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Supporting the Professional Needs of Alternatively Certified Secondary Education Teachers

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This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Michelle L. Washington

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

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2016

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Abstract

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by

Michelle L. Washington

MS, Alabama State University, 1999

BS, Troy State University, 1995

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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August 2016

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Abstract

The reliance on alternative teacher certification to address teacher quality and quantity is an educational issue worthy of study because non-traditionally prepared teachers fill the nation's classrooms. This qualitative case study explored the experiences of secondary education teachers with no preservice training who earned a professional educator certificate in Alabama through the alternative baccalaureate-level program. The central research questions of this study related to the professional needs of alternatively certified teachers and how educational leaders supported those professional needs. The conceptual framework of this project study included the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education's differentiated induction model based on technical pedagogy and collegial support to address teacher quality and attrition. The qualitative data were gathered through a series of interviews with 6 alternatively certified secondary education teachers using specific protocols. Transcribed data were coded for a priori themes aligned to the research questions, and coded data were analyzed for trends and patterns. The results indicated that the participants perceived support from administrators and teacher leaders as important to their professional development and effectiveness. As a result of this study, a professional development training program was developed for the study site to assist educational leaders in providing an induction program. Implications for positive social change include for school and district administrators to have a better understanding of the challenges that alternatively certified teachers face; they may also appreciate the importance of providing administrator support to improve teacher effectiveness, retention, and ultimately student achievement.

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Dedication

This doctoral study is dedicated to my parents, Theodore and Jennifer Washington. With love and support, they taught me that the price of success is hard work and perseverance. It is God's grace and that lesson that has allowed me to accomplish many goals throughout my life. I love you.

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Section 1: The Problem

Introduction

Teacher quality and quantity is a concern of policymakers and educational leaders across the United States (Murnane & Steele, 2007; Stryker & Szabo, 2009; Wilson, 2011). In 2001, with the passing of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), the high stakes accountability to make adequate yearly progress increased for schools and districts in the United States (Finnigan, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). In an effort to improve teacher quality, the U.S. federal government challenged states to assign a *highly qualified* teacher in every classroom, which included placing teachers in the area where they are properly certified (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Since the inception of NCLB, however, many schools have struggled to meet the law's mandates due in large part to teacher shortages (Brownell, Bishop, & Sindelar, 2005; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Jacob, 2007; Mollenkopf, 2009).

At the time of this study, some U.S. school districts hire emergency certified teachers and assign teachers out of field to fill empty classrooms (Berry, Daughtery, & Nieder, 2009; Ludlow, 2011). It is a challenge for school districts to be held accountable for meeting adequate yearly progress (AYP) while struggling to hire and retain highly qualified teachers (Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Kolbe & Strunk, 2012; Strawn, Fox, & Duck, 2008; Stryker & Szabo, 2009). Failure to fill U.S. classrooms with highly effective and well-prepared teachers is one of U.S. educational stakeholders' greatest areas of concern (Berry, 2008; Brownell et al., 2005; Ingersoll, 2001; Kolbe & Strunk, 2012; Ludlow, 2011; Stryker & Szabo, 2009; Wilson, 2011).

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While teacher quality has been at the forefront of U.S. school improvement initiatives, teacher quantity has also became a major concern and obstacle for many schools to meet the mandates of NCLB (Jacob, 2007; Ludlow, 2011; Stryker & Szabo, 2009). Many school and district administrators struggle to recruit and retain good teachers (Berry, 2008; Kolbe & Strunk, 2012). This shortage is complicated by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2010) report that between 2008 and 2020 an estimation between 2.9 and 5.1 million teachers will be hired due to retirement alone. Additionally, increased college tuition costs, increased student enrollments, teacher attrition and migration, working conditions of schools, and staffing requirements contribute to this growing problem of teacher shortages (Boyd, Goldhaber, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2001; Howard, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

Another key issue regarding the replacement of outgoing teachers is a documented decrease in teacher education graduates from U.S. colleges and universities. Enrollment in undergraduate and graduate teacher preparation programs decreased by 22,000 students between 2003-2004 and 2006-2007 (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education Programs, 2010). This teacher shortage dilemma has forced states to rely more on the alternate routes to teacher certification to fill their classrooms (Ludlow, 2011). This reliance on alternative teacher certification to address the teacher quality and quantity issue was the impetus for this study.

State departments of education have created alternative routes to teacher certification out of necessity to address these ongoing teacher quality and teacher

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shortage issues (Adelman, Michie, & Bogart, 1986; Gimbert, Cristol, & Sene, 2007; Ludlow, 2011; Ingersoll, 2003; Sandlin, 1993; Shaw, 2008). The design of alternative teacher certification programs offers shorter pathways to teaching careers for individuals holding a bachelor's degree in a field other than education, which are also known as nontraditional teacher preparation programs. Every state has at least one alternate route to teacher certification (National Center for Alternative Certification, 2009). During the 2007-2008 school year, alternative certification programs issued certificates to teach to 62,000 individuals across the nation (NCET, 2009). With the increase in the number of individuals obtaining certificates to teach via this route, supporters worked to improve the quality of training provided through alternative certification programs (Walsh, Jacobs, & Thomas Fordham Institute, 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2004), whereas others argued that teachers produced from alternative certification programs are underprepared and can have a negative impact on student learning have (Anthony & Kritsonis, 2006; Berry, 2001; Lacko-Kerr & Berliner, 2003; Nagy & Wang, 2006; Silin et al., 2008).

The phenomena of alternative certification is a major force within the current landscape of education within the United States. There is limited knowledge of how school administrators and mentor teachers support the needs of alternatively certified secondary education teachers when a preservice training program does not exist. This project study investigated what those needs are and how school and district administrators addressed the needs from their perspectives of alternatively certified teachers who completed the State of Alabama's alternate route to teacher certification.

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Definition of the Problem

In the state of Alabama, alternatively certified teachers enter the classroom without preservice training, and their retention rate is low (Leech, 2007; Phillips, 2007; Sims, 2009). A problem existed in a rural southeastern Alabama school system relative to the assimilation of alternatively certified teachers in the secondary classroom setting. As of the 2006-2007 school year, there were 67 emergency and alternatively certified teachers employed (LEA HQT Plan, 2006). These teachers were not fully certified, and they did not meet the requirements of the federal mandate of the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) definition of highly qualified status. There were a number of reasons for termination of the teachers' employment with the school district. Failure to meet certification requirements and poor performance were mentioned as reasons for termination by school and district level administrators (R. Brown, personal communications, May 11, 2010; E. Howell, personal communications, August 19, 2012; S. Nowlin, personal communication, June 12, 2012; J. Painter, personal communications, May 15, 2007; M. Sherfield, personal communications, September 4, 2012; J. Wilkerson, personal communications, May 12, 2010; Sims, 2009).

This study explored the experiences of secondary education teachers who completed the alternative baccalaureate-level program to achieve a professional educator certificate in Alabama. According to the Alabama Department of Education (2007), this certificate approach is available to college graduates who hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree in a field other than education. These individuals were required to pass the appropriate subject area Praxis exam, a basic skills test, and

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must be employed at the secondary level by a local school board of education. They entered the high school classroom with no prior course work in the field of education and are required to complete course work prior to the end of their second year of employment. They were required to complete three years of employment prior to receiving a Professional Educator Certificate. Based on observation of school and district leaders, meeting the requirements to earn a certificate to teach while learning to teach posed an additional challenge to their assimilation to the classroom environment (R. Brown, personal communications, May 11, 2010; E. Howell, personal communications, August 19, 2012; S. Nowlin, personal communication, June 12, 2012; J. Painter, personal communications, May 15, 2007; M. Sherfield, personal communications, September 4, 2012; J. Wilkerson, personal communications, May 12, 2010).

Alternatively certified teachers participate in induction in the same manner as traditionally certified teachers as they enter their new teaching careers. Although some alternatively certified teachers may enter the secondary education classroom with content knowledge to meet the definition as a highly qualified teacher, they often lack the necessary pedagogical knowledge and training to be an effective teacher (Torff & Sessions, 2009). The alternatively certified teachers at the study site lacked field experiences. This lack is important because field experiences expose student teachers to the classroom environment by providing observation and interactions with professionally certified experienced teachers (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2009). Field experiences also expose student teachers to the diverse learners that exist in today's classroom. Lack of field experiences contribute to a

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lower sense of self-efficacy as a teacher of record, higher attrition, and affect the achievement and behavior of the students taught by the alternatively certified teacher (Elliott, Isaacs, & Chugani, 2010).

Many alternatively certified secondary education teachers are entering the classroom for the first time since they were students as first year teachers, and often find themselves in need of significant professional support (Steadman & Simmons, 2007). To be effective, these teachers need more than content knowledge: Alternatively certified teachers are not properly prepared to relate to the diverse backgrounds and learning styles of today's students (Boe, Shin, & Cook, 2007; Tissington & Grow, 2007). District and school administrators should provide professional support and development to this specialty class of secondary education teachers without a clear understanding of how their needs differ from a traditionally certified new teacher. Darling-Hammond (2007) identified the percentage of teachers with full certification in content area specialization as a powerful indicator of student achievement. Middle and high school alternatively certified teachers do not participate in research studies as a separate subgroup of the education community. The professional needs of this special group of teachers are important to the education community to ensure quality of their instruction as well as the quality of the professional support they receive for success and retention (Greenlee & Brown, 2009).

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Rationale

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

The Alabama State Department of Education established alternate routes to teacher certification in 1986; however, no preservice training component was included in the program (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2015). Districts and schools in Alabama, like many states across the nation, are desperate for certified teachers, especially secondary education teachers (Alabama School Journal, 2007; Phillips, 2007; Thornton, Peltier, & Medina, 2007; U.S. DOE, 2013). A survey of the 131 Alabama school systems conducted by the Alabama Education Association regarding teacher shortages reported a shortage of special education, middle, and high school level math and science teachers (Alabama School Journal, 2007). In the southeastern Alabama School system, there were 67 nonhighly qualified teachers; most had an emergency certificate or were on an alternate route to certification (LEA HQT Plan, 2007). Within the following three years, 25 teachers resigned, and 28 teachers lost their jobs for various performance deficiencies or because they could not meet certification requirements. These alternatively certified teachers were core academic secondary education teachers and were responsible for ensuring that the students that they taught were college and career ready based on the state approved standards. The retention of these alternatively certified teachers is of great concern to policymakers and educational leaders due to the impact on student performance, the amount of finances and time invested in professional development, and the shortage of education graduates in the core academic content areas from the surrounding colleges and universities (PARCA, 2015) .

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The Alabama Department of Education (2007) acknowledged the necessity for mentors to assist new teachers by providing a stipend for mentor teachers. A mandated formal induction program for each school system is not required. A variety of designs of induction and mentoring programs exist (Wei, Andree, & Darling-Hammond, 2009). Such variety in induction and mentoring programs results in an inconsistency of professional support provided to the new teachers (Boe et al., 2007; Foote, 2009; Maloy, Siedman, Pine, & Ludlow, 2006). Although alternatively certified teachers met the federal definition of a highly qualified teacher because they had demonstrated their content knowledge on the required exams and obtained certification, researchers agree that "a teacher's content knowledge does not ensure high-quality instruction" (Linek et al., 2009, p. 403). The limited education coursework that alternatively certified teachers complete results in less pedagogical knowledge than their traditionally prepared colleagues. With no preservice training and pedagogical knowledge, alternatively certified teachers without the proper support are less prepared to teach subject matter, develop curriculum, and manage student behavior which can have a dramatic impact on the academic performance of high school students (Boe et al., 2007; Maloy et al., 2006; Riggs, 2013).

The State of Alabama has the highest high school graduation requirements in the United States (Alabama Department of Education, 2004). The curriculum requires four years of English, mathematics, social studies, and science. These subjects are the core curriculum courses. High school students are required to master the fundamental concepts of core curriculum courses as a graduation requirement by passing the Alabama High School Graduation Exam (AHSGE; Alabama Department of

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Education, 2004). School districts across the state of Alabama reported the teacher shortages exists in grades 7 to 12 core academic subjects as science, mathematics, English, and social science along with special education and foreign languages (USDOE, 2013). Although all students in all grades need highly effective and highly qualified teachers, there is a dire need at the secondary level (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005; U.S. DOE, 2013).

Eighty-two percent of Alabama's high school students are graduating without the knowledge and skills needed to succeed in college or the 21st-century workforce (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2013). In fact, Alabama's graduation rate is below the national average. Only about 24% of eighth grade students in Alabama read proficiently (NCES, 2011). These students need the best teachers possible to raise their achievement and attainment levels—to graduate prepared for further training and education, and to become contributing members of society (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005).

The number of individuals graduating with bachelor's degree in education across the state of Alabama is low (PARCA, 2015). With fewer education graduates, alternative routes to certification are a necessity. The design of alternative routes to teacher certification programs assists school leaders with access to a qualified individual to fill teacher vacancies and provides a quality education to students. To accomplish teacher retention and have a positive impact on student achievement, alternate route programs must produce highly effective as well as qualified teachers.

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Evidence of the Problem From the Professional Literature

The National Center for Education Information (2011) reported 40% of new teachers hired since 2000 were prepared through an alternate route to teacher certification program. In Alabama, since the mid-1980s at least 5% of new hires were alternatively certified teachers (NCEI, 2010). Although the number of alternatively certified teachers hired each year were increasing rapidly, the retention rates were lower for teachers who enter the classroom through traditional teacher preparation programs (Boe & Cook, 2006; Suell & Piotrowski, 2007; USDE; 2002; Wilkinson, 2009). The National Commission on Teaching America's Future (2002) estimated the attrition rate of alternatively certified teachers to be as high as 60 percent. Ingersoll (2003) referred to the increased demand for new teachers and the high rates of teacher mobility due to the attrition and other contributing factors like teacher shortages as a revolving door. Math, science, and special education teachers are more often subject to leave in public schools (Friedrichsen, Lannin, Abell, Arbaugh, & Volkmann, 2008; Ingersoll, 2003). These vacancies placed school administrators in desperate situations where they hired individuals who were minimally prepared and not fully certified (Leko & Brownell, 2009). In this study, the term *not fully certified* includes *alternatively*, *undercertified*, *emergency*, *temporary*, and *provisionally* certified.

There is much debate amongst educators and policymakers regarding the effectiveness of alternatively certified teachers while they learn on the job. Grossman and Loeb (2010) contended that the "existence of alternate routes into teaching alone, even highly selective alternate routes, cannot ensure high quality teaching and learning, particularly in high poverty schools" (p. 26). Cleveland (2003) noted that

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knowledge of subject content does not qualify a person to be able to provide

instruction on that subject. Researchers found that alternatively certified teachers lack

pedagogical content knowledge (Brindley & Parker, 2010; Cleveland, 2003;

Grossman & Loeb, 2010; Lacko-Kerr & Berliner, 2003).

Steadman and Simmons (2007) observed that alternatively certified teachers

"often find themselves in need of professional support" because they lack the

"practitioner experience" gained through a traditional teacher preparation program (p.

366). Brindley and Parker (2010) investigated the experiences of second-career

teachers during their induction year, examining their beliefs about teaching. Three

teachers who entered a post baccalaureate program participated in the study; two were

hired in hard-to-staff schools, and the third teacher hired at a charter school (Brindley

& Parker, 2010). Brindley and Parker (2010) reported that the alternatively certified

teachers expressed dissatisfaction with their induction. These second-career teachers

identified a lack of support and resources as contributing factors to their difficult

transition into their new profession (Brindley & Parker, 2010). Lack of understanding

what and how to teach also contributed to their eventual decisions to leave the field of

education (Brindley & Parker, 2010). These findings by Brindley and Parker (2010)

revealed that although these alternatively certified teachers experienced the same

pressures as their university prepared counterparts, they struggled to adapt to the

teaching profession during their induction year.

Alternatively certified teachers participate in the same induction programs and

evaluation systems as traditionally certified teachers in Alabama. However, the

induction and mentoring program were designed to assist first-year teachers who had

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background knowledge of pedagogy, classroom management techniques, child development, and internship experiences (Zeichner & Hutchinson, 2008). Although addressed in the literature was various initiatives and strategies for supporting the needs of alternatively certified teachers, researchers reported that these teachers are not receiving these services (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Fry & Anderson, 2011; Nagy & Wang, 2006). The lack of differentiated induction and mentoring experiences affected the efficacy and retention of alternatively certified teachers because they did not receive the adequate professional support needed to be successful in the classroom (Anthony & Kritsonis, 2006). This problem in turn ultimately affects student achievement.

Some experts have noted that underprepared teachers hinder student learning (Anthony & Kritsonis, 2006; Boyd et al., 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2010; Darling-Hammond et al., 2002; Lacko-Kerr & Berliner, 2003; Nagy & Wang, 2006; Whiting & Koltz, 1999). Liu and Meyer (2005) noted that these noncertified or emergency certified teachers may impede students learning experiences due to inadequate preparation and ineffective teaching. Whiting and Koltz (1999) stated that the educational community should suspend the practice of putting poorly prepared alternatively certified teachers "into shark infested waters with the expectation that they will be able to navigate and survive, without harming either the students or themselves" (p. 7). After being hired, the alternate route teachers are left to fend for themselves without proper support, mentoring, and personal contact with school administrators (Boe et al., 2007; Brindley & Parker, 2010; Maloy et al., 2006; Nagy & Wang, 2006).

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As a result of these problems, alternatively certified teachers have several common traits. They tend to:

- have a limited view of curriculum;

- lack understandings of student ability and motivation;

- experience difficulty translating content knowledge into meaningful information for students to understand;

- plan instruction less effectively;

- tend not to learn about teaching through experiences; and

- are less skilled in classroom management (Lacko-Kerr & Berliner, 2003; Schonfeld & Feinman, 2012).

Leko and Brownell (2009) reported that since many alternatively certified teachers, and specifically alternatively certified special education teachers, enter the classroom with minimal preparation, they fail to provide assistance to regular education teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities as well as "to provide direct, intensive instruction in literacy or mathematics" (p. 66). Anthony and Kritsonis (2006) conducted a study on alternatively certified teachers and recommended that school districts provide alternatively certified teachers strong leadership and guidance, create an environment conducive to meet their needs, model multiple teaching strategies and pedagogical styles, provide opportunities for alternatively certified teachers to have a voice, and respect them as professionals and adults.

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Definitions

Alternative certification: A teaching certificate issued to an individual by a federal, state, or local agency that is earned through a nontraditional teacher-training program (Ravitch, 2007).

Alternatively Certified Teacher: A college graduate with a degree in a field other than education that is earning a professional teaching certificate through nontraditional teacher preparation program and employed as a teacher by a school system (Ravitch, 2007). Alternative certified teacher, alternate route teacher, nontraditionally prepared teachers, nontraditional teacher, second career teacher, and alternatively certified teacher are used interchangeably throughout this study.

Content knowledge: Expertise in a subject being taught (Shulman, 1987). Also known as subject matter knowledge.

Emergency certificate: In the context of this study, a temporary teaching certificate. In state of Alabama, the emergency certificate is valid for one school year.

Highly Qualified Teacher (HQT): According to the Alabama State Department of Education (2010), a teacher must hold a bachelor's degree, full state certification, and a passing score on a subject specific test. The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that states establish criteria to identify highly qualified teachers. NCLB does not apply to teachers of the following disciplines: driver and traffic safety education, health education, physical education, Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC), and career technical education (CTE) unless CTE courses carry embedded credit or substitute credit for mathematics or science or other core academic subjects."

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High quality professional development: In the context of this study, teacher-learning experiences consistent with research on effective adult learning to improve professional practice (NRCCTE, 2011).

High quality professional support: In the context of this study, consistent interactions between novice teachers, a qualified mentor, school and district administrators, and university professors to improve professional practice (NRCCTE, 2011).

Induction program: A professional support designed to assist beginning teachers during their transition into the teaching profession which include orientation, mentoring, professional learning opportunities and support from administrators (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010).

Mentor: In the context of this study, a teacher or instructional support employee who provides guidance, support, and assistance in the development and improvement of the professional skills and understanding to a beginning teacher or instructional support person (Alabama State Department of Education, 2010).

Pedagogical content knowledge: Expertise in instructional strategies and classroom management techniques for students in the K-12 setting that are typically taught in traditional teacher preparation programs (Shulman, 1987).

Praxis II Exams: Subject specific tests required by state boards of education as a component of their teacher certification process, which measures content knowledge and teaching skills (Educational Testing Service, 2009).

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Proper Certification: Holding a valid certificate in the teaching field(s) and/or area(s) of instructional support in which the person is assigned throughout the school day (Alabama Department of Education, 2010).

Teacher instructional competence: Teacher performance in instructional planning, use of instructional strategies, assessment, and classroom management (NRCCTE, 2011, p. 14).

Teacher self-efficacy: The degree to which teachers feel they can influence students and their learning (NRCCTE, 2011, p. 14).

Significance

This study explored the experiences of alternatively certified secondary education teachers with no preservice training during their initial years of teaching and provided insight to local school and district leaders about the professional needs of these teachers. The voices of alternatively certified teachers are rarely heard. Goodson (1992) acknowledged the importance of teachers' voices being represented in educational research to foster a greater understanding of teacher learning. Studies have been conducted that focus on supporting and mentoring alternatively certified teachers from preparation programs that require field observations and student internships prior to assuming the full responsibilities as a classroom teacher (Anthony & Kritsonis, 2006; Bradbury & Kobilla, 2007; Chesley, Wood, & Zepeda, 1997; Humphrey & Wechsler, 2007; Humphrey, Wechsler, & Hough, 2008; Myers, McMillan, Price, Anderson, & Fives, 2007; Utsumi & Kinu, 2006).

Humphrey and Wechsler (2007) agreed that more research is needed about alternative certification program participants and their preparation. Strawn et al.

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(2008) encouraged school districts to report the needs of alternatively certified teachers to higher education institutions before their license expires. The data reported by school districts could be used to inform schools of education for the development of course objectives for new teacher training (Strawn et al., 2008). More research is needed to evaluate how alternatively certified teachers are prepared and supported as they enter the classroom (Bell et al., 2010).

This study may improve teacher and school leader preparation programs by igniting discussions on teacher quality and challenges that this special class of teachers experience as they transition into the classroom. Other state departments of education with similar alternate route to certification programs or school districts who employ teachers with no preservice training may benefit from this project. By studying this problem, local school and district administrators can identify professional needs of alternatively certified secondary education teachers, which can lead to the development of more effective professional development plans and procedures for recruiting and retaining individuals from nontraditional teacher preparation programs. In essence, exploring the experiences of alternatively certified teachers at the secondary level can inform federal, state, and local policymakers and teacher educators how to better assist them as they rapidly fill vacancies in classrooms across the nation.

Guiding/Research Question

The retention rate of alternatively certified teachers was low in a southeastern Alabama school system. These teachers entered the classroom with no preservice training. Although professional support from school and district personnel was

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expected to ease the burden of transitioning for alternatively certified teachers, many school and district leaders were not aware of the challenges and needs of this special group of teachers. This qualitative case study explored the experiences of alternatively certified secondary education teachers who entered the classroom with no preservice training and completed the alternative baccalaureate-level certificate approach in the state of Alabama. This project study focused on the following main question: What are the professional needs of alternatively certified teachers? The following research subquestions were also included in the study:

1. What do alternatively certified secondary teachers regard as a meaningful experience in the school assimilation process?

2. What do alternatively certified secondary teachers consider the most frustrating and challenging situations of their first years of teaching?

3. What support can school and district administrators provide to ensure retention and teacher effectiveness of alternatively certified secondary teachers?

4. What advice would completers of Alabama's alternative certification program provide to novice alternatively certified teachers as they start their new career?

Review of the Literature

Alternatively certified teachers assume dual roles as teachers of record and students of teaching while working in the secondary education classrooms with no preservice training in Alabama. Examining the current research on alternative routes to certification is vital to improve their preparation program and ensure their success

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as a classroom teacher. Although various initiatives and strategies for supporting the needs of alternatively certified teachers are addressed in the literature, it does not mean that these teachers are receiving these services (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 2003; Fry & Anderson, 2011; Nagy & Wang, 2007). The purpose of this review of literature is to foster a deep understanding of the variables relating to the professional support and professional development of this special group of teachers to ensure their success and retention.

In conducting this review of the literature, I used several different libraries to saturate the topic. Libraries at Walden University, Alabama State University, Auburn University, Troy University, Tuskegee University, and Auburn and Opelika city public libraries were utilized. To further my search on the study, I subscribed to Teachers College Record. Also, EBSCO Host Research Databases were searched including Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Dissertation and Theses, Education Research Center, Google, Google Scholar Teacher Reference Center, Education: A SAGE Full Text Collection, Psychology: A SAGE Full Text Collection, PsycINFO, and PsycArticles.

Conceptual Framework

The design of qualitative research is to explore the meanings people have constructed about a particular phenomenon (Merriam, 2002). The phenomenon under study in this project study was the alternatively certified secondary education teachers' perceptions of their professional needs during their initial years of teaching. Specifically, I identified and described the experiences of alternatively certified secondary education teachers who enter the classroom with no preservice training. A

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thorough investigation of the experiences of the completers of the alternative

baccalaureate certification program yielded findings on which to base future policy

and practices for educational leaders to develop to improve the preparation and

retention of this population of teachers.

The conceptual framework for this project study suggested that with a

working knowledge of the identified professional needs of alternatively certified

teachers; educational leaders can provide high quality professional development and

high quality professional support to improve teacher effectiveness and retention of

alternatively certified teachers, which ultimately improves student achievement. A

study conducted by the National Research Center for Career and Technical Education

concluded that "professional support and professional development provided by

educational leaders yield increased levels of teacher instructional competence, self –

efficacy, and career commitment" (NRCCTE, 2011, p. 13). Educational leaders are

not trained to meet the needs of alternatively certified teachers (Nagy & Wang, 2007).

This study is of utmost importance because of the shared experiences of the

alternatively certified teachers can reveal about their initial years of teaching to

educational leaders may help support future alternatively certified teachers as they

transition to the classroom.

This literature review included an in-depth overview of the research

necessary to understand the components of this study. The literature search indicated

six relevant areas for the exploration of alternatively certified teachers: (a) the history

of alternate route to teacher certification, (b) professional development of

alternatively certified teachers, (c) professional support provided to alternatively

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certified teachers, (d) teacher instructional competence, (e) teacher career

commitment, and (f) teacher self-efficacy. The overview of these six topic areas

provided the most insightful and supportive data related to the purpose of this project

study.

Alternative Route to Teacher Certification History

In the late 1800s, state departments of education identified alternative route to

teacher certification as "emergency certification" (Zeichner & Schulte, 2001). As

early as 1945, educational leaders have been concerned about teacher shortages and

the use of alternatively certified teachers to fill the classrooms. Harap (1945) reported

that since Pearl Harbor more than 250,000 teachers left the classrooms leaving

schools in need of teachers in the areas of "industrial arts, physical education,

mathematics, commercial education, agriculture, physics, home economics,

chemistry, trade and industries" (p. 176). The United States Department of Education

(2009) projected 54 million students will be enrolled in public schools across the

nation by 2018. The United States Department of Education (2005) also predicted

needing an additional four million teachers to fill U.S. classrooms due to retirement,

attrition, and increased student enrollment. The necessity to staff our nation's schools

with qualified teachers has resulted in the inauguration of alternative teacher

certification programs (ATCP). These programs range from "emergency certification

to very sophisticated and well-designed programs that address the professional

preparation needs of the growing population of individuals who already have at least

a baccalaureate degree and considerable life experiences who want to become

teachers" (Feistritzer, 1998, p. 2). Since its inception, educational stakeholders

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designed alternative certification programs to reduce teacher shortages (Adelman et al., 1986; Ingersoll, 2001; Sandlin, 1993; Shaw, 2008) and increase the quality of instruction provided in U.S. classrooms (Gimbert et al., 2007). In the past two decades, alternative teacher certification programs were the route that nearly one-third of all new teachers entered the classroom (Feistritzer, 2010).

Types of Alternative Teacher Certification Programs

Currently, there are three types of alternative teacher certification programs in the United States designed to fill classrooms across the United States of America: national state, and school district programs. The national, state, and school district alternative teacher certification programs vary in entry requirements, length, group or agency responsibility, delivery mode, program components, curricula (Feistritzer, 2009; Suell & Piotrowski, 2007), and the nature of quality of mentoring and support that is provided once the trained teacher is in a classroom" (Zeichner & Hutchinson, 2008, p. 25). Suell and Piotrowski (2007) analyzed alternative certification across the nation and identified the agency responsible for training alternatively certified teachers ranges from a school district, regional service center, university, teacher union, or a business community. Alternative teacher certification programs range from two weeks to two or three years of coursework and mentoring.

National Models. American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE), Teach for America, and Troops to Teachers are the three national programs known to assist individuals seeking a teaching position through an alternate route. Teach for America, and Troops to Teachers are often mistaken for alternative certification program but are actually recruitment programs that assist individuals

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who desire to teach (Finn & Petrilli, 2007). Each state is responsible for defining its

requirements for teacher certification programs. These national programs serve as

recruiting models to assist individuals in the eligibility process without the numerous

requirements and cost of a traditional teacher preparation program offered through a

college or university (Tuttle, Anderson, & Glazerman, 2009; Finn & Petrilli, 2007;

McMurray, 2008).

Founded by the United States Department of Education in 2001, the American

Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) assists career changers with

an effective and rigorous process to become teachers (ABCTE, 2013). ABCTE also

assists current teachers who desire to earn certification in another subject area (Tuttle

et al., 2009). Unlike the traditionally prepared teacher certification programs and

some alternative certification programs, ABCTE does not include the same

components to earn certification such as field experiences, coursework, and a

portfolio (Tuttle et al., 2009). Instead, ABCTE requires individuals to demonstrate

mastery of content and pedagogical knowledge on a standardized assessment (Tuttle

et al., 2009). The retention rate of ABCTE teachers is eighty-five percent on the first

three years (ABCTE, 2013).

