



APPRECIATIVE EVALUATION - APPLICATIONS WITHIN EDUCATION

*Cynthia Bauman, Ph.D.
Evaluation Workshop Series @ USF
September 19, 2020*

About Me

- Former Pasco County Educator
 - Teacher, Instructional Coach, Assistant Principal and Principal
- USF Graduate Certificate in Evaluation - 2015
- USF Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies - 2018
- Presented at American Evaluation Association (AEA) annual conferences
- Currently Instructor with Florida Atlantic University
 - IDEAL Program for Educational Leadership (Inclusive Development of Educational Administrators and Leaders)

My Journey

- First exposed to appreciative mindset through the evaluation certificate program at USF. The idea that we could ask questions to determine what is going well to evaluate programs was revolutionary to me. I had been embedded in a deficit mindset (trying to fix what was wrong) rather than building on strengths.
- But you can reach into what is missing by first seeing what is present in a positive way.
- The root of this application is appreciative inquiry.

Appreciative Inquiry

- Theoretical Foundations
 - Cooperrider and Srivastva, 1987
 - Proposals for Action Research about Organizational Life
 - Principle 1: Research into the social (innovation) potential of organizational, life should begin with **appreciation**
 - Principle 2: Research into the social potential of organizational life should be **applicable**
 - Principle 3: Research into the social potential of organizational life should be **provocative**
 - Principle 4: Research into the social potential of organizational life should be **collaborative**

Appreciative Inquiry

- Appreciative inquiry operates from the premise that asking positive questions draws out the human spirit in organizations.
- Four D Cycle (Cooperrider and Sekera, 2006) – Asking positive questions!
 - Discovery – Positive Questioning
 - Dream - Vision
 - Design – Collaborative Planning
 - Destiny – Shared Implementation “network like structures”

Practical Applications

- ***Appreciative Education (Bloom, Hutson, He & Konkle, 2013)***
 - ***Administration (Bloom, 2016)***
 - ***Advising (Bloom & Martin, 2002)***
 - Disarm – Your voice matters (power)
 - Discover – Positive , open ended questioning
 - Dream - Vision
 - Design – Collaborative actioning planning for the shared vision
 - Deliver – Resilience
 - Don't Settle – Always looking for ways to improve

Practical Applications

- ***Appreciative Leadership (Whitney, Trosten-Bloom, Rader, 2010)***
 - Inquiry – Positive questioning
 - Illumination – Highlighting strengths
 - Inclusion – Sense of belonging
 - Inspiration - Vision
 - Integrity – Trust everyone will give their best

Practical Applications

- ***Appreciative Evaluation (Preskill & Tzavaras-Catsambas, 2006)***
 - *Inquire* – Positive questioning
 - *Imagine* – Vision
 - *Innovate* – Plan
 - *Implement* - Engage

Spaces Between

“Leadership resides, not in individuals, but in the spaces between and among individuals” (Taylor, Goeke, Klein, Onore, and Geist, 2011, p. 921).

“*Spaces Between*”

- Organizational change AND Socially constructed reality
 - The theoretical frameworks for my dissertation include symbolic interactionism and social capital – both very socially constructed frameworks for reality – social interactions are very influenced by how you view yourself, how others view you, how you think others view you, and the resources you perceive are available to you within and across social settings.
 - Appreciative Inquiry comes from that same branch of socially constructed reality.
 - I wanted to know more about what was going “right” in a relatively successful school. I wanted to know what professional networks existed and if they had an impact upon perceptions of leadership for student achievement within this school. – Remember Cooperrider and Sekera’s (2006) “network-like structures” that would occur for implementation in the Destiny phase.
 - I applied Social Network Analysis to reveal both formal and informal (organic) networks along with those prominent influential individuals within the network – no matter what their title or role.

Teacher Leadership

- What was I looking for?

I wanted to find out what networks exist in this school, and how teacher leaders view their opportunities to influence the broader school community for improvement and innovation.

