout, inaccurate teacher evaluation systems have been implemented that reflect nothing about what a teacher does daily with students (Marshall, 2012). Marshall explained that the overall effectiveness of the changes has been questioned harshly by all levels of stakeholders and has prompted some local school systems to vote *no-confidence* in the state department of education. Finger pointing and disagreements over the best course of action in education continue to cloud the research-based decisions that are desperately needed in education.

Hattie (2003) conducted a “synthesis of over 500,000 studies” (p. 3) that determined the most meaningful effects on student achievement. To create meaningful information about the effects, he aligned the information in the studies and called the measure the “percentage of achievement variance” (2003, p. 3). Results of Hattie’s synthesis showed that 50% of achievement variance was accounted for by the student, 30% of the influence was the teacher,

5% to 10% was the home, 5% to 10% was peer influence, and 5% to 10% was the school and principal. Hattie noted that, with teachers having such a high percentage of influence on student achievement, it seemed clear that schools should focus their efforts on improving and developing teacher effectiveness.

Many teachers have entered the teaching profession with excitement for the job but do not always have control of the needed skills or characteristics to be effective educators. Some teacher skills can be honed, but most skills must already be there to be a successful teacher. Passion is a characteristic that teachers and students frequently ranked among the top 10 required skills, and has been corroborated as one of the most important characteristics by many research studies. Despite the value given to passion as an important teaching characteristic, researchers struggle to agree on a definition of passion and whether or not it can be taught to those entering teaching (Smoot, 2013). Some studies indicate that passion is both a teaching tool, intentionally used by teachers, and a teacher disposition unintentionally used by passionate teachers. Further research is needed to determine if passion can be used as a tool or if it is a teacher disposition that cannot be controlled.

Having participated in hiring several employees in my school system, I always looked for a knowledgeable candidate who showed a passion for the job. I knew what passion looked like and how valuable it was to identify the characteristic in our new hires. Further research is needed to determine if passion can be taught to teachers. If it is determined that passion can be taught, then passionate teaching may be developed into a teaching pedagogy. This would be invaluable for young teachers entering the profession and could be extremely important in the professional development of veteran teachers.

### Statement of Intent

The intent of this study is to add to the field of research concerning passion and its use by providing an in-depth understanding of the experiences of passionate teachers in the classroom (Creswell, 2013). Additionally, the intent is to provide strong evidence that teacher passion is used intentionally by teachers as an instructional tool and to provide strong evidence to indicate that teacher passion is the result of the teacher's disposition. Regardless of teachers' intentional use of passion, the study is intended to answer research questions dealing with varying teaching techniques used by passionate teachers.

### Research Questions

Three research questions were used to guide this qualitative study.

- RQ1. How is passion experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School from the perspective of teachers?
- RQ2. How is passion unintentionally experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School based on metacognitive reflections?
- RQ3. How is passion intentionally used in the classroom at Hugo High School?

### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research was to understand how passion is used by participating effective teachers at Hugo High School and if its use is intentional in the classroom. Unlike research studies that focus on the importance of effective teaching using passion and the perspective of children, this research focuses on the experiences of teachers. The purpose was also to discover the use of passion regarding teacher perception and intent. Results from this study could shed light on determining how passion is experienced in the classroom and whether passion can be taught and used as a tool for teaching in the classroom.

The participants in this study were a selected group of teachers at Hugo High School. The data collection process included in-class observation, document analysis, emotional intelligence testing, and in-depth interviews to gather information about the experiences, thoughts, and techniques of teachers using passion.

### Statement of Significance

The results of this study may be useful to educators because, unlike most of the research on passionate teaching, this study focused on the experiences of teachers and not student outcomes. This study was also unique in that it used rich text to understand teachers' experiences and an emotional intelligence test to understand teachers' ability to use passion as a teaching tool. Information gathered about various techniques and behaviors that passionate teachers use in their teaching may be used in teacher preservice and inservice instruction to improve teacher effectiveness and strengthen teacher pedagogy.

### Definition of Terms

To clarify meaning, several terms used during the study have been defined here.

*Disposition* – “The values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities that affect student learning, motivation, and development as well as the educator’s own professional growth. Dispositions, according to the NCATE, are steered by attitudes and beliefs related to values like caring, honesty, fairness, empathy, respectfulness, responsibility, and thoughtfulness” (Almerico, Johnston, Henriott, & Shapiro, 2011, p. 2).

*Intergenerational* – The International Consortium of Intergenerational Programs defines intergenerational programs as “social vehicles that create purposeful and ongoing exchange of resources and learning among older and younger generations” (Kaplan, Larkin, & Hatton-Yeo, 2009, p. 70).

*Passion* – “Someone in love with a field of knowledge, deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world, drawn to the dilemmas and potentials of the young people who come into class each day – or captivated by all of these” (Fried, 2001, p. 1).

*Preservice Teaching* – Requires teachers to observe mentor teachers in authentic K-12 classrooms with the hope of collaborating and learning about teaching. Preservice teachers meet with cooperating teachers to plan lessons, prepare projects, and assess student knowledge. As part of their teacher education program, preservice teachers are also required to complete courses on various topics related to education (Miller & Michael, 2014)

#### Scope of the Study

This study of passion was built on various areas of research in the professional and educational world (Carbonneau, Vallerand, Fernet, & Guay, 2008; Chen, Xiao, & Kotha, 2009; Day, 2009; Feiman-Nemser, 2008; Fried, 2004; Gaier, 2015; Hobbs, 2012; Howard, 2007; Levy, 2016; Mart, 2013; Metcalfe & Game, 2006; Neumann, 2006; Osisoma, 2011; Ramirez, 2013; Smoot, 2013; Sparks, 2016; Villarroel, 2015; Zhang, 2014). Dissertations have been written about passion in education but primarily at the postsecondary level and almost exclusively about the effects of passion on student achievement and the student experience (Roeger, 2012; Su & Wood, 2012; Trigwell, 2012). This research contributes to the body of knowledge regarding passion; it is particularly needed in education to understand how teacher techniques differ because of teaching passionately and how passion may be used as a teaching tool. The data collection (evaluations and observations) for this research occurred at a high school within one month during the fall semester of the 2016 school year. The results cannot be extrapolated

beyond the setting and time in which the data were collected, although future comparisons using these data may provide further insight into the phenomenon.

#### Summary of the Chapter

The purpose of chapter one was to present the context setting and intent of the study as well as some elements of the framework and the important terms used in the study. Educational terms used in this study are common, so the number of terms defined is limited. Elements in the framework included the purpose, scope, and significance of the study. Three research questions answered during the study were presented.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Framework for the Discussion of Passion

This literature review has been arranged thematically based on a logical progression of the research questions in this research study. The framework for the literature review was based on the work of Fried (2001) who explained that, “A passionate teacher is a teacher who breaks out of the isolation of a classroom, who refuses to submit to apathy or cynicism” (p. 1). Fried reported that there were three major areas that impassioned teachers – teachers are passionate about their field of knowledge, the issues facing the world, or they are passionate about children (Fried, 2001).

In education, there is much research written about the value of passion and its effect on student achievement (Day, 2009; Fried, 2001; Gaier, 2015; Levoy, 2015). There is a significant research gap regarding what passionate teachers do differently from teachers who are not passionate. The gap in research also extends to whether teacher passion is unintentional or used purposefully as a teaching tool. The purpose of the literature review was to understand the body of work that surrounds passion and that which addresses the research questions in this study. A comprehensive review of the literature was conducted to uncover the gaps in research that make this study important.

The available literature indicated that the topic of passion is presently a source of interest in two different worlds – the business world and education. Passion is an important topic to leaders in the business world because it is useful as both a motivator and as a means to measure potential in employees. Employers understand the influence of passionate employees on the business world; they have invested much time and resources in identifying, keeping, and

attracting passionate employees (Whitehurst, 2016). The research done in the business world is an important part of a larger discussion as to whether passion is intentional or the result of an employee's disposition.

### Passion Experienced in the Classroom

Passion has been experienced in various ways by teachers. Many factors can influence the way a teacher demonstrates and experiences passion. This section outlines several of the ways teachers may experience passion.

#### Engagement

Zhang (2014) explained that engagement is an effective antidote to declining academic performance, but teacher enthusiasm is generally recognized as one of the most essential and desirable qualities of an effective teacher. Zhang said that enthusiasm is synonymous with a motivating, energetic, passionate, and dynamic teaching style. This enthusiasm sparks curiosity in students and leads to a motivation to learn, better evaluation scores, and improved student behavior. Zhang (2014) conducted a study to examine the effects of teachers enthusiasm on student engagement and motivation. Zhang surveyed 165 college students who were asked to rate their perceptions of the instructor's enthusiasm; provide a self-assessment of their behavior engagement, cognitive engagement, and emotional engagement; and rate their motivation to learn. Results indicated that teacher influence had a significant effect on student engagement in the classroom. The more enthusiastic teachers were the more engaged students became. Teacher enthusiasm had a weaker effect on student behavior engagement than on cognitive and emotional engagement. Results also showed that the teacher's enthusiasm was an effective predictor of the student's intrinsic motivation rather than on the student's extrinsic motivation. Zhang admitted that teacher enthusiasm is not a panacea for all behavior problems in the classroom, but it is a

powerful source of student behavioral, cognitive, and emotional engagement. Zhang noted that teachers should understand that negative emotions may provoke increased antisocial and defiant behaviors and, even if teachers engage in emotional labor by purposefully acting in a positive way, it should be strongly encouraged.

One factor influencing the experience of students is often related to how well an instructor engages the students in the classroom. Student engagement is the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, optimism, and passion that a student shows during the learning process (Student Engagement, 2016). The concept of student engagement is based on the idea that learning improves when students are inquisitive, interested, or inspired. There are various uses and definitions of the term student engagement. Its use has grown in popularity related to educational strategies and teaching techniques that address the developmental, intellectual, emotional, behavioral, physical, and social factors, which enhance and sometimes undermine student learning. Student engagement can take many forms; it is discussed thoroughly to examine student interest. Intellectual engagement may be used when a teacher creates a lesson that stimulates students' curiosity. For example, students may be asked to solve a problem about a topic of interest, to solve a local environmental problem, or to build a robot that may accomplish a particular task.

Emotional engagement is used when educators promote positive emotion in their students (Student Engagement, 2016). Teachers do this by monitoring student mood or redesigning the learning environment so it is more conducive to learning. Schools may use support programs, counselors, or other support services that encourage student optimism and positive student relationships. Mentorship is a supportive device often used in schools that is out of basic emotional engagement theory. It is used because students are more likely to succeed if an adult

meets regularly with them; the adult may help the student deal with issues – including issues unrelated to school. Behavioral engagement refers to established classroom routines that help students focus on the lesson and stay on task (Student Engagement, 2016). A break in the routine may be just as effective if used occasionally to break monotony and introduce variety to a lesson. Physical engagement includes physical activities that stimulate learning. For kinesthetic learners, physical engagement can be an essential part of the teacher’s routine, which may include having students solve problems by coming to the board or introduce short periods of exercise to reduce antsy, fidgety, or distracting behaviors. Social engagement can be used by a teacher by pairing students on projects or asking students to work collaboratively to solve problems or create competition. Teachers may use social interaction as an opportunity to engage students by discussing social issues or by learning about societal problems. Cultural engagement is used by educators to engage student interest by interacting with or addressing issues regarding diverse cultures (Student Engagement, 2016). This may be done by welcoming immigrants or refugee students and families to a school. It is culturally engaging to ask a person from a diverse background to speak to the class about their culture, or introduce a song from a different cultural background than the students.

### Dispositions

Gaier (2015) wrote about the disposition of academically successful students. Stemming from the work of Dweck on mindset, Gaier conducted a study to see if there were dispositions associated with the growth mindset. The findings indicated that successful students have dispositions for active engagement, curiosity, joy, intentional effort, learning from failure, perseverance, and they seek help. There was also a relationship found between deep learning and students who use these dispositions. These results indicated that teachers should purposely teach

students how to take ownership of their learning – to take full advantage of the dispositions and maximize their learning.

Almerico et al. (2011) conducted a study to determine how to measure a student's disposition. A result of the study was the development of a series of instruments that could be used to measure a person's disposition. The results of this study were used to meet the university accreditation requirements set by The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). NCATE (2016) is an organization created to establish and promote teacher preparation. It uses a performance-based accreditation system that promotes the development of competent classroom teachers. A member coalition consisting of more than 3 million members, NCATE advances that every child deserves a caring, competent, and highly qualified teacher. The US department of education has recognized NCATE as an accreditation system for teacher preparation and it has accredited more than 600 colleges and universities. NCATE required that the school's teacher preparation program develop an assessment instrument to measure and document candidate disposition. The requirement was based on the assumption that a teacher may possess the needed knowledge and skills and not have the ability or disposition to successfully implement instruction in the classroom. To provide direction to universities, NCATE (2016) describes disposition as the values, commitments, and professional ethics that influence behaviors toward students, families, colleagues, and communities affecting student learning, motivation, development, and the educator's professional growth. Almerico et al.'s study findings determined that dispositions are steered by attitudes and beliefs related to values like caring, honesty, fairness, empathy, respectfulness, responsibility, and thoughtfulness (Almerico et al., 2011). Findings from the study were used in the development of two disposition scales; one is used in the college setting with preservice teachers and the other is used for student

internships. The study addressed 16 factors of disposition in the scale and, although there were issues with overlapping characteristics within the dispositions, the reliability of the instrument could be calculated. With the proper care given by the assessor, the instrument provides a valid and reliable assessment of student disposition.

### Great Teachers

Smoot (2013) explained that after interviewing 51 teachers that he still could not formulate the definition of passion; but as for great teaching, he knew great teaching when he saw it. Despite differences in teachers backgrounds, there are many commonalities between great teachers. Great teachers seek to serve a greater purpose than self and understand that passionate teaching does not complement their expertise as much as it completes their teaching. Smoot explained passion as a detached awareness and a sort of meta-awareness or a mode of self-reflection that teachers cultivated and tried to cultivate within their students. Another characteristic of great teachers is teacher self-awareness. The Greek aphorism *know thyself* means that self-knowledge is not only a goal of learning but necessary to learn. The fact that teaching is more of an art than a science may explain why passion is easily seen but difficult to define.