Teach for America (TFA) corps program's primary objective is to recruit high

achieving college graduates to teach for two years in low-income urban and rural

schools (Donaldson, 2012; Donaldson & Johnson, 2011). Harvard University and

Vanderbilt University are the leading contributors of the graduates that join the TFA

corps (Strauss, 2013). Nearly 48,000 individuals from all 50 states applied to the TFA

corps (Strauss, 2013). These diverse recruits serve the highest need of teacher

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vacancies in the United States (Donaldson, 2012; Donaldson & Johnson, 2011; Strauss, 2013).

Troops to Teachers (TTT) was established in 1994 by the Department of Defense to assist Service members to become employed as teachers, provide good role models to U.S. youth, and assist schools by providing teachers in critical subjects (Troops to Teachers, 2013). Over 14,000 military members have entered the field of education through this program (Nunnery, Kaplan, Owings, & Pribesh, 2009). Owings et al. (2006) conducted a study on the principals' perception of TTT program participants. The results indicated that the TTT program participants were more effective in instruction, classroom management, and student discipline than those teachers without military experience (Owings et al., 2006).

State Models. The federal government plays a role in the state sponsored alternative teacher certification programs through the Department of Education funding recruitment activities for hard to staff schools and critical subject area shortages. In 1984, New Jersey implemented the United States's first statewide alternative teacher certification program. New Jersey's statewide alternative certification program, the Provisional Teacher Program, served as a model for states throughout the nation (National Center for Education Information [NCEI], 2003). Alternate route teachers attend a program of formal instruction that takes place concurrently with the first year of employment. The school district assigns an experienced teacher to serve as a mentor. After successful completion of the 34-week long program, the alternate route teachers are eligible for a recommendation of the issuance of a standard licensure. More than 40 percent of New Jersey's teachers attain

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certification through the alternative teacher certification program, which certifies all grades and subject areas (Feistritzer, 2007).

The Alabama State Department of Education established alternate routes to teacher certification in 1986. Preservice training is not a requirement in the state's alternative certification program. The colleges and universities are responsible for meeting the certification requirements established by the state board of education. Therefore, the State Department of Education approves designs of the training programs developed by the colleges and universities develop. The Alabama State Department of Education (2013) offers several alternate routes to teacher certification:

1. Alternate baccalaureate-level certificate (ABC) approach;

2. Alternative fifth year program;

3. Preliminary alternative certificate (PAC) approach;

4. Special alternative certificate (SAC) approach; and

5. Additional teaching field approach based on praxis.

The study focused on alternatively certified teachers who have completed the alternative baccalaureate-level certificate approach. This certificate approach is for college graduates who hold a minimum of a bachelor's degree but did not complete a traditional teacher preparation program. These individuals must pass the appropriate subject area Praxis exam and a basic skills test. A local school board offers employment to an individual for admission into a university alternative certification program. A local board of education or nonpublic school employs that individual for three consecutive scholastic years, and must teach a majority of the time in the

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subject area and at the grade level of the certificate (Alabama State Department of Education, 2013). The school principal assigns the participant a mentor for two years. The alternate certificate issued is valid for one year of employment.

Prior to the beginning of the next year of employment, the alternatively certified teacher must complete the requirements in order maintain employment. Prior to the end of the third year of employment, the participant must have earned a grade of "C" or above in each course of the specified 12 semester hours or 18 quarter hours at an Alabama college or university with a state-approved teacher education program (Alabama State Department of Education, 2013). The alternatively certified teacher must submit a passing score in the required areas of coursework, which are classroom management, the evaluation of teaching and learning, strategies for teaching special needs students in inclusive settings, and methods of teaching in the field and at the grade level assigned (Alabama State Department of Education, 2013). At the end of the third year of employment, the alternative teacher applies for the Class B (baccalaureate level) professional teacher's certificate. The Class B professional teacher's certificate is the same certificate issued to a university graduate that has completed the bachelor's level teacher preparation program.

District Program. The New York City Department of Education is the largest public school system in the nation with approximately 1.1 million students in grades K-12 in over 1,700 public schools (New York City Department of Education, 2012). The New York City Teaching Fellows Program is the largest alternative certification program in the United States (New York City Department of Education, 2012). Since the spring of 2000, the NYC Teaching Fellows Program was designed to alleviate the

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chronic teacher shortages in high need subject areas such as special education, science, mathematics, bilingual education, English, Spanish, English as a second language, elementary education, and music (NYCDE, 2010). Approximately 16, 000 participants with no prior teaching experience has completed the program and become full time certified classroom teachers. These individuals completed an intensive preservice training program prior to their first year of teaching. They receive on-going professional development at the school level from mentor teachers and school administrators. Over 9,000 Fellows Program completers are teaching on 90 percent of the NYC's nearly 1,700 public schools (NYCDE, 2010).

Characteristics of Alternative Certification Programs

Humphrey et al. (2008) conducted case studies of seven alternative certification programs across the nation. Their findings identified characteristics of effective teacher certification programs. Program administrators should select candidates with strong content knowledge; and assign candidates to schools with strong administrators, adequate resources, effective induction programs, and a collegial environment (Humphrey et al., 2008). Brannan and Reichardt (2002) also noted key characteristics of high quality alternative teacher certification programs to include high entrance standards, extensive mentoring and supervision, intensive pedagogical training instruction, management and curriculum opportunities, frequent and substantial evaluations, practice in lesson planning and teaching, opportunities to work with diverse learners, and high exit standards (Brannan & Reichardt, 2002).

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Benefits of Alternative Certification Programs

Since its inception, alternate route teacher certification programs have been a topic of debate among policymakers, teacher educators, district and school administrators, and parents (Evans, 2011; Ingersoll, 2001). Proponents of alternative certification claim that these programs are the solution to the teacher shortage crisis (Chesley et al., 1997; Feistritzer, 2002; Johnson, Birkeland, & Peske, 2005) and attract more minorities to math, science, and special education teaching positions (Rosenberg & Sindelar, 2005; Scribner & Akiba, 2007). Johnson et al. (2005) conducted a study of 13 alternative teacher certification programs across four states. They found that in all 13 nontraditional programs the participants attributed reduced cost, reduced coursework, and reduced timeline as rationale for choosing the alternate route. The advantages of alternative certification programs are that they are cost effective, take shorter preparation, attractive to science and math majors and individual who are interested in teaching in rural and urban poor schools (Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2003).

Maier (2012) explained that alternative teacher certification programs deregulate entry to teaching, delay career decisions, and successfully recruit high achieving students who are interested in social justice. Participants of alternative route to teacher certification programs report that they are attracted to the opportunity to work as a teacher or record while earning a salary and completing the requirements of the program (Johnson et al., 2005). Advocates for alternative certification programs agree that in contrast to the traditional teacher education program, alternative certification programs removes expense and time of completion of

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education related coursework (Finn & Petrilli, 2007; Hess, 2001; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2003; Maier, 2012).

Challenges of Alternative Certification Programs

Supporters of traditional teacher education programs argue that teachers produced from alternative certification programs are underprepared and can have a negative impact on student learning (Berry, 2001; Darling–Hammond et al., 2002; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2003; Nagy & Wang, 2006). Berry (2001) noted that although some traditional teacher preparation programs fail to produce effective teachers, there are more alternative certification programs that fail to produce effective teachers and devalue the necessity of pedagogical knowledge. Laczko-Kerr and Berliner (2003) noted the disadvantages of alternative certification programs are retention rates, low grade point averages of program participants, and participants display less self-confidence and lack of pedagogical knowledge.

Classroom management, instructional planning, student assessment, child development, student diversity, and learning styles are areas that alternatively certified teachers have reported as challenges (Steadman & Simmons, 2007). Berry, Montgomery, and Synder (2008) also identified "common challenges to alternative teacher preparation programs to include: (a) a condensed, prescriptive curriculum, (b) lack of clinical support before becoming the teacher of record, (c) limited opportunities to learn both content and pedagogy, and inadequate preparation for teaching diverse learners" (as cited in Heineke et al., 2010, p. 127). Verlti (2012) identifies one of the drawbacks to fast track preparation, as the Teach for America (TFA) Program is that it devalues the traditional teacher preparation receive through

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colleges and universities. Unlike the traditional preparation program graduates, alternative route to teacher certification program participants are unfamiliar with pedagogy, classroom management techniques, instructional strategies, academic and social challenges faced by a diverse student population (Davis, Impara, Launey-Rodolf, & Dahlem, 2006; Nagy & Wang, 2007; Rosenberg, Boyer, Sindelar, & Misra, 2007). Nagy and Wang (2007) reported the challenges among alternatively certified teachers as they make their transitions to the classroom much more difficult than the assimilation of traditionally prepared teachers.

Types of Professional Support Received by Alternatively Certified Teachers

Teaching demands a complex set of skills and knowledge and teachers need support as they execute lesson plans, managed classrooms and evaluate students while meeting local, state, and federal standards (Malow-Iroff, O'Connor, & Bisland, 2007). Alternatively certified teachers need professional support as they transition into their new careers as classroom teachers (Bell et al., 2010; Malow-Iroff et al., 2007; Nagy & Wang, 2006). Many new alternatively certified teachers are hired the week of or during weeks the first day of school. Simmons (2005) contends that this practice of late hiring causes new alternatively certified teachers to focus on daily survival of their needs instead of the needs of the students. As alternatively certified teachers assume dual roles as teachers and students they struggle with classroom management, planning instruction, diverse student populations and learning styles (Steadman & Simmons, 2007). Depending on the alternative route program, many new, alternatively certified teachers lack the student teaching experience or college coursework typically completed in traditionally prepared teacher education programs

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(Steadman & Simmons, 2007). Administrative and collegial support mediates the effects of a beginning teacher's lack of student teaching experience, student behavior, job satisfaction and intent to remain in education (Connelly & Graham, 2009; Tickle, Chang, & Kim, 2011). Alternatively certified teachers typically receive professional support from various school and district personnel (e.g., school principals, assistant principals, mentors at the school level and district level, and university professors) which is vital to the effectiveness and retention of alternatively certified teachers.

Researchers (Foote, Brantlinger, Haydar, Smith, & Gonzalez, 2011) found that the majority of the alternatively certified teacher who participated in their study believed they were under supported. With the variety of support and the lack of cohesiveness among the personnel, these teachers may receive mixed messages (Foote et al., 2011). If the school, district, and university personnel fail to collaborate, this support may impede professional and personal growth of alternatively certified teachers (Foote et al., 2011). Connelly and Graham (2009) acknowledged that administrative and collegial support may compensate for the lack if preservice training. Crocco and Costigan (2007) conducted a study with middle and high school level beginning teachers with less than five years of teaching experience in NYC schools. Some of these teachers were completing an alternative route to certification program. The participants reported lack of support as one of the major problems, which affects their decision to remain in education or at the assigned school (Crocco & Costigan, 2007). These participants reported that the district level support did not assist in professional development but mundane tasks like ensuring the teachers followed the districts expected desk arrangements, prescribed bulletin boards and

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pacing guides (Crocco & Costigan, 2007). The participants also reported that there

were not enough effective and experienced mentors (Crocco & Costigan, 2007).

Casey, Dunlap, Brister, and Davidson (2011) conducted a study of 54 novice

alternatively certified special education teachers on the perceived support they

received during their beginning years. The participants were in their first, second, or

third years of teaching. Casey et al. reported that identifying challenges that

alternatively certified teachers face can be beneficial to school districts who hire

them. The participants of the study reported high levels of difficulty with mastering

the content of the subjects they had to teach and implementing effective classroom

management strategies. Three deficient areas identified by the novice alternatively

certified teachers were (a) special education procedures/process (60.3%), (b)

paperwork (52.8%), and (c) materials (47.9%; Casey et al., 2011).

Administrative Support. Administrative support is the most significant

predictor of teachers' intent to remain in education and the most significant predictor

of teachers' job satisfaction (Tickle et al., 2011). Boyd et al. (2011) defined

administrative support as support provided by school leaders that creates an

environment where teachers can teach and learn. Administrative support provided by

school leaders ranges from assistance with classroom management, instructional

strategies, curriculum, and assimilation to the school environment, to providing

effective professional development and protecting the teachers from the

implementation of nonessential district mandates (Boyd et al., 2011). Administrator

support strongly influences new teachers' decisions to remain in education or at their

assigned school (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009).

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In a study conducted by Ilmer, Nahan, Elliot, Colombo, and Synder (2005), 178 first year alternatively certified teachers reported that they were disappointed and frustrated with the lack of support received from principals. Nagy and Wang (2007) reported that although professional support from school and district personnel are expected to ease the burden of transitioning for alternatively certified teachers, many school and district leaders are not properly trained to support new alternatively certified teachers. It is the responsibility of the building administrator to foster growth and to ensure a successful integration into the school culture and community (Elliott et al., 2010). Teacher quality improves through professional development, supervision and support (Elliott et al., 2010).

Mentor and Collegial Support. Mentoring is a vital component of the alternate route to teacher certification programs. In a survey distributed to the Teaching Fellows (TFs), alternatively certified teachers working in the largest public school district in the United States identified classroom teachers as the most essential component to a school support system (O'Connor, Malow, & Bisland, 2011). In a study conducted by Humphrey et al. (2008), alternatively certified teaches reported that the mentoring experience was the most valuable factor of their induction into the teaching profession. The alternatively certified teachers identified the benefits of being able to observe their math teachers, review teaching resources, and discuss lesson plans and students with mentor (Humphrey et al., 2008).

Effective mentoring strategies are vital to ensure the success of a high quality-mentoring program. Cuddapah and Burtin (2012) reported that alternatively certified teachers expressed the desire to participate in a mentoring program that allows novice

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teachers to observe veteran teachers, receive observation and feedback. Garza (2009) conducted a qualitative study examining the written feedback provided to twenty rookie alternatively certified teachers. Based on the findings of this study, Garza (2009) recommends the use of functional feedback as an effective mentoring initiative for alternatively certified teachers. Mentoring alternatively certified teachers requires a conscious commitment from the mentor to provide assistance in planning effective lessons, delivering high quality instruction, and assessing students using a variety of effective evaluation techniques (Garza, 2009).

Career Commitment of Alternatively Certified Teachers

The quality of the professional support a teacher receives can have an impact on a teacher's decision to remain in the teaching profession (Nagy & Wang, 2007). Teacher *career commitment* refers to a teacher's self-report of intent to remain in the field of teaching for more than three years (NRCCTE, 2011, p. 14). Career commitment and providing quality education for students are primary expectations of teachers prepared in alternate route programs (Jorissen, 2003). However, there are studies that indicate that even these new teachers do not remain in the classrooms. Researchers found a lack of commitment to teaching among alternatively certified teachers (Nakai & Turley, 2003; Shen, 2000).

Approximately a half million teachers have become certified through an alternative route program (Feistritzer, 2009). Although the number of alternatively certified teachers hired each year is rapidly increasing, the retention rates are lower for teachers who enter the classroom through traditional teacher preparation programs (Boe & Cook, 2006; Suell & Piotrowski, 2007; USDE, 2002; Wilkinson, 2009). The

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retention of alternatively certified teacher varies as much as the variances among the program components of alternate routes. For example, Teach for America has yielded positive teacher retention results largely due to a two year commitment (Boyd et al., 2009; Grossman & Loeb, 2008; Kane, Rockoff, & Stagier, 2008).

Donaldson and Johnson (2011) surveyed over 2000 Teach for America teachers to determine retention rate beyond their two-year commitment. The authors (2011) reported that after five years, only 28 percent of the Teach for America teachers were still teaching. Donaldson and Johnson (2011) noted that the Teach for America teachers cited lack of collaboration and poor administrative leadership as their primary reason for leaving the field of education. A study conducted by Grissom (2008) found that the attrition of alternatively certified teachers is higher than their traditionally prepared counterparts' attrition. Ingersoll (2003) estimated it to be as high as sixty percent. Nagy and Wang (2007) concluded that the time of hire affects an alternatively certified teacher's decision to remain in the classroom. Nagy and Wang (2007) found that alternatively certified teachers who were hired during the summer were more likely to stay than those hired during the school year.

An estimated 60% of alternatively certified teacher leave the profession by their third year of teaching compared to 30% of traditionally prepared teachers (Berry, 2001). In high poverty urban environments, teacher turnover is high. Leko and Brownell (2009) found that the teacher attrition disrupts cohesion of the school environment and interferes with the faculty's attempts to build a collaborative culture. Leko and Brownell (2009) concluded that high poverty urban schools hire more alternatively certified teachers, which are inexperienced and minimally prepared.

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Teacher Instructional Competence and Teacher Self-efficacy Among ACTs

Instructional competence and self–efficacy have been linked to a teacher's ability to promote more positive learning environments and high student achievement (Zientek & Thompson, 2008). Kee (2012) conducted a study of novice traditionally certified and alternatively certified teachers about their feelings of preparedness. Kee (2012) found that alternatively certified teachers believed that somewhat less well prepared than their traditionally certified counterparts did. The results from Kee's study indicated that the alternatively certified teachers' training experiences consisted of less education coursework and shorter field experiences than the traditionally certified teachers did.

Zientek and Thompson (2008) conducted a study of novice alternatively certified middle and secondary mathematics and science teachers in Texas. Zientek and Thompson (2008) reported that the alternatively certified teachers needed additional training on standards for effective teacher. The mathematics teachers in the study did not feel prepared to teach in a high poverty school and that the professional supports provided were not enough to help overcome the feeling of inadequacy to teach (Zientek & Thompson, 2008). The findings of this study were similar to those from Darling-Hammond, Chung, and Frelow's (2002) study conducted in New York City. In this study, Darling-Hammond, et.al. (2002) examined data from a 1998 survery of 3,000 novice teachers regarding their feelings of preparedness and commitment to teaching. The study suggested that the teachers from alternative certification programs reported having difficulty with classroom management lower

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retention rates, and believed their preparation programs wre not adequate for the their teaching responsibilities.

The perceived competence and confidence of novice teachers, professional support, and professional development are elements that contribute to high quality teachers (Elliott et al., 2010; NRCCTE, 2011; Stryker & Szabo, 2009). Stryker and Szabo (2009) identified positive actions and negative actions of a teacher's self-efficacy. Some of the positive actions associated with a teacher's high self-efficacy include: (a) using of a variety of teaching approaches and materials, (b) being less likely to criticize students, (c) using good classroom management skills, and (d) being more flexible if the classroom routine is interrupted (Stryker & Szabo, 2009, p. 202). Stryker and Szabo (2009) associated the following negative actions of a teacher's poor self-efficacy to include: (a) using only lecture, (b) overusing worksheets, (c) reading the basal script, and (c) becoming frustrated when a student is not learning (p. 202). Stryker and Szabo (2009) concluded that positive self-efficacy improves instructional practices and in turn improves student performance.

Additional research shows that by previous experiences, a good school context, and valued coursework teacher efficacy improves (Humphrey et al., 2008). Alternatively certified teachers lack field-based experiences and pedagogical skills, which may result in lower teacher self-efficacy as they assume full responsibilities as teacher of record. In a school setting, administrators and mentors can only control the school context. Prior experiences and coursework are out of the control of the school. A supportive and collegial culture within the school can provide teachers with the confidence that they have the skills and knowledge to be successful in the classroom

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(Humphrey et al., 2008). School administrators and mentors should understand the importance of instructional competence and positive teacher efficacy in the development of alternatively certified teachers and their role in providing quality professional support to ensure success and retention of alternatively certified teachers. Careful attention to the development of alternatively certified teachers as they serve as teacher of record to reduce the teacher shortage will also help improve the retention of this teachers and the quality of instruction provided to the students that they serve (Kee, 2012).

Implications

Several studies indicated an increase in teacher attrition rates of first year teachers in the past two decades (Ingersoll, 2012). Alternatively certified teachers are filling the gaps although training and retaining them is of vital importance to local school and district leaders. This doctoral study may be an important contribution to the field of teacher education and educational leadership. This project study examined the experiences of alternatively certified secondary education teachers with no preservice experience that completed the Alternative Baccalaureate – level Certificate approach in a southeastern school system in Alabama.

This study was largely guided by the belief that by exploring the experiences and examining the perceptions of alternatively certified teachers in this doctoral study, implications for positive social change could include differentiated induction and mentoring strategies for educational leaders to utilize to improve the quality of professional support and professional development of alternatively certified teachers as they assume dual roles of teachers of record and students of teaching. A model for

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induction and mentoring designed for alternatively certified teachers could help improve teacher performance and retention, which ultimately improves student achievement.

Summary

Alternate routes to teacher certification programs designs are to address both quantity and quality of available teachers. Although alternative certification programs have assisted many school leaders in filling vacant classrooms, school leaders should consider the needs of these program participants as they enter the classroom with specific needs unlike those novice teachers trained in a traditional teacher preparation program. The results from this study directed the development of a professional development program to assist school and district leaders in providing a differentiated model for induction and mentoring alternatively certified teachers. In section 2, I provide a description of the methodology and the procedures employed to gather and analyze the data. Sections 3 and 4 consist of discussions about the project design, results, and reflections.

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Section 2: Methodology

Introduction

In this qualitative case study, I explored the experiences of alternatively certified secondary education teachers with no preservice experience in southeastern Alabama. The purpose of this study was to examine the teachers' perceptions of their professional needs and their assimilation into the classroom during their initial years of teaching. This section provides a rationale for the study's design, an outline of the data collection and analysis procedures, and an explanation of my role as the researcher for this study.

This case study examined teachers' perceptions of their assimilation into the classroom by attempting to answer the following main question: "What are the professional needs of alternatively certified teachers?" The following research subquestions were also answered in the study:

1. What do alternatively certified secondary teachers regard as a meaningful experience in the school assimilation process?

2. What do alternatively certified secondary teachers consider the most frustrating and challenging situations of their first years of teaching?

3. What support can school and district administrators provide to ensure retention and teacher effectiveness of alternatively certified secondary teachers?

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4. What advice would completers of Alabama's alternative certification program
   provide to novice alternatively certified teachers as they start their new
   career?

Research Design and Approach

Qualitative research is the most appropriate design for the exploration of the perceptions of alternatively certified secondary education teachers (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Qualitative research produces results that are reflective of descriptive experiences of the participants and bring to light the inner workings of an organization (Hatch, 2002). Unlike quantitative research in which the researcher uses formal instruments to collect data and seeks a consensus, the qualitative research design uses the researcher as the key instrument to collect data through interviews (Creswell, 2003).

Researchers identified *voice* in the center of qualitative research design (Tell, Bodone, & Addie, 1999; Lodico et al., 2010). Researchers noted that the voice of the teacher is absent during discussions among educational leaders about professional development, policy changes, and educational reform (Compton, 2010; Dana & Yendol-Hoppey, 2009; Stake, 2010). Findlay (2005) concluded that in order to find solutions to educational problems that impact curriculum, supervision, and instruction teachers must be included in the discussion. Although the numbers of alternatively certified teachers are increasing in our nation's classrooms, this is a unique group of teachers whose voices area rarely heard. Tell et al. (1999) acknowledged qualitative researchers as interpreters who utilize the teachers' voice in educational research to reach policymakers and educational stakeholders. A qualitative research design and

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approach was appropriate for this study because it gave a voice to the feelings and perceptions of the participants of the study, per Lodico et al.'s (2010) guidelines.

Case Study Tradition and Research Design

In this qualitative case study, I explored the lived experiences of secondary education teachers, who have participated in the state's alternative certification program, bounded by their first years of teaching. Case study allows the researcher to explore an issue through one or more cases within a group, program, or organization (Creswell, 2003; Merriam, 2009), which was a parameter of this study.

Justification for Qualitative Case Study Design. Unlike quantitative research, where a researcher starts with a theory or hypothesis, a qualitative researcher begins with the data, the perceptions of participants, and inductively identifies themes and patterns as they emerge (Creswell, 2003). In quantitative research approaches, the researchers collect and analyze numbers. The results are reported numerically (Lodico et al., 2010). Yin (2003) identified case study as the research strategy that satisfies three aspects of the qualitative methodology through description, explanation, and understanding. Creswell (2003) noted that qualitative studies focus on the specifics of a situation, group, or program where as quantitative focuses on the whole population. In a qualitative case study, the researcher uses in-depth interviewing to seek understanding of the lived experiences of the participants and makes meaning of their experiences (Seidman, 2006). This study's focus was on the lived experiences and perceptions of alternatively certified secondary education teachers who completed an Alabama alternate route to teacher certification program which led to an understanding of their professional needs.

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Participants

The participants for this study were solicited from the three secondary schools in a rural school system in southeastern Alabama. The three schools collectively served approximately 1,680 students in Grades 7–12. Ninety-five percent of the faculty met or exceeded the federal definition of a highly qualified teacher (ALSDE, 2010). The student population consisted of predominately African American students. According to the districts' continuous improvement plan, eighty- five percent of the students qualify for the free and reduced meal program and 12% of the students had been identified as special needs.

      Criteria for Selecting Participants. A nonprobability purposeful sampling strategy was the strategy selected for this qualitative research study. Specifically, criterion case sampling was the strategy chosen to select alternatively certified secondary education teachers. Gall, Gall, and Borg (1999) defined criterion case samples as cases that satisfy an important criterion. Creswell (1998) noted that "criterion sampling works well when all individuals studied represent people who have experienced the phenomenon" (p. 118). With the focal point on the challenges and perceived professional needs during their initial years of teaching, the criteria for selecting participants for this were as follows. An individual teacher met the following criteria for consideration to participate in the study:

1. The study participant has three to seven years of teaching experience in content area subjects or career technical programs.

2. The study participant was an employee with a school district in the southeastern part of the state of Alabama.

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3. The study participant previously held or hold an Alternative Baccalaureate Certificate as defined by the Alabama State Department of Education.

4. The study participant allowed audiotaping of the interviews.

Justification of the Number of Participants. I solicited the participation of six to ten teachers with three to seven years of experience based on their completion of the state's alternative certification program. Researchers recommended 6–10 participants for a case study (Creswell, 1998; Morse, 1994) to achieve what Glaser and Strauss (1967) termed the *saturation point* (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The participation of six teachers increased the chances of a variety of core academic teachers from each school within the system. Study participants assumed full teaching responsibilities while completing coursework and meeting other requirements of the alternative certification program during the first three years of their employment.

Across the United States, an estimated 40% to 50% of all beginning teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching (Ingersoll, 2012). The first five years of teaching are important to the retention and success of alternatively certified secondary education teachers. Powers (2002, as cited in Wiehe, 2009) noted that teachers with at least five years of teaching "can have a more reflective discussion about their perspective and goals, as they are not entrenched and distracted by the stressors that come with first year or two of teaching" (p. 52). The teachers may serve as mentors for future alternatively certified teachers therefore, their perspective on their experiences during their initial years of teaching was appropriate for this study. As future mentors, they will benefit from participation in this study as they reexamine their initial years of teaching when attrition rates are highest, the

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factors that contributed to their success, and reflect on the challenges that they experienced. This project study provided a voice and explanation of the experiences of this special population of teachers for local school and district leaders.

Procedure for Gaining Access to Participants. The gatekeeper in this study was the school superintendent, and the informants are the alternatively certified teachers. The gatekeeper is "the initial contact for the researcher and leads the researcher to other informants" (Creswell, 1998, p. 117). Creswell (1998) acknowledged that "gaining access through the gatekeeper" is important for a case study (p. 117). I contacted this gatekeeper by mailing a letter requesting permission to conduct the study in the school system located into southeastern part of Alabama to the superintendent (Appendix B).

The contents of this letter provided the purpose of the study and identified the criteria of potential participants need to conduct this study and the benefits for the school districts' participation in the study. The superintendent granted permission to conduct the study, after which an institutional approval was granted by the Walden Institutional Review Board. The Walden Univeristy's approval number for this study is #04-28-14-0057346 and it expired on April 27, 2015. I then requested information for potential participants from the study site's Director of Human Resources, who also serves as the school system's teacher certification officer. Finally, I sent a letter of invitation to participate in the study to the potential participants by email and the postal mail (Appendix C).

Methods of Establishing Research-Participant Working Relationship. I contacted participants to formally introduce myself and explain my role as the

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researcher and their role as the participant. I employed the suggestions made by

Janesick (2004) to establish a rapport with the participants. I allowed the participant

to choose a location and time for the interviews to take place based on a

predetermined schedule. I provided the purpose of the study and the benefits of

participating in the study in a letter of invitation and repeated at the initial meeting. I

shared a brief introduction about my career path and why I chose this topic for

investigation. I took notes during the interview and asked probing questions.

As recommended by Seidman (2006), I also utilized a three interview series to

establish a relationship with the participants. The three interview series approach to

interviews allows the researcher and participant to "plumb the experience and to place

it in context" (Seidman, 2006, p. 17). Seidman (2006) suggested there is little

possibility to explore the meaning of an experience without placing the participant's

behavior in the context of their lives. I discussed in more detail the three interview

series as a data collection strategy in this section.

Methods for Ethical Protection of Participants. I completed the National

Institute of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research web-based training course

"Protecting Human Research Participants." Prior to conducting the study, I requested

approval from the Walden Institutional Review Board. I made the documentation

available for the superintendent and any potential participant to review and

distributed a Human Subjects Consent to Participate Form (Appendix B) to potential

participants. Participants received the purpose of the study, the procedures utilized in

the data collection, as well as notification of their rights to withdraw from the study at

any time by email.

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Assigning aliases to each individual protects the anonymity of the participants. I maintained privacy and confidentiality toward participants throughout the entire research process. To protect privacy and confidentiality, I conducted the interviews at a location that the participants believed to be secure. The recorded interviews, hard copies of transcribed interviews, jump drives, field notes, and other information collected that could result in the identification of the participants were stored in a locked file cabinet and stored in a restricted hard drive in my home for a period of five years.

Data Collection

I used interviews as the data collection strategy to explore the experiences of alternatively certified secondary education teachers. Heck (2011) identified interviews as a "primary source of case study information" (p. 207). Goetz and Le Compte (1984) noted that interviews allow educational researchers to explore how and why research participants respond to events, situations, techniques or concepts, or programs as they reflect on their careers. I developed the set of interview questions for an assignment during the qualitative research methods course, EDAD 8035, at Walden University. These interview questions used in the interview protocol are on the research pertaining to alternatively certified teachers. I solicited the assistance of human resource directors/certification officers and the assistance of alternatively certified teachers to review for understanding of the content of the interview protocol. The Walden faculty consisted of the qualitative research course professor and members of my doctoral committee. They also reviewed the interview protocol of for

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content, relevance of the interview protocol to the research questions, and administration of interviews.

