

2017

# Perceptions of Novice Elementary Teachers Regarding Retention

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*Walden University*

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Walden University  
2017

Abstract

Perceptions of Novice Elementary Teachers Regarding Retention

by

Nathaniel Morris III

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

May 2017

## Abstract

Teachers at the local study site continue to leave the elementary school and profession at increasingly high rates creating a teacher shortage. The school staff consists of 33 teachers, with an average of 10 resigning each year. Because of the shortage, state and local school boards, school districts, and school-based administrators share the need to understand this phenomenon. Guided by Herzberg's 2-factor theory, which noted that people are motivated by attributes such as recognition and by Maslow's motivational theory, which refers to human needs and personal beliefs as motivational factors, this study investigated factors that contributed to teacher attrition and retention, as well as strategies used to improve retention of novice teachers. Nine novice teachers employed at the local site participated in e-mail interviews. Participants provided their perception of factors that influenced their decision to remain or stay in the profession. Data were analyzed with an emphasis on seeking emerged themes through the process of open coding. Data analysis revealed a gap in the level of support from mentors and administrators that affected novice teachers' professional growth, as well as their decision to leave or stay in the profession. Participants listed incentives, acknowledgment, and training as the primary strategies for retaining teachers. The findings led to the creation of a professional development program. This study contributes to positive social change by providing educators a deeper understanding of the problem of teacher attrition and by identifying strategies to manage teacher turnover to improve retention efforts.

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## Dedication

First, this and any other work I do is a result of the grace bestowed upon me by the Father. I am extremely thankful for all the encouragement that I have received from family and friends throughout this study. I also want to thank my colleagues and classmates for the many posts and comments that encouraged me in ways you could not imagine. Thank you to Dr. Weintraub for your direction and most of all your honesty. To my children, Michael and Machia, thank you for the endless encouragement and humor you provided when I needed it most. To my loving wife and lifelong friend, Lillie Barrett Morris, thank you for being there throughout this doctoral journey. You have supported me in every way and made as much of a commitment to this study as I have. I love you.

## Table of Contents

List of Tables .....	v
List of Figures .....	vi
Section 1: The Problem.....	1
The Local Problem.....	1
Rationale .....	5
Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level.....	5
Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature.....	8
Definition of Terms.....	9
Significance of the Study .....	10
Purpose Statement.....	12
Research Questions.....	13
Review of the Literature .....	13
Theoretical Framework.....	15
Review of the Broader Problem.....	18
Gaps in the Literature.....	35
Implications.....	36
Summary .....	37
Section 2: The Methodology.....	39
Qualitative Research Design and Approach .....	39
Participants.....	41
Setting of Local Study Site .....	41

Participants.....	42
Protection of Participants.....	43
Role of the Researcher.....	44
Data Collection.....	45
Instrument.....	47
Data Analysis.....	50
Member Check, Triangulation, and Peer Review.....	52
Timeline of Study Events.....	53
Limitations.....	55
Data Analysis Results.....	56
Research Question 1.....	56
Research Question 2.....	64
Relationship of the Data to the Literature.....	69
Conclusion.....	72
Section 3: The Project.....	73
Introduction.....	73
Description and Goals.....	73
Rationale.....	75
Review of the Literature.....	77
Professional Development.....	78
Mentorship and Mentor-Mentee Relationship.....	81
Administrative Support.....	84

Project Description.....	87
Potential Resources and Existing Supports.....	88
Potential Barriers .....	89
Proposal for Implementation and Timetable.....	90
Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others .....	90
Project Evaluation Plan.....	92
Project Implications .....	93
Far-Reaching.....	93
Conclusion .....	93
Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions.....	95
Introduction.....	95
Project Strengths and Limitations.....	96
Strengths .....	96
Limitations .....	96
Recommendations for Alternative Approaches .....	97
Local Community .....	98
Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership and Change .....	99
Scholarship.....	99
Project Development and Evaluation.....	99
Leadership and Change.....	100
Reflection on the Importance of the Work .....	100
Analysis of Self as Scholar .....	100

Analysis of Self as Practitioner.....	101
Analysis of Self as Project Developer .....	101
Potential Impact for Social Change .....	102
Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research .....	102
Conclusion .....	104
References.....	107
Appendix A: Professional Development Project .....	128
Appendix B: Interview Guide .....	143
Appendix C: Sample of the Categorization of Participant Data .....	146

## List of Tables

Table 1. Number of Teachers Leaving the School.....	3
Table 2. Local School State Accreditation Results for 2011-2016.....	4
Table 3. Herzberg's Two Factor Theory.....	15
Table 4. Alignment of Research Questions with Interview Questions.....	49
Table 5. Proposed Budget for Professional Development Training .....	89

List of Figures

Figure 1. SY 2015-16 School district accreditation status.....6

Figure 2. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs .....17

## Section 1: The Problem

The attrition rate of teachers has increased significantly in recent years and is now one of the highest of all professions (Deangilis & Presley, 2011; Waddell, 2010).

Annually, over a third of the teaching force is in job transition (Lloyd, 2012). Lloyd (2012) noted that 15% of all teachers leave their schools for another teaching position or exit the profession altogether. Lynch (2012) concluded that 16% of teachers leave the profession due to retirement and the remaining 84% either transfer or exit the profession for other reasons. In urban districts, the annual teacher attrition rate grows to above 20% (Kain, 2011). Retaining quality teachers is an important variable of education because researchers have found that teacher quality is the most important influence on student achievement (Loeb, Kalogrides, & Beteille, 2012; Strong, 2011). Torres (2012) concluded that high attrition rates hinder schools' ability to deliver quality instruction. Torres asserted that understanding why teachers leave the profession requires immediate attention. National teacher attrition rates have reached levels which require immediate intervention (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011). This case study investigated novice teacher perceptions on teacher retention and attrition, as well as research-based literature related to teacher turnover and strategies to retain quality teachers.

### **The Local Problem**

Teachers at the local research study site continue to leave the school and the profession at high rates. Currently 33 teachers comprise the staff at the local research study site, with 15 teachers having 3 years or less of experience. Table 1 highlights 2011-2016 data of the number of teachers that left the school by either transferring to another

school within the district, moving to another school out of the district, or resigning from the teaching profession altogether. For school year (SY) 2011-12, eight teachers left the school by transfer or resignation. Six of the teachers had 5 or more years of experience, and two teachers had 3 years or less of experience. One teacher from the group of 5 or more years of experience and one teacher from the group with 3 years or less experience resigned. For SY 2012-13 when two first year teachers resigned during the school year, the replacement teachers were two other first-year teachers. Researchers have suggested that novice teachers are usually less effective in the classroom than teachers they replace that have more years of experience (Harris & Sass, 2011). During SY 2012-13, 11 teachers left the school. Eight teachers transferred and three resigned. The eight teachers that transferred had 3 or more years of teaching experience. The three teachers that resigned were in their first 3 years in the profession. At the end of the SY 2013-14, 17 teachers left the school by transfer or resignation, 11 teachers in SY 2014-15, and 12 teachers in SY 2015-16. In SY 2014-15, 19 of the 25 grade level teachers, or 76% had 5 years or less teaching experience. In SY 2015-16, 18 teachers, or 72% had 5 years or less experience. Of the 18 classroom teachers on staff at the local research study site in SY 2015-16, six were noncertified. To address the teacher shortage, out of the six noncertified staff members, three were college seniors. From SY 2011-12 to SY 2015-16, the attrition rate for classroom teachers at the local research study site was 47.2%.

Table 1

*Number of Teachers Leaving the School*

School Year	Total Left	Transferred/ Moved	Resigned
2011-12	8	6	2
2012-13	11	8	3
2013-14	17	14	3
2014-15	11	6	5
2015-16	12	9	3

*Note:* Data retrieved from local school district termination reports (2011-2016)

The local research study site is one of the lowest performing elementary schools in the district, as evidenced by the Standards of Learning (SOL) tests administered to students in Grades 3 through 5 (Virginia Department of Education [VDOE], 2016a). The study site failed to achieve state accreditation for five consecutive years, 2011-2016, which resulted in the school being subject to corrective actions recommended by the state Board of Education (VDOE, 2016). As indicated in Table 2, the school was denied accreditation for the prospective years due to the school not meeting the state benchmark on the SOL tests in the four core subjects of math, reading, history, and science for the *all students* group (VDOE, 2016a). Data indicate that in SY 2011-12 the local school met the state benchmark in history and science. However, during the testing season, several schools in the district received a reprimand over allegations of testing irregularities. Some schools provided low-performing students' improper assistance on the SOL tests to ensure that students would obtain a passing score (Dessoff, 2011). The local study site did not receive a reprimand. However, the following school year, the school received new

administrators.

Table 2

*Local School State Accreditation Results for 2011-2016*

Subject	Accreditation benchmark	2011-2012	2012-2013	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016
Reading	75	72	39	48	48	60
Math	70	66	29	53	51	63
History	70	81 M	80 M	61	56	61
Science	70	74 M	38	29	46	39

*Note:* Table summarizes the percentage data used in calculating the state accreditation status of the school. Data retrieved from <https://p1pe.doe.virginia.gov/reportcard/report> and [http://www.ultimatedata.norfolk.virginia/school\\_reports](http://www.ultimatedata.norfolk.virginia/school_reports). M= Met or exceeded state benchmark

In SY 2012-2013, a new principal was appointed at the local research study site to lead the school to full accreditation as defined by the state. When reviewing the data, the administrative team identified the school's attrition rate as one of the problem areas. The local research study site attrition and mobility reports from 2011-2014 revealed that both beginning and experienced teachers were leaving at high rates for varying reasons that include, but are not limited to, teacher burnout, lack of administrative support, student behavior, and teachers' workplace conditions.

Over the past 20 years, the attrition rate for novice teachers has increased (Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2014). Sass, Flores, Claeys, and Perez (2012) estimated teacher attrition rates from 2009 to 2011 to be between 13% and 33% each year nationwide with the end result being 40% to 50% of all novice teachers in the United States leaving the profession within their first 5 years. Lynch (2012) found that teachers

in low-performing schools had attrition rates at 27% while the attrition rates for teachers in high performing schools were at 15%. Up to 50% of the teachers recruited yearly leave the profession in their first five years (Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Hughes, 2012). Boyd et al. (2011), as well as Sass et al. (2012) pointed out that teacher attrition was both costly and harmful to instructional consistency in schools. Shernoff, Martinez-Lora, Frazier, Jakobsons, and Atkins (2011) reported that Chicago Public Schools' estimated cost of teacher turnover was between \$76 and \$128 million annually. Heineke, Mazza, and Tichnor-Wagner (2014) noted that although school districts spent millions of dollars to recruit and retain teachers, current attrition rates remain as high as 33%, with the highest rates found in high-needs schools.

The intended audiences for this study include state boards of education, local school boards, school districts, and school-based administrators. Many states have begun to respond with urgency to the problem of teacher shortages (Barth, Dillon, Hull, & Higgins, 2016). States such as Arkansas, North Carolina, California, and Massachusetts have developed and implemented monetary programs aimed at combating teacher attrition and retaining quality instructors (Maranto & Shuls, 2012; Petty, Fitchett, & O'Connor, 2012).

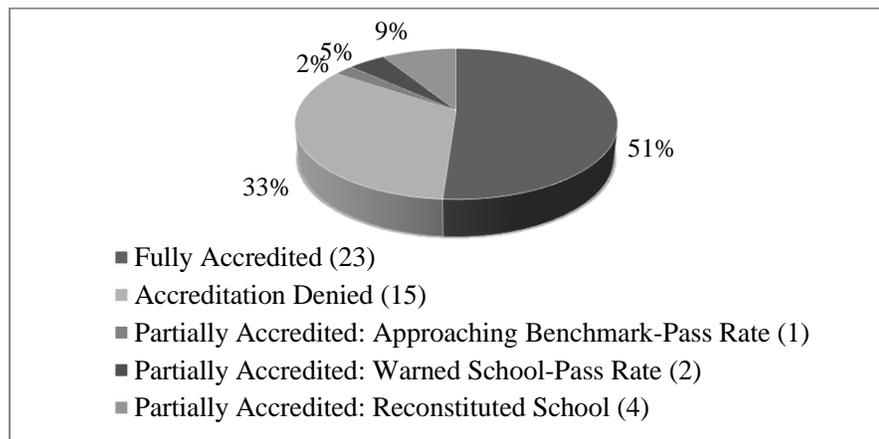
## **Rationale**

### **Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level**

As reported in the local school district's annual termination report, at the end of SY 2012-13, 341 teachers left the school district (Newsome, 2014). In SY 2013-14, Newsome reported that 353 teachers left the school district, which constituted over 13%

of the district's teaching staff. Teachers leave the profession for varying reasons (Hughes, 2012). However, school district attrition and termination data indicated that each school year more teachers leave than the previous year. Furthermore, many teachers who remain in the district request a transfer to move to other schools. In SY 2014-15, 50% of the teachers at the local research study site requested a transfer (Newsome, 2014).

The school district not only has one of the highest teacher turnover rates in the state, but it also has some of the lowest performing schools (VDOE, 2016a). Data displayed in Figure 1 reveals that in SY 2015-16, out of the district's 45 schools, only 23 or 51% of the schools were fully accredited (VDOE, 2016a).



*Figure 1.* SY 2015-16 School district accreditation status. Information retrieved from <http://schoolquality.virginia.gov/divisions/>

The local study site was one of the schools in accreditation denied status, which caused the school to be subject to actions prescribed by the state Board of Education (VDOE, 2015; VDOE, 2016b). State and local school boards, school districts, and school-based

administrators share the concern regarding teacher retention and attrition (Darling-Hammond & Ducommun, 2011).

The local district's school board considered teacher attrition a major concern. School district termination data indicated that each school year more teachers leave than the previous year causing an increase in teacher vacancies annually. An increase in vacancies would be another indicator of a teacher shortage (Barth et al., 2016, p. 5). However, during a recent school board meeting in the local district, a member of the board inquired about possible solutions to address the district's budget deficit. In response to the question, a higher ranking official proposed reducing the deficit by limiting salary increases and limiting the number of teacher vacancies available for the upcoming school year (Anonymous, personal communication, March 11, 2015). The official mentioned that the school district loses approximately three hundred teachers annually (Anonymous, personal communication, March 11, 2015). Even though retaining highly qualified teachers has been a major priority in the school district's strategic plan for a few years, yet due to budget shortfalls, only a fraction of the positions get filled creating vacancy gaps. In addition, teachers who left cited incomparable salaries as a reason for leaving (Newsome, 2014).

Title I schools, such as the research study site, experience the highest turnover (Newsome, 2014). The Title I federal program provides financial assistance to schools with a high percentage of students from economically disadvantaged families to help ensure that all students can meet state academic standards (U.S. Department of Education, 2015b). In SY 2012-13, 2013-14, and 2014-15, Title I schools in the local

school district had the highest percentage of core subjects taught by teachers not meeting the federal definition of highly qualified status (VDOE, 2016c). Quality teaching requires practice over several years to perfect the craft. The consistently high rates of teacher turnover at the local study site create a concentration of inexperienced teachers limited in their ability to improve students' academic outcomes.

### **Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature**

The National Education Association [NEA] (2010) estimates the national rate of teacher turnover in 2010 at 17% per year. Sass et al. (2012) mentioned that the growth of teacher attrition since 2010 has reached shocking levels. National attrition rates for 2012 reported at 33% to 50% for teachers leaving the profession in the first 5 years (Hughes, 2012; Petty et al., 2012). Le Cornu (2013) reported that nearly 15% of all beginning teachers exit the profession at the end of their first year, 25 to 40% exit within the first 3 years, and 50% exit within the first 5 years. Buchanan (2010) emphasized that teachers leave the profession with considerable amounts of acquired knowledge, skills, and experience at significant cost. The problem of teacher attrition costs the nation more than \$7 billion annually (Lloyd, 2012). The annual cost of recruiting, hiring, and training new teachers estimated at \$2.2 to \$7.34 billion per year (Hughes, 2012; Lloyd, 2012). School district data, and professional literature that indicated a connection between teacher quality and student achievement provided the rationale for researching the problem of teacher attrition.

## Definition of Terms

*Administrative support:* School leadership's ability to assist teachers with issues that pertain to their ability to perform their duties (Boyd et al., 2011).

*Beginning teachers:* Teachers who perform their duties with less than 3 years of experience (Watson, Harper, Ratliff, & Singleton, 2010). In this study, the terms beginning, novice, and new are used synonymously.

*Burnout:* Defined as a syndrome of bodily and mental exhaustion and concluded it is due to isolation, alienation, a high amount of paperwork, lack of administrative support, role conflict and unclear expectations (Schaefer, Long, & Clandinin, 2012).

*High-needs schools:* Schools where 80% or more of the student enrollment are from low-income families and are eligible for Title I funds (Petty et al., 2012).

*Induction programs:* Programs designed by school districts to provide support for new teachers during their early years so as to help increase and perfect skills and to strengthen weaknesses that could lead to creating a quality teacher (Deangilis, Wall, & Che, 2013).

*Mentor:* Usually a veteran teacher that delivers ongoing professional development to a beginning teacher. Mentors model, coach, and exchange ideas to reduce feelings of stress and influence the new teachers' emotional state (Hallam, Chou, J. Hite, & S. Hite, 2012).

*Professional development:* Training or professional learning that produces change in educators' practices that can be connected to improvements in professional knowledge, skills, and expertise, as well as improvements to student achievement (Hidden

Curriculum, 2014).

*School contextual factors:* School-wide factors that affect a child's ability to learn. Each school will have its own culture and identity that differs and can have a significant impact on teaching and learning (Guarino, Brown, & Wyse, 2011).

*Teacher attrition:* Changes in teacher status from year to year which may include teachers' exiting the profession, change fields and schools (Boe, Bobbitt, & Cook, 1993).

*Teacher quality:* Personal or psychological qualities of a teacher (such as love of children, honesty), the pedagogical standards that a teacher exhibits (teaching strategies, classroom management skills), or the teacher's ability to raise student learning, successful or effective teaching (Strong, 2011).

### **Significance of the Study**

Teacher attrition continues to be a concern for state and local district leaders, which has increased policymakers' interest in learning about retention. Carroll and Foster (2010) concluded that the rate at which new teachers leave the profession has increased over the past 15 years. Ingersoll et al. (2014) estimated new teacher attrition within the first five years to be at 40% to 50%. The local school district loses between 200 and 300 teachers each year. Due to the shortage of qualified teachers, the school board allows schools to hire people with no teaching license or classroom experience (L. M. Carter [pseudonym], personal communication, October 13, 2016). Noncertified school employees, non-degreed college students, and candidates matriculated into a graduate program through the Durational Shortage Area Permit (DSAP) fill the teaching vacancies. Many of the substitutes do not meet the federal definition of highly qualified.

Schools across the nation have developed similar plans to address the teacher shortage. Dwinal (2015), conveying data from the National Center for Education Statistics, revealed that “45 states reported that at least one of their school districts used some form of teacher recruitment incentive during the 2011–12 school year” (p.1).