The greatest teachers are masters at maximizing learning time with their students (Meador, 2016b). They are great at bringing out the full potential of their students and building trusting relationships with them. Great teachers are also masters of time and they will tell you that developing strong relationships with students is important to academic success. Meador (2016b) explained the strategies that great teachers use to build successful relationships with students. Building these relationships is essential to building mutual respect, engaging students in the learning, and sustaining positive learning environments. To build strong relationships,

teachers must provide structure in the classroom, teach with enthusiasm and passion, have a positive attitude, incorporate humor into lessons, make learning fun, and use student interests to their advantage. Students make real life connections with stories so it is important for teachers to incorporate storytelling into lessons to show an interest in student lives. Teachers must always treat students with respect and go *the extra mile* to help them succeed in life. Meador (2016a) explained the exceptional things great teachers do that make them special. Great teachers go *above and beyond* what is expected and are able to bring the best out of every student. They are energetic, fun, and students look forward to coming to class. Many teachers have the ability to be great teachers but great teachers are rare because so many are not willing to put in the necessary time. Great teachers are dedicated and are lifelong learners. Although there are many things that make up great teachers, there are a few qualities that they have in common including great teachers are prepared, organized, continuous learners, adaptable, involved, proactive, and they are great communicators. A great teacher is one who networks, inspires others, and is compassionate. They are respected, make learning fun, they go beyond expectations, they love what they do, and they educate.

### Quality of Teaching

Day (2009) conducted a study that was broken up into three parts: 1) Why passion matters, 2) The three qualities, and 3) Messages for teacher educators. The study explained the significance that passion plays on the quality of teaching. He said that the definition of passion – at best – remains ill-defined and – at worst – it is associated with unhelpful extremes of emotion that often cloud rather than enhance possibilities for learning. Part one of Day’s (2009) study (why passion matters) explained how being passionate can lead to an enhanced vision and create energy, determination, conviction, commitment, and obsession in people. Passion should not be

regarded only as a disposition, because people are not born nor do they die as passionate. Part two of Day's study (the three qualities) focused on the qualities that are suggested as central to being, behaving, and remaining passionate. The three qualities were relationships with pupils, moral purpose (care and courage), and emotional identities. Part three of Day's study (messages for teacher educators) used previous research studies to direct the design of programs and professional development for teachers in the profession as well as for students in training to become teachers. Day's results may be used to demonstrate that teacher commitment was strongly associated with effectiveness in the classroom. Teachers who had a calling to teach were more likely to be committed and maintain their effectiveness. According to Day (2009), there was not a strong association between teacher effectiveness and teaching experience, but poor student socioeconomic conditions corresponded to teacher burnout. Strong school leadership and positive work conditions had a positive effect on sustaining teachers and minimizing teacher burnout. In conclusion, teacher quality was not only related to knowledge and skills but also to the passion that the best teachers brought to their work. To be a good teacher requires many skills, knowledge, and classroom competency but above everything else, it requires passion. To meet the demands of today's schools, students need passionate teachers who are lead by principals who are passionate about education.

Kaplan et al. (2009) wrote about the value of passionate leadership in an intergenerational program. Kaplan et al.'s research was an observational study of what it takes to successfully build and run a program where the focus is in the field of intergenerational practices. The project leaders provided the opportunity for people from different generations to build working relationships and social bridges through their work projects. The intergenerational work projects included organizing daycare programs to support older citizens and providing childcare

resources for grandparents who were raising their grandchildren. The programs varied much in size and scope but there was one thing the successful programs had in common, they each had passionate leaders who provided encouragement and direction to the organization. Whereas the existing literature on preparing leadership is helpful, Kaplan et al. (2009) explained that the intergenerational leader should include *matters of the heart* as well as intellect. Dispositions are helpful and can be somewhat important to determine who may or who may not be suited for teaching. However, vision and passion are not things that can be readily taught (Kaplan et al., 2009). It would be hard to imagine that an intergenerational studies professional would be unwilling to embrace their role without emotionally connecting to those with whom they are seeking to make a difference. Skills and knowledge are necessary to the leadership of such organizations; however, we must look beyond those things to find someone who can inspire others (Kaplan et al., 2009).

Faull (2009) conducted a study to determine what it meant to be a highly effective teacher by including the perspective of teacher dispositions, “Dispositions are inherent qualities that incline a person to act in consistent ways that can be observed through patterns of behavior in particular contexts” (p. 14). Faull (2009) identified five clusters of dispositions that she considered representative of highly effective teachers. The clusters were authentic, committed, creative, communicative, and passion. The five clusters were determined from evidence gathered from 12 case studies that included interviews with highly effective teachers. Having detailed the clusters and what was included in each, she reminded readers that it is one thing to know about effective teaching but it is another to be a highly effective teacher. Faull (2009) concluded the research by explaining the significance of being a reflective teacher and stressing the importance

that highly effective teachers actively work to strike a balance between disposition and strong teaching pedagogy.

Linsenmaier (2013) spent two summers working in a remote area of Uganda with primary school teachers. Linsenmaier's (2013) job was to share best practices with the teachers to help them better prepare their students. In each class session, the Ugandan teachers were enthusiastic and willing to learn new strategies for their schools to help their students. In addition to the teacher training, a follow-up procedure and reporting program was developed to facilitate staff collaboration and planning throughout the school year. Each school developed an action plan that appointed a head teacher in the school to be in charge of professional development and ensure teacher quality. In spending time with the teachers from Uganda, the highlight of Linsenmaier's experience was watching a Ugandan teacher use new teaching strategies to instruct 130 students. The new teacher had an enthusiastic and infectious personality and effectively used new strategies to make a difference in the student's lives.

Hoyle (2015) surveyed 77 students in his college classes to find out what college students want in a professor. Participants were about two-thirds juniors and one-third freshman who were asked to complete a 1- to 5-sentence writing assignment. Hoyle examined the responses and categorized them according to keywords or phrases. He reported that the responses were not clear-cut and that some students wrote more than others but the answers were still relatively clear. Hoyle's (2015, Great teachers...) findings are shown here:

- Motivate and inspire students. (33)
- Are passionate and enthusiastic about the material they are teaching. (26)
- Engage their students in the learning process. (25)
- Develop effective teaching styles. (20)

- Invest in the success of their students. (16)
- Take an interest in their students and care for them as people. (14)
- Connect with students personally. (7)
- Adapt their class style to teach all of the students. (6)
- Communication with their students (6)
- Are approachable. (6)
- Have patience. (5)
- Have empathy for students and understand the importance of encouragement. (4)
- Students also mentioned that Great teachers...
  - ◆ Require students to participate and allow them to make mistakes. (3)
  - ◆ Are willing to do the necessary hard work. (2)
  - ◆ Teach students how to learn. (2)
  - ◆ Are honest with their students. (1)
  - ◆ Focus on reinforcement. (1)
  - ◆ Are knowledgeable about their subject. (1)
  - ◆ Have years of teaching experience. (1)
  - ◆ Teach others to become great teachers. (1)
  - ◆ Like to be challenged. (1)

Pojoga and Marici (2015) attempted to find teacher capacity to manage educational activity and the influence of perceived control of preschoolers behavior. The study, conducted in Romania, used data collected through questionnaires completed by 82 female teachers. The results indicated that teacher level of humor and enthusiasm played a significant role in their perception of student behavior. The study also indicated that there was no significant difference

found in the perception of student behavior by teachers who demonstrated a high level of involvement or didactic communication.

McKnight, Graybeal, Yarbrow, and Graybeal (2016) conducted a study in South Africa to find out what teacher qualities schools valued most. The study surveyed students, parents, teachers, administrators, and education research and policy makers across 23 countries. The survey asked participants to list 3-15 qualities, in their own words, of what they thought were the most important qualities of effective teachers. The survey did not define what effective teaching was for the participants but allowed them to decide. Listed in order from most to least important are the top 10 teacher qualities (McKnight et al., 2016, p. 4):

1. Patient, Caring, Kind Personality
2. Dedication to Teaching
3. Professionalism
4. Ability to Develop Trusting, Productive Relationships
5. Ability to Make Ideas and Content Clear
6. Subject Matter Knowledge
7. Managing the Classroom Learning Environment
8. Knowledge of Learners
9. Intelligence
10. Lesson Planning

The results shown here were remarkably similar in all groups surveyed, across all grade levels, by gender, and comparing public and private schools. McKnight et al. (2016) explained that the top four mentioned qualities most identified by the participants demonstrated the stakeholder value in dispositions of character and care in their teachers. While some of these dispositions are

built into South Africa's standards, there is research that supports a link between these dispositions, effective teaching, and learner outcome. Other information of interest noted that in the survey, teaching skills were mentioned in less than 2% of all the responses. Less than 1% of responses noted that knowledge and use of assessment to evaluate and track students' progress was important (McKnight et al., 2016).

### Pedagogical

Dewey (1944) explained that to improve our environment one must acquire the use of social and intellectual dispositions for the use of adapting our environment to our needs. Knowledge is not just something we are conscious of, it is the ability to bring forth our dispositions to the forefront to view and solve problems. The school referred to dispositions as habits of the mind (intellectual and social) and explained that dispositions render the professional actions of teachers.

Feiman-Nemser (2008) identified four themes under which learning to teach could be conceptualized:

1. learning to think like a teacher,
2. learning to act like a teacher,
3. learning to know like teacher, and
4. learning to feel like a teacher.

Feiman-Nemser's (2008) study focused on the *feel like a teacher* concept as essential to learning *how to learn* and becoming pedagogical. Other strategies that were addressed in this study included credos as a way to explore how teaching is a creative profession. Credos are a creative way of expressing and sustaining the teacher's heart for teaching by becoming pedagogical.

Leggo and Irwin (2013) took what they learned from their work with practicing educators and began to study the concept of how teachers *learn to learn*. As a teacher questions and re-imagines his or her actions before and during the lesson, the teacher will engage in unique personal and social aspects of knowing. Leggo and Irwin refer to this process as becoming pedagogical, “Inquiry may be conceived as practice-based action research” (2013, p. 4). Observation, questioning, analysis, and interpretation are inquiry skills that teachers learn as they move from a desire to be an expert teacher to becoming a teacher as inquirer.

Bean-Mellienger (n.d.) said that a degree in early childhood development provided teachers with what they needed to help children; there are additional qualities that are also needed to become a quality teacher. According to the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), enthusiasm and passion for children are the most important characteristics for young children (Bean-Mellinger, n.d.). For most teachers, that means they have the drive to want to make a difference in every child’s life. There are many important characteristics that early childhood teachers need for success. Teachers should be patient and have a sense of humor. The child’s age can make him or her rambunctious and a challenge to communicate with at times. A sense of humor makes it possible for teachers to be able to take the good with the bad and return with focus for another day. Teachers should have strong communication skills that enable them to understand and effectively communicate with students. Teachers must be able to respect differences in children and find ways to meet them where they are while teaching students to welcome differences. Creativity and flexibility are important when planning and putting learning first. No matter how well planned a lesson may be, there are usually issues that must be worked around to keep on track. Being able to work around those issues is important to keeping the day positive and successful for students (Bean-Mellinger, n.d.).

### Academic Presentation of Passion

Hobbs (2012) conducted a case study to determine the efficacy of a framework called “Aesthetic Understanding” (p. 718). The framework was developed to understand the relationship between teacher knowledge, teacher identity, and passion. The case study involved three teachers and used empirical information to explore the topic. The first theme in the study included teacher identity, which was defined as a teacher’s belief that he or she can positively affect student success. The second theme explained the aesthetic value of teacher knowledge and its effect on student outcomes. The third theme was teacher passion. Teacher passion has been explained by Day (2004) as a multifaceted term associated with enthusiasm, caring, commitment, and hope, which are key characteristics of effective teaching. Hobbs’ (2012) study focused on the aesthetics of how a teacher’s experience of, and response to, the subject taught was aesthetic – meaning the cognitive and the affective are linked in both the experience of the subject and the way experiences provide parameters and expectations for future experiences. The study shed light on what it is like for a teacher who is compelled by passion about a subject to engage students in the subject. The teachers’ buildup of the subject, along with teaching students, can become more than cognitive – it can become an esthetic experience. A significant finding was that teachers asked to teach outside of their subject area might lack an aesthetic appreciation for the subject. Efforts to improve instruction in a subject should occur with the understanding that results in an aesthetic appreciation should be valued as much as the pedagogical knowledge of the subject.

Cannizzo (2016) conducted a study to identify how university faculty and staff conceptualize their expectations as compared to how students understand university expectations related to how these perceptions were alike or different. He analyzed eight of the 40 public

universities in Australia and interviewed 29 academic laborers. Cannizzo identified two modes of academic self-governance, “‘entrepreneurial academic’ and the ‘passionate academic’” (para. 4). Cannizzo (2016) described the entrepreneurial academic as the knowledge production of universities and a result of the influences of post-industrial economies. The universities had three discourses built into their policies and strategic documents, including excellence, innovation, and impact. Excellence referred to the evidence shown that one excels in the curriculum, innovation referred to the students’ integrated use of technology in academic practices, and impact referred to engagement with industry and other entities in line with university interests. In his study, the passionate scholar was a concept for understanding how academics presented a relationship with their labor amid peer groups (Cannizzo, 2016). Cannizzo stated that “passion is not only indicative of an emotional response to certain forms of academic labour, but is itself governed by tacit norms of expression and legitimation” (2016, *The Passionate Scholar*, para. 5). In relation to the state, requirements in education could not be ignored but the passionate academic “developed alternative modes of thinking and acting upon their labour...” and “passionate academic labour is not able to be treated as another enterprise” because it contributed to a person’s sense of self, belonging, and possibly even authenticity (Cannizzo, 2016, *Institutional Subjectivities*, para. 3).