I employed Seidman's (2006) recommendation of a three interview series. Seidman (2006) cautioned interviewers who have never met their interviewee about the use of a "one-shot meeting" to explore their topic (p. 17). I conducted the interviews with the alternatively certified teachers for a period of up to one hour.

In the first interview, I focused on the participant's experiences prior to becoming an alternatively certified teacher. The focus of this interview was how the participant becomes an alternatively certified teacher. I asked questions to guide the participants to share their experiences in past school environments and previous work experiences. I concentrated on the details of the lived experiences as an alternatively certified secondary education teacher in the second interview. The participants focused on their daily work, challenges, and meaningful experiences. In the third interview, I asked participants to focus on understanding their experiences as alternatively certified teachers. They reflected on the support provided, the support they needed from school and district administrators. As they reflected on their experiences, they also provided advice for future alternatively certified teachers. I asked the same questions in the same order to participants during the interview at a time and location they believed was convenient and secure. However, the use of probing questions was necessary during the interview as needed.

Systems for Keeping Track of Data

Although Lincoln and Guba (1985) did not support the use of tape recorders during interviews because of their intrusiveness and the possibility of technical

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failure, I utilized an audio recorder during the interview process to record the data.

Recording data is also a strategy used to enhance validity of qualitative research

design (Macmillan & Schumacher, 1997). I also used a field journal to document

interviews, ask follow-up and probing question in the event the recording was not

clear or successful (Creswell, 1998; Rubin & Rubin, 2002). The use of a field journal

minimized researcher bias and subjectivity (McMillian & Schumacher, 1997). I

transcribed the interviews and save the data using Microsoft Word on my personal

computer in my home. I stored recorded interviews, hard copies of transcribed

interviews, jump drives, and field notes in a locked filing cabinet in my home for a

period of five years.

Access to Participants

Prior to conducting the study, I requested the approval from the

superintendent (see Appendix B). Upon receiving permission from the superintendent

and approval from the Walden Institutional Review Board, I requested identification

of the potential participants from the Director of Human Resources, who also serves

as the school system's teacher certification officer. Then I sent a letter of invitation

(Appendix C) to participate in the study to the potential participants by email and the

postal mail. I communicated by email and phone with the teachers that participated in

the study. Once I received notification of participation, the participants received an

introductory letter that explained the interviews should last no longer than 60

minutes. The participants chose a comfortable location and time to conduct each

interview.

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Role of Researcher

My years of experience as a professional educator are relevant to this study. I am employed in a neighboring school system in the state. Many school and district administrators have similar concerns with finding and retaining quality secondary education teachers. My initial reaction to the alternative certification phenomenon was negative. I believed that based on traditional teacher preparation program with education and training in pedagogy that was similar to my parents and my own teacher preparation program develops successful teachers. I strongly believed that a teacher could not be effective based on content knowledge alone. Based upon my experience, I was aware of how teachers related to each other, school and district administrators, and other educational stakeholders for support.

My years of experience as a district administrator are also relevant to this study. I became familiar with phases of new teacher growth as I coordinated the beginning teacher assistance program and the mentor teacher training. As new teachers evaluated their mentors and the induction program annually, I became familiar with challenges they faced during the year. In my current role as director of human resources and certification officer, I have become familiar with the number of teachers entering the classroom through alternative routes to certification. My previous assumptions were questioned. I witnessed alternative certified teachers leaving the classroom for a number of reasons, and I witnessed some staying beyond five years. I have heard the concerns from school administrators across the state about hiring alternatively certified teachers. However, I also understand and appreciate the importance of this approach to teacher certification for individuals who can meet the

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requirements and fill the empty classrooms when a traditionally prepared teacher is not a viable option. Some alternatively certified teachers have been successful and remained in the classroom.

Creswell (2003) identified the researcher as the "instrument of data collection" (p. 13). As a practitioner, the role of "data collector" is a familiar one. I assumed the responsibilities of interviewer and transcriber. I was solely responsible for communicating with the participants, interviewing them and collecting the data. I coded, analyzed and interpreted all data. I set aside my personal viewpoints and only studied those of the participants. I presented the results of the study objectively and without bias.

<div align="center">

Data Analysis

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In order to make this complex data understandable, I utilized the typological analysis to analyze the interviews. Hatch (2002) acknowledged typological analysis as the "best suited" approach to analyze interview data (p. 229). I followed the steps that Hatch (2002) has outlined. First, identify the typologies to be analyzed. Based on the research questions, I used the following typological areas: alternative certification program, classroom challenges, and advice. Next, I transcribed the recordings of the interview into written form. The transcripts were saved in a word document and stored on my personal password protected computer as well as a jump drive that was placed in a lock filing cabinet in my home. After transcribing the interviews, I read the data, and then marked entries related to the typologies (Hatch, 2002). I marked these entries by color on a summary sheet and recorded the main ideas. Next, I identified patterns, relationships, or themes within the typologies (Hatch 2002).

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Following this step, I read data and coded entries based on identified patterns (Hatch, 2002). Once the patterns from transcribed interviews were coded, I sorted and ranked the codes according to how they respond to the research questions. I wrote these patterns as one-sentence generalizations and identified the data that supports them.

Evidence of Quality

I employed several procedures identified by researchers to establish validity in this qualitative case study (Creswell & Miller, 2000; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam, 2002). A panel of experts was the validation technique used in this study to ensure the clarity, trustworthiness, and appropriateness of the interview protocol. The panel of experts consisted of alternatively certified teachers, human resource directors /certification officers, and qualitative research course professor and members of my doctoral committee. I collaborated with alternatively certified teachers that were not participants in this study to discuss the research questions and interview protocol. The assistance of human resource directors/certification officers was solicited to review for understanding of the content of the interview protocol. The Walden faculty supervising this research consisted of the qualitative research course professor and members of my doctoral committee. They also reviewed the interview protocol of for content, relevance of the interview protocol to the research questions, and administration of interviews.

I also collaborated with the participants of the study in writing the narrative account to ensure accuracy, in alignment with Creswell and Miller's (2000) advice that credible data comes from close collaboration with participants throughout the research process. Researcher reflexivity is a validity procedure that allows the

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researcher to "report personal beliefs, values, and biases that may shape their inquiry" (Creswell & Miller, 2000, p. 127). In the Role of Researcher section, I acknowledged and described my beliefs and biases, so as to limit their impact on my interpretation of the findings.

I utilized several strategies to ensure quality, accurate and credible findings. First, I utilized descriptive writing to establish credibility. In addition to establishing credibility, rich, thick, and detailed descriptions also facilitate transferability (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Seltzer and Rose (2011) noted that in case study research, "the case or cases being explored needs to be useful to others in similar situations those with similar research questions or problems of practice" (p. 272). I also used member checking as a strategy to establish valid and credible findings, in alignment with Lincoln and Guba's (1985) identification of member checking as "the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" in a study (p. 314). The participants in this study reviewed the transcribed recordings of their interviews, in addition to the findings, results, and recommendations of this study to ensure the validity of my interpretations. This strategy also ensured the freedom from researcher's bias in the reporting of the findings.

Procedures for Dealing With Discrepant Cases

In qualitative research, searching for discrepant cases is an important strategy to ensure validity and credibility (Patton, 1990). A researcher should search for, record, analyze, and report negative cases of discrepant data that are an exception to patterns or that modify patterns found in the data (Merriam, 2009). I reported the discrepant cases in my conclusion and allowed the readers to evaluate the evidence

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and draw their own conclusions (Wolcott, 1990). Employing this strategy in my research study ensured my credibility as a researcher and ensured the validity of my data analysis. Reporting discrepant cases indicates that my data analysis is not biased by my preconceptions about alternatively certified teachers.

Findings

The five themes that emerged from the interviews of six teachers are presented in this section. Interviews were structured around the central question for this case study: "What are the professional needs of alternatively certified teachers?" In addition, the following research subquestions were asked:

1. What do alternatively certified secondary teachers regard as a meaningful experience in the school assimilation process?

2. What do alternatively certified secondary teachers consider the most frustrating and challenging situations of their first years of teaching?

3. What support can school and district administrators provide to ensure retention and teacher effectiveness of alternatively certified secondary teachers?

4. What advice would completers of Alabama's alternative certification program provide to novice alternatively certified teachers as they start their new career?

This section is organized around the five themes to focus on the participant's voice. The section begins with a discussion of each of the major themes in detail, linking the relevant research questions. Within each major theme, subthemes were developed and then each theme concluded with a summary of the findings and a

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discussion of the research questions. The five major themes that were identified from the data were:

1. Teaching as a Career

2. Alabama Alternative Baccalaureate Certification Program

3. Frustrating or Challenging Classroom Situations

4. Professional Support

5. Advice from Completers

The characteristics of the participants are presented in Table 1. Numbers were assigned to protect the identity of the participants. Only one of the participants was currently working on completing the requirements of the alternative certification program. The other participants were tenured teachers and had over five years of teaching experience.

Theme 1: Teaching as a Career

Entering the teaching profession is a life decision that should not be taken lightly. If one is not prepared to work in an educational setting, the transition can be damaging to both the new teacher, as well as the students in which they are responsible. Becoming a teacher was not the participants' first career choice. All participants mentioned that they were called to the profession. Although none of the participants originally pursued a degree in education, past life events led them to the classroom. With the influence and encouragement from family, friends, a school superintendent, principals, and university professionals, the participants entered the teaching profession through an alternate route to teacher certification.

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T2 pointed out, "The majority of my family members were educators. Also, I wanted to make a difference in the lives of youth." T3 stated, "Teaching is in my blood. My mother was a teacher. It was a natural choice for me." T6 found that the original choice of major was not a good fit. T6 stated that she should have chosen education as her first major. T6 realized after talking with a counselor and a semester from graduation that she was called to teach. T4 revealed a similar sentiment, "I chose the wrong major. Teaching is where I should have been to begin with. However, I was too deep into my degree plan, so I completed the degree and quickly enrolled in the alternative certification program."

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Table 1

Characteristics of Participants

Participant Name	Years of Teaching Exp.	Secondary Teaching Level	Content Area	Prior Career
T1	3	High School	Social Studies	Athletic Administration
T2	10	High School	Career Technical: Communications	Communications
T3	14	Middle	Social Studies	Federal Government
T4	8	Middle	Science	Bank Teller
T5	10	Middle	Science	Research Assistant
T6	10	High School	English	_____

Educational background. Many participants believed that their educational background prepared them for the curriculum they were teaching on the secondary education level. For example, T1 stated, "My bachelors in political science had a lot of history which helps in my classroom instruction," T4 acknowledges that the "bachelor's degree prepared me in regards to content." T5 expressed, "My degree in biology really prepared me because I don't have to refer to a book." T6 echoed, "I am more prepared because I took more English courses like literature than the average traditionally prepared English education teacher. I was able to learn everything about the subject I was hired to teach in my undergraduate degree."

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Skills learned from a prior career. While some participants attribute their preparedness to their bachelor's degree, others identified specific skills learned from their prior career. T2 identified the work experience in public broadcasting as the contributing factor that prepared him to teach communications. T1 also attributed his career in athletic administration in preparing him for his role as a teacher. He stated, "Athletic administration helped me manage everything. Like teaching, you have to be very organized to be a coach."

Expectations of teaching prior to entering the classroom. Several participants had low to no expectations at all of teaching prior to entering the classroom. For example, T5 professed, "I really didn't know what to expect." T2 actually attended the high school where he is currently teaching. He stated, "I expected things to be pretty much how they were." T3 commented that he had no expectations. T6, on the other hand, believed that "the kids are going to adore you and love every course that you teach." T4 declared, "Prior to entering the classroom, I thought everything would fall into sync the way they tried to demonstrate it from a textbook standpoint being a student."

Fears of becoming a teacher. Alternatively certified teachers in the state of Alabama enter the classroom with no preservice training. Many new employees experience fear as expected when one embarks on a new career. The participants expressed their fears of becoming a teacher. All participants feared if they would fail to be effective teachers. For example, T5 questioned herself about becoming a teacher. She expressed, "Will I know my information? Will I be able to get it across

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to the kids? Are they going to apply this to real life?" Relating to students was the issue most identified by the participants.

T2 stated, "I feared that students couldn't relate to what I am saying or maybe I would have an altercation of some kind with a student."

T4 feared the pay. T4 expressed, "Balancing everything, trying to do everything, paying everything off of a salary that will never be enough. Once a month pay, I was used to being compensated bi-monthly."

T6 commented, "You are in a classroom all day long by yourself with kids and nobody to help you. You are an island. It was fearful not knowing if what you were doing is right or important."

Summary. The background information shared by participants provided a greater understanding of their decision to enter the teaching profession. Their choice to become a teacher was connected to their influences from family, friends, and university professors. Several teachers believed that they are prepared to teach based on their undergraduate degree while others believe they benefited from skills obtained from a prior career. The participants expressed low to no expectations prior to entering the classroom. However, all participants had fears of their effectiveness as they embarked on their new profession as teachers.

Theme 2: Alabama Alternative Baccalaureate Certification Program

The research questions linked to Theme 2 are:

1. What do alternatively certified secondary teachers regard as a meaningful experience in the school assimilation process?

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2. What do alternatively certified secondary teachers consider the most

> frustrating and challenging situations of their first years of teaching?

The second theme provides a description of how the participants experienced the components of the Alternative Baccalaureate Certification program. The research questions connect to this theme because the participants revealed meaningful experiences and challenging situations from their participation in the alternative certification program. The participants expounded on their program experiences in terms of coursework and dual responsibilities. They also expressed the impact the courses had on their classroom practices.

Alternatively certified teachers met the requirements of the program to earn a Class B (bachelor's degree level) Professional Educator Certificate in the teaching field of the Alternative Baccalaureate Certificate. They completed three full scholastic years of full time teaching experience in the teaching field of the secondary education courses. They earned credit for the four required areas of postsecondary education coursework. These teachers were required to submit a passing score on the appropriate AECTP Praxis II Principles of Learning and Teaching (PLT) test. The teachers were supposed to be assigned a mentor who holds a valid Alabama Professional Educator Certificate in the teaching field of the alternate route teacher or in a related field and has had at least three full years of full time educational experience.

Courses. Teachers who earned a certificate through the Alabama Alternative Baccalaureate Certification Program earned credit in four education courses. The current courses are classroom management, the evaluation of teaching and learning,

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methods of teaching in the teaching field and at the grade levels for where
certification is sought, and strategies for teaching special needs students in inclusive
settings. At the time when these participants entered the program, an instructional
technology course was required. The participants were asked which course were the
most beneficial, the least beneficial, and the impact the coursework had on their
classroom practices.

T1 reflected, "All of the courses contributed to me being a much better
teacher. Because when you come from the nontraditional teacher's program, you
don't have a good understanding of what you should be doing." A majority of the
participants identified the classroom management course as the most beneficial. T1
compared coaching to teaching and mentioned, "the classroom management course
really helped me understand how to do it from the teacher's perspective." T3 stated,
"The classroom management course gave me tips and steps to control my class." T2
recognized, "the coursework provided a foundation of how to manage my classroom
discipline and showed me strategies to use to help my students understand what I
wanted them to accomplish." T6 stated, "the classroom management course helped
me with strategies to manage unwanted behavior."

T6 also recognized the methods course as most beneficial. She stated, "The
methods course helped me learn how to develop lesson plans." T5 identified the
strategies for teaching special needs students in inclusive settings to be the most
beneficial.

Being a brand new teacher, I found the diversity in the classroom course to be
the most beneficial. Even though it was about special education, many of

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those students fell in those categories that have not been identified. I applied

many of the strategies that were introduced for special education to all of my

students. It was very beneficial. I tried things to see if it worked for all my

kids.

T1 identified the strategies for teaching special needs students in inclusive settings

course as the least beneficial. He shared, "It was limited for me. I did not learn a lot. I

did not have any special education students in my classes. The coursework was based

on your experiences and I could not relate because my experience was limited." Other

participants identified the instructional technology course as the least beneficial. T4

shared that she "did not have access to the technology on the job." T5 revealed

similar sentiments, "I really didn't get much out of it. I could not apply the use of the

technology introduced in the course. The technology was not available at my school."

Dual responsibilities. The teachers assumed full responsibilities of a teaching

position, attended classes, and studied at night. T4 and T3 agreed that juggling full

time teaching responsibilities and taking evening courses was not as difficult for them

during their initial years of teaching. When asked what was it like to taking courses

while teaching full time, T3 stated, "it was fine. I did not have any problems. I had a

good support system. However, I was aware of the struggles of others. I started the

program with eight other teachers. Unfortunately, three of them left during the first

semester of their first year of teaching." T4 shared, "I value education therefore I just

did what I had to do."

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The other participants' experiences were different. They found taking courses and teaching full time difficult and hard. T4 was a single mother with a young son during her initial years of teaching. T4 commented, "the coursework was demanding along with grading papers and preparing progress reports for parents. They would give you a reading assignment then throw a quiz on you. You had to critique a lot of articles." T1 explained,

> I was coaching full time, teaching full time, and taking courses. The best thing for me was that I did not operate on a lot of sleep. My days would start about 4:00 a.m. in addition, between classes and coaching I would work until 9:30 p.m. It was pretty rough. After I finished my master's degree, I thought that I was finished going to school. It was a little frustrating that I had to complete coursework to earn the certificate. I looked at the fact that it would make me more marketable with a professional educator certificate.

T2 and T6 found the dual responsibilities tiring and frustrating due to long drives and long nights. T2 explained,

> It was tiring getting off at 3:00 p.m. then hit the highway for a 30-minute drive. I had to make time to grab something to eat before a 5:00 p.m. class. At six o'clock, I was ready to go home. I had to learn to go home and get in the bed. I could not do a lot of things because I had to get homework done and prepare lessons.

T6 expressed, "I had to work all day and drive 45 minutes to take classes and stay up late nights to complete my assignments. I almost had a nervous breakdown. My very first year was very hard."

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Summary. The participants described the alternative certification program in terms of coursework and assignments. The teachers identified the impact the coursework had on their classroom practices. The descriptions gave insight into the following research question:

What do alternatively certified secondary teachers regard as a meaningful experience in the school assimilation process?

Although a majority of the participants identified the classroom management course as the most beneficial, the teachers shared meaningful experiences about most of the courses. The participants expressed how the classroom management course provided meaningful strategies that they could apply immediately to their daily practices. The teachers expressed appreciation for the content of the methods of teaching course. The participants shared the methods course provided strategies to develop lesson plans, which were applicable to their daily practices. The participants agreed that they learned by trial and error about what to use in their daily practices with the information provided in the courses. The issues of dual responsibilities are related to the following research question: what do alternatively certified secondary teachers consider the most frustrating and challenging situations of their first years of teaching?

Some participants expressed frustration because they perceived some of the required courses as not beneficial. Specifically, some of the participants identified the instructional technology course and the strategies for teaching special needs students in inclusive settings course as least beneficial. Lack of technology in the schools led to the frustration experienced by some of the participant. The teachers shared that

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they could not relate to the content of the course or apply the strategies because the technology were not available in their schools.

The majority of the participants expressed that during the initial years it was frustrating and challenging to manage the dual responsibilities of being a teacher and student. Going to classes and completing course assignments caused frustration for these new teachers because they were trying to understand their students, coworkers, what to teach, how to teach, how to evaluate, and participate in school activities. With dual responsibilities, the participants expressed how they had to learn to balance their schedules between work and school. In the end, however, the course component of the program provided the participants with strategies to implement and a network of colleagues and university professors to share ideas with and ask questions.

Theme 3: Frustrating/Challenging Classroom Situations

The research question linked to Theme 3 is:

What do alternatively certified secondary teachers consider the most

frustrating and challenging situations of their first years of teaching?

Several issues poised challenges to the participants that they shared during their interviews. Student behavioral problems, lack of materials, resources, and parental involvement were topics mentioned several times in the interviews. Half of the participants expressed their frustration with the lack of communication with district administrators about meeting the alternative certification program requirements within the prescribed timeline. The participants compared the challenges they faced as teachers to the challenges they faced in previous careers.

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Student behavioral problems. Most participants struggled with student behavioral problems during their initial years of teaching. T5 believed,

> They put the wrong personalities together in my classroom. I had all the boys that wanted to fight. The administrators did not know the children well enough to ensure those who had issues with each other were not in the same classroom. It was a challenge correcting the unwanted behavior.

T6 found working the behavior of special education students in her general English class frustrating.

> We did not have any help with the special education students. We did not have enough money to pay for special education teachers. Our special education students were severe and they needed more help than could give them. Because of the behavioral problems in my room, I did not have time to do one on one activities with my students. It was a frustrating environment.

Lack of communication with district administrators. Some of the teachers expressed their frustration about the lack of communication with district administrators about the alternative certification program requirements. T5 shared her frustration with her district administrators.

> When I first started the program, it was not spelled out to me. I was a pure science person, not an educator. They should have sat down with me in the beginning and discussed the details of the program. I was caught up in a situation where I could not get the courses taken in the timeframe. I was called to the central office, and the superintendent at that time gave me two options – resign or be terminated. So I resigned. I was a single mom and very frustrated.

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T2 shared a similar experience as he described his frustrating situation during his initial years of teaching. T2 explained,

> The lack of communication between the employee and employer about the certification process was frustrating. I needed to know how long I had to meet the requirements and was caught up struggling to finish within the timeline. I needed to know at the start of the year from them specifically what I needed to do to meet the requirements and how long I had to get it done. It leaves a bitter taste in your mouth when your options are gone, and you do not finish the requirements in time.

Comparison of challenging situations to other careers. The participants compared the challenges during their initial years of teaching with the challenges they faced in as they started their other careers and jobs. T1 expressed,

> The biggest difference is that I had a foundation in athletics administration. I was already familiar with what I was going to do at that new job. I had everything I needed to do the work. It was different with teaching because I did not have a foundation for how things would work. If I had known the inner workings of it and been given everything that I needed to teach, my transition would have been so much easier.

T2 stated, "In my other job, we were provided the resources and tools to get the job done. In education, I am working with children, our future, and the resources are limited to none." T3 shared similar sentiments, "I used to work for the federal government. I had everything that I needed to get the job done… In teaching,

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resources were not readily available." T4 expressed similarities and difference between teaching and her old job.

> The jobs were similar. As a bank teller, I had to take tests. I had to take mathematical exams and score a certain percentage on them before I could be considered for the job. Banking allows you to work with adults…the public. It is more personable. Customer relations are very important. You want the public to come back. Technology is always available. The supplies that you need to work will be available. There was one set of rules. In the classroom, there is not enough training in the world to prepare you. I have to work to children. They are there for 180 days. Education is constantly changing. Once you learn one thing, it changes.

Although teaching is T5's first career, she made a comparison to the training and experiences from other jobs that she worked. She shared,

> This was my first career. But when I worked at restaurants and in retail during college, my trainer stood by me for a timeframe before they allowed me to work solo. It was scary in the classroom alone with a room full of kids only to see my next door teacher during class changes, lunch, before and after school when I had questions that needed to be answered, and I wondered am I doing this right.

In addition, T6 discussed the fact that during her initial years of teaching "I believed that all alone, I didn't have anyone to help me. I believed that like the young teacher that nobody wanted to talk to."

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Lack of materials, resources, technology, and parental involvement.

Participants reported lack of materials, resources, and technology as frustrating and challenging situations. Although lack of materials and resources were identified as challenges for most new teachers, AC T1 stated that,

> As a new teacher, we tend to lean on resources. Having not going through the traditional teacher prep program, you tend to rely on the textbooks' teacher edition and resources. Not having access to those makes it tough for me. In the first year, when you are trying to organize and you do not have what the curriculum says that you are supposed to have in order to teach---it is very frustrating.

T3 echoed T1's response about his challenges due to lack of resources. T4 expressed frustration for lack of resources and technology.

> The most frustrating situations during my initial years of teaching were lack of technology and supplies. I was docked on my evaluation during my first performance observation. I started teaching on mid-September. All of the technology in the library had been checked out by teachers who started at the beginning of the school year in August. By the time, that I was hired there were no supplies and technology available to me, which resulted in a low score on my evaluation for lack of use technology. I had absolutely no control over having access to technology. It was aggravating.

T3 and T4 believed that lack of parental involvement was also frustrating during their initial years. T3 stated, "I couldn't believe it when you have a problem and you called

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a parent and their response was why are you calling me?" T4 suggested, "Parents

need to check on their children."

Summary. Theme 3 was characterized by the challenges the participants

described in their classrooms and gave information to the following research

question:

What do alternatively certified secondary teachers consider the most

frustrating and challenging situations of their first years of teaching?

Leading among the challenges named was student behavioral issues. Although the

classroom management course was identified as the most beneficial in the alternative

teacher preparation program, classroom management was a challenge to the

participants. Lack of materials, resources, technology, and parental involvement were

also identified as challenges of the participants during their first years of teaching.

Half of the participants also identified lack of communication with district

administrators about the Alternative certification program requirements and timelines

as a challenging situation during their first years of teaching.

The participants compared the challenges they faced during their initial years

of teaching to their probationary periods in their other careers. They reported minimal

frustration during that time. The participants expressed that training was provided

prior to being allowed to work solo. They also discussed that resources and materials

were readily available to complete their assigned job tasks. However, in spite of these

challenging and frustrating situations, these teachers have earned tenure and worked

more than three years.

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Theme 4: Professional Support

The research question linked to Theme 4 was:

What support can school and district administrators provide to ensure

retention and teacher effectiveness of alternatively certified secondary

teachers?

The fourth theme provided a description of what professional supports were

provided, who provided the support, and what support was needed from school and

district administrators during your initial years of teaching. The research question

connected to this theme because the participants reflected on their experiences during

their initial years of teaching and identified the support they received and who

assisted them. The participants also described their relationship with their school

administrators.

Identified professional support. The participants were asked to reflect on

how they were supported during their initial years of teaching. Their experiences with

support varied from all types of support to very little at all. For example, T2 shared

that "the district did not have a new teacher orientation program when he started

teaching." T1 participated in a new teacher orientation program when he started. "I

could remember it was on a Saturday and thinking that this is information that I could

use but it was after a college football game, and I wasn't focused. It really didn't help

me."

T3 stated that he had a mentor for one year. He explained that, "We taught the

same grade level. We interacted often and it was very beneficial." T5 also identified

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mentoring as the support that was provided to her. T5 shared that on Fridays she had lunch with her mentor. T5 added, "We worked on cross curricular lesson plans… My mentor taught the same grade level but she was a social studies teacher…I could not have gotten through the first year without her. T2 shared that,

> The mentor program was vital to my success. I came in and had to learn how to use that program, laws, policies, how to enter grades in the computer instead of a gradebook, and develop a lesson. It was difficult to learn all those things with 33 students in your face… My mentor did not teach the same subject as I did. But we meet on an as needed basis. It was beneficial to me because I did not have an education background, and I had to enter grades and lesson plans in an online program that I had never seen before. I thought I was going to use a gradebook and lesson plan book like I saw my teachers use when I attended this school as a student. It was different from what I thought it would be like. My mentor explained things to me like why I didn't get the supplies I needed when I asked at the beginning of the year because the fiscal year started in October. I still don't understand why that is so when the students come in August.

Unfortunately, T4 did not have similar positive professional support experiences that she believed that she needed during her initial years of teaching. T4 explained,

> I did not have any support during my first year. I believed that like if I had started at the beginning of the school year instead of mid nine weeks, my first year would have been different. But I didn't have an induction or a mentor.

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T6 also lacked support during her first year of teaching, T6 stated,

I was the only teacher that taught my subject and I taught three different grade

levels. There was no one to help me. It was no one to share lessons with. I was

the only teacher for the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grades. I was the English

department.

Relationship with school administrators. Although the relationship with a

mentor teacher is important to the professional development of an alternatively

certified teacher, the relationship with the school administrator is also important. The

participants explained their relationships with their administrators. For example, T3

stated:

The principal and assistant principal that I had my initial years of teaching

were very visible. They walked the halls and monitored. They would often

just pop into my classroom to check up on me. I appreciated that because in

order to be a great leader in your school, you have to know what's going on in

your school.

T5 and T2 echoed T3's sentiments. They both shared that they believed that they

were supported by their administrators. T5 commented, "My principal always made

me feel like she had time to address my concerns." T2 explained, "My principal

provided new teacher professional development sessions like sexual harassment and

Lee vs. Macon training." Unfortunately, T6 did not feel supported by her principal

during her first year of teaching. She explained, "My very first year under the

alternative certificate my principal was horrible. She was mean to me. She bullied me.

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It was awful. I moved to another school my second year, and that principal was great." T6 later added, "The administrator made a big difference. The students were a challenge but the administrator support helped me complete the program through difficult times."

Summary. The participants described professional support in terms of new teacher orientation programs, mentor assistance, and support from other colleagues, university supervisors, and administrators. This theme relates to the following research question:

What support can school and district administrators provide to ensure retention and teacher effectiveness of alternatively certified secondary teachers?

Several participants shared that they did not participate in a new teacher orientation program. Most of them were assigned a mentor but it was not a formal program. One participant mentioned that his university supervisor provided support while he was in the alternative certification program. Another participant commented that the vast distance between the university and the rural school where she was assigned prevents her from receiving face-to-face feedback from her university supervisors. Most of the participants believed that the support provided by school administrators is important.

Theme 5: Advice from Completers

The research questions that are linked to Theme 5 were:

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1. What support can school and district administrators provide to ensure retention and teacher effectiveness of alternatively certified secondary teachers?

2. What advice would completers of Alabama's alternative certification program provide to novice alternatively certified teachers as they start their new career?

This theme presents the participants' recommendations about the alternative certification program. The participants provided advice to novice alternatively certified teachers and offered suggestions to school administrators, mentor teachers, district administrators, and state department of education officials and policymakers. The participants had varying degrees of support from mentor teachers, district administrators, and school administrators. The participants made recommendations in the area of induction, mentoring, materials and resources, and effective feedback.