Professional Networks

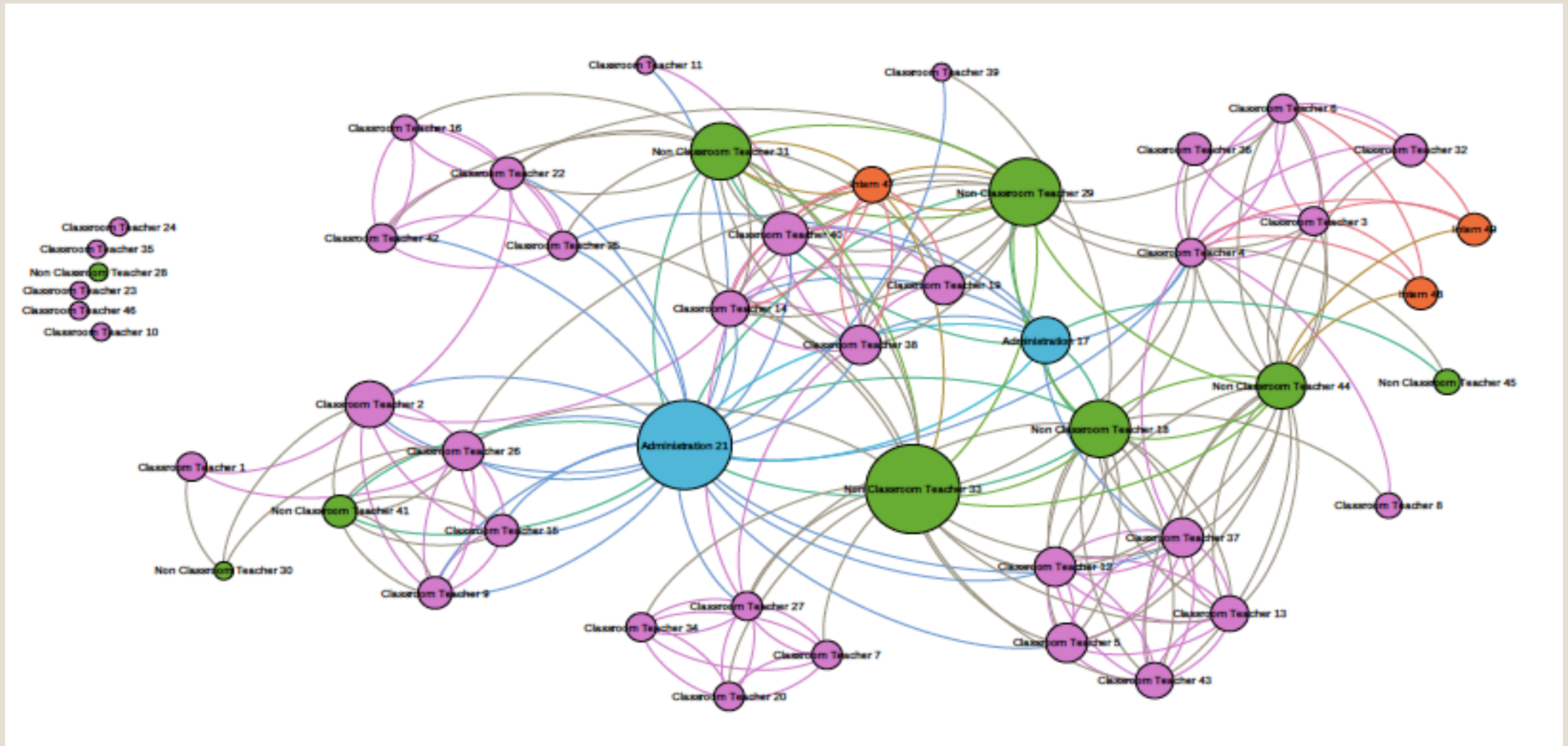
- What was I looking for?

I investigated what formal and informal networks exist in this case. Networks were mapped using Social Network Analysis (SNA). Formal advice seeking networks were mapped based on data collected through observations, while informal networks were mapped based on data collected through a survey and interviews of key actors within the network. Interviews with these key actors provided more thorough descriptions of these networks. I then combined the data from all three sources to create an overall advice-seeking network.