### Teacher Passion

Roeger (2012) wrote a qualitative phenomenological dissertation on how community college students perceive passionate teaching. The study used a definition of passion developed by Vallerand (2008) stating that, “Passion is defined as a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, find important, and in which they invest time and energy” (p. 1). Results of the study suggested that, whereas teacher passion has not been widely researched in academic literature, it has been proven to exist and has been manifested in classroom teaching (Roeger,

2012). The study included nine students of three passionate teachers who completed entries in a journal and agreed to be interviewed. Results of Roeger's (2012) study revealed that Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love could be adapted as a framework for passionate teaching and learning. The three aspects of the theory included intimacy, passion, and love. Student perception of teacher passion could be separated into four categories, including caring, creating quality lessons, personal zest, and teacher expertise in the discipline. Roeger (2012) concluded that passionate teaching awakened students to life and perpetuated the lives of teachers and their teaching.

Mart (2013) explained that passionate teachers are distinguished by their commitment to achieve for their students and that passion was an essential part of successful teaching. Passionate teachers cultivated students' curiosity and interests while showing commitment to their learning. The qualities were shown to be important in motivating students and were key factors in the development of a student's education. Passionate teachers consider their roles to be to encourage students to be active learners and to promote students' education both in intellect and in moral development. Mart (2013) concluded that passionate teachers are those who make the greatest impact on our lives. Passionate teacher beliefs and actions help students realize their inner values, they motivate students, and they inspire students to perform. Passionate teachers motivate students to achieve and inspire student commitment, which is a key aspect of the learning process.

Levoy (2015) addressed the impact of passion. When beginning college, his father advised him to sign up for teachers – not courses. His father's advice may be truer today than ever before because passionate teachers are critical and can have a profound effect on revealing students' passion and inspiring their engagement. Levoy explained that for passionate teachers to

have the profound effect they are capable of they must *tend to the flame* that makes up their passion. These teachers should read books and sign up for higher learning classes that encourage their flame to burn brightly. Levoy (2015) said passion is contagious but when teachers are no longer learning, the love of learning becomes difficult to pass along to students. It is important for teachers to understand that dispassion is also contagious. In 2012 A Gallup poll “found that, on average, 87% of workers were either ‘not engaged’ or ‘actively disengaged’ ...In the U.S. alone, this adds up to roughly \$550 billion a year in lost productivity” (Levoy, 2015, Passion is Contagious, para. 3). Levoy explained that passion equals productivity and non-engaged means actively acting out their unhappiness; teachers should realize that their work is the work of the world.

### Motivation

Bilash (2009) noted that motivation is important in education but found that the word has been replaced with investment. Investment has been used to place more emphasis on the interest of the student, students learning, and the student’s passion for learning. Both words include the same concepts and hold the same understanding in education. Bilash (2009) identified axis motivation as a scale of motivation to describe why a learner wanted to learn something, instrumental motivation occurs when someone learns something for a specific reason or purpose, and integrative motivation is used when someone learns something to belong to the environment. The most familiar scales of motivation are intrinsic and extrinsic. Whereas all these scales have come into play in the educational setting, we generally witness extrinsic motivation over intrinsic. Bilash (2009) explained that the problem with motivation is that one can only be motivated by things already known until introduced to something new. At that point, a student has the option of being motivated by new information or not. It could make a big difference if

the teacher introducing new information is a passionate teacher who introduces the information with passion. Research reveals that teaching with passion can make passion contagious, so if we want students to own their learning we should expect teachers to teach with as much passion, interest, and enthusiasm as possible.

Valerio (2012) wrote about intrinsic motivation in the classroom, which determined that motivation played a crucial role in teacher pedagogy. Teacher training was important to help teachers understand how to motivate students and empower students through their lessons while providing a supportive and quality learning environment (Valerio, 2012). Teachers should be role models who engage in the learning with their students by sharing their passion and enthusiasm for learning. Teachers should provide students with choices in setting goals that reflect student interest and create opportunities for interest. Teaching students to be intrinsically motivated allows them to see that learning is valuable and worth taking ownership over their learning.

Atkinson and Sandwith (2012) addressed passion as it related to design and technology. The links between creativity, motivation, and passion had been well documented. Passion in this field was explained as the urge to do something for the pleasure of having done it rather than for the external reward. Atkinson and Sandwith's study used a sample of 49 students and a non-probability purposive sample of 10 students who had studied to become design and technology teachers. The purpose of the study was to identify factors that enabled students to be passionate about creating a product and, in the same learning situation, discover why other students did not reach the same level of enthusiasm. The results of the study were intended to inform and improve the way students were taught and to improve students' teaching of an activity after becoming design and technology teachers. The results indicated that passionate designers used

language that was positive and that most were happy. They relished in the challenge of the work and welcomed unknown situations. Students who were not passionate tended to have a *glass-half empty* and a *can't do* attitude toward the work. The negative attitude created a barrier and prevented participants from overcoming their fear of misunderstanding the processes involved.

### Passion Matters

Research findings show that teachers who demonstrate passion receive better results and are more likely to make a difference in student lives (Hattie, 2008). Passion from teachers is contagious; it sparks inner curiosity and excitement in students that gives them the opportunity to excel. Passionate teaching makes learning fun without the need for teachers to feel like they need to entertain their students. Passionate teaching is just one part of evidence-based teaching that is crucial to teacher effectiveness and student learning.

Ellis and Cross (2009) conducted a phenomenological study to assess 10 undergraduate students' perspectives on what characteristics they regarded as present in the best teachers of their lives. The participants were interviewed in person, answered questions from an email, and participated in a follow-up interview. The list of characteristics involved 17 words or phrases that were placed in three emergent categories. Of the 17 categories, the students spoke about content teaching most frequently (12 times) with the categories passion, affirming, and individualized attention all tied for second (10 times). The results of the study indicate that the subject matter is the main vehicle the best teachers use to impart their passion and enthusiasm.

Mazumder (2010) conducted a study of student sense of passion and the link to academic performance. In an effort to quantify the degree of engagement, an instrument was developed to rank and characterize engagement into one of four levels from a high degree of engagement to the lowest (passion, engagement interest, attentive – not strongly engaged, inattentive – not

engaged) (Mazumder, 2010). Participants included an engineering professor and two classes of students enrolled in an introductory engineering course. Another cohort included 19 high school students identified as academically similar and interested in engineering; two distance-learning classes of students were also included. The first online class received a 30-minute lecture taught by an off-site professor and then 45 minutes with a face-to-face professor. The second online class received various guest lecturers for 40 minutes and the remaining 35 minutes was taught by a face-to-face professor (Mazumder, 2010). Mazumder (2010) administered a survey before the course with a weekly follow-up survey; the results were shared with the professors twice during the semester. Results from the first survey indicated that moderate passion was conveyed across both cohorts. This observation and the professor self-reflection appear to have caused the professor to increase his attempt to strengthen student passion (Mazumder, 2010). Overall, the weekly measures of student passion showed a wide fluctuation, but student perception of the professor's passion did not fluctuate. Consistent across both the high school and university setting was student passion toward engineering. Student passion varied from week-to-week with no discernible pattern but never reached the highest level. The primary variable in the degree of passion appeared to relate to the topic (Mazumder, 2010). By the end of the engineering course, one third of the students in the university courses were less passionate when compared to how they began; in the high school setting, the students' passion remained the same. The high school students academic performance was better than the university students was, but no link was found in this study regarding how passion influenced academic performance (Mazumder, 2010).

### Emotional

Neumann (2006) interviewed 40 tenured university teachers who indicated that scholarly work was emotional in content. They contended that the work drew on emotional resources and

shaped their scholarship. However, many scholars refrained from speaking about this at the risk of having painted it as a less than serious endeavor. Given this fear, most scholars separated passion from intellect, suppressing emotional content, and did not speak publically about feelings and intuition. Neumann (2006) studied the idea that scholarship was emotional, personal, and thereby passionate. The purpose of her longitudinal study was to determine how professors learned after they became tenured. Regarding the results, this study used two terms to explain the results of the study. *Flow* was the first concept and represents a term used to identify and cluster segments such as concentration, absorption, joy, accomplishment, and strong feelings that things are going well (Neumann, 2006). Flow is a valuable term that conceptualized different emotions. Passion – rather than love – is a term that better represented the emotional complexities that participants experienced. Passion was associated with flow but exceeded flow as a description of emotional intensity and peak experience. The second concept that emerged in this study was *passionate thought*, which includes a stream of intellectual and emotional endeavors that could materialize into memory as context (Neumann, 2006). Participants explained passionate thought as pockets of deep insight, fulfillment, excitement, or gratification within broad streams of intellectual and emotional endeavors. Neumann concluded that knowledge about professors' intellectual and creative development could be considered when attempting to build professional development. There were few policies aimed at improving professors performance in the classroom and they were generally developed from the perspective of school needs instead of the professor needs. The research findings suggested that universities should invest in addressing both school and teacher needs as a policy to improve the educational experience.

Trigwell (2012) researched the relations between the emotions of teachers and their approaches to teaching individual courses. There were 175 Australian higher education teachers

who agreed to participate in the study that used two questionnaires, an emotions teaching inventory, and approaches in teacher teaching (Trigwell, 2012). The findings indicated a significant relationship between the ways teachers emotionally experience context in their teaching and the ways teachers approached their teaching. Positive emotions were linked to student-focused teaching; negative emotions were linked to the transmission approach to teaching (Trigwell, 2012).

### Unintentional Passion

Passion can be an unintentional influence on teaching. It is not always easy to define and use passion. This section examines unintentional passion.

#### Passion as an Unintentional Behavior

Harper (2009) explained how difficult it is to put passion or enthusiasm in a lesson plan. Passionate characteristics are qualities of what studies indicated were valuable to great teaching but teachers did not plan to be passionate or enthusiastic within a lesson. Teachers may have been tempted to take the approach of demonstrating these characteristics when being observed but these behaviors were transparent to the students and the observer. Research showed us that people remember those teachers who were inspirational. Much of Day's (2009) research supports these findings and he argues that passion should not be thought of as a fixed disposition- it can diminish as well as grow.

#### The Lives of Teachers

Klann, a teacher at the American Public University, says that all teachers are nurturers who provide knowledge to feed learners (Hedgepeth, n.d.). Klann beams when he sees the light come on for his students or the students helping one another. Helping someone else is what it

looks like when students pay it forward and that is what teaching is all about. Evidence supports that passion stems from overcoming personal pain (Hedgepeth, n.d.). Age has no bearing on when passion emerged and gender seemed to have nothing to do with passion.

Rampa (2012) explained how passion for teaching contributes to teacher improvement and provides insight into the work and lives of teachers. Much research has been done on what inspires people to teach. Reasons for teaching cited in Rampa's study included teachers who wanted to make a difference, felt a calling to teach, were passionate about teaching because of role models, wanted to make a difference, liked the benefits, and they received numerous holidays. In addition to low compensation for the profession, working with professionals who expressed these reasons for teaching may have hindered passionate teaching. With numerous obstacles in the workplace, simply having passion was not sufficient and may be a reason so many teachers leave the profession (Rampa, 2012). Growing teacher passion is important to the profession and relates to the development of key trends including cluster workshops and personal workshops; sustaining passion is equally important. Rampa's (2012) findings were varied with two key points. The first was professional development and curriculum stability. Rampa (2012) noted that extrinsic motivations were mostly negative motives for choosing to teach. The second was that most participants expressed that a lack of motivation for teaching was due to their environment. Many things have changed in education over the years but passionate teaching has not (Rampa, 2012).

Day's (2013) research on professional life phases explained his theories on teachers' professional life in education. He argued that teachers ongoing capacity, commitment, and passion to teach their best are related to their professional life phase, their sense of identity, and their passion for teaching (Day, 2013). The six primary phases that Day used to explain teacher

progress included commitment, identity and efficacy, managing changes in role and identity, work-life tensions, challenges to sustain motivation, and sustaining or declining motivation. Day (2013) explained that, in teaching, it seemed that countries had forgotten to look at the well-documented work explaining that teachers who were committed to their work would increase student willingness to commit to their work. As countries continued to implement policies and reform education, researchers continued to record the consequences. In light of this research and continued pressures added to education through reform, Day (2013) suggested that professional development should be targeted to support teachers in hopes of renewing commitment and capacity for effectiveness.

### Distressed Environments

Osisoma (2011) explained that passion is great enthusiasm that, coupled with strong emotion, compels a person to great sacrifice. Men and women who taught with passion outpaced themselves to leave their impact on society. Osisoma wrote about the problems with the Nigerian government's education system and explained that it had poorly articulated plans, developed inconsistent policies, and that misallocation of funds had debilitated the education system. These and many more acts had undermined the effectiveness of education in Nigeria and distressed the educational environment. The search for a new mindset for education would be a challenge but teachers were to be the focus of quality in schools and schools must proceed in the search for passionate teachers. Passionate teaching and curriculum development would be the engine of a functioning school in order to teach students. Osisoma said Jesus Christ was a great example, "Jesus Christ remains the best example of Teaching with Passion!" (2011, p. 18). He taught His lessons with compassion and love for His students. His lessons cost Him a great deal, but He was eventually able to turn His students into excellent specimens of manhood.

Miranda (2012) conducted qualitative research to address the link between urban high school science teachers' beliefs about disposition and student achievement. The study was conducted in an urban school setting with a large population of underachieving minority students. Schools in this study were under-resourced and experiencing disadvantaged economic circumstances. The study focused on internally held teaching dispositions exhibited by teachers. The findings showed that teaching dispositions were essential to raising student achievement and may have a positive influence on student achievement. The findings also suggested that, to help science students, teachers should possess certain dispositions, including professionalism, a passion for science and teaching, and a dedication to student learning (Miranda, 2012).

### Teaching as a Calling

Jones (2006) explored the relationship between teachers who voice a calling to teach and whether or not that passion affects implementing a character education program in the classroom. The qualitative study was a single case study that included 23 teachers from four campuses in the school district. The study used a semi-structured interview method, a journal entry process, and a classroom observation to collect data. The findings suggested that teachers who were called to teach were more driven to teach character education to their students. Teachers who described teaching as a profession said character education was important, but they were less likely to work it into their lessons. Teachers who described teaching as a job said character education as an interruption or that it had no effect on students.