Advice for novice alternatively certified teachers. As future mentors, the alternatively certified teachers benefited from participation in this study as they reexamined their initial years of teaching, the factors that contributed to their success, and reflected on the challenges that they experienced. T6 gave advice related to managing instructional time. T6 stated, "You have to plan enough activities within the time allotted, and you have to have activities that actually mean something." T3 emphasized the huge responsibility that teachers face as they assume their role in the classroom. T3 advised, "You are responsible for the lives of people's children. They have different personalities, medical issues, etc. You have to be able to maintain control of your class and respond appropriately as situations arise." T4 shared similar

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advice about the duties of a teacher. T4 expressed, "Find out what works and what doesn't work and that just come with the territory over a period of time. You are a teacher and have to fill the role sometimes as the parent."

Induction or orientation programs. Although five of the six participants did not participate in an induction or orientation program, a majority of the participants suggested an orientation program to improve the transitions of alternatively certified teachers during their initial years of teaching. For example, T6 suggested,

Make sure they are taught protocol, rules, the chain of command, how to set up the gradebook, review the school calendar, and what to do in emergency situations. A five-day training would be ideal prior to them starting the first day with students.

T2 did not have the opportunity to participate in a new teacher orientation when he started teaching. T2 advised school and district administrators to implement an orientation for teachers. T2 suggested, "Take some time to explain why a teacher needs to do this or that. Explain the purpose of doing it because the alternatively certified teacher hasn't taken an education law class, and they don't know the board policy."

Mentor program and training. A mentor teacher is a requirement of the state's alternative teacher certification program. Unfortunately, half of the participants did not have an assigned mentor. A majority of the participants suggested that a mentor program and mentor training is necessary to improve the transitions of alternatively certified teachers. For example, T5 provided suggestions to administrators for the mentor and mentee,

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Make sure they meet before the first day of school in a relaxing atmosphere to

sit down and talk about what needs to be done. Allow the new teacher an

opportunity to meet with the faculty. Pair new teachers with veteran teachers

in the same discipline. Provide a checklist for the mentor and the mentee.

T2 agreed that, "It should be required to have a mentor." T2 also offered a

suggestion to administrators to ensure the mentors provide assistance, "They should

be given an incentive to mentor. A lot of people helped me out of the goodness of

their heart. But when some are told to go and help and alternative certification

teachers, some mentor teachers are not happy." T3 shared, "It's difficult being in the

classroom all by yourself. A mentor program should last more than one year. I

recommend at least two and a lead teacher in the room." T6 offered advice to the

mentor teacher, "Even if the new teacher says they don't need help, help them. The

alternative certification teacher is so overwhelmed with the responsibilities of being a

new teacher they will not know where to begin. Basically provide them assistance."

Other support. In addition to induction and mentoring, the participants

advised that administrators support alternative certification teachers through effective

communication, instructional supervision, positive feedback, and financial resources.

Many participants commented that periodic communication about the program

requirements would have been helpful. For example, T4 stated,

There needs to be a better relationship between the university, school district,

and alternative certification teacher. There needs to be better communication

about the alternative certification process. Ask the teachers about their

experiences. It is a lot of work. Monitoring, supervision, and communication

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are necessary. It is a revolving door of people exiting the profession because

of lack of communication. If you needed me to enter the classroom because

you could not find a certified teacher, then you should provide financial

assistance with completing the coursework.

T2 agreed with T4. T2 shared, "the state needs to allocate more financial resources

for alternative certification teachers. If you are asking me to come work for you, why

am I taking a loss? I have killed my savings to become a teacher."

T6 agreed with T4 that administrators should provide better communication

about the program requirements. T6 advised, "Provide a checklist of requirements to

be met by a certain date with really strong guidelines to follow. Provide checkpoints

throughout the year to make sure the requirements are met." This advice is necessary

to prevent alternatively certified teachers from losing their job for failure to meet

requirements. T5 failed to complete the courses and was terminated then brought

back once the requirements met. T4 commented,

I was caught up in a situation where I could not get the courses taken in the

prescribed timeframe. I was called to the central office, and the superintendent

at that time gave me two options: resign or be terminated. So I resigned. I was

a single mom. It was devastating… When I first started it was not spelled out

to me, I was a pure science person, not an educator. They should have sat

down with me in the beginning and discussed the details. Some people resign

and never go back. I knew this was something that I was meant to do. So I

enrolled and finished the coursework and got my job back.

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T4 also offered advice to district and school administrators about instructional supervision and feedback. She stated,

> Alternatively certified teachers are like the children they teach. They like structure. When they come in from other professions, they are used to structure. You cannot expect alternatively certified teachers to walk into the classroom and develop a lesson plan or even execute one that is provided. That is why individuals are leaving the profession. There is no structure. I replaced a new teacher who had worked two weeks, and she left because she did not feel supported or safe… Instead of conducting a walkthrough or an observation for an evaluation, come in the classroom and see what is going on and see if the teacher is having problems. If you cannot do it, provide an instructional coach to offer feedback, model a lesson, and provide instructional strategies to use.

T3 agreed that, "Administrators should spend time with alternatively certified teachers in the classroom, maybe even coteach a lesson."

Summary. Several concerns and suggestions of the participants were presented in this section. The participants made seven suggestions that helped answer the following research questions:

1. What support can school and district administrators provide to ensure retention and teacher effectiveness of alternatively certified secondary teachers?

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2. What advice would completers of Alabama's alternative certification program provide to novice alternatively certified teachers as they start their new career?

The participants suggested that school and district administrators provide a strong orientation program that is at least two years with a mentoring component and training for the mentors. They also recommended to administrators to utilize lead teachers and instructional coaches to assist with instructional supervision and positive feedback. The participants suggested financial assistance to meet program requirements and effective communication of the program requirements with a detailed timeline. A majority of the participants advised the novice alternatively certified teachers to be patient, ask for assistance, and meet the program requirements according to the timeline.

Conclusion

A problem existed in a rural southeastern Alabama school system relative to the assimilation of alternatively certified teachers in the secondary education classroom setting. Principals recommended alternatively certified teachers to fill the shortages of certified and highly qualified middle and high school teacher, but the principals struggled to retain these teachers over time. These alternatively certified teacher struggled to remain in education. Although professional support from educational leaders was expected to ease the burden of transitioning for alternatively certified teachers, many school and district administrators were not aware of the challenges and needs of this special group of teachers.

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This section focused on the findings of this qualitative case study, which documented the experiences six alternatively certified secondary education teachers. The central research question that guided the study was: What are the professional needs of alternatively certified teachers? The findings were report under five major themes:

- teaching as a career,

- the Alabama alternative baccalaureate certification program,

- frustrating/challenging classroom situations,

- professional support, and

- advice from completers.

Findings of this study gained through the qualitative data process support the information in the literature indicating that professional support is an important factor to the success of retaining alternatively certified teachers.

Project Outcome

The outcome of this project is to create a professional development program that provides knowledge and understanding of the key leadership constructs needed to develop a base of professional support for alternatively certified teachers and improve their retention rates. A differentiated induction and mentoring program, mentor training, and supporting materials for educational leaders are proposed tangible products of the professional development program. The unique perspective of this project study is to equip educational leaders with research-based strategies to improve the transitions and retention of alternatively certified teachers based on their needs.

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Research on teacher induction and adult learning is applied in the development of the educational leaders' training program.

The format for the professional development is multiday hands on, multisensor activities. Implementation of the professional development program created through this project is intended to assist educational leaders with providing high quality professional development and high quality professional support to improve teacher effectiveness and retention of alternatively certified teachers, which ultimately improves student achievement. In Section 3, I provide an explanation of the project goals, rationale, implementation, evaluation, and implications.

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Section 3: The Project

Introduction

This section provides a description of the proposed project for presenting the results of this qualitative study. This three-day professional development program is designed for middle and high school administrators to address the challenges and needs identified by alternatively certified teachers interviewed in this qualitative study. The professional development program is the first step in solving the research problem of this study by ensuring that the needs of alternatively certified teachers are met to improve their retention rate and their effectiveness as they enter the teaching profession. The development of this project is inspired by Covey's (1989) admonition to "begin with the end in mind" (p. 95). It is only when the desired objective is defined that a professional development project can be designed to attempt to deliver that goal.

The goal of the project must be efficacious and realistic to accomplish and impact change in the schools. Therefore, beginning with the end in mind, this section commences with a description of the project design, intended goals and objectives, a discussion of the rationale behind the development of the project, and an explanation of how the project addresses social change. In addition, a review of literature on professional development of principals including a discussion of the definition, modes, and key features of professional development, as well as the theory that guided the development of the project. An implementation plan, an explanation of the project evaluation, and discussion of the significance of this project to educational

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stakeholders are also provided. Documents to assist the reader in understanding the design and purpose of the project are included in the appendices.

Description and Goals

The project, *Leadership Matters,* is a three-day, interactive professional development workshop designed to (a) raise awareness of the needs and challenges of alternatively certified teachers, (b) provide an overview and historical perspective of induction in Alabama, (c) understand the role leadership plays in induction, (d) establish a culture of support for beginning teachers, specifically, novice alternatively certified teachers, and (e) provide critical information regarding the selection and development of mentor teachers. The workshop is designed for middle and high school administrators and other individuals who are responsible for teacher development and supervision. Participants will review current research around induction programs and practices that meet the needs of alternatively certified teachers.

The first goal is intended to increase participants' awareness of the significance of assessing the needs of alternatively certified teachers and to encourage principals to consider the implications of needs assessments as a tool for school reform. The second goal of this program is to increase leadership capacity to improve teacher quality and retention. To this end, one program objective is to expand school administrators' knowledge regarding the benefits of induction, cultivating leadership in others, and mentor teacher selection and training. A significant goal of this program is to equip school administrators and the leadership teams with the tools to

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create an induction program in their schools that will provide differentiated support to all teachers regardless of their route to certification.

Rationale

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of alternatively certified secondary education teachers with no preservice training that completed the alternative baccalaureate-level certificate approach in the state of Alabama. Based on the findings of the qualitative study, alternatively certified teachers that I interviewed stated that the school administrators could provide more support to ease the transition into teaching. The alternatively certified teachers expressed that they felt isolated and frustrated. Several findings of this study suggest that alternatively certified teachers did not participate in an induction program, a formal mentoring program, and had limited administrative support. This study's findings of a lack of support from administrators and veteran teachers, and of a failure to provide induction and orientation for novice teachers, are consistent with earlier findings in the literature showing these factors have an impact on teacher effectiveness and retention (e.g., Huling, Resta, & Yeargain, 2012; Kelser, 2013; Morris & Morris, 2012; Tickle et al., 2011).

Based on the findings of the study, there was no formal induction or mentoring program provided to novice teachers in this school system by school or district administrators. This is a significant problem because the Alabama Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program (2003) was designed to provide first-year teachers with mentoring assistance within the first year of school. Alabama state law requires that alternatively certified teachers are assigned a mentor

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teacher (New Teacher Center, 2016). Alabama state law does not require school

districts to provide induction support for new teachers (Goldrick, Osten, Barlin, &

Burn, 2012; New Teacher Center, 2016). The mentor program has not received

funding from the state legislature since the 2012-2013 school year (PARCA, 2015)

and due to changes in the district and school administration,, lack of administrator

training, the program's implementation has not continued in several districts within

the state of Alabama.

The quality of the teacher is the most powerful school based indicator of

student achievement (Haynes, 2011). Therefore, school districts must provide

induction that will develop novice teachers into highly qualified and highly effective

teachers (Grescko, 2013; Grossman & Davis, 2012; Kelser, 2013). Researchers

estimated that it takes novice teachers three to seven years to become highly qualified

and effective teachers (Dillon, 2009). Among the school factors related to student

achievement, leadership is second to quality teaching (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson,

& Wahlstrom, 2004; Mendels & Mitgang, 2013; Miller, 2013). After two decades of

research on new teacher induction, Moir (2009) contended that "principals are a

critical component of the induction program" (p. 17). According to Marzano,

Frontier, and Livingston (2011), the most common problem faced by new teachers is

to learn by trial and error without administrative support and supervision.

Administrators must make the induction of novice teachers in their schools a top

priority (Cherian & Daniel, 2008; Grossman & Davis, 2012; Moir, 2009).

Wooleyhand (2014) identified induction tasks of principals to support novice

teachers that have wide support from educational researchers (Brookhart & Mas,

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2013; Donaldson, 2011; Fahey, 2011; Markle & Van Koevering, 2013). These tasks include:

- recruiting, hiring, and placing new teachers;

- providing orientation to the site and resource assistance, induction and mentoring;

- managing the school environment;

- building relationships between principals and teachers;

- providing leadership for instructional development through formative and summative evaluation; and facilitating a supportive school context (Wooleyhand, 2014).

Fahey (2011) noted that it is the responsibility of the district administration to ensure that principals, school based administrators and teacher leaders receive professional development on inducting novice teachers to increase teacher quality and effectiveness.

A professional development workshop is the chosen project genre for this study. Although the continuous use of workshops as a method for professional development have been criticized in educational literature by some educational researchers (Reeves, 2010; Schomker, 2006; Stein, Smith, & Silver, 1999), other educational researchers agree that a well-designed workshop can reform educator practice and improve student learning (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Guskey & Kwan, 2009; Killion, 2014). Educational researchers have recommended that school administrators be encouraged to provide mentoring

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and induction support (Fahey 2011; Grossman & Davis, 2012). With an understanding of the goals of the induction program, principals can create a culture of support for novice teachers that yields a positive impact on student learning (Moir, 2009).

The professional development program is designed to provide school and district administrators with a basic framework of induction to meet the needs of novice teachers. Additionally, the program will introduce school leaders to a variety of induction supports and equip them with differentiated induction strategies so as to improve teacher effectiveness and the retention of alternatively certified teachers. Therefore, professional development for educational leaders which emphasizes the importance of induction is the solution to the improving the quality and retention of alternatively certified secondary teachers.

Review of the Literature

The purpose of this literature review was to investigate professional development of school leaders as a solution to improving the retention and effectiveness of alternatively certified secondary education teachers. Specifically, the focus of the literature review was professional development in relation to education reform, the elements of adult learning, and the professional development of school principals. I conducted the literature review using several different libraries to saturate the topic, including the library resources of Walden University and Auburn University. To further my search, I subscribed to Teachers College Record. Also, EBSCO Host Research Databases were searched including Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), Dissertation and Theses, Education Research Center,

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Google, Google Scholar Teacher Reference Center, Education: A SAGE Full Text

Collection, Psychology: A SAGE Full Text Collection, PsycINFO, and PsycArticles.

When exploring the literature, I used several keywords pertaining to this

study to narrow search efforts. These search words included *principal training*,

principal networks, *adult learning*, *professional learning*, and *professional*

development. The terms *professional learning*, *staff development*, and *professional*

development are used interchangeably throughout the literature review. These search

terms produced numerous results related to teachers' professional development. The

search resulted in a limited number of current professional articles, educational

reports, and research studies that focused on the professional development of school

administrators.

Professional Development Research

The purpose of the project for this study was to provide a framework for a

professional development program for school leaders to support alternatively certified

teachers. An exploration of the research regarding high quality professional

development was important to the study. The ultimate goal of high quality

professional development for educators is to improve the quality of teaching and

learning outcomes (Brown & Anfara, 2002; Spanneut, Tobin, & Ayers, 2012). In the

literature, educator professional development plays a critical role in national

education reform for linking student achievement to teacher quality (Bayar, 2014;

Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Guskey, 2000). As district and school administrators

work collaboratively and draft plans to improve teacher quality and increase student

achievement, they must keep in mind that high quality professional development is an

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essential component of school improvement (Guskey, 2000). Therefore, an exploration of the research regarding high quality professional development was important to this doctoral study.

There have been multiple scholarly and legislative calls for reforming the U.S. public education system to improve teaching standards. In 1983, the report *A Nation at Risk: The Imperative for Educational Reform* (The National, 1983), identified a need for higher standards for educators' professional growth. In 1994, the *Goals 2000: Educate America Act*, validated the relevance of professional development for all educators in order to improve teacher effectiveness and student learning. The United States Department of Education (1994) described high quality professional development as "rigorous and relevant content, strategies, and organizational supports" (p. 2). The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 required the availability of high quality professional development for all teachers.

NCLB outlined eight key elements of high quality professional development:

1. All activities are linked to student learning.

2. Data are used to make decisions about the content and type of professional development activities.

3. Professional development activities are research based;

4. Subject matter mastery for all teachers is a top priority.

5. There is a long-term plan that supports focused and continuous professional development activities;

6. Professional development activities match the content taught;

7. Fully evaluate all professional development activities;

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8. Aligned professional development activities with state standards, assessment, and the local school curriculum. (USDOE, 2002b).

These elements served as a blueprint to school and district administrators as they used Title IIA funds to design, plan, select, or implement professional development activities for their faculties. Under NCLB, states were required to provide scientifically based professional development for core academic subject area teachers. This requirement excluded other educators, specifically school administrators. Reseachers noted that "NCLB did little to provide direction to districts as to the identification of research-based elements or practices that could be included in strategies aimed at supporting and developing school principals" (Haller, Hunt, Pacha, & Fazekas, 2015, p. 5). Funding under NCLB was specifically earmarked for teacher professional development to ensure adequate yearly progress. School districts, state departments of education, and professional associations provided professional learning opportunities to teachers to assist with improvements in these areas.

On December 10, 2015, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) which reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 (ESEA) and replaced the No Child Left Behind Act of 2002. The ESSA addresses and supports improving recruitment, preparation, placement and retention of school leaders. The ESSA contains provisions related to support and professional development for principals. The ESSA emphasizes the importance of district level professional devepment to meet the needs of school leaders. Under ESSA, the required professional development district-level activities involving principals must include:

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- Provide induction programs that support professional growth of new principals.

- Provide an emphasis on leadership opportunities, multiple career paths, and pay differentiation.

- Develop and provide training for school leaders, coaches, mentors, and evaluators on how to accurately differentiate performance, provide useful feedback, and use evaluation results to inform decision-making about professional development, improvement strategies, and personnel decisions.

- Provide principals with high-quality, personalized professional development that is evidence-based (e.g. using data to improve student achievement, effectively engaging parents, families, and community partners, coordinating services, etc.).

- Provide programs and activities to increase the knowledge base of principals on Instruction in the preschool, and the transition to elementary school.

- Provide training, technical assistance, and capacity-building to assist principals with developing appropriate assessment systems, using data for school improvement, developing in-service support for school personnel, developing high quality professional development plans, and developing feedback mechanisms on school conditions.

- Provide professional development and other comprehensive systems of support for principals and other school leaders to promote high-quality instruction and instructional leadership in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects, including computer science.

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- Provide high-quality professional development for principals and other school
  leaders on effective strategies to integrate rigorous academic content, career
  and technical education, and work-based learning (if appropriate; (Haller,
  Hunt, Pacha, & Fazekas, 2015, p. 6).

Also under ESSA, the definition of professional development was updated and specifically defines quality professional development as activities that are an integral part of school and local educational agency strategies for providing all educators and are sustained, intensive, collaborative, job-embedded, data driven, and classroom focused (USDOE, 2015). As United States's major law governing public schools, the ESSA prioritizes excellence and equity for all students and supports effective teachers, principals, and other school leaders (USDOE, 2015).

Theory and Research that Supports the Project

Professional development is a form of adult learning that supports district and school administrators, teachers, and ultimately student learning (Zepeda, Parylo, & Bengtson, 2014). Adult learning theories and research form the foundation for effective professional development (Bickmore, 2012). Similar to the students that they serve, educators have unique learning needs that are critical to improving professional practice. However, professional development designers and facilitators should know that teaching and learning strategies for adult learners are significantly different than with children. During the planning and development of workshop activities, the designers and facilitiators must be aware that adults learn differently from children and the motivation of the adult learner is purposeful. Therefore, the

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activities and instructional strategies should be designed to ensure that the adult

learner participates in the learning process to make application of the knowledge to

their daily practice. Knowles' (1980) theory of andragogy (the art and science of

teaching adults) outlined basic principles as a foundation to develop learning

experiences for adults. These principles characterize adults as learners who are self-

directed, bring an accumulation of their life experiences and knowledge as a learning

resources, have a desire to learn based on their life experiences and needs, and apply

their learning to solving problems and to their needs.

Educational researchers and adult educators have also applied Oja's (1980)

key elements of successful adult learning to develop models that guide professional

development in schools:

- use of concrete experiences.

- continuously available supervision and advising.

- encouragement of adults to take on new and complex roles, and

- the use of support and feedback when implementing new techniques (Trotter,
  2006, p. 12).

In a study of the impact of structure principal networks, Tillery (2012) found that

school principals wanted learning experiences that they could immediately practice in

their school. As a method of professional learning, school principals reported that

they prefer the opportunity to discuss their practice with others and collaborate on

how to solve problems that exist in their schools (Salazar, 2007; Tillery, 2012).

Through collaboration, adult learners were able to reflect, grow and adapt throughout

their careers (Trotter, 2006).

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The key elements of successful adult learning guided the development of the project for this study. The use of concrete experiences was important to the development of the project. Examples of induction and orientation programs from other schools systems were provided to principals and their leadership teams to review prior to developing their own. Continuous supervision and advice will be provided throughout the year by district administrators both formally through site visits and quarterly meetings and informally by responding to questions and providing support as needed.

The literature review in Section 1 and the findings in Section 2 suggest that one component needed to address the local problem is administrative support. One of school principals' most challenging tasks is meeting the needs of and supporting the success of a diverse group of teachers, including those with no preservice training (Preston, Jakybiec, & Kooymans, 2013). Poor quality of administrative support is a leading factor for teacher attrition (Cherian & Daniel, 2008). In a study conducted on the preparation, support, and retention of alternatively certified teachers, Nagy (2006) reported that principals are not knowledgeable of the needs and challenges that alternatively certified teachers face. Nagy (2006) recommended that principals receive professional development on working with alternatively certified teachers because their needs differ from the traditionally prepared teachers. To be effective instructional leaders, principals need job embedded professional development, specifically on instructional leadership tasks (Ashton & Duncan, 2012; Brown, Benkvoitz, Muttillo, & Urban, 2011; Fullan, 2009; Morris & Morris, 2012; Muenich, 2014). Conducting walkthroughs, formal observations, coaching and mentoring

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teachers, and planning for induction and staff development are instructional

leadership tasks of the evolving role of principals that are essential to improving

teacher effectiveness and aid in teacher retention. Brookhart and Moss (2013) noted

that in order for building administrators to become better leaders of learners they

must become the lead learner.

Principals must see themselves as adult educators (Bickmore, 2012; Muenich,

2014). This project provides the framework for principals and their leadership teams

to provide orientation and induction to their new teachers as well as a training model

for their veteran teachers to become effective mentors. The principals and their

leadership teams will be supported while implementing the induction and orientation

program throughout the school year. An evaluation of the project and the orientation

program from principals and teachers will provide feedback to make improvements to

the program. The collaboration and networking opportunities of this project will assist

the principals in applying their learning immediately to their schools and impact the

quality of their professional practice, the quality and quantity of their teachers and

ultimately, student learning. Research indicates that high quality princpals improve

teacher retention and student achievement (Beteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2012;

Leithwood et.al., 2004).

Professional Development for School Principals

Despite the calls for education reform over the past 50 years, the professional

development of principals and other school leaders has been neglected. Since 2014,

the United States Department of Education is focused on implementing initiatives for

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school improvements and the professional development of school leaders. Those

initiatives include:

- the School Leadership Program, which awards competitive grants to districts

    to recruit, train, and mentor principals and aspiring principals;

- the Teach to Lead Initiative, a partnership with the National Board for

    Professional Teaching Standards that promotes teacher-leadership

    opportunities in schools;

- and the Turnaround School Leaders Program, which disburses grants to train

    principals to lead low-performing schools slated for turnaround under the

    department's School Improvement Grant program (Superville, 2014, p. 10).

With a current shift in education reform recognizing the importance of school leaders

in improving student achievement, those initiatives focuses the attention of state and

district leaders to include the professional needs of school leaders in school

improvement plans and professional development agendas. The professional

development workshop for this project study is designed for middle and high school

principals and their leadership teams to learn and reflect with other principals and

their leadership teams. Researchers agree that high quality professional development

is a school improvement strategy that is necessary to improve the quality of teaching,

learning, and leadership in our school systems (Cook, 2015; Manna, 2015; Spillane,

Healey, & Melser Parise, 2009; Spanneut et al., 2012).

Historically, school districts have relied on preservice principal preparation

programs for colleges and univerisities, national and state professional associations,

and networking opportunites from other principals for the development of principals

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(Brown, Squires, Connors-Tadros, Horowitz, 2014; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Schleicher, 2012; Young, 2015). According to a 2012 report by The Wallace Foundation, *The Making of the Principal*, over 500 university-based principal preparation programs have failed to provide learning opportunities that sustain the evolving role of principals (Mitgang, 2012). University coursework has been found to have the least impact on principal effectiveness (Grissom & Harrington, 2010); therefore, effective professional development for principals is the key to school reform (Manna, 2015; Miller, 2013). Like the teachers they supervise, school administrators need professional development to improve their professional practice.

Researchers agree that it is essential that district administrators provide opportunities for school administrators to improve their leadership skills (Fahey, 2011; Mendels & Mitgang, 2013; Wright & da Costa, 2016). Over the last few decades, district administrators have broadened their roles and responsibilities on the professional development of school administrators (Honing & Rainey, 2014; Talbert & David, 2007; Wright & da Costa, 2016). There are a number of factors that result in the expanded involvement of district administrators' role in the professional development of school leaders: an increase in state and federal funding provided for principal professional development (Herman, Gates, Chavez-Herrerias, & Harris, 2016), lack of adequate training from principal preparation programs (Grissom et al., 2010; Mitgang, 2012), and the evolving needs of school districts (Lynch, 2012). School districts need high quality school leaders to address the tasks required to implement state and federal policies and to enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

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District administrators are shifting from their roles as directors of programs and implementors of policies towards designers of professional development that supports teaching and learning (Fahey, 2011; Honing et al., 2014; Mendels et al., 2013; Wright et al., 2016). In a study conducted by Honing and Rainey (2014), district administrators were noted for creating networking opportunities also known as "principal professional learning communities" (PPLCs) to support princpals as instructional leaders (p. 2). The PPLCS were designed to support principals in incorporating instructional leadership into their daily practice instead outsourcing to an outside company or allowing district administrators to report information about district policies implementation. District administrators led the PPLCs which resulted in the transformation of the district administators' daily professional practice from directive to teaching and supportive. Honing and Rainey (2014) noted that principals reported that the participation in the PPLCs supported their work and they viewed the participation in the PPLCs as valuable learning experiences. The central office administrators created opporotunities for all prinicpals in the school district to serve as PPLC learning resources (p. 39). Honing and Rainey (2014) noted that although the district admininstrators struggled to dedicate time to principal development, the professional development opportunities provided support for growing and sustaining instructional leadership practices among all educational leaders within the school district.

Implementation

The implementation of this professional development project could commence upon approval of the project study by the superintendent and school board. The three-

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day workshop could be implemented during the Administrator Academy that usually

takes place during the third week of July. Upon approval from the superintendent and

school board, I will facilitate the program and solicit the assistance of the director of

human resources and director of curriculum and instruction. The target population for

participation is middle and high school principals, their assistant principals, and

teacher leaders. The content of the project was based on the findings of the interviews

of the alternatively certified secondary teachers employed in this school system. The

challenges and professional needs expressed by the alternatively certified teachers

and the research on induction programs guided the content of the project. Upon

completion of the three days, the principals and their leadership teams are expected to

have an induction program to utilize with their new teachers. In late July, mentors

will be selected and assigned by the school principal and reported to the director of

human resources. In early August, one day training program will be provided for

mentors during the new teacher orientation by the school improvement specialists. A

calendar of monthly mentor activities and follow up training will be presented during

the training. Quarterly principals and mentor teacher meetings will be held to monitor

and evaluate the program. In May, a culminating activity will be held with principals,

mentors and mentees to evaluate the program and celebrating the end of a successful

school year.

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Table 2

Implementation Timeline of Project

Timeline and key elements	Approx. time needed
May or June	1 day
Approval for the superintendent and school board	
First Summer June	1 day
Meet with district administrators to discuss areas of responsibility and resources needed	
July	
Leadership Matters: Supporting New Teachers' Training August	3 days
Assign and train mentors	1 day
New teacher orientation	2-3 days
	3 days
Ongoing training during the school year (year1)	Ongoing
Second Summer	2-4 days
New administrator training, new mentor teacher training, and or new teacher orientation	
Ongoing training during the school year (year2)	Ongoing

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

To ensure the project is a success, human resources, financial resources, and district resources are needed. The human resources need is based upon the support and assistance of the superintendent, directors and the school improvement specialists. The director of human resources will help to facilitate mentor teacher selection and training activities and the director of curriculum and instruction will help to facilitate teacher evaluations activities. The support of these administrators will strengthen the urgency and relevancy that an effective induction program will improve teacher quality and aid in teacher retention. Two school improvement specialists will be invited to provide assistance during the workshop activities. The school improvement specialists work with teachers throughout the school year and

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can share their experiences along with assistance during the discussion of teacher challenges.

Financial resources are required to implement this project. However, there is no cost to the participant. Lunch will not be provided during the first two days of the workshop. On the last day of the workshop, lunch will be provided by the district to all administrators and mentor teachers in the district. Although there is no cost to the participants associated with the workshop, there are expenses related to the workshop and the implementation of an induction and mentoring program. There are food costs. Breakfast and refreshments during the break (approximately $200) for three days is an expense. There are other expenses necessary for purchases such as printing, paper, large writing pads, and markers (approximately $50). There are additional district resources are also needed to implement the project. The use of the district's meeting rooms is needed. A commitment to secure funds in the district's budget to pay mentor teachers is needed for the implementation. The budget for this project implementation will also include the number of mentor teachers with a $1000 stipend per novice teacher.

Potential Barriers

Active participation from administration and lead teachers is a potential barrier towards implementation. Induction is not mandated in the state of Alabama. The Alabama State Department of Education does not provide funding for mentors. Funding from the district's budget for mentor development and incentives is also a barrier towards implementation at the school level. Financial stipends for attendance of teacher leaders may also be a barrier because unlike the school administrators who

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are working under contract the teachers will not return to work under contract until

the last week of July. The teachers' return date conflicts with new teacher training

and mentor teacher training. It is imperative that the district's school board,

superintendent, and district administrators support this project and the facilitator

communicates the potential benefits to the school administrators and the teachers they

lead.