Teachers highly satisfied with their job are more likely to remain in the field and make teaching a career (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). According to the MetLife Survey of the American Teacher, in 2009 59% of teachers were very satisfied with their jobs (MetLife & Harris Interactive, 2012). In 2011, teacher satisfaction dropped to 44% and in 2012 to 39%. A continual decline on state assessments has caused district leaders to focus on the connection between student performance and teacher attrition (VDOE, 2015). Research supports the notion that quality teaching matters to student learning (Burchinal et al., 2011; Hughes, 2012). Teacher satisfaction leads to better teacher performance that, in turn, improves teacher retention.

Staffing schools with highly qualified teachers is the obligation of every school division (NEA, 2011). Having access to highly qualified teachers was a provision of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) legislation (Adamson & Darling-Hammond, 2012). Schaefer et al. (2012) stated that not retaining teachers creates a noncohesive environment that hinders teacher development and student achievement. Hughes (2012) and Schaefer et al. (2012) indicated that while there are many reasons for teacher attrition, the impact on student achievement is consistently a negative one. Ignoring the problem may cause further harm to students’ achievement performance (Schaefer et al., 2012). Sass et al.’s (2012) study focused on what leaders needed to do to improve teacher

retention. Although the impact of teachers leaving the profession affects all schools, the low-income, low-performing schools such as the local study site experience the impact more severely (Sass et al., 2012). In 2012-13, 10% of teachers in low-performing schools left the profession, whereas, fewer than 7% of teachers in high-performing schools did so (Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, & Darling-Hammond, 2016). The persistently higher rates of turnover in high-poverty, low-performing schools creates a school staff of inexperienced teachers limited in their ability to improve students' educational outcomes.

High teacher turnover has led many urban schools to hire inexperienced and unprepared teachers that, in the long term, hinder student academic performance (Strong, 2011). For teachers leaving the profession within their first 5 years, Petty et al. (2012) reported that the national attrition rates are between 33% and 50%. Hughes (2012) reported similar statistics. Schaefer et al. (2012) contended that there are discrepancies about the actual percentage of teacher turnover. However, the consistent finding among researchers is that the attrition rate is too high and concentrated efforts must be taken to reduce it. Due to the high attrition rate at the national and local levels, the intent of this study was to find ways to help curtail attrition and sustain retention of quality elementary teachers.

### **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to investigate beginning teachers' perceptions about teacher retention, mobility, and retention. Hong (2012) believed that with the concern about the attrition rate among novice teachers, it is essential to understand why teachers leave the profession. In this study, factors were explored that contributed to

understanding why novice teachers decide to stay in or leave the profession, as well as identifying strategies for improving teacher retention at the local study site. The research questions align with the purpose of the study, which was to examine participants' perceptions about their experiences during their beginning teaching years.

### **Research Questions**

School districts can benefit from knowing what influences teacher attrition, and strategies useful for improving retention when deciding how to best fund recruitment efforts. Following Herzberg's two factor theory and Maslow's hierarchy, two qualitative research questions guided the research. The questions aligned with the purpose of the study that investigated novice teachers' perceptions about teacher attrition and mobility, as well as strategies to retain novice teachers.

1. What factors do participants at the local study site perceive contribute to novice teachers leaving or remaining in the profession?
2. What strategies at the local study site do participants perceive has contributed to novice teachers' retention?

### **Review of the Literature**

Recruiting, developing, and retaining quality teachers are essential to improving student achievement. Schools located in high-poverty urban communities are hard-to-staff. Shernoff et al. (2011) wrote that the problem of teacher attrition escalates when districts place new teachers in hard-to-staff schools. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] (2014), most teachers are satisfied with their jobs, but teaching in schools with a high percentage of low-performing students

is associated with lower levels of job satisfaction. Following Herzberg's theory, for teachers to be satisfied with their job hygiene factors must be addressed and motivation factors must be present (Ferguson, Frost, & Hall, 2012, p. 30). According to Ingersoll and Perda (2012), teacher turnover is nearly 4% higher than other professions. A growing body of research suggests that job satisfaction exerts influence on performance, retention and turnover rates (Malik & Naeem, 2013). The concern about the rising teacher attrition rate has increased policymakers' interest in learning the root causes of teacher attrition and strategies to reduce it. In this study, ways to curtail the attrition problem examined programs such as mentorship and induction programs.

Professional literature provided an understanding of why teachers were leaving the profession, as well as and what could be done to retain quality teachers. Data were used to investigate the best practices and strategies to improve retention. The following keywords used to conduct searches for the study included *teacher attrition, teacher retention, teacher turnover, job satisfaction, novice teacher, beginning teacher, low performing schools, urban schools, teacher recruitment, incentives, student achievement, role conflict, and unclear expectations*. Databases utilized through the Walden University Library to obtain literature included Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), ProQuest, and Google Scholar. Saturation became apparent when the literature reached a level of redundancy. Themes examined in the literature review include causes for teacher attrition, high-needs schools, teacher recruitment, and interventions to increase teacher retention, administrative support, mentorship, induction programs, and monetary incentives and salary.

## Theoretical Framework

Herzberg's two-factor theory (1966) and Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs theory provided the theoretical framework for this study to investigate teacher attrition and retention. The first component of Herzberg's two-factor theory, hygiene, affects an employee's level of job satisfaction (Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1959, 2010). According to the theory, job satisfaction decreases by not having the hygiene factors met, affecting a person's basic physical and psychological needs (Herzberg et al., 1959, 2010). The hygiene factors displayed in Table 3 include elements such as salary, interpersonal relationships, and administrative leadership. On the other hand, the motivators listed in Table 3 increase job satisfaction. In Table 3, motivators, which are intrinsic in nature, include the need to achieve and the need for recognition to experience achievement and growth in the work itself (Herzberg et al., 1959, 2010). Motivators contribute to job satisfaction if present, but do not detract from job satisfaction if not present.

Table 3

### *Herzberg's Two Factor Theory*

Hygiene Factors (contingent)	Motivators (intrinsic)
Salary	Nature of Work
Job Security	Sense of Accomplishment
Working Conditions	Recognition
Quality of Supervision	Responsibility
Administration Interpersonal Relations	Personal Growth/Advancement

*Note:* Items in the table were adapted from Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory –widely known as the Two Factor Theory

Job satisfaction is critical to an organization's success. Raziq and Maulabakhsh (2015) contended that job satisfaction is the essential component for employee motivation that leads to better performance. As reported in the 2012 MetLife survey, job satisfaction for public school teachers has declined to its lowest point in 25 years (MetLife & Harris Interactive, 2012). Herzberg (1966) theorized that a person's satisfaction and dissatisfaction on the job depended on the type of motivators and hygiene factors experienced. Teck-Hong and Waheed (2011) believed that job satisfaction is associated with salary, occupational stress, empowerment, company and administrative policy, achievement, personal growth, relationship with others, and the overall working conditions. The authors wrote that, "an increase in job satisfaction increases worker productivity" (p. 73). Herzberg contended that job satisfaction factors were a result of achievement, responsibility, the challenge, and recognition.

Sergiovanni (1967) studied the job satisfaction factors of teachers and found considerable support for Herzberg's theory. Sergiovanni found that "the satisfaction factors identified for teachers tend to focus on the work itself and the dissatisfaction factors tend to focus on the conditions of work" (p. 66). Ingersoll and Merrill (2010) found that teachers were more likely to remain in the profession if they had administrative support, a shared voice in the decision-making process, training to meet the daily challenge, and if they had students motivated to learn and whose achievement was a result of their efforts. According to Herzberg (1966), job dissatisfaction factors comprise administrative practices, interpersonal relations through collaboration, working conditions, benefits, and salary. Results from the 2013 Schools and Staffing Survey

found job dissatisfaction as the primary factor in teachers' decision to leave the profession (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Reviewing Herzberg's theory provided an understanding of the component structure of job dissatisfaction and on how teachers recognize their feelings about their work.

Maslow's (1943) theory describes a hierarchy of basic human needs and personal beliefs, as well as their motivational factors. Figure 2 displays the first hierarchy that consisted of a five-stage model with factors ranging from physiological to self-actualization. Maslow (1943) found that when one need is met, a different need emerges causing the needs to move up and down the hierarchy. Maslow expanded the hierarchy in the 1970s from five stages to an eight-stage model. According to Maslow, individuals must first satisfy the lower level basic needs before moving on to the higher level needs. Maslow also found that a person is either content or discontented with each of the needs at any given time. Maslow (1970) believed that all people are capable of reaching the highest level of self-actualization, but only a limited number will progress to that level.



*Figure 2:* Maslow's hierarchy of needs. This figure is the five-stage model, which is the earliest version of the hierarchy. Retrieved from <http://www.simplypsychology.org/maslow.html>

Maslow (1943) argued that individuals retain a motivational desire to realize their full potential, referred to as self-actualization. Maslow also believed that self-actualization helps persons to gain in wisdom and allows them to know what to do when faced with making a decision in various situations. Maslow (1970) stated that self-actualized people are problem focused while self-transcendent people look to help others find self-fulfillment and realize their potential.

In this study, the two motivational theories, Herzberg's (Herzberg et al., 1959, 2010) two-factor theory and Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, formed the theoretical basis for exploring the problem of teacher attrition. Dissatisfaction with the job is a main determinant of teacher attrition (Sutcher et al., 2016). Both Herzberg et al. and Maslow's theories proposed that a specific set of needs must be met in order to help reduce teacher shortages and create a stable high-quality teaching force. The two theories share the belief that the link to job satisfaction is human motivation. The theories differed in their beliefs in that Herzberg divided the human needs into two categories. Herzberg (1966) declared that job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction derived from different causes; whereas, Maslow organized the basic needs according to levels in a continuum, but believed all basic needs are motivators and that people need them all.

### **Review of the Broader Problem**

A large volume of information exists on teacher turnover and retention. Greenlee and Brown (2009), along with Lynch (2012) analyzed the rate that teacher turnover occurs and the conditions that would influence teachers to remain. Other literature distinguished between teachers that left the profession and those that transferred between

schools (Ingersoll et al., 2012; Startz, 2016). Referencing statistics from the U.S. Department of Education 2012-13 Teacher Follow-up Survey (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014), Startz (2016) wrote that only about 2% of teachers leave education for alternative work, while many teachers just move to other schools. After viewing the 2011-12 NCES teacher attrition and mobility report, Brown (2015) considered the statistic of over 40% new teacher attrition grossly exaggerated. Disputing the current research findings of Ingersoll et al. (2014) and other researchers, Brown believed that new teachers are less likely to leave the profession than previously reported. Brown found that the statistic for new teachers leaving the profession to be at approximately 17%. The Center for American Progress, a nonpartisan policy institute –think tank, calculated an even lower statistic, arguing that only 13% of new teachers leave the profession within five years (Hanna & Pennington, 2015). At the same time, it is important to note that the discrepancy in the percentages of beginning teachers leaving the profession could be attributed to the process by which the data were calculated.

**Causes for teacher attrition.** Chambers (2010) reported a connection between working conditions and teacher attrition. Lynch (2012) stated that the root causes of attrition must first be determined and the information used to develop programs from strategies that have proven to be successful. As it pertains to teacher attrition, the literature revealed that teacher dissatisfaction was shown to be related to issues of salary, support, collaboration, family, opportunities to participate in school decision making, and heavy workloads (Sass et al., 2012; Hughes, 2012). Other causes cited for teacher attrition include retirement, increased student enrollment, and job stress that created the

need for an estimated two million new teachers (Shaw & Newton, 2014). Waddell (2010) identified the teacher attrition rate as one of the highest of all professions. Teacher attrition has been analyzed across dimensions such as teacher gender, ethnicity, and school demographics. Schaefer et al. (2012) identified reasons for being dissatisfied with the teaching profession. The reasons consisted of burnout, resilience, demographic features, and personal reasons. The authors defined burnout as a syndrome of physical and mental exhaustion and concluded it is due to isolation, alienation, and excessive paperwork, lack of administrative support, role conflict and unclear expectations. Schaefer et al.'s research framed teacher attrition as a problem associated with individual and contextual factors such as burnout, support, and salary. The authors found that burnout brings on an attitude of negativity towards the job, colleagues, and the workplace. Schaefer et al. noted that burnout occurs more commonly in teaching due to isolation, and alienation that occurs in the profession.

Hughes (2012) attributed turnover to younger teachers that left for family reasons while older teachers retired and both transferred to other schools. Hughes and Eckert (2013) attributed high stress as another reason for new teachers leaving the profession. In Eckert's study, participants were from high-poverty schools. Eckert determined that many of the participants were unprepared to handle stressors at schools with a high-poverty student enrollment. Buchanan (2010) found while conducting his study that salary was a major contributing factor as to why teachers left the profession. Buchanan pointed out that the teachers in the study reported that there were less adequate facilities, fewer opportunities to participate in school-wide decision making, little administrative

support and heavy workloads. Ronfeldt (2012) surmised the teacher shortage was not a result of producing qualified teachers, but the inability to retain them. The author cited the change in student demographics, low teacher salaries, and an increase in the number of underachieving schools as major reasons for the attrition problem (Ronfeldt, 2012). Other identified causes cited in studies investigating teachers leaving the profession were a lack of colleague and administrative support, teacher preparedness, and stress related issues (Fisher, 2011; Heineke et al., 2014). On the contrary, Darling-Hammond and Ducommun (2011) contended that a shortage of teachers in the nation was not the problem, but an uneven distribution of qualified teachers in high-needs schools.

**High-needs schools.** All schools need highly skilled experienced teachers to raise student achievement; however, the literature supports that the need is greater in high-poverty schools with a high percentage of low-performing students (Maranto & Shuls, 2012; Rice, 2010). Petty et al. (2012) defined *high-needs schools* as those where 80% or more of the student enrollment are from low-income families and are eligible for Title I funds, such as at the local research study site. Pearman and Lefever-Davis (2012) reported that the problem of teacher attrition has an adverse effect on all of America's schools, and the impact is severe due to teacher ineffectiveness. Ronfeldt (2012) conducted a study specific to high-needs schools. In his study, Ronfeldt sought to determine if teachers assigned to high-needs schools for preservice preparation are more or less likely to leave the profession within the first five years. The results of Ronfeldt's study showed that teachers trained in high-needs schools were more effective in raising

student achievement in their first five years of teaching, as well as staying at the school, than teachers trained in schools that were easier to staff.

Rice (2010) declared that teachers are the most valuable influence in increasing the academic achievement of the economically disadvantaged. Adamson and Darling-Hammond (2012) contended that less qualified teachers tend to work in schools with a greater number of low-income students. Studies have reported that students in low-income schools across states are “3 to 10 times more likely to have unqualified teachers” than students in more affluent schools (Adamson & Darling-Hammond, 2012, p. 4). ParTEE (2014) maintained that low-achieving, high-poverty schools are losing quality teachers with few teachers applying to replace them, which hurts student performance. Rates at which teachers leave high-poverty, low-achieving schools are greater than that of the high-achieving and more affluent schools (Berliner, 2013; Rice, 2010). Sass et al. (2012) agreeing with Rice concluded that higher turnover rates were in schools where there was a greater proportion of low-income or minority students, as compared to more affluent schools. The resulting impact of the practice mentioned above is an increased academic performance gap between minority students and students that are more affluent.

High-poverty schools experience the greatest impact of teacher turnover (Sutcher et al., 2016). Sass et al. (2012) and Rice (2010) found that teachers are migrating from schools that have a high-poverty student enrollment to schools within districts that have more resources, better professional opportunities, higher student achievement, and lower proportions of minority and low-income students. Sass et al.’s research also concluded that students in high-needs schools are more likely to suffer academically due to

increased teacher turnover and students in schools with a high retention rate. In addition to the many challenges essential to educating students living in poverty, the teachers in high-needs schools usually are less experienced and have a much higher teacher attrition rate (Ekert, 2012). Barth et al. (2016) and Heineke et al. (2014) contended that due to the trending teacher shortage, high-needs school districts often hire last-minute underprepared personnel for the classroom that is a detriment to student learning. Jacob, Vidyarthi, and Carroll (2012) and Heineke et al. noted that student achievement is dependent upon qualified, effective teaching. Maranto and Shuls (2012) focused their research on teacher recruiting and retention in low-performing schools in Arkansas. The authors believed that hiring highly effective teachers was the key to significantly improving student achievement (Maranto & Shuls, 2012).

**Alternative teacher recruitment.** Early attrition from the teaching profession is a major factor often overlooked (Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2012). Ingersoll et al. (2012) researched how prospective teachers are prepared for the workforce and found that 40% of teachers come into teaching through nontraditional or alternative routes. The authors investigated participants' perceptions about whether the type and amount of training received, as well as the level of education, affected their decision to stay in the teaching profession (Ingersoll et al., 2012). Ingersoll et al.'s study focused on how the retention rates of teachers coming from traditional teacher education programs compared with those of teachers coming from alternative routes. Results from Ingersoll et al.'s study showed that there was no significant difference in attrition rates for teachers who

attended undergraduate education programs as compared to those that entered the nontraditional way.

Pearman and Lefever-Davis (2012) declared that teacher preparation assuredly affected retention. Ingersoll et al. (2012) found the amount of practice teaching, observing other teachers, and the quality of feedback received about their teaching was significantly related to teachers remaining in the profession. The authors contended that on average, teachers that come from a program like Teachers for America are more likely to leave the profession than someone that entered the profession through the traditional collegial paths. Brown (2015) agreeing with Ingersoll et al. stated that teachers who entered the profession through an alternative certification program left the profession at a higher rate than those who went through traditional preservice programs. During the school year of 2011-2012, about 21% of teachers with alternative certification were no longer teaching, compared with 16% who had traditional training.

Kang and Berliner (2012) noted three approaches that have been used to help overcome the problem of attrition: teacher recruitment from alternative licensing programs, such as Teach for America and Career Switchers, mentoring, and induction programs. Heineke et al. (2014) researched the Teach for America program and found that the program recruits scholars for a 2-year commitment teaching in high-needs schools. Exit interviews conducted by the authors from the 73 participants revealed, 37 intended to remain in teaching, 13 extended their contract for one year, and 23 left the Teach for America program, which added to the attrition numbers. The primary reasons cited by Heineke et al.'s 23 participants for leaving the teaching profession included

pursuing additional schooling or other lines of work. Goldhaber and Cowan (2014) also analyzed teacher preparation programs and had similar findings as Heineke et al. The authors concluded there was a significant difference in the rate at which teachers left their schools and the profession (Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014). However, Goldhaber and Cowan found that teacher turnover and student achievement varied based upon the effectiveness of the teacher's preparation program and teacher competency.

**Interventions to increase teacher retention.** School districts want to retain quality teachers. Research suggests that teacher quality is the most important school-based determinant of student success (Strong, 2011). Lynch (2012) determined that mentoring and induction programs, class size, autonomy, and administrative support were factors that make a difference in retaining teachers. The author stated that school systems needed to develop and use reform agendas as recruiting tools by sharing their vision and highlighting strategies with prospective recruits (Lynch, 2012). Lynch also suggested that school systems use studies, such as those reviewed by Guarino et al. (2011) to guide recruitment and retention of teachers. Guarino et al. found that teachers completing alternative routes to teaching were older and had higher rates of retention than persons completing traditional collegial programs had. Guarino et al. also noticed that recruiting from alternative programs provided school systems with teachers that remained in education at higher rates.