Teacher Efficacy and Innovation

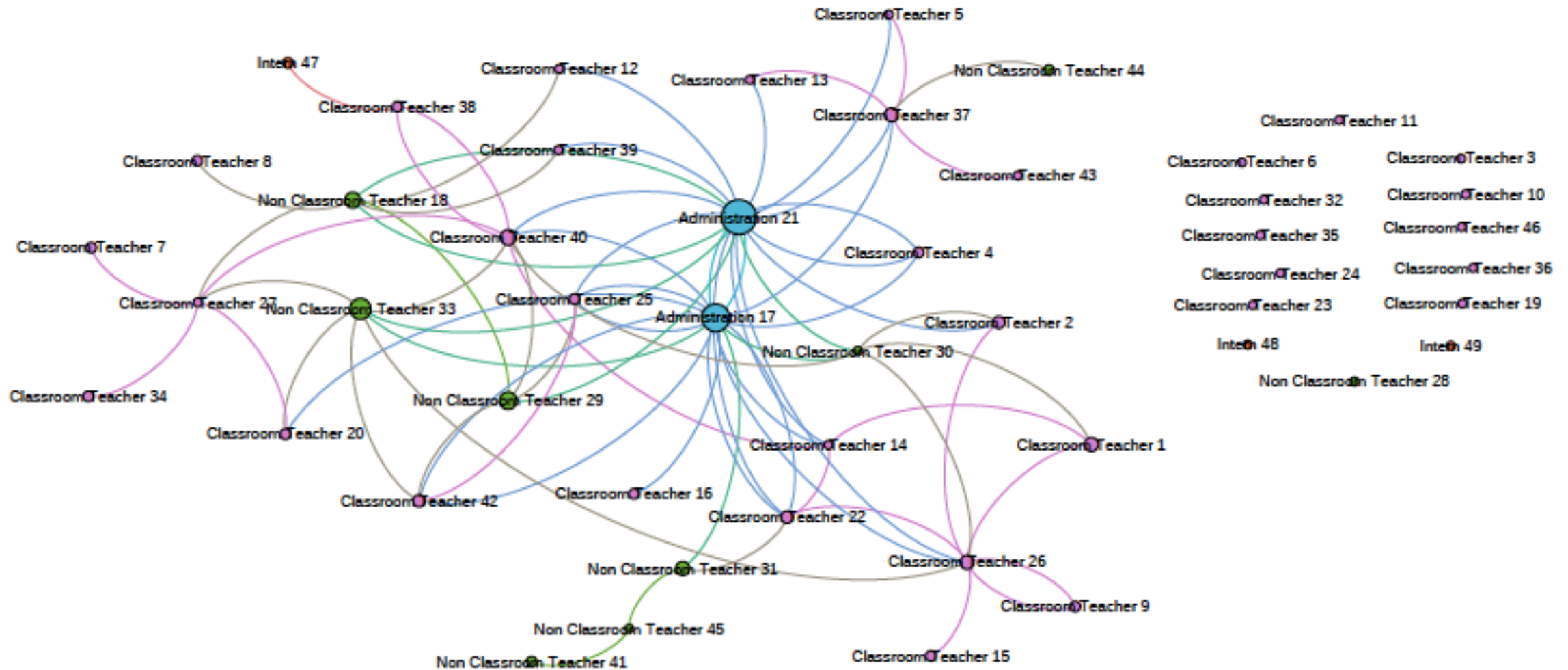
- What was I looking for?
 - Evidence from observations helped reveal public manifestations of teacher efficacy.
 - Interviews helped reveal links between teacher leadership and efficacy.
 - Observations and interviews helped reveal innovation opportunities and advice-seeking within professional networks.

