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Interventions to Address Teacher Attrition from Low-Income Schools

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Walden University
2020

Abstract

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Kenneth Bradley Darnell

MA, National-Louis University, 2007

MS, Azusa Pacific University, 2003

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

The research problem was teacher turnover from low-income K–12 schools to higher-income K–12 schools. This problem is important because of the negative effects on student learning and the high cost of replacing departed teachers. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to describe how low-income schools can implement interventions that will positively address the challenges teachers face that lead to teacher attrition through the support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety as perceived by teachers who formerly taught in low-income schools. The conceptual framework for this study was human capital theory. The participants were 56 K–12 teachers who formerly taught in a low-income K-12 school but currently teach in a higher-income K–12 school. Of the 56 participants, 48 completed an online survey and 8 participants completed an interview. Themes from the study for the interventions that would help low-income schools increase teacher retention were increasing parental involvement and support by building relationships, administration listening to teachers, administrative consistency with discipline, salary, and administrative transparency. The teachers in the study felt that administrators need to learn to better communicate with teachers, especially regarding student discipline. Another recommendation is to allow teachers greater input in developing school policies and procedures to promote ownership within the school. The implications for positive social change are that low-income districts with high rates of teacher turnover can implement the interventions from this study that will help increase teacher retention in low-income schools.

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Dedication

This page is dedicated to my wife, Margaret; my sons, Mason and Carter; my father, Ken Darnell; my mother, Christine Darnell; Robert Bohn and Dr. Marlys Bohn. Thank you for supporting me in this endeavor.

Acknowledgments

I want to acknowledge God for helping me through this process. Also, thank you to Dr. Amy Gaskins for your help and support, Dr. Ann Smith for your help as second committee member, and Dr. Fish for you feedback.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Lochmiller, Sugimoto, and Muller (2016) found that beginning teachers and teachers in low-income and urban schools left at higher rates than teachers in other settings. In the area where this study took place, because of high rates of teacher turnover, some low-income schools have difficulty retaining high-quality teachers (Illinois State Board of Education, 2017). In this study, I focused on how interventions can positively influence factors leading to teacher retention in low-income schools. Studying teacher attrition from low-income to higher-income schools is important because of the effect on student learning that occurs when teachers leave low-income schools for higher-income schools.

When elementary teachers leave low-income schools, student learning suffers. The students fall further behind because student achievement improves with teacher experience (Ost & Schiman, 2015). Hanushek, Rivkin, and Schiman (2016) found that student achievement suffers from teacher turnover, even factoring for ineffective teachers leaving. In the area where this study occurred, many students do not perform at grade level (Illinois State Board of Education, 2017). The potential positive social change as a result of this study is that there will be less turnover and more effective teachers remaining in low-income schools.

The background section of this chapter contains reasons why teacher turnover in low-income schools is a problem. Some reasons for teacher turnover are teacher compensation, teachers receiving certification through alternative methods, and school

administration. In the problem statement, I explain why teachers leaving low-income schools for higher-income schools is a problem that affects student learning. Teachers leaving low-income schools create a high cost for the districts they are leaving because new teachers must be recruited, interviewed, and trained. The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to describe how low-income schools can implement interventions that will positively address challenges teachers face that lead to their attrition through the support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety as perceived by teachers who formerly taught in low-income schools (see Simon & Johnson, 2015). How the interventions can positively influence teacher retention in low-income schools is addressed in the research questions.

The conceptual framework for this study includes a description of the theory of human capital and how the theory relates to teacher turnover in low-income schools. Kirby, Grissmer, and the Rand Corporation (1993) used the theory of human capital to describe reasons why people remain in or leave a job. People are more likely to continue in jobs where they receive rewards, such as opportunities for advancement (Kirby et al., 1993).

In the nature of the study section, I explain the basic qualitative study design. The definitions section includes definitions of terms that frequently appear in the study. The scope of the study involved teachers who formerly taught in a low-income school but currently teach in a higher-income school. The study took place in middle to high-income K-12 schools. The limitations of the study include time constraints, a small

geographical area, and results that cannot be generalized because the study was qualitative and limited to one geographical area in the Midwest. In the significance of the study section, I explain how low-income schools can implement interventions that will lead to higher teacher retention. There are many studies on teacher turnover in low-income schools, but there is a dearth of studies on how specific interventions can positively influence factors that lead to teacher attrition from low-income schools (Adnot, Dee, Katz, & Wyckoff, 2017; Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer, 2007; Bettini & Park, 2017; Boggan, Jayroe, & Alexander, 2016; Chall & Jacobs, 2003; Crosnoe, Benner, & Davis-Kean, 2016; Goldhaber, Lavery, & Theobald, 2015; Green & Muñoz, 2016; Simon & Johnson, 2015; Whipp & Geronime, 2015).

Background

This background section contains a brief summary of the literature review topics. A more thorough review of literature related to teacher turnover in low-income elementary schools is located in Chapter 2. There is a deficiency in the literature showing how interventions related to teacher attrition from low-income schools can positively influence factors that lead to teacher attrition from low-income elementary and middle schools.

Pedota (2015) stated that teachers who discover methods to improve students academically remain in teaching. Another method of increasing teacher retention, as discovered by Springer, Swain, and Rodriguez (2016), is providing a $5,000 bonus to effective teachers in low-income schools, which increased the retention rate by 20% in

Tennessee's lowest-performing schools. Administration also plays a role in teacher retention as Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, and Labat (2015) found that administrative leadership was the most significant factor in teachers voluntarily remaining at their schools. Whipp and Geronime (2015) found that teachers' desire to teach in a low-income school predicts teacher retention. Teachers who received certification via alternative methods have comparable short-term rates of retention to teachers who received certification via traditional methods (Zhang & Zeller, 2016). Zhang and Zeller (2016) showed that the long-term rate of retention for 7 years for alternatively certified teachers is lower than teachers who received certification via traditional methods.

Culturally responsive training is another method that helps with teacher retention (Williams, Edwards, Kuhel, & Lim, 2016). Williams et al. (2016) found that teachers who received preservice training in culturally responsive teaching had high rates of retention with 4 of the 5 teachers remaining in teaching after 5 years. Shaw and Newton (2014) found a positive correlation between job satisfaction, principal leadership style, and teacher retention.

The study is needed because teacher retention is a problem that affects many low-income schools (see Adnot et al., 2017; Barnes et al., 2007; Gagnon & Mattingly, 2015; Illinois State Board of Education, 2019; King, Kan, & Aldeman, 2016; Sun, Saultz, & Ye, 2017). For several local low-income school districts, the teacher retention rate over a 3-year period has been more than 10% below the state of Illinois average (Illinois State Board of Education, 2019). Low-income school districts hire more beginning teachers

than higher-income districts do (King et al., 2016). King et al. (2016) also found that low-income school districts experience a lower rate of teacher retention than the state average.

Problem Statement

The problem I focused on in this study was teacher turnover in low-income schools (see Barnes et al., 2007; Gagnon & Mattingly, 2015; Helms-Lorenz, van de Grift, & Maulana, 2016; Illinois State Board of Education, 2019; King et al., 2016; Simon & Johnson, 2015). Teacher turnover is a problem because teachers leave low-income schools at higher rates than teachers leave higher-income schools (King et al., 2016). Lochmiller, Sugimoto, et al. (2016) found that beginning teachers in low-income schools returned at lower rates than teachers in higher-income schools. The problem of teacher turnover in low-income schools is relevant to both the local and national setting (Barnes et al., 2007; Gagnon & Mattingly, 2015; Helms-Lorenz et al., 2016; Illinois State Board of Education, 2019; King et al., 2016; Simon & Johnson, 2015).

Another reason that teacher turnover in low-income schools is a problem is that teachers leaving low-income schools negatively correlates with student learning (Adnot et al., 2017). Adnot et al. (2017) also found that when low-performing teachers leave, then teacher turnover can positively affect student learning. Hanushek et al. (2016) found that teacher turnover negatively affected student learning and that many of the teachers who left were low performing.

Finally, teacher turnover is a problem because of the cost to the schools and districts (Barnes et al., 2007). The problem of teacher turnover in low-income schools is significant to teacher leadership because schools with students from a low socioeconomic status have lower short- and long-term teacher retention than schools with students from a higher socioeconomic status (King et al., 2016). Barnes et al., (2007) found that teacher turnover cost the Chicago Public Schools over $86 million in 1 school year, with a cost to both the district and each school of $17,872 per teacher. The teacher turnover cost for Milwaukee Public Schools was almost $11 million (CITE). These costs include recruiting, administration costs, background and reference checks, interviewing, hiring, orientation, induction, and professional development.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to describe how low-income schools can implement interventions that will positively address challenges teachers face that lead to teacher attrition through the support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety as perceived by teachers who formerly taught in low-income schools. Simon and Johnson (2015) analyzed six studies on teacher turnover in low-income elementary to high schools and found that working conditions, such as the support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety, are common reasons for teacher attrition. Low-income schools tend to have more beginning teachers than higher-income schools (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2015).

The participants in this study were K–12 teachers from higher-income schools who formerly taught in a low-income school. The setting was a K–12-unit district in the suburbs of a large city in the Midwest and the entire metropolitan area of the large city in the Midwest. The teachers participated in an online survey and interviews. I analyzed the data for themes by looking for measures that can be taken to ensure teacher retention in low-income schools through the lens of human capital theory.

Research Question

I developed the research question to guide the basic qualitative study and furnish the structure for data collection and analysis. The problem was teacher attrition from low-income schools. In this study, I focused on teachers who left low-income districts in one area of the Midwest. The question was derived from the problem statement showing that teacher turnover negatively affects student learning (see Adnot et al., 2017; Hanushek et al., 2016). The problem statement also shows that teacher turnover has a high cost for the district (see Barnes et al., 2007). Using a basic qualitative study design, I used past and current research as a catalyst to answer the following research question:

> How can school leaders implement interventions to help with teacher retention rates in low-income schools, specifically relating to school culture, parental involvement, and safety?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was the human capital theory. Human capital theory states that employees work where they can achieve the most rewards

(Kirby et al., 1993). The rewards of a higher salary, opportunities for advancement, collegial relationships, or other items related to career may influence teacher retention. The decision to remain in teaching or leave is not a one-time decision but rather an ongoing process that continues throughout a teaching career (Grissmer, Kirby, & the Rand Corporation, 1987). Grissmer et al.'s (1987) analysis of schools from all income levels found that other factors impact teachers' decisions to remain in the classroom, such as job security, the environment of the school, rapport with colleagues, support from administration, and the motivation of the students.

Teachers who are thinking about leaving their job must consider the cost of training for a new job and the lost income that results from training for a new career. When entering the new career, the former teacher will not have the human capital that they accrued at the school, and the former teacher will compete with others who have more experience and better pay at the new job. The more years a teacher is in the classroom, the more human capital the teacher develops in that school (Grissmer, Kirby, & the Rand Corporation, 1987). Examples of human capital are knowledge of the rituals and routines of the school, respect for others, and retirement benefits (Grissmer et al., 1987). The more years a teacher is in the classroom, the less likely the teacher is to leave because of the human capital that developed over the years (Grissmer et al., 1987).

In this basic qualitative study, I examined in-depth teachers' reasons for leaving a low-income school through their responses to a survey. Human capital theory was used

to help explain teachers' reasons for leaving a low-income K-12 school. A more thorough explanation of human capital theory appears in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

The study was a basic qualitative study because the data gathered from the participants helped draw conclusions and gather meanings (see Yardley, 2017). The phenomenon investigated was how low-income schools could implement interventions that will positively address challenges teachers face that lead to teacher attrition from low-income schools. The participants were 56 current teachers who previously taught in a low-income school but currently teach in a higher-income school. Participants completed an online survey and interviews until themes emerged. I continued collecting data via an online survey until reaching saturation. After collecting data via an online survey, more data were needed, so I interviewed eight teachers to ask more in-depth questions. An analysis of the data occurred by looking for common themes from the teacher responses to the online survey and interviews.

Kozleski (2017) stated that qualitative research helps the researcher and participants collaborate, and the collaboration helps the researcher discover topics or concerns of importance to the participant. According to Merriam (1998), qualitative researchers collect multiple sources of data through interviews, observations, and examining documents. They use multiple sources of data to achieve trustworthiness through triangulation (Merriam, 1998).

Interviews are one method of collecting data in qualitative research (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Merriam, 1998). In this study, the participants recorded their responses via an online survey. One advantage of using an online survey to gather data is that the researcher uses the participant's words to establish meaning (Merriam, 1998). When interviewing, the researcher should make sure that the questions do not lead the participant and that the questions do not contain bias (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In addition to completing an online survey, eight participants completed interviews so I could collect additional data. The responses of 48 participants completing the online survey and the eight teachers completing interviews led to data saturation.

Definitions

Alternative certification: Earning a teaching certificate in ways different than traditional methods (Boggan et al., 2016; Bradshaw, 1998; Redding & Smith, 2016).

Attrition: When a teacher teaches the previous year but not the next year (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014).

Beginning teacher: When a teacher has fewer than 3 years of experience (Green & Muñoz, 2016).

Capital: Factors that influence teacher's decisions to remain in the classroom, such as job security, the environment of the school, rapport with colleagues, support from administration, and the motivation of the students (Grissmer et al., 1987).

Disadvantaged schools/ Low-income schools: Schools where more than half of the student population qualify for free or reduced lunch; more than 40% of the students are racial minorities (Jette, 2017; Sun et al., 2017).

Leaving teacher: When a teacher transfers to a different school or district or leaves the teaching profession (Glennie, Mason, & Edmunds, 2016).

Low-income school: A school with more than 50% of the students' families at or below 185% of the poverty line (Dauter, Olivieri, Education Cities, & GreatSchools, 2018).

Mentoring: Guiding a new teacher (Mahboob, 2014). Pirkle (2011) defined a mentor as an experienced teacher who supports and guides a beginning teacher.

Retention: When a teacher stays in the same school consecutive years (Lochmiller, Adachi, Chesnut, & Johnson, 2016).

Teacher turnover: When a teacher leaves a school voluntarily or involuntarily, when the school initiates the departure, or when the school or district does not renew the contract (Sun et al., 2017).

Assumptions

The following assumptions formed the basis of the study: (a) the teachers were willing participants, (b) the teachers honestly shared their reasons for leaving a low-income school for a higher-income school, and (c) the low-income schools in the study are similar to other low-income schools. These assumptions were necessary because the teachers agreed to participate in the study voluntarily. Teacher turnover from low-

income to higher-income schools is a current and relevant problem for low-income schools. The teachers included in the study were 56 current teachers who formerly taught in a low-income school but currently teach in a higher-income school.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of the study focused on the interventions that can positively address factors that lead to teacher attrition from low-income schools. The 56 participants were current K–12 teachers. The delimitations of the study were that the teachers had formerly taught in a low-income school but taught in a higher-income school at the time of the study.

Limitations

One of the limitations of the study was that it was limited to one point in time. In this study, I only focused on the viewpoints of K–12 teachers from one geographical area in the Midwest of the United States. The results of this study do not transfer to other situations in general because the study was qualitative and limited to one geographical area.