Ronfeldt (2012) suggested the teacher shortage was not a result of producing qualified teachers, but the inability to retain them. Ronfeldt concluded that a quality education for students is highly dependent upon effective teachers and that effect of

teaching on student achievement showed how critical it is to train and retain teachers. The literature provided several recommended strategies such as inductions programs, mentorship, pay raises, professional learning communities and a voice in instructional concerns (Waddell, 2010). Petty et al. (2012) addressed ideas on how to attract, support, and retain teachers in high-need schools. Results of Petty et al.'s study supported the research of Waddell that established teachers would be more attracted to working and staying at high-needs schools for a higher salary. Participants chose caring as an important reason they remain and indicated more exposure and a high-needs preparation program were essential to successful to retain teachers at high-needs schools.

Research by Perrachione et al. (2008) and Ingersoll et al. (2012) identified factors that could influence job satisfaction and result in teachers remaining in the profession. The factors cited by the authors that determined whether novice teachers remained in the profession included personal efficacy traits that could be addressed with relevant professional development (PD) connected to teachers identified areas of need, and timely, direct, and honest feedback from administrators. Perrachione et al. cited student demographics, low pay, and low-achieving schools as major reasons that contribute to the attrition problem.

**Administrative support.** Daniels (2011) noted that education reform has created high stakes accountability for administrators. The purpose of NCLB legislation was to create measures implemented on the state, district, and school levels to hold schools and teachers accountable for student achievement (Dee & Jacob, 2011). Daniels also pointed out the need for administrators to understand that teachers matter and fostering supportive

relationships with novice teachers lead to better productivity and improved teacher retention. Daniels found that administrators could support novice teachers by modeling the kinds of behaviors expected of knowledgeable and experienced teachers. Some traits that administrators expect of both novice and experienced teachers are instructional skill, work ethic, being open to receive feedback, and able to admit when they do not know the answer (Daniels, 2011). Boyd et al. (2011), reporting on the results of surveys completed by teachers who had recently left the teaching profession, concluded that the influence of school administrators on teacher retention is great.

As mentioned in the literature, lack of administrative support contributed to teacher attrition (Sutcher et al., 2016). Boyd et al. (2011) sought to understand the relationship between administrative support and retention decisions. The authors concluded that characteristics that predict whether teachers leave or stay in the teaching field included age, experience, preparation and pathway to the profession (Boyd et al., 2011). Boyd et al. also found that administrative support and effective leadership practices were essential to retaining teachers. Principals need to understand that they are the main talent developers in their schools (Shaw & Newton, 2014). Boyd et al. acknowledged that academic improvement depends on a school or district's ability to retain good teachers and that school leaders play a critical role in influencing retention decisions. The literature also suggested the importance of articulating clear standards of effective teaching (Millanowski & Kimball, 2010; Odden, 2011). Articulating clear standards of effective teaching allows principals to more accurately identify their most effective teachers (Brown, 2009; Curtis, 2010).

In their study, Boyd et al. (2011) focused on correlations between working conditions and socioeconomic factors. The authors looked at teacher influence on school policy decisions, administrative support, and collaboration with peers, student behavior, and school climate conditions. Of the above-mentioned factors, Boyd et al. found that administrative support was the most cited contributor that determined whether a teacher stays or goes. After analyzing their data, Boyd et al. concluded that 44% of teachers who had problems with administration left the school or profession and those teachers who were effective in working with their administrators were more likely to stay in the profession. Talent evaluation, nurturing and management functions are foundational to any effort to retain top performing teachers in schools. Another major aspect of a principal's role is fostering relationships, and collaboration among colleagues, is finding teachers who will fit well with the school culture and blend in with their teams is essential to fulfilling the role (Hughes, 2012). When school administrators provide a positive, safe learning environment, it provides opportunities for teachers to succeed (Boyd et al., 2011). This positive environment contributes to eliminating job dissatisfaction.

**Mentorship.** Mentoring is a way of delivering ongoing PD to beginning teachers. Mentors model, exchange beliefs, reduce feelings of stress, and influence the new teachers emotional state. The mentoring experience also allows the veteran teacher a chance to gain new ideas and re-examine some of their practices (Rice, 2010). Researchers have given examples of effective strategies to curtail the problem of teacher attrition, such as mentors, induction programs and administrative support (Kang &

Berliner, 2012; Wong, 2004). Hallam et al. (2012) concluded that mentoring beginning teachers increased their retention significantly. The above authors also identified building mentors as opposed to district level mentors as being more effective because of proximity

Parker, Ndoye, and Imig (2009) study focused on working conditions and a possible relationship between mentoring and beginning teacher intentions to remain in the profession. Parker et al. used data from the 139 participants who completed the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey to look at working conditions and a possible relationship between mentoring and beginning teacher intentions to remain in the profession. The authors' sample participants consisted of teachers mentored in their first 2 years of teaching. Parker et al.'s study found teachers left the profession because of environmental, psychological, organizational, and social factors, but 88% that had mentors located at their school site intended to stay in the profession. Hudson (2012) believed mentoring and assisting beginning teachers that are transitioning into the profession rather than assessing them would result in their not leaving. Hudson also believed that having mentors help with the challenges and responsibilities associated with the first years of teaching is a highly effective strategy. Hallam et al. (2012) agreed that mentoring beginning teachers would increase retention significantly. The authors went on to identify in school mentors as opposed to district level mentors as being more effective because of proximity.

Hudson (2012) conducted a study that investigated the beginning process for 10 new teachers. The teachers were involved in an induction program and assigned mentors. A majority of the 10 teachers agreed their mentors were supportive, comfortable with

discussing different aspects of teaching, and had instilled confidence in their ability to teach. The participants did respond in exit interviews that the supportive environment with compatible mentors helped to aid in their development. Hudson found that mentors need to be selected based on their willingness to be supportive to aid teacher retention rates. Shernoff et al. (2011) researched why mentorship programs fail to address predictors of teacher attrition. The authors concluded the predictors of attrition were classroom management, how well teachers engaged learners and collaboration with colleagues. In addition, Shernoff et al. concluded that linking beginning teachers with peer-nominated mentors and a district mentor coach would provide positive support for classroom management training and provide an avenue to connections for new teachers to network with experienced teachers.

**Induction programs.** Induction programs, as defined by Kang and Berliner (2012), are programs introduced by school systems to help beginning teachers deal with the transition to classroom educator. Eckert (2013) contended that induction programs have become a focal point of how to assist beginning teachers in providing a quality experience for themselves and quality education for all students. Deangilis et al. (2013) surmised that induction programs deliver support for new teachers during their early years to help increase and perfect skills and to strengthen weaknesses that could lead to attrition. Deangilis et al. contended that there should be a relationship between preparedness and induction programs. Perry and Hayes (2011) concluded that novice teachers with good school-based level support have better retention rates. The authors maintain that induction programs create situations that allow candidates to face situations

that approximate realities. Deangilis et al. indicated the interaction would affect teacher's career intentions and decisions leading to less teacher attrition.

Induction programs provide coherent, comprehensive sustained PD designed to train, support and retain new teachers (Wong, 2004). Hudson (2012) concluded that participants felt their induction program experiences were rewarding when the emphasis was on learning school culture and infrastructures. Huling, Resta, and Yeargain (2012) conducted research that followed 954 teachers through their fifth year of teaching and found that participants in induction programs remained in the profession at higher rates than those that do not participate.

Perry and Hayes' (2011) study analyzed beginning teachers' participation in teacher induction programs. The authors surveyed novice teachers to determine if those who participated in teacher preparation programs had significantly different induction experiences and needs from the end of Year 1 as compared to the end of Year 5. Perry and Hayes determined that effective induction programs create relevant experiences that mimic realities in schools thus better preparing young teachers. The authors analyzed participating teachers' mobility and retention rates to determine the impact of the induction program. Perry and Hayes found that the surveyed participants considered effective leadership by district decision makers important to the success of the induction program. Perry and Hayes noted that new teachers referred to their first year as climbing a cloud-covered mountain. The authors also concluded that teachers that felt they received sufficient school-based support, such as mentorship and adequate administrator support during their induction period had higher levels of retention (Perry & Hayes,

2011). Shernoff et al. (2011) noted that mentorship, as a part of teacher induction, should have mentors selected based on merit and recognition from peers rather than the length of service.

**Monetary incentives and salary.** Torres (2012) noted that teacher salary has been a focus in attrition studies for many years. The increase in job options with higher wages, better benefits, and good working conditions are some reasons why teachers are less likely to remain in the profession (Raziq & Maulabakhsh, 2015). Johnson, Berg, and Donaldson (2010) revealed that salary played a major role in new teacher recruitment. Data obtained through exit interviews with teachers leaving the profession indicated that while there were no expectations of wealth, still many teachers did not expect to struggle to build financially stable careers (Johnson et al., 2010). Buchanan (2010) found that there was a relationship between salary and odds of beginning teachers leaving the profession. The author also found that teachers were eight times more likely to leave the profession due to low salary. With some school district's experiencing budget shortfalls, teacher salaries remain low compared to those of other professions with similar education requirements.

Lynch (2012) noted to improve teacher attrition, new teachers have to be recruited, trained, and adequately compensated. Lynch determined that increased monetary compensation and better working conditions contribute to teacher satisfaction leading to improved retention. Imazeki (2005) connected higher teacher retention directly to higher salaries. Luczak (2005) determined that ethnicity and the proportion of low-income students are indicators that teachers may leave the profession. Though agreeing

with Imazeki (2005), Luczak pointed out that salary and working conditions are better indicators as to whether teachers stay in or leave.

Ingersoll et al. (2012) investigated the influence of pay incentives on teacher retention. The authors concluded that while salary was important, teachers in high needs schools identified smaller class size, more planning time, need for visible administrators, more autonomy, easy access to technology, support for student discipline issues, better working conditions and more open communication with administrators, as more important considerations for remaining in high needs schools. Buchanan (2010) concluded that the salary factor was statistically significant as it related to increased numbers of beginning teachers staying or leaving the profession. Schafer et al. (2012) concluded that higher salary was associated with higher rates of retention, while Greenlee and Brown (2009) found financial incentives, working conditions, and student behavior issues are all important factors in retaining teachers.

Financial incentives have been a strategy used by states and districts to attract and retain teachers to help reverse the problem of attrition. Implementation of the monetary incentive programs occur in different ways. One state spreads the stipend into equal payments over 5 years, while another state gives larger stipends at the beginning and end of the term than in the between years. Maranto and Shuls (2012) researched recruiting, retention strategies for high-needs areas of Arkansas. Maranto and Shuls cited student demographics, low pay, and low student achievement as major factors that influence a school's attrition rate. In addition, Maranto and Shuls concluded that nontraditional pathways into the profession such as Teachers for America often result in high attrition.

In the Maranto and Shuls' study, the authors explored extrinsic ways to attract teachers. The authors found that teachers were enticed to stay in the teaching profession when offered monetary incentives, a housing program, and guaranteed participation in a State Teacher Education Program. Maranto and Shuls investigated the Massachusetts Signing Bonus Program (MSBP) launched in the late 1990s. The MSBP was a monetary incentive program created to serve 13 school districts. Newly hired teachers received a \$20,000 signing bonus for working in low-performing schools. Participants received the money in four installments. After interviewing and tracking thirteen 2004 participants in the incentive program, Maranto and Shuls found that only five teachers remained long enough to receive the entire bonus.

School districts in California, when experiencing a severe teacher shortage, implemented the MSBP model with limited success. The teachers who received the monetary incentive increased new teacher hiring at low-performing schools by 28%. Maranto and Shuls (2012) further stated that the recipients of the incentive would more than likely not remain in the program for the 4 years than teachers who were not recipients. The California teachers reported three major reasons for leaving teaching despite the monetary incentive: inadequate PD, lack of resources, too little time to plan, bureaucratic hindrances, and lack of collegial support. Maranto and Shuls also investigated the North Carolina monetary incentive model that offered \$1,800 to any teacher that would teach at a low-performing school. The authors found that the program failed due to poor implementation and experienced only minimal results (Maranto and Shuls, 2012). Maranto and Shuls stated that the North Carolina school district only

slightly decreased teacher attrition. Maranto and Shuls, reporting on the Arkansas Department of Education, stated that the Arkansas DOE in 2007 developed a priority bonus system that paid teachers new to the profession and teachers working in high priority areas a one-time only \$5000 bonus upon completion of their first year and \$4,000 upon completion of Years 2 and 3. If the teachers remained for Years 4 and 5, recipients received a \$3,000 bonus upon completion (Maranto & Shuls, 2012). The figures as mentioned above for the Arkansas program reflect a \$1,000 yearly increase that began in 2009. The State Teacher Education Program (STEP), formed in 2009, encouraged teachers to teach in areas where a shortage existed. STEP awarded teachers \$3,000 per year for 3 years (Maranto & Shuls, 2012). Minority candidates received an additional \$1,000 per year. Results of the study by Petty et al. (2012) supported previously mentioned research that established teachers could be enticed to working and staying at high-needs schools for financial incentives.

### **Gaps in the Literature**

Gaps identified in the literature pertained to attrition and retention problems in low-performing or high-needs schools, as well as the quality of instruction. Low-performing schools disproportionately serve minority, and low-income students such as at the local research study site, perpetuating the achievement gap. Lynch (2012) and Shernoff et al. (2011) pointed out that a large percentage of teachers that leave low-income, low-performing schools have a higher enrollment of minority students. While there are vast amounts of research on the attrition and retention problem, fewer articles focus on the problem as it pertains to high poverty, low-performing schools (Jacob et al.,

2012). Additional research needs to address specifically the issue of the learning gap in lower performing high-needs schools due to high teacher attrition rates. Johnson et al. (2010) pointed out that there should be further examination of the relationship between the learning gap and teacher retention. Research suggests that experienced teachers have a greater influence on student achievement than inexperienced teachers do. However, the high attrition rate at the local research study site limits the number of veteran teachers on staff. Cowan, Goldhaber, Hayes, and Theobald (2015) maintains a different view regarding teacher attrition. The authors view teacher attrition as not necessarily a bad thing, but as a way to prevent from using valuable time and resources to train ineffective teachers. Cowan et al.'s research suggests that effective teachers are more likely to stay in their jobs.

### **Implications**

This case study findings revealed insights about teacher attrition that were used to develop a project that when implemented can lead to retaining quality teachers, as well as positive social change. The purpose of the study was to understand perceptions of novice teachers about teacher attrition and retention, as well as strategies perceived to improve teacher retention. In addition, data analysis results informed the creation of a PD project.

After reviewing the literature, several viable options for the project emerged. Barth et al. (2016) suggested providing time and resources for leadership development for administrators, as well as support and training for new teachers. One option for the project included implementing intensive PD programs for beginning teachers, such as a mentorship program, as a means for supporting and keeping quality teachers (Hallam et

al., 2012). Providing PD training to support the local study site's mentoring program seemed appropriate for the project. Another option for the project included submitting a policy recommendation to educate school boards and other leaders on best practices for recruitment to improve on guidelines already implemented in the district. Stakeholders would benefit from learning best practices on how not to just retain teachers, but more importantly, on how to retain highly-qualified teachers. Konoske-Graf, Partelow, and Benner (2016) suggested schools adapt their recruitment practices by concentrating on human capital of employees by capitalizing on their knowledge and experience. The authors suggested that recruiting goes beyond local district job fairs, but incorporates training at the beginning of the hiring process.

Tentatively, the project involves mentors and administrators participating in PD on related topics resulting from the data and relevant to the mentor and mentee's needs. The intention is to have focused PD and regularly scheduled meetings. The meetings would take place throughout the school year for both the mentor and mentee to attend together, in addition to meetings held for the mentees and mentors separately. However, I will use the findings of the research to guide the development of the project to bring awareness to the problem of teacher attrition, along with reducing teacher attrition and improving teacher retention. Appendix A includes the components and details of the project in its entirety.

### **Summary**

Many states in the nation face severe teacher shortages. Attrition is at an all-time high (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Teacher preparation programs have seen a decrease of almost

240,000 teachers or 35 % since 2011 (Sutcher et al., 2016). Darling-Hammond and Ducommun (2011) noted that retaining teachers was a larger problem than recruiting new teachers. The authors contended that creating effective teacher preparation programs and high quality mentoring programs is a fundamental component to solving the teacher turnover problem. Lynch (2012) and Schaefer et al. (2012) agreed that offering teachers that enter the profession through alternative programs adequate salaries and compensation would better keep a greater number in the profession. On the contrary, Yeargain (2012) concluded that new teachers in quality induction programs remained in the profession at higher rates without the additional compensation. Maranto and Shuls (2012) focused their study on interventions recognized to improve attrition and help to retain teachers. Interventions mentioned in this study include induction programs, professional learning communities, administrative support, employee financial assistance, and mentoring.

For Section 1, I presented literature related to teacher attrition and retention. The literature supported the notion that retaining teachers is an important aspect of education because of its effect on student achievement, school climate and culture, and stability of the school staff and school community (Maranto & Shuls, 2012). I also examined teacher attrition using the theories of Herzberg et al. (1959, 2010) and Maslow (1943). In Section 2, I presented the methodology for this case study as it related to the purpose of the study and in alignment with the research questions. Topics discussed in the methodology include the design, data collection, data analysis, participants, and the interpretation of the findings.

## Section 2: The Methodology

The research literature provided evidence that school districts and administrators have concerns about teachers leaving the profession after just a short time in the field. This level of turnover leads to a shortage of qualified teachers in schools, and expensive recruitment efforts for the school district. Using qualitative methods, the purpose of the study was to investigate novice teachers' perceptions regarding factors that contribute to teacher attrition and strategies that contribute to teacher retention. Qualitative research, such as case study, provides the means for exploring the topic of teacher turnover and retention in its natural setting (Creswell, 2014).

### **Qualitative Research Design and Approach**

For this study, the case study design provided the basis for exploring teacher retention and attrition, as well as to identify strategies to train and retain quality teachers. The case study combined qualitative traditions and techniques in order to meet the specific needs of the research topic. According to Creswell (2012), the case study design is the most flexible qualitative methodology that when blended with multiple steps of analysis creates a valid research design. Yin (2014) described case study research as inquiry to discover meaning and gain an in-depth understanding of an issue.

Characteristics of the qualitative research method can be different from the planning of the study, exploring the problem and developing an understanding of the central problem (Creswell, 2012). Yin (2014) contended that case study is appropriate for answering how and why questions or to uncover conditions deemed relevant to the phenomenon under study. Using a qualitative research method allowed the in depth

exploration of the problem of teacher attrition and retention (Creswell, 2012). Denzin and Lincoln (2012) noted that qualitative research allows the researcher to use an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the problem by attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them. According to Jacob and Furgerson (2012), qualitative research reflects the experiences and feelings of individual perspectives. The qualitative research design selected for this study provided a way to gain an in-depth understanding of the factors that led to teacher attrition through a bounded system (Yin, 2014). The case study design provided the opportunity for novice teachers to provide rich descriptions about their perceptions on teacher attrition and retention through e-mail interviews.