Combined Advice Seeking for Instructional Practice

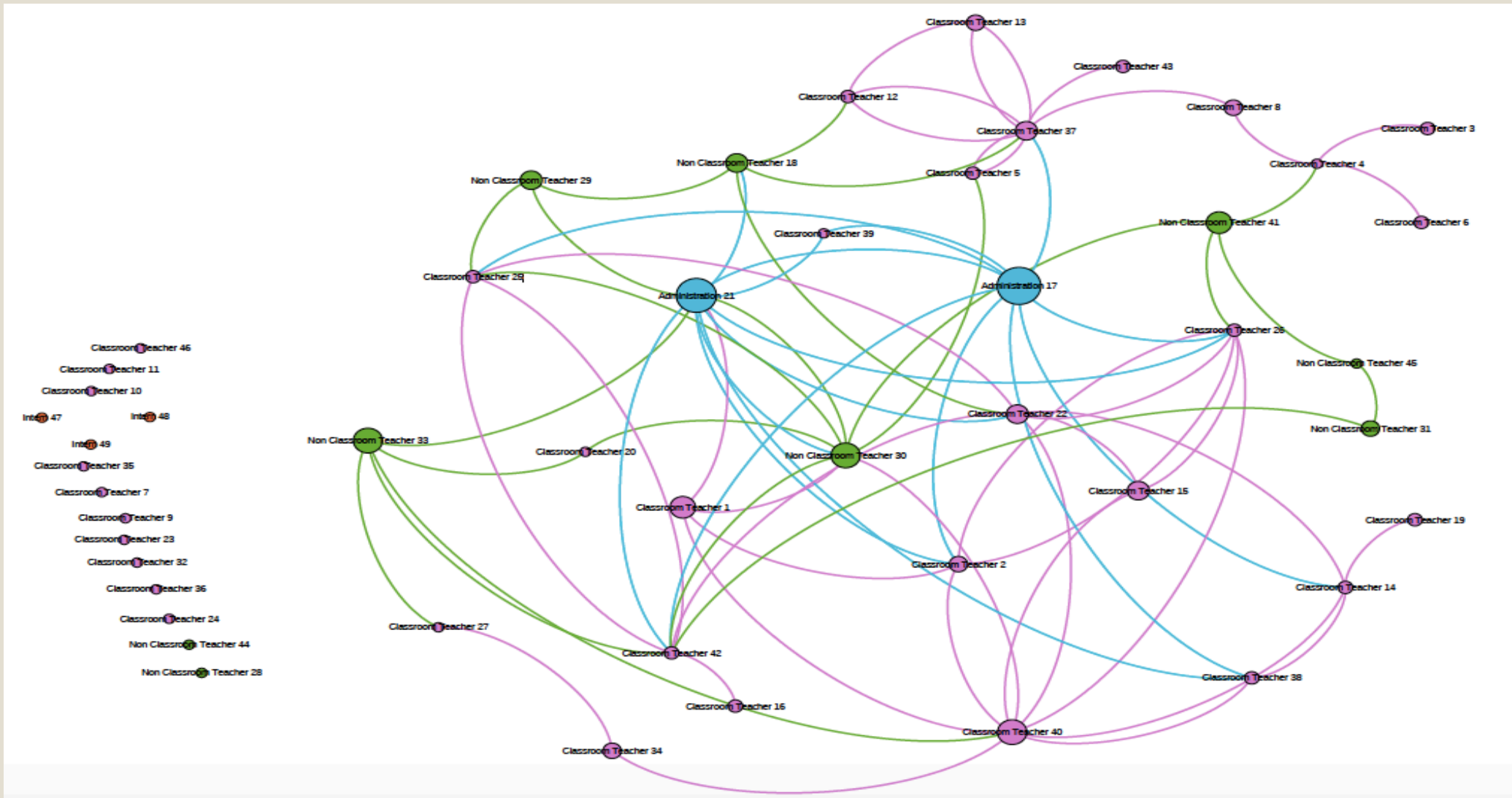


Bastian M., Heymann S., & Jacomy, M. (2009). Gephi: An open source software for exploring and manipulating networks. In *Proceedings of the Third International AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media*. Retrieved from <http://www.aaai.org/ocs/index.php/ICWSM/09/paper/view/154>

Combined Advice Seeking for Improvement



Combined Advice Seeking for Innovation



Making Connections

- Upon reflection – I was deep in the ***Inquiry*** phase.
 - I chose a school that illustrated what was “going well” in the district.
 - I wanted to reveal strengths within the networks – who were those instructional leaders – those positive sources of advice - as perceived by their peers.
 - Used semi-structured interview protocol with open ended questions framed in a positive way – ex, What areas of support do you provide to others? What about your school supports teacher leadership? Tell me about a time when you sought out advice from a peer.
 - Some follow up questions were – Why did you go to him/her? What draws you to that person?
 - By revealing what was going well, my inquiry also revealed areas that could have benefited from more focus – for example, the combined networks for advice-seeking showed opportunity for growth in interactions around improving and innovating practice – with evidence of strength in networks across campus – the networks for improving and innovating practice could be grown.

Making Connections

- Upon reflection
 - I worked deep in the **Inquiry** phase.
 - All my actions were with transparency and collaboration with the staff.
 - I was visible, present, and accessible to build trust.
 - To complete the cycle
 - I would have wanted to share my results with everyone that participated. The rest of the work would continue to be in collaboration with them.
 - **Imagine** – Did the revealed *Vision* match the intended vision? How do we continue to build a shared moral purpose?
 - **Innovate** – *Collaborative Planning* – Are there ways to build upon what is going well – our strong networks and a perception of shared leadership across the school?
 - **Implement** – Cooperrider and Sekera's (2006) "*network like structures*". How does the knowledge of our current professional networks help strengthen engagement for implementation of effective instructional practice?

What might it look or sound like?

Educators asking appreciative inquiry questions during...

Continuous Improvement Planning

Response to Intervention

MTSS

Teacher Evaluation

Constructive Feedback

Contact



Cynthia B. Bauman, Ph.D.

Email: baumancb@yahoo.com

Phone: +1 (813) 334-3846

References

- Bloom, J. L., Hutson, B. L., He, Y., & Konkle, E. (2013). Appreciative education. *New Directions for Student Services*, 143, 5–18.
- Bloom, Jennifer. (2016). Appreciative Administration: Applying the Appreciative Education Framework to Leadership Practices in Higher Education. *Journal of Higher Education Management*, 31, 195-210.
- Bloom, J. and Martin, N.A. (2002, August 29). Incorporating appreciative inquiry into academic advising. *The Mentor: An Academic Advising Journal*.
<http://dus.psu.edu/mentor/old/articles/020829jb.htm>
- Cooperrider, D. (2017) The Gift of New Eyes Reflecting on 30 Years of Appreciative Inquiry. *Organizational Life Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 25, (81), 42. doi:10.1108/S0897-301620170000025003
- Preskill, H. and Tzavaras-Catsambas, T. (2006). *Reframing Evaluation through Appreciative Inquiry*. SAGE.
- Whitney, D., Trosten-Bloom, A., & Rader, K. (2010). *Appreciative Leadership: Focus on What Works to Drive Winning Performance and Build a Thriving Organization*. McGraw Hill.