Significance

The issue of teacher retention in low-income schools is significant because of the number of teachers leaving low-income schools needing new teachers to replace them every year. For several local school districts in the suburbs of a large city in the Midwest, the retention rate over a 3-year period was more than 10% below the state of Illinois average (Illinois State Board of Education, 2019). Helms-Lorenz et al. (2016)

found that teachers' skills improve by 60% from the first to the third year of teaching. Helms-Lorenz et al. also reported that 29% of first-year teachers left their school, but of those teachers, 16% left teaching as a career.

The findings of this study promote positive social change by determining how low-income schools can implement interventions that will positively address teacher retention in low-income schools through the support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety as perceived by teachers who formerly taught in low-income schools. Teacher turnover in low-income schools affects student learning because low-income students are less likely to enroll in college than students from middle- and high-income families (Kena et al., 2016). Preschool and elementary schools are where students build a foundation for learning (Chall & Jacobs, 2003). Around fourth grade is when students from a low-income background begin to score lower than other students (Kim et al., 2016). The problem of teacher turnover in low-income elementary schools is significant because elementary school provides a child the foundation for success in middle school, high school, college, and their career.

King et al. (2016) found that low-income districts were more likely to hire beginning teachers than experienced teachers. In 2012, the districts with the most students from a low-income background hired a low percentage (i.e., 28%) of experienced teachers (King et al., 2016). King et al. showed that about two thirds of beginning teachers were still teaching after 5 years. The 3-year retention rate for beginning teachers was 6% lower in low-income districts than the state average (King et

al., 2016). One city in the Midwest had a 66% 3-year retention rate and a 39% 10-year retention rate, both below the state average. The setting for this study was in the same area as this city, but not the same city.

Summary

Many low-income schools have difficulty retaining teachers. In this basic qualitative study, I examined how low-income schools can implement interventions that will lead to higher teacher retention in low-income schools through the support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety as perceived by teachers who formerly taught in low-income schools. The interventions will positively influence factors that lead to teacher attrition from low-income schools. Teacher turnover affects student learning and finances in low-income schools (Adnot et al., 2017; Barnes et al., 2007; Hanushek et al., 2016). Teachers who have human capital in the school leave at lower rates than those who do not have much capital in the school (Kirby et al., 1993). Teachers leaving low-income schools affect student learning because many low-income schools have difficulty staffing with high-quality teachers (King et al., 2016). In Chapter 2, I will present the literature review about teacher turnover, the theory of human capital, the cost of teacher turnover, and teacher preparation.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Teacher turnover is higher in low-income schools than in higher-income schools (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2015; Ingersoll, 2001; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Juczak, 2005; Steele, Pepper, Springer, & Lockwood, 2015). Teacher turnover affects low-income schools disproportionally when compared to higher-income schools (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2015; Simon & Johnson, 2015). In this basic qualitative study, I determined the reasons for the teacher turnover rate from low-income schools to higher-income schools and the reasons teachers leave low-income schools for higher-income schools. When teachers leave low-income districts, some of the low-income districts are not able to hire enough highly qualified teachers for all classrooms (Boggan et al., 2016).

Several factors influence teachers leaving a low-income school. One factor that influences a teacher's decision to leave a low-income school is administration (Barnatt et al., 2016; Fuller, Waite, & Torres Irribarra, 2016; Hughes, Matt, & O'Reilly, 2015; Kraft, Marinell, & Shen-Wei Yee, 2016; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016; Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016; Rice, 2014; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Tiplic, Brandmo, & Elstad, 2015; You & Conley, 2015). Another factor in teacher retention is alternative certification. Teachers who receive certification via alternative methods are more likely to leave low-income schools (Player, Youngs, Perrone, & Grogan, 2017; Redding & Smith, 2016). In a study of all Kentucky public schools, Lochmiller, Sugimoto, et al. (2016) showed that beginning teachers are more likely to leave than teachers with more than 4 years of experience.

When teachers leave a low-income school, learning suffers (Elfers, Plecki, & Knapp, 2006; Goldhaber et al., 2015). Teachers of disadvantaged students are more likely to leave than teachers in schools with fewer disadvantaged students (Blazer, 2015). Mentoring leads to beginning teachers remaining at higher rates than those teachers who do not receive mentoring (Callahan, 2016). Relevant professional development also leads to higher teacher retention (Tricario, Jacobs, & Yendol-Hoppey, 2015). Teacher preparation programs should help prepare teachers for success in a low-income classroom (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Barnatt et al., 2016; Green & Muñoz, 2016). When teachers depart the classroom, there is a high cost involved with recruiting and replacing the teachers (Adnot et al., 2017). The longer a teacher remains in the classroom, the more their beliefs about the students change (Lavigne, 2014). The last factor influencing teacher turnover is working conditions (Kraft et al., 2016; You & Conley, 2015).

In the literature search strategy section of this chapter, I explain the terms used to search databases for current literature related to the topic of teacher turnover in low-income schools. The conceptual framework/theoretical foundation section contains an explanation of the theory of human capital and how it relates to teacher turnover. In the literature review related to key concepts and variables section, I discuss the common themes found in current literature related to teacher turnover in low-income schools.

Literature Search Strategy

I searched multiple databases to locate literature to review for this study. The databases were Thoreau, ERIC, Education Source, SAGE Journals, Taylor and Francis

Online, and Google Scholar. Variations of *teacher turnover* and *low-income* were used in the searches. The search terms used to locate literature were *teacher turnover, teacher attrition, teacher retention, low-income, urban, low socioeconomic status,* and *disadvantaged students*.

Conceptual Framework/Theoretical Foundation

The conceptual framework of this study was human capital theory. Human capital theory can be used to explain factors that influence teacher's decisions to remain in the classroom, such as job security, the environment of the school, rapport with colleagues, support from administration, and the motivation of the students (Grissmer et al., 1987). Developing human capital theory, Kirby et al. (1993) found that people work where they can receive the most satisfaction in their job. Job satisfaction includes factors such as more money, career advancement, or relationships with colleagues (CITE). Over time, job satisfaction at a school can change based on colleagues and administration leaving or changing positions or changes in the school environment, so choosing to remain at the school is a continual process and not a one-time event (Grissmer et al., 1987).

A teacher thinking about leaving a school should consider the cost of leaving the current school. The more years a teacher has been at a school, the more human capital the teacher has accrued and the less likely the teacher is to leave the school for another school (CITE). If the teacher leaves the school, then the teacher starts at the new school with less human capital than at the previous school. When entering a new school, the

teacher will have to begin building relationships with the new staff and administration. The teacher will have less knowledge of the rituals and routines of the school. The more years a teacher is in a school, the more human capital the teacher accrues (Grissmer et al., 1987).

New teachers are more likely to switch grades while remaining in the same school due to having less human capital in a school (Brummet, Gershenson, & Hayes, 2015). The longer teachers remain at a school, the more comfortable they are at the school with the policies and personnel, and they choose to remain at the school (Elfers et al., 2006). A successful career begins with building human capital (Faria, Mixon, & Upadhyaya, 2017).

Human capital influences teacher retention. Using human capital theory as a foundation, Mason and Poyatos Matas (2016) found that Australian foreign language teachers who felt their subject was not held in high esteem and did not feel connected to the school's culture were more likely to leave the school. Conversely, the teachers who had capital and received support from colleagues were likely to remain (Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016). Player et al. (2017) found that human capital theory helps explain teacher retention because teachers who recognize and agree with the school culture are more likely to remain. In the current study, I demonstrated the importance of human capital theory as a factor in teachers' decision-making about leaving low-income elementary and middle schools for higher-income schools.

A teacher does not just build human capital when teaching at a school, but the teacher begins building human capital while in college by training to become a teacher (Bradshaw, 1998; Ismail & Anwang, 2017). Prospective teachers who study education build human capital while in college because they want opportunities to use their training for a career. Another way that future teachers build human capital while in college is that the prospective teachers may not have been a part of the labor market. The teachers may have forgone earnings to invest in education with expectations of future salary (Bradshaw, 1998; Ismail & Anwang, 2017).

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variable

Conducting this literature review, I found that many factors contribute to teacher turnover, including administration in a school and district, receiving certification through alternative methods, being a beginning teacher, mentoring, and the college where the teacher received training (Barnatt et al., 2016; Fuller et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2015; Kraft et al., 2016; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016; Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016; Rice, 2014; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Tiplic et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015). Student learning and the income level of the student population also factor into teacher turnover from low-income schools (Adnot et al., 2017; Elfers et al., 2006; Goldhaber et al., 2015; Hanushek et al., 2016). Three other factors contributing to teacher turnover are compensation, the resilience of the teachers, and the working conditions of the school (Hanushek et al., 2016; Koedel & Xian, 2017; Redding & Smith,

2016). My review of the literature did not show measures that could have been taken to retain elementary and middle school teachers in low-income schools.

Administration

One of the key factors related to teacher turnover is administration (Barnatt et al., 2016; Fuller et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2015; Kraft et al., 2016; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016; Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016; Rice, 2014; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Tiplic et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015). Administrators who teachers feel are not supportive lead to teachers leaving the classroom at twice the rate of teachers who view the administration as supportive (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Kraft et al. (2016) found that the teacher's view of administration had the strongest correlation to teacher turnover. Thibodeaux et al. (2015) also showed that administrative support was the biggest factor in teacher retention.

In a qualitative, longitudinal, case study using data collected from interviews, observations, student work, and self-assessments from the four participants, Barnatt et al. (2016) found that administration is a crucial factor in beginning teacher success. Of the four participants in the study, two were elementary school teachers and two were high school teachers. Barnatt et al. used purposeful sampling for the study with participants who had similar backgrounds to describe the experiences of the teachers in different grade levels as well as a cross-case analysis to explain individual cases and generalize the results.

Of the four factors related to teacher retention in Kraft's et al. (2016) study of 278 New York City middle schools, the teacher's view of administration had the strongest correlation to teacher turnover. Kraft et al. performed a factor analysis on various factors influencing teacher turnover. Multiple other studies support the finding that teachers' view of administrative support factors into their intention to stay or leave a school (Fuller et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2015; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016; Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016; Rice, 2014; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Tiplic et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015). Using a quantitative design with a qualitative element, Thibodeaux et al. (2015) showed that administrative support was the biggest factor in teacher retention. Thibodeaux et al. used a convenience sampling of five school districts in the southern United States and had 212 teachers respond to a survey. The qualitative data supported the quantitative data showing that administration is a key factor in teacher retention (Thibodeaux et al., 2015).

Avalos and Valenzuela (2016) used a mixed-methods study, including the use of databases, surveys, interviews, and narratives, to show that administrative support was one factor cited by beginning teachers in Chile for leaving teaching. As in Chile, a thematic analysis of 133 teachers in Australia showed a lack of administrative support factored into teachers leaving the profession (Howes & Goodman-Delahunty, 2015). Teachers in rural Alaska also stated that administration is a factor in returning to the school, according to results from a mixed methods study by Kaden, Patterson, Healy, and Adams (2016). In their study, 820 participants took a survey, and the researchers

performed member checks throughout the study to ensure validity and reliability (Kaden et al., 2016).

In a grounded theory study of nine high school teachers, Wronowski (2017) showed that low-income high school teachers who received administrative support and had involvement in decision-making are more likely to return to the school. Wronowski collected data using nonstructured interviews, continuing the data collection process until saturation, then performed member checks to ensure validity and reliability. After performing member checks, Wronowski analyzed the data using a computer program using constant comparative analysis.

As in a traditional school setting, administrative support and responsiveness to issues factor into online teachers remaining with their online school (Larkin, Brantley-Dias, & Lokey-Vega, 2016). Larkin et al. (2016) used a mixed-method approach: For the quantitative portion of the study, the 108 participants completed a survey, and to collect qualitative data, the researchers conducted focus group interviews.

A qualitative study of teachers of color in an urban school showed that administrative support was an issue, especially as it related to safety (Kokka, 2016). The 16 participants completed semistructured interviews that were recorded and transcribed using Atlas.ti (Kokka, 2016). To ensure validity and accuracy, Kokka (2016) performed member checks.

The amount of work for beginning teachers can be overwhelming, and schools who provide support have a better chance at retaining teachers (Latifoglu, 2016). Shaw

and Newton (2014) conducted a quantitative quasi-experimental study using surveys from 234 participants that showed teacher retention is higher in schools where teachers view the administrators as servant leaders. Principals providing their teachers with a large amount of freedom and who do not micromanage lead to teacher retention in a latent class analysis by Urick (2016). Urick showed that when a principal provides a more direct amount of leadership, the teachers are more likely to remain.

Burkhauser (2017) discovered that the principal is the biggest factor in teacher working conditions, as the principal sets the tone for the building. Principals with a strong leadership style lead to teachers less likely leaving the school for another school but do not lead to higher teacher retention. A principal with a positive leadership style, however, does not factor into teacher retention. Rural, urban, and suburban teachers' retention is similar when factoring for administration (Player et al., 2017). Ryan et al. (2017) discovered that stress from administration was not a factor in teacher attrition. A quantitative survey by Woestman and Wasonga (2015) found that administrative criticism of teachers leads to teacher attrition. An exploratory study with a purposeful sample of 20 former charter school teachers by Torres (2016a) showed that teachers who did not trust the principal were more likely to leave. Torres conducted semistructured interviews with the teachers and then transcribed the interviews to develop themes.

Alternative Certification

Alternatively certified teachers are affected by teacher turnover at higher rates than teachers who received certification via traditional methods (Redding & Smith,

2016). Several factors, such as support from the teacher preparation program, mentoring, salary, benefits, administrative support and collegial interactions influence the high rate of turnover amongst alternatively certified teachers (Bastian & Marks, 2017; Boggan et al., 2016; Morettini, 2016; Player et al., 2017; Redding & Smith, 2016). Some alternative certification programs which offer high levels of support to new teachers can help lead to higher numbers of teachers remaining in the classroom (Bastian & Marks, 2017; Boggan et al., 2016). Boe, Shin, and Cook (2007) found that traditional teacher preparation programs better-prepared teachers than alternative certification programs. Some low-income districts have difficulty filling classrooms with certified teachers. By recruiting, preparing candidates and providing scholarships, one alternative certification program in Mississippi has led to high retention rates in low-income schools (Boggan et al., 2016).

Teachers receiving certification via alternative methods were more likely to leave than teachers who received certification via traditional methods in a study of Belgium teachers (Dupriez, Delvaux, & Lothaire, 2016). Redding and Smith (2016) found that teachers who received certification via alternative methods leave voluntarily at higher rates than traditionally certified teachers. The alternatively certified teachers cited higher salary and better benefits as reasons for leaving teaching (Redding & Smith, 2016). Redding and Smith also found that the turnover rate between teachers received certification via alternative methods and traditional methods has grown since 2000. Player et al. (2017) found that teachers who received certification through alternative methods were more likely to leave the school. Bastian and Marks (2017) found that

alternatively certified teachers who received mentoring support from a university program showed no differences in performance when compared to traditionally certified teachers.

Papay, Bacher-Hicks, Page, and Marinell (2017) found that Teach for America teachers had retention rates similar to other beginning teachers. Teach for America teachers who excelled at teaching math in low-income schools remained in the classroom after the 2-year commitment at higher rates than other Teach for America teachers (Hansen, Backes, & Brady, 2016). Using a mixed methods approach, Heineke, Mazza, and Tichnor-Wagner (2014) found that many teachers in Teach for America remained in urban schools because of the students, support of administration, colleagues, mentors and professional development opportunities. Teachers switched schools because of administration and colleagues who were not supportive. Heineke et al. used a sequential explanatory design to explain teachers' decisions to remain or leave the classroom. The participants completed surveys for the quantitative portion of the study. For the qualitative portion of the study, the participants completed interviews.

