Public Abstract

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Title:GOALS OF INSTRUCTION: A CROSS CASE ANALYSIS OF FIVE SECONDARY MATHEMATICS TEACHERS

Teacher goals are an understudied component of teacher thinking. Potentially, teacher goals uncover the composite of knowledge, beliefs, and values and direction that underlie teachers' actions. In this study five experienced secondary mathematics teachers were observed and interviewed over the span of a week to investigate their goals. Findings were developed inductively and led to a presentation of goal themes. Teachers in this study held numerous goals directed toward engaging and orienting students to learning goals. They held goals for self-improvement, for the classroom environment, the direction tasks and activities would go, and also held learning goals in both pure subject matter as well as affect goals such as that students come to value mathematics and perceive it as useful. Teachers monitored the attainment of their goals and generally were driven to continually work towards goals because they did not think of themselves as ever completely achieving their goals.

The reasoning teachers engaged in related to their goals provided a window into their knowledge and beliefs and how their knowledge and beliefs developed around their goals. This information is beneficial to researchers as well as practitioners and pre-service teachers because this research indicates that teachers' goals can be very useful to uncover teacher knowledge and highlights how influential teacher goals are in the overall learning environment as well as how teachers perceive their own work.