### Enthusiasm and Passion

Metcalf and Game (2006) "interviewed 13 well-known Australians and 22 teachers" (p. 91) to explain the relationship between teachers' enthusiasm and relational issues in the classroom between teacher and students. Metcalf and Game explained that when teachers try to

energize students they were channeling their energy into the wrong place and became too distracted from the subject to teach anything meaningful to their students. Students saw through this lack of authenticity and suffered from the inadequacy of the lesson. Students who were lectured experienced disrespect and became disengaged from the lesson; students taught by charismatic teachers reported feeling inspired and energized. When students applied passion to the lesson, they assumed it was coming from the teacher, even when it resulted from a relational dynamic between the teacher and students. Metcalfe and Game described passion as a passivity, a movement with stillness, and exuberance with respectful attention. Passion was also defined as a compassion that suspended the self to ensure student attention to the lesson. Teachers should not rush the interpretation of a lesson such as one on Shakespeare. Rather, teachers should be devoted to the understanding and building of cognitive power so a passionate classroom could become a place where students knew that what they needed was present but was not necessarily what they had anticipated (Metcalfe & Game, 2006).

Levy (2016) recognized a distinction between enthusiasm and passion. She pointed out studies that showed no effect of teacher enthusiasm on student learning and that it may have been because of enthusiastic teachers having problems with classroom management. Levy (2016) identified many instances of young teachers who were excited and enthusiastic about teaching, but who lacked the necessary skills to be effective in a classroom full of students. It was important to understand the subject and know how students learn. For example, Steve Jobs (the founder of Apple) had a passion for electronics that developed into an expertise of computers; he did not enter the field as someone who was passionate about computers. “There is no evidence he [Jobs] died any less passionate or committed because his enthusiasm developed over time, and enthusiasm can be learned” (Levy, 2016, para. 11).

### Intentional Passion

Passion can have an intentional influence on teaching. It can be used to make a teacher more effective. This section examines intentional passion.

### School Leadership

Martin and Loomis (2007) defined a person's disposition as his or her attitude toward the content taught, the community of people who surround the teacher, and where the school is located. Understanding patience, acceptance, and kindness are qualities that can be learned from community members who demonstrate the qualities. Those qualities are dispositions that will help someone become a better teacher and a stronger professional (Martin & Loomis, 2007). Self-awareness improves teaching, which is why it is important for teachers to know their motive for teaching, and know what dispositions they do or do not possess. Effective teachers must have certain dispositions and skills to be effective in the classroom; passion is an important disposition that many favorite teachers likely possess. Martin and Loomis (2007) explained that how a teacher made students feel and the influence the teacher had on their lives was what inspired students to become a teacher. Teachers may be surprised to learn that students discussed not only the content of a lesson, they also discussed the quality of the relationship that teachers had with them and the students in the class. Martin and Loomis (2007) reported that teacher support groups were responding to the alarming rate of teacher attrition by strengthening teacher induction programs to help new teachers. This effort included advocacy for assigning teacher mentors and sustaining passion to inspire lifelong teaching careers.

Barrett and Breyer (2014) conducted a study to determine how principal modeling of instructional strategies influences teachers implementation of strategies to promote student engagement and learning. The study used teacher observations, surveys, and data gathered

through anecdotal observation to collect data that could be measured and assessed. Barrett and Breyer (2014) explained that principals and teachers face a challenge when attempting to meet the demands of teaching and learning. The education environment is full of negative tendencies like poverty, teacher satisfaction, salary, and instruction. Barrett and Breyer explained that it is difficult to sustain or raise student achievement. Teachers say that effective administrators should understand and know how to support them through the difficult aspects of education. Administrators must instill passion in teachers, provide effective leadership, and motivate teachers to energize students. Barrett and Breyer (2014) wrote that modeling by administrators has a positive effect on teacher motivation and implementation of teaching strategies in the classroom. Teachers need the opportunity to see their administrators implement effective teaching strategies so that school leaders are viewed as knowledgeable and credible collaborators who are invested in helping teachers. Modeling increased the number of strategies used in the classroom and teachers reported fewer discipline issues and more student engagement. Barrett and Breyer (2014) indicated that modeling provided more than just effective classroom strategies; it became a key aspect of retaining relevancy, increasing morale, and providing effective leadership.

Hopkins (2017) examined what principals were looking for in newly hired teachers by questioning principals about which characteristic was most essential in a new teacher. Responses from the principals were compiled to answer Hopkins' interview questions. One principal said there was no single characteristic that would influence his hiring. Rather, the principals chose to consider many things that made up a complete picture. Passion was repeated by all the principals as an important characteristic. Hopkins explained that passion was a quality principals wanted in all of their teachers, as passion included heart, which was another strong characteristic that

principals looked for. Heart was a characteristic that could easily be observed in a teacher interview. Heart could be seen in the body language, the eyes, gestures, words, and speech inflection. Enthusiasm was also associated with passion and was an important part of the classroom. An elementary principal interviewed by Hopkins (2017) said students deserved to be taught by a teacher who created a positive and exciting learning environment. Principals went on to say they would like to have a “Kid magnet” at their school (Hopkins, 2017, “I Want... a ‘Kid Magnet’,” para. 1). Principals want teachers who want to be involved. They explained that a teacher should be willing and interested in school-sponsored activities. Hopkins said “the single most important characteristic [in a teacher] would be their compassion for children” (2017, Passion... and Compassion too, para. 1). Principals explained that most of the other qualities can be learned with time but compassion was critical to achieving positive results. The learning environment was significantly better when empathy and compassion connected with intelligence, training, and knowledge of subject. Hopkins (2017) also explained that strong interpersonal skills and a sense of humor are valuable assets when interviewing for a teaching job. Principals look for teachers who can work with enthusiasm as part of a team and who can inspire others. In working with others, it means that the candidate must be flexible; a sense of humor is also valuable for breaking the ice with parents, kids, and especially colleagues.

### Effective Teachers

Bulger, Mohr, and Walls (2002) explained the *Four Aces of Effective Teaching* as a conceptual framework for increasing self-reflective practices in the higher education setting and identified them as outcomes, clarity, engagement, and enthusiasm. Bulger et al. refer to the outcome of teacher effectiveness as “process-product” research (2002, para. 8); for instance, when a teacher does something (the process), it results in student learning (the product).

Teachers can nurture a positive learning environment by showing their passion for the subject they teach, using student names, encouraging student participation, and actively teaching the class by moving among the students. Enthusiasm is contagious with students; the more a teacher uses enthusiasm the more it reflects teacher competence and confidence in their teaching. The four aces provide an excellent framework for successful teaching and creating order out of chaos. When systematically implementing the techniques, a teacher could enhance student learning and use the four aces as a self-examination tool for continuing education (Bulger et al., 2002).

Colker (2008) explained what it took to be an effective early childhood teacher. New teachers and those at a crossroads would benefit greatly from knowing the characteristics of an effective early childhood teacher. Colker says that one of the problems with understanding good teacher characteristics is that very little research on effective teachers has been conducted in secondary or early education. To address these gaps, 43 early childhood teachers were interviewed to get their perspective on the characteristics of effective teachers in their field. A qualitative analysis of the responses was used to categorize the data into 12 themes that emerged from the participating teachers. The 12 themes, in rank from highest to lowest, were passion, perseverance, willingness to take risk, pragmatism, patience, flexibility, respect, creativity, authenticity, love of learning, high energy, and sense of humor (Colker, 2008).

Breault's (2013) study was used to understand the importance of preservice training for teachers and to understand the effects of that preservice. The participants included 38 secondary education majors. The students were asked to answer two questions about their favorite high school teacher: "1. Who do you recall as your favorite teacher and why?" and "2. Who do you recall as your most effective teacher and why?" (Breault, 2013, p. 2). Breault reported that more than 80% of students claimed gender had nothing to do with effective teaching; however, the

findings identified men more often than women as favorite or effective teachers. Breault (2013) reported that there were recurring responses from participants indicating the three most important qualities of an effective teacher were teacher passion or enthusiasm, teacher concern for the learning of all students, and teacher knowledge of the subject matter. Results indicated that teacher preservice should move away from its current practices and explore beliefs about teachers and teaching. Prospective teachers would do well to look back at recollections of their favorite and effective teachers for the sake of their own learning (Breault, 2013).

### Passionate Teaching

There are three components needed to build student capacity, including passionate teachers, time and space for inquiry, and learning from failure. Smoot (2013) interviewed 51 teachers and found one characteristic that all the teachers had in common; they all had passion for what they were doing. They drove their students to excellence and innovation in their work. The teachers were always looking to improve and find new ways of inspiring students to innovate and grow through real work in and out of the classroom (Smoot, 2013). When students are given time to work on their own they are given the opportunity to create amazing things independently. The 20% model, also known as the genius hour, gives students an opportunity to build, compose music, create games, and much more. It is important for students to learn from failures in the same way that great inventors learned from failure. A strong classroom learning moto is “Sometimes you succeed... and sometimes you learn” (Juliani, 2014, 3. Learning From Failures para. 2).

### Passion-Based Learning

In an interview with Wolpert-Gawron (2011), Beach explained that passion-based learning was diverse because the teacher allowed students to pick what they were passionate

about. Students should learn about a subject because not only it was in the textbook but also because students had the opportunity to experience the activity they were passionate about. If students were doing something they were passionate about, they would be much more likely to learn from the experience. Beach explained that students who learned in the passion-based model owned a piece of the learning, the design, and direction in the mastery of the objectives (Wolpert-Gawron, 2011). Teachers should accept that in the context of an ever-changing world, learning does not occur strictly in the classroom; it occurs without the restrictions of time and space and is not lead by school administrators. Teachers involved in connected learning communities experienced connections in three ways:

1. locally through professional learning at the school and district level,
2. globally through community and online connections around the world, and
3. globally through personal learning resources.

Beach explained that teaching has to be the focus of education (Wolpert-Gawron, 2011).

Gerstein (2012) explained that project based, passion based, and play-based learning methods are all the same if educating the student is done correctly. Effective and progressive teachers were already using these learning strategies in their teaching because they understood the importance of including the elements of passion and play. Project-based teaching strategies motivated students in authentic learning strategies that resembled the types of learning that working people engage in every day. Gerstein (2012) explained that the advantages of a play-based curriculum was that very young students could observe and learn from others about how to take turns, delay gratification, solve problems, and deal with disappointment. Understanding the importance of play for students and integrating these teaching strategies is a moral imperative in this era of learning.

Ramirez (2013) explained that in learning about instructional strategies (inquiry-based, project-based, design-based, and problem-based) the thing they all had in common was that they had the theme of enticing and engaging learning. Ramirez explained that passion was the motivating force that sold movies, moved mountains, and needed to return to education as a key component to learning. Passion empowered students to overcome hardship; it motivated them to reach their goals. Two useful methods to make students passionate about learning included learning about what made the student naturally passionate, and to model passion, so it infected the entire classroom with that passion. A passion-based teacher may share a story when beginning a new lesson, to help create interest for the students. Interest could also be stimulated for students by sharing the beauty or teacher's delight in the topic. A teacher should make learning a passion for their students by infecting them with their own passions (Ramirez, 2013).

### Summary of the Chapter

This literature review is presented in three parts that were drawn from the three research questions:

- RQ1. How is passion experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School from the perspective of teachers?
- RQ2. How is passion unintentionally experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School based on metacognitive reflections?
- RQ3. How is passion intentionally used in the classroom at Hugo High School?

Sub-sections emerged through the categorization of particular words or phrases that reoccurred throughout the literature selections. There was significant support and information in the literature review for each of the research questions.

Evidence provided in the literature supports that passion is a valuable teaching characteristic that has been an important part of what makes a great teacher. The literature reviewed in this chapter used many, well supported, definitions for passion that reflect the many forms that passion takes in passionate teachers. Despite the many forms of passion, collectively, the definitions clarify what passion is and, what draws a distinction between passion, disposition, and enthusiasm. The literature review has been important in making a case for the need for more research about what passionate teachers do and whether or not the differences are intentional or a result of the teacher's personality or disposition. Evidence seems conclusive that passion rises and falls within a person. However, it was not clear how much control an individual has over those changes. This literature review indicates that teachers experience an increase and decrease in the extent of the passion they demonstrate over the course of their career (Day, 2009).

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

#### Introduction

This dissertation focused on how teachers use and experience passion when teaching. Having observed the consistency of quality instruction by passionate teachers, the researcher studied methods passionate teachers use and asked questions to understand if the differences were intentional or a result of the teacher's personality and disposition. The findings from this study provide information regarding how teachers are intentional with their use of passion. Three methods of data collection were employed: interviews, document analysis, and observations. These methods provided rich data and lines of inquiry were aligned to each of the research questions.

#### Qualitative Design

A qualitative research design was used for this study. Descriptive explanations from teachers were important for understanding how teachers use passion; the line of inquiry could not be easily quantified or measured (Sauro, 2015). This study used processes of data collection common to case study analysis to collect data related to how passion is used in the classroom. The constant comparative method of data analysis was employed to integrate new data into categories to build new understanding (McNabb, 2010). This study also included the use of interviews and observations often found in qualitative design.

#### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to understand how passion is used by participating teachers at Hugo High School and if its use is intentional in the classroom. Unlike research studies that

focus on the importance of effective teaching using passion and the perspective of students, this study focused on the experiences of teachers. The purpose was also to discover the use of passion regarding teacher perception and intent. Results from this study provide information related to how passion is experienced by teachers in the classroom and whether the use of passion is an intentional or unintentional tool for teaching in the classroom.

### Review of the Research Questions

Three research questions were used to guide this qualitative study.

- RQ1. How is passion experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School from the perspective of teachers?
- RQ2. How is passion unintentionally experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School based on metacognitive reflections?
- RQ3. How is passion intentionally used in the classroom at Hugo High School?