Considering the qualitative approaches of case study, ethnographic, grounded theory, and phenomenology, case study was the most suitable option for my study. Lodico, Spaulding, and Voegtler, (2010) wrote that the case study approach allows the researcher to gain insight into understanding an individual, group, or situation. Case study methodology properly applied can be a valuable research method to study phenomena in their context (Yin, 2014). An ethnographic study would provide a description of cultural groups or communities under investigation (Lodico et al., 2010). The method often requires collecting data over long periods. My study did not include observing groups in a real life environment. Creswell (2012) stated the grounded theory approach consists of a longitudinal and inductive approach, usually used in the social sciences to develop theory determined through data analysis. Of the qualitative methodologies, researchers consider grounded theory among the most misused.

Phenomenological researchers look at participant interpretations of their experience and attempt to understand the meaning of the experience from the participant point of view (Lodico et al., 2010). Phenomenological research is well suited to study affective, emotional and intense human experiences (Merriam, 2009). I did not select the phenomenological approach because I was examining participants' opinions and not their experiences. While the aforementioned qualitative designs are necessary methods, the case study proved to be effective because the method fit the specifics of this research study.

### **Participants**

Procedures for gaining access to teacher participants included receiving permission from the Walden University Institutional Review Board [IRB] (Approval number 06-02-16-0322853), the school district leadership research team, and the principal of the research study site. Permission was obtained to utilize interviews to collect qualitative data. Seidman (2013) considered gaining access to participants a part of the main component of interview research. I followed IRB and school district protocol to protect the participants from harm. The internet served as the method for participant recruitment.

### **Setting of Local Study Site**

The study took place at an urban public pre-kindergarten to Grade 5 elementary school located in the mid-Atlantic region. The school staff consists of approximately 50 instructional and resource staff members. The school serves a predominantly Black student population of over 400 students. Nine percent of the student population receives

special education services. One hundred percent of the students receive free or reduced lunch, which qualifies the elementary school to receive Title I resources. Title I is a federal program that provides financial assistance to schools with a high percentage of students from economically disadvantaged families to help ensure that all students are able to meet state academic standards (ED, 2015b). This site was of particular interest for my case study because of the high turnover of new teachers.

### **Participants**

The target population comprised beginning teachers. Criteria for participating in the study consisted of being a teacher at the local research study site, and having less than 5 years of experience in the profession. The sampling frame consisted of Pre-K to fifth grade teachers and key resource personnel, ( $N=33$ ). Nineteen teachers, which comprised 58% of the instructional staff, met the criteria. The novice teachers were best suited to answer questions about the phenomenon of beginning teacher attrition and retention.

According to Castillo-Montoya (2016), the number of participants required for an adequate sample for a qualitative research project can vary. Even though it was not practical to use all nineteen teachers that met the criteria, a representative sampling was sought that accurately reflected the school's instructional grade level population. A purposeful sample was obtained after electronically mailing (e-mailing) an overview of the study and the consent form to the nineteen potential participants who met the criteria. Participants agreed to be in the study by signing and returning the consent form electronically to my Walden University e-mail. The purposeful sampling included individuals with the strongest feelings about a specific phenomenon to yield a more

comprehensive range of responses (Lodico et al., 2010).

A subsample of nine teachers ( $n = 9$ ) agreed to participate in the study. The subsample included 4 primary (Grades pre-K-2) teachers and 5 upper grade (Grades 3-5) teachers. The participants' years of experience ranged from one year to five years with four teachers having 1 year, one teacher with 2 years, three teachers with 4 years, and one teacher with 5 years. The interviews took place at a time when the staff found out that the local study site *all group* SOL scores failed to meet the state testing benchmarks, making the school ineligible for accreditation.

### **Protection of Participants**

Upon securing IRB, school district, and the study site administrator's permission, I e-mailed a participant letter to all teachers that met the criteria of 0 to 5 years of experience to solicit participation. The e-mail included a clearly articulated disclaimer that participation in the study was voluntary and no compensation provided. The e-mail process allowed participants to ask questions regarding the study and responses returned in a timely manner through e-mail. Participants consented to participate in the study by returning the consent form were sent a second e-mail with the study's interview questions and the instructions on how to return the completed form. Participants e-mailed their completed interview responses directly to my private e-mail address that I provided. The purpose for using a private e-mail rather than the school district's e-mail system was to ensure confidentiality of the research data. Participants could choose which questions to answer and could leave the study at any point in the research without fear of harm or retribution. Throughout the data collection and analysis, I informed participants that

everything having to do with the research was confidential. I was the only person to view the responses.

To protect and minimize the potential risk of loss of confidentiality of the participants, I assigned each participant a number to conceal the identities. I also printed the e-mail responses on a home copier. A paper copy of the responses will remain in a combination locked file cabinet located in my home office to minimize the chances of it becoming mishandled or lost. I was the only person to have access to the combination to the file cabinet. At the conclusion of the study, a printed copy of the responses will remain in the combination locked file cabinet for a period of 5 years. I also created a database so that data is available for inspection. The database, created using the Computer Aided Qualitative Data Analysis Software program (CAQDAS), enabled me to track and organize data that included personal notes and data documents. The CAQDAS program provided unlimited storage for organizing the data.

### **Role of the Researcher**

My job, as the math interventionist at the study site, involves developing interventions to assist teachers in increasing students' math proficiency. I conduct PD sessions for staff and observe math instruction in classrooms to determine the effectiveness of math programs. I also co-teach math instruction in classrooms at the request of a teacher. While serving in the role of interventionist, I conference and interact with the administrative and instructional teams. However, my role does not include evaluating staff or faculty members. My responsibilities at the school do not consist of having a supervisory role over potential participants. My relationship with participants

was of a professional nature.

As an employee at the local research study site, I had a familiarity with the culture and climate of the research site. My personal or professional standing did not create a conflict of interest at the local site with interpreting the qualitative data. I adhered closely to all IRB approved procedures. To ensure my own biases did not influence participants' perspectives, I provided a summary of the results by e-mail to each participant for review. In addition, member checks of the participants' interview data and my researcher notes validated the findings that contributed to eliminating researcher bias.

### **Data Collection**

The primary method of data collection included interviews, which was a reliable approach for exploring participants' perceptions and encouraged them to share their experiences in openly and honestly. Participants had the option to be interviewed face-to-face or through electronic mail (e-mail). In an era of increased technology, internet-based qualitative research methods have become a viable option (Williams, Clausen, Robertson, Peacock, & McPherson, 2012). E-mail interviews help to facilitate research of individuals with limited time available (Bowden & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015). Seven out of the nine participants selected e-mail interviewing, one participant preferred a face-to-face interview, and one participant did not respond with a preference. I was not able to accommodate the participant preferring the face-to-face interview. The participant led a busy life and could not agree on a convenient time to meet in person. The participant, along with the participant with no preference opted for the e-mail interview method.

Multiple studies have established that data collected using online interviews is

more concise than data collected verbally through the face-to-face interview process (Abrams, Wang, & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015). Ratislavová and Ratislav (2014) observed that email interview participants provided more concrete responses than responses collected verbally through face-to-face interviews. Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez (2015) considered the e-mail interview process a viable data collection method for the following reasons (p. 80):

- Use of the computer eliminates any boundaries associated with access to participants
- Reduces research costs of traveling to a location to conduct the interview and it also eliminates costs and time to transcribe the data
- Participants able to manage their own level of comfort
- Encourages iterative reflection throughout the interview process for the interviewer and interviewee about the questions and responses
- Process streamlined by already having the responses in text format (eliminates transcriber bias)

On the other hand, Bowden and Galindo-Gonzalez (2015) cited limitations associated with the e-mail interview process as well. The limitations included:

- Interviewees must have unlimited access to the internet along with sufficient computer literacy skills
- Interviewer not able to actively engage in verbal discussion with research participants or able to use social cues to express listening, as well as understanding of the participants' responses

- Time because of the interviewer having to wait for the participants to email their responses

For this study, the local school district leadership research team approved the interviewing of a maximum of 10 participants. Nine novice teachers representing five years or less teaching experience agreed to participate in the study. The participants completed the interview questions through e-mail. The e-mail interviewing process was asynchronous and somewhat semi-structured. Obtaining in-depth responses from the participants required multiple email conversations between the interviewees and me. However, on the onset, I informed participants that the interview process would involve no more than 10 e-mail exchanges. E-mail interviewing eliminated any undue influence from the researcher or other participants that can be a factor during face-to-face interviews (Bowden & Galindo-Gonzalez, 2015). Participants completed their responses using the interview guide, which helped ensure the consistency of the responses. Original interview data were printed in full and a copy made available to each participant.

### **Instrument**

Qualitative interview data were collected for this case study to address the research questions. Seidman (2013), defining the purpose for interviews, wrote:

The purpose of in-depth interviewing is not to get answers to questions... At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience...Being interested in others is the key to some of the basic assumptions underlying interviewing technique. (p. 9)

Interviews allow researchers to ask questions about the goals of a study (Patton, 2015) and in-depth data about life experiences and the perceptions of others (Castillo-Montoya, 2016; Creswell, 2012; Lodico et al., 2010).

Research Question 1 examined participant's perception about factors that contribute to novice teachers' decision to leave or remain in the teaching profession. Research Question 2 examined participant's perception about district-initiated strategies implemented to address teacher retention. Table 4 shows the alignment of the interview questions (IQ) used to address each research questions (RQ).

Table 4

*Alignment of Research Questions with Interview Questions*

	IQ that addresses each RQ
Background Information	IQ 1-3
RQ 1	IQ 4-7
RQ 2	IQ 8-14
Additional information on Teacher Retention	IQ 15-16

*Note:* RQ represents Research question; IQ represents Interview question

The instrument used in the study consisted of an interview guide (Appendix B). An interview protocol, referred to in this study as an *interview guide*, helps ensure the consistency of the responses (Jacob & Furgerson, 2012). A pre-established questionnaire was preferred; however, after being unable to locate a questionnaire that would generate the responses to my research questions, I created an interview guide. Castillo-Montoya (2016) and H. Rubin and I. Rubin (2012) pointed out that using an interview protocol

helps provide structure to the interview that assists researchers in obtaining in-depth qualitative data related to the study.

In creating the interview questions, I incorporated Maslow's (1943) theory of self-actualization and transcendence and Herzberg's two-factor theory. According to Maslow, self-actualized people are problem focused while self-transcendent people look to help others find self-fulfillment and realize their potential. The first of Herzberg's (1966) two-factor theory, hygiene, ensures an employee remains satisfied on the job. The hygiene factors include salary, interpersonal relationships, and administrative leadership. Herzberg's two factors often appeared in the literature and were addressed by several authors (Brown, 2009; Kang & Berliner, 2012; Maranto & Shuls, 2012). The second of Herzberg's two-factors is motivational that includes the need to achieve, be recognized for the achievement and growth, just to name a few. The interview questions determined if hygiene or motivational factors appeared contributing to participant's thoughts on staying in or leaving the field.

The interview questions addressed factors found throughout the literature that pertained to teacher attrition, but also allowed the participants to go beyond the topic if desired. The first set of interview questions, descriptive in nature, provided background information to determine how the teachers entered the profession, what their aspirations were when initially entering the profession, as well as any prior experiences. The second set of interview questions focused on RQ 1 to determine perceptions about what influenced novice teachers' reasons for staying in or leaving the profession, as well as how or why they came to their decision. The third set of interview questions addressed

research question 2 to identify the effectiveness of the retention strategies implemented at the local research study site.

An instrument achieves reliability when it answers the research questions as intended. The interview instrument guide provided participants with opportunities to express their perception of the problem. The interview guide consisted of open-ended questions that ensured that the themes emerged from the data and not influenced by researcher bias or prior studies. The accuracy of the instrument and data responses was established through member checking (Carlson, 2010; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and a form of triangulation (Denzin, 2012). Member checking and triangulation establishes transferability of the data and adds credibility and dependability to a study (Carlson, 2010).

### **Data Analysis**

A case study design utilized the findings from the textual data to answer the research questions.

RQ 1: What factors do participants at the local study site perceive contribute to novice teachers leaving or remaining in the profession?

RQ2: What strategies at the local study site do participants perceive has contributed to novice teachers' retention?

When analyzing data, it is important to remain open-minded about the analysis, so that the data tells the story. To answer the research questions, I collected qualitative data through e-mail interviews. I used open-ended interview questions to gather the information related to the phenomenon. The interview data provided insight into nine

novice teachers' experiences to understand their perceptions about factors that influence attrition and strategies implemented to improve retention. Glesne (2011) wrote that data analysis entails an "iterative and reflexive process" (p. 322). Data analysis was an ongoing process; meaning, I personally analyzed the data, as they were collected.

Since I received the data responses in textual format, transcribing of the responses did not have to be prepared. I categorized, and then coded the data based on participant perceptions to determine emerging themes. Coding consisted of an inductive approach by conducting a thematic content analysis (Creswell, 2012). According to Guest, Namey, and Mitchell (2012), thematic data analysis identifies common ideas and concepts within the data. I read the e-mailed responses thoroughly to look for initial codes based on the research. Appendix C shows the categorization process for RQ 1. I reread the responses to identify themes and gather together examples of those themes from the text before interpreting the findings. After I considered the data analysis process completed, connecting and discussing the themes to interpret the findings proved even more labor intensive and time consuming. Analysis of the data ended when it was determined that no new knowledge was being generated and saturation had been reached.

Member checking ensured accuracy of the interview data and the interpretation of the findings. All participants were given the opportunity to read a copy of their interview responses. When coding the data with themes related to teacher attrition and retention, I wanted to ensure that the themes emerged from the data not influenced by my preconceived notions or previous research studies.

### **Member Check, Triangulation, and Peer Review**

The purpose for member checking was to assess whether the analyzed data reflected what participants expressed during the initial interview. Member checking ensured the accuracy of the interpretation of participants' perceptions about why teachers decide to stay in or leave the teaching profession. Conducting member checking gave participants the opportunity to change or add to their responses. In addition, member checking allowed for the removal of any inconsistencies in the data to minimize or eliminate reporting bias (Yin, 2014).

For this study, I emailed participants copies of their original and analyzed responses. Participants conducted a member check by examining the data and pointing out any misrepresentations or inaccuracies to their original account. Eight of the nine participants accepted their account as accurate. Participant 3 clarified the initial response regarding the role of the administrator. Other than the one change about the administrator's role for supporting the success of novice teachers, no new data were received.

Triangulation is the process of utilizing multiple sources of information to achieve an in-depth understanding of a single phenomenon (Denzin, 2012; Yeasmin & Rahman, 2012). According to Creswell (2012) and Yeasmin and Rahman (2012), triangulation entails validating evidence obtained from multiple sources, such as different viewpoints, types of data, or data collection methods which adds to the credibility and authenticity of the research study. Using multiple sources to corroborate the findings reduces the likelihood of bias (Greene, 2014; Yeasmin & Rahman, 2012). For this study, a single

method of interviewing comprised the data collection. Even though triangulation minimizes the inadequacies of single-source research by capturing different dimensions of the same topic, the school-district research team limited the primary data collection to novice teacher interviews.

Another step taken to ensure the thoroughness of my analysis consisted of peer debriefing. According to Lodico et al. (2010), peer debriefing is the process where a researcher works together with a peer who is not involved in the research study to assist in probing the researcher's thinking about aspects of the research. I enlisted the help of a colleague that recently earned a Doctor of Education degree to conduct the peer debriefing. The peer's concise feedback helped me become more aware of my own assumptions and biases when reporting the data. The peer debriefing process enhanced credibility and ensured validity of my study (Creswell, 2014).

### **Timeline of Study Events**

Upon obtaining permission from the Walden IRB, I proceeded with obtaining permission from the school district and the school-based administrator at the study site. Following the district procedures, I submitted the proposal and other required documents to the district office seeking their permission to conduct the study. I sought permission from the principal of the local study site to gain access to the staff and to conduct the study at the school before commencing with distributing the consent form. Following obtaining the necessary permissions, I continued the study process by following the steps outlined in the timeline. Timeline of events included:

Step 1: Explanation of the study sent to all K-5 staff members through e-mail to

announce the search for interview participants.

Step 2: E-mail sent to inform potential participants of the purpose and significance of the study and outline requirements of participation, as well as measures used to protect participant confidentiality.

Step 3: Consent form and interview guide e-mailed to participants that agreed to participate in the study. All participants reminded of their rights in writing and asked to return the consent form by e-mail.

Step 4: Data collection and data analysis conducted concurrently.

Step 5: Coding completed.

Step 6: Member check completed.

Step 7: Peer debriefing completed. Interpretation of findings modified based on feedback from colleague.

Step 8: Development of the project based on the findings.

Step 9: Continue doctoral study to complete remaining sections until approved.

As stated in the timeline, each participant received the interview guide by e-mail.

Each of the nine participants e-mailed back their responses according to the prescribed instructions. Instances where participants needed clarification about a research question or additional information about the interview process was handled through e-mail. A reply addressing the participant's question or concern was forwarded within 24 hours. Upon receiving each participant's interview responses, the responses were coded according to the emerging themes.

### **Limitations**

This study examined public elementary school teacher attrition and retention at the local level. The study presented several limitations. Limitations are circumstances not controlled by the researcher, and that may influence the credibility of the study (Simon & Goes, 2013). Participation in the study was limited to a school located in an urban school district. Because the small sample lacked diversity, an all-female sample with five years or less experience, it limits the generalizability of the results to other schools. Data are limited to a single high-needs school where a demand exists to improve retention. The demographics of the study site included economic variables such as low-income, and free and reduced lunch. The results narrow the generalizability of the study at low poverty high achieving schools.

Another limitation to the study could be that although participants were assured their responses would be kept confidential, some may not have been completely honest out of fear of retribution. The credibility of the study is based on the assumption that all participants presented honest responses. Interviews took place two weeks before the end of the school year. Gloria, Faulk, and Steinhardt (2012) found that teacher morale could be low toward the close of the school year. Participants' responses may skew the data analysis results due to their overly positive or negative attitudes. The interview responses of the nine participants may not have provided an accurate representation of the local research study site or school district responses (Creswell, 2012; Yin, 2014). Lastly, this study sought to understand novice teachers' perceptions of attrition, mobility, and retention. However, the study does not make the connection between the variables and

teacher effectiveness.

### **Data Analysis Results**

School districts and administrators look for ways to support novice teachers so that they stay in the education field to curtail the teacher shortage. The high turnover at the local study site causes the instructional staff to comprise mostly of beginning teachers with 5 years or less experience rather than qualified veterans. The data analysis explored factors that novice teachers at the local study site perceive contributed to novice teachers leaving or staying in the profession, as well as strategies participants perceive has contributed to novice teachers' retention. I interviewed 9 beginning teachers through e-mail. Completion of the data collection and coding, led to findings aligned with the research questions.

#### **Research Question 1**

The first research question focused on understanding the perceptions of novice teachers about factors that affect their decisions regarding their teaching career. Specifically, the interview questions encouraged the participants to share examples from their teaching experiences that contributed to their decision of whether to remain at their current teaching site, transfer to other schools in or out of the local school district, or leave the profession altogether.