Beginning Teachers

Lochmiller, Sugimoto, et al. (2016) found that when compared to experienced teachers, beginning teachers are more likely to leave their schools. Low-income schools struggle to hire experienced teachers, so schools hire more beginning teachers than do higher-income schools (Goldhaber et al., 2015). Steele et al. (2015) found that teachers in low-income schools are more likely newer to teaching, do not have a master's degree

and did not have graduate from an elite school. In nontraditional schools, teacher turnover of beginning teachers decreases as the school ages, because the teachers are part of the leadership in the school (Glennie et al., 2016).

Using a descriptive study, Lochmiller, Sugimoto, et al. (2016) found that beginning teachers had a higher turnover rate in Kentucky public schools than teachers with 4-19 years of experience. As in Kentucky, beginning teachers in West Virginia had more turnover than teachers with 4-14 years of experience. After the first year of teaching, 19.5 % of first-year teachers in West Virginia left teaching. After 4 years of teaching, 32 % of beginning teachers in West Virginia left teaching (Lochmiller, Adachi, et al., 2016). Player et al. (2017) showed that beginning teachers were more likely to change schools or leave teaching. Player et al. showed that administration is not a greater factor in beginning teacher retention than in an experienced teacher's retention. Ryan et al. (2017) found that beginning teachers have less probability of leaving teaching, but are more likely to change schools when compared to experienced teachers. Beginning teachers and teachers who have taught for more than 25 years have the highest rates of turnover (Papay et al., 2017).

Beginning teachers have less sway in voluntary transfer to another school when seniority is a factor (Goldhaber, Lavery, & Theobald, 2016). When compared to middle-aged teachers, beginning teachers leave at higher rates (Ingersoll, 2001). Papay et al. (2017) found that 55% of beginning teachers left the district and 70% left the school in the first 5 years.

Student Learning

Teacher turnover affects student learning (Adnot et al., 2017; Elfers et al., 2006; Goldhaber et al., 2015; Hanushek et al., 2016). Adnot et al. (2017) used a quasi-experimental design to find that teacher turnover in low-income schools in Washington DC led to increased student learning, and of the teachers who left, 40% were teachers evaluated as ineffective or minimally ineffective. Adnot et al. also found that teachers in low-income schools comprise 90% of teacher turnover for ineffective teachers. In a quantitative 2-part study of schools in the state of Washington, teacher retention has a negative relationship to both student learning and poverty. The higher the rate of attrition, the lower the academic achievement of the students. The schools with a lower rate of retention were the schools with more lower-income students (Elfers et al., 2006).

Low-income students have a low probability of having a high-quality teacher every year, according to various data that Goldhaber et al. (2015) analyzed. Teacher turnover does not affect student learning in higher-income schools as much as in lower-income schools (Goldhaber et al., 2015). When inefficacious teachers at low-income schools leave, student learning decreases because the teachers who left have experience and understand the culture of the school (Goldhaber et al., 2015). When an ineffective teacher leaves a higher income school, student learning does not decrease (Goldhaber et al., 2015). Even though many of the teachers who leave low-income schools are ineffective, student learning suffers because the teachers who replace them are new to the school and less proficient at teaching than the teachers who departed (Hanushek et al.,

2016). Teachers who are more effective in regards to student learning remain more often than teachers who are not effective in student learning (Papay et al., 2017).

Disadvantaged Schools

Chilean teachers in a study by Avalos and Valenzuela (2016) stated that because of their affinity for working in disadvantaged schools, the teachers delayed leaving the schools, but did eventually leave because of job dissatisfaction. Teachers in low-income schools switch grade assignments and have lower rates of retention than teachers in higher-income schools, according to Blazer (2015). Some reasons teachers in low-income schools cite for leaving are lack of student support at home, classroom management issues, parental communication, parental involvement in the school and student attitudes towards learning (Elfers et al., 2006).

A study of teacher retention in Kentucky by Lochmiller, Sugimoto, et al. (2016) showed that teacher retention was lower in low-income schools. A similar study in West Virginia showed that teacher retention was lower in low-income schools (Lochmiller, Adachi, et al., 2016). A study on disadvantaged students and teacher retention by Sun et al. (2017) showed that the number of teachers leaving low-income schools involuntarily increased after implementing No Child Left Behind. Papay et al.'s (2017) study of urban teachers found that 13% of teachers leave their district every year, 19% leave their school each year, 45% left their district during the first 5 years of teaching and 58% left their school during the first 5 years. Using descriptive statistics, Fulbeck and Richards (2015) showed that when teachers transfer, they are more likely to transfer to schools with high

reading and mathematics scores and high rates of retention than schools with high numbers of low-income students.

The more minority students in a school, the more likely that experienced teachers will transfer (Goldhaber et al., 2016). Goldhaber et al. (2016) also found that beginning teachers are less likely to leave a school with a high number of minorities than experienced teachers. When factoring for seniority, beginning teachers are less likely to transfer from a school with a high number of disadvantaged students (Goldhaber et al., 2016). When compared to rural schools, teachers from urban and suburban schools leave at higher rates (Ingersoll, 2001). Teachers from urban, low-income schools leave at the rate of 14.4%, while the overall rate of turnover in the study by Ingersoll was 13.2%.

Ineffective teachers are more likely to leave low-income schools than are effective teachers (Hanushek et al., 2016). Teachers leave low-income schools at higher rates than higher-income schools (Ingersoll, 2001). Smith and Ingersoll (2004) concluded that teachers in low-income schools showed less likelihood to switch schools but were more likely to leave education than teachers in higher-income schools. A study by Player et al. (2017) showed that school income level was a predictor of intent to leave teaching, where the more low-income students in a school, then the increased likelihood that teachers leave the school. Regular education teachers were 2 and 1/2 times less likely to leave teaching than beginning special education teachers. When compared to other subject areas, Mathematics and science teachers left at higher rates than teachers of

other subjects. Administration and teacher retention in low-income schools do not correlate (Player et al., 2017).

Mentoring

Studies show that mentoring helps beginning teachers remain in the school (Barnatt et al., 2016; Barnes et al., 2007; Bastian & Marks, 2017; Boggan et al., 2016; Callahan, 2016; D'Souza, 2014; Harfitt, 2015; Larkin et al., 2016; Morettini, 2016; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Tricario et al., 2015). Using a qualitative study, Morettini (2016) mentoring helped teachers remain in the classroom. To have success and a better chance of remaining in the classroom, alternatively certified teachers need a mentor for their first year of teaching. One method used by Morettini to collect data was to interview all 13 participants individually. Other methods used to collect data by Morettini were open-ended surveys, document analysis, and memos. To obtain a complete picture of the experiences of the teachers, Morettini collected data at the beginning, middle, and end of the school year.

In a study by Barnatt et al. (2016), two of the teachers in the study left the teaching profession partly due to lack of productive mentoring. The costs of mentoring are investments in teachers and help to decrease teacher turnover and also help with the retention of teachers, according to Barnes et al. (2007). Bettini and Park (2017) recommend administrators and colleagues provide support and communicate with beginning teachers. Redding and Smith (2016) found that teachers who received mentoring did not have lower rates of turnover, but that mentoring was more helpful for

alternatively-certified teachers than traditionally-certified teachers in regards to turnover. Boggan et al. (2016) found that mentoring and professional development led to alternatively certified teachers having success at the beginning of their careers.

Mentoring helps new teachers have success in teaching and leads to the new teachers staying in teaching to become experienced teachers (Callahan, 2016). Using a longitudinal, qualitative case study over 5 years of two teachers, D'Souza (2014) found that a researcher can serve as a mentor and help teachers transition from teacher preparation in college to starting successful careers. The case study was a substudy of a larger longitudinal study involving 22 case studies. D'Souza gathered data by conducting interviews, observations, analyzing teacher preparation coursework and surveys over 5 years. The teachers trusted the researcher because of the years involved in the longitudinal study and because the feedback offered by the researcher was nonevaluative. The interviews helped the beginning teachers reflect on their teaching.

A study of online teachers (Larkin et al., 2016) showed that mentoring of new teachers factors into the teachers remaining at the online school. Avalos and Valenzuela (2016) discovered that of the 18 Chilean beginning teachers in the study, only three had a mentor. Some teachers who leave teaching return. Teachers who left the classroom after 1 year and decided to return did so because the teachers wanted to make an impact on students and the new school provided a mentor and more support than did the previous school (Harfitt, 2015).

Beginning teachers who had a mentor to start the school year were 30% less likely to leave after the first year (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Teachers who received mentoring and other supports such as collaboration, common subject planning time and open lines of communication with principals and department chairs were more likely to remain in the classroom than those beginning teachers who received mentoring without the additional supports. Teachers who expressed satisfaction with their jobs and received mentoring showed a desire to return the following school year (Thibodeaux et al., 2015). Mentoring, both formally from an assigned mentor and informally from a colleague, factors into a successful beginning of a career for teachers in low-income schools (Tricario et al., 2015). The teachers wanted experienced teachers to guide them with certain problems beginning teachers face.

LoCascio, Smeaton, and Waters (2016), in a mixed-methods study of 53 beginning, alternatively certified teachers in low income schools, found that alternatively certified teachers who did not have a mentor had a better start to their teaching career than did teachers who did not fully complete the mentoring program. The teachers completed a survey, and six of the participants completed interviews. The teachers want their mentors to have trust, flexibility and empathy. Having a mentor to start the school year positively influenced the alternatively certified beginning teachers' intention to return for the next school year (LoCascio et al., 2016).

A qualitative study of 13 science, technology, engineering and math career change teachers by Morettini (2016) found that having a mentor who provided emotional

support was a reason for beginning teachers remaining in the classroom. Morettini analyzed documents, conducted interviews and gave each participant a survey. To help beginning teachers return for the second year, mentors need to build relationships with the mentees, assist the beginning teachers with classroom management strategies and guide the beginning teacher with lesson plans and curriculum (Sowell, 2017).

Professional Development

Beginning teachers who did not remain in teaching cited a lack of opportunities for professional development as one factor for not remaining in the classroom (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016). Australian teachers who were considering leaving the classroom cited few professional development opportunities as a reason (Howes & Goodman-Delahunty, 2015). Lack of quality professional development leads to teacher turnover (Loeb et al., 2005). Professional development can help schools lower teacher turnover (Odden, 2011; Shaha, Glassett, Rosenlund, Copas, & Huddleston, 2016). Teachers need professional development to be relevant to their teaching in the classroom (Farber, 2010).

Using a qualitative design, Tricario et al., (2015) found that low-income beginning teachers felt that the most valued professional development contributed to increased student learning. Tricario et al. used purposeful and homogenous sampling to identify seven participants in low-income schools. The teachers participated in a focus group and individual interviews. Tricario et al. transcribed the interview data, analyzed artifacts about the teachers and collaborated with the participants to discover themes. Participating in a teacher support program from a university showed beginning teachers

had higher rates of retention in the same low-income school than teachers who did not participate in the program (Bastian & Marks, 2017). Bastian and Marks (2017) also showed that the teachers who received a visit from an instructional coach once per month returned to the schools at higher rates than teachers who did not have a coaching visit.

Teacher Preparation

Green and Muñoz (2016) found that teacher preparation programs should prepare teachers for the difficulties of starting a teaching career. Avalos and Valenzuela (2016) found beginning teachers felt prepared to teach upon entering the workforce. In a qualitative, longitudinal study of four teachers by Barnatt et al. (2016), a beginning teacher felt prepared to teach in a low-income school because of completing observation hours and student teaching in the school where she received her first assignment. Another teacher in the same study by Barnatt et al. left her first position after 1 year because she did not feel prepared with classroom management skills. A study by Bastian, McCord, Marks, and Carpenter (2017) found that beginning teachers with high levels of conscientiousness returned at higher rates than teachers who had less conscientiousness.

Boe et al. (2007) found that teacher preparation is an important factor in helping teachers become highly qualified. Redding and Smith (2016) found that alternatively certified teachers did not feel prepared to teach. There are differences in attrition rates depending on the university where the teacher graduated (Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014). As a result of a longitudinal case study, Barnatt et al. (2016) found that teacher preparation programs should help provide teaching candidates with coping tools so that

the teachers can successfully deal with issues that arise as teachers. Teachers who start their careers better able to meet the needs of learners remain in the schools longer (Helms-Lorenz et al., 2016).

A full-time teaching internship in low-income schools was shown to help with teacher retention (Helfeldt, Capraro, Capraro, & Scott, 2015). Teachers completed a full-year internship in a low-income school instead of student teaching for a semester. The teachers who completed the internship had higher rates of retention than teachers who completed student teaching for a semester. The rates of retention were higher for the internship teachers than for other teachers who student taught in schools of various income levels. The rates of retention, 83%, were higher for the internship teachers than for other teachers in the same schools, 70% (Helfeldt et al., 2015).

Silva, Mckie, and Gleason (2015) found that teachers who participated in an internship at a low-income school, remained in the same district the following year at higher rates than teachers who did not participate in an internship. Of the intern teachers who left their low-income schools, 86 % moved to another low-income school. The students at the teachers' new schools scored higher in mathematics and reading than the students at the previous school. The new school's demographics were 9 % fewer African-American students but the same percentage of Latino students (Silva et al., 2015).

A mixed-methods study by Avalos and Valenzuela (2016) found that beginning teachers who left teaching felt unprepared to deal with students with special needs. Avalos and Valenzuela collected data over 3 years from 157 teachers by conducting one-

on-one and focus groups interviews, observations, surveys and written narratives. Teachers who completed a full-year internship described themselves as more prepared to teach and had higher self-confidence about their teaching skills (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016).

Teachers with master's degrees are more likely to leave their schools than teachers without a master's degree (Fuller et al., 2016). Player et al. (2017) found that teachers with a master's degree were more likely to leave a school, but a master's degree did not factor into retention in the profession. Many teachers who graduate from highly regarded teacher training programs have aspirations for leadership roles in the school (Rice, 2014). Krieg, Theobald, and Goldhaber (2016) found that minority teachers tended to student teach in schools where a high number of students are minority. Highly regarded teaching candidates are not as prone to student teach in districts with a large number or minority students (Krieg et al., 2016).

Recruitment, Cost and Compensation

Adnot et al. (2017) found that schools have difficulty replacing teachers evaluated as proficient or excellent with teachers who will receive the same rating. A study of the cost of teacher turnover led Barnes et al. (2007) to state that districts should monitor the costs associated with teacher turnover. When following the costs, the district personnel can see where to spend the money and how well the money helps with teacher retention. Other recommendations by Barnes et al. were that the data should be assessed over time to see trends and districts should develop retention strategies designed to keep high-

quality teachers. Low-income schools keep teachers at higher rates when teachers receive bonuses based on student learning (Hanushek et al., 2016).

Ingersoll and Perda (2009) as cited in Haynes (2014) estimate that teacher attrition costs schools in the United States around $2 billion annually. Shockley, Guglielmino, and Watlington (2006) found that in St. Lucie County School District, the attrition cost per teacher was $4,631. In Broward County School District, the attrition cost per teacher was $12,652 (Shockley et al., 2006). Merit-based pay can help a district attract high-quality teachers (Hanushek et al., 2016).