### Scope of the Study

This research contributes to the body of knowledge regarding passion; it is particularly needed for a more complete understanding of how teaching techniques differ because of teaching passionately and how passion may be used as a teaching tool. The results of this study are contained to Hugo High School only and care should be taken when transferring the findings beyond the setting and time in which they occurred. The findings may provide further insight into the teaching experience.

### Research Environment

The names of participants and the institution were changed in this study to protect the identity of participants. The name of the institution was changed to Hugo High School. The

teachers' names were changed to the pseudonyms of: Ms. Mitchell, Ms. Foster, Mr. Andrews, Ms. Sharpe, Ms. Brightman, Ms. Vanoy, Ms. Fulmer, Mr. Simpson, and Ms. Brezina.

The chosen site was a high school in eastern Tennessee. At the time of data collection, the school employed between 50 - 75 teachers and enrolled between 800 - 1000 students. Hugo High School maintained a higher than average student enrollment as compared to the state average and had an above average number of course offerings. The school also had an above average number of teachers as compared to most schools in the area.

### Data Collection

Data for this qualitative study were gathered through interviews, documents, and observations. This section provides a description of the data collection methods used for the study.

### Interviews

Interviews were used to gather data for this study. Participants were chosen based on a set of criteria that coincided with passionate teaching. The interview selection criteria included: (1) Teachers who were rated as effective through previously conducted TEAM evaluations (those who scored an average of 3 or better on the teacher TEAM model evaluation for the previous 3 years), (2) Teachers who were recognized as passionate by the administrative staff at Hugo High School through observations conducted during the year. The administrative staff were given the following definition of a passionate teacher to help identify interviewees:

someone truly enamored of a field of knowledge, or deeply stirred by issues and ideas that challenge our world, or drawn to the crises and creativity of the young people who come into class each day-or all of these. To be a passionate teacher is to stop being isolated within a classroom, to refuse to submit to a culture of apathy or cynicism, to look beyond getting through the day. (Fried, 1995, para. 3)

Sample. Using the above selection criteria, identified teachers were then invited to participate in an emotional intelligence test. The scores were ranked from highest to lowest. The top nine scoring teachers from the test were then selected as participants for the study. If a teacher subsequently declined participation in the study, the researcher selected the teacher with the next highest score on the test.

Efforts were made to select teachers who would represent a cross-section of the subjects taught at the school. Subjects represented by the participants included math, English, history, science, physical education/driver's education, foreign language, and fine arts. It was important to account for differences in pedagogy for the different subjects as it may pertain to passion and add knowledge to the comprehensive view of the phenomenon across the subject areas.

Recruiting protocol. Each participant met face-to-face with the researcher where he or she was given a written explanation for the purpose of the study, the information that would be gathered in the study, and what would be done with the data after they were collected. Confidentiality of the data and interview responses was ensured by the researcher and explained to each participant. Each teacher was given an opportunity to ask questions before agreeing to participate and told that they could withdraw from the study at any time. Upon agreement, an appointment date was made for a classroom observation, interview, and an emotional intelligence test for that teacher. If the teacher expressed that he or she needed time to consider participation, an additional contact was made to ascertain participation. The teacher was also provided with a phone number he or she could call if there were any additional questions.

Interview guide. Each participant was interviewed using a semi-structured interview guide to ensure consistency (Appendix A). All participants were asked the same questions but not in the same order. The direction of the conversation during each interview determined the

order of the questions. The interviewer also asked probing questions for clarity and asked teachers to give examples when appropriate. This process helped facilitate an open discussion of the research questions and gained as much data for the research as possible (Seaman, 1999). Interview sessions were recorded to ensure that all data were gathered and fully understood and then each interview was transcribed verbatim.

Open coding transferred the transcripts into workable data. Corbin and Strauss (2008) described open coding as that which fractures the data and allows the researcher to identify categories, properties, and dimensional locations. After open coding, the information was sorted and categorized. During each interview, the researcher identified words and cues that the participant used to indicate the teacher's use of passion. The identification of certain words or cues was helpful in understanding what the teacher does differently when teaching with passion.

The general structure of the interview was the funnel model. Questions were broad and open-ended at the beginning of the interview with more specific and detailed information gathered at the end of the interview (Seaman, 1999). The general model could have been disrupted by the direction of the conversation but the form generally remained the same from the beginning to the end of the interview process.

Interview logistics. The interviews were held in the participant's classroom at Hugo High School during his or her planning time. Every effort was made during the interview to make participating teachers feel comfortable and free to talk about their classroom experiences. Many of the participating teachers were involved in activities before or after school and had other responsibilities that inhibited their ability to conduct the research before or after school. Scheduling interview times during teacher planning periods helped avoid scheduling conflicts with teachers and made it possible to maintain an appropriate data collection timeframe that

strengthened the internal validity of the study. In the case of an interruption or event, the researcher negotiated an alternate time for the interview.

The interviewer met with each participant (interview guide in hand), addressed the purpose of the meeting, and reviewed the ethical information. The interviewer asked questions from the guide while recording the answers and exercised active listening skills by paying close attention to the participant and asking probing questions to obtain as much information as possible.

Ethics. There is little ethical or safety risk involved with this study either by topic or through the nature of the data and data collection. Prior approval was received from the University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to gather data for this study (Appendix B). Proper steps were taken to ensure that information was kept confidential and private. Steps included keeping participants' information off insecure locations online and securing a signed consent form before collecting data for the study. The consent ensured that participants were voluntarily participating in the research with full knowledge of relevant risks and benefits (Smith, 2003). During the interview, the researcher discussed intellectual property and whom the participants should contact with additional questions. A classroom setting with a closed door provided all the necessary security for this research because the information discussed in the study was not personally or professionally threatening. Teachers interviewed were not peers or employees with a work connection to the researcher and none of the information gained during the study has or will be shared with employees' superiors.

### Documentation

Documentation was collected as data for this study. This section examines the documentation collection methods used.

Sample. The nine participants who were chosen at the beginning of this study were the same throughout the study. The participants were asked to provide lesson plans, notes, and other written evidence of their experiences in the classroom while teaching with passion. Participants were asked to provide day-to-day documentation that may not pertain to passionate experiences, to determine if teachers were experiencing unintentional passion and to identify possible differences in planning between passionate and non-passionate lessons.

Ethics. The American Psychological Association (APA) code of ethics addresses ethical considerations when testing participants. The APA makes it clear that psychologists strive to benefit the people they work with and ensures to do no harm. Psychologists have a responsibility to make scientific and professional judgments to protect the rights of all those they work with (Smith, 2003). All collected documentation was kept confidential by storing the information in a safe location away from unsecure servers and out the hands of others. No social, financial, or political information was collected that would compromise the safety or security of the individuals participating in the study. None of the information gained during the study has or will be shared with employees' superiors or the school system and all personal documents have been disguised with pseudonyms.

### Observations

Observations were used to gather data for this study. This section examines the observation methods used.

Sample. The participating teachers were the same nine teachers who were selected with the help of the administrative staff at Hugo High School. The teachers were observed one time on a day selected by and agreed to by the teacher and the observer. The observer of the class

encouraged the participant to teach as he or she would on an ordinary school day. The goal of the observation was to capture the teacher in an authentic classroom setting (Creswell, 2013). Using this setting provided an opportunity to discover how the participant used passion as a tool and what things passionate teachers did differently that made them passionate teachers. To minimize distractions, the researcher conducted observations from the back of the classroom. The researcher took notes and made an audio recording of the lesson to ensure that nothing was mistaken or missed in the observation.

Data collection. Information collected from the in-class observation was directed by an observation guide (Appendix B). The guide assisted the researcher in gathering appropriate information and collecting data directly purposed for answering the research questions. The same amount of observation time was allotted for each participant and the same observation guide was used for each observation. The guide included the three research questions as well as other probing questions designed to identify if the use of passion was actually demonstrated by participants in the way they intended. The researcher identified key words and cues established during the interview to assist in the observation and subsequent coding of its recorded audio. The cues identified during the interview helped identify how the participants adjusted their teaching during the lesson and how various teaching techniques may be used when using passion.

Ethics. There is little ethical or safety risk involved with this study either by topic or through the nature of the data. Proper steps were taken to ensure that observation information was kept confidential and private. Steps included keeping information off the Internet and securing the signed consent information needed to collect information for the study. The consent information ensured that participants were voluntarily participating in the research with full knowledge of relevant risks and benefits (Smith, 2003). The researcher discussed intellectual

property with participants and who to contact with questions. A classroom setting with a closed door provided all the necessary security for this research because the information discussed in the study was not personally or professionally threatening. Participants were not peers or employees with a work connection to the researcher and none of the information gathered during the study has or will be shared with employee supervisors.

### Data Analysis

The research data were collected from nine teachers about their use of passion in the classroom. Information gathered was used to answer the research questions surrounding how passion was experienced in the classroom and whether or not participants use passion as a tool in the classroom.

The constant comparative method is an important tool in sorting data during the coding process. The constant comparative method was used to take information from the data, compare it to previous data, and sort it into different categories. These categories were further developed to establish themes and answer research questions. Glaser developed six steps recommended to use in conducting the constant comparative method (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

1. Begin collecting data.
2. Look for key issues, recurrent events, or activities in the data that become categories of focus.
3. Collect data that provide many incidents of the categories of focus, with an eye to seeing the diversity of the dimension's under the categories.
4. Write about the categories you are explaining, attempting to describe and account for all the incidents you have in your data while continually searching for new incidents.

5. Work with the data and emerging model to discover basic social processes and relationships.
6. Engage in sampling, coding and writing as the analysis focuses on the core categories. (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003, p. 67)

After each phase of data collection (testing, interviews, collecting documentation, observation), information was sorted and categorized in emerging patterns and interview question themes. The process of coding was used to sort data into various groups. Coding was not limited to textual information. According to Strauss, Corbin, and Glaser coding should be used when categorizing observational and interview data (McNabb, 2010). Three types of coding were used in this study.

Open coding is the first stage of coding and is considered the most casual coding process. This stage of coding was under constant change as the researcher attempted to identify, name, and categorize new information being received. Borgatti (n.d.) noted that open coding involves the researcher perceiving variables and relationships that affect the number and type of categories where data are grouped. Open coding is a data reduction process that makes the information easier to understand and begins the process of labeling phenomenon. Labeling is important in open coding and must be done with great care to ensure that data maintain their integrity (McNabb, 2010).

Axial coding is the second process of coding and requires the researcher to compare and group themes into a basic frame (McNabb, 2010). To group all data into a handful of frames, the researcher would take broad informational topics and continue the reducing process by thematically grouping these topics by their most outstanding properties. While respecting the

development of the emerging information, this research study categorized information into a frame that consisted of four to eight major themes (McNabb, 2010).

Selective coding is the third process of coding. This process requires the researcher to choose a main category and relate all the other categories to that main category. The constant comparative process allows the researcher to move back and forth throughout the three coding processes to categorize and re-categorize as themes change and emerge (Ke & Wenglesky, 2010). The constant comparative method is an important tool in sorting data in the coding process. The purpose of the selective coding process is to create a central theme by picking a main category and draping all the other categories around that central theme as supporting ideas. The central theme was the emergent storyline that all other themes can support and encircle.

#### Delimitation and Limitations of the Study

Four tests are widely accepted that establish validity and reliability in social research (Rowley, 2002). The tests are construct validity, internal validity, external validity, and reliability. Construct validity is concerned with reducing subjectivity. This study used construct validity through a strict adherence to standardized procedures of data collection. The case study framework supported the means of measurement for this three-part study made up by the process of triangulation, which further strengthened the legitimacy of the measurement process and validity of the research. The three measurements used in this study were interview, document collection, and observation.

In this case study, internal validity is concerned with establishing the accuracy and quality of the study. The study must be clear and logical to create the understanding needed to see how well the study was executed. To establish internal validity in this study, the researcher followed case study procedures. This study was clear and logical by showing the results of each

of the three means of measurement and using the constant comparison method of coding to achieve accurate coding results.

A technique used to address the different constructs of thought is triangulation. This research project used the triangulation method of investigation by collecting data through observation, interviews, and collecting documentation. The methods chosen for this study were the appropriate tools for data collection as decided by the criterion and needs of the research project.

The research tools used in this study are sound and earn a high degree of validity and truthfulness. The research tools used in this study include but are not limited to the qualitative methods, coding, interviews, collection documentation, and observation. Adhering to the case study approach standardized how the research information was gathered, coded, and interpreted.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) addressed nine issues addressed in this study to ensure rigor and truthfulness. This research project used all of the Lincoln and Guba methods to ensure rigor and accuracy.

1. This research study accounts for personal bias that may influence findings.
2. This research acknowledges bias in sampling.
3. This study makes meticulous recordings and demonstrates a clear decision trail.  
Information and interpretations of data are consistent and transparent.
4. This study establishes comparison cases and studies to address similarities and differences across accounts to ensure that multiple perspectives are represented.
5. This study records information verbatim from the participants of their experiences to support findings in the research.
6. This study is clear in thought processes during data analysis and interpretations.

7. This research project is conducted with the oversight and direction of my doctoral dissertation committee to reduce researcher bias.
8. This study requests that the participants validate the coding transcript to determine whether the themes reflect the experience being investigated.
9. This research project uses triangulation to produce a more comprehensive set of results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### Summary of the Chapter

The purpose of this chapter was to discuss the research methodology and to establish the need for research in the area of how teachers use passion in teaching. This qualitative study used the case study approach to gain a deep understanding of the experiences that teachers have in their authentic teaching environment. The study was used to examine nine classroom teachers and used case study methods to gather data.

The first measurement used to gather data was the semi-structured interview. The interviewer followed an interview guide to maintain consistency of questions but allowed for variation in the interview to permit participants the opportunity to provide as much information as possible.

The document collection method was the second measure used in the study. This measure was used to collect lesson plans, teacher work, and other paperwork to determine if the documentation revealed teacher plans to use passion, which is recommended for educational researchers who are looking for a substantive understanding of the way a person processes emotion. This method was intended to provide a baseline from which to determine if the nine teachers could control their use of passion or if that passion was a characteristic of teacher disposition.