Proposal for Implementation and Timetable

The project should begin the summer after the dissertation is approved. The

school leaders' training session outlined (Appendix A) will take place during the

Administrators' Academy held during the month of July. Follow-up meetings will be

scheduled quarterly with school principals to discuss the implementation of the

induction program. The mentor teacher training sessions will consist of five training

sessions throughout the school year according to the Alabama Teacher Mentoring

Program (ALSDE, 2007).

Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others

I will serve as the program planner and facilitator of the professional

development program for school administrators. I will solicit the assistance of the

district administrators to review, edit, offer suggestions, and conduct workshop

activities. I will be responsible for gathering materials for workshop activities,

developing the PowerPoint presentation, and printing all materials. Participants will

be expected to share their experiences with alternatively certified teachers, contribute

to discussions on how to provide an induction program at their schools, and

collaborate with others. The project will require a commitment of time, financial

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resources, district resources, and support from the district's leadership team in order to provide the principals and their leadership teams the opportunity to learn and implement an effective induction program.

Project Evaluation

The goals of this project are to (a) raise awareness of the needs and challenges of alternatively certified teachers, (b) provide an overview and historical perspective of induction in Alabama, (c) understand the role leadership plays in managing induction, (d) establish a culture of support for beginning teachers, specifically, novice alternatively certified teachers, and (e) provide critical information regarding the selection and development of mentor teachers. In order to determine if the project was successful and elicit constructive feedback, a formative evaluation will be conducted. The formative evaluation will be presented in the form of a survey of Likert-type statements regarding the effectiveness of the professional development at addressing the goals of the daily session with open ended questions at the end of the questionnaire. The evaluations will be collected at the end of each day from the participants. The use of the formative evaluations will assist the researcher, district administrators, and superintendent in determining the helpfulness of the information presented and identify what information will be useful in the future professional development opportunities. The evaluations also provide the participants the opportunity to express what could be done differently and identify what additional information is needed to accomplish the goals of the project. Principals and their leadership teams will serve as cocollaborators for future professional development sessions based upon their responses.

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A formative evaluation tool in the form a survey with open ended questions will also be distributed to the mentor and mentee to complete at the end of each semester to determine the effectiveness of the induction program components. First, second, and third year alternatively certified teachers and their mentors will be asked to complete the evaluation. By providing the mentee an opportunity to evaluate the induction program, mentor, and administrative support, completion of the evaluation gives voice to the novice teacher to express their opinions regarding the effectiveness of the mentor and administrator support in addition to yielding documentation of the attainment of the goals of the professional development project. The mentor will also have the opportunity to express their opinion regarding the effectiveness of the mentor teacher training, the administrative support, and the components of the induction program.

Implications Including Social Change

Local Community

Within the educational process, site-based research promotes the greatest societal change (Creswell, 2008). The data collected during this study indicated several challenges and areas of concern of alternatively certified secondary education teachers in their school system. Specifically, the study revealed that the teachers in this school district did not participate in an induction program, they were not assigned mentors, they felt isolated, and some did not feel supported. The costs of failing to induct new teachers specifically alternatively certified teachers into the education profession has an enormous impact on new teachers, their students, and their school communities (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). By failing to strengthen the teachers'

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knowledge and practices, provide support, and sustain these initial educators, the results can negatively impact their students and teachers in the school (Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013). This project was specifically designed to meet the needs of the alternatively certified teachers at the middle and high schools in this school district. A professional development program for administrators designed to discuss the needs and challenges of this special class of teachers and the benefits of induction to improve retention and effectiveness of these teachers. When new teachers received high quality induction and support, the performance and retention improves which ultimately improves student achievement (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Far-Reaching

Research has indicated that effective school leadership and teacher quality are key school related factors that impact student achievement (Horng & Loeb, 2010; Miller, 2013; Murnane & Steele, 2007; Stryker & Szabo, 2009; Wahlstrom, Seashore, Leithwood, & Anderson, 2010; Wilson, 2011). In order to improve teacher effectiveness and retention, all new teachers, especially alternatively certified teachers must receive support from their school administrators (Kukla-Acevedo, 2009; Landgraf, 2004; Tickle et al., 2011; Wynn, 2008). Transformation of how school administrators induct novice teachers into the profession is critical to student achievement, teacher development, and retention (Goldrick et al., 2012). Like Alabama, there are states in the nation were preservice training and induction is not require for alternatively certified teachers. Although this project was designed to meet the needs of a local school system, this project can assist school leaders across the

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nation with specific induction strategies to strengthen, support, and sustain the alternatively certified teachers hired to fill our nation's classrooms.

Conclusion

According to the findings of this study and educational literature, researchers have found that many alternatively certified teachers have learned through trial and error (Ingersoll, 2012; Scherer, 2012). Some of the alternatively certified teachers interviewed in this study described feelings of isolation, frustration, and being overwhelmed by the demands of the job. As a result, I developed a professional development program for school leaders to provide a quality induction program for alternatively certified teachers as the proposed solution to this problem.

Most school leaders assume that novice teachers can develop professional expertise own their own (Marzano et al., 2011; Nagy, 2007). Participation in a quality induction program can improve teacher effectiveness and retention (Ingersoll, 2012). The project study's purpose was to enhance the needs, experiences, and perspectives school leaders and equip them with tools to transform the experiences of future alternatively certified teachers. The following section provides a review of all aspects of this project and a discussion of reflections on the strengths, limitations, and future implications of the project.

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Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Introduction

This section includes a discussion of the strengths and limitations of the project. An analysis of my role as scholar, practitioner, and project developer is also included. I will conclude with suggestions for the project's potential on social change, implications, applications, and directions for future research.

Project Strengths

The project study utilized interviews with six participants and was guided by a set of research questions. The overall strength of project comes from the creation of a professional development program designed for school leaders. This professional development workshop, *Leadership Matters*, was designed for school administrators and mentors at the study site and stems from the synthesized research of leadership practices that support improving teacher retention and effectiveness.

An induction program that provides differentiated support to alternatively certified teachers is needed in this school system. This project was designed to establish a professional learning community, build capacity in the school leaders, allocate resources, use data to inform decisions about school leaders' professional learning needs, and uses the adult learning theory as a guide for interactive workshop activities. The research-based content of the workshop activities provide the administrative teams with an understanding of the needs of alternatively certified secondary education teachers and the tools to differentiate induction program activities to meet the needs of all novice teachers in the school district.

Another strength of the project is its situation within the genre of professional development. Based upon the interviews with the participants of the study and the fact that the state of Alabama does not require a formal induction program for new teachers, there was a clear need for training for school leaders on how and why an induction program and mentor training is essential for to improve teacher retention and quality. This project is designed to provide tools to assist the school leaders with mentor teacher training and necessary components to tailor an induction program to meeting the individual novice teachers' needs within the school. The adaptability of induction and mentoring activities is a strength of the project. This project could be easily tailored by educational leaders based on the needs of the novice secondary education teachers regardless of certification route and principals in any Alabama school system.

Project Limitations

The primary limitation of this project is that it requires resources to conduct the training program. Human, financial, and little district resources are needed to conduct this training. The human resources needs are time, support, and participation of district and school administrators. Time allocated during the summer academy and support of the superintendent and district administrators is critical. Principals will participate with the understanding that the implementation of an induction is required not optional in this school system. The need for financial resources is also a limitation of this project. The state of Alabama no longer provides funds to school systems for a mentoring program. The professional development program requires financial resources for the cost of food, supplies, and materials. District resources are also needed through the use of facilities to hold the workshop. The availability of meeting rooms that are conducive to whole and

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small group activities is also important. It is also helpful to the participants of the workshop to meet away from a school to be free from distractions.

Recommendations for Remediation of Limitations

Based on the conclusions drawn from the literature review and the findings from the study, the following recommendations were designed for the remediation of the limitations have been formulated.

1. The district administrators should use Title II funds to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers. The Title II funds can be used to attend teacher education career fairs, provide financial stipends to mentors to participate in an induction program, and provide professional development for new teachers, mentor teachers, and principals.

2. The district superintendent and district administrators must make improving teacher quality and quantity a top priority for the improvement of teacher and learning for all students and educators. In order to achieve this goal, the Superintendent and the school board may establish a collaborative partnership with the surrounding local colleges and univerisities' college of education. The Superintendent should work with the school board members, district and school leaders, teachers, and other stakeholders to identify a plan of action to help all K-16 students, improve the postsecondary education coursework of alternatively certified teachers, and provide continuous professional development to the principals and teachers.

An alternative to addressing this problem differently would be for the district administrators to create a professional learning unit (PLU) which focuses on improving

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the quantity and quality of teachers for middle and high school principals and add it to their professional learning plans to be completed. This alternative approach to the problem will make the participation in the professional development program mandatory as well as provide supporting evidence of the implementation of the induction program and ongoing data of the impact on the retention rate of alternatively certified teachers.

Scholarship

The knowledge acquired by this project study will benefit me and several others as I continue to serve as an educational leader. I learned that in order to possess the academic attainments of a scholar, one must dedicate time and resources to accomplish their goals; commitment to a schedule to conduct research and write is critical. A scholar is one has profound knowledge of their subject matter. In order to have that knowledge, I had to ask a lot of questions and seek information beyond my own previous experiences. Seeking the primary sources and limiting my own opinion is of vital importance to ensure the validity and credibility of my research.

Project Development and Evaluation

As a district administrator, project development and evaluation is an essential job function to ensure the success and effectiveness of the services provided to meet the needs of the school system. I spent many hours researching what educational leaders are doing across the nation to prepare, retain, and meet the needs of alternatively certified teachers. I learned that meeting the needs of the employees in your school system is critical because it ultimately impacts student achievement. Although teacher shortages exist across the nation and alternatively certified teachers enter through revolving classroom doors, the solutions will vary. As I developed this project for school

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administrators, I considered the student engagement strategies that the teachers in my school system are expected to use in their daily instruction.

Although adults learn differently from students, it was important to me that I incorporated engagement activities to help the administrators stay engaged and allow them opportunities to collaborate instead of providing a lecture format where they take information and return to their buildings with a list of things to do. Consideration of the timeline was also important. A three-day workshop provides an introduction to the topic, discussion of strategies to improve retention, and time to develop an induction plan. Although I believe evaluating participants' satisfaction and acquisition of new information is important, it is equally important to evaluate the implementation of the induction plan through survey at the end of the school year in order to assess the impact on the students, teachers, and school system.

Leadership and Change

Leadership is the second most important element to increasing student achievement and maintaining a safe learning environment. The Association of California School Administrators identified six dimensions of educational leadership: visionary/cultural, operational, instructional, learning, collaboration, and strategic (Bossi, 2008, p. 8). Collectively, these dimensions define an effective leader as one who:

- is a competent, strategic, collaborator who develops and maintains systems that support the school vision,

- ensures that all children learn, and

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- supports the faculty and staff to reduce factors that impede the school operations to maintain a safe environment conducive for teaching and learning.

As educators, there is a great focus on instructional leadership because of the level of accountability to ensure that children are taught by highly qualified educators.

Throughout this doctoral journey, I read a number of research articles and studies that reported why teachers leave the profession. I recorded the experiences of alternatively certified teachers and noted their challenges and I have discussed with school and district leaders how we can retain our teaching staff. I learned how other educational leaders across the nation work to ensure that the responsibility of educational leadership is distributed beyond the principal's desk. District leaders, teacher leaders, community leaders, teachers, and parents are also responsible for ensuring the success of our schools.

Leadership is about change. Due to the teacher shortages across the nations, state departments of education changed the requirements to allow individual in the schools without completing a teacher preparation program. This change requires school and district leaders to change how we induct and mentor these individuals. When the State of Alabama decided to no longer fund the mentor teacher initiatives, several of the programs ceased to exist in districts and schools across the state. New teachers enter schools yearly in need of support. School leaders must be change agents. Induction and mentoring activities can exist without funding from the state. The responsibility falls on the local school districts and principals to be creative with incentives and financial resources. Leaders must be creative and resourceful to meet the needs of their schools. I believe

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leadership makes the difference in how change is experienced. Educational leaders can make the choice to respond positively to change and move their schools forward or respond negatively and make no changes.

Analysis of Self as Scholar

I learned that I was a researcher long before I began this doctoral journey. In my daily work as an educator, I collect information, analyze data, and apply the findings to improve student learning, the workplace, teacher development, principal development, and stakeholder involvement. I learned through this doctoral journey that I like discovering a problem, collecting and analyzing data, and proposing a solution. I am comfortable reviewing evaluations to determine if goals are met or to determine how I can assist to improve policies, processes, and the culture to make my organization better. I gained a new appreciation for the historical significance of the city of Tuskegee regarding the contribution to the establishment of Institutional Review Boards (IRBs). The acquired knowledge and experiences gained from this doctoral journey is synonymous with my personal kaizen goals

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

I am a better practitioner. I am a change agent. From hours of research on alternative teacher certification, I gained knowledge of how stakeholders at all levels of education organizations impact policy development. Educators must be knowledgeable of current reforms in education and understand what impact the reforms will have impact on student achievement. As Director of Human Resources, I am more knowledgeable of impact of the timing of new hires, the induction provided, and support needed for this special class of teachers that fill the state's secondary classrooms. I gained knowledge

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about this problem that I can use to impact change in my school district. I can conduct interviews of new alternatively certified teachers in the school system where I work and share the findings with the other district and school leaders to make improvements to our induction program based on the findings. As President – Elect of the Alabama Association of School Personnel Administrators, I can share my research with other educational leaders across the state at conferences. Based upon the experiences gained during this process, I will encourage other human resources directors to analyze the retention rate of their alternatively certified teachers.

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

As I developed this project, I reflected about the relevance each component would contribute to the professional development of the administrators in the school system where I work and the school system where I conducted this study. The design of each component was guided by the challenges and needs of alternatively certified teachers. I was determined to provide the administrator with meaningful learning experiences and equip them with a toolkit of research based strategies to implement in their schools to improve teacher retention and effectiveness. For example, I reviewed the phases of development of new teachers and shared other emotional phases that alternatively certified teachers experience with no preservice training. Because the implementation of an effective induction program was the solution to the problem of study, I incorporated the training modules from the Alabama Teacher Induction and Mentoring Manual (2003). The administrators of the local school setting were employed within the last five years and the Alabama state legislature has not allocate funding for the program implementation since 2012. The training modules on mentoring along with the research

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based activities that I incorporated in this project provides an interactive professional development program that will provide the administrative teams with an understanding of the needs of alternatively certified secondary education teachers and the tools to differentiate an induction program to meet the needs of all novice teachers in the school district.

The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change

There are several reasons why teachers leave the teaching profession which causes teacher shortages in middle and high school classrooms. Alternative teacher certification programs were created to alleviate teacher shortages. In this local setting, alternatively certified teachers faced many challenges as they earned a professional educator certificate. The alternatively certified teachers entered the teaching profession with no preservice training, completed graduate coursework to meet the alternative certification program requirements, and did not participate in an induction program. The teachers were struggling to survive from day to day.

In this project study, I addressed the problem by proposing a professional development program on the administrator's role in induction. I feel that the completion of this body of work will promote positive social change. In this local setting, the implementation of the project will assist all new teacher regardless of certification route because an induction program does not currently exist. Participation in the professional development activities will introduce the school administrators and teacher leaders to the needs of alternatively certified teachers, emotional phases of new teachers as well as induction strategies to improve retention rates. My project can serve as a training tool to implement or improve induction strategies that can be implemented in schools. I can also

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share this research with the State Department of Education to emphasize the importance of induction and need for consideration to reallocate funding for the induction and mentor initiative.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The research had implications for project development by identifying the professional needs of alternatively certified teachers. This study provides insights for the middle and high school principals in the local setting charged with the responsibility of improving the retention rate and effectiveness of alternatively certified teachers. The interviews conducted in this study provides support for positive social change in middle and high schools, as well as school districts, as individuals enter middle schools and high schools with no preservice training. The project study provided a framework for leadership capacity that will assist middle and high school principals, district administrators, college professors, and state department of education specialists to improve the transitions of alternatively certified teachers.

The research findings guided the design of the professional development program for educational leaders to be knowledgeable of the needs and challenges that alternatively certified teachers face. The professional development program also informs school administrators that induction is needed to improve the retention and effectiveness of alternatively certified teachers. District and school administrators must assume the responsibility of a high quality induction program that will last the duration of the alternative certification program. The program requirements must clearly be communicated to the alternatively certified teachers upon hire and benchmarks should be established during the school year to monitor their progress toward meeting the yearly

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requirements of the program. Implementation of an induction program will ensure that a mentor is assigned and communicate the district and school administrators' expectations and responsibilities to the novice teachers, mentors, and school faculty.

This project study also serves as evidence that there is a need for allocation of state funds to support a mandated teacher induction and mentoring program. School districts cannot rely solely on Title II funds or local funds to meet the needs of novice alternatively certified teachers. There must be support provided from the state level to assist district that are not able to employ a fully certified teacher and must rely on hiring an alternatively certified teacher. Collaboration among the state department of education, the state's colleges and universities, and the local school districts is needed to ensure an effective transition into the classroom. The findings in this study revealed that the course content did not relate to their daily practices. Collaboration among the university professors and local schools should bridge the gap between theory and practice to meet the needs of alternatively certified teachers.

After analyzing the findings in this study, I found that there are strong perceptions regarding the assimilation of alternatively certified teachers into the classroom. Although alternative teacher certification is a solution to the growing problem of teacher shortages, it may not necessarily solve the teacher quality issue. All teachers interviewed in the study mentioned that they questioned their effectiveness as they entered the classroom. As the growing number of alternatively certified teachers increase, failure to meet their needs will have a lasting impact on the student achievement. Therefore, the following directions for future research are recommended.

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This study could be replicated to examine a different geographical area of the state of Alabama and schools systems with different student population sizes. This study was conducted in a small rural school system with middle and high school teachers. This study would be beneficial because alternatively certified teachers are employed in rural and urban schools. This information could provide more insight as to other needs and challenges alternatively certified teachers face.

Another direction for future research would be able to interview novice alternatively certified teachers with one to three years of teaching experiences. The participants in this study had five or more years of teaching experience. Novice teachers within the first three years of their teaching career may provide insight on their experiences during the first two weeks of school, the impact of the course content on their daily practices, the support provided by the mentor teacher and administrative team, as well as other areas of needs and challenges that may benefit all educational stakeholders.

Findings of this study revealed that some of the teachers did not benefit from the coursework. The teachers shared that the course content was not relevant to their daily practice. A study on the impact of the four required courses of the Alternative Baccalaureate Certificate Program would be beneficial to all stakeholders to determine if the content is adequately preparing the teachers as they enter without preservice training. A survey from principals and alternatively certified teachers could be conducted to determine if reform is needed for these special class of educators and serve beneficial to colleges and universities.

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Conclusion

The phenomena of alternative certification is a major force within the current landscape of education within the United States. This educational reform was created to increase the quantity and quality of classroom teachers. The number of alternatively certified teachers entering the classrooms is rapidly increases and their preparation varies from state to state. In Alabama, there is no preservice requirement. These teachers assume the full responsibilities of a teacher of record and attend graduate course at night. They enter the classroom with fears of being ineffective. Alternatively certified teachers need knowledgeable school administrators, mentors, and a supportive network of district and school level educators to be successful.

The central research question for this study was: What are the professional needs of alternatively certified teachers? The findings of this study identified support from administrators and a need for a multiyear induction program as the most prevalent needs. An implementation of an induction program could improve the retention rate of all highly effective novice teachers regardless of certification route. The study has the potential of having a positive impact not only at the local school level and district level, but also at the state level. The project study will assist school administrators to gain a better understanding of the challenges that alternatively certified teachers with no preservice training face and the need for administrator support to improve teacher effectiveness, retention, and ultimately improve student achievement. It is my desire that educational leaders will be motivated to meet the professional needs of all novice teachers through high quality induction programs, specifically alternatively certified teachers with no

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preservice training, as they enter the classrooms as teachers of record and students of

learning.

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Appendix A: The Project

Slide 1

Slide 2

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Slide 3

Slide 4

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Slide 5

Slide 6

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Slide 7

Getting to Know You

Candy Bar Test!
Directions: Pick a Hershey's Miniature
Candy Bar of your choice and don't eat it!

Slide 8

Candy Bar Personality Test

- What does your candy bar choice tell us about your personality?
- Once the music starts, find the poster in the room with the picture of the candy bar that you chose.
- Once at the poster, greet all members of your "candy personality" group. Read the description of the candy bar you chose. Discuss as a group, how is this like/unlike you?
- Now read all of the other descriptions for the other candy bars too!
- Discuss with a partner at your group which candy bar BEST describes you and why.

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Slide 9

Slide 10

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Slide 11

Individually, record responses on post-it notes. At table groups, discuss thoughts in an

effort to identify common themes. Engage in a whole group discussion. Chart responses.

Assure participants that throughout the training efforts will be made to address identified

requests.

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Slide 12

In addition to the factors listed on the slide, some teachers leave the profession due to

frustration and lack of support. Other research has suggested that many teachers leave

the profession due to increasing teacher workloads and the growing demands placed upon

teachers to improve student achievement and performance regardless of each school's

and each student's unique circumstances (Haberman, 2005). Well-designed and carefully

managed systems of beginning teacher support can help lower the dropout rates among

new teachers and increase their success in the classroom.

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Slide 13

Slide 14

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Slide 15

Alabama's Teacher Shortage

During the 2015 – 2016 school year, the areas of greatest need

- Agri-Science (Grades 6 -12)
- Arts: Art, Band, and Music (Grades 6 -12)
- Career Technologies
- English/Language Arts
- Family Consumer Science
- Guidance and Counseling
- Health Occupations
- Foreign Languages (Grades 6 - 12)
- History/Social Sciences (Grades 6 – 12)
- Mathematics (Grades 6 - 12)
- Science (Grades 6 - 12)
- Special Education

U.S. Department of Education, 2014

Slide 16

Unfilled Positions in Alabama

Table 6. Fields of Teacher Shortage

Unfilled Positions Statewide	2014-15	2013-14	2-Year Average
Special Education	128	166	147.0
Math	95	120	107.5
Science	72	48	60.0
Career-Tech	36	69	52.5
Foreign Languages	22	25	23.5
English	18	16	17.0
Guidance Counseling	11	16	13.5
History	6	10	8.0

SOURCE: State Department of Education

Public Affairs Research Council of Alabama, 2015

Math, science, and the various categories of special education are consistently the highest shortage areas. While teacher shortages in these areas are by no means unique to Alabama, the shortage of math and science teachers is of particular urgency here, because it is in those subjects that Alabama students struggle the most in national comparisons.

Slide 17

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A Few Definitions

Student	Individuals who are in medical school are referred to as medical students. They are not referred to as a doctor or physician until they graduate from medical school. Once they graduate, they are a physician even though their training is not complete.
Intern	After completing medical school, the doctor completes their first year of post-medical school training. This year is referred to as the intern year. The intern does not have the right to practice unsupervised medicine, and must practice within the confines of the training program in which they are enrolled.
Resident	Having completed eight years of higher education, physicians that enter a residency program are known as residents. Residency follows the intern year. At this point, when the internship year has been completed and a third level exam has been passed, the physician may practice as a general practitioner. While practicing independently is possible, the vast majority of physicians choose to pursue a residency for further training. Residency can range from an additional two years of education to an additional seven years of training, depending upon the specialty.
Fellow	A fellow is a fully credentialed physician. In the U.S., all physicians must complete a four-year undergraduate degree, either a Bachelor of Science (BS) or a Bachelor of Arts (BA). When they complete their education, all physicians must apply for a medical license before they are allowed, by law, to practice medicine.
Attending	An attending is a physician who has completed their training and is working independently. This individual is typically board certified in their area of expertise. In a teaching facility, the attending is often directing the education of medical students, interns, residents and fellows.

Webster's Internet Dictionary

HANDOUT- Distribute to table groups or have a folder on the table with each handout

copied in colored paper. Refer to this page.

Move to next slide

Slide 18

Table Talk

In your table groups, describe how the following terms relate to becoming a professional educator:
- – Medical Student
- – Medical Intern
- – Medical Resident
- – Medical Fellow
- – Attending

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Slide 19

Slide 20

It is human nature to make assumptions. "Teaching…a flat line profession!"

With a table group partner, consider the following question:

What assumptions do you have about new teachers?

After brief discussion, refer to handout Assumptions that guide BEST Induction Programs.

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Slide 21

BEST Induction Programs are also based on a series of assumptions. Participants read

the "Assumptions that Guide BEST Induction Programs" and select one assumption to

explore in triads.

Ask participants to stand and locate two partners who selected the same assumption.

Triads engage in a discussion around the following prompt:

Based on your experience with participating teachers, why is this assumption of greatest

interest to you?

Elicit responses from triads to share with the whole group.

Close by reminding participants that learning to teach is a complex process and that

induction is provided in order to support teachers as they grow and develop as

professional educators. In addition to quality professional development, participating

teachers have an opportunity to earn a Professional Educator Certificate upon completion

of a BEST Induction program.

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Slide 22

Slide 23

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Slide 24

Preventing teacher dropouts is very cost-effective. A 2007 study sponsored by the

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future ("The Cost of Teacher Turnover

in Five School Districts: A Pilot Study") found that on average, schools spend $8,000 for

replacement and retraining every time a teacher leaves. Low-performing and low-

resource school systems often experience higher rates of turnover and are thus

disproportionately harmed by this problem.

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Slide 25

School Disadvantages

- In the fall of 2014 there were 2,731 classroom teachers without any prior experience teaching in Alabama's public school classrooms.

Teacher Experience vs. ASPIRE Test Results

	Percentage of Classroom Teachers With No Experience, FY 2015	ASPIRE Percent Proficient, FY 2014
Statewide	5%	39%
Anniston City	14%	25%
Dallas County	10%	23%
Choctaw County	2%	22%
Birmingham	6%	22%
Lowndes County	11%	20%
Tarrant City	10%	20%
Lanett City	21%	20%
Fairfield City	9%	19%
Chickasaw City	26%	18%
Midfield City	7%	18%
Macon County	22%	17%
Sumter County	14%	16%
Greene County	7%	15%
Selma City	10%	14%
Bessemer City	13%	14%
Bullock County	6%	13%
Barbour County	17%	12%
Linden City	6%	12%
Wilcox County	7%	12%
Perry County	8%	11%

SOURCE: LEAPS Database.

HANDOUT

According to the Local Education Agency Personnel System (LEAPS) database maintained by the State Department of Education, in the fall of 2014 there were 2,731 classroom teachers without any prior experience teaching in Alabama's public school classrooms. These beginning teachers comprised 5.2% of the state's classroom teachers. Individually, these teachers would have benefited from an induction program and a trained mentor. Table shows the 20 school systems with the lowest results on the spring 2014 administration of the Aspire tests in reading and math for grades 3-8. The table also shows the percentage of classroom teachers in those systems who had no experience in the fall of 2014, according to LEAPS. All but one of these low-performing systems had above-average percentages of classroom teachers with no prior experience; in over half of them, the percentage of inexperienced teachers was two or more times the state average. These results are only suggestive, but they reinforce the common-sense notion that having experienced teachers work proactively with new teachers to improve their instructional performance has great potential to impact student results in Alabama.

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Nationally, 27 states require some form of induction or mentoring, according to a 2012 survey by the New Teacher Center. In 11 states, two or more years of transitional support are required for all new teachers.

Slide 26

HANDOUT

Placing emphasis on the importance of intensive, high-quality teacher mentoring for teachers who are inexperienced, those who are teaching based on emergency or alternative certificates, and teachers in schools identified for academic improvement, the State Board of Education adopted *Alabama Standards for Effective Teacher Induction and Mentoring* in June 2004.

Admittedly, this is an area that needs considerable work in Alabama.

These standards are based on the NCLB definition and criteria for high-quality teacher mentoring and are supported by research- and evidenced-based literature. LEAs and

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schools that use state or federal funds for teacher mentoring must use these standards as a

basis for their programs.

Slide 27

Slide 28

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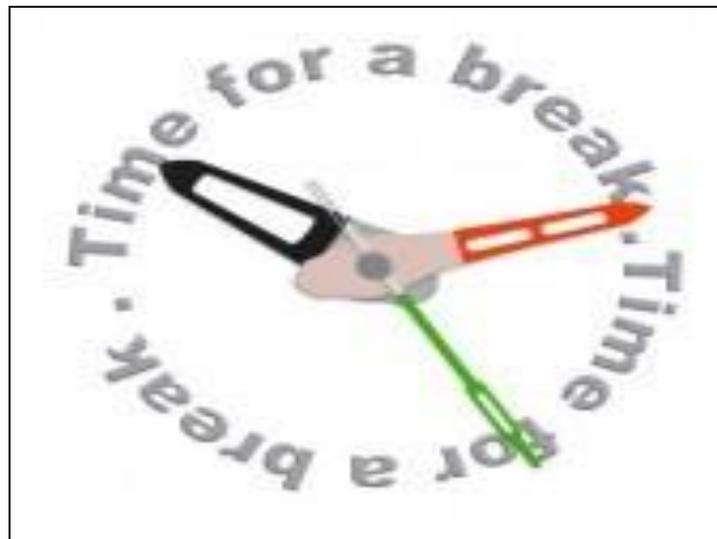
Slide 29

Alabama Pathways to Teach

Alabama has the following routes to becoming certified to teach:

- State-Approved Traditional Teacher Preparation Program
- Alternative Baccalaureate-Level Certificate Approach
- Special Alternative Certificate Approach
- Preliminary Certificate Only Through Exception Approach
- Additional Teaching Field Approach Based on Praxis (CBT)

Slide 30

Approved Traditional Preparation Program

- An individual may complete a State-approved teacher education program with an Alabama institution of higher education. This includes master's programs for the career changer with a baccalaureate degree.
- Through this approach individuals participate in field experiences and internships.

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Slide 31

I conducted research on the Alternative Baccalaureate-level certificate because it is the

most popular alternative approach. It is for those who have not begun earning their

teaching certification through an approved teaching certification program in Alabama.