Retirement changes did little to improve teacher retention in St. Louis public schools (Koedel & Xian, 2017). A study of retention bonuses in low-income schools in Tennessee found that receiving a $5,000 bonus to remain in the same school did not affect teachers remaining in the classroom in a quasi-experimental study by Springer et al. (2016). The same study by Springer et al. found that teachers who teach subjects assessed on mandated state assessment tests were 20% more likely to stay when compared to teachers who did not receive a $5,000 bonus.

Teacher salary for online classes factors into teachers leaving online classes and returning to a traditional classroom (Larkin et al., 2016). In a study of Swedish teachers who left the classroom, Lindqvist and Nordänger (2016) found that the former teachers cited salary as a reason for considering a return to the classroom. A study of teachers in West Virginia showed that the lowest and highest paid teachers had higher turnover rates than other teachers (Lochmiller, Adachi, et al., 2016).

Teacher salary is a factor in teacher attrition (Farber, 2010; Ingersoll, 2001; Odden, 2011). Lower teacher salary correlates to higher teacher turnover in schools in California, while higher teacher salary correlates to less teacher turnover (Loeb et al., 2005). Teachers who earned more were less likely to leave teaching (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Having a higher salary correlates with less teacher movement between schools, but not with teachers leaving the profession (Player et al., 2017).

Teacher merit-based compensation correlates to teacher turnover (Springer & Taylor, 2016). Merit-based compensation did not lead to higher teacher turnover for experienced teachers but did lead to higher turnover in the second year of implementation for beginning teachers (Springer & Taylor, 2016). Teachers who received a monetary award for student performance returned at higher rates than teachers who did not receive a monetary award for student performance (Springer & Taylor, 2016). Fulbeck and Richards (2015) found that teachers are more likely to voluntarily change schools that incentivize achievement rather than transferring to schools to receive compensation for teaching low-income students. Beginning teachers had a lower turnover when merit-based compensation was based on individual performance rather than group performance (Springer & Taylor, 2016). Merit-based compensation helps reduce teacher turnover (Hanushek et al., 2016).

Resilience

In a study of Australian teachers, Arnup and Bowles (2016) found that resilience and job satisfaction factored into teachers wanting to leave the profession. In a study of

beginning teachers in Alberta, Canada (Clandinin et al., 2015), 62.5% of the teachers were not sure if they would continue teaching after 5 years. Lavigne (2014) found that for beginning teachers remaining in the classroom for a minimum of 5 years, the beliefs about students and learning changed. The teachers felt more positive about student learning and viewed the students as more positive about learning and school.

Beginning teachers who felt they did not have opportunities for advancement were likely to leave the classroom (Rice, 2014). Teachers beginning their career in a low-income school felt that reasons for a successful start to their career and remaining at the same school for the first 5 years of teaching were persistence, motivation and a strong work ethic (Tricario et al., 2015).

Working Conditions

Working conditions, such as an adequate supply of textbooks, access to technology, class size and condition of the school building, contribute to teacher turnover (Loeb et al., 2005). Working conditions also include factors such as how much time a teacher is allotted for lunch daily, how frequently a teacher can use the restroom, teacher and student safety, interactions with parents and condition of the school building (Farber, 2010). Redding and Smith (2016) found that poor working conditions did not lead to higher teacher turnover. Struyven and Vanthournout (2014) discovered that working conditions such as workload contributed to attrition of beginning teachers in Belgium. Beginning teachers in Norway with adequate supplies are less likely to leave (Tiplic et al., 2015). Working conditions factor into teacher retention (You & Conley, 2015). The

higher quality the working conditions of a school, the higher the rate of teacher retention (Kraft et al., 2016). Kraft et al. (2016) also found that working conditions correlate to teachers leaving the school, but not the profession.

A study of charter school teachers (Torres, 2016a) found that 22.5% of teachers state that unsatisfactory working conditions were the leading cause of teacher attrition. Torres (2016b), in a different study of charter school teachers, also found that teachers who were not able to meet unreasonable expectations, such as working well past the contractual time, were likely to leave the school. Teacher burnout from testing, emotional and physical stress are all factors contributing to teacher attrition (Ryan et al., 2017).

Ellis, Skidmore, and Combs (2017) found that job satisfaction factors into teachers leaving a school. Using data from 729 teachers, Ellis et al. found that new hires who received accurate job descriptions were more likely to have a better fit with the school than the new hires who did not receive an accurate job description when hired. Another finding by Ellis et al. was teachers in schools with fewer than 50% of the students from a low socioeconomic status were more satisfied with their job. The 729 teachers took a questionnaire that measured job satisfaction in regards to teaching and the school. The teachers were from diverse schools and backgrounds in the state of Texas.

A study of teachers from Belgium by Vekeman, Devos, Valcke, and Rosseel (2017) found similar results to Ellis et al. in regards to teachers with high job satisfaction are less likely to leave. Another finding by Vekeman et al. was that the socioeconomic

status of the student population factors into teacher turnover. Other studies on teacher turnover and working conditions show that the less time a teacher spends on classroom management, the lower the turnover rate (Ingersoll, 2001). Students who are not motivated to learn factors in teacher turnover (Ingersoll, 2001).

Summary and Conclusions

Many factors contribute to teacher retention in low-income schools, according to the literature. One factor contributing to teacher turnover is support from administration (Barnatt et al., 2016; Fuller et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2015; Kraft et al., 2016; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016; Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016; Rice, 2014; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Tiplic et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015). The administration supports beginning teachers by helping with issues that new teachers face. Beginning teachers who have a mentor to guide with classroom management, curriculum issues and relationships have a better chance of returning for another year (Callahan, 2016). Current and relevant professional development helps guide beginning teachers and leads to teacher retention (Tricario et al., 2015).

The training a prospective teacher receives in college factors into teacher retention. Teachers should receive the tools necessary for success in a low-income school while preparing for a teaching career in college (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Barnatt et al., 2016; Green & Muñoz, 2016). Alternatively certified teachers who receive mentoring have a greater chance of returning, but some teachers who received certification through alternative means view teaching as a temporary job, not as a lifelong

career (Player et al., 2017; Redding & Smith, 2016). The length of time a teacher is at a school factors into retention, as beginning teachers are more likely than experienced teachers to leave (Lochmiller, Adachi, et al., 2016).

The more years a teacher is in the classroom, the more their beliefs about the students change (Lavigne, 2014). Teacher turnover has a high cost for districts having to replace, recruit and mentor new teachers (Adnot et al., 2017). Whereas teacher salary and benefits are not major factors in teacher retention, working conditions, such as adequate supplies of materials and the condition of the school, do contribute to teacher retention (Kraft et al., 2016; You & Conley, 2015).

The literature shows reasons for teacher turnover such as administration (Barnatt et al., 2016; Fuller et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2015; Kraft et al., 2016; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016; Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016; Rice, 2014; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Tiplic et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015), mentoring (Callahan, 2016), professional development (Tricario et al., 2015) and teacher training (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Barnatt et al., 2016; Green & Muñoz, 2016). There is evidence in the literature as to why teachers leave low-income schools (Redding & Smith, 2016). There is not, however specific evidence in the literature as to what interventions would have led to teacher retention in low-income schools where more than 50% of the student population is disadvantaged for higher-income schools where fewer than 50% of the students are disadvantaged. This study aimed to discover interventions that would have led to teacher retention in low-income K-12 schools.

In Chapter 3 I will describe the qualitative research method used in the study to discover reasons for teacher turnover from low-income elementary and middle schools to higher-income schools. In Chapter 3 is the research design, rationale, setting and methodology. The methodology includes participant selection, instrumentation and data analysis plan.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to describe how low-income schools can implement interventions that will positively address challenges teachers face that lead to teacher attrition through the support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety as perceived by teachers who formerly taught in low-income schools. In Chapter 3, I describe the research design and rationale of the basic qualitative study. Chapter 3 also includes an explanation of my role as the researcher in this case study. In the chapter, I describe the research methodology, which includes the participant selection, the instrumentation, and the data analysis plan. Other items included in Chapter 3 are the methods used to determine the trustworthiness of the study and the ethical procedures followed to protect the participants from harm and protect their anonymity.

Research Design and Rationale

This study was a basic qualitative study (see Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2014). The research question that guide this study was: How can school leaders implement interventions to help with teacher retention rates in low-income schools, specifically relating to school culture, parental involvement, and safety?

A basic qualitative study is used to understand a larger issue (Creswell, 2012; Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2014). The larger issue in this study was teacher retention. A basic qualitative study was the most appropriate choice for this study because a basic qualitative study can help to examine the

interventions that could positively influence teacher retention in low-income schools. The boundaries of the case were that the teachers currently teach in a higher income school and formerly taught in a low-income school as well as reside and work in the same geographic area.

Role of the Researcher

In qualitative research, the researcher is the main source of data collection (Merriam, 1998; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 2014). In this study, I had the role of researcher as a nonparticipant observer. Merriam (1998) and Stake (2014) stated that a nonparticipant observer collects data as an individual not involved in the study. In this study, I collected responses to an online survey and from interviews as well as performed member checks to ensure accuracy. I did not have supervisory or instructor relationships with the participants, and there were no biases or power relationships between me and participants. There was also no conflict of interest issues with the participants because the participants taught in a different district from me.

Methodology

The methodology of this study was qualitative. In qualitative research, the researcher uses words to describe the data (CITE). I wanted to portray the experiences of the participants using the participants' own words and from the perspective of the participants by having the participants respond to an online survey and interviews (see Merriam, 1998). A qualitative researcher seeks to explore an issue where the answers are not known (Merriam, 1998).

Participant Selection

I chose the participants using homogeneous purposeful sampling. A researcher uses purposeful sampling to select participants who have the desired knowledge about the topic under study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2012; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2014). Homogeneous purposeful sampling is used to select participants who are part of a subgroup that has similar qualities or experiences and when the researcher wants to describe those qualities or experiences in detail (Stake, 2014). For this study, the participants formerly taught in a low-income K–12 school but taught in a higher-income K–12 school at the time of the study.

In qualitative research, the researcher wants to find a sample of participants with background and experience on the topic (Flick, 2007). A qualitative researcher chooses participants who either are representative or nonrepresentative examples of the issue under study (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). I chose participants who represented the issue and had comparable experiences in leaving low-income schools for higher-income schools.

The intent of the sampling was to describe how low-income schools can implement interventions that will positively address teacher attrition from low-income schools to higher-income schools. The 56 teachers I chose for this study were a mixture of K–12 teachers who taught in a higher-income school at the time of the study but previously taught in a low-income school. My intent with choosing the sample from the K–12 grade levels was to develop different perspectives on the issue of leaving a low-income school for a higher-income school.

The 56 participants allowed me to reach the point of saturation with data as well as an opportunity to provide a thick description of their experiences of the factors that led them to leave the low-income schools for a higher-income school. The participants had experiences in different low-income settings and grade levels.

After receiving Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I contacted the school district to request access to the participants for the study. I sent the potential candidates a consent e-mail asking them to participate in the study. The consent e-mail stated the inclusion criteria of having previously taught in a low-income school but currently teaching in a higher-income school for participating in the study. In the e-mail, the prospective participants received my contact information and were told they could ask me any questions they had before beginning the study. The 48 participants for the online survey received a link to the survey on SurveyMonkey via the introductory e-mail. To help identify the prospective participants who met the inclusion criteria, the first question on the survey was: "Did you previously teach in a low-income school?" Low-income was defined as at least 50% of students in a school receiving free or reduced lunch. If the candidates chose "No," then they were exited out of the survey and saw a screen thanking them for their time. If the candidates chose, "Yes," for the first question, then the prospective participants could view the consent form for the next question. After the prospective participants reviewed the consent form, they saw the next question: "If you feel you understand the study well enough to make a decision about it, please indicate your consent by clicking 'I consent.'" For those who were interviewed, I sent

the participants an introduction e-mail with the consent letter attached. The interview participants responded with "I consent" to the e-mail to show that they voluntarily consented to be interviewed.

Instrumentation

The participants completed an online survey and eight additional participants completed an interview. To ensure content validity, I field tested the interview questions by providing two individuals with either an Ed.D. or Ph.D. who knew of the topic with copies of the interview questions. The two individuals did not provide data but provided feedback on the questions, including on items such as the suitability of the questions to the population and topic (see IRB, 2015). Another way I established content validity was by performing member checks with the interview data. Member checks help make sure that the responses are accurately analyzed (Merriam, 1998).

After requesting permission from the district and obtaining a list of approved schools, I contacted the potential candidates to ask about their interest in participating in the study. After identifying the participants, the participants received an e-mail stating the purpose of the study, the procedures, and the risks and benefits of being involved in the study. The district received notice that the research would occur outside of the school day. The informed consent letter given to the participants stated that participation was voluntary, they would not receive compensation, the responses would be kept confidential, and they had the right to withdraw without penalty.

I collected data for this study through an online survey and interviews. The online survey allowed the participants to describe their experiences and reasons for transitioning from a low-income school to a higher-income school. The participants shared interventions that would have positively addressed the factors that led to their leaving the low-income school. Before beginning the online survey and interview, the participants read the consent form and could ask any questions of me pertaining to the consent form and the study. Per IRB guidelines, the data from the study will be stored in an electronic, password-protected file for 5 years and then destroyed.

Upon completion of the online surveys and phone interviews, I began the search for themes by reading the data. The interview participants received the data from their interview and my analysis of the data. The interview participants had the opportunity to discuss if there were any discrepancies with meaning. Member checking helped ensure internal validity (see Marans, 1988).

Data Analysis Plan

The data from the online survey and interviews were collected, analyzed, and searched for themes (see Creswell, 2012; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Stake, 2014). Data analysis was a continuous process. The participants completed an online survey and others were interviewed. After completing the first survey, I began a preliminary exploratory analysis of the data. A preliminary exploratory analysis allows the researcher to have an overall view of the data and determine if more data need to be collected (Stake, 2014). I recorded notes and my thoughts about the data while reading through it.

Some of my initial notes and thoughts about the data as the participants from the first district responded were that few teachers were responding; many of the participants did not provide a lot of detail in their responses; and if more teachers did not respond, then the teachers from the first district would receive another e-mail. After resending the e-mail and receiving only two more responses, I sent the assistant superintendent an e-mail asking for advice on how to obtain more responses. The assistant superintendent replied that she did not have any further suggestions about collecting data in the district and that maybe the district was not the right choice for the study.

Needing to collect more data, I identified a second setting for the study. Data from the second setting were collected through SurveyMonkey. After receiving committee chair and IRB approval, I used SurveyMonkey to help identify former low-income teachers who currently teach in a higher-income school. To ensure that the participants worked in the same geographical area, a second criterion, that the teachers work in the greater metropolitan area of the study location, was added to SurveyMonkey.

I read through the online survey data one response at a time to try to determine what the participant was saying by identifying text segments. To identify themes, the text was analyzed to look for repeated words and phrases. Whenever possible, the participant's own words were used to convey accurately what they say (see Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2014). Needing to collect more data for saturation, I asked eight additional teachers from various districts to participate in individual interviews.

I analyzed the data to look for key words and phrases that helped answer the research question. The data were coded by looking for patterns, then analyzed by looking at the descriptive and interpretive accounts of the participants' responses. Several steps were involved in coding the qualitative data. The first step involved reading through the data and dividing the text into smaller segments. The next step was labeling the segments with codes, then shortening the list of codes by removing codes that overlapped or repeated. The final step in coding was reducing the number of codes to between 5 and 7 themes that emerged from the data (see Stake, 2014). Discrepant cases were used to either confirm prior knowledge about teacher turnover from low-income schools or to show that teachers who leave low-income schools for higher-income schools are atypical. Creswell (2012) stated that discrepant cases help the data become more valid.