Data indicated that beginning teachers' experiences in their first year affects not only whether they stay in or leave teaching, but it also affects the kind of teacher they will become. Participants' level of motivation and job satisfaction differs depending on teachers' interactions with students, administrators, and parents, as well as district

policies. The data highlighted similarities, patterns, and trends that all participants experienced during their first year in the classroom. Two of the interview participants planned to remain at the local study site at the end of the school year— stayers, while seven participants planned to leave— leavers. Four teachers planned to transfer to schools within the district and three teachers resigned, with plans to move to schools out of the district, move out of the area, or leave the profession altogether. In an effort not to compromise the identity of the small sample, I assigned each participant a number. The numbers were used to present participants' responses.

Participants' perceptions regarding factors that influenced their decision to leave or stay at the school emerged as themes from the coded data. The identified themes that emerged included Interactions with stakeholders, Classroom experiences, Quality of Life, and Working conditions (Appendix C). Interpretation of participants' perspectives was presented based on the results from the interviews.

**Interactions with stakeholders.** Teachers interact with students, parents, co-workers, school administrators, and other stakeholders to foster the learning and development of students. The nature of these interactions among different stakeholders varies depending on the teachers' intent and the needs of their students. All participants expressed having varied experiences in working with each group.

Participants' responses indicated that the classroom is a social system in which the teacher and the students interacted as organizational members. Activities of both the teacher and the students contributed to determining the quality of teacher-student relationship. Participants shared that working with low-performing students on a daily

basis at the local study site presented a challenge. Even though it was a challenge, Participant 1 and Participant 3 expressed enjoying working with the high-needs student population. Participant 4 cited working with the students as a factor for staying at the school another year. On the other hand, another participant cited low student motivation as a factor for leaving the school. When asked about what influenced the decision to stay or leave, Participant 5 shared that not all students are motivated [to learn], which makes it difficult to teach without disruptions. Participant 5 also alluded to lack of parental involvement or negative parental influence as a factor for leaving the school. Results indicated that even though 7 of the 9 participants or 78% planned to leave the study site, only two participants or 22% listed the low achievement of students as a factor for leaving.

Promoting academic success for all students require the participation of all stakeholders. Accountability reform for teachers continues to be a major issue. State boards of education link teacher evaluation ratings to student success. Participant 6 wrote, “What about parents? Why are they not held accountable?” Participant 9 shared that when activities such as the afterschool tutoring program are set up to help the students, parents do not send their kids. Low parental involvement hinders parent support of the school’s parent teacher organization at the study site. Responses showed that the lack of parental support also plays a role in whether to stay at or leave the school. Participants indicated that accountability for the students should be shared among all stakeholders – including parents. A participant shared, “It seems that the responsibility falls on the teacher. This is especially true when dealing with behavior problems.”

In terms of job satisfaction, influencing factors include having supportive colleagues and a collaborative working environment. The two stayers considered camaraderie of the staff a strong factor in their decision to remain at the study site at least another year. Participant 7 wrote:

When first year teachers have trouble managing student behavior, or experience difficulty adjusting to the job, supportive co-workers can make a world of difference in how fast they [new teachers] adapt to the workplace and school community.

Likewise, Participant 4, in a similar response, wrote that without the emotional support of one of her grade level team members, she would not have made it through her first year. Participant 4 found it challenging navigating through the first week housekeeping responsibilities. Participant 4 sought advice on how to set up the classroom and how to prepare lesson plans.

**Classroom experiences.** Of the seven participants that planned to leave the local study site, five recognized bad classroom experiences as one factor for leaving due to extraordinary demands on teachers. This seemingly low job satisfaction influences organizational commitment, which in turn affects teacher turnover. Data indicated that a lack of administrative support related to discipline was the most common factor related to classroom experiences. Participants also revealed an ongoing challenge with classroom management made worse by students' low academic performance and disruptive classroom behavior.

**Working conditions.** Job satisfaction was the strongest factor among participants for deciding to stay in or leave the profession. Data suggested that teachers' perceptions of their working conditions influenced their career decisions. Participants identified several areas where they wanted support, including help from veteran staff and sharing of resources, school culture and environment, and support from administrators.

Aspects of culture included having a safe and secure environment, so that the focus could be on teaching and learning. Data showed that the location of the school plays a role in the teacher attrition rate. Some participants believed the community to be "pretty dangerous" and at times keep teachers from staying late to finish work or getting involved in the community. The interview data revealed that participants considered teacher attrition and mobility part of the school's culture. When rating the school on its ability to retain teachers, the school received an average score of 2.7 based on a 10 point scale. Participant 4 wrote, "Turnover is extremely high each year for administration and teachers." Participants shared that in their few short years at the local study site, the school replaced three principals and two assistant principals. At one point, the veteran teacher in the building had only four years of experience. Participant 1 disclosed that, "It has just become routine to replace multiple teachers and staff every year."

Participants responded that a wide range of behavioral issues exists. Teachers are not only responsible for student's academic learning, but students' social growth and character building. Teachers handle discipline directly for minor classroom disruptions and on many occasions have to deal with rude and disrespectful students and parents. Participant 7 considered student misbehavior a factor that contributes to teachers'

decision on whether to stay or leave. Participant 7 felt it was demeaning having to tolerate rude remarks from students and parents. School discipline data revealed that acts of disrespect ranged from rude comments and cursing to threats of physical harm. An incident occurred where a student told the teacher that the mother would come to school and shoot the teacher. After following up on the threat, it was found not to be credible. Another student turned his derriere in the teacher's direction and made a sound with his mouth. Participant 7 mentioned that the disappointment of not having administrator support with student behavior contributed strongly to the decision on whether to stay or leave. The participant went on to explain, "Having administrator support makes behavior easier to manage."

Safety was also mentioned as a factor. If teachers do not feel safe within or outside the school, it reduces teacher retention. One participant that received experience only at the study site felt compelled to stay to work with the student population. The participant refused to be driven out by disruptive students. Participant 1 thought administrators should seek to "create a learning environment that reaches beyond academics." The responses implied that the environment and school culture should be one that promotes and allows teachers to encourage students to see beyond their current situations and make good choices for the future.

Participants' opinions of low-performing schools having a role in developing effective teachers varied. Seven of the nine participants responded in some way about the overwhelming workload, and stress. Participant 6 was especially adamant about a stigma of not being an effective teacher while attached to teaching at a low-performing school.

The participant went on to address the large number of unprepared teachers, the scrutiny and high pressure of raising test scores under those conditions, and believed it should be considered a major factor for teachers leaving. In addition, the participant believed the pressure of meeting the school's unrealistic expectations in an environment where a large percentage of students performed below grade level contributed to stress and eventual burnout.

Participants overwhelmingly cited administrator support, or lack of support, as a significant factor on whether to stay or leave. Participant 5 wrote that the district adds on more and more expectations every year. "We work hard and it never seems to be enough time to get everything done." Participant 7 mentioned that the frustration of not having administrator support with student behavior contributed to her decision on whether to stay or leave. The participant went on to explain, "Having administrator support makes behavior easier to manage." Although less research exists about the effects of working conditions on teachers' career decisions, evidence from the interview data revealed that participants consider working conditions as a factor in their decision to stay or leave the local site or teaching altogether. Along the same lines Participant 2 stated that it is almost impossible to retain teachers [at the local study site]. Participant 2 explained that, "it is very hard to work with the population of students that we have at this school. It is hard to work in a school that lacks proper communication, organization, and consistency needed to maintain an optimal learning environment."

**Quality of life.** Participants confessed to working well past contract hours, sacrificing time with family and friends, and stressing about meeting district, school,

parent, and student expectations that varied greatly. Participants overwhelmingly viewed stress as a contributing factor for leaving the profession. Issues highlighted by participants that contributed to their stress included teaching unmotivated students, dealing with difficult student behavior, and having to suppress feelings of inadequacy. Particularly in the case of beginning teachers, a supportive culture at school was seen as a factor that influenced individual resilience. Data showed that participants believed that teaching to be a stressful profession and the workload associated with the job at the local school make it difficult to sustain long term. One participant felt it difficult to work in an environment of constant stress due to dealing with student behavior, and decided to transfer to a higher achieving school in another district.

A difference regarding participants' perceptions of salary existed. Data suggested that salary had little effect on participants' decision to stay or leave. Participant 6 mentioned salary as an issue to consider, but thought it not a driving factor to determine whether to stay or leave. Participant 3 explained that teachers do not get into this profession for the money. One of the participants that planned to leave mentioned that the new job, not in education, provided more financial rewards and seemingly less stress. However, "the satisfaction of peace of mind from no longer having to address the variety of academic and nonacademic needs without adequate support" makes the impending financial rewards inconsequential. The other leaver admitted to actually losing pay to leave the local study site for employment in another district.

## **Research Question 2**

It helps to understand the kind of strategies implemented in the past to improve retention and what beginning teachers perceive about the effectiveness of the strategies. Research Question 2 explored the strategies implemented at the study site that participants thought contributed to teacher retention. The two contributing strategies obtained from the data included mentorship and administrator support, which led to the suggested themes: Focused development of the mentor/mentee relationship and Administrator training to mentor new teachers.

**Focused development of the mentor/mentee relationship.** Mentoring was seen as an integral part of teachers remaining in the profession, as a majority of participants responded that it positively contributed to novice teacher retention. Data showed that participants' felt their pre-service education programs did not sufficiently prepare them for the demands of the profession. Participants' overwhelming support of the mentoring program at the local site appears contradictory since 7 out of 9 participants planned to leave the school. However, when considering the responses, factors other than the mentoring program contributed to their leaving the local study site to pursue employment elsewhere. In similar responses, Participants 1, 2, 6, and 8 defined mentors as experienced or seasoned teachers that provide advice, structure and support, and that help with the development of mentees' skills and practices for the classroom. Mentors provide a sense of confidence and resilience for the novice teachers. Two participants considered mentors as necessary helpers, but provided no reasons to explain their response. One participant, while appreciated having someone with experience be a sounding board, felt

the influence of a mentor was not significant enough to affect a teacher's decision about a life profession. The participant explained:

When it comes to a career, it takes more than one person to make a teacher satisfied with their job...a mentor definitely helps, but I don't think you can base whether you stay in or leave teaching on the actions of that mentor.

Responses of participants with more than one year experience acknowledged that they were able to establish a good relationship with their mentor in their first year and have maintained that professional relationship because the mentee and mentor were located at the same workplace. Other reasons cited by the participants for being able to maintain a positive mentor-mentee relationship included mentors being respectful of their opinions, willingness to collaborate, challenged mentees to think critically, and provided specific feedback. Three teachers that were assigned mentors from other schools during their first year of teaching did not express the same accolades for the mentorship program. The participants felt isolated and thought it negatively affected their first year experience. Although, some participants had a difficult time adjusting during their first or second year of teaching, a majority of participants were able to take advantage of the benefits of the mentorship program and felt that the program contributed to their personal growth, as well as the development of their teaching skills. Participant 9 mentioned having "a bad mentoring experience" and felt mentors should come from outside the building. As contention grew between the mentor and mentee, the more difficult it became to repair the relationship. Successful mentorship remains essential to career satisfaction for both veteran mentors and beginning teacher mentees (Ingersoll & Strong,

2011).

The district funded beginning teacher orientation/induction program received a mixture of responses that ranged from being effective to Participant 8 responding, “I didn’t participate in an induction program. I don’t know what it consist of.” This participant’s response was not considered unusual. During years of budget shortfalls, the district places the responsibility of implementing an orientation/induction program on to the individual schools. Participant 1 felt the induction program provided too much information to grasp in one week. Participants 4 and 7 felt the induction program worked well, but felt the mentor relationship was more important to their development and progress in becoming effective teachers. Other responses referred to the opportunity to collaborate with other novice teachers that share the same experiences to make lasting connections.

Eight of the nine participants, 89% felt administrative support was the key to retention success. Participant 6 believed positive interaction was necessary for retention while negative attention would reverse retention decisions. Participant 6 further explained that the administration set the tone for positive environment and inclusiveness. Four participants shared that they wanted their opinions acknowledged by the administration. The participants also mentioned that they needed to know through collaboration and support that the administration had confidence in their abilities and would provide opportunities for professional growth. Two responses revealed that a good administrator was one that develops teachers in regards to curriculum, instruction, and classroom management. Data revealed the qualities of a good administrator as someone that

provides growth opportunities, collaborates with teachers, listens to their opinions and includes them in the decision-making process and incentives to show appreciation for teachers' efforts. Another description from the responses described of an effective administrator as one that creates a culture of high expectations, and creates working conditions that foster and warrant teacher retention. One participant wrote, "A good administrator should be someone who pushed their staff to give their best." Participants expressed that the administration should ensure that all teachers have the proper materials and resources, be a mentor, and should model the behavior conducive to creating an optimal learning environment and a positive school culture. Two participants cited poor relations with administration and staff that fostered feelings of disrespect, mistrust, and in some way contributed to their decision to leave the profession.

Two participants shared that incentives may be a worthwhile strategy that contributes to novice teachers staying in the profession. Money, while a strategy, was not considered a major incentive according to the study participants due to underlying reasons. One participant mentioned small tokens of appreciation to show respect and support from administrators or superiors. Participant data suggested that some form of incentive from administration would improve rates of teacher retention. However, budget shortfalls hindered the implementation of incentives.

A suggested incentive by two participants included merit pay. Participant 3 further explained that shared leadership would allow veteran teachers to interact more with beginning teachers and to share their instructional expertise.

**Administrator training to mentor new teachers.** A majority of participants

considered the best strategy for improving teacher retention were to have well trained administrators that build and maintain a supportive environment for novice teachers. Data responses also implied that participants preferred an administrator that (1) seeks to improve student achievement, (2) hires, supports, and retains quality staff members, and (3) promotes a culture of collaboration.

Participants' responses varied on strategies to address teacher retention, but mostly agreed that mentorship, administrative support, and incentives would influence their decision to stay in or leave the profession. Participant 9 listed fostering mentoring relationships, and setting a positive tone for faculty morale as strategies to improve teacher retention. Regarding mentors, several participants expressed a strong opinion about having the mentor and mentee based at the same school rather at different schools. Data showed the importance of having a mentor that you could trust whether located in the same school or not. Several participants acknowledged that having their mentor based at their school provided inspiration and emotional support because of being able to build a positive mentor-mentee relationship. Data, in line with professional literature, suggested that good mentor-mentee relationships provided novice teachers with instructional experiences and one-on-one support that helped them to develop their instructional practices and skills.

Several themes emerged from the data analysis, such as Focused development of the mentor/mentee relationship, Administrator training to mentor new teachers, and Principal-created positive learning environment. Overall, the data analysis results

suggested that novice teachers would more than likely remain in the profession if they have a good mentor, and effective administrator leadership.

### **Relationship of the Data to the Literature**

This research study consists of a single site investigation whereby participants' responses do not sufficiently control for other factors likely to contribute to teachers' decision to stay or leave the school or the profession. Likewise, the contributing strategies identified by the participants may be limited. The results of this study aligned with the literature in many respects. RQ1 established factors affecting novice teachers' decision to stay in or leave the profession. Applying Herzberg et al. (1959, 2010) and Maslow's (1943) theories to the research questions, essentially, RQ1 investigated factors influencing novice teachers' job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. A connection exists between the research data and the professional literature regarding factors that contribute to novice teachers leaving the profession prematurely. Factors identified in the professional literature and consistently found in the participants' responses relate to school leadership and working conditions. Darling-Hammond and Ducommun (2011) concluded that acceptable working conditions are important for keeping teachers on the education career track once they have made the choice to teach.

Factors included limited administrative support, isolated working conditions, poor student discipline, lack of support from the administration, and having a voice in school-wide decisions. Haynes (2014) and Ingersoll et al. (2014) found similar factors when conducting their studies on the causes of teacher attrition. According to Ingersoll et al. (2012), conditions at the school drive a large percentage of the teacher attrition. Data

from participant interviews supports the perception that novice teachers are often assigned challenging classes that they feel untrained to teach. Burkhauser's (2016) research provided evidence of factors associated with increased job satisfaction such as managing student behavior to ensure a safe school environment, protecting teachers from adverse influences, supporting teachers, and acknowledging teachers' accomplishments.

Novice teachers' responses indicated that the mentoring program was the best strategy for supporting beginning teachers. The teachers believed that with better support by the principal, the mentoring program could be a major contributor to retaining new teachers. Consistent with Darling-Hammond and Ducommun (2011), the research results indicated that the mentoring program was a major strategy for novice teachers primarily because of the personal and professional experiences offered to new teachers. The results of this study align with a study conducted by Masuda, Ebersole, and Barrett (2012). Masuda et al.'s study determined that teachers' willingness to engage in PD coincided with their years of experience. Masuda et al. found that beginning teachers participated more in PD activities than teachers with more experience.

Administrator support was also a major factor to the participants because of the responsibility of the administrator to provide support and resources, opportunities for growth, promote a positive climate, and model respect for all staff. Participant responses, along with professional literature recognize administrator support as a leading determinant for a school's success. Daniels (2011) and Boyd et al. (2011) agreed that the key to teacher retention was administrator support. A participant mentioned that the disappointment of not having administrator support with student behavior contributed

strongly to the decision on whether to stay or leave. The participant went on to explain, “Having administrator support makes behavior easier to manage.”

Incentives were also mentioned as a strategy; although, the emphasis was on small tokens or verbal acknowledgement. Only Participant 4 saw the induction program as a major factor. Two participants acknowledged creating collaborative working relationships with other novice teachers as a favorable result of participating in the induction program.

Based on the findings, I identified major factors that influenced teachers’ decisions to stay at or leave the local study site, or stay in or leave the teaching profession. However, due to the small number of participants, there could be individual factors that contributed to participants’ decision to stay or leave not discussed in these findings. Primarily, the findings indicated that retention depended on the effectiveness of training and support afforded beginning teachers during their early years in the profession, especially their first year of teaching. Novice teachers look to their principal for guidance and support to set them up for success.

In the local school district, the mission of finding ways to assist beginning teachers and the issue of new teacher turnover lies with the building principal. At the local study site, in theory, the mentoring program provides new teachers with the support they need to experience success during their early years in the classroom. Administrator, as well as teacher turnover has hindered the effective implementation of the mentoring program. While at the local study site school administrators, technically do not participate as mentors, yet they have the responsibility of selecting mentors and administering the

mentoring process. Participant responses suggested the mentoring program could be approved by providing training for the mentors.

### **Conclusion**

The research questions established the focus to investigate and uncover the causes of novice teacher attrition, mobility, and retention at the local study site, and practices and strategies to improve retention. I utilized a number system to protect the identity of the participants and the confidentiality of the participants' responses. Data were kept in a locked file cabinet to minimize chances of misplacing the original and interpretation of results transcriptions, and the researcher notes. Use of a timeline kept the project on-track. In Section 2, the emphasis was on presenting the methodology for the study and on providing a detailed description of the findings. Data were placed into categories based on the emerging themes.

Findings of the data analysis drove the creation of the resulting project. Data analysis indicated that beginning teachers would benefit from having well trained administrators and teacher mentors that build and maintain a supportive environment for novice teachers. The project will allow administrators and school-based teacher mentors to gain a better understanding of why novice teachers leave the profession within their first five years, as well as develop strategies to help retain quality teachers at the local study site.