These individuals are a unique group of teachers whose voices are rarely heard.

Slide 32

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Slide 33

Slide 34

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Slide 35

Alabama Quality Teaching Standards

- Developed by the Governor's Commission on Quality Teaching, 2007
- Based on research about effective teaching
- Adopted by the Alabama State Board of Education

The Alabama Quality Teaching Standards were created by the Governor's Commission on Quality Teaching in 2007. They are based on research about effective teaching. They have been adopted formally by the Alabama State Board of Education.

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Slide 36

I'd like for you to think, individually, about what **quality teaching** looks like.

Imagine, if you would, the beginning teacher assigned to you this year. Imagine that, within three years, he or she has become a very successful teacher, with students consistently achieving at higher-than-expected levels.

What I want you to think about is this: If you walked into that teacher's classroom, what would you see to let you know that he or she was successful? What would the teacher be doing? What would they have done before and after each lesson that contributed to their effectiveness? What would you see in the classroom that would make you know, "THIS IS QUALITY"?

Ask participants to write each idea on a separate post-it note. Ask them to write legibly and to use a short phrase for each post-it.

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Slide 37
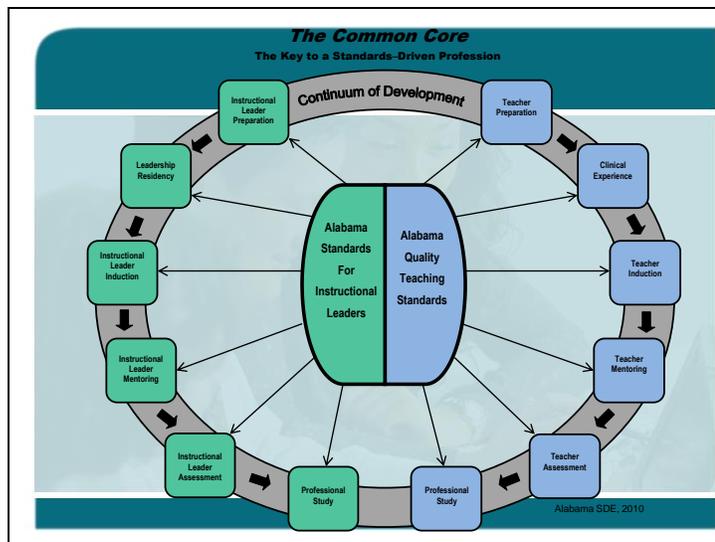
Slide 38

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Slide 39
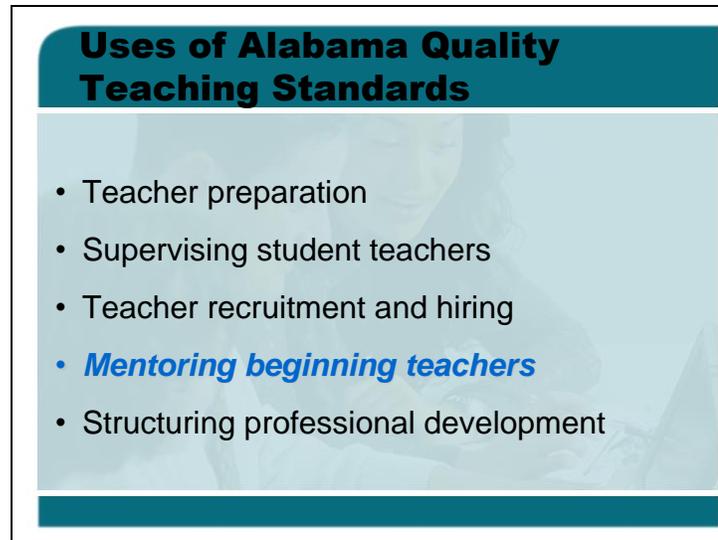
Uses of Alabama Quality Teaching Standards

- Teacher preparation
- Supervising student teachers
- Teacher recruitment and hiring
- *Mentoring beginning teachers*
- Structuring professional development

Slide 40

Alabama Quality Teaching Standards

- Standard 1: Content Knowledge
- Standard 2: Teaching and Learning
- Standard 3: Literacy
- Standard 4: Diversity
- Standard 5: Professionalism

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Slide 41

Slide 42

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It is helpful to make tent cards for the "expert groups": 1 through 5. Place the tent cards around the room so that people can gather with others who have the same standard assigned to them. When they gather as 1's, for example, they will read the description, the rationale, and the key indicators; create a definition for the standard, giving examples of evidence they would look for; and be prepared to present to other members of that original home group of five participants.

If we have the "placemats" refer participants to both the long form of the standards and to the "shortcut" or abbreviated version of the standards as they study their standard.

It is helpful if the facilitator walks around to different groups to monitor their work in order to be sure they understand the assignment and further, that they understand the standard to which they have been assigned.

Hopefully, 10-15 minutes will be adequate for this task.

Call time and ask them to return to their home groups. Allow about two minutes for each participant to present a summary of his or her assigned standard.

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Slide 43

Slide 44

If you decide that you don't have time to do the Jigsaw, you might just want to present

the next 10 slides—a summary of the five standards.

Alternately, after the expert groups have taught their standards to their home groups,

these 10 slides could serve as a group review of the five standards.

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If time allows, it would be good to ask for examples (as you address each standard) from the easel papers the created as they did the activity of what a "quality teacher" looks like. You can expect most of those examples to come from Standards 1, 2, and 4.

If you feel that the teaching has been adequate, you might decide to skip these slides altogether.

The first standard deals with the teacher's knowledge of the content, including state standards and system curriculum…and his or her ability to communicate that content to students.

Slide 45

Alabama Quality Teaching Standards

- Standard 1: Content Knowledge
  – Academic Discipline(s)
  – Curriculum
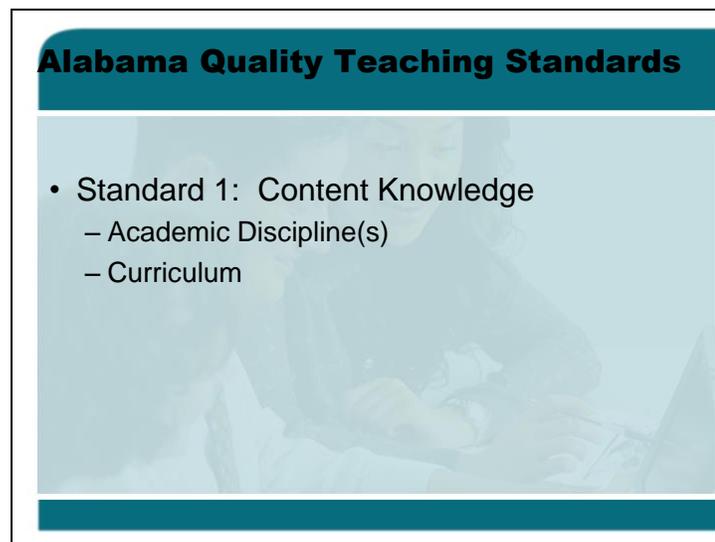
The two indicators deal with knowledge of the academic disciplines that are being taught and ability to design instruction in such a way that students can learn the content.

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Slide 46

Slide 47

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Slide 48

Alabama Quality Teaching Standards

- Standard 3: Literacy
  – Oral and Written Communication
  – Reading
  – Mathematics
  – Technology

Slide 49
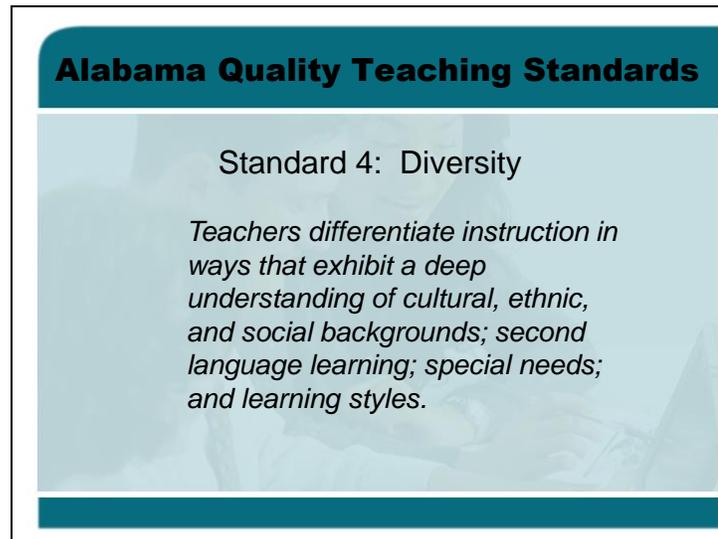
Alabama Quality Teaching Standards

Standard 4: Diversity

Teachers differentiate instruction in ways that exhibit a deep understanding of cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds; second language learning; special needs; and learning styles.

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Slide 50

Alabama Quality Teaching Standards

- Standard 4: Diversity
  – Cultural, Ethnic and Social Diversity
  – Language Diversity
  – Special Needs
  – Learning Styles
  – General

Slide 51
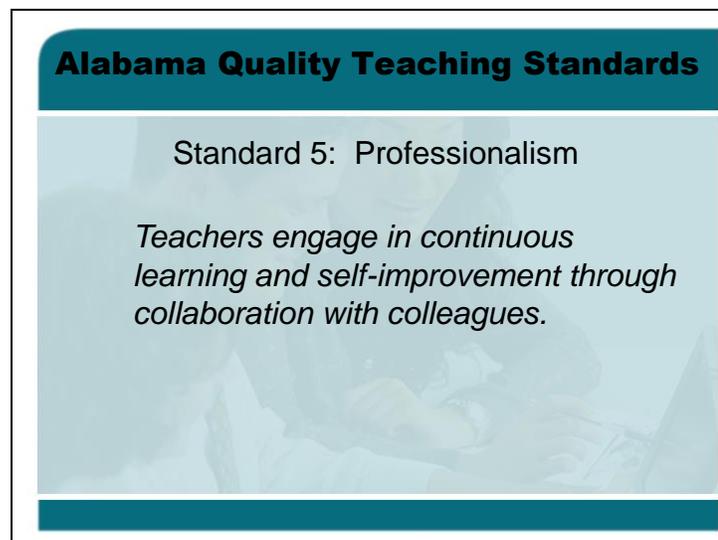
Alabama Quality Teaching Standards

Standard 5: Professionalism

Teachers engage in continuous learning and self-improvement through collaboration with colleagues.

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Slide 52

Slide 53

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Slide 54

Slide 55

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Slide 56

Applying

- Career teachers at this level operate with autonomy, consistently applying effective teaching practices.
  – They are proactive in anticipating student learning needs and responding to them with prior planning as well as in the moment.
  – This teacher is adept in data collection and analysis and can demonstrate his/her impact on student achievement.
  – This teacher is highly engaged in professional development and actively works with colleagues to promote student achievement.

Slide 57

Integrating

- Master teachers at this level possess highly developed skills.
  – These teachers are adaptable and easily adjust plans or practices in response to changing contexts.
  – effectively implement challenging curricula, utilize interactive instructional strategies, and process assessment data.
  – is a reflective participant in professional learning communities, and works to move the school forward through application of Best Practices.
  – influences colleagues by the implementation of successful instructional practices and the modeling of professional demeanor.

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Slide 59

Innovating

- Teachers at this level are highly creative and inventive in their own classrooms to increase student learning and achievement to the highest degree possible.
  - initiates and/or provides leadership of professional learning communities who collaborate on curriculum, innovative instructional strategies, and positive learning cultures.
  - leads at the school, district, and community level and contributes to the educational profession through venues such as classroom research, the submission of educational articles, and professional development activities.

Slide 60

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Slide 61

Slide 62

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Slide 63

Slide 64

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Slide 65

High Quality Professional Support

- Trained administrators
- Trained mentors
- Frequent structured administrator and mentor meetings
- Coaching observations and feedback
- Networking with peers

High Quality Professional Support

Slide 66

Increased Teacher Success

- Increased instructional competence
- Increased sense of self-efficacy
- Increased commitment to teaching as a career

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Slide 67

Slide 68

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Slide 69

Slide 70

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Slide 71

"A caring, competent, and qualified teacher for every child is the most important ingredient in education reform and, we believe the most frequently overlooked."

National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996.

Slide 72

WHAT IS INDUCTION?

A comprehensive, continuous program designed to address the personal, professional, and instructional needs of beginning teachers.

ALSDE, 2003

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Slide 73

Purposes of Induction

- *To provide support and guidance to smooth the transition of beginning teachers from novice to professional*

- *To familiarize beginning teachers with the responsibilities of teaching and the culture of the schools where they teach*

- *To increase the competency of beginning teachers by improving their content knowledge and professional skills*

- *To assess beginning teachers to ensure that they can perform the duties of teaching and that they are an effective match for their particular school*

- *To increase retention of teachers in a particular geographic location or in a particular subject area*

ALSDE, 2003

Slide 74

Table Talk

What impact might induction have on school districts, teacher retention, and increased student achievement?

Share your response with the whole group.

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Slide 75

HANDOUT

Slide 76

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Slide 77

Program Vision

When developing an induction program vision, districts should:
focus on **best practices** in teaching.

- create organizational systems for helping all teachers to reach their highest potential as **teacher leaders**.

- provide opportunities for collaboration to **reduce isolation** among new teachers.

- foster new professional norms of **collaboration and on-going learning**.

- **set high standards** for all who are involved in new teacher induction.

- establish the expectation of a successful teacher as one who continues to engage in professional development from the moment they enter the field.

Slide 78

Collaboration

When building collaborative networks for novice teachers, districts should:

- Create professional learning communities (PLCs) where new and veteran teachers work together with the outcome of student achievement by examining daily practice.

- Offer structured, sustained, intensive professional development programs that allow new teachers to observe others, be observed by others, and be part of networks or study groups where all teachers share together, grow together, and learn to respect each other's work.

- Create opportunities for all colleagues to contribute to leadership and professional development.

- Trust new teachers to share and create knowledge together, while including veteran teachers, and communicate the message that quality teaching is a group responsibility.

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Slide 79

Institutional Commitment and Support

In demonstrating commitment and support, leaders have a responsibility to:

- **make time to engage in ongoing formal and informal dialogue with new teachers to foster their professional growth.**
- **design an induction program that allocates time and resources needed to accomplish program goals and support continuous program improvement.**
- **Leadership & Professional Learning Communities work to improve conditions that affect beginning teacher success and their students' learning.**
- **balance the site and district reform initiatives with the steep learning curve of new teachers.**
- **advocate for quality program implementation.**
- **support those who are working with new teachers, including but not limited to: instructional coaches, mentors, department members, grade level teams, etc.**
- **communicate the induction plan and vision to the district and community in order to promote the support of new teachers.**
- **designate program leaders in order to ensure there is a point person in the district to whom mentors and instructional coaches can communicate questions or needs.**
- **work with program leaders to coordinate and facilitate induction and implement components.**

Slide 80

Professional Development

New teachers:

- **are provided with learning communities for professional learning, problem-solving and opportunities to collaborate**
- **will collaborate assisted by their coaches/mentors in applying professional learning.**
- **are engaged in ongoing professional development by well-qualified presenters and facilitators.**
- **are given choice and flexibility in their professional learning.**
- **are provided with opportunities to incorporate reflection within their practice.**

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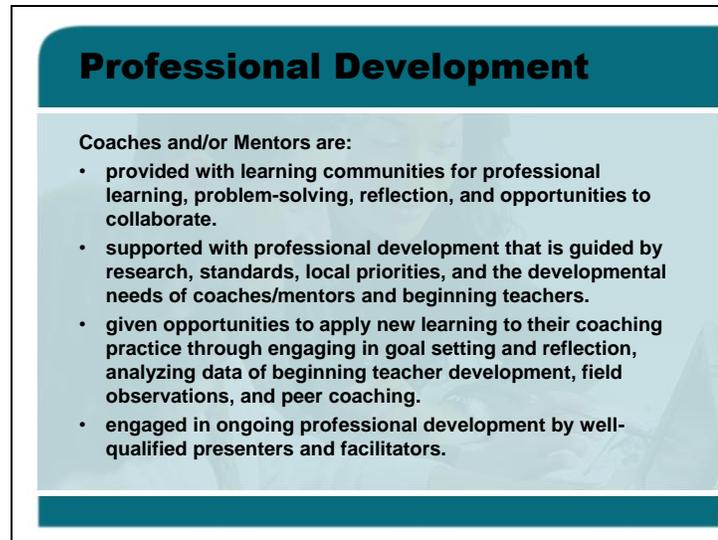
Professional Development

Coaches and/or Mentors are:
- provided with learning communities for professional learning, problem-solving, reflection, and opportunities to collaborate.
- supported with professional development that is guided by research, standards, local priorities, and the developmental needs of coaches/mentors and beginning teachers.
- given opportunities to apply new learning to their coaching practice through engaging in goal setting and reflection, analyzing data of beginning teacher development, field observations, and peer coaching.
- engaged in ongoing professional development by well-qualified presenters and facilitators.

Slide 82
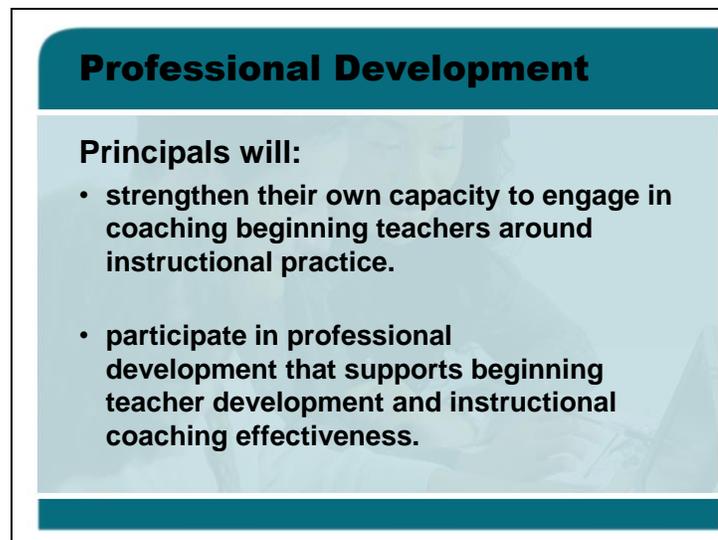
Professional Development

Principals will:
- strengthen their own capacity to engage in coaching beginning teachers around instructional practice.

- participate in professional development that supports beginning teacher development and instructional coaching effectiveness.

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Slide 83

Slide 84

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Slide 85

Slide 86

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Slide 87

Handout

Slide 88

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Slide 89

Slide 90

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Slide 91

Slide 92

Each table will have an article related to an induction component to review. Articles can be found in the handout folder. Each table has a folder with research articles related to components of induction.

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Each member of the group will read an article and write a response to the following discussion questions:

What is the major theme of the article?

How does this article relate to induction?

What does this article say about the component of induction?

Do you agree with the author's point of view? Please explain in detail.

After 30-45 minutes, the group member meets with other participants with the same article. Group assignments are made. All group members share their responses and prepares a report to whole group. Provide responses on large chart paper with the Induction component title. Whole group discussion of each article.

Articles for this activity:

Program Vision

Potemski, A & Matlach, L. (2014). Supporting New Teachers: What Do We Know About State Induction Policies?, *Center on Great teachers & Leaders: American Institutes for Research.* Retrieved from

http://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Induction_Snapshot.pdf

Collaboration:

Raywid, M. (1993). Finding Time for Collaboration. *Educational Leadership, 51*(1), 30-34.

Institutional Commitment & Support:

:

Johnson, S. & Kardos, S. (2002). Keeping New Teachers in Mind. *Educational Leadership, 59*(6), 12-16.

Professional Development:

Diaz- Maggioli, G. (2004). Professional Development Today. In *Teacher-centered professional development*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD pp. 1-18.

Teacher Leadership:

Harrison, C. & Killon, J. (2007). Ten Roles for Leaders. *Educational Leadership, 65*(1), 74-77.

Teacher Evaluation System:

Danielson, C. (2011). Evaluation that Helps Teachers Learn. *Educational Leadership, 68*(4), 35-39.

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Slide 93

Slide 94

Teaching, however, has traditionally not had the kind of induction programs for new

entrants common to many skilled blue- and white-collar occupations and characteristic of

many traditional professions (Ingersoll, 2012).

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There are the various issues and problems that effective employee entry, orientation, and support programs—widely known as induction—seek to address (Ingersoll, 2012).

Slide 95
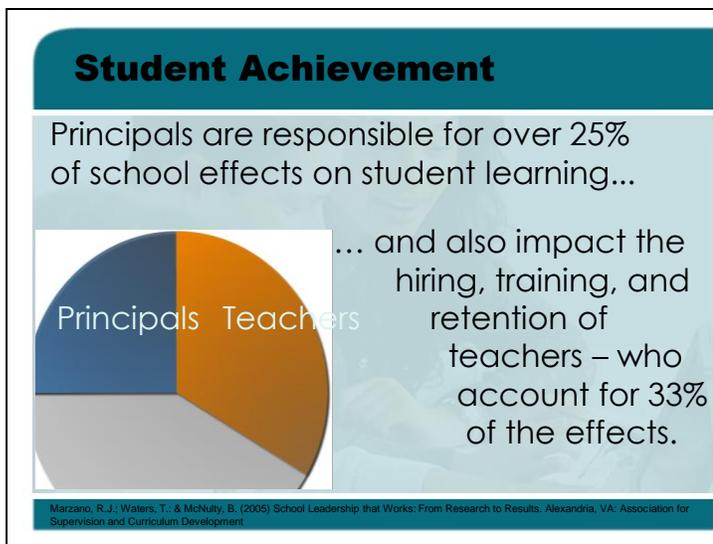
A significant statistic: In a 2004 Wallace Foundation Study, it was found that principals effect one quarter of a school's impact on student learning, Imagine that – one person in the school is responsible for one quarter of the impact. But every principal is different, and the size of that impact and quality of that impact on student achievement will vary based on the strength of each principal. Principals must be LEADERS OF LEARNING. While most have been through university programs, research out of Columbia University's Teacher Collage found that most of these programs weren't providing the skills and knowledge necessary for the new demands of instructional leadership (Educating School Leaders, 2005, Arthur Levine, President, Teachers College, Columbia University)

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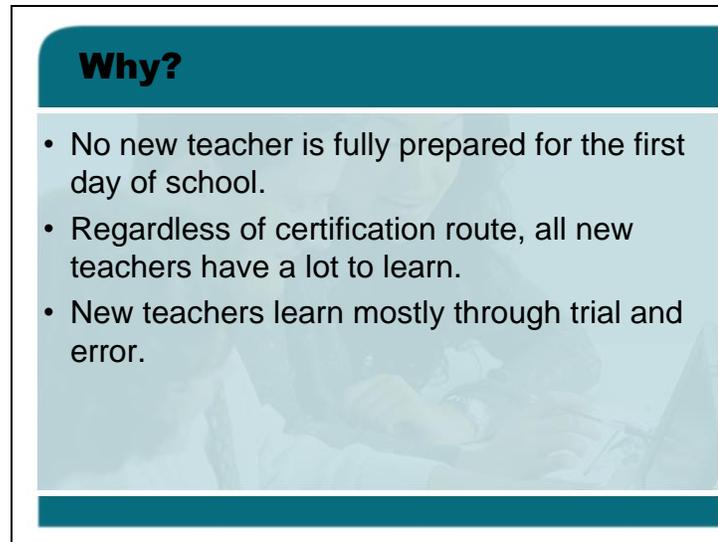
Why?

- No new teacher is fully prepared for the first day of school.
- Regardless of certification route, all new teachers have a lot to learn.
- New teachers learn mostly through trial and error.

Slide 97
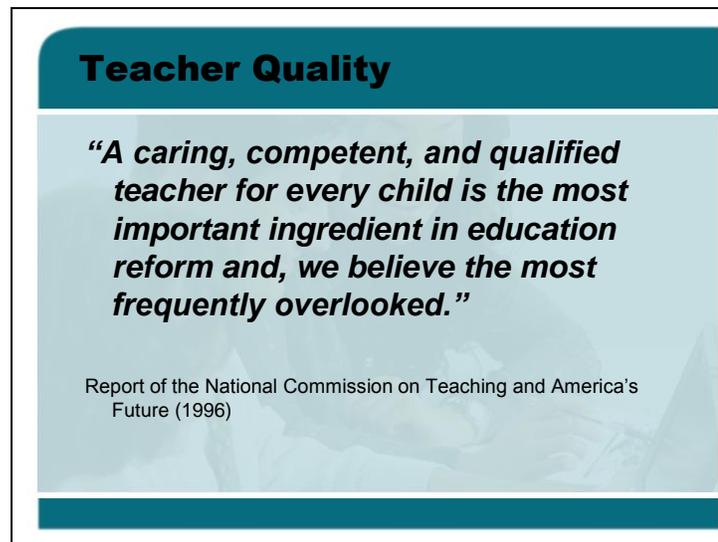
Teacher Quality

"A caring, competent, and qualified teacher for every child is the most important ingredient in education reform and, we believe the most frequently overlooked."

Report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (1996)

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Slide 98
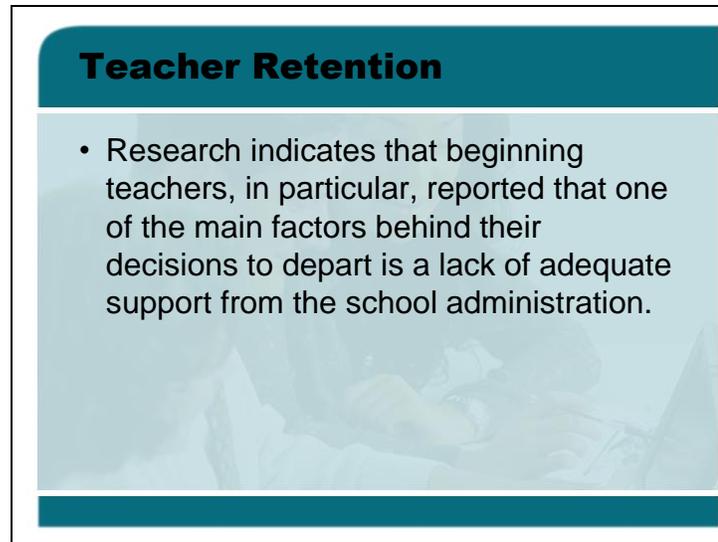
Teacher Retention

- Research indicates that beginning teachers, in particular, reported that one of the main factors behind their decisions to depart is a lack of adequate support from the school administration.

Slide 99
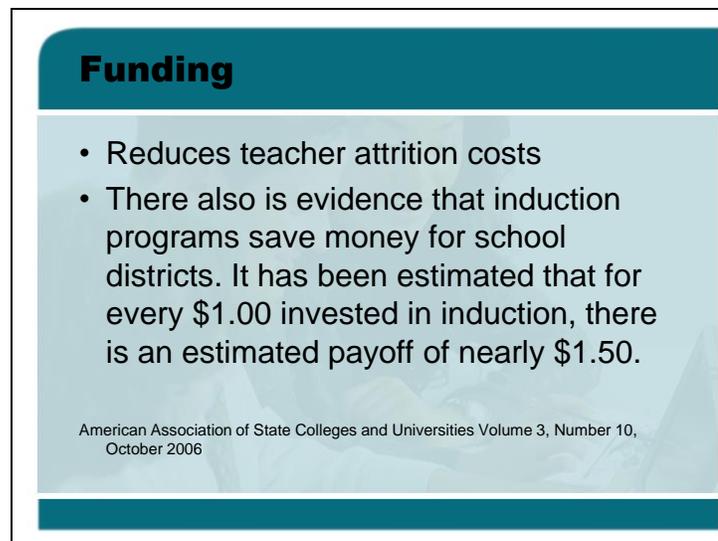
Funding

- Reduces teacher attrition costs
- There also is evidence that induction programs save money for school districts. It has been estimated that for every $1.00 invested in induction, there is an estimated payoff of nearly $1.50.

American Association of State Colleges and Universities Volume 3, Number 10, October 2006

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Slide 100

Table Talk

How might students benefit from a novice teacher's induction experience?

How these factors impact a new teacher's professional development and certification status?

Share with whole group.

Table Talk

Slide 101

Time for a break. Time for a break. Time for a break.

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Slide 102

Slide 103

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Slide 104

Slide 105

We have an article for you to read, excerpted from "Support for Beginning Teachers Must

Become a Top Priority" published in the newsletter of the AL Best Practices Center.

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As your read, find at least three ideas that you find interesting or important. Underline or highlight them so you can refer to them later. Be prepared to talk about why you think they are important.

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Slide 107

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Slide 108

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Slide 114

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Slide 118

Slide 119

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Slide 120

Jigsaw Guidelines

- At each table, members count off from 1 to 5.
- Each person will read the introduction, then read their assigned section
  - 1's Read Anticipation
  - 2's Read Survival
  - 3's Read Disillusionment
  - 4's Read Rejuvenation
  - 5's Read Reflection
- Groups meet at tables according to their number and read the pre-assigned pages.
- Participants share out their insights, experiences, and thoughts about the reading.
- Return to original tables when "Attention Getting" device is sounded.
- Participants share out the key ideas discussed at their expert tables.

Slide 121

Phases of First Year Teachers' Attitude Toward Teaching

In pairs

- Review **"*Calendar of Options"***

- Complete the *Phases of First-Year Teaching Graphic Organizer* by matching phases of first-year teaching with examples of appropriate support

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Slide 122

Feelings of an ABC Teacher

DREAD

Pulling from the pit of my stomach.

Subtle. A dark cloud hanging overhead. It's not paralyzing, but I know it's there.

A shadow playfully taunting me all day Sunday. Every time I snap around to catch a glimpse

It tucks away behind the couch

But I know it's there.

Janet Williams, ABC teacher

Janet described in vivid detail her typical Sunday as a alternate route teacher.

Slide 123

Survival Strategies

Read this poem. Can you relate?

The Imposter Syndrome

There is something I don't know,
That I am supposed to know.
I don't know what it is I don't know
And yet am supposed to know.
And I feel I look stupid if I seem to both not to know it,
And not to know what it is I don't know.
Therefore, I pretend to know it.
This is nerve-wracking since I don't know
What I pretend to know,
Therefore, I pretend to know everything.