The third measure was the use of observation. The researcher used an observation guide to ensure consistency between the observations; all observations were recorded to assure quality of data collection. The researcher used open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to categorize information and allow for emerging themes until the storylines could be realized. The coding process began after each interview and used the constant comparative method to maximize validity and reliability.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings to the research questions. The focus of the research was to understand how passion is used by selected teachers at Hugo High School and whether its use is intentional in the classroom.

The nine teachers who participated in this study were observed using an observation guide (Appendix B). Observations were conducted under ordinary school conditions. Teachers were asked to conduct a lesson as they would normally while being observed. Classroom conditions included class interruption by phone calls, intercom announcements, bathroom breaks, and tardy students.

Interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview process and an interview guide (Appendix A). Teachers were asked questions from the interview guide to better understand teacher use of passion and determine if passion was intentionally used as a teaching tool. Documented evidence of lesson plans and notes were gathered from each participant to provide support and evidence as to whether teachers made plans for using passion.

This qualitative study used the case study approach to gain a deeper understanding of the experiences that teachers have in their ordinary teaching environment. The coding process included analysis of data from various documents, interview questions, and observations to gain an understanding of how passion was experienced in the classroom.

### Participant Profiles

Participants represented several departments from various areas and subjects at the school. Subjects represented by the participants included math, English, history, science, physical education/driver’s education, foreign language, and fine arts. There were both male and female participants with three male and six female teachers. Each participant had 4 or more years of teaching experience. Five of the participants had coaching experience and four did not. All of the nine participants scored above the threshold of 56 on the emotional intelligence test used to screen participants; the maximum score possible on the test was 75. As part of the screening process, each participant scored 3 or higher on the TEAM evaluation model for the previous 3 years. The designation as a tested or non-tested teacher is related to the administration of a state standardized test at the end of the course; tested teachers administer a standardized test to their students and non-tested teachers do not.

Table 1  
*Participant Profiles*

Participant	Subject Taught	Gender	Teaching Experience	Coaching Experience	End of Course Test	Emotional Intelligence Score
Ms. Mitchell	Math	F	12	N	Y	65
Ms. Foster	Science	F	23	Y	Y	65
Mr. Andrews	History	M	4	Y	Y	62
Ms. Sharpe	History	F	26	Y	Y	61
Ms. Brightman	Math	F	9	N	Y	60
Ms. Vanoy	Foreign Language	F	23	N	N	59
Mr. Fulmer	Physical Education & Driver’s Education	M	12	Y	N	58
Mr. Simpson	Fine Arts	M	13	N	N	58
Ms. Brezina	English	F	10	Y	Y	57

Ms. Mitchell taught math at Hugo High School for 4 years. She possessed 16 years of teaching experience, having taught in another state for 3 years and 7 years in a different Tennessee school system. She taught several levels of math at the high school level. Ms. Mitchell is a tested teacher in the math department and was responsible for preparing students for an end-of-course standardized test. Her score on the emotional intelligence test was 65. In the ranking of scores, she tied as first out of the seven emotional intelligence scores earned by participants in the study.

Ms. Foster taught science at Hugo High School for 20 years. She has 24 years of teaching experience, having taught for 4.5 years as a science and physical education teacher in middle and elementary school. Ms. Foster is a tested teacher in the science department and has been responsible for preparing students for an end-of-course standardized test. Her score on the emotional intelligence test was 65. In the ranking of scores, she tied as first out of the seven emotional intelligence scores earned by participants in the study.

Mr. Andrews taught history and is a coach at Hugo High School for 4 years. He is a tested teacher in the history department and has been responsible for preparing students for an end-of-course standardized test. His score on the emotional intelligence test was 62. In the ranking of scores, he was second out of the seven emotional intelligence scores earned by participants in the study.

Ms. Sharpe taught history at Hugo High School for 26 years where she has spent her entire career and has been a former coach, a mentor to other teachers in the school, and the head of the history department for many years. Ms. Sharpe is a tested teacher in the history department and has been responsible for preparing students for an end-of-course standardized test. Her score

on the emotional intelligence test was 61. In the ranking of scores, she was third out of the seven emotional intelligence scores earned by participants in the study.

Ms. Brightman taught math at Hugo High School for 6 years. She has 9 years of teaching experience, having taught for 3 years in a different Tennessee school system. Ms. Brightman took an alternative path to teaching, as her undergraduate degree was in business. She studied for 2 years in an engineering program that included the math courses required to teach math. After taking several education classes and the Praxis test, Ms. Brightman became a highly qualified teacher. Ms. Brightman is a tested teacher in the math department and has been responsible for preparing students for an end-of-course standardized test. Her score on the emotional intelligence test was 60. In the ranking of scores, she was fourth out of the seven emotional intelligence scores earned by participants in the study.

Ms. Vanoy taught Spanish and French at Hugo High School for 12 years. She has 23 years of teaching experience, having taught for 2 years in another state and 9 years in a different Tennessee school system. Ms. Vanoy is a non-tested teacher and depends on other teacher's scores in the school for a portion of her level of effectiveness score. Her score on the emotional intelligence test was 59. In the ranking of scores, Ms. Vanoy was fifth out of the seven emotional intelligence scores earned by participants in the study.

Mr. Fulmer taught physical education, driver education, and has been a coach at Hugo High School for 5 years. He has 12 years of teaching experience, having taught for 7 years at the middle school level. Mr. Fulmer is a non-tested teacher and depends on other teacher's scores in the school for a portion of his level of effectiveness score. His score on the emotional intelligence test was 58. In the ranking of scores, Mr. Fulmer was tied for sixth out of the seven emotional intelligence scores earned by participants in the study.

Mr. Simpson taught art and a leadership at Hugo High School for 10 years. He has 13 years of teaching experience, having taught art for 2 years at the middle school level. Mr. Simpson is a non-tested teacher and depends on other teacher's scores in the school for a portion of his level of effectiveness score. His score on the emotional intelligence test was 58. In the ranking of scores, Mr. Simpson was tied for sixth out of the seven emotional intelligence scores earned by participants in the study.

Ms. Brezina taught English and has been a coach at Hugo High School for 9.5 years. She has 10 years of teaching experience, having taught English for half a year at the middle school level before moving to the high school. Ms. Brezina is a tested teacher in the English department and has been responsible for preparing students for an end-of-course standardized test. Her score on the emotional intelligence test was 57. In the ranking of scores, Ms. Brezina was last out of the seven emotional intelligence scores earned by participants in the study.

### Results of Research Questions

Three research questions were used to guide this qualitative study. The researcher used open coding, axial coding, and selective coding to categorize information and allow for emerging themes until the storylines could be realized. The coding process began after each interview and used the constant comparative method to maximize validity and reliability (McNabb, 2010). The results regarding each research question were answered by collapsing codes into larger themes that could make data more easily understood (Gibbs, 2007).

#### Research Question 1

*How is passion experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School from the perspective of teachers?*

Theme 1. *Teachers experience passion through care for students.* Eight of the nine participants indicated that although they love the subject they teach, their passion was for working with and helping students. Interview questions 1 (*What are your beliefs about what makes you passionate in the classroom?*) and 2 (*When you are teaching with passion what responses do you observe in your students?*) provided direct support for this theme although it should be noted that the idea was also mildly supported by several teachers in questions 3 (*What differences do you noticing in students, after they experience a passionate lesson?*) and 13 (*How do you use passion to create sympathy?*).

Mr. Fulmer stated, “I never thought I would love teaching driver’s education. I like the curriculum but I think it starts with the kids.” Ms. Brezina said, “I love working with young people.” Mr. Mitchell explained, “Our teachers get excited about making connections with students and they get excited about their teaching. Nobody here is working for a paycheck.”

Classroom observations provided support for statements made during the interview process. All nine teachers demonstrated signs of caring for students. Teacher expression of care for students was observed to be more than a basic concern for student understanding. Teachers were observed expressing concern for students well-being, asking about the student’s weekend, asking how they were doing, and asking students how they could help with their class work. All nine teachers were observed sharing smiles of approval when student behaviors or answers were acceptable by giving consistent, verbal rewards, and praise such as, “that’s right, I love it,” “way to go,” and “these are all beautiful assumptions.” These were some of the statements used by teachers to support the learning and create opportunities to demonstrate teacher care for students.

Theme 2. *Teachers experience passion through receiving encouragement from student expression of success in learning.* Participants in the study experienced several different

expressions from students that encouraged their efforts to teach passionately. The positive encouragement from student expressions additionally inspired different and more positive teacher expressions and experiences of passionate teaching. Interview questions 3 (What differences do you noticing in students, after they experience a passionate lesson?) and 4 (How do you treat your students when teaching a lesson passionately?) directly relate to these findings. Teacher examples of positive student expressions included student engagement behaviors of nodding the head, student facial expressions, smiles, squinting of interest, accelerated student note taking, increased student questions, enthusiasm, a change in the interest in working, and better (exit tickets) learning assessments at the end of class. Some of these positive student expressions were motivated by the teachers. When positive expressions were given by students, teachers were inspired to continue to deliver passionate teaching.

Several teachers expressed purposeful intent to generate positive learning expressions from students. Mr. Simpson explained that he is encouraged when he sees an “ah-ha” moment with students saying, “I want them to see me get excited. When they see me get excited, they get excited.” Ms. Brightman said,

I get more excited and more animated; it may be enthusiasm and caring for them. I treat the students how I want to be treated. I check on the students who don't ask questions and set them up for success; this is what keeps me entertained.

Mr. Andrews explained, “If I take that time off from being excited, they will take the time off.”

Ms. Foster said, “I bring in things that they know and make connections with them.” Ms. Brezina explained,

There is nothing better than when they complain and are groaning because it is time to close the book because they want to keep going. Just yesterday, when students asked me if they could have an official debate over some big questions that the book is bringing up, that to me is what lets me know that we are on the right track.

Some teachers expressed that they experienced passion by the difference in their behaviors when teaching a lesson. These behaviors included talking a little louder, becoming more animated, more energetic, more humorous, more engaged, using more hand motions, expressing more love, and encouragement toward students. Mr. Andrews explained that he “treats his students more like they have working knowledge of what they are taking about” because he says students will remember the passionate lesson from the day before. Ms. Mitchell stated, “I interact with them more. I can connect more with what’s going on with them. I ended up dabbing to help them and I made a personal connection.” (Note to the reader: *Dabbing* is a new pop culture hand and arm motion, dance gesture, like *The Hand Jive*.) Mr. Fulmer explained that he had fewer student discipline issues because he conducted a more nurturing classroom and that his bias toward students’ behavior disappeared. Mr. Fulmer had increased his ability to teach all students without an expectation that certain students would behave inappropriately. These adjusted expectations changed student behavior for the better and improved the teaching experience for the teacher.

### Research Question 2

*How is passion unintentionally experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School based on metacognitive reflections?*

Theme 3. *Passionate teaching time and passionate moments vary in practice.* Participants in this study stated that they taught with passion most of the time and passionate teaching moments with students varied in practice throughout each lesson. Seven of the nine teachers in this study answered that they taught with passion the majority of days.

Ms. Vanoy explained that she taught with passion:

Every day. I try to do it every day. I know I don't do it every day, but I try to be positive about the fact that we are here and the fact that I am seeing them and it's good to see them and that's the message I try to send them.

She continued to explain about passionate teaching by saying,

Sometimes it depends on the day; it depends on the lesson. Sometimes it depends on the kid and sometimes it depends on me. There are days I'm not my best. The night before last, I slept very, very poorly. It was all I could do to get through the day and I told the kids right from the beginning, watch out for verbal train wrecks, help me out here, and we got through that. The students were like, we understand, we understand.

Mr. Andrews said that when he first arrived at Hugo High School it was explained by his department head Ms. Sharpe, "You have to bring it every day, and I do. I try to teach with passion every day." Ms. Sharpe said she tried to teach with passion every day.

But, we are educators. There are certain things that we truly enjoy and then there are things that we, like mud to the armpits, you slog through it. In history, it's a subject matter thing. Ya know – my passion – what I know solidly, or know a little story about. Like we are about to do the 1920s and my grandmother was born in 1901 and was in my home. And so I've got a lot of Na-naw tails that I tell. Ya know, about the dresses and the flappers, but I'm going to do that for W.C. Hendy and the Grand Ol Opry. So ya know, I think it's a rolling thing. I don't think you can stay at the 10% mark or 30%. I think it's a subject matter thing.

Mr. Fulmer, Mr. Andrews, and Ms. Mitchell explained that within a lesson they felt like they averaged two to five passionate teaching moments in the classroom each day. Mr. Fulmer explained,

Especially when we can leave the subject for just a little bit and have a whole group discussion; that's when I feel it the most. When I'm able to get their feedback and when they are engaged it fuels my fire and it get me that much more excited. So, for me, when we can divert off the subject and possibly bring something more modern that matches up, or pull something that we already know and bring it back, and there are good conversations that comes from me and them; that's really going to fuel me to give that much more. So, history is so talk-based that I would like to think that it happens more often than in other classes; where I have that opportunity to have those conversations. So I would say four or five times a lesson, where I really feel it.

Observations of each of the participants indicated several moments of passion, as indicated by the interviews.

Theme 4. Unintentional passion improved teaching experiences. Teachers expressed an improvement in their teaching experience when teaching with or experiencing passionate teaching. Interview question numbers 10 (*Do you plan to use passion in your lessons?*), 11 (*What teaching techniques do you choose in conjunction with passionate teaching?*), 12 (*How do you use passion to add emphasis to a lesson?*), 13 (*How do you use passion to create sympathy?*), and 16 (*Based on your observations of student behavior, how do you think passion is unintentionally experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School?*) were directly related to the theme. When asked if they plan to use passion in their lesson, many teachers indicated no. They did not plan to use passion but they certainly used it when they were aware of the opportunity.

Mr. Simpson said,

No, it's not a planned thing, it's just how I interact with humans. I'm finding a common denominator when the kids and I can meet, whether it's the topic, whether it's related to the topic that they possibly experienced, whether it's an interest. I guess a good example would be teaching linear perspective. It's not a very exciting topic but when I explain that if any of them are interested in designing video games, they have to have an understanding of linear perspective; then they spark up. Because they have a common interest in video games, we meet on that common ground. Then me and the students both become passionate about teaching and learning as a cooperative unit.