Trustworthiness

Triangulation was used to have multiple sources of information to ensure validity and trustworthiness (Creswell, 2012; Flick, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2014). The sources to ensure triangulation were online surveys, interviews, and collecting data from teachers in different districts. Member checking allowed the participants the opportunity to analyze their data and comment on accuracy and meaning (Stake, 2014). The participants saw and commented on their text. They did not see other participants' data (Stake, 2014). All participants who reviewed their data stated that the data were accurate.

To ensure credibility, the research questions were field tested to see if there were any ambiguities or unclear items. The questions should be credible so that the data are

credible (Creswell, 2012). The professors who reviewed the questions stated that some of the questions needed to be reworded for clarity. Other methods of ensuring credibility were to check to see if the transcripts were accurate and to revisit the codes to make sure that the meaning of the codes did not shift during the study (Creswell, 2012). For intercoder reliability, another person was asked to see if they agree with the codes (Creswell, 2012).

For dependability, I triangulated the data by using multiple participants and multiple methods of data collection. The participants had the opportunity to member check the data to ensure that the descriptions were accurate. The report used a rich, thick description of the data by describing the setting. The study has transferability by generalizing the findings to a broader theory. Transferability occurs when other researchers use the findings for new cases (Stake, 2014).

Ethical Procedures

Before collecting data, the IRB approved the study. The IRB approval number was 09-21-18-0559745. The participants signed consent forms agreeing to participate in the basic qualitative study (Flick, 2007). The consent forms explained the purpose of the study, the expectations of the participants, and the methods used to maintain anonymity. The expectations of the participants in the first phase of the study were that they would participate in an online survey. For the second phase of this study, the expectations of the eight participants were that they would participate in an interview. The consent form also explained voluntary participation and that the participants could withdraw from the study

without negative consequences to employment. The participants received notification that there will be no harm to them from participating. The data will be kept in a locked drawer for 5 years and then discarded. The participants' names will be kept confidential, and to ensure privacy, pseudonyms were used instead of the participants' names to protect their identities (Flick, 2007). As soon as data were collected, the participants' names were anonymized (Flick, 2007). The participants had the opportunity for member checking. Member checking helped protect the participants by ensuring that the data were accurate (Stake, 2014).

There was no work conflict, as I did not work at the schools or districts where the study took place. Formal permission was requested from the districts to conduct the study. The letter of permission contained a request for access to the participants, the time commitment, the impact and potential outcomes of the research study. No harm or marginalization occurred to the participants in the study. The informed consent letter contained information about myself, the purpose of the research, the benefits of participating in the study, the participants' time commitment involved with the study, the risks to the participants, a guarantee that the participants names will be confidential and the participants could withdraw at any time without harm to employment (Creswell, 2012).

The participants' names were kept confidential in the study, as pseudonyms were known as an Online Survey Participant number and Interviewee number. To protect the participants, there were no locations of employment used in the study. To ensure

accuracy of results, the participants had the opportunity to read their data and debrief to analyze that the data reflect what was said and intended (Creswell, 2012).

Summary

I sought to examine how low-income schools can implement interventions through support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety as perceived by teachers who formerly taught in low-income schools. I used a basic qualitative study in which the 48 participants completed an online survey and eight participants completed interviews. I assumed the role of a non-participant observer during data collection. The participants were selected using homogeneous purposeful sampling because the participants all have similar experiences of previously teaching in a low-income school with a majority of disadvantaged students and currently teaching in a higher-income school with less than a majority of disadvantaged students.

The data were collected and analyzed from the online survey and interviews. I looked for themes by using inductive data analysis and coding. The themes emerged as the data were collected. To ensure an accurate portrayal of the participants' thoughts and ideas, I offered the participants the opportunity for member checking. The IRB approved the study before any data were collected. The participants signed consent forms and their identity was confidential. The first district received permission to conduct the study and access the teachers. The permission letter explained the purpose of the study, the time commitment and how participation in the study was voluntary. The participants could withdraw at any point without harm to employment.

In Chapter 4 I will give the results of the study. In Chapter 4 I will also describe the setting for the study and the results of the data collection. How I ensured trustworthiness during the study is explained in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to describe how low-income schools can implement interventions that will positively address challenges teachers face that lead to teacher attrition through the support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety as perceived by teachers who formerly taught in low-income schools. The research question that guided this study was: How can school leaders implement interventions to help with teacher retention rates in low-income schools, specifically relating to school culture, parental involvement, and safety? In Chapter 4, I present the setting of the study, data collection and data analysis, the results of the study, and evidence of trustworthiness.

Setting

The study occurred in three different settings and two phases. The first setting was one of the largest unit school districts in the suburbs of a metropolitan area in the Midwest of the United States. There are 20 schools in the district. The assistant superintendent approved nine schools from which to contact teachers for this study. Of the nine schools, five were K–5 elementary schools; three were sixth through eighth grade, junior high schools; and one was a high school. In the district, 24.1% of the student population is low-income. Teachers in the district had taught on average 11.8 years, and 72.1% have a Master's degree or higher. The retention rate for teachers for the 2017–2018 school year was 87.2% (Illinois State Board of Education, 2019). The six participants were a mixture of elementary, junior high, and high school teachers. All six

participants formerly taught in a low-income K–12 school but currently teach in a higher-income K-12 school. According to the district assistant superintendent, the response rate might have been low because teachers felt overworked preparing students for state testing the next month.

Due to the low response rate of teachers from the first district, after e-mailing 543 teachers three times and only receiving six responses, I expanded the study setting to include more districts. The assistant superintendent from the first district did not want the teachers to participate in interviews because she felt that interviews would be too much of an "imposition on the teachers." Data collected from the six teachers from the first district were used in the online survey. There was one teacher from the first district who agreed to participate in interviews, otherwise, the only data used from the first district were the responses of teachers to the online survey. I sent multiple superintendents requests to allow teachers the opportunity to participate in this study. After receiving no responses, the setting was expanded to include the entire metropolitan area of the study location. SurveyMonkey was used to contact 209 teachers to ask if they would like to participate in the online survey. Of those 209 participants, 42 of the teachers met the criteria of having formerly taught in a low-income school but currently teaching in a higher-income school and had valid responses. The response rate might have been low because state standardized testing was scheduled a few weeks after the study data collection period, the teachers might have been overworked, or the teachers were exhausted as spring break was only a few weeks away.

The study continued with a second phase of data collection via interviews. Nine teachers who met the criteria of having formerly taught in a low-income school but currently teaching in a higher-income school agreed to participate in an interview. Of those nine teachers, eight consented to be interviewed. One participant agreed to participate but did not respond to my further e-mails to schedule a time to interview or return any further communication.

Data Collection

The first part of this study was collecting data via an online survey. I sent a contact e-mail to teachers from the nine schools in the first district looking for participants willing to answer questions for the study. A total of 539 teachers from the first district received introductory e-mails that included a hyperlink directing the teachers to the online survey. Of the 539 teachers from the nine schools, three teachers' e-mails were returned as not valid. Potential participants read the introductory e-mail and clicked on the hyperlink to view and take the online survey. The online survey questions are located in Appendix A.

The survey was available for 2 months for the first district and 1 month for the second setting. To record data, the participants typed their responses into SurveyMonkey. The variations in data collection for the first phase of the study from Chapter 3 were that the first partner district did not want the teachers to do an individual interview but rather the partner district wanted the teachers to take an online survey to record their answers. No teachers in the first phase of the study participated in an oral

interview. All teachers in both the first and second setting took the online survey. In the second phase of the study, eight teachers also participated in a phone interview.

After receiving IRB and committee chair approval for the first phase of data collection, I sent 539 teachers from nine schools an e-mail introducing the study and asking for participants. Twenty teachers clicked on the link for the survey. Only 6 of the 20 teachers met the criteria, consented, and completed the online survey. Two potential participants chose "No" for the first question, so they did not complete the survey because they did not meet the criteria for formerly teaching in a low-income school but currently teaching in a higher-income school. There were six participants from the first setting and 42 participants from the second setting. The second setting had 209 potential participants who answered the first question on the survey. Of those 209 participants, 50 participants met the criteria of having previously taught in a low-income school but currently teaching in a higher-income school and completed the survey. After reading through the data from the 50 participants, the removal of eight responses occurred. Based on their responses, two teachers did not meet the criteria for the study even though they had stated that they met the criteria in Question 1. Their responses were not included in the final data analysis. The other six responses did not count because the participants either did not answer the questions or wrote gibberish.

Needing more data because the first phase of the study did not yield enough data to thoroughly answer the research question, I began a second phase of the study. After receiving committee and IRB approval, nine teachers who met the criteria of having

previously taught in a low-income school but currently teaching in a higher-income school agreed to participate in the study. Of those nine teachers, eight consented to be interviewed. The interviews took place over the phone. I sent the eight participants the consent letter via e-mail, to which they responded, "I consent." Times were arranged with each participant to be interviewed. To ensure an accurate transcription of their responses, the phone interviews were recorded via computer and the phone on speaker. After recording the interviews, the responses were transcribed. Data were collected from 48 teachers from the online survey and eight teachers from the interviews.

Data Analysis

After teachers responded to the online survey and completed interviews, I began the data analysis process. The first step was reading the answers for themes and keywords. The participants provided emic data. Creswell (2012) stated that emic data is data provided by the participants. Before coding the data, I used a matrix to help organize the data. Since the participants wrote the answers to the survey themselves in the survey, there was no need to transcribe the data because the participants had already typed out their answers. The interviews, however, had to be transcribed by listening to a recording of the interview and typing out what was said.

To obtain an overall view of the data and see if more data were needed, I took the next step of a preliminary exploratory analysis. The inductive process of coding the survey data was performed to label the data into codes to develop broad themes (see Creswell, 2012). The codes that were developed from the survey data were that teachers

left their low-income schools because of lack of parental involvement, poor student attendance, insufficient resources, minimal support for teachers, low pay, administration, building relationships with parents, supportive colleagues, and lack of student engagement in learning, but no data stated what interventions would have increased teacher retention in low-income schools. Teachers left their low-income schools, according to the data from the interviews, because of geography, administration, and salary. The codes for the interventions that would have helped their low-income schools with teacher retention were building relationships, consistency with discipline, and transparency of administration.

The first step in coding was to read the responses to the surveys and interviews to obtain an overview of the data. The second step was to determine the meaning of each participant's responses by asking, "What is the teacher saying?" The third step was to code the data by designating meaning to the text segments. The codes were in vivo codes, which means that the codes were in the participants' own words (CITE). The codes were also lean codes, meaning that only a few codes were used to then work to broad themes (see CITE). The fourth step was listing the code words by grouping the codes, searching for superfluous codes, then shortening the codes to a smaller number. The fifth step was to look at the data with the code list and ensure that the data backed the codes. The sixth and final step was to shorten the list of codes to a final list using data that the participants discussed most frequently (see Creswell, 2012).

The three main emergent themes from the survey that showed why the participants left their low-income district were (a) support of parents, (b) support of administration, and (c) inadequate resources. The three main emergent themes from the interviews for why teachers left their low-income schools were geography, administration, and salary. Themes from the interviews for the interventions that would help low-income schools increase teacher retention were increasing parental involvement and support by building relationships, listening to teachers, administrative consistency with discipline, salary, and administrative transparency. The themes are shown in the Table 1.

Table 1

Inductively Developed Thematic Categories

Research Question	Key Terms	Themes
Challenges	• Support • Parents • home • lack	Support of parents
	• Students • kids • home • hard	Support of administration
	• Lack of resources	Inadequate resources
Why did you leave?	• Geographic location • Closer to home • Something different • Relocation • The commute	Geography
	• Vision of the district • Treated teachers • Lack of support • Lack of respect • Not listen	Administration
	• Low pay, funding	Salary

Table 1

Inductively Developed Thematic Categories

Research Question	Key Terms	Themes
How to increase teacher retention	• Build on parent strengths • Location • Accountable • Go between • Informal functions at school • More supportive	Increasing parental involvement Listening to teachers
	• Jumped to conclusions • Discipline • Inconsistency • Slipped	Administrative consistency
	• Business as usual • Paycheck	Salary
	• Money • Salary • Discipline • Reassignment	Administrative transparency

Four of the interviewees were male and four were female. The interviewees were between the ages of 30 and 55 years old. Seven of the 8 interviewees were married, and one interviewee was divorced.

Results

There were five questions approved by the committee and field tested that were used in the interviews. The first question was a background question: Why did you leave your low-income school? The interview responses varied from the survey responses. The top three responses on the online survey for why teachers left their low-income school were a lack of parental involvement, poor student attendance, and insufficient resources. The emergent themes for the background question were geography, administration, and salary.

Geography

One theme that emerged as to why the teachers left their low-income school was geography. Some of the interviewees lived far away from their low-income school and wanted to work closer to home, while others lived far away from friends and family and wanted to move closer to friends and family.

Interviewee 1 said that the main reason that he left his low-income school was because of geography, “We actually didn’t leave because of any problems or concerns. It was a geographic location. We were not dissatisfied with it.”

Similar to Interviewee 1, Interviewee 2 also stated that geography played a role in her leaving her low-income school, “Trying to get closer to home.”

One of the primary reasons that Interviewee 3 left his low-income school was also geography and wanting something different in his life, "Honestly, where I grew up just a lot of racism, sexism. Lots of inequity and things like that. Good ole' boy system and what not. Growing up in that for my whole life I wanted something different." Interviewee 3 also wanted to move closer to his wife's family, "And also my wife is from the area (where we wanted to move), so I was like absolutely let's move up to where you came from. So that was kind of the reason for leaving." The teaching experience of Interviewee 3 is similar to the experience of teachers in a study by Kraft et al. (2016) which showed that how teachers view administration factors into teacher turnover.

Similar to Interviewees 1, 2 and 3, Interviewee 6 left her low-income school because of geography and when she relocated, she did not apply to any low-income schools:

> A relocation kind of a thing and I will say it was interesting when we left that we didn't even look in low-income areas when we moved. Once we came to the area (where we now live), we only looked at suburbs. We were ready for a change at that point. We left because of relocation and we didn't apply to any of the same kinds of schools because it feels really tall. You are bumping into walls all the time trying to help the kids and it feels a little bit impossible I think in low-income schools as a generalization.

Interviewee 6 felt frustration with teaching in a low-income school and wanted to experience a different teaching environment, so she did not seek to return to a low-

income school after moving. A study of Chilean teachers by Avalos and Valenzuela (2016) showed that the teachers enjoyed working with low-income students but because of job dissatisfaction the teachers eventually left the low-income schools.

Interviewee 7 stated that he also left because of geography, "The commute. I lived (far away) and I was commuting with traffic about an hour and a half over to (the towns where I worked). So that was one of the primary reasons I wanted to leave." The theme echoed by five of the teachers was that they left because of geography. For two of the teachers, geography meant that they lived in a different part of the country than the rest of their family and that they wanted to be closer to family. The other three teachers had a long daily commute which can be difficult when having to balance family, life and work.