R. D. Laing (1970)

Think about this:

What kind of impact might "the imposter syndrome" have on job satisfaction and the likelihood of leaving a profession?

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Slide 124

Survival Strategies

List 5 "bad habits" a new teacher might resort to help them survive their first year.

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Slide 125

Survival Strategies

Did you include anything such as:

- not asking for help
- ignoring some very real needs of students
- failing to maintain on-going contact with the families of students
- spending inordinate amounts of time preparing materials during evenings, weekends, and breaks

Part of your role as a BEST team member is to help the new teacher avoid coping strategies that can result in these "bad habits".

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Slide 126

**Working Conditions
and New Teacher Success**

- In an *Analysis of Teachers' Concerns in Selected Alabama Public Schools (2005), Dr. Findlay reported 250 teachers expressed*
  – Lack of trust in administration
  – Lack of collaboration
  – Lack of commitment to teaching specifically in teachers with less than 5 years of experience

Slide 127

**Working Conditions
and New Teacher Success**

It is in schools and classrooms where teachers must find success and satisfaction. It is there they will decide whether or not to continue to teach.

Susan Moore Johnson, et.al. Harvard Education Letter

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Slide 128

Slide 129

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Slide 130

Slide 131

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Slide 132

Orientation: a Process Not an Event

- What might Orientation look like at your school?
- Is it all at once or over time
  - Teams take notes
  - Report to whole group

Slide 133
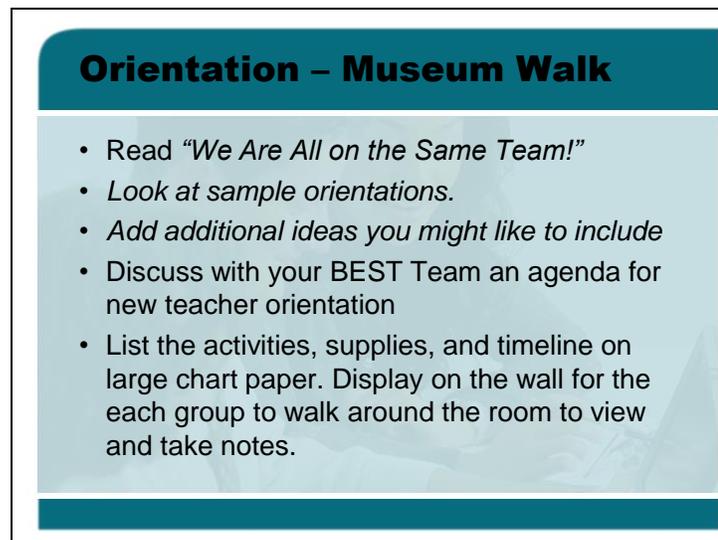
Orientation – Museum Walk

- Read *"We Are All on the Same Team!"*
- *Look at sample orientations.*
- *Add additional ideas you might like to include*
- Discuss with your BEST Team an agenda for new teacher orientation
- List the activities, supplies, and timeline on large chart paper. Display on the wall for the each group to walk around the room to view and take notes.

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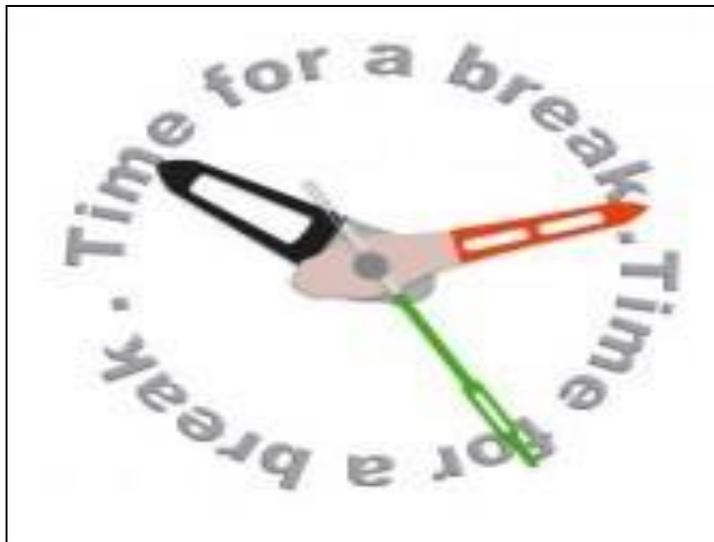
Slide 134

Slide 135

Prepare an Elevator Speech

- What would you want to say to your faculty—in two minutes or less—about the induction program and about their role in helping to provide a successful year for the beginning teachers in your school?

- Work with your table group to plan an elevator speech—something you could say in the time it takes to ride an elevator from the lobby to the 10th floor.

Turn your attention to the rest of your faculty. Most of them probably know very little

about the induction. What is essential for them to know? What will be their role in

ensuring success for your beginning teacher?

With your table group, plan an elevator speech—something you could say in the time it

takes to ride an elevator from the lobby to the tenth floor of a building—about the

:

induction program and the ways in which the faculty might be supportive to new teachers.

Slide 136

Allow a few minutes for participants to reflect, using their handout, "Making a Commitment."

Ask them to stand, find a partner, and share one idea from their reflections.

Call time and ask them to find another partner with whom to share an idea they have written.

Now ask—from across the room—for someone to share an idea that their partner shared with them. If time allows, hear from everyone in the group. This will help to cement the commitment to a quality induction for new teachers.

Thank them for a good day.

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Slide 137

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Day 1 -Agenda

8:00	Continental Breakfast
8:30	Introductions and Goals and Norms of the Workshop
	Welcome from the Superintendent Introduction of Presenter Goals and Norms of the workshop • Provides training with an overview and historical perspective on induction in Alabama. Participants will have an opportunity to look at Alabama's alternative certification program and learn the benefits on induction. Warm Up Activity Getting Know You Ice Breaker • Introduce yourself and tell us what do you hope to learn about induction?
9:00	Activity 1 – Understanding the Need for Induction Goals: • To understand induction • To understand the rational for supporting beginning teachers through induction Slides: Nation's Teacher Shortage, Alabama's Teacher Shortage, A Few Definitions, Teaching…A Flat Line Profession, Triad Talk Handouts: *A Few Definitions, Assumptions that Guide BEST Induction Program*
9:30	Activity 2 – The Historical Perspective Goals : To develop an understanding of teacher induction, a review of the history of the Alabama Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program Slides: The Historical Perspective, Funding, Costs, School Disadvantages, Standards, and Table Talk Handouts: *Test Results and Teacher Experience and Standards for Effective Teacher Induction and Mentoring Programs*
10:15	BREAK
10:30	Activity 3 - Alabama's Pathways to Teach and Alabama Continuum of Teacher Development

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	Goals:
	    • To inform administrators about the pathways to teacher certification
	    • To review the Alabama Quality Teaching Standards and levels of practice
	
	 Slides: AL Pathways, Approved Traditional programs, Alternative Routes, ABC requirements, Teaching Fields, Table Talk, Al Quality Teaching Standards, AQTS: Jigsaw
	
	 Handouts: *Alabama Quality Teaching Standards*

12:00	LUNCH
1:00	Activity 4- Formative Assessment and Review of the Quality Teaching Standards Goals: • To review the Alabama Quality Teaching Standards and Levels of Practice Slides: AL Quality Teaching Standards 1-5, Levels of Performance Handouts: *Alabama Quality Teaching Standards and Levels of Performance*
2:45	BREAK
3:00	Report to Whole Group – Check for Understanding Slides: Checking for Understanding

3:30	Activity 5- Conceptual Framework Discussion
	
	 Goals:
	    • Discuss the conceptual framework on implementing an induction program.
	    • Discuss the roles and responsibilities of building administrators to new teachers
	    • Discuss the roles and responsibilities of school faculty to new teachers
	
	 Slides: Conceptual Framework, High Quality Professional Development, High Quality Professional Support, Increased Teacher Success, Final Thought

4:00	Evaluation

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Day 2

8:00	Continental Breakfast
8:30	Activity 6 – What is Induction? Goals: To discuss the purposes of induction, essential components of induction, and the key players who contribute to successful program implementation. Slides: What is Induction, Purposes of Induction, Table Talk, Essential Components of Induction, Student Achievement, Program Vision, Collaboration, Institutional Commitment and Support, Professional Development, Teacher Leadership, Instructional Coaching and Mentoring Handouts: *What is Induction, Purposes of Induction, and Induction Essential Components*
10:00	BREAK
10:15	Activity 7 – Teacher Evaluation and Induction Components Jigsaw Goals: Review the teacher evaluation system and check understanding of the essential components of teacher induction Slides: Teacher Evaluation System, EducateAlabama, Implementation Timeline, Program Assessment and Evaluation, Components Handouts: *Teacher Evaluation, AL Quality Teaching Standards: Levels of Performance, Jigsaw of Articles*
12:00	LUNCH
1:00	Activity 8- The Impact of Induction on the Local District – Table Talk Goal: Review testimonies from districts across Alabama that continue to implement the Teacher Induction and Mentoring Program Slides: The Impact of Induction on School Districts, Student Achievement, Why?, Teacher Quality, Teacher Retention, Funding, Table Talk
2:45	BREAK
3:00	Activity 9 - Administrator Roles and Responsibilities in Induction Goal: Review testimonies from administrators and mentors about the successful approaches of new teacher induction. Slides: Administrators Roles, Administrator Roles in Induction, The Successful Approaches of New Teacher Induction, Final Word

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	Watch Video- Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (13 minutes) https://youtu.be/xJZVj44klaw
4:00	Evaluation

Day3

8:00	Continental Breakfast
8:30	Activity 10 – Surfacing Assumptions Goals: Explore assumptions about new teachers and the challenges they face. Slides: How can we bridge the gap between…, Some of the Facts, New Teacher Challenges, Surfacing Assumptions, Extending the Conversation

9:00	Activity 11 - Understanding New Teacher Challenges
	
	 Goals: Explore the challenges that new teachers face
	
	 Slides: Understanding New Teacher Challenges, New Teacher Fears, Understanding New Teacher Challenges- Turn and Talk
	
	 Watch Video- What's your biggest fear on your first day of teaching? (4 minutes)
	
	 • https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f8LVmTychrU
	
	 Handouts: Articles are on each table:
	     – *Responding to New Teachers' Concerns* by Thomas McCann, Larry Johnnanessen and Bernard Ricca
	     – *What New Teachers Really Need* by Scott Mandel
	     – *What All Novice Teachers Need* by Jennifer Cuddapah and Anika Burtin

10:00	BREAK
10:15	Activity 12 – Phases of First Year Teacher's Attitude Toward Teaching Goals: Familiarize BEST team with phases of first year teacher's attitude toward teaching Slides: Phases of First Year Teacher's Attitude Toward Teaching, Jigsaw Guidelines, Calendar of Options, Feelings of an ABC Teacher, Survival Strategies Handouts: *Recognizing and Meeting the Needs of Beginning Teachers, Calendar of Options, Phases of First Year Teaching* Graphic Organizer
11:15	Activity 13- Working Conditions and New Teacher Success Goal: To explore challenging working conditions that beginning teachers face.

:

	Slides: Working Conditions and New Teacher Success, Challenging Working Conditions Handouts: Article is on each table: *Hazed* by Mary Patterson *Here's What! So What? Now What?* Graphic Organizer
12:00	LUNCH
1:00	Activity 14 – Orientation: A Process not an Event Goals: Familiarize BEST team with orientation models and to develop school new teacher orientation and induction plan Slides: Helping New Teachers Grow, Purposes of Orientation at Your School, Orientation: A Process Not an Event, Orientation – Museum Walk Handouts: *We Are All on the Same Team!, School Orientation Topics*
3:00	BREAK
3:15	Activity 15 - Making a Commitment Goals: To develop an introductory speech to the school faculty about the implementation of the induction program and review the ideas and commitment to support new teachers' assimilation into the education profession. Slides: Prepare an Elevator Speech, Making a Commitment
4:00	Evaluation

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Appendix B: Handouts for Project

A Few Medical Definitions

Student	Individuals who are in medical school are referred to as medical students. They are not referred to as a doctor or physician until they graduate from medical school. Once they graduate, they are a physician even though their training is not complete.
Intern	After completing medical school, the doctor completes their first year of postmedical school training. This year is referred to as the intern year. The intern does not have the right to practice unsupervised medicine, and must practice within the confines of the training program in which they are enrolled.
Resident	Having completed eight years of higher education, physicians that enter a residency program are known as **residents.** Residency follows the intern year. At this point, when the internship year has been completed and a third level exam has been passed, the physician may practice as a general practitioner. While practicing independently is possible, the vast majority of physicians choose to pursue a residency for further training. Residency can range from an additional two years of education to an additional seven years of training, depending upon the specialty.
Fellow	A fellow is a fully credentialed physician. In the U.S., all physicians must complete a four-year undergraduate degree, either a Bachelor of Science (BS) or a Bachelor of Arts (BA). When they complete their education, all physicians must apply for a medical license before they are allowed, by law, to practice medicine.
Attending	An attending is a physician who has completed their training and is working independently. This individual is typically board certified in their area of expertise. In a teaching facility, the attending is often directing the education of medical students, interns, residents and fellows.

Whitlock, J. (2014, April). Understanding the Different Types of Physicians: Interns, Residents, Fellows, and Attendings. Accessed http://surgery.about.com/od/questionsanswers/a/Interns-Residents-Fellows-Attending-Physicians.htm

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Assumptions that Guide BEST Induction Program

1.	Learning to teach is a life-long, developmental process that involves confronting challenges and taking risks.

2.	The teacher is the key agent of educational change; effective teaching is the cornerstone of educational reform.

3.	A common language and professional standards promote the improvement of teaching practice and the development of a professional community.

4.	The professional norms of self and peer assessment, reflection, and collaboration are central to the success of schools and the improvement of teaching and learning.

5.	Teacher-learning must focus on classroom practice and student achievement.

6.	Formative assessment information best guides the refinement of teaching practice and the design of professional growth activities.

7.	Novice teachers are professionals who are capable of critically examining their practice to improve teaching and learning.

8.	Effective support offers mutual learning opportunities for the novice teacher, the mentor teacher or induction support provider, and the school administrators.

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Test Results and Teacher Experience

Twenty school systems with the lowest results on the spring 2014 administration of the Aspire tests in reading and math for grades 3-8. The table also shows the percentage of classroom teachers in those systems who had no experience in the fall of 2014, according to LEAPS. All but one of these low-performing systems had above-average percentages of classroom teachers with no prior experience; in over half of them, the percentage of inexperienced teachers was two or more times the state average.

These results are only suggestive, but they reinforce the common-sense notion that having experienced teachers work proactively with new teachers to improve their instructional performance has great potential to impact student results in Alabama.

Nationally, 27 states require some form of induction or mentoring, according to a 2012 survey by the New Teacher Center. In 11 states, two or more years of transitional support are required for all new teachers.

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Teacher Experience vs. ASPIRE Test Results

	Percentage of Classroom Teachers With No Experience, FY 2015	ASPIRE Percent Proficient, FY 2014
Statewide	5%	39%
Anniston City	14%	25%
Dallas County	10%	23%
Choctaw County	2%	22%
Birmingham	6%	22%
Lowndes County	11%	20%
Tarrant City	10%	20%
Lanett City	21%	20%
Fairfield City	9%	19%
Chickasaw City	26%	18%
Midfield City	7%	18%
Macon County	22%	17%
Sumter County	14%	16%
Greene County	7%	15%
Selma City	10%	14%
Bessemer City	13%	14%
Bullock County	6%	13%
Barbour County	17%	12%
Linden City	6%	12%
Wilcox County	7%	12%
Perry County	8%	11%

SOURCE: LEAPS Database.

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Standards for Effective Teacher Induction and Mentoring Programs

District induction and mentoring programs that support the continuous improvement and growth of beginning teachers have:

1.   Goals that reflect local needs and are aligned with the goals of the district and the state.

2.   Formal structures, policies, and procedures that support program implementation and address the following:

    Induction
    Mentoring process
    Mentor training
    Collaborative problem-solving and decision-making

3.   Administrative leadership and commitment at the district and building level with designated persons responsible for implementation.

4.   Confidentiality policies that guarantee the integrity of the mentoring relationship.

5.   Clearly defined roles and responsibilities for mentors.

6.   Identified criteria and methods for mentor selection and matching.

7.   Adequate human and financial resources available to provide for effective implementation.

8.   Mentor training and new teacher orientation provided prior to the opening of school and ongoing, high-quality professional development for mentors and protégés throughout the school year.

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9.	An evaluation plan for program improvement and accountability and to provide feedback to all stakeholders, particularly the institutions where any new-to-the-profession teacher completed an Alabama State Board of Education-approved program.

What is teacher induction?

The first days, weeks, and even months of school can be overwhelming for many novice teachers. For the first time, not only will they be completely responsible for the academic performance and well-being of a group of students, they also must learn the culture of the work environment and find their place with fellow educators. A strong teacher induction program can be a powerful tool in minimizing the loneliness and trauma associated with a "sink or swim" experience all too common for first-year teachers. In addition, the U.S. Department of Education states in its 2000 report, *Eliminating Barriers to Improving Teaching,* that attrition rates of first-year teachers can be reduced by up to two-thirds if teachers participate in a formal first-year induction program that includes mentoring.

Teacher induction is a formal, systematic program designed to transition novice teachers into the teaching profession by providing continuous individual and group support and education. Induction programs can help teachers improve their teaching and management skills, adjust to the culture of the school and district, and better understand their professional responsibilities.

Teacher induction programs vary from district to district and school to school. Some consist solely of formal teacher orientation prior to the start of the school year. Others are more comprehensive and include formal orientation, extensive professional development opportunities, release time for study and observation, and mentoring. The Alabama State Department of Education views teacher induction as a comprehensive, continuous program designed to address the personal, professional, and instructional needs of beginning teachers.

Personal needs such as emotional support help teachers assimilate into the school culture and gain confidence in their skills. Most new teachers enter the profession excited about their new career. They want to be accepted by the other faculty members and feel they are a part of the team. Despite their initial enthusiasm and confidence, some may begin to question their competence as they face challenges in the classroom. Providing emotional support and encouragement to uncertain teachers can help them move from personal concerns to addressing the instructional needs of the students.

The ***professional needs*** of new teachers focus on developing an understanding of school and district policies, procedures, and priorities. These could include formal policies and procedures such as helping new teachers develop an understanding of the student code of conduct and the evaluation system, and less formal policies and procedures such as how to order supplies and operate the copy machine. This type of support gives new teachers the knowledge and tools to operate effectively within the school and district.

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Districts and schools should also address new teachers' *instructional needs.* Instructional needs may involve the mentor in explaining, coaching, and guiding new teachers in classroom organization and management, lesson planning, student assessment, and curriculum content and methodology. Addressing instructional needs helps novice teachers improve their teaching skills and this, in turn, promotes greater student achievement.

Personal, professional, and instructional needs can be met through various mechanisms, including formal orientation to the school, workshops, mentoring, informal contact, and sustained professional development opportunities. Some induction programs specifically address these needs during a one-year period, while others view induction as a multiyear program with assistance tapering off as proficiency and confidence grows. Most induction programs are at least two years in length, and some may include a third year if needed.

Purposes of Induction

Novice teachers enter the profession eager and ready to nurture and educate a group of students. Teacher preparation programs have provided them with an understanding of educational pedagogy, child growth and development, and some direct experience working with students alongside a seasoned professional. While knowledge and practical experience are essential in the creation of an accomplished teacher, most novice teachers have not had the experience of independently planning for, instructing, and evaluating a group of students on a day-to-day basis. Personal, professional, and instructional issues may challenge even the most talented and competent teachers during their first few years of teaching.

Increasing numbers of new teachers are needed in the United States due to the high rates of teacher attrition, or teachers leaving the profession. Troubling statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics show that approximately one-third of new teachers leave the profession during their first three years of teaching and about one-half leave during the first five years of teaching. Attrition rates are highest in low-income urban schools and in the fields of mathematics, science, and special education (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future [NCTAF], 2003). New teachers leave for a variety of reasons, including difficulty with classroom management and instruction, feelings of isolation, and lack of support within the work environment.

It is essential that every effort be made to retain bright and capable teachers. Recognizing the importance of supporting the professional development of beginning teachers, the State Higher Education Executive

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Officers Association (SHEEOA) gives the following reasons why districts should provide formal induction programs for novice teachers (*SHEEOA, 1999, pgs. 4-5)*:

- *To provide support and guidance to smooth the transition of beginning teachers from novice to professional*

- *To familiarize beginning teachers with the responsibilities of teaching and the culture of the schools where they teach*

- *To increase the competency of beginning teachers by improving their content knowledge and professional skills*

- *To assess beginning teachers to ensure that they can perform the duties of teaching and that they are an effective match for their particular school*

- *To increase retention of teachers in a particular geographic location or in a particular subject area*

Strong, effective teacher induction programs reduce attrition rates, assist teachers in developing proficiency in needed areas, and break down the walls of isolation by giving the support needed to hurdle the challenges that accompany the first few years of teaching.

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Induction Essential Components
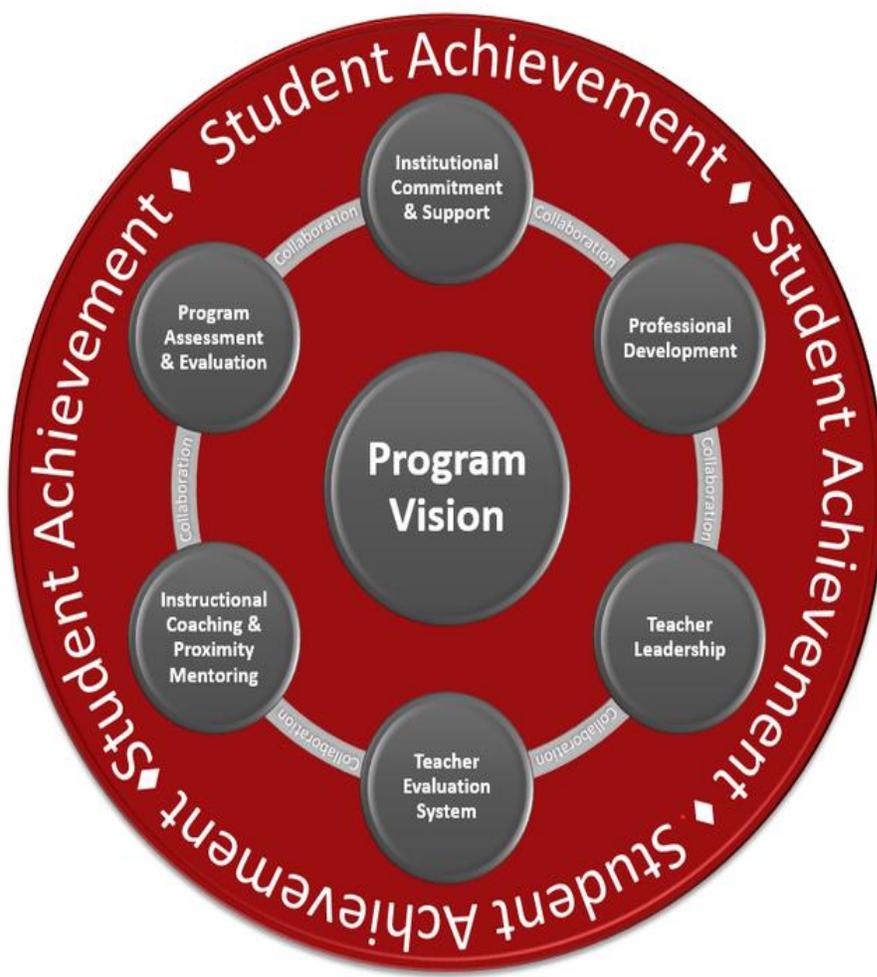
IGNITE The Teacher Prepartion Initiative
Modified from the New Teacher Center Induction Program Standards
The recommendations for induction program essential components **are the result of extensive research by the Teacher Preparation Initiative's Support Working Group.**

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TEACHER EVALUATION

The visual below depicts how EDUCATEAlabama works.

How the EDUCATEAlabama Collaborative Works

Definitions of Expectations and Performance	Instrumentation	Rubrics	Collaborative Summary	Improvement

STANDARDS and INDICATORS

Self Assessment

Observation and Post Conference

Dialogues and Principal Data

Professional Learning Plan (Yr 2 and beyond)

STANDARDS BASED RUBRICS

COLLABORATIVE REPORT SUMMARY

Professional Learning Plan

Growth to Standards

Achievement

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EDUCATEAlabama will:

- Be a formative evaluation system designed to provide data about a teacher's current performance based on the Alabama Teacher Quality Standards (AQTS) and that can be used to set expectations, goals, and plans for teacher professional growth.

- Use the wording aligned to the Teacher Development Continuum to demonstrate levels of performance at the *Emerging*, *Applying*, *Integrating*, or *Innovating* level (as defined in EDUCATEAlabama Continuum) and not numerical ratings. A copy of the EDUCATEAlabama Continuum can be found within the *ALSDE Resources and Materials Section* of this manual.

- Address the five Alabama Quality Teaching Standards and their 39 indicators. The new evaluation process will employ holistic ratings. The number of forms used in the evaluation process has been minimized, and levels of performance will appear only on the Collaborative Summary Report (CSR).

- Define the expectations for levels of performance for each indicator. They are very similar to the Alabama Teacher Development Continuum used in the Alabama Mentoring Program. The EDUCATEAlabama Continuum has four levels of performance rather than five.

- Use a self-assessment based on the Alabama Quality Teaching Standards (AQTS) and the levels of performance provided in the EDUCATEAlabama Continuum.

- Include a minimum of two unannounced observations for all teachers. Anecdotal notes and the observation checklist will be used

- Use Dialogue and Principal Data

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- Build a Collaborative Summary Report (CSR) compiling all data gathered during the evaluation process and determine a holistic level of performance based on the EDUCATEAlabama Continuum.

- Use a Professional Learning Plan (PLP) focused on two indicators determined as a result of the evaluation process. A stand-alone student achievement goal will not be written because all Alabama Quality Teaching Standards are focused on improving student achievement. The PLP has been revised for clarity but has the same expectations of teacher growth and development.

Alabama Quality Teaching Standards
Levels of Performance

The Alabama Quality Teaching Standards (*AQTS*) identify four levels of performance on a Continuum for teacher assessment: Emerging, Applying, Integrating, and Innovating. These four levels represent developmental stages rather than chronological performance. A teacher may receive performance designations at all four levels depending on individual indicators. Professional practice rather than years of service (experience) determines level of performance. Therefore, a veteran teacher might receive ratings in the emerging range for some indicators which would indicate an area of focus for the Professional Learning Plan. Also, very competent teachers might earn Emerging if a new program is introduced (reading adoption, for example), a change in grade level or teaching assignment occurs, a school CIP emphasis is identified, or a new system emphasis is broached (Strategic Plan focus). The Governor's Commission on Quality Teaching asserted in 2007 that t*hroughout their teaching careers, educators will use the Continuum to assess their current practice, envision next steps towards advancing it, and set specific and meaning professional goals.*

Emerging – Teachers at this level work with mentors and/or colleagues for assistance and support to enrich their knowledge and skills. The teacher relies upon educational theory and classroom experiences to adjust and modify instruction. This teacher is increasingly self-directed and independent and heavily focused on his/her classroom and students.

Applying – Career teachers at this level operate with autonomy, consistently applying effective teaching practices. Because these teachers are aware of students' academic and behavioral patterns, they are proactive in anticipating student learning needs and responding to them with prior planning as well as in the moment. This teacher is adept in data collection and analysis and can demonstrate his/her impact on student achievement.

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This teacher is highly engaged in professional development and actively works with colleagues to promote student achievement.

Integrating – Master teachers at this level possess highly developed skills. These teachers are adaptable and easily adjust plans or practices in response to changing contexts. Due to their self-efficacy, they effectively implement challenging curricula, utilize interactive instructional strategies, and process assessment data. Their practices result in significant student engagement, learning, and achievement. Students in these teachers' classrooms consistently demonstrate academic growth. This teacher can be designated as a teacher leader, is a reflective participant in professional learning communities, and works to move the school forward through application of Best Practices. The master teacher may be a mentor to new teachers, peer coach, supervising teacher for interns, or a teacher leader in another capacity. In short, this teacher influences colleagues by the implementation of successful instructional practices and the modeling of professional demeanor. The classroom of the master teacher serves as a student professional learning community which exemplifies high degrees of student motivation, engagement, and achievement.

Innovating – Teachers at this level are highly creative and inventive in their own classrooms to increase student learning and achievement to the highest degree possible. They move beyond their own classrooms to facilitate colleagues' growth toward more complex teaching and learning and greater student achievement. As a leader, this teacher initiates and/or provides leadership of professional learning communities who collaborate on curriculum, innovative instructional strategies, and positive learning cultures. This teacher leads at the school, district, and community level and contributes to the educational profession through venues such as classroom research, the submission of educational articles, and professional development activities.

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Jigsaw of Current Articles on the

Essential Components of Induction

Time: 90-120 minutes

How the activity works:

- Each table has a folder with research articles related to components of induction.
- Each member of the group will read an article and write a response to the following discussion questions:
    - What is the major theme of the article?
    - How does this article relate to induction?
    - What does this article say about the component of induction?
    - Do you agree with the author's point of view? Please explain in detail.
- After 30-45 minutes, the group member meets with other participants with the same article. Group assignments are made. All group members share their responses and prepares a report to whole group. Provide responses on large chart paper with the Induction component title.
- Whole group discussion of each article.

Articles for this activity:

Program Vision

> Potemski, A & Matlach, L. (2014). Supporting New Teachers: What Do We Know About State Induction Policies?, *Center on Great teachers & Leaders: American Institutes for Research.* Retrieved from http://www.gtlcenter.org/sites/default/files/Induction_Snapshot.pdf

Collaboration:

> Raywid, M. (1993). Finding Time for Collaboration. *Educational Leadership, 51*(1), 30-34.

Institutional Commitment & Support:

> Johnson, S. & Kardos, S. (2002). Keeping New Teachers in Mind. *Educational Leadership, 59*(6), 12-16.