When asked if passion is planned, Ms. Brightman explained, "No, not really, it's dependent on what I plan, but not the presentation with the kids. It just happens." Ms. Mitchell said, "No, I don't plan but I can feel myself getting excited about the lesson when I'm planning and I know there are certain things that I am going to bring up in the lesson. I don't knowingly interject passion." Ms. Foster answered,

No, I plan to know how they are going to know the information. I can present the lecture but I have to do something to figure out if they got any of that. Is it sinking in? Do they know what they are writing down? Stop, listen, and let's talk about it. Don't ever write down a word you don't understand. Stop and ask. I don't want silence; students should be engaged. Students can be talking and explaining things to one another, discussion. I look to do different things, going back to wanting them to get it. I guess that is passion – wanting them to get it.

### Research Question 3

*How is passion intentionally used in the classroom at Hugo High School?*

Theme 5. *While the majority was unintentional, three indicated they intentionally planned to use passion.* Three of the nine participants indicated intentionality about passionate teaching. They intentionally planned to use passion when teaching a lesson. Interview questions 10 (*Do you plan to use passion in your lessons?*), 11 (*What teaching techniques do you choose in conjunction with passionate teaching?*), 12 (*How do you use passion to add emphasis to a lesson?*), 13 (*How do you use passion to create sympathy?*), and 15 (*How do you think passion is intentionally used in the classroom at Hugo High School?*) directly relate to this theme. Ms.

Vanoy said yes and no. She explained,

I liked to be there when the students liked to be there. Then I thought, what can I do to make them like this lesson, how can I make them get into it? I don't know if that's passion but I knew they had to like the lesson.

The researcher observed Ms. Foster teaching a French class where she used several Nazi concentration camp videos to make the learning real and inspire interest in the subject matter. After viewing the atrocities of war committed by the Germans, she then showed a video of one of the few American military cemeteries in the world located in France. Ms. Vanoy explained how grateful the French were for the US military intervention in World War II. She continued the lesson by showing the French celebration of their independence from the German empire and explained how that related to our own Independence Day celebration. At the end of the video

presentations, she asked her students, “How did that make you feel?” She then practiced speaking French with the students by teaching them how to ask each other if they were going to the Independence Day celebration. At the end of the lesson, Ms. Vanoy taught the students how to ask a person for a date to the celebration. In one lesson, Ms. Vanoy effectively provoked feelings of sorrow for the French, pride for the United States, and appreciation for the French solidarity with the United States. At the end of the lesson, Ms. Vanoy continued to add motivation for the learning by teaching her students the proper French way to ask for a date to the French Independence Day celebration.

Ms. Brezina was asked if she planned to use passion in her lessons. She said, “Yes, I plan to use passion. You have to plan on it. I feel very fortunate. I understand this does not come easy to others but it seems to come easy to me.” She went on by explaining, “I plan on how I’m going to present, to make sure that kids get what I want them to get.” In Ms. Brezina’s interview, she indicated that she felt that she was a passionate teacher 95% of the time and stated, “I try to make sure that there is no wasted time.” Her observation indicated a very strong awareness of her environment and her control of the lesson. When teaching a piece of literature Ms. Brezina asked very guided questions and rewarded the students for their answers, “I couldn’t have paid you more to ask that question!” She used the Socratic Method on a regular basis by inviting her students to, “Tell me what you know.” Then she asked follow-up questions to guide students’ learning, “Why did you ask about his dad?” Spirited discussion was encouraged by Ms. Brezina who could be seen giving fist pumps, pointing at students for correct answers, and providing extreme voice inflections to emphasize key ideas in the literature.

When asked, do you plan to use passion in your lesson? Mr. Fulmer answered,

Yes, I do. I think it’s the underlying thing for everything I do. I came across the definition for a... There’s a quarterback camp I was working, and the one of the big... It was kind of

a marketing thing that the coaches were using, but I truly believe that they believed in it and that's why they were using it. It was good, but it took the word "passionate" and it broke it down back to its root, "passio" and looked at the origins of the word. And it kind of turned to a spiritual thing that uh...

Before in literature and stuff, before Jesus Christ, um... "Passio" was looked at as kind of a negative thing. The literal thing was, "to suffer." To suffer. And it's kind of a negative kind of word. It had not – it did not associate love with suffering. And then once Jesus Christ came along, that in literature, and especially in spiritual literature, of course, then "passio" turned into a suffering through love of – "what am I willing to do for you?" You know the servant kind of attitude. And so, that camp that kind of talked about that... about how it relates to sports and basically defined it as uh, "passio" as, "the willingness to do for others, for the benefit of those around you, without desire nor expectation for reward or recognition."

So, it was really asking, "What are you willing to do for your teammates?" Once I started studying that meaning, it was like – oh wow – this is like directly what I believe spiritually and then how it applies to everything. From my family – and that's what we talked about, too, in the camps. What really hooked me is that they, they really turned it into, you know, well, how do you act toward your mom and dad? How do you act toward your coaches – your teachers? You know, off the field and stuff like that. This on-the-field stuff is great but it's not what's going to last forever.

And, so that's where it kind of turned into, you know, me as a teacher had to reevaluate that, too. It's like, well, what am I bringing every day? I know I do when I coach, because I absolutely love it. Well, I love teaching, too. But, did my behavior really reflect that feeling and that belief? And so, you know, whenever I'm looking at lesson plans, and stuff like that, it's kind of like – all right, how can I really be my best right here? Because, if that's truly what I believe, I wanna be a passionate person. Then I believe it means to, you know – I'm willing to do what others are not, you know, for the benefit of the kids that are around me. It's hard to do, and I'm far from being able to like, say, oh yeah – I'm really good at that. 'Cause it's tough to do it, day-in and day-out, but I think that's what – me as a teacher, you know, that's what I wanna strive for.

Mr. Fulmer's observation indicated an ability to effectively keep students engaged through student involvement and frequent positive praise. Mr. Fulmer told personal stories about his grandfather and showed the students a video of a television program to illustrate his lesson and to make personal connections with students. Mr. Fulmer incorporated strong coaching techniques to his teaching style. These techniques were demonstrated by his strong classroom management skills, his request for students to find ways to illustrate and demonstrate their class projects, and his listening gestures such as increased voice volume and his expression, "heads up."

Theme 6. Passionate experiences altered teacher behavior. Positive changes in teacher behavior include stronger relationships with students and positive teacher motivation. Interview questions 13 (*How do you use passion to create sympathy?*) and 15 (*How do you think passion is intentionally used in the classroom at Hugo High School?*) directly relate to this theme. Classroom observation supports adjustments in teacher behavior on a small scale but the interview process is a much more effective tool for understanding altered teacher behavior.

Mr. Simpson explained how passion alters student-teacher relationships.

Passion is used because instructors want to connect with kids. An English teacher, she is super excited about English, gets the kids excited and then opens up for everything else that follows through for you to then be able to use that platform to help mold and guide the whole child, holistic education, the whole kid.

Mr. Fulmer said, “Our administration does a good job of saying, guys if we want to get some results out of these kids during testing then we’ve got to be looking for those connections with those kids and I think it starts with being passionate.” Mr. Andrews explained, “I think it’s relationships, if you are not ready to be there and build those relationships, they are not going to listen.” Ms. Brightman said that passion is used in the school to professionally coalesce the teaching staff. She explained that,

We are all in it together. While what I do directly affects my students it also indirectly affects everyone else. So, I think we are all like, I got to pull my part to make everything better. I think there are a lot of people who are real passionate. And I think that the school strategically places us, to an extent. Ya know, you want to play to your strengths, but I think our school as a whole, everybody just really cares.

Ms. Brezina expressed the intentional use of passion as something that teachers use to get through the many obstacles facing teachers and schools. Ms. Brezina said,

I think that in recent years, with all the things that are being thrown to educators, that leads to frustration, and unhappiness, and resentment. And causing so many educators to leave the field because of all these things. I think that the teachers who remain, for the most part remain because their passion. I think it’s fair to say that sometimes teachers remain because they feel like they have to or maybe they are stuck. I think that our people

are still here and are still doing what they are doing and making impacts on students' lives because of their passion. Otherwise, I don't think that they would still be here.

There are too many things going on right now that if you didn't have passion for this you would let those frustrations take over and say I'm done, I'm out, I'm not going to do this anymore. And, I think there are passionate teachers that leave because they are just at that breaking point. But, I think that in our building, the people that are still here are trudging through the restrictions, or trudging through the hoops that we are having to jump through, because they are still putting kids first, and they want to be an advocate for them, and they want to be a champion for them, and not just for them but for our school. I think teachers have a lot of pride in our school. I'm an alumni of this school and so I'm loyal and proud and enthusiastic since I graduated in 2003. So, I think for our building, passion is huge, otherwise I don't think people would still be here.

### Summary of the Chapter

Research data were collected from nine teachers about their use of passion in the classroom. Information gathered was used to answer three research questions regarding how passion was experienced in the classroom and how teachers intentionally and unintentionally use passion as a tool in the classroom. The constant comparative method was used to take information from the data, compare it to previous data, and sort it into different categories. These categories were further developed to establish six overarching themes that answered the research questions. After each phase of data collection (emotional intelligence testing to select participants, interviews, collecting documentation, and observation), information was sorted and categorized into emerging patterns and interview question themes. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the findings from Chapter 4.

## CHAPTER 5

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

Chapter 5 presents the summary, conclusion, and recommendations based on the findings and results of this qualitative study. The study followed case study methodology to conduct the research and findings are reported in Chapter 4. The coding process and the constant comparative method were used to sort information into six themes needed to give the data meaning. The introduction, literature review, and presentation of the study methodology were introduced in Chapters 1, 2, and 3.

#### Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this research was to understand how passion is used by participating effective teachers at Hugo High School and whether its use is intentional in the classroom. Unlike research studies that focus on the importance of effective teaching using passion and the perspective of students, this research focuses on the experiences of teachers. The purpose was also to discover the use of passion regarding teacher perception and intent. Results from this study could provide more information related to understanding how passion is experienced in the classroom and whether passion can be taught and used as a tool for teaching in the classroom.

#### Analysis of Findings

Analysis of the data revealed six major themes. These themes were developed through the collection of data from three resources including classroom observation, collection of teacher documentation, and teacher interviews. Participants were observed using an observation guide that directed the observation process and provided consistency in identifying how passionate

teaching could be recognized in each classroom observation. The observation guide proved helpful in providing consistency in documenting the variations identified from one classroom to the next. The researcher used a semi-structured interview method with an interview guide that provided focus. The semi-structured process allowed the latitude necessary to further question teachers who presented intriguing answers that needed exploring or clarification. Two teachers struggled with the interview questions and needed the latitude to speak freely in conversation without the structure of a question-answer format. Those participants provided valuable insight, which may not have been contributed if it had not been for the semi-structured process used in the interviews.

Teacher documentation did not provide great support for the themes in the study. Teachers who said they did plan to use passion in their lessons provided little documentation to demonstrate those plans. The researcher did not anticipate a great amount of evidence for passion in written lesson plans. It is worth noting that it was evident in the documentation collected that the teachers made plans for students learning. Ms. Foster explained, “I look to do different things. [It] goes back to wanting them to get it. I guess that is passion; wanting them to get it.” Six emerging themes dictated the findings of the research; they are documented in conjunction with the corresponding research questions.

### Research Question 1

*How is passion experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School from the perspective of teachers?*

The researcher concluded that the teachers in this study experienced passion in the classroom through the care they demonstrated for the students they taught and through the positive student feedback they received. These findings were related to what Day (2009)

explained as the three qualities that research suggest are central to being, behaving, and remaining passionate. In order of importance were relationships with pupils, moral purpose (care and courage), and emotional identities. Teacher reactions to positive student feedback in the classroom was more than academic; it was dynamic and, at times, emotional. Eight of the nine teachers indicated that, although they loved the subject they taught – their passion was for working with young people. Meador (2016b) conducted a study to determine if great teachers were great at bringing out the full potential of their students and building trusting relationships. Great teachers are masters of time and will tell you that developing strong relationships with students is important to academic success. This theme of building relationships emerged throughout the research and was one of the most visibly pronounced of the findings.

Two themes emerged in the findings surrounding this research question. Theme 1 was *teachers experienced passion through the care for students*. Theme 2 was *teachers experienced passion through receiving encouragement from student's expression of success in learning*. Participants were observed expressing care for students in many ways including those beyond the scope of their students' academic achievements. Verbal signs of approval for correct answers were common, as were verbal comments of encouragement, support, and praise. Teachers created safe and secure environments for students to grow and flourish as learners. They supported and protected their students in all questions they asked in the classroom environment. Students were encouraged to be successful in all school courses and were asked about their family stories to involve them in the learning and demonstrate that they were important to the teachers. This teaching technique used by passionate leaders in the classroom was supported by Kaplan et al. (2009). Kaplan et al. (2009) explained that the intergenerational leader should include *matters of the heart* as well as intellect. Importance and respect for learning time was

consistently communicated by the participants, as teachers consistently used bell ringers at the start of each class while role was taken, objectives for each class were made clear, learning was checked at the end of each lesson, and each teacher made it a point to use every minute of the class time. The findings in this research are consistent with Meador (2016b) who explained that great teachers are masters at maximizing learning time and building trusting relationships with students.

Student feedback was common and expected in each classroom. Participants checked student understanding through the feedback they observed from their students. Positive student feedback helped teachers gauge the learning and inspired the teachers to educate their students in various ways. Examples of teaching differences from participants included increased excitement about the lesson, increased speaking volume, increased animation, and addition of verbal expressions such as “way to go,” “I love it,” and “ah-ha.” Teachers employed methods of encouragement by giving out gold stars and bringing a stuffed animal named *Grandpa Fish* down from the shelf to speak French with the other stuffed animals. Teachers’ reactions to positive student feedback in the classroom were more than academic; reactions were dynamic and at times emotional. Participants reacted to positive student reinforcement and, in turn, gave additional positive reinforcement to the students in their own creative way. Hattie (2012) explained that passion from teachers was contagious, and continued by explaining that passion sparks an inter curiosity and excitement within the students that gives them the opportunity to excel. The feedback teachers provided related to experiences of passion was positive and fitting to their teaching style and personality. Participants in the study explained that, while negative student feedback could be painful, it was not allowed to affect the entire lesson or class of students.