Administration

Another theme in why teachers left their low-income school was administration of the school or district. As stated in the literature review, the teacher's view of administration correlates strongly to teacher turnover (Kraft et al., 2016). A study by Thibodeaux et al. (2015) showed that the biggest factor in teacher retention is administrative support. Part of the reason why Interviewees 2, 4 and 5 left was because of administration.

Even though geography played a role in her leaving, Interviewee 2 stated that the main reason she left her low-income school was because of administration not dealing with student behavior, academics and other issues in the school:

> Administration. More administration than anything else. I just didn't like the vision of the district. I felt like the district wasn't taking the improvement of the kids that it needed to. It was more worried about just making things happen. Covering up the bad stuff and not really addressing what needed to be done with children's improvement and behavior and academics.

The experience of Interviewee 2 showed that if administration were to deal with student behavior and academics to address issues and help the students improve, then Interviewee 2 would have been more likely to stay. Interviewee 2 did not feel that administration did what it needed to do to improve the school and that frustration factored into her leaving for a higher-income school. Interviewee 2's experience echoes studies that show that administration factors into teacher turnover (Barnatt et al., 2016; Fuller et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2015; Kraft et al., 2016; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016; Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016; Rice, 2014; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Tiplic et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015).

Even though geography played a role in Interviewee 3's leaving his low-income school, there were other factors, such as how minorities were treated and how administration treated teachers who had been there longer differently than the administration treated newer teachers. Interviewee 3 found it difficult to support some of the policies and practices of the administration in his low-income school, "Some of the stuff and the practices that were going on in the district it was just difficult for me to support, I guess." As shown in the study by Barnatt et al. (2016), administration plays

an important role in the success of beginning teachers. Interviewee 3 was a beginning teacher and he did not feel that the administration supported his growth and would help him develop into a successful teacher:

> The people who were in positions of power were male. And just the way that they approached situations specifically like how they talked to staff, how they talked to kids. Again, I didn't feel like it was appropriate. There was just kind of a double standard in which the principal. Again, it was my first year. And I remember coming to like a SIP (School Improvement Day) day staff meeting. I walked into the office and I had on jeans and a T-shirt and the principal made a comment, he goes, 'I figure a first year would dress a little nicer than that.' And I was like, 'Huh?' And he goes, 'Well I figured somebody in their first year in education would dress a little bit nicer than the clothes you're wearing today'. And I was like, 'Oh, I'm sorry. I'll go run back home. I live like two miles away. I'll change if that's what you prefer.' And in walks another teacher and that teacher was in his pajamas. Nothing was ever said. Again, so just like little things like that. That I think were frustrating. And so, I don't know what that's all about. But just kind of the way that people talk to each other.

Similar to Interviewee 2, Interviewee 3 did not feel support from administration and that lack of support factored into his leaving his low-income school. Interviewee 3 wanted his administration to be consistent with how they dealt with issues and to treat newer teachers with respect. The administration in Interviewee 3's low-income school

did not treat newer teachers with respect and that factored into his leaving his low-income school for a higher income school. If the administration had treated all teachers with respect, then Interviewee 3 might have been more likely to remain in his low-income school.

The main reason that Interviewee 4 left was also because of administration at the district level. Interviewee 4's teaching position changed from middle school teaching one subject to an elementary school classroom where she was responsible for teaching multiple subjects. Interviewee 4 did not have a say in the movement of her teaching position. A study by Wronowski (2017) showed that low-income teachers who were involved in decision making are more likely to return to the school. Interviewee 4 left because she did not have a say in the decision making involving her teaching position, nor was she ever given a satisfactory reason for the change in position:

> Movement. The unknown. The, I guess not having respect for the teachers. Doing what they want to do. I wouldn't say the building principal. I would say the superintendent and the people in district office. Them just feeling like they have the freedom to do whatever they want.

Interviewee 4 felt like the district level administration were not willing to listen to her concerns about changing schools and grade levels and the administration would not provide her with an explanation for the move from middle school to elementary school:

> I think they could have been more willing to listen. Not only to the building principal but to the union and myself about not moving me down to second grade.

> They never really gave a good reason of why they moved me and never would give me a good reason. Just kept telling me that it was for the best of the district.

Interviewee 4 taught at the school where she was transferred and then left after one year, "I stayed there for one extra year because I knew that I was pregnant and that no other job would hire me while being pregnant or else I would have left that year." If the administration had been willing to listen to the concerns of Interviewee 4 about changing her teaching position, then she might have considered staying at her low-income school. Since Interviewee 4 was not given a choice in her position change, she left her low-income school for a higher-income school. She was not actively looking for employment elsewhere until her grade level assignment changed. The low-income school lost a qualified teacher because the district level administration would not have a conversation about the reasoning behind the change in grade level assignment.

Interviewee 5 also left her low-income school after many years because she felt a "Lack of administrative support and a feeling of constant danger from the students." A study by Kokka (2016) found that that administrative support was an issue in teacher retention in regards to school safety. Interviewee 5's experience at her low-income school was similar to Interviewee 5's in that her teaching position changed without any input from her. Interviewee 5's teaching assignment was also changed from middle school where she taught one subject a day to an elementary school classroom where she was responsible for teaching multiple subjects. Similar to Interviewee 4 who left for a higher-income school after teaching elementary school in a low-income district for one

additional year, Interviewee 5 did not teach in an elementary position in the low-income school district, but rather, she resigned and left teaching for several years. Only this past school year has she returned to teaching.

Neither Interviewee 4 nor Interviewee 5 were actively looking for employment elsewhere, but decisions by the administration at the district and school levels caused the teachers to leave the low-income schools. Neither Interviewee 4 nor Interviewee 5 were satisfied with the reasons for their grade level reassignment. The grade level reassignment caused both Interviewees 4 and 5 to leave their low-income school. If administration had been more willing to discuss the reasons for the reassignments, then both teachers might have been more likely to remain at their low-income elementary schools. An intervention that would have led to Interviewees 4 and 5 remaining would have been for the administration to be more open with the teachers about the reasons for reassignment. Both teachers experienced frustration that their jobs were changing and they did not feel like they had any say in changing positions nor were any explanations provided by administration as to the rationale behind the moves.

Interviewee 8 stated that he felt that the administration and his colleagues at his low-income school were supportive and that "I really liked being there. I really liked the staff. I liked administration. They were very helpful to me. They gave me my first chance and they were very supportive." Interviewee 8 was a new teacher when he began teaching at his low-income school. A study by Barnatt et al. (2016) showed that administration factors into the successful beginning of a career for new teachers.

Interviewee 8 felt that his administration supported him and allowed him to successfully begin a change in career to teaching, but the main factor for Interviewee 8 leaving was salary.

Salary

A theme that developed from the online survey and interviews was the theme of low pay. Hanushek et al. (2016) and Springer and Taylor (2016) found that teacher compensation factors into teachers leaving low-income schools. Online Survey Participant 2 from the online survey cited, "Low teacher pay" as a challenge faced by formerly teaching in a low-income school. Not making enough money was a reason why Online Survey Participant 9 from the online survey left teaching in a low-income school, "My poor pay is why I left."

Seven of the eight teachers who participated in interviews said that salary was not the primary factor in leaving their low-income school. The one teacher from the interviews whose response correlated similarly with some of the responses from the online survey as to having left their low-income school because of low salary was Interviewee 8. The main reason, according to Interviewee 8, that he left his low-income school was because of salary. Teaching for Interviewee 8 was a career change, so he was making significantly less money than he did in his previous career and wanted his compensation as a teacher to be closer to his compensation in his previous vocation:

> I would say the number one reason would be salary. There was a considerable difference in pay. The backstory to me being in education was I spent 20 years in

> a different field. This was like a change of career, so when I left my prior job and then went to the low-income school, I took a significant pay decrease, a significant cut. It really did not have any bearing on my enjoyment or anything to do with the school or the district. It really boiled down to getting back to that pay grade where I was at before.

Echoing the theme of Interviewee 8 leaving his low-income school because of salary, Online Survey Participants 10, 18, 29, 33, 34, and 38 from the online survey agreed with the sentiment of low pay factoring into their leaving their former low-income school, "Paycheck," "I left because of the pay not being enough," "Lack of pay," "Money," "Money, poor funding" and "Money." The former low-income teachers stating that they left the low-income school because of the low pay, echoes the literature in studies by Hanushek et al. (2016) and Springer and Taylor (2016).

Interviewee 8 felt that higher salary would help with teacher retention in low-income schools. Interviewee 8 did not leave because of a lack of support from administration, but rather the difference in pay was the main factor in his leaving his low-income school:

> It's a bummer to say that it boils down to money, but I think that's a big thing too. I think if I stayed, I would have been at about $39K and I went to (my current) school. I started at $53K. Now, if that happened at (my prior school), chances are I probably would have stayed. I had a 20-minute drive to (my former school)

> as opposed to a 40-mile drive to (my current school). It really stinks to say that things boil down to money, but a lot of times it does.

Interviewee 8 was surprised that he left a larger low-income school district for a smaller district and that his pay increased substantially,

> I was very surprised that a small school district where I went could pay that way they did compared to a larger school district like (my previous one). For me to start at that dollar amount was great. I couldn't really, I could not turn it down. There's no way I could say, boy thanks for the opportunity, but I'm going back to (my last school). I had to do it. I had to make the jump.

Interviewee 8 feels that the low salary can be a hindrance in hiring and retaining teachers for a low-income school district,

> So when a new teacher comes in and they're starting anywhere from whatever it is, $32K to $35K, that's a tough salary to start at. I'll go back to that first question you had. I was kind of a different situation. I started there I was 44 years old. I had a 20-year career somewhere else. I knew I would come in making less money, so I kind of always had the thought of I probably wouldn't have stayed because I saw the pay scale and then where the pay was going and I probably would have followed the money regardless.

The low-income school that Interviewee 8 left has not been fully staffed for several school years. An intervention that will help the district attract and retain qualified teachers is to seek alternative methods of compensation, such as increased benefits, to

attract and retain teachers who want to be there. When the salary disparity is so great, then attracting and retaining qualified teachers is a challenge that many low-income schools cannot overcome, so the school is understaffed, and student learning suffers because the students are not being taught by a qualified teacher.

If the pay were similar at his low-income school, Interviewee 8 would have liked to stayed at his low-income school, but could not pass up the opportunity for a higher salary,

> But you know what, if things were all equal, I really liked my position and my part at (my previous school). If the pay was the same as at (my current school), there's a strong chance I probably would have stayed. I think administration really did a great job. I really enjoyed everyone's kind of enthusiasm. I thought (the superintendent) and (assistant superintendent) were very supportive of teachers. I think they understand they kind of have a tough position in front of them with teacher turnover. I feel like that's kind of a revolving door. There's probably always going to be a revolving door. I don't know if that's because of, I wouldn't like to say it's because of culture. I think it's just kind of because of pay. I think there's a good positive culture there. If you can find it, you can build off of it. You can make each year better than the last.

Dealing with student fights and student's hitting teachers led Interviewee 8 to feel that working at the low-income school for such little pay was not worth it, "That day

when (the female student) hit (the teacher), this isn't worth $38 grand a year. There's a lot that goes into that. You look at the paycheck and yeah, it's a bummer."

An intervention that would have allowed Interviewee 8 to remain at his low-income school was a more competitive salary. If Interviewee 8 had received compensation similar to what he receives at a higher-income school, he would have remained at his low-income school. When a teacher is making $20,000 less teaching in a low-income school than the teacher can make in a higher-income school, it is very difficult for the teacher to pass on the opportunity for a greater salary.

Interviewee 7 stated that finances were not the main reason for leaving, as the pay for a beginning teacher was similar in his new district when compared to his low-income district:

> You know the contrast between where I was and where I am wasn't financially that stark. It wasn't too much more money in the system but there's more now after 10 years of teaching. Back then there wasn't much of a differential.

Increase Parental Involvement Through Building Relationships

Farber (2010) found that parental involvement factored into teacher retention. Ratliffe and Ponte (2018) found that parents who were invited into the classroom were more involved and felt like they were more a part of the school community. Ahmann (2017) found that parents wanted to be connected with their child's school, but the parents wanted the school leaders to be accountable and transparent. Several participants in the online survey stated that one of the greatest challenges they faced teaching in a

low-income school was the low participation from parents. Online Survey Participant 1 from the online survey stated that the reason teaching in a low-income school was challenging was because of trying to involve parents in the educational process, "Low participation of parents in education, little to no support at home" echoing Elfers et al. (2006) who found that the backing of parents and communication factored into teachers leaving a low-income school. Themes from the interviews correlated with the online survey in regards to parental involvement. Interviewee 1 found that the parents were supportive of him as a new teacher, which surprised him, because he was a young teacher, and the parents were older than him, but the parents looked to him for advice,

> The parents were as supportive as they were able to be based on the knowledge that they had. This is when we worked in a school system in (the Southwest) and we had a high Hispanic population. From what I found the parents were pretty trusting of me as a professional which was interesting because I was 23 years old and a lot of the parents were a lot older than I was and were looking to me for guidance and for parenting advice. I would say the actual quantitative and qualitative level of involvement was not super high just because I think there weren't available for that, but they were verbally supportive to the best that they were able to be.

Ratliffe and Ponte (2018) found that parents who were invited into the school to discuss their culture felt more a part of the school community. To increase parental involvement in his low-income school, Interviewee 1 felt that administration should

validate the parents by building on the strengths of the parents and validating the parents and what career they have. To help build connections with parents and increase parental involvement in the learning process, parents should be invited to career day to discuss what skills they need for their jobs, so that they feel validated and that the students see that their parents receive validation from the school,

> I think that something that would be really important for school leaders in a high poverty area is to try to build on parent strengths. Everybody has some and to recognize what type of involvement that they can have and validate that. So, if somebody is working in a low paying job that they don't take a whole lot of pride in. Still have a career day not all about doctors and lawyers but a career day where someone is talking about what they do and the skills that they need to do what they do just things like that where you are able to validate that the school is not an entity that is the supreme untouchable being but is accessible and we want to have connections and we want to validate the parents work and the support that they give and the overcoming nature of what they provide as opposed to...asset based thinking rather than deficit based thinking.

The response of Interviewee 1 shows similarities to a study by Rothrock (2017) where a teacher helped to build connections with the community and increased the learning of the students by making culturally relevant connections to the students' culture. The teacher helped to build connections with the students by placing an importance on the students' culture. Another way the teacher helped to build

connections to the students was to have the students take on a place of ownership with their learning in the classroom. Schools can help build connections with the community and increase teacher retention rates by implementing interventions such as the teacher in the study by Rothrock.

Interviewee 2 found that parents were not very involved with their child's education at a low-income school because of factors that were beyond their control. Interviewee 2 felt that administration tried to involve parents, but that many parents were not able to be very involved with the school because of their home situation or work schedule:

> I felt like our school tried to pull parents in, they just weren't successful. When you have a community where both your parents work full time, in order for, or if you're in a single-family home, or if your family is incarcerated, it's kind of hard to find opportune times for parents to come in. I don't know if it's so much district didn't have enough to do with it, as it was just the circumstances of where the school was located.

Interviewee 2 felt frustrated because of low parental involvement. If the reasons for low parental involvement are the outside factors cited by Interviewee 2, then maybe the school could focus on building better connections with the students before focusing on building better relationships with the community. The low-income school where Interviewee 2 left could try to make better culturally relevant connections to the students in the classroom, such as in the study by Rothrock (2017).