Professional Development:

> Diaz-Maggioli, G. (2004). Professional Development Today. In *Teacher-centered professional development*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD pp. 1-18.

Teacher Leadership:

> Harrison, C. & Killon, J. (2007). Ten Roles for Leaders. *Educational Leadership, 65*(1), 74-77.

Teacher Evaluation System:

> :

Danielson, C. (2011). Evaluation that Helps Teachers Learn. *Educational Leadership, 68*(4), 35-

39.

Program Assessment and Evaluation:

Gajda, Rebecca & Jennifer Jewiss (2004). Thinking about how to evaluate

your program? These strategies will get you started. *Practical Assessment,*

Research & Evaluation, 9(8). Retrieved November 10, 2015 from

http://PAREonline.net/getvn.asp?v=9&n=8.

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Recognizing and Meeting the Needs of Beginning Teachers

Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman

Beginning teachers' needs vary widely, as each novice brings a different perspective, experience, and knowledge base about teaching. Further, there are differences in preferred methods of problem-solving, learning styles, and educational philosophies. However, there are some generalizations that can be made about the needs, expectations and emotional phases during the first year of teaching.

In a study conducted by Simon Veenman (1984), more than one thousand preservice teachers ranked their concerns before entering the classroom for the first time. The perceived needs of these novices are consistent with other research studies on beginning teacher concerns (Bullogh, 1989; Odell, 1986; Covert, et.al., 1991). These studies identify concerns about students; controlling and managing, motivating, evaluating, and differentiating instruction. They also point to concerns about managing time; for planning, scheduling, completing work load and balancing personal and professional life. Other concerns include relations with colleagues, administrators and parents. As we might imagine beginning teachers worry about knowing what to do, when to do it and whether or not they will do it well.

Phases of First Year Teaching

Ellen Moir, Director of the New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz and her colleagues, have identified a series of mental and emotional challenges that occur in developmental phases across the first year of practice. They note that while every teacher does not go through this exact sequence, these generalizations are a useful map for predicting and responding to the needs of novices. The six phases described in their work are; Anticipation, Survival, Disillusionment, Rejuvenation, Reflection and Anticipation (Moir, 1999).

For novices, it is useful to understand that these phases are likely to occur as a normal part of their first year in teaching. As mentors, awareness of and sensitivity to these phases helps us to maintain a developmentally appropriate balance of support and challenge while facilitating professional vision.

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The following pages correlate these identified phases with some ideas for providing that balance as a learning-focused mentor.

Phases of First Year Teaching

ANTICIPATION

ANTICIPATION

REFLECTION

SURVIVAL

REJUVENATION

DISILLUSIONMENT

AUG SEPT OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL
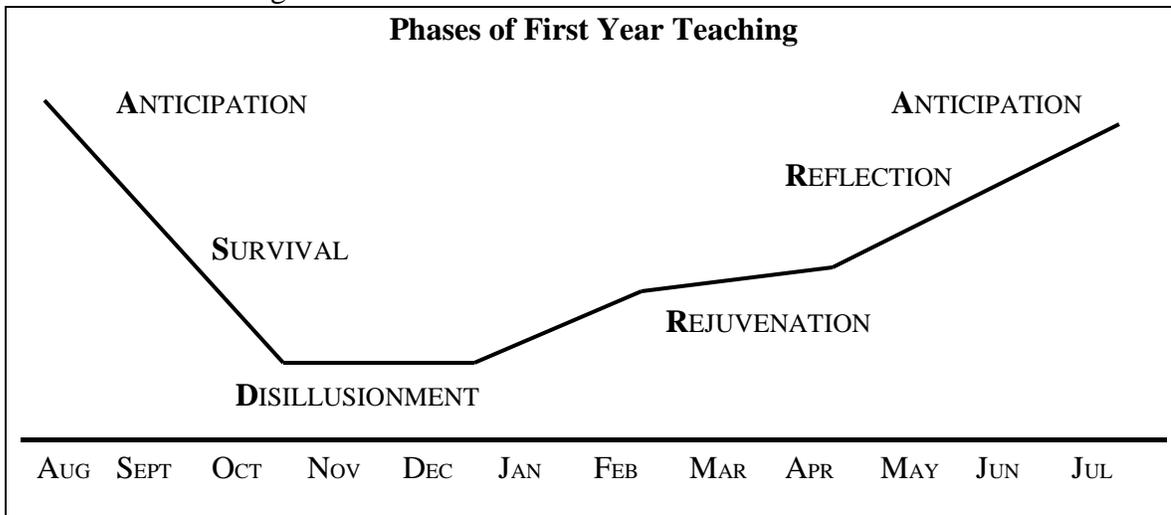
Anticipation

It is August and Janice is excited and anxious about the beginning of her first school year. She is confident of her knowledge and has a passion for making a difference in students' lives. She can't wait to set up her room and organize materials. It will definitely be different to have a classroom of her own.

New teachers begin to anticipate their first year of formal work during their student teaching experiences. They enter their classrooms with a commitment to making a difference and an often vague and idealistic sense of how to reach their goals. Major concerns at this time are setting up the classroom, locating teaching materials, establishing relationships with colleagues, support staff and administrators and establishing relationships with students and parents. The press of tasks and the emotional rush of new responsibilities often propel novices through their first weeks on the job.

- **S**upport

     Offer support during the Anticipation phase by providing information regarding materials, procedures, first day activities, and mandated paperwork for opening school. Set aside time to think out loud about your own strategies and rationales for room arrangements, first day activities, contact with parent and support services. Collaborative opportunities may present themselves as you jointly plan for the first day or week of school.

- **C**hallenge

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Maintain a learning focus by having a goal-setting conversation. Establish some initial goals for learning and for the mentor-protégé relationship. Use national, sate or district standards combined with the novice's assessment of needs (see Section Seven, Appendix) to be sure the goals are relevant and reasonable. Discuss ways that you will monitor your progress and celebrate your successes.

- **F**acilitate **V**ision

    Ask your protégé to articulate his or her idea of the ideal teacher. Share your own vision of professionalism. Expand the conversation to consider the ideal classroom and connect to the established goals. Remember to balance long-term thinking with support in the short-term. Assure your colleague that for now, it's fine to take it one day at a time.

Survival

It is Saturday night, September 30, and the realities of being a teacher are beginning to sink in. Janice is spending at least half of each weekend and most weeknights trying to keep up. She struggles with managing lesson plans, record-keeping, parent meetings and progress reports. She wonders if she really can do it.

The realities of the day-to-day work of the classroom soon bear down upon new teachers. They are faced with many different problems for the first time and have few of the routines and tricks-of-the-trade in their repertoires that help veteran teachers conserve time and energy. Most are running hard to stay in place and have little time for reflection or advanced planning. Many new teachers spend up to seventy hours a week on schoolwork. Often the core curriculum materials are unfamiliar and the novice teacher is only one or two lessons ahead of the class in preparation for future lessons. There is a constant need to learn the curriculum, develop instructional plans, learn and develop assessment systems, correct student work and develop and gather materials. Many novices do not accurately anticipate the amount of work their chosen profession requires, but most manage to maintain their energy and commitment to student learning during this phase.

- **S**upport

    Offer support during the survival phase by sharing materials and management tips. Time is precious and may not best be spent reinventing the wheel. Share tips for establishing routines and managing the activities of the day. Keep it learning-focused by thinking aloud about your choice points and purposes. You may wish to keep note cards handy during the day to record effective techniques that may be unconscious and automatized for you, but would be useful to share with your protégé. As appropriate, invite your protégé to observe in your classroom, or offer to model a lesson.

- **C**hallenge

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Ask questions that help your protégé recognize effective choices. Offer your ideas as a menu. Ask your protégé to share thoughts about what might work best, and why. Gently challenge by asking your protégé to keep a structured Reflection Journal (see Section Eight, Structured Forms, Tools and Blacklines) and use the recording to focus your conversations.

- **F**acilitate **V**ision

  Celebrate the goals already achieved (or subsets of them) and set new ones. Have conversations about what drew you to teaching, what's been important and/or rewarding to you. Ask your protégé to talk about what made teaching an attractive career choice.

Disillusionment

Everything seems to be going wrong. Janice's evaluation observations did not go as she had planned. The experiments did not work, the students did not participate and she lost the supplemental handout for the integrating activity. Maybe she should never have taken this job, or even become a teacher. Maybe it is not too late to find another career.

After working seemingly nonstop for six to eight weeks, new teachers often 'hit-the-wall', entering a phase of disillusionment. This phase varies in intensity and duration as novice teachers begin to question their commitment, capability and self-worth. These factors, combined with fatigue, can weaken immune systems. It is not uncommon for new teachers to get sick at this time.

Several temporal events add to the tension and stress at this point. Back-to-school night arrives triggering stage fright and concerns about parents questioning both their competence and character. The first round of parent conferences soon follows with both time demands that cut into preparation for class and anxiety about relationships with parents. And the first formal evaluation by the principal occurs. Lack of familiarity with the process, and in some cases, the principal, adds to the stress load. Most often, the new teacher over prepares a 'showcase' lesson that consumes most of whatever planning time was available.

It is not uncommon for classroom management concerns and the needs of specific students to occupy much of the novice's attention. Routines and response patterns are not yet firmly established and mentors often find their counsel is sought and or required in these matters. Deeper issues of teaching and learning often have to wait until these issues are resolved or stabilized.

This phase is usually the toughest challenge the first year teacher has to overcome. Self-doubt and pressures from family members and friends complaining about the time that teaching seems to take away from their relationships add weight to the burden new teachers carry.

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- **S**upport

  Continue to assist by sharing materials and tips for managing paperwork and conserving energy. Focus on what has been accomplished and learned to this point. Assist in the abandonment of unnecessary or ineffective routines and procedures. Collaborate by jointly planning for open house. Think aloud regarding parent conferences and first semester assessments and grading. Acknowledge feelings of inadequacy without dismissing them by suggesting that they will just go away. Check in often and watch for cues from your protégé regarding needs. Assure your colleague that every educator experiences periods of disillusionment and everyone makes mistakes and feels insecurities.

  Debunk the myth of professional certainty. Let your protégé know that you do not have all the right answers either, because there aren't any. Emphasize that there is best choice, based on the best knowledge at the time, given the context of the situation.

- **C**hallenge

  Create challenge by helping your protégé learn from experience. Coach thinking and support reflection. Collaborate on methods for refining practice. If the structured Reflection Journal seems burdensome, use quick forms to focus conversations (see Section Three, Maximizing Time and Attention). Pay close attention to signals that you're pushing beyond 'whelm' into overwhelm.

- **F**acilitate Vision

  Facilitate professional vision by calibrating existing state and expectations for a novice teacher with the desired state and goals to be accomplished by the end of the first year. Ask your protégé to identify some examples of growth thus far and share specific, concrete things you have observed. Continue to connect the protégé with other staff members, building a sense of community.

Rejuvenation

Wow! The job seems much more doable after two weeks away. Time away has allowed Janice to reconnect with friends, family and herself. As she reflected on the first half of her year, she was amazed at how much she had accomplished and learned. Beginning the second semester, routines are in place and her expectations much more realistic. Counting down to the end clearly shows she's made it through the first half, with summer vacation coming into view.

For teachers on a traditional calendar, the winter break marks a transition in the pace and flow of the school year. Time away with family and friends reminds new teachers of their life outside of the classroom. Rest and relaxation re-energizes body and soul. With

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new outlooks come a glimmer of perspective and an emerging sense that this is a learnable profession, one that with time and attention, can be mastered.

Many novice teachers return from break with a clearer understanding of the realities of their classroom, the system in which they work, and ways to access available resources. They begin to have a small sense of their accomplishments as well.

Confidence in routines and relationships increases as the novice automatizes patterns for behavior, time and instructional management. These, in turn, free time and energy for explorations of curriculum development, new teaching strategies and longer term planning.

This phase tends to last into the spring with a few bumps and surprises along the way. As the end of the year appears on the horizon, concerns emerge about getting everything covered and everything done. Worries often arise about students' academic performance and novices may question their own instructional competence.

- **S**upport

    Celebrate, share and mark goals achieved and milestones passed. Be proactive in helping your protégé begin to organize for the end of the school year.

- **C**hallenge

    Continue to challenge by focusing on instructional outcomes and cause-effect results. Inquire about new learnings and applications. Assist in analyzing student outcomes. Seek collaborative opportunities and mutually construct implementation and evaluation plans for trying out new ideas. Meet and discuss the results and learnings from implementation. Engage in conversation cycles of planning, observation/data collection and reflection.

- **F**acilitate **V**ision

    Collaborate with your protégé—plan a field trip or create a shared unit of instruction. Let your colleague take the lead, and follow his or her wise counsel. Try something new your protégé has suggested and ask for some coaching.

Reflection

Three weeks and counting! Janice recognizes the tremendous amount of growth she's experienced this year and feels pride in her accomplishments. As she thinks back, there are things she would never try again or would choose to do differently. Next year will be exciting. She will not be the newest kid on the block and she has a workable plan for managing time and tasks. Janice also has greater comfort with content knowledge and setting expectations for students.

The last weeks of the first year are a time for reflecting and taking stock. Mentors support novice teachers by helping them to remember all they have learned, what

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worked, what was modified, what was set-aside, and to consider what might happen differently the following year.

End-of-the-year routines require time and energy at this phase. Parent communication, closing up the classroom and a mountain of paperwork demand attention to detail. For many, the emotional leave-taking from the first class or classes marks the moment in time.

- **S**upport

   Offer support during the reflective phase by providing information and tips regarding end-of-year paperwork. Share your routines for organizing end-of-year tasks. Make a gift of colored markers, tape and stickers for labeling boxes. Start a list of items to order for next year.

- **C**hallenge

   Mediate a rigorous analysis and interpretation of student performance information. Facilitate reflection through learning-focused conversations; surfacing insights, applications, and goals for the coming year.

- **F**acilitate **V**ision

   Do a gap analysis. Make connections between what was expected, what was desired and what actually occurred. Explore student successes and mark the specific turning points for them and your protégé. Collaborate on constructing a professional growth plan for the coming year.

   And Celebrate!

Mentoring Matters, A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships, Pages 5-11 (Adapted from Moir, E., *Phases of First-Year Teaching*, 1999.)

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Calendar of Options

Laura Lipton and Bruce Wellman

This calendar offers a menu of activities correlated with time of school year, the developmental phases of beginning teachers, (Moir, 1999) and Frances Fuller's stages of concern. In her research with beginning teachers, Fuller (1969) defined the phases of concern as Self, Task, and Impact.

> Self concerns involve feelings of adequacy, questions of ability and potential effects on personal time and lifestyle; surfacing questions such as *"Can I do this?," "What might happen if I can't," "What does this mean for me?"*

> Task involves management concerns such as scheduling, sources of materials, and many logistical issues, surfacing questions such as *"How long will this take?," "Where do I find…?," "Am I allowed to do this?"*

> Impact addresses concerns for others, including students, colleagues, and the school community. Questions that occur in this stage include *"How will this choice affect my students?," "What are some ways I could support my team?", "How can I improve on this plan?"*

It should be noted that these activities are provided as a menu of possibilities, and not a mandatory list. Activities marked with an *asterisk are described in detail in Section Six, Strategies for Success.

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Phases	**Concerns**
Anticipation	Self

- Letter or phone call to make informal contact

- Informal get-acquainted meeting

- Joint Planning Session*

- Informal sharing of teaching materials, files, bulletin board displays, etc.

- Share Incredible Ideas Scrapbook*

AUGUST

At least two weeks prior to school beginning

Phases	**Concerns**
Anticipation	Self

- Share school plant layout, discipline policies, location and availability of resources/materials, etc.

- Clarify record-keeping/management procedures

- Check for readiness of texts, kits, equipment, etc.

- Begin a Collaborative Staff Development activity*

- Share a Welcome To….Basket*

- Schedule a Meet, Greet and Share*

AUGUST

Week prior to school

Phases	**Concerns**
Anticipation	Self

- Informal check-in and mutual sharing

- Have, or schedule, a New Teacher Luncheon/Shower*

SEPTEMBER

First Day of school

:

Phases	Concerns
Anticipation	Self

- Schedule conference times for: clarifications/questions/problem-solving around grouping issues, materials, and classroom management

- Apply the Planning Template (see Section Three, Maximizing Time and Attention) to goal-setting conversation

- Think aloud regarding preassessment and uses of data

- Establish a basic contact schedule for first month

- Begin work on Professional Portfolios*

- Leave notes of encouragement in mail box

SEPTEMBER

Week One and Two of School

Phases	Concerns
Anticipation moving toward Survival	Self

- Provide information/clarification regarding the local teacher evaluation policy, student progress reports and grading

- Share procedures and tips for Open House

- Review non-instructional duties (plan to accompany the first time)

- Think aloud regarding parent contacts and preparing for parent conferences, or offer an Idea Bank for organizing these meetings

- Portfolio Planning Meeting

SEPTEMBER

:

Phases	Concerns
Survival	Self

- Joint planning for time management and new instructional units

- Discuss purchases and priorities for using remaining funds

- Review teaching videos and discuss strategies/applications

- Protégé Support Group Meeting*

- Apply the Reflecting Template for a learning-focused conversation

- Emphasize personal, informal contacts

OCTOBER

Phases	Concerns
Disillusionment	Task (Management)

- Create some Lively Lifelines*

- Encourage contact and activities with colleagues

- Discuss impact of student extra-curricular activities

- Think aloud regarding student motivation

- Share personal time management strategies or offer an Idea Bank

- Schedule a Problem-Solving Partnership meeting*

NOVEMBER

Phases	Concerns
Disillusionment	Task (Management)

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- Discuss pacing and curricular progress

- Calibrate overload and assist in determining priorities

- Provide information/clarification regarding end-of-course exams, grades and report cards

- Think aloud regarding goals for second semester

- Celebrate Success

DECEMBER

Phases	Concerns
Rejuvenation	Impact

- Mutual sharing of professional growth goals and strategies

- Joint planning for upcoming units

- Clarify schedules, recordkeeping, reporting, etc..

- Encourage collaborative opportunities with other colleagues

- Attend professional development offering

- Portfolio Interim Support Team Meeting

JANUARY

Phases	Concerns
Rejuvenation	Impact

- Explore team teaching opportunities

- Think aloud regarding student performance data and its use

- Collaborate on an action research project

- Jointly structure student data collection

FEBRUARY

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- Clarify/share information regarding final evaluations, schedules (spring break, student testing, etc.)

Phases	Concerns
Rejuvenation	Impact

- Discuss curricular pacing

- Think aloud analyzing student performance data and exploring cause-effect relationships

- Provide information/clarification on student files/records, parent conferences, etc.

MARCH

Phases	Concerns
Rejuvenation moving to Reflection	Impact

- Mutually share progress on professional growth plans

- Discuss end-of-year schedules, final evaluations, student testing, field trips, etc.

APRIL

Phases	Concerns
Rejuvenation	Impact

- Schedule a reflecting conversation

- Identify successes

- Assist in analyzing student performance data and exploring

MAY

:

cause-effect relationships

- Facilitate connection-making between personal learnings and application to future decisions

- Final check for clarification on parent contacts and reports

Phases	Concerns
Anticipation	Impact

JUNE

- Celebrate successes

- Think aloud regarding completion of recordkeeping and other end-of-year activities

- Presentation of Portfolio

- Share the load while Packing Up*

Laura Lipton is an international consultant. She is author and coauthor of numerous publications related to organizational and professional development, learning-focused schools and literacy development. **Bruce Wellman, M.Ed.** has served as a classroom teacher, curriculum coordinator, and staff developer in the Oberlin, Ohio and Concord, Massachusetts public schools.

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Phases of First-Year Teaching

Phases of First-Year Teaching	Support Ideas
Anticipation	*Example: Informal sharing of teaching materials, files, etc.*
Survival	
Disillusionment	
Rejuvenation	
Reflection	

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Mentoring Matters, A Practical Guide to Learning-Focused Relationships, Pages 13-17.

Here's What!	So What?	Now What?

Adapted from Lipton, L. & Wellman, B. Pathways to Understanding, Page 44.

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We Are All on the Same Team!

The Principal

- Create a culture for learning so that mentoring is a natural outgrowth of professional practice.

- Convey to new teachers your philosophy of how students learn, the school history, the special traditions and accomplishments, as well as the essence of the school improvement or strategic plan and how they can play a role in the implementation of that plan.

- Provide working conditions for the new teacher that facilitate success: minimize special programs, moving from room to room, multiple preparations.

- Inform staff of rationale for and the components of the mentoring program.

- Clearly articulate to the staff that all have a responsibility for informal mentoring of new teachers.

- Organize the school environment so that collaboration is more easily accomplished, meeting time is focused on instruction, where instructional decision making and student work is made public.

- Include mentoring as a component of the school improvement plan with indicators for individuals, departments, grade levels, or team.

- Identify mentors or facilitate the identifying of mentors using criteria established by the district.

- Facilitate interaction between mentors and new teachers by providing release time for them to plan, reflect, and observe together. Hire a substitute teacher one or two days a month to create time for this interaction.

- Reduce as much as possible additional responsibilities of mentors and new teachers so that they can have maximum time to work together.

- Check in frequently with mentors to see how the work is going and offer assistance in any way.

- Observe with the mentors to ensure that you are all aligned around best practice in teaching and learning.

- Let new teachers know the best mode of communication and the best time to contact you.

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- Interact with each new teacher face-to-face at least once a week for the first semester.

- Have lunch with them once a month or organize an after school social for new teachers.

- Either build on the district document or create a school document that provides new teachers the essential-to-know information about the school and the district and provide it to new teachers as they are hired.

- Provide recognition of the extensive work done by mentors.

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School Orientation Topics

Professional

School policies, procedures, and rules

- Access and use of school equipment such as computers and copying machine
- How to sign in and out
- What to do in case of absence
- How to order and get supplies
- Where to find instructional resources
- Where to park
- Lunchroom procedures
- School dress code
- How to handle disciplinary actions
- Fire and tornado drills

    - Availability and location of school resources (personnel resources such as librarian and counselor, and material resources such as computers and copying paper)
    - School expectations
    - School traditions
    - Responsibilities and names of key school personnel

Instructional

- Lesson plan requirements

- Planning time

- Student assessment and evaluation requirements

- Special instructional programs

- Grading procedures

- Homework practices and/or policy

Alabama State Department of Education. (2008). *Alabama Teacher Mentoring Manual.* Montgomery, AL: Author.

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Appendix C: Permission to Conduct Study Letter

Dr. Pearl Howard
Superintendent of Violet County Schools
1913 School St.
Violet, AL 36083

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study

Dear Dr. Howard:

I am writing to request permission to conduct a research study at your middle and high schools. I am currently enrolled in the Administrator Leadership for Teaching and Learning program at Walden University in Minnesota, MN. I am in the process of writing my doctoral study. The study is entitled, "Supporting the Professional Needs of Alternatively Certified Secondary Education Teachers: Perspectives from the Field."

I hope that the school administration will allow me to recruit 5 -8 alternatively certified teachers with 3 to 7 years of experience from the middle and high school to anonymously complete a series of three interviews. Interested teachers, who volunteer to participate, will be given a consent form to be signed (copy enclosed) and returned me at the beginning of the interview process.

If approval is granted, participants will complete the interviews in a classroom or other quiet setting on the school site after school with your permission. The interview process consists of three one-hour interviews. The individual responses of this study will remain absolutely confidential and anonymous. Should this study be published, no costs will be incurred by either your school system or the individual participants.

Your approval to conduct this study will be greatly appreciated. I would be happy to answer any questions or concerns that you may have at that time. You may contact me at my email address: michelle.washington@waldenu.edu.

If you agree, kindly sign below and return the signed form in the enclosed self-addressed envelope. Alternatively, kindly submit a signed letter of permission on your institution's letterhead acknowledging your consent and permission for me to conduct this case study at your institution.

Sincerely,

Michelle L. Washington, Doctoral Candidate

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Appendix D: Letter of Invitation to Participate in the Study

Dear Alternatively Certified Teachers,

I am a doctoral candidate researching the experiences of secondary education teachers who completed the Alternative baccalaureate-level approach to achieve a professional educator certificate in Alabama. I would like to invite you to participate in a case study I am conducting as a part of my doctoral research at Walden University.

This research is intended to focus on the professional supports provided to alternatively certified teachers and the impact those supports have on a teacher's instructional competence, self-efficacy, and career commitment. Your participation in this study will provide valuable information on the experiences and perceptions of alternatively certified teachers in Alabama and benefit federal, state, and local policymakers and teacher educators on how to better assist alternatively certified teachers as they rapidly fill vacancies in classrooms across the nation.

If you are selected from the pool of volunteers, your participation in this case study will require three interviews with you at your convenience. Your participation in this case study would represent the voice on many alternatively certified secondary education teachers. Participation is strictly voluntary; your involvement or decision to not participate will be kept confidential. Your identity will be disguised in the text to ensure confidentiality. I will provide you a copy of your interview transcripts and the results of the research to prove accuracy of your accounts and to ensure what you want to say be conveyed.

I look forward to working with you and request that you accept or decline this invitation by emailing me at michelle.washington@waldenu.edu by _____.

Please provide your telephone number in the body of the email if you elect to join the pool of volunteers from which participants will be selected for this study. If you have any questions, please contact me at the email provided.

Thank you in advance for your support of this case study.

Sincerely,

Michelle L. Washington, Doctoral Candidate

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Appendix E: Consent Form

You are invited to take part in a research study of alternatively certified secondary education teachers. You were chosen for the study because you are alternatively certified teachers with more than 3 years of experience. This form is part of a process called "informed consent to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether to take part.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Michelle L. Washington, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to explore the experiences of alternatively certified secondary education teachers with no preservice training that completed the Alternative baccalaureate-level certificate approach in the state of Alabama.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- Participate in three interviews that will last approximately one hour.

- Review the transcriptions of the interviewers to make any corrections.

- Review the finding of the interviewer to ensure they accurately represent your experiences.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Your participation in this study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you choose to be in the study. No one at the State Department of Education or Violet County Schools will treat you differently if you decide not to be in the study. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during the study or skip any questions that you feel to be too personal.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:

There are minimal risks of being involved in this study one of which is the stress related to participating in a one-on-one interviews and answering questions concerning your job performance. Being able to reflect upon your experiences may benefit your ability to perform your job. Exploring your experiences may generate ideas to help make the experiences of future alternatively certified teachers less stressful and more rewarding.

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Compensation:

There is no compensation for participating in this study.

Confidentiality:

Any information you provide will be kept strictly confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. In addition, the researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by a locked file cabinet in the home. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:

You may ask any questions you have now. Alternatively, if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via phone number at 334-727-XXXX or michelle.washington@waldenu.edu. If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott. She is the Walden University representative who can discuss this with you. Her phone number is 1-800-925-3368, extension 1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **IRB will enter approval number here** and it expires on **IRB will enter expiration date.**

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep. If you choose to participate in the study, another copy will be retained in the researcher's file cabinet.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By signing below, I understand that I am agreeing to the terms described above.

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Appendix F: Interview Protocols

Interview Protocol One: Focused Life History

The first interview will focus on the participant's experiences prior to becoming an alternatively certified teacher. The focus of this interview will be how the participant becomes an alternatively certified teacher. Questions related to their life experiences in their past school and work experiences will be asked to guide the participants to share their experiences.

*1.	People have come into education through different pathways. Please explain your path to the teaching profession. Is this your second career? How did you choose teaching as a career?*

*2.	What is your subject area? At what grade level? How many years have you been teaching? What is your highest degree earned? Bachelor's, Master's or Doctorate?*

*3.	Which Alabama university or college did you complete your required courses for the Alternative baccalaureate-level approach to certification?*

*4.	 Which course did you find the most beneficial? Which course did you find the least beneficial? What impact has your coursework had on your classroom practices?*

*5.	How do you feel your degree and additional required coursework prepared you for your role as a teacher? Why? Give specific examples.*

*6.	Reflect on your decision to become a teacher. What did you expect prior to entering the classroom? What fears did you have about becoming a teaching?*

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Interview Protocol Two: The Details of the Experience

The second interview will concentrate on the details of the lived experiences as an alternatively certified secondary education teacher. The participants will be asked to focus on their daily work, challenges, and meaningful experiences.

1.   Describe yourself as a teacher in the classroom. Did your serve on committees, sponsor student organizations, or supervise extra-curricular activities?

2.   What do you regard as a meaningful experience during your initial years of teaching? Please provide 2-3 examples.

3.   What do you consider the most challenging/frustrating situations during your initial years of teaching? Please explain your challenges with specifics.

4.   Did you overcome your challenges? If so how? What supports were provided? Who assisted you? Feel free to provide the job title of the individual instead of the person's name.

5.   You identified _____ as major challenges or difficulty that you experienced in your initial years of teaching. Compare the challenges with challenges you may have faced in other careers or jobs.

6.   What was it like to take course while teaching full time? Share your experiences about completing the course assignments.

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Interview Protocol Three: Reflection on the Meaning

The third interview will ask participants to focus on understanding their experiences as alternatively certified teachers. They will be asked to reflect on the support provided, the support they needed from school and district administrators. As they reflect on their experiences, they will also be asked for advice for future alternatively certified teachers.

*1.	Research identifies support to novice teachers as induction experiences, mentoring, professional development, supervision, etc. How were you supported during your initial years of teaching?*

*2.	Provide a list of needs that you had during your initial years of teaching and explain why. Do you think the support provided by the school and district meets your needs? Please provide examples.*

*3.	Did you have opportunities to observe, to meet, or plan with other teachers in your department or grade level? If so, what was the nature of your meetings and how often did you have the opportunities?*

*4.	Describe your relationship with your school administrators. How often did you interact with your principal and assistant principal? Under what circumstances did you interact?*

*5.	Did you have a mentor teacher? Was that person in the same grade level, department, or school? Often did you interact? Was it beneficial? Why or Why not?*

*6.	What suggestions would you provide to improve the transitions of alternatively certified teachers during their initial years of teachers?*

(a) school administrators

(b) Mentor teachers.

(c) District administrators

(d) State Department of Education and policymakers

*7.	Would you like to share anything else about your initial years of teaching?*

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