## Section 3: The Project

### **Introduction**

This qualitative case study investigated perceptions of novice teachers on why they stay in or leave the teaching profession. The research helped me to gain insight and an understanding from the beginning teacher's point of view as to what makes them decide to leave or stay in the profession. Data results indicated that beginning teachers at the local study site need support to be encouraged to continue their career in education beyond the first year. The finding mentioned above assisted me in constructing a PD program that I have titled, *Strategies that Lead to Retention of Novice Teachers*. Data results also revealed that teachers were in need of PD that offered training for administrators and veteran teachers in mentoring beginning teachers. Gilles, Wilson, and Elias (2010) concluded that PD builds teacher capacity that aids in increasing student achievement. The authors found PD to be an important component to the growth of novice teachers as it allows them to reflect on their understanding of teaching (Giles et al., 2010).

### **Description and Goals**

After analyzing and coding the collected data from the nine study participants, I was able to see emerging themes. Based upon the themes, I was able to identify the training needs for the research study site. Participants' responses on factors they felt were important to their staying in or leaving the profession guided the project. For the most part, participants identified interpersonal relationships, support from co-workers, working conditions, and support from administrators as major factors in their decision making

process to stay at or leave the local study site. Other factors mentioned were collaboration, school climate, parental support, and job expectations. In addition, the participants strongly agreed that the strategies of effective mentorship and leadership of the administration as the two key variables that could affect their decision to leave or stay. To support the novice teachers, administrators and other school staff must have an understanding of the needs of their new teachers and be committed to providing effective PD that contributes to the novice teachers' professional growth.

The plans for this project developed from the results of the data analysis. Research supports the notion that novice teachers struggle in their early years in the classroom. According to the interview responses, among the greatest challenges perceived by the novice teachers were managing student behavior – classroom management, motivation of students, meeting individual needs of students, dealing with parents, assessing student work, and overcoming feelings of isolation. From the mentors, beginning teachers will learn early in their career about the best practices of effective teaching and learning in a supportive environment. Therefore, the overarching goal of the PD project is to provide training for administrators and mentors at the local research study site on how to best guide and support novice teachers based on their corporate and individual needs so they will develop into highly effective classroom educators and remain in the profession.

The PD project consists of three separate training sessions held over a 3-day period. For Day 1, I will meet with mentors and concentrate on factors or reasons identified by participants as to why beginning teachers usually stay in or leave the

profession. On Day 2, I will address administrators on ways to retain teachers. On Day 3, I will meet with both administrators and prospective mentors on the urgency and importance of their roles in curtailing the problem of teacher attrition. Participants in the training will evaluate the project. The results of the evaluation will be used to determine how the content and delivery method of the training could be improved.

### **Rationale**

The attrition rate at the local research study site has continued to increase since SY 2011-12. The research provided evidence that teachers become dissatisfied with their job and leave the profession within the first five years. Analysis of the local study site's termination and mobility data indicated that about a third of the instructional staff leave the school annually. Understanding factors that contribute to beginning teachers' decision to stay at or leave the local study site would be helpful for reducing the teacher attrition rate and improving teacher retention. High poverty schools tend to hire the greatest number of teachers with the least experience and the least qualifications (Eckert, 2013). The training comprised strategies to support new teachers at the school to build their instructional skills and practices so they think positive about remaining at the school. Providing adequate support also increases the likelihood that novice teachers will remain the profession.

After analyzing the collected data, the needs of this group of participants became apparent. There was a need for sustained PD that would meet the concerns of the group. I designed this project because the data clearly spelled out the concerns of the group and addressing the needs through PD sessions afforded the opportunity of collaborating with

stakeholders to create strategies on how to address each concern. In addition, this project directly addresses staff members who can make an immediate impact on the situation. Professional development is part of a teacher's professional life. At all stages of their careers, teachers participate in PD to enhance their knowledge and skills for the benefit of all stakeholders. Designed according to the data analysis results, the goals and topics for the PD training met the needs of the mentors and new teacher mentees. The responsibility to follow up with the mentees and provide on-going support falls to the mentors and administrators. After full implementation of the training, the school's retention rate should increase.

According to participant responses, mentoring was the most favorable solution to training and retaining teachers. Interview data described the most beneficial mentoring experiences to improve novice teacher skills as coaching, collaboration, and meaningful feedback. Secondly, an important factor to teacher growth consisted of the actions of the administrators. When it comes to teacher retention and administrative leadership participants believed administrators had the task of motivating and inspiring novice teachers to successful levels. More than half of the participants felt it was important to have an administrator that sought to build their capacity and help them become consummate professionals. The 3-day PD training was developed to help districts and administrators train and retain teachers while increasing continuity and student achievement.

## **Review of the Literature**

Teachers are continuing to leave the education profession for various reasons (Hudson, 2012). Ferguson et al. (2012) investigated predictors of job satisfaction among teachers. Consistent with Herzberg's theory, the authors found teachers' years of experience to be a significant predictor of job satisfaction. Understanding the reasons why teachers leave the profession is the first step in getting them to remain in the field (Schaefer, Downey, & Clandinin, 2014). School districts face organizational disruption when mass teacher resignations create a high number of teacher vacancies. Participants' responses indicated that the primary reasons why novice teachers leave or stay in the teaching profession relate to the level of support new teachers receive from effective mentoring and administrative leadership. These two emerged themes guided the development of the PD project. The PD training project offers learning experiences to administrators and potential mentors to build skills to meet the needs of beginning teachers. The PD project was designed to assist districts and building administrators with the planning and implementation of a mentoring program with an emphasis on retaining good teachers. The administrators and potential novice teacher mentors will benefit from discussions and interactions with peers that will help improve their skills during PD opportunities.

For this literature review, I conducted searches using databases such as ERIC, SAGE Premier, Education Research Complete, ProQuest, and Google Scholar. The search included topics pertaining to the emerged themes: professional development, mentorship and the mentor-mentee relationship, and administrator support. Key words for

the search included *professional development, professional learning, teacher professional development, job-embedded, beginning teachers' needs, induction, mentoring, mentoring and school administrator, mentoring and school leader, adult learners, and administrator leadership*. The literature review includes citations of peer-reviewed journal articles, as well as government websites and researched educational works.

### **Professional Development**

Schools, school districts, and policymakers recognize an effective teacher as a key element for improving student achievement, supporting an increase in PD as a preparation resource to gain experience. Professional development provides some form of education for teachers. Research suggests that PD be considered a viable solution for addressing school improvement leading to changes in teacher practices and an increase in student learning (Green & Allen, 2015). Attention to quality PD began with the reauthorization of the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act as NCLB legislation to improve the knowledge and skills of educators (Domina, 2014; NCLB, 2002). In addition, NCLB brought a level of transparency to the achievement gap between high achieving and low performing schools by requiring annual testing of all students, accountability for schools, school districts, and states to report test results for all subgroups, and mandatory implementation of interventions for schools failing to meet state benchmarks (Groen, 2012). NCLB laid the foundation for equal opportunity for all students, increasing access for economically-disadvantaged and minority students to highly qualified teachers and administrators (Dee, Jacob, & Schwartz, 2013). In 2015, the federal law of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) replaced the NCLB.

Under ESSA, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) modified, but did not eliminate the provision for PD outlined in the NCLB legislation (ED, 2015a). The ESSA legislation, as with NCLB, mandates that PD be a part of school district improvement plans suggesting that improving teachers' content knowledge leads to improvements in student achievement (ED, 2015a). Title II, Part A supports state initiatives to increase student achievement particularly at low-performing high needs schools (VDOE, 2017b). Schools utilizing funding from Title II, Part A implement activities that promote professional growth contributing to improving teacher effectiveness, as well as the retention of qualified teachers (VDOE, 2017b).

Professional development utilizes different formats. Burkman (2012) shared that the main component of PD is the manner in which it is delivered. Common methods of PD are informal dialogue, multi-day education conferences, one-day workshops, peer observations, online communication, and job embedded collaborative learning in professional learning communities (Desimone, 2011). Wei, Darling-Hammond, and Adamson (2010) noted that one-day workshops are the least effective PD format for adults and yet they are the most widely used. Gulamhussein (2013) believed that even though one-day workshops provide a means for introducing teachers to new knowledge and strategies, they usually do not lead to a change in teachers' classroom practices. Considered an effective method, job-embedded PD refers to teacher learning well-grounded in standard instructional practices (Huffman et al., 2014; Hunzicker, 2012).

Professional growth and development is an ongoing process. Effective PD provides learning opportunities to improve teachers' content-specific skills and practices

with the intent of improving student academic performance (Burke, 2013). Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (2011) suggested that in order for PD to promote change in teachers' instructional practices, teachers must recognize the need for professional learning and have the desire to participate. Participating in required PD may involve a change in teachers' mindset (Jacob & McGovern, 2015).

Researchers acknowledge that engaging novice teachers in professional learning is a key element to improving the deficiencies in their instructional practices. Lumpe, Czerniak, Haney, and Beltyukova (2012) conducted a large-scale study to assess the effectiveness of PD training on teachers' practices. The authors found PD to be an effective method for providing teachers with the most current best practices for instruction that contributed to improvements in student achievement (Lumpe, et al., 2012). However, the authors recognized that not all PD is effective. According to Barlow, Frick, Barker, and Phelps (2014), key components for PD to positively effect change in teacher practices leading to improvements in student achievement involve focusing on content, engaging participants in active learning, providing an opportunity for collective training, and aligning the learning with teachers' beliefs and school and district policies to increase the fidelity of implementation.

Gou and Yang (2012) described PD as a primary method that districts and schools use for staff members to continue their growth and development. According to Huffman, Hipp, Pankake, and Moller (2014), teachers consider professional development (PD) relevant when it addresses their specific educational needs. The PD training for this study was designed to build mentoring skills and increase administrators' knowledge of what it

takes to train and retain novice teachers. An important aspect of face-to-face PD is the interactions that occur amongst the participants. The customized face-to-face training sessions will accommodate and meet the specific needs through role play and simulations based on needs identified in the case study. The reason for the face-to-face workshops is that they are more efficient and cost effective because more time can be spent discussing relevant topics. In addition, training participants learn as a team to achieve a shared goal.

Adults bring life experiences and established beliefs to the PD learning experience. Knowles, Holton, and Swanson (2012) explained that adult learners thrive on being treated as a professional and require the learning experience to be relevant and applicable to their needs. O'Toole and Essex (2012) stated that adult learning experiences become practice when closely related to the workplace. I will be using a one full day and one half day training format for each administrator and mentor group. Evaluations conducted after the training and follow-up sessions will determine the success of the training.

### **Mentorship and Mentor-Mentee Relationship**

Building positive relationships is important in education for promoting teacher-teacher and teacher-student engagement (Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012). Research suggests that teachers leave the profession much faster when not provided adequate mentoring support (Bieler, 2012). Sempowicz and Hudson (2012) suggested that relationship building assists with productive collaboration among grade level team members and other colleagues leading to increased job satisfaction. Teachers who are highly satisfied with their job are more likely to remain in the field and make teaching a

career (Lynch, 2012). The role of a mentor involves building a positive relationship between the mentor and mentee.

Beginning teachers need good mentors, one who can instill confidence that is often lacked in new teachers (Grossman & Davis, 2012; Hobson, Harris, Buckner-Manley, & Smith, 2012). Gut, Bean, Henning, Cochran, and Knight's (2014) researched mentor-mentor interactions during novice teachers' experiences. The researchers found that the more substantive interactions between the mentor and mentee, the greater chance for a trusted and positive mentor-mentee relationship to develop (Gut et al., 2014). A study conducted by Callahan (2016) suggested that mentoring programs advance teacher growth, and reduces the attrition rate of new teachers. Callahan also believed a good mentor program is only as successful as the teachers providing the support. da Rocha (2014) determined that mentors need to be prepared for their role. da Rocha maintained that the characteristics associated with being a mentor should be self-reflection, active interest in their own professional development, high tolerance, and be highly cooperative.

Supporting beginning teachers in their initial year of teaching requires mentors to have a caring and understanding attitude, as well as an understanding of the teaching and learning process. Small Roseboro and Williams (2014) reported that new teachers leave the profession at a rate of 40-50% in the first five years. Small Roseboro and Williams believed that the novice teachers that left the profession may have survived with the assistance of good mentors. High teacher turnover particularly in low income and high minority schools has placed mentoring at the forefront of public school induction

programs (Zembytska, 2016). Zembytska concluded that some turnover is inevitable and benefits the profession by eliminating poor performers. Also concluded was that enhanced support for novice teachers has proven to be effective in the development and retention of these young teachers.

In order for mentorship to be successful, there must be a desire for wanting to help mentees overcome the hurdles that must be overcome (LoCasale-Crouch, Davis, Wiens, & Pianta, 2012). The hurdles include, but are not restricted to, classroom management challenges, improving content knowledge, using data to inform instruction, and planning (LoCasale-Crouch et al., 2012). Asgari and Carter (2016) studied two groups of novice teachers, one group received mentors, and the other group did not. The authors determined that the mentored group showed consistent improvement. Asgari and Carter found that 86% of teachers who had a mentor continued to teach beyond their first year, compared to 71% who did not have mentors. Wyre, Gaudet, and McNeese (2016) found that the need for mentoring continues to grow, along with the need for training quality mentors. Wyre et al. concluded that development programs, such as quality mentorship programs were essential to understanding, and meeting beginning teachers' needs.

Twenty-nine states have specific qualifications for becoming a mentor. Of the 29 states, the respective boards of education of 18 states require PD for teacher mentors (Scherer, 2012). However, only 15 states require mandated support for teachers in their first and second year (Goldrick, 2016). Under the Education Accountability and Quality Enhancement Act of 1999, the state board of education of the local study site requires

school districts to implement a mentorship program (VDOE, 2017). Schools in the local school district provide mentor teacher support programs for new teachers and experienced teachers new to the school district. However, beyond the initial class to become a certified mentor, no additional training is required. Hudson (2013) suggested the criteria of a good mentor included being a good listener, an effective communicator to adult learners, able to provide optimistic and positive feedback, and ready to listen, reflect, and learn.

Researchers maintain that teachers are the most significant factor influencing student achievement. Bullough (2012) suggested that mentors are necessary for improving the professional practice of novice teachers. Therefore, supporting novice teachers early in their career increases the likelihood for them to develop their identity and confidence as a teacher, and remain in the profession.

### **Administrative Support**

Effective school leaders' help their staff succeed by establishing a well-supported teaching and learning environment. Title II, Part A grant funds promote improvements in school leadership, as well as teacher effectiveness (VDOE, 2017b). For example, However, the investment in recruiting, preparing, and supporting great principals, particularly for high-poverty schools has been inadequate (Darling-Hammond & Ducommun, 2011). School administrators are responsible for providing effective PD opportunities, and articulating professional responsibilities for all teachers, especially beginning teachers to encourage lifelong learning. To promote sustainable growth of beginning teachers, school leaders can establish induction and mentoring programs. Often

the terms induction and mentoring are used synonymously. Mentoring is not induction, but a main component teacher induction (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Goldrick (2016) recognized induction as part of the initial preparation of teacher professional learning focused on assisting beginning teachers to become a part of an existing community of learners. Perry and Hayes (2011) noted that an orientation induction program provides a chance to give an overview of curricular and school and district philosophy, discuss special emphases for the year, and note important features of curriculum materials.

Grossman and Davis (2012) acknowledged that “effective induction requires high-quality mentoring and a supportive school environment, tailored to fit novice teachers' individual needs” (p. 54). Mentoring provides beginning teachers with more individualized support. Goldrick (2016) stated that “Without strong support and continued growth, many new educators do not stay on the job” (p. 1). When school leaders allot ample time for mentors and mentees to work together, it benefits the school through the development of quality staff and sustained organizational success (Goldrick, 2016). Sunde and Ulvik (2014) contended that effective mentoring programs can contribute to beginning teacher satisfaction leading to an improvement in retention.

One of the interview questions asked participants about the characteristics of a good administrator. Participants shared that high expectations from administrators would set the tone and positively affect student achievement. Newly hired school leaders, just as beginning teachers, have shortcomings in their educational practices (Cray & Weiler, 2011). Cray and Weiler (2011) considered providing PD opportunities for school leaders to be the responsibility of the school district. Investing in developing all school leaders’

skills benefits the organization leading to and noted a concern that often the responsibility for engaging in PD opportunities is left to the individual principal.

Norman (2010) established that effective administrative support affects overall school performance. Administrators have the responsibility of confronting many issues, to include curriculum, school performance, climate, providing adequate resources, and more. Navigating through these issues and inquiries with fidelity instills motivation and confidence by the novice teachers in their administrator's support. According to Boyd et al. (2011), new teachers who receive poor administrative support leave schools at a rate of 14.8% yearly, teachers who received average support leave at a rate of 10%, and teachers that receive effective support, at an average of 6.7%.

Mentoring holds the key to transforming the teaching profession; however, the success of implementing a mentoring program for beginning teachers is highly dependent upon school leaders (Sunde & Ulvik, 2014). Sunde and Ulvik (2014) described an effective school leader as someone who is essential to developing and maintaining a professional climate. In addition to Sunde and Ulvik's description, study participants at the local site believed an effective school leader uses appropriate resources to ensure novice teachers' needs are met and broadened.

Studies have suggested that administrators should focus on issues such as increasing salaries, improving working conditions, implementing school-based shared decision-making, and encouraging collegiality (Huffman et al., 2014; Norman, 2010; Willis & Varner, 2010). As part of their many site-based responsibilities, administrators recruit, hire, and mentor the teachers, foster collaboration, and use of data supported

shared decision making to improve student performance. Rubinstein and McCarthy (2011) concluded that collaborative problem solving fostered the most growth amongst new teachers. The authors also emphasized those school administrators who foster strong relationships with their staff contribute to improving teacher retention and student achievement. The authors also suggested that the key to administrator success is for administrators to maintain an emphasis on teacher quality, provide a strong mentor for new teachers, and to provide effective PD for all staff members (Rubinstein & McCarthy, 2011). Rubinstein and McCarthy also cited creating opportunities to work with teachers, analyzing student data, identifying instructional areas of focus, problem-solving critical issues, and promoting collaborative decision-making about teacher retention of beginning teachers.

### **Project Description**

While developing the project, a proposal was submitted seeking permission to present the project during the district-wide PD week, scheduled to take place the week before the first official week of school. As an alternative, I would submit a request to utilize district planned PD days to present the project to staff. The PD requires prospective mentors and administrators to each attend one full day of training separately, one day of training together to prepare for the upcoming school year mentoring program. Participating mentors will be required to maintain a monthly log that will be due at the end of each month to the program director. Mentors will record time spent in the mentor role. The information will be used to modify or enhance the mentoring program for both the mentors and mentees as needed.