Interviewee 4 stated that the low-income school should have held "Parents more accountable and making them do certain things. As far as checking their grades online and not catering to all their needs. Kind of putting some accountability towards them instead of all on the school."

Interviewee 4 felt that parents who did not have access to online grading at home should have the option to come to the school to check grades. The school should provide help for the parents to become more involved in the learning process to support their child:

> Then I would say that maybe more communication should have been sent home to groups of parents. More parents should have been invited to the school not only for like games and like social events but more so them being able to use the computers or them being able to just get help one on one. Some of them don't know how to help their own kids. So maybe they would just need some support first.

Interviewee 4 did not feel supported by parents in the learning process for the students and experienced frustration by not having parents involved. Echoing the theme from a study by Torres (2016a), Interviewee 5 found that working conditions were a source of frustration for her because she was not able to contact many of the parents because many of the phone numbers in the school system did not work. Interviewee 5 also stated that administration should have attempted to make the parents more

accountable, “Probably should have had some kind of mandatory parental meeting. Set the ground rules. Never, half the time there were no phone numbers to contact anyone.”

Interviewee 6 stated that parental involvement was low for the students who struggled the most. The students who did not struggle received plenty of parental support,

> I would say any of my kids that were super low or super struggling below to minimum parental involvement. Plenty of parent involvement from higher end of a couple of bright kids. It was a weird little school that I worked in. We pulled from a lot of public housing and we pulled from one pocket of beautiful homes with families of doctors or lawyers as a parent. So those parents would come in all the time and I was grateful for it but the parental involvement from all the kids who really, clearly were struggling, there was nothing.

The feeling of frustration experienced by Interviewee 6 is similar to the experience of teachers in a study by Elfers et al. (2006) which showed that some reasons teachers leave low-income schools are because of insufficient support of school at home, poor parental communication and low involvement of parents in school. Working conditions at the school were a source of frustration for Interviewee 6 because parents would not keep their sick children home, but would send them to school,

> They would send their kids to school when they were super sick. We’d try to send them home and they’d be like, ‘We can’t come and get them. You’re going

> to need to keep them.' And it was overwhelmed. I would have a super low kid in class with a 103 fever.

There was a large contrast in the students who received more parental support at home and those who did not receive parental support at home according to Interviewee 6, "It was the complete polar opposite of the other kids in class. They've had breakfast. They've been practicing flashcards at home with their parents."

Interviewee 6 felt that administration should have tried to build better connections between home and school so that parents would be more connected with the school and be better able to support their children,

> You know, there weren't any liaisons or some sort of go-between between the school and the families. The district where (my husband) works right now. They have people assigned to work with families and I am over at a (high school) right now as a Para. I don't know if it's an outside company, but they have somebody that touches base with these families. There was nothing like that in place. Sometimes, when I had the time, I would go to try to connect with these families outside of the school day. Some sort of program where school is acknowledging 'You know what, if we could connect with these families' and even sending someone do their house once a month to make sure the parents were on the up and up. We have parent teacher conferences. Make sure you sign up. I can help you with that. Something like that would have resulted in a better situation for some of these kids. I'm not sure if all of these parents would have

> responded, but I'm sure some of them. There was a low education level among the parents and if they don't have the skill set to know. Check your email. Read all the way through. If someone comes along and says, 'Let's do this. We're on your side", they may have responded in a better way.

The response of Interviewee 6 is similar to a study by Sibley and Brabeck (2017) which showed that schools can do a better job of being involved in the community. One way that schools can better involve parents according to Sibley and Brabeck is to hold parent-teacher conferences in the community instead of just at school. Sibley and Brabeck stated that schools should realize that the culture of the students and parents can contribute to a positive learning experience for the students.

Interviewee 7 stated that he did not have much interaction with parents during the one year that he taught at a low-income school, and that he did not try to involve parents more because he did not feel that administration supported him as a teacher, which factored into his leaving his low-income school, echoing studies by Kraft et al. (2016); Sutcher et al. (2016); and Thibodeaux et al. (2015) which showed that support from administration factors into teacher retention. Interviewee 7 would have liked for administration to show more support to the specials teachers instead of making them feel like their subject was not important, "Well I think I saw maybe one parent the entire time I was there. I teach music. I didn't have any involved parents."

Interviewee 8 felt that administration did a decent job with trying to involve parents, but that they perhaps could have done more by having more informal functions

at school to involve the parents and make the families feel supported and part of the school community,

> I think they did a decent job starting with meet the teacher nights and advertising for report card pickups. I wonder if they could have done more community nights. Something that would just give the kids and parents the opportunity to come in and maybe on a low-key level have discussions. I thought I saw a story once where a school did something on a Friday night. It was something called like Leave the Lights on. And the school would close. It would be about 7 o'clock. They would keep the gym open. The kids could come shoot baskets. They would sell hot dogs and chips. It was kind of like a YMCA feel. An open gym. But maybe if there was something that was just out there in the community that they knew that we're there to help and they could come in freely without any thought of we're going to punish your child. We're going to tell you how bad he or she is doing. Maybe a place to hang out. You can have a chance to talk to mom real quick and say so and so's doing great here but I'd really like to see them turn the corner with this. So maybe where it's not always structured. Parent-teacher conference is set up to where you're going to say Joey got a D and this is why he's got a D because he's missing all these assignments.

Interviewee 8's response corresponds to the responses of other teachers in that low-income schools need to do a better job of building relationships with the community. Realizing that the parents might not be available during the school day, schools might

need to stay open later to help support parents to build connections that will assist the parents in the learning process with their children. The school building does not have to be the only place where relationships are built. The teachers, administration and students can go into the community to serve the community.

Interviewee 8 felt to increase parental support and student growth in the low-income school, the low-income school should have more of a focus on social-emotional learning. The low-income school would have a lesson once a week for the students, but maybe the social-emotional learning could be included in the lessons every day,

> Maybe if it was more social-emotional learning-based. If we had that component outside of just every Wednesday morning when it was just the cool tool. I'm at this rural high school now and we do daily social-emotional lessons. We do a lot of standards-based grading around social-emotional lessons and learning and standards and such. I think if that was established that might help out where it's not just grades. The community and the parents know that we're here to help them in more ways than just English or social studies or science. I think that could be a big help.

Interviewee 1 stated that building relationships with parents by showing them that educators want to partner with parents to help the children succeed is key to helping parents trust the school. Some parents may not be trusting of the school because they were not successful in school, so the school needs to show the parents that the school is there to help the students succeed with help from the parents. Administrators and

teachers want to help the students be successful, and the school needs to build trust with the parents,

> I do think there is always an opportunity to try to be proactive and reaching out to invite those parents in to let's say meet them in the community and hear from them. Relationships first are such an incredibly important part of that process. Anything they can do to establish a trusting relationship and help parents learn to trust us and how we see them as a critical asset of their child's learning. It's not something that we want to do in spite of them and not something that we want to do against them but it's something we want to do with them. As soon as that is overcome, I think in some cases some parents were not highly successful in school so the sentiment that they have in school may not naturally be one of trust or positivity based on their own experiences so to try to get beyond that a little bit so maybe school looks a little bit different than when you were here. We're not all about punishment and working against you sometimes I think we have to change the narrative with the parent.

Sometimes it might be necessary to change the mindset of the parents to build relationships. If a student struggles with following the expectations of the school or with low achievement, then the parents may have interactions with the school that could be seen as negative. If the school can change the narrative to one of helping the students be successful instead of the student is always doing something wrong, then the schools will have a better chance to build positive relationships with the parents. One intervention

that will help low-income schools build better relationships with parents is to help change the narrative that the school has with the parents. The school should try to show the parents that the school is there to help the student succeed and here are some ways that the student can improve to be more successful.

Interviewee 2 felt that administration did all they could to help support teachers with resistant parents, but that there was only so much that administration could do because,

> I don't think anything administration wise they could have done. I feel like administrators have their hands tied. All the things they can't do because of (certain laws regarding discipline). All the things they can't do anymore. They're kind of tied that way. I wish administrators could be a little bit more active in the fact of, you know, house calls and things like that, but it's just not doable in our society, I guess.

Interviewee 2 felt frustration that administration did not do more with discipline and involving parents. Administration was the main reason why Interviewee 2 left her low-income school. Interviewee 2's experience equates to a study by Sutcher et al. (2016) that found that teachers who did not feel supported by administration leave at higher rates than do teachers who feel supported by administration.

Interviewee 3 also felt that the administration did the best that they could. One area that Interviewee 3 felt would have helped with administrator support of teachers

would have been for administration to be more vulnerable, especially when it came to dealing with difficult situations:

> I think they tried the best they could. I don't think anybody was there to like maliciously harm kids or to try to make their lives difficult. I just think some of the situations that or some of the barriers I didn't know what to do. And so, we were grasping at straws and I think as a young educator I think to just have a little bit more support. To sit down and talk and say like you know I don't know where this is going to go either. I don't really know what to do. Maybe a little bit of that vulnerability. To not always have the answer. I'd be okay with that. I think would have been nice.

Interviewee 3 wanted the administration to be more open and honest about the issues that they faced in a low-income school. Instead of feeling like he was the only person who did not have the answers to the problems that were present in the low-income school, Interviewee 3 wanted to know that administration was on his side and that the administration and teachers working together could help to solve some of the problems. Administration could support the teachers by showing the teachers that administration and staff would work together for the betterment of the students.

Interviewee 4 felt that administration would not listen to all sides of a story but would instead side with parents without taking into account all the facts of the case. Administrative support from administrators listening to teachers was something that Interviewee 4 wished she would have received from her administration,

> I think they should have been more supportive of the teachers. And they should not just have jumped to conclusions or just said to the teachers that they were wrong and that the parent was right. I think that everything should have been looked at. I think that they weren't very supportive in that department. They kind of always chose the parents as far as like higher administration. Maybe not so much the building principal but higher up they did.

Since Interviewee 4 did not feel that administration was supportive of her in her classroom and acquiesced to the parents instead of supporting her, it created a push factor in her leaving her low-income school district for a higher-income school district. Interviewee 4 wanted to feel like district level administration supported her and would help her with difficult parents. Instead of making Interviewee 4 feel supported, she felt like the administration would yell at her and tell her that she was not doing her job.

Interviewee 5 echoed the theme of support from administration, specifically in regards to supporting the teacher in the classroom with the curriculum and learning. Interviewee 5 is an example of teachers who left their schools because of lack of administrative support in studies by Kraft et al. (2016); Sutcher et al. (2016); and Thibodeaux et al. (2015). Interviewee 5 felt that administration needed to support the teachers and the curriculum that the teachers needed to teach,

> Support the curriculum. The work needed to be done. Not just give them extra work, some other project, some other work to do that never got done either. And

> then if that was the case, they were required every single student who didn't do any kind of work, which became a bookkeeping nightmare.

A 2017 study by Burkhauser showed that the principal sets the tone for the school culture. The principal sets the tone for the building and if the teachers feel like the administration is consistently giving them more work, then the teachers do not feel supported because the working conditions are worsening. If the administration were more supportive of teachers in the curriculum and what the teachers needed to teach the students, then Interviewees 4 and 5 might have been more likely to remain in their low-income schools.

Interviewee 6 said that schools should try to find ways to involve parents in their child's education, and that then the parents might not be as resistant to help from the teacher and school. Ways to better involve low-income parents might be to partner with community organizations to offer support for students who complete the school work. Interviewee 6 felt that threatening the students to complete the work did not lead to more students completing the work, but involving the parents might increase student learning,

> At (my husband's) school, they had a summer worksheet packet. If the kids did it and brought it back within the first 2 weeks of school. The school had partnered with TGIFriday's or with a local pizza place. I think for some of those families sometimes they really do mean something to them. Like a free Domino's pizza if you turn this packet in. I don't know how that would be implemented on a case-by-case basis with each school and if there's only certain kids you want to do that

> with but other than that sometimes I feel that parents. You can threaten or be kind as much as you want. Unless you have a good incentive they're not that interested.

One intervention that can help with teacher retention in low-income schools is for the school to help provide parent's access to community and school-based resources. Sibley and Brabeck (2017) stated that one method of improving school and community relationships is to show the members in the community where to access resources. The resources can be things such as health care, homework help or other community-based services. Parents may not know what resources are available or how to access the resources, so the school can help the parents with access to the resources.

Interviewee 7 felt that he did not have administrator support as a teacher, so he did not attempt to involve parents because he dealt with the issues in his class and "I guess I never considered it enough of a problem beyond the interactions it was something I could take care of in school. Knowing that I wasn't getting administrator support I didn't consider reaching out to them further." The experience of Interviewee 7 is similar to the experiences of teachers in a study by Burkhauser (2017) which showed that the biggest factor in working conditions in a school is the principal. The principal of Interviewee 7's school set the tone by telling Interviewee 7 that his subject was not important. The principal viewed Interviewee 7's classroom as a "Bathroom break." Knowing that administration did not support him, Interviewee 7 did not attempt to build

connections with the families and community and Interviewee 7 felt that his efforts would have been for naught.

Interviewee 8 echoed the theme of building relationships with parents to help partner through the journey of their child's education. Interviewee 8 felt that a good way to build relationships with parents would be to have more community nights at the school,

> Outside of always just having more parental meetings, maybe more community things where. I guess it's establishing relationships. So if you did continual things, maybe like once a month, if you had an open gym. And you came in, you talked to parents. They had the ability to show up too. It's not just like the one meet the teacher night and the two report card pick up nights. I think it's easier said than done. But if there was a way to really establish a rapport and a relationship with the community they might be more willing to see the teachers' side of things. I think it's just building relationships. If there was a way that administration and (the district) could build like a really strong relationship.

Interviewee 8 expressed that building connections with the parents and community could have improved working conditions, specifically in parent teacher relationships, at his low-income school. Several of the teachers felt that their low-income school could have done a better job of reaching out to the community. Even though several of the teachers who were interviewed admitted that the school did try to connect with the community, their low-income school did not do a great job of connecting the

community with the school. The school leadership either did not have the right resources, knowledge or connections to better involve the community.

Listening to Teachers

An intervention that teachers who formerly taught in a low-income school said would help to retain teachers in low-income schools was administration listening to teachers. Doll (2016) stated that leadership academies, where teachers learn to be school leaders, have helped increase teacher retention. As teacher leaders, the teachers have a say in school policy and the barrier between administration and teachers is lowered because both teachers and administrators have a say in the policies and procedures in the school learning environment. Interviewee 1 felt that teachers should have a say in the school and that that would help with teacher retention in low-income schools,

> I think it's the same thing as the whole idea of shared purpose, shared vision, shared goals and then really celebrating those successes as a collective unit making people feel like we're all working towards the same purpose and anybody's success is all of our success and we should all celebrate that together and when there are challenges or issues we all work together to try to resolve those so then we can all be part of the solution as well. That kind of unity, whatever you can do to try to get away from this idea of teachers as independent contractors is going to help people feel like this is important, I'm a part of this. This is my family.

When the students are successful, then everyone is successful according to Interviewee 1. If teachers, administration, parents and students all have the mindset of shared purpose, vision and goals, then everyone can work together for a successful school. If everyone does not work together, then that is a push factor that leads to teachers leaving low-income schools because the teachers do not feel supported by the administration or parents. An intervention that could lead to higher retention in low-income schools is for the administration to try to have everyone on the same page with regards to the vision and goals of the school.