## Research Question 2

*How is passion unintentionally experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School based on metacognitive reflections?*

Through the analysis of data, it was concluded that passion was unintentionally experienced at Hugo High School. Participants unintentionally experienced passion when passionate moments occurred that were not planned by the teacher. Teachers in the study attempted to teach with passion on a regular basis but were not able or did not plan for passion in their lessons. They planned for student understanding and were opportunistic in their approach to the use of passion in the lessons. Opportunities for passionate teaching were realized by teachers when positive student feedback was provided. Results of passionate teaching on teachers was no less impactful to teachers who did not plan as compared to teachers who did plan to use passion.

Two themes emerged in the research surrounding this research question. Theme 3 was *passionate teaching and passionate moments vary in practice*. Theme 4 was *unintentional passion improved teaching experiences*. Many participants did not plan passionate lessons but experienced passionate lessons and passionate teaching practices several times a week and in some cases several times a day. Teachers admitted that some days were better than other days. However, they expressed the intent to teach with passion every day. Teachers were aware that there were certain lessons they presented with more passion than other lessons because they enjoyed those lessons more or knew more about the topic. They were also aware that there were some lessons the students did not enjoy and student feedback affected how passionate they became about teaching those lessons.

Teachers who explained that they did not plan passionate lessons planned to take advantage of opportunities to make their lessons passionate with students. Teachers understood

that they might create opportunities for passionate moments by the way they taught or by how they designed the lesson. If these opportunities for passionate moments did not manifest themselves or went unrealized by the students, teachers continued to focus on student learning and moved on with the lesson. Metcalfe and Game's (2006) findings support these findings and explain that when students applied passion to the lesson they assumed it was coming from the teacher, even when it was the result of a relational dynamic between the teacher and students. Metcalfe and Game described passion as a passivity, a movement with stillness, exuberance with respectful attention. When opportunities were present, teachers took advantage of passionate moments with students to delve deeper into the learning and make stronger student connections to the material. Teachers were accepting that there were some lessons that were more meaningful with some students and not as meaningful with other students.

The theme (Theme 4) under research question two documented how unintentional passion from students improved teaching experiences because teachers reacted to positive student feedback. Teachers were invigorated by the positive feedback given to them by their students. In a study by Roeger (2012), it was found that passionate teaching awakened students to life and perpetuated the lives of teachers and their teaching.

When students were visibly interested in a topic, the teacher worked harder to teach the class. With positive student feedback, teachers became more animated, louder, and more passionate about what they were teaching. Participants explained that they taught better and were more interesting to learn from when teaching with passion. According to Day (2009), teacher quality was not only related to knowledge and skills but also to the passion that the best teachers brought to their work. Teachers explained how much better it made them feel about their lessons

and how much more they got out of the teaching experience when students gave them positive feedback.

### Research Question 3

*How is passion intentionally used in the classroom at Hugo High School?*

The researcher has concluded that passion was intentionally used by teachers in the classroom at Hugo High School to manipulate student behavior, thoughts, and feelings to increase student retention and learning. The use of passion as a teaching tool was woven into the teaching style and was developed as a teaching skill by these participants. It may be that some teachers have an affinity for teaching with passion but it was clear that few teachers intentionally planned to use it on a regular basis as a teaching tool. As indicated in the findings, passion was an extremely valuable technique for the teachers who used it as a teaching tool. It was also clear that teachers who used passion as a tool used it regularly. The amount of set up and preparation time for a passionate lesson varied just like any other lesson. It was not determined that passionate lessons took more or less time to prepare but that preparation time varied depending on the subject, the class of students, and other classroom influences. Similar to teachers who did not use passion as a teaching tool; these passionate teachers indicated that outside influences contributed to their feelings about the effectiveness of passionate lessons.

Two themes emerged in the research surrounding this research question. Theme 5 was *While the majority was unintentional, three indicated they intentionally planned to use passion.* Theme 6 was *passionate experiences altered teacher behavior.* The findings indicate that three teachers planned to use passion as a teaching tool and did so in various ways. A few methods included using videos and stories but the theme that developed from teacher information was that teachers altered their behavior to manipulate student behavior and inspire learning.

The theme (Theme 5) that emerged from the findings indicated that three teachers intentionally planned and successfully created passionate teaching experiences. Three of the nine participants indicated that they planned to use passion in their lessons. The three teachers who planned to use passion had a strong understanding of their audience. In a research study by Bulger et al. (2002) they concluded that teachers could nurture a positive learning environment by showing passion for the subject they taught, using student names, encouraging student participation, and teaching the class actively by moving among the students. Enthusiasm is contagious with students; the more a teacher uses enthusiasm the more it reflects a teacher's competence and confidence in their teaching. Three teachers in this research study said they had control of the learning environment and were willing to act out of the ordinary to manipulate student behavior, thoughts, or feelings. The three teachers who planned to use passion as a tool were brave and had a least a small flare for the dramatic. These three teachers used many tools to create passionate lessons. Each teacher used a set up or a primer to bring the students into the lesson. Observed setups included a video, an interesting book, and or a personal story. The primers were followed by class discussions about what the students thought or what predictions they had for how the story would progress. Discussion was encouraged, prompted, and sometimes antagonized by the teacher. Teachers asked setup questions and sometimes withheld information to tempt students and create intrigue. Teachers planned to ask certain questions, planned how to ask them, and sometimes even planned which student to ask. All three teachers who said they planned to use passion as a teaching tool demonstrated its use during the study observation. This provided more evidence to the notion that teachers had the control they thought they had over the use of passion as a teaching tool.

The theme (Theme 6) under this research question documented how altered teacher behavior was associated with passionate teaching. Teachers explained how using passion changed their expectation for student learning. Teachers expected that they could move faster in their lessons with the anticipation that students would remember more from previous lessons that were taught with passion. Beach explained that students should learn about a subject not because it was in the textbook but because students had the opportunity to experience an activity they were passionate about (Wolpert-Gawron, 2011). If students were doing something they were passionate about, they would be more likely to learn from the experience. This anticipation altered teacher behavior by increasing teacher pacing and material covered.

Teachers who intentionally used passion demonstrated more latitude for changing their look, behavior, and voice if needed for narrating a story, explaining a lesson, or if needed for prompting an expected student behavior. Teaching with passion for these participants was theatrical from the standpoint that the teacher anticipated how to control the audience to further the learning. Ramirez (2013) explained that a teacher should make learning a passion for their students by infecting them with their own passion. The teachers in this study enjoyed using passion as a teaching tool because of the positive effect it had on the students and because of how that made them feel as a teacher. Teachers were more than willing to lose themselves in the teaching to create a positive teaching experience for their students.

#### Recommendations for Practice

- The first recommendation would be for educational leaders to make their teachers aware of the importance of teaching with passion on a regular basis. The evidence in this research study indicates that passionate teaching is a valuable factor in a positive teaching experience for teachers. Teachers should be encouraged to show passion for their subject

with the understanding that passion for their subject is contagious and may be important in inspiring student learning. Teachers should be aware that teaching with passion allows a more valuable teaching opportunity for teachers. While some teachers have the ability to create passionate teaching moments, all teachers should make the effort to teach with passion every day. Teachers should be open to and prepared to take advantage of passionate moments as a way of creating a more effective learning experience for students and for themselves.

- The second recommendation would include sharing with teachers the importance of creating a strong relationship with their students. An understanding of students and their learning needs are what teachers gain from developing relationships with students. These understandings could be used to create meaningful, student-focused lessons built on student interest and attached to students' prior knowledge. Instructional leaders should make it known that lessons with these characteristics are more effective and cannot be developed fully without a strong understanding of the students and their learning needs. A teacher who fails to build relationships and gain an understanding of his or her students makes it difficult to create meaningful lessons.

#### Recommendations for Further Research

The study findings were conclusive and stronger than anticipated. There was a clear distinction between teachers who intentionally created passionate moments and those who taught with passion but who were more opportunistic in taking advantage of passionate moments.

- It was surprising to find the importance that each of the participants placed on the student teacher relationship and how much emphasis each teacher placed on concern for students. It was clear that participants in this study were some of the best teachers in their school

and – by their own admission – cared for students more than they cared for the profession of teaching. Further research is needed to determine how strong the correlation is between highly effective teachers and the self-perceived care that teachers have for the students they teach.

- The study findings showed that teachers used passion as a teaching tool and said it was because they felt better about their teaching and they believed it made them better teachers. Are teacher beliefs accurate when they explain that they are better teachers when using passion? Do test results reflect that teachers are more effective when using passion? It is recommended that research be conducted to determine if teachers who use passion as a teaching tool are more effective than teachers who do not use passion as a teaching tool.
- Findings from this study may be used to suggest that using passion as a teaching tool can be taught to teachers. The researcher was hopeful that a theme would develop to answer that question but answering that question was not the focus of this study, the theme did not develop, and the information gathered was inconclusive to that end. It is recommended that research be conducted to determine if teachers can be taught how, or to what degree, they could intentionally use passion as a teaching tool.

### Conclusion

This research study was designed to answer three research questions. This study has accomplished that goal and the following results are a conclusion of the researcher.

Research question one examined how passion is experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School from the perspective of teachers. The researcher concluded that the participants in this study experienced passion in the classroom through the care they felt for the students they

taught and through the positive feedback received from their students. Teacher reactions to positive student feedback in the classroom environment were much more than academic. The reactions were dynamic and sometimes emotional. Eight of the nine teachers indicated that although they loved the subject they taught their passion was for working with young people.

Research question two asked *how passion is unintentionally experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School based on metacognitive reflections*. The researcher concluded that passion was unintentionally experienced at Hugo High School. Teachers unintentionally experienced passion when passionate moments occurred that were not planned by the teacher. Participants in the study attempted to teach with passion on a regular basis but were not able or did not plan for passion in their lessons. They planned for student understanding and were opportunistic in their approach to the use of passion in their lessons. Opportunities for passionate teaching were realized by teachers when positive student feedback was provided. Results of passionate teaching on teachers was no less impactful to teachers who did not plan when compared to teachers who do did plan to use passion.

Research question three asked how passion is intentionally used in the classroom at Hugo High School. The researcher has concluded that passion was intentionally used by teachers in the classroom at Hugo High School to manipulate student behavior, thoughts, and feelings to increase student retention and learning. The use of passion as a teaching tool was woven into the teaching style and was developed as a teaching skill by these participants. It may be that some teachers have an affinity for using passion but it was clear that few teachers intentionally planned to use passion regularly as a teaching tool. The findings from this study suggest that passion is an extremely valuable teaching technique for the teachers who used it. It is also clear that the teachers who used passion as a tool used it regularly in some way. The amount of set up and

preparation time for passionate lessons varied, just like any other lesson. It was not determined that passionate lessons took more or less time to prepare but that preparation time varied depending on the subject, the class of students, and other classroom influences. Similar to teachers who did not use passion as a teaching tool; passionate teachers said outside influences contributed to their feelings about the effectiveness of passionate lessons.

In summary, the findings indicate that teachers use passion as a teaching tool, passionate teaching was used by all teachers in the study, and passion was experienced through the care that teachers felt for their students. Teachers who did not plan to use passion used passion when the opportunity was present and realized by the teacher. Using passion was a positive experience for teachers. Teachers who did not plan to use passion recognized changes in their behavior and felt good about themselves as teachers. Teachers who planned to use passion planned many of their own behaviors and felt good about themselves as teachers when experiencing passionate lessons. The feelings were fueled by positive student feedback that perpetuated passionate teaching moments.

Skilled teachers understand their students and are willing to do what they know moves their students to learn. Passion, teacher personality, and relationships with students are some of the tools intentionally and unintentionally used by teachers with their students. Teachers do not use passionate teaching the same way or with the same frequency but it is valued by teachers. More research is needed to understand that passionate teaching may be used to help make teachers more effective.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### Interview Guide

1. What are your beliefs about what makes you passionate in the classroom?
2. When you are teaching with passion, what responses do you observe in your students?
3. What differences do you notice in students, after they experience a passionate lesson?
4. How do you treat your students when teaching a lesson passionately?
5. What types of behaviors do you think you exhibit when teaching with passion?
6. How often do you think you are experiencing passionate teaching moments within your lessons?
7. How often do you think you are teaching with passion?
8. How do your behaviors change when you teach with passion?
9. What are the rates at which passion comes and goes throughout the lesson?
10. Do you plan to use passion in your lessons?
11. What teaching techniques do you choose in conjunction with passionate teaching?
12. How do you use passion to add emphasis to a lesson?
13. How do you use passion to create sympathy?
14. How often do you use passion to help teach a lesson?
15. How do you think passion is intentionally used in the classroom at Hugo High School?
16. Based on your observations of student behavior, how do you think passion is unintentionally experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School?
17. How do you think passion is experienced in the classroom at Hugo High School from the perspective of teachers?

APPENDIX B

Observation Guide

Expressions	Frequency	Duration
Anger		
Worried		
Intense		
Happiness		
Delight		
Excited		

Physical	Frequency	Duration
Standing		
Sitting		

Involvement	Frequency	Duration
Monitoring		
Lecturing/Verbal Teaching		

Participation	Frequency	Duration
Listening		
Observing		
Teaching		

Volume	Frequency	Duration
Normal		
Loud		
Soft		

Gestures	Frequency	Duration
Pointing		
Shaking of fist		
A teacher look		
Other gestures		
Other gestures		

Evidence of Passion	Frequency	Duration
Example		
Example		

If planned, did the teacher use passion when they planned on using it during the lesson? \_\_\_\_\_

Did the use of passion appear in other areas of the lesson besides what was planned? \_\_\_\_\_

Did the use of passion appear to be effective? \_\_\_\_\_

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