### **Potential Resources and Existing Supports**

The resources schools allocate to support the success of novice teachers during their early years vary. The focus of the PD project was to construct a program at the study site to support the efforts of administrators and mentors in their efforts to train and retain novice teachers. Access to various resources and supports exist at district and school levels to assist with programs that help sustain teachers. In addition, potential resources and existing supports are the principal, director of research and testing who receives a copy of the completed study. Other potential resources include prospective mentors, school principals, and district leaders. I designed the PD training for this study to be conducted with local school facilitators using on-site school materials, along with free on-line resources. However, to purchase instructional materials to conduct the training requires a small budget. The budget identifies expenses that are necessary to the success of the PD project at the local research study site. The monies listed in Table 5 will be set aside for the presenters of the PD training to defer the cost of materials. If available, funds from the local school or the school district's PD budget could cover training costs. For this study, expenses associated with the project will be drawn from resources available under the Title 1 program. Purchased materials to carry out the training require a receipt from presenters to receive reimbursement.

Table 5

*Proposed Budget for Professional Development Training*

Item	Amount
100 Planners @ \$4.59 each	\$459.00
Instructional Supplies (pencils, pens, manila paper, Post It notes, and folders)	\$234.00
Total: \$693.00	

*Note:* Funding for training intended to be drawn on resources available under Title funds set aside for ongoing PD for principals, teachers, and other staff to promote continuous improvement.

**Potential Barriers**

One potential barrier could be, not having the opportunity to present the project during the school district's PD week due to time. In that case, I would request time to present during PD days set aside in the district calendar. Another barrier could be the perception by stakeholders about a mandated PD project. At the local site, the data indicated that PD activities are perceived as just another unwelcomed demand on the staff's time. Some stakeholders may disagree with this project since prior PD experiences did not deter novice teachers from leaving the school or with some, the profession. Educators prefer engaging in PD training that is relevant to student achievement (Avalos, 2011). There is also the possibility of having mentors attempt to influence their mentee into their style of teaching rather than recognizing the strengths of the novice teacher and allowing them to develop their own skills through collaboration, reflection, and inquiry (Wyre et al., 2016).

### **Proposal for Implementation and Timetable**

Professional development opportunities for educators to learn new or improved instructional practices are essential to every state and district. With the constant loss of teachers from the study site and district, PD training was the logical choice to assist in delivering strategies to curtail the problem. I will submit a proposal by the mid July deadline that will include a complete copy of the PD project to central office requesting to be a presenter during districtwide PD in the week before educators return to school. Training participants will include both administrators and potential mentors. Each PD session is planned to last a total of 12 hours to be spread out over a 3-day period. The training schedule is included in Appendix A. Taking advantage of the technology, preparation for the PD can be streamlined by disseminating an outline of the training prior to the PD sessions. Participants sign up for district PD training online and their e-mail addresses made available to me as project facilitator. Upon conclusion of each session, the presenter will ask participants to complete an evaluation with additional follow-up evaluations e-mailed at quarterly intervals for administrators, and mentors.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of Student and Others**

School districts and administrators look for ways to support novice teachers so that they stay in the education field. Reducing teacher turnover curtails the teacher shortage, and contributes to improving student academic performance. While education professionals differ in their roles, skills, and attitudes, educating all children remains the common goal (E. Skaalvik & S. Skaalvik, 2011).

My role, as the project facilitator, will be to provide study data to all stakeholders. I will be responsible for working collaboratively with the administrators and mentors to coordinate the PD sessions, analyze data from the PD training evaluations, and develop a data system to monitor implementation of the project goals. School-based administrators manage the day-to-day operations regarding every aspect of the school. Huling et al. (2012) reported that the role of an administrator is to provide academic leadership and support, clearly communicate curriculum goals, and foster a positive climate and culture in the school community, along with providing a safe and secure learning environment.

For the project, administrators will oversee the mentoring program by first, hiring and then assigning beginning teachers to a grade level where they can be successful. Second, the administrators' role would consist of creating good matches between mentors and mentees. Lastly, by establishing the appropriate environment needed to promote an effective mentoring program. The administrator would be the chief advocate for the program. Administrators would be responsible for establishing a positive administrator-mentor relationship, maintaining confidentiality of the mentors and mentees, and providing necessary resources to implement the program with fidelity.

The role of the mentors would be to take an interest in the professional growth of a beginning teacher. This will be achieved by providing instructional guidance and in-classroom support, along with one-on-one support to their mentee. Mentors would be responsible for documenting mentoring activities on the

Each group, administrators and teacher mentors would be responsible for implementing ideas from the training sessions. Data will be used to accomplish the goal

of this study, which is to equip stakeholders with strategies that will assist in creating quality teachers that remain in the profession.

### **Project Evaluation Plan**

The goal of PD is to bring about change to learner outcomes. According to Gou and Yang (2012), evaluation data provides information on the effect of PD to ensure that the PD activities can be modified for program improvement on an ongoing basis. The goal of the PD project will be to increase administrators and prospective mentor's knowledge of practices that will help develop a quality teacher and reduce the school's attrition rate. Therefore, I designed an outcome-based evaluation in the form of a questionnaire for the project. The questionnaire will be completed at the conclusion of each training session. Data from the questionnaires will be used to guide the next steps and potential changes to the mentoring program. Follow up training for mentors and mentees respectively will be developed after reviewing monthly mentor formative reports, which will be called learning logs. The learning logs will be submitted electronically to the program facilitator. From these formative evaluations, changes will be made as necessary to improve the projects direction and assist in obtaining the goal of training quality teachers and their retention. At the end of each school year, there will be a summative evaluation and a reflection of the projects implementation and outcomes to determine skill acquisition by mentees, mentors, and administrators. The evaluation data will determine the mentoring program's progress leading to adjustments, if needed, to accomplish the intended goals.

## **Project Implications**

### **Far-Reaching**

A much more comprehensive study would be required to consider far-reaching implications for high-poverty low-performing schools across the nation. For this study, I investigated one of the lowest performing high-poverty Title I elementary schools located in the mid-Atlantic region. Because I investigated only a single case, I cannot imply that the results would be applicable to any other low-performing Title I school in the district or elsewhere. I designed the PD project for the local study site. However, with modifications, the PD training could be implemented in other schools and districts.

Research suggests that a global crisis exists surrounding the teacher turnover issue. When teachers leave the profession prematurely, it negatively affects student achievement and school operations. Ronfeldt et al. (2013) emphasized that teacher turnover is also detrimental to teachers who remain in the same school. There is a need to provide support, guidance, and training to beginning teachers to influence their decision to make education a career that extends well beyond five years. Retaining teachers requires positive action on the local school, school district, and state levels, as well as the community and all stakeholders involved.

### **Conclusion**

Research showed that a teacher is the most important factor in determining student performance (Lynch, 2012). The purpose of the project was to present strategies to administrators and potential mentors on creating and retaining quality teachers. This chapter provided an explanation as to why the PD project was necessary and outlined the

details of that project. With commitment and training, I know administrators and mentors will find gratification in their work to increase the effectiveness and retention of novice teachers. In the literature review, the findings of the data analysis were discussed, as well as solutions to address the problem. Findings for this study showed that through professional training, administrators, teachers, and students would benefit. The data from the participants made it clear that a good administrator and mentor played a key role in novice teachers' success. Additionally, roles and responsibilities, implications, project evaluation and social change were addressed.

## Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

### **Introduction**

This research study was presented in four sections. In Section 1, I outlined the problem of teacher attrition, contributing variables and supporting research. In Section 2, this study's research methodology was explained in detail that included data collection, data analysis, and methods used to interpret the findings. Section 3 of the report delineated the PD project, reasons for the training program, and the plan to implement and evaluate the training. Topics addressed in Section 4 include the project strengths and limitations, and development, as well as a self-analysis and opportunity to reflect on the possibility of social change.

The purpose of the study was to retrieve information through individual email interviews from novice teachers about reasons why they stay in or leave the profession. The findings of this study provided insight for developing a PD project to support novice teachers stay in or leave the profession. This study provided an understanding of the connection between the factors and strategies perceived to contribute to beginning teacher attrition, mobility, and retention. The PD training addresses the factors, strategies, and offer solutions based on the findings of the data analysis to move novice teachers in a direction that will reduce attrition rates and improve retention at the local research study site and school district. In addition, the information assisted in developing a PD project to curtail teacher turnover. In this section, a reflection of the project is described through an evaluation of the strengths and limitations of the project, implications of social change, as well as a self-evaluation about lessons learned during this research journey.

## **Project Strengths and Limitations**

### **Strengths**

The project sought to understand the problem of teacher attrition at the local study site. The outcome of the study was a PD project: *Strategies and Training for Curtailing Novice Teacher Attrition Rates*. In alignment with the purpose of the study, the project benefitted teacher mentors and administrators by providing time for them to work together concerning the critical issue of beginning teacher attrition. In this PD, teachers and administrators collaborated, as a large group and in smaller teams, to discuss variables to develop best practices to maximize the potential of novice teachers. The goal of understanding the local problem will take the expertise and skills of all project participants. The PD project lays the foundation for a more widespread examination of teacher attrition across the school district. Effectively implementing the project should contribute to improving retention rates and establishing a stable learning environment. In reaching this goal, project participants will have to listen and communicate ideas while having interpersonal discussions about the data and how best to work together to curtail this problem in our schools.

### **Limitations**

The overarching goal of the PD project is to provide training and support for administrators and mentors on how to guide and support novice teachers based on their needs so they will develop into quality teachers and remain in the profession. In addition, the data was strictly qualitative with the interview questions created by the researcher. A limitation associated with the data collection was that the study employed a single data

source. Viewpoints discussed within this study include novice teachers from a Title 1 school. Another limitation refers to not being able to probe for deeper responses face-to-face, or provide immediate verbal clarity to respondents when utilizing email to communicate with the participants. To remediate the limitation, multiple sources of information could be utilized to achieve an in-depth understanding.

Even though teacher attrition has increased significantly in recent years, the PD project and teaching resources, PowerPoint and facilitation guide (Appendix A) addresses teacher attrition solely at the local study site. Additional data could be gained by conducting a follow up study or a 2 to 3 year longitudinal study to determine what affect, if any, the PD project is having on the teacher attrition problem. Without further research and feedback, it is difficult to know whether the strategies developed from the study were an influence in retaining teachers.

### **Recommendations for Alternative Approaches**

The current trend in education indicates that teacher attrition has become a potentially critical issue. Based on the literature, there have been several attempts to improve the teacher shortage in our nation, as well as globally. Most often, there have been financial incentives that failed to alleviate the problem. Perhaps a solution to improving teacher retention is by researching alternative routes to certification to recruit additional teachers into the profession. While alternative routes are available, they have not been a viable solution for retaining teachers at the local study site. I am advocating alternative routes, along with the proper level of preparation and support for beginning and incoming teachers.

The Alternative Route to Teacher Certification programs (ARTC) works in conjunction with school districts to operate partnerships with community colleges and other higher education teacher preparation programs. ARTC programs identify core subject areas that school districts find difficult to fill. The certifying organization of ARTC is the National Association for Alternative Certification (NAAC). The organization advocates for standards-driven nontraditional educator preparation leading to effective school staffing. NAAC examines teacher turnover trends to inform practices and policies related to recruitment, support, and retention of quality educators.

One of the potential benefits of the study was gaining an understanding of what participants considered as important factors for staying in or leaving the profession. Participants indicated disruptive student behavior or poor classroom management as reasons for leaving the profession. To address the problem of teacher attrition, perhaps a behavioral study could be conducted with novice teachers that leave the profession in the first 3 years. Another solution could be to provide behavior management workshops for teachers with three or less cumulative years of experience before the school year begins to assist with training and retaining of novice teachers.

### **Local Community**

An important mission of schools or school districts is to increase student achievement. Along with this comes the responsibility of staffing schools with highly qualified teachers. Implementing this PD project, *Strategies and Training for Curtailing Novice Teacher Attrition Rates*, allows administrators and mentors to contribute to building a good quality staff, as well as a safe and secure learning environment. The basis

of a mentorship project is to provide administrators and veteran teachers with strategies that will assist novice teachers in creating an environment conducive to improving learning of all stakeholders (Bear, 2013). Providing stakeholders with information on teacher retention can raise awareness regarding the issue resulting in an improvement in the local study research site's recruitment practices.

### **Scholarship, Project Development, and Leadership and Change**

#### **Scholarship**

When I began this journey, I felt apprehensive primarily because I had little knowledge of scholarly writing. It was a desire to write effectively to develop a research study that propelled me forward. As I developed into a scholar, I became more confident in my skills to complete the journey.

The doctoral process required the development of a project to address the research problem. I selected a topic based on an issue affecting my local school. I discovered the problem of teacher turnover was prevalent throughout my district. During the research, I found that the problem of teacher turnover existed throughout the nation, and the world. Participants' responses provided insight into the realm of qualitative research that through this study brought awareness to the nation's teacher shortage crisis.

#### **Project Development and Evaluation**

There have been many methods of project evaluation developed over the years. As the developer of this project, I considered an adult audience and the ways that adult learners absorb new knowledge. Developing the project required collaboration with other educators and their expertise to develop effective ways to provide a high-quality learning

experience for young and new novice teachers. I feel it was important for them to see the results of the study's data analysis as being trustworthy and a valuable tool they can use to have input in the direction of the application and goals of the project. To achieve this, I will provide a synopsis of the findings that focuses on providing a clear picture of participant responses concerning the problem, addressing credibility and transferability. I found this to be important, as the success of the PD training would be measured by the data.

### **Leadership and Change**

Change is a process that individuals experience in their personal and professional lives. In education, reform focuses educators' efforts on influencing change to allow all students to reach a level of proficiency on state assessments. As educators, we must be innovative to explore new ways to facilitate change in our schools. Leadership is an important topic at the local study site, as administrator turnover is as prevalent as teacher turnover. Being a teacher leader involves influencing change. Leaders, furthermore, play a major role for improving the quality of teaching and learning in the context of their school to empower others to lead.

### **Reflection on the Importance of the Work**

#### **Analysis of Self as Scholar**

In developing this project as a beginning researcher, I found myself engrossed in the literature on the topic and in the responses received from the study participants during data collection and analysis. While there was much information, it helped me decide on a focus that leads me to a better understanding of the teacher attrition problem. This

doctoral journey has helped me develop as a scholar-practitioner. I was able to see through the lens of learner, researcher, and project developer. While performing the abovementioned roles, I was also able to collect, analyze and formulate the acquired knowledge into a project and professional growth opportunity. It was an experience that I would recommend to colleagues and want to try again.

### **Analysis of Self as Practitioner**

As a practitioner, I feel that I had opportunity to reflect and use my experiences as an instructional specialist to understand how to engage adults and students. I was also able to revisit previous learnings such as qualitative methodology and expand my knowledge in others such as data analysis. I feel that my knowledge of how to assist a novice teacher to reach their maximum potential increased substantially. Themes obtained from the thematic analysis and interpretation of the data were used to develop the project. I have seen growth in my abilities to assist administrators and teachers alike to develop the talent of novice professionals.

### **Analysis of Self as Project Developer**

Each course and step in this doctoral process assisted in developing me to be a project developer. As a project developer, I learned to depend on the data to develop the project as well as some previous learning experiences as an adult learner. While developing the project I realized that many of the strategies I will employ are similar to those I have employed in my teaching. In addition, I discovered information through research that would not of have come to my attention if I were not developing this project.

### **Potential Impact for Social Change**

The potential impact of this project will include improved teacher retention rates that will result in continuity and well-trained teachers. I feel that every educator that attends the PD sessions is there to improve their knowledge of training and retaining novice teachers. In addition, this should result in a better-taught learner and an environment that will be conducive to learning. Knowledge is a tool that empowers. The project empowers novice teachers to be better educators and thus creates a better student who will eventually find their role in society and the transformation process (Patil, 2012). Mayor (1998) summed up the need for quality teachers and their effect on social change when he wrote that educators are relevant to social needs. This is essential if our young students are to acquire the skills and attitudes needed to be successful in this knowledge-based society.

### **Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research**

Teacher attrition has been recognized as a problem across America and countries abroad. This study, as well as other research studies, uncovered various reasons for why teachers stay in or leave the profession. One-third of new teachers leave the profession after three years and almost one-half of all new teachers leave the profession within the first 5 years of their employment (Petty et al., 2012). My study focused on reasons why novice teachers leave the profession. To better understand attrition at the local study site, participant's should have been divided into three groups: teachers staying at the local study site (stayers), teachers leaving the profession (leavers), and teachers moving to

other schools (movers). Dividing the participants into groups could have compromised their identity.

The findings, based upon participant responses resulted in the two overarching strategies of administrative support and mentorship cited as contributors to why new teachers tend to stay in the profession. Without good mentorship and a collaborative culture fostered by administrators, the result is likely to be the opposite. A PD project developed from the findings.

The conclusion drawn from this study is that school districts could benefit from investing the time and personnel in PD geared to assisting potential mentors and administrators in helping novice teachers develop into quality teachers. In addition, when experiencing a higher level of satisfaction, the beginning teachers would likely stay in the profession and better able to motivate students to become future contributors to this global society.

A possibility for future research surrounds the topic of teacher retention specifically in high-needs schools. Current researchers, educational organizations, and think tanks are disputing past studies that reported teachers leave schools in high numbers. Studies conducted in 2015 and beyond are finding that the percentage of teachers that leave the profession within four years is a much lower percentage than reported (Gray & Taie, 2015). For future research, high-needs schools specifically could benefit from understanding structural and organizational changes that can be implemented to close the growing learning gap. The study focused on novice teachers. Data revealed that the issue of turnover at the local study site pertained to administrators,

as well as teachers. The local school and school district could benefit from a follow-up study to identify the attrition of administrators in the district and strategies to recruit and retain quality leaders.

Program success depends largely on implementing the goals with fidelity. Kretlow and Bartholomew (2010) emphasized improving fidelity required providing teachers with appropriate training and follow-up support. Hence, programs designed to combat the problem of teacher attrition need to be conducted with fidelity to reverse the trend of new teachers leaving the profession.

### **Conclusion**

Since the 1970s, school districts, state boards of education, and policymakers consider teacher attrition a major issue affecting the nation's schools. Currently, 16% of public school teachers leave their schools each year (Goldring et al., 2014). Although researchers have tried to explain the high attrition rate, many teachers entered education sensing the profession to be self-rewarding, but found only disillusionment, discontentment, and dissatisfaction. The problem of the shortage of teachers especially remains a concern to high-poverty low-performing schools that tend to have higher rates of teacher turnover (Petty et al., 2012). School districts continue to struggle to attract and retain quality teachers. The more comprehensive the teacher turnover, the more problematic the situation becomes. News coverage of teacher attrition indicate a national crisis: *Teacher shortage has schools in 'crisis mode'* [Seattle Times] (Associated Press, 2015) and *Low morale causes rise in number of teachers leaving field* [Virginian-Pilot] (Connors, 2015). Research indicated that fewer teachers have entered the teaching field

since 2010 (Barth, et al., 2016), which underscores the challenges of teacher attrition. This study focused on understanding beginning teachers' perceptions about factors that contribute to their decision to stay in or leave the teaching field, as well as retain quality teachers at the local study site.

Research studies showed that financial costs accompany teacher attrition (Hughes, 2012; Lloyd, 2012; Loeb et al., 2012). Teacher turnover affects schools both economically and emotionally. School districts across the nation address teacher turnover by investing resources in mentoring programs, as well as induction programs to create a supportive environment. Creating a supportive environment is conducive for teaching and learning for novice teachers, benefits both teachers and students.

Teaching requires the ability to multitask that requires planning, implementing the curriculum, administering formal and summative assessments, enforcing the code of discipline, while motivating students to achieve (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Ferguson et al. (2012) considered teaching to be one of the most stressful professions, especially for beginning teachers with limited experiences. Ferguson et al. found that a high number of teachers believe the teaching profession to be either highly stressful or very stressful. Ferguson et al.'s (2012) finding could justify why a number of beginning teachers that leave the profession cite fatigue and stress as primary reasons.

Teacher turnover in U.S. public schools creates a challenge in meeting the demand for recruiting and retaining effective teachers. This study provided meaningful insights about the challenges beginning teachers' experience during their first year, their needs, and more importantly, ways to train and support them to encourage them to stay in

the profession. Findings indicated that a main factor and a strategy linked to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction of beginning teachers is the amount of available support. I developed a PD project to address teacher retention at the local study site. The comprehensiveness of the project will allow other school leaders to modify the project for their site.

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## Appendix A: Professional Development Project

### Strategies and Training for Curtailing Novice Teacher Attrition Rates

#### Purpose and Goals

There has been a trend in the education profession of a high attrition rate of novice teachers leaving the profession. To address early career attrition, a PD project was developed. The project will allow administrators and school-based beginning teacher mentors to gain a better understanding of why teachers leave the profession within their first five years, as well as develop strategies to help retain quality teachers at the local study site. The overarching goal of the PD is to provide training and support for administrators and mentors on how to guide and support novice teachers based on their corporate and individual needs so they will develop into highly effective classroom educators and remain in the profession. Topics addressed in the PD training, to name a few, include understanding needs of beginning teachers, characteristics and actions of effective mentors, strategies for successful mentoring relationships, and curriculum and behavioral issues.

## Mentor Training Timeline

Icebreaker: Let it Snow...How much do You Know (10 minutes)

Goal 1: Beginning Relations with Your Assigned Mentee (1 hour)

- Introducing yourself (15 minutes)
- Be a good listener (20 minutes)
- Plan a meeting and observations (25 minutes)

Goal 2: Lesson Planning (2 hours 20 minutes)

- Help in establishing instructional focus (20 minutes)
- Learning goals (30 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

- Using Data to Drive Instruction (60 minutes)
- Teaching collaborative processes (30 minutes)

Goal 3: Classroom Management (1 hour 23 minutes)

- Safe Schools video “Creating a Manageable Classroom” (33 minutes)

Lunch (1 hour)

- Communicating with parents (20 minutes)
- Roundtable discussion on strategies that establish and maintain classroom management (60 minutes)

Goal 4: Managing Stress (1 hour)

- Discussing potential stressors with Mentee (30 minutes)
- Avoiding Burnout (30 minutes)

Closure: Recap of the day’s activities along with open floor for questions.

## Administrator Training Timeline

Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Goal 1: Philosophy of Teaching (1 hour 20 minutes)

- Sharing the Vision (20minutes)
- Expectations (60 minutes)

Goal 2: Assigning Mentors (40 minutes)

- Who Should Be Your Mentors and Why (25 minutes)
- Selection Norms (15 minutes)

Break (15 minutes)

Goal 3: Staff Motivation (1 hour 35 minutes)

- Identifying and Explaining Supports for Novice Teachers (45 minutes)
- Incentives (20 minutes)
- Growth opportunities (30 minutes)

Lunch (1 hour)

Goal 4: Observations and Feedback (1hour)

- Role play (40 minutes)
- Roundtable Discussion (20 minutes)

Closure: Recap of the day's activities along with open floor for questions.

Administrator and Mentors Joint Session Timeline

Icebreaker (10 minutes)

Goal 1: Creating a Development Map and Timeline of PLC's for Novice Teachers

- Showing Mentee How to build Collegial Relationships (30 minutes)
- Communicating Common Values with a focus on Student Learning (30 minutes)
- Novice Teacher Development and Improvement (90 minutes)

Break (15 minutes)

- Technological Inference (75 minutes)

## Professional Development Questionnaire

### Strategies and Training for Curtailing Novice Teacher Attrition Rates

To what extent do you agree with the items below? (5 Strongly agree – 1 Strongly disagree)

1. Training was well planned and of high quality.
  - 1 – Strongly disagree
  - 2 – Disagree
  - 3 – Neutral
  - 4 – Agree
  - 5 – Strongly agree

Comments: Type comments here.
2. Time in the training session was sufficient to allow learning and practicing of new concepts.
  - 1 – Strongly disagree
  - 2 – Disagree
  - 3 – Neutral
  - 4 – Agree
  - 5 – Strongly agree

Comments: Type comments here.
3. Content was relevant to my needs.
  - 1 – Strongly disagree
  - 2 – Disagree
  - 3 – Neutral
  - 4 – Agree
  - 5 – Strongly agree

Comments: Type comments here.
4. Materials presented during the training were pertinent and useful.
  - 1 – Strongly disagree
  - 2 – Disagree
  - 3 – Neutral
  - 4 – Agree
  - 5 – Strongly agree

Comments: Type comments here.
5. Presenter encouraged participation and collegial professional exchange and collaboration.
  - 1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Neutral

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly agree

Comments: Type comments here.

6. I gained new information and skills about the topic.

1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Neutral

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly agree

Comments: Type comments here.

7. Training provided important resources for me.

1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Neutral

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly agree

Comments: Type comments here.

8. I plan to implement information and/or strategies learned.

1 – Strongly disagree

2 – Disagree

3 – Neutral

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly agree

Comments: Type comments here.

9. What suggestions do you have for improving this training? Type comments here.

10. What, if any, suggestions do you have for additional training/support for curtailing novice teacher attrition? Type comments here.

Additional comments: Type comments here.

Adapted and modified from (FormGet, 2015)  
Project Facilitator Guide

### Training Facilitator Guide

- I. Purpose of the Facilitator Guide – To provide a focus for PD participants who will be training on the implementation of a program that leads to retention of novice teachers.
- II. Preparation – Prior to the training the content will be developed with the audience and needs of the group, purpose and goals of the study in mind.
  - a. Group needs – Training on the project
  - b. Audience – Study site and District stakeholders
  - c. Purpose – To provide a training opportunity for administrators and potential mentor teachers on retaining novice teachers.
- III. Training Delivery – This PD was designed to be interactive. Participants will work in two-person-groups, role-play and participate in group discussions throughout the duration of the sessions. Additionally, there will be collaborative interactions, a parking lot where ideas can be expressed or questions asked and evaluation.

IV. Presentation Elements – PowerPoint presentation, opening activities for each session and provide handouts with data analysis and links to all videos that will be used during sessions.

V. PowerPoint Slides

Slide 1- Title “Strategies and Training for Curtailing Teacher Attrition”

Slide 2- Purpose of the Training

Slide 3- Expectations from the training

Slide 4- Icebreaker: How much Do You Know?

- Participants will form a ring, then write something about themselves on a sheet of paper, ball it up and toss it into the center of the ring. Each participant will then pick up a sheet of paper and one at a time read the paper. Participants will attempt to use clues from the reading to determine whom the story is referencing.

Slide 5- Agenda for the Mentor Role

- Mentors will use excerpts from the book “Ready for Anything: Supporting New Teachers” by Lynn F. Howard for goals 1 through 4 in this phase of the training.

Slide 6- Introducing yourself and beginning relations with your assigned mentee

- Participants will be given a copy of the article, “Getting your Mentoring Relationship Off to a Good Start”.  
<http://www.apa.org/pi/disability/resources/mentoring/success.aspx>
- Mentors will work in two-person groups to role-play with one another by briefly discussing their educational experiences, background and goals of the relationship with their Mentee.
- Two-person groups will role play listening to mentees experiences and probe them for career and relationship expectations.
- Groups will role-play how to facilitate meeting and observation schedules and how to use time wisely.

Slide 7- Lesson Planning

- We will use the article “Facilitating Mentee-Data Driven Goal Setting”

<https://www.td.org/Publications/Magazines/TD/TD-Archive/2013/05/Facilitating-Mentee-Driven-Goal-Setting>

- Discuss and roleplay the use of the curriculum framework mentors and administrators will use to help mentees unwrap objectives and develop an understanding of how to tie goals to lesson delivery.
- Mentors will have a mock data meeting using.

Slide 8- Mentors will watch video on classroom management and then have roundtable discussion on experiences and strategies that establish and maintain classroom management.

Slide 9- Managing the stresses of teaching

- Mentor will discuss potential stressors with Mentee, as well as how to handle the stressors.
- Mentor and Mentee discuss identifying and avoiding burnout.

Slide 10- Begin session 2

Slide 11- Ice breaker

Slides 12-13- Philosophy of Teaching and Learning

- Administrators discuss the best way to share their vision for the school to novice teachers.
- How should we relay our expectations?

Slide 14- Assigning Mentors

- Excerpts from the book “Coaching and Mentoring First Year and Student Teachers” by India Podsen and Vicki Denmark will be used to lead the discussion.

Slide 15- Staff Motivation

- Improving Student Learning by Supporting Quality Teaching: Key issues and Strategies pgs. 16-27 by Hightower, Delgado, Lloyd, Wittenstein, Sellers, & Swanson will be used to lead discussion.

Slide 16- Observations and Feedback

- Administrators will view a video with an administrator observing a first year teacher and then the post conference.
- Observation Video and Post Conference with a Beginning teacher  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8QWIRdK2iU#t=63.724313>  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qlKGIIdmDAA>

Slide 17- Begin Session 3

Slide 18- Session 3 Goals

Slide 19- Creating a Timeline and calendar for professional development

- Administrators and mentors will develop a PD calendar ordering the session topics and determining which will deliver the sessions.

Slide 20- Technology and the classroom

- Eric Simon discusses the need for and usage of technology

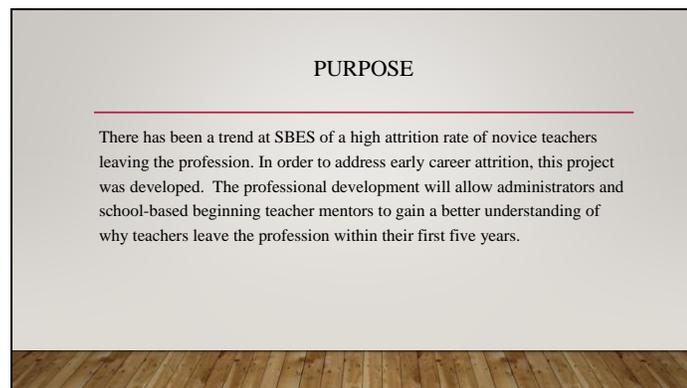
Slide 21- Recap

Slide 22- Closure

- Video “A Day in the Life of a Teacher”.

Various PowerPoint Slides: *Strategies and Training for Curtailing Teacher Attrition*

## Slide 2



PURPOSE

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There has been a trend at SBES of a high attrition rate of novice teachers leaving the profession. In order to address early career attrition, this project was developed. The professional development will allow administrators and school-based beginning teacher mentors to gain a better understanding of why teachers leave the profession within their first five years.

## Slide 3

TRAINING OUTCOMES

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- Gain a better understanding of why teachers leave the profession within their first five years
- Develop practices that will assist in supporting novice teachers that remain in the profession
- Develop strategies to help retain quality teachers

## Slide 5

SESSION 1 AGENDA: THE MENTOR ROLE

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- Goal 1: Beginning Relations with your assigned mentee
- Goal 2: Lesson Planning
- Break (15 minutes)
- Goal 3: Classroom management
- Lunch (1 hour)
- Goal: 4 managing stress
- Closure

## Slide 6

GOAL 1: BEGINNING RELATIONS WITH YOUR ASSIGNED MENTEE

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- Introduce yourself
- Be a good listener
- Planning meetings
- Planning and scheduling observations
- Using time wisely

## Slide 7

GOAL 2: LESSON PLANNING

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- Establish an instructional focus
- Learning goals
- Break (10 minutes)
- Using data to drive instruction
- Teaching collaborative processes
- Planning collaboratively with peers.

### Slide 8

GOAL 3: CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

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- Video: Creating a Manageable Classroom (30 minutes)
- Roundtable discussion
- Lunch (1 hour)
- Communicating with parents
- Participants will brainstorm ways to train mentees to communicate with parents.

### Slide 9

GOAL 4: MANAGING STRESS

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- Managing Stress
  - Discussing potential stressors with mentee
  - Avoiding burnout
- Closure
- Participants will visit the workshop parking lot to place post-it notes with questions and concerns
- Share comments

### Slide 10

### SESSION 2 GOALS

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- Goal 1: Philosophy of teaching
- Goal 2: Assigning mentors
- Break (15 minutes)
- Goal 3: Staff motivation
- Lunch (1 hour)
- Goal 4: Observations and feedback
- Closure

### Slide 11

### ADMINISTRATOR TRAINING: DAY 2

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- Icebreaker: How much do you know
  - Participants will form a circle
  - Each participant will write something about themselves on a sheet of paper, then ball it up, and toss it into the center of the circle
  - Each participant will pick up a sheet of paper and one at a time read the paper
  - Participants will use clues from the reading to guess who the reading is about

### Slide 13

### PHILOSOPHY OF TEACHING

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SHARING THE VISION	EXPECTATIONS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shaping a clear vision for academic success</li> <li>• Creating climate and culture conducive to learning</li> <li>• Cultivating leadership qualities in novice teachers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher will have high expectations for all of their students</li> <li>• Be prepared daily</li> <li>• Help to create and maintain a risk free academic environment</li> </ul>

### Slide 14

## GOAL 2: ASSIGNING MENTORS

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- Excerpts from the text by India J. Podsen and Vicki Denmark
  - “Coaching and Mentoring First Year and Student Teachers” will be used to lead the discussion.
- Who should be your mentors and why?
- Selection norms
- Break (15 Minutes)

## Slide 15

## GOAL 3: STAFF MOTIVATION

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- Identifying and explaining supports for novice teachers
- Incentives
- Growth opportunities
- Lunch (1 hour)

## Slide 16

## GOAL 4: OBSERVATIONS AND FEEDBACK

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- Observation Video and Post Conference with a Beginning teacher
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8QWIRdK2iU#t=63.724313>
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qIKGIldmDAA>
- Roundtable discussion about observing beginning teachers and providing feedback
- Closure
  - Participants will visit the workshop parking lot to place post-it notes with questions, concerns. After reading and discussing a few the floor will be open for additional comments, etc.

## Slide 18

**SESSION 3 GOALS**

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- Goal 1: Creating a development map and timeline of professional development and services for novice teachers.
- Training wrap-up
- Closure



### Slide 19

**GOAL 1: CREATING A DEVELOPMENT MAP AND TIMELINE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT FOR NOVICE TEACHERS**

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- Relaying common values with a focus on student learning to novice teachers
- Administrators and mentors discuss novice teacher development and improvement
- Administrators and mentors build a professional development calendar for the school year
- Break (15 minutes)
- Technological and the educational experience



### Slide 21

**RECAP**

- Training participants and facilitators recap activities and discussion from the 3 day workshop.

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### Slide 22




### Appendix B: Interview Guide

Thank you again for agreeing to participate. The focus of my research study pertains to exploring the thoughts and perceptions of novice teachers regarding effective practices that lead to teacher retention. Your school was selected for this study because of its high attrition rate. You are invited to participate because of your classroom tenure at the school and years of employment. In this interview, I hope to gain a better understanding of the needs of new teachers and determine what can be done to meet those needs to retain effective teachers.

I value your time, so I want to reiterate my sincere appreciation for your participation in this study. The information you share will not only be helpful to me, but I believe it may offer new insights that can inform efforts to improve retention.

This online asynchronous interview should not exceed 60 minutes. Please know that you can decide to end the online interview, or skip questions. Further, I would like to ask permission to audio record any portion of the interview that may take place face-to-face, so that the data can be transcribed later if needed. As detailed in the consent form, confidentiality will be preserved and the e-mailed responses will be destroyed once my study is completed and approved.

- Review consent form
- Invite questions

#### Line of Inquiry 1: Background and School Context

1. How many years have you taught?
2. How long have you taught at this school?

3. If you have taught at other schools, please share about your experiences and your reason(s) for leaving.

Line of Inquiry 2: Factors contributing to novice teachers leaving or staying in the profession

4. What do you enjoy most about working at this school?
1. Why have you decided to stay or leave this school? What factors influenced your decision?
2. On a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the highest effort, how would you rate your school in its ability to retain quality teachers? Explain your rating.
3. What do you believe motivates development of effective teachers and their desire to remain committed to their profession?

Line of Inquiry 3: Strategies for developing and retaining effective teachers

4. In your opinion, how does mentoring play a role in developing and retaining effective teachers (in general)?
  - If so, how would you describe that role? How would you rate this as a factor in teacher retention?
5. In your opinion, how has the induction program played a role in your development and in becoming an effective teacher?
  - If so, how would you describe that role? How would you rate this as a factor in teacher retention?
6. In your opinion, how do low achieving schools play a role in developing and retaining effective teachers?
  - If so, how would you describe that role? How would you rate this as a factor in teacher retention?
7. What kinds of incentives do you believe could assist in retaining effective teachers?
  - How would you rate incentives as a strategy in teacher retention?
8. How does your administrator's leadership influence your decision to stay or leave

this school?

9. What other strategies implemented in the school play a role in retaining effective teachers? Are there any things in your school environment or culture that play a role? Are there any systems or structures that play a role? Are there any other beliefs or attitudes that play a role?
  - Of the strategies mentioned, which do you believe have the greatest influence on developing effective teachers?
10. Are there any other leadership practices you believe play a role in retaining effective teachers in your school?
11. In your opinion, how is retaining effective teachers prioritized at your school?
  - How do you know whether retaining teachers is or is not a priority? How, if at all, do the school administrators discuss teacher retention with the staff?
12. What do you say are the most important strategies a principal can utilize to develop and retain effective teachers?

Thank you for taking time to complete the interview questions. If you have anything else you would like to share about retaining effective teachers at your school, you may e-mail or call me at any time. E-mail or call me if you have any questions about this study. As per the informed consent, I will call or e-mail you if I need to ask a follow-up or clarifying question.

## Appendix C: Sample of the Categorization of Participant Data

## Research Question 1

Code	Initial Theme	Final Theme
Code 1 – Students	Engaging and motivating students	Interpersonal relationships and interactions with stakeholders
Code 2 – Parents	Parental support	Interpersonal relationships and interactions with stakeholders
Code 3 – Co-workers	Collaborating with co-workers	Interpersonal relationships and interactions with stakeholders
Code 4 – Leadership	Administrator support	Interpersonal relationships and interactions with stakeholders
Code 5 – Job	Job responsibilities	Classroom experiences
Code 6 – Stress	Emotional stability	Quality of life
Code 7 – Discipline/Safety	School culture/climate	Working conditions
Code 8 – Culture	Realistic/unrealistic expectations	Working conditions
Code 9 – Advancement	Personal achievement	Quality of life

*Note:* Codes used to categorize data from responses