Interviewee 2 felt like administration listened to her but that changes were not made because district level administration would not allow the principal autonomy to make the necessary changes to improve the working conditions in the school, which might lead to higher teacher retention, echoing results from studies by Ellis, Skidmore, and Combs (2017); Kraft et al. (2016); Ryan et al. (2017); and Torres (2016b):

> They would listen but nothing would ever come of it. The principal was good at listening. He wanted ideas, but I felt like his hands were tied because above him would be like, 'Nope, it's my way or the highway.' I think (the principal) at that point in time wanted to see things change and improve and have retention within his staff, but he couldn't do it. Because anything that would go wrong, he would have his hands tied.

At Interviewee 2's first low-income school, she felt like her principal listened to her concerns, but that the district level administration did not listen to the concerns of the

teachers and building principals. The district level administration's apparent lack of concern was a push factor in causing Interviewee 2 to leave her low-income school. If Interviewee 2 had felt like the district level administration were willing to implement changes based on feedback, then Interviewee 2 would have been less likely to leave her low-income school.

Interviewee 4 felt that the teacher retention rate would increase if administration showed that they cared about the teachers and wanted to retain them,

> The administration there just needs to you know I don't know handle things in different situations. And I think that they would keep more teachers that way. In my personal experience. (The union president) spoke to (the superintendent) and was like, "You're getting rid of a teacher who is not afraid of our kids, who comes, likes her job, and you're letting her go?" And then she's like, "Well, that's not my choice." Like she doesn't really seem to care. And I guess if maybe she cared a little bit more, she would keep more teachers.

Interviewees 2 and 4 had similar experience with the district level administration. Both Interviewees 2 and 4 had concerns that were not addressed. The lack of communication with regards to the concerns served as a push factor in pushing the teachers out of low-income schools into higher-income schools.

Interviewee 5 believed that teachers were treated differently based on their personal relationship with administration and that it was not fair to those teachers who followed the expectations of the school and the teacher contract echoing studies by Kraft

et al. (2016) and You and Conley (2015) which found that working conditions factor into teacher retention. Interviewee 5 stated:

> I really believe discrimination played a big part in why teachers leave. Because teachers who didn't do lesson plans, didn't submit lesson plans, had marginal reviews, were still teaching after 15-20 years. I'm not sure if they had development plans for those teachers in place, but this moving teachers from a grade level that they taught for 10 years in the district, for example, eighth grade, and moving them to third grade, in an elementary building, was their answer to just getting rid of a problem in the building.

Interviewee 5 felt like this was administration's method of getting rid of her by not allowing her a say in moving her to a different school and a different teaching assignment which echoes the results of a study by Wronowski (2017) which showed that teachers who have the support of administration and are involved in the decision making have a higher chance to return to their school. Interviewee 5 felt like the administration told her, "You're moving. Take it or leave it." Interviewee 5 also felt that administration was telling her, "You're becoming a problem, so let's see how you like going from eighth grade to third grade. Or from sixth grade to kindergarten. And provide you no resources, and you're not even qualified for early elementary education."

Interviewee 6 also echoed Interviewee 5 and the study by Wronowski (2017) by her feeling that teachers having a voice would improve teacher retention rates in low-income schools,

> Being willing to work with teachers in any way, shape, or form. I don't think administration every needs to think like oh, teachers run the building. I think that administration sees a different side of things that teachers don't see and that is crucial and important to keep in play. I think working that through with the teachers is ideal.

Interviewee 6 wanted the administration to partner with teachers to address the concerns and issues faced by teaching in a low-income school. Interviewee 6 did not feel like administration and teachers were partners in the school. Interviewee 1 stated that the administration, teachers, parents and students should have the same purpose and vision. Interviewee 6 wanted to feel like her school had the same purpose and vision but it did not. Instead of having the same purpose and vision, the administration did not work with the teachers. Interviewee 6 would have like for her principal to discuss the issues faced at the school instead of the principal "Getting mad." Interviewee 6 felt like the principal did not want anyone to question her,

> It was just an old lady principal that didn't want anyone to question her and she didn't want to be bothered. She just shut us down the whole time. She shut anyone down. How dare anyone come to her with anything.

If the principal had been willing to listen, then the culture of the school might have improved by allowing administration and teachers to work together to help with student learning.

> Administration can do so much by just listening. I feel so bad that we can't do it a certain way. But I want to at least explain to them why we are doing it the way we are. I think that overall if they could have worked to create a positive climate or culture for the teachers. We are working together for these kids. From the highest of the high to the lowest of the low and everyone in between. We want to meet these kids where they are at and take them to the next level.

The working conditions of the school would have improved, according to Interviewee 6 if the principal had been willing to listen. Studies by Kraft et al. (2016), Tiplci et al. (2015), and You and Conley (2015) show that the better the working conditions of a school, the higher the teacher retention rate. Interviewee 6 agrees that if the working conditions were better at her low-income school, then that would have made a difference in teacher retention and student learning,

> I think being a part of a team like that feels super special so when classroom situations are difficult or the pay isn't all that great or one thing that we literally had a 20 minute lunch and that was the end. It was hard but when you have a situation where you are all working together, like, lay it all down. I'm in. I want to help you kids. Creating a culture where like people are working together for the right reasons for the right end goal I think that would have made a tremendous difference. It would be super cool to have a leader that would say let's turn that around.

Interviewee 6 wanted to work in a school where teachers and administration collaborated. Facing less than ideal working conditions with not having enough time for lunch and working for a principal instead of with a principal, Interviewee 6 left her low-income school. If the administration collaborated with teachers, listened to the concerns of teachers and tried to do what was best for the students in the low-income school, the push factor to leave the low-income school might not have been so strong.

Interviewee 7 said that money was not the main issue in trying to increase teacher retention in low-income schools, but that the commute was his main reason for leaving and the working conditions were not the best because he did not feel that the principal supported his role as a music teacher:

> A lot of people think I left because of the money. I went to a building that didn't make much more money. For me it was a commute thing, but I've always been a guy of climate. And when my administrator tells me flat out to my face that I'm a bathroom break, that's definitely a thing. She was also an old school principal. The principal itself was part of the reason for the turnover for a lot of us young teachers. We just, we didn't feel supported in the specials world especially. I only have one experience that the other teachers, you know the regular classroom teachers that the third grade, the fourth grade, the seventh grade, whatever those teachers are, they weren't a fan of us either. So the culture kind of went not really from administration, but from other quote regular teachers. They didn't like us either.

Goldhaber et al. (2015) found that low-income schools have difficulty hiring experienced teachers, so the low-income schools are more likely to higher beginning teachers than higher-income schools. Beginning teachers are more likely to leave their low-income schools when compared to teachers who have more experience (Lochmiller, Sugimoto, et al., 2016). Interviewee 7 felt that the teacher turnover at his low-income school occurred mostly among the beginning teachers:

> There was a few teachers that were, this is a racial based thing, there were a very few teachers of Caucasian and a majority of them that my interactions were with African-American. Turnover was happening from all of us that were there for only a year or two all happened to be Caucasian. I don't know if that's coincidental, but it was observational.

Interviewee 7 took the teaching job at a low-income school because it was late in the summer and he needed a job after graduating from college. A study by Papay et al. (2017) found that more than half of beginning teachers left the school district within 5 years. Interviewee 7 left the low-income school district after 1 year,

> I feel like this job for me, it was late in the hiring year, and I didn't have a job yet, so I took a job. I didn't care where it was, I took a job. I feel like that's how this school is regardless of race. I took the job and either I found something else and got out or I'm still here. There were staff members who lived in the community. This was their school. A lot of us that did commute in from half hour, hour out because it was the only job we could get. And that's why part of it for me was

> turnover, it was such a commute. I felt like this school was badly and honestly a dumping ground for teachers. This is the last job some of us could get.

Interviewee 1 felt that at his low-income school teachers and administrators did not work together, and that the school leadership at his low-income school showed animosity to the teachers,

> This particular school was an example unfortunately of a little bit of animosity between school leadership and the teachers, so as much as the teachers came together to some degree opposed to the leader, the principal and assistant principal they had at the time.

Interviewees 1 and 2 both felt that if administration would have come to the teachers and been more transparent about the issues that the school faced, then the administration and teachers might have worked together for the betterment of the students. Interviewee 1 stated,

> I think it was one of these situations where even the principal could have said I really do recognize the challenges and we're all in this together as opposed to the top down approach. I think shared school-wide goals regarding attendance and achievements of different kinds may have brought people together more. Not so much helping the teachers be together but certainly helping the whole school from top to bottom be together instead of having kind of a us against them in terms of school leaders versus the teachers.

Like the experience of Interviewee 6, the administration at Interviewee 1's school did not collaborate with teachers, but instead passed down rules and expectations without teacher input. When a teacher does not have input into decisions that affects the classroom, then the teacher feels a push factor to leave the low-income school. Teachers will not have a say in every decision that affects the school, but the teachers should have some say regarding the curriculum and expectations of the students. When administration tells the teachers the expectations without any buy-in or input from the teachers, many teachers will feel frustration.

Interviewee 2 found that at her low-income school the working conditions were not very supportive to learning because some of the teachers were "Negative, unhappy" and that the

> Negativity would come out on the kids. It seems like overall people are just miserable. Administration wise, some of it comes from top down. You got a superintendent who's got their hands in everything, won't let the building administration do their job to help their staff. You're going to have some people that are not very happy. You can't make everyone happy. But if you can make your staff on board following along with what your expectations are and what you're looking to do moving forward to have improved learning and improve the environment of the school. That helps. Where I'm at now (at a higher-income school), I would say the majority of the staff are happy. But they definitely are

> more student driven than anywhere I've been. They're really focused on making sure they (the students) are successful.

In contrast to her first low-income school, at Interviewee 2's higher-income school the teachers and administration collaborate. Another area of difference between he low-income and higher-income school is the staff morale. At Interviewee 2's higher-income school, the staff have buy-in with the expectations of the school, and the school culture is better in regards to staff morale. The collaboration and staff morale were pull factors in Interviewee 2 wanting to work in a higher-income school.

Interviewee 3 felt like his voice did not matter in the school because he was a newer teacher and that is one reason why he left his low-income school, echoing a study by Player et al. (2017) that showed that beginning teachers were more likely to change schools that were experienced teachers. Administration factors into success for beginning teachers, according to Barnatt et al. (2016). Latifoglu (2016) found that administrative support of new teachers leads to higher teacher retention rates. Interviewee 3 also felt like all teacher voices should be heard as well as student and parent voices:

> I mean my experience was the higher up you were in tenure or years of experience like your voice mattered more. If you were in that spot where you had been teaching 15, 20 years, I think your voice was valued much more than somebody who was just coming out of school and into the system. I think if they would have valued all voices, and by all voices I mean even student voice, parent

> and community voice. I think there was a lot of emphasis placed on some of those like hierarchical structures of who's been here the longest and their voice might have a little bit more weight in saying what goes. And they might have had more of the ear of the administration instead of the administration kind of seeking input from all points of view and then making a determination based on all of that information.

Interviewee 3 did not feel like he mattered because he did not feel like he had a voice. If he tried to address an issue with administration, Interviewee 3 felt like administration would not value his concerns because he was a new teacher. At Interviewee 3's low-income school the administration valued the teachers who had been there longer more than newer teachers. Interviewee 3 did not have the trust of administration and that was a push factor in Interviewee 3's leaving his low-income school. Administration should value all teachers, not just teachers who have been there the longest and with whom the administration has a personal relationship. Administration should build relationships with all teachers so that everyone feels valued and is part of the same collaborative team.

Like Interviewee 3, Interviewee 4 also felt that to help with school culture, administration needed to listen to all teachers, not just certain ones. At her new higher-income school, Interviewee 3 feels like the administration allows the teachers more freedom. Urick (2016) found that schools with leaders who allowed their teachers

freedom and did not micromanage every facet of the teacher's work load, were more likely to retain their teachers. Interviewee 4 stated,

> During SIP meetings or institute meetings or any other kind of meetings, not really an administrator is sitting in there checking on us or kind of leading it. It's on the teachers being accountable. And then we have to turn in a piece of paper stating what we talked about and everything. So it's more so holding the teachers accountable without them micromanaging. I think that they should have maybe. I just feel like some teachers were extremely close to administration and if you weren't one of those teachers in that district then you weren't kind of listened to either. So it was mainly only the people who had a voice or were close to them that they cared about listening to. So maybe being more open.

Interviewee 5 also felt like Interviewees 3 and 4 that all teacher voices were not valued equally by administration, "I think that was just administration paying lip service to us. They never really took our ideas seriously."

Interviewee 7 felt that he did not have a voice because he was a new teacher and that the teachers who had been at the school for a while did not appreciate the new teachers, nor accept the new teachers. Interviewee 7 felt that administration could have done more to build the community of the school with the new and older teachers:

> It was a combination of set teachers that had been there for what seemed like multiple years. There was the well-established teachers and then there was routine turnover including myself of new teachers. So there was definitely a wall

> between the ‘We’ve been here and the oh you’ll be gone in a year or two teachers.’ Those of us who were young at the school all had our own mix together. You could definitely tell those that had been there awhile. And every now and then you would get a crossover depending on your subject area. So, one she had taught 37 years in PE there and she actually shared her office which was in a closet in my music room. So her and I got along great.

Interviewee 7 felt that administration could have done more to build school culture: “Anything. I don’t think we ever had a staff meeting. We didn’t have any conversations together. There was no mentor situation. There was nothing.”

Interviewees 3, 4, 5 and 7 did not feel valued by their administration. Administration should have done a better job with making sure that everyone’s voice matters. One of the push factors in Interviewees 3, 4, 5 and 7 leaving their low-income schools was because they did not feel valued by administration. These four teachers who formerly taught in a low-income school wanted to be a part of the school, but administration did not value them, so these four teachers left their low-income schools for higher-income schools. Administration should not have favorites. There might be some teachers who are leaders, but staff should not feel like they are not valued because they have not been at the school for many years and are new to teaching so their opinions and concerns do not matter as much as someone who has been at the school for a longer time.

Interviewee 8 felt like school culture would have been better if administration were more consistent throughout the school year. Interviewee 8 stated,

> I really liked the way the school year started last year with (the principal). I thought he was pretty stern and I think the first 6-8 weeks were pretty strong with kind of like discipline and it felt like staff and administration were all pulling from the same side of the rope and that kind of helped with student issues, behavioral issues. But it felt like it slipped throughout the year and it kind of reverted back to business as usual. It's tough for me to say having only been there for two years. I think maybe just being consistent is one thing that administration could do that would help students with the culture.

Interviewee 8 wanted consistency from administration. Interviewee 8 felt like administration would start the year with a strong message and then as the school year went along, administration would stop being consistent. The lack of consistency frustrated Interviewee 8 and was a small push factor in his leaving his low-income school. Interviewee 8 felt that the school leadership could have done a better job at rewarding students who followed the expectations of the school and that then the other students who had difficulty following the expectations would have followed,

> Maybe more rewards for those kids that did really great positive things. I know we would have student of the month and small rewards. They might get open gym one day but making that more apparent. Making that more noticeable to everybody to where other students would think I'd really like to get that reward. I'd really like to have open gym more.

Interviewee 8 also said that the low-income school should be more positive in the interactions with student and students not following the expectations of the school in order to get the students to feel that they are more a part of the school community,

> I think pushing more of a really strong positive message would be great. Sometimes during convocation there would be those talking to or talking down to the students. This is what happened when you got off the bus. This is what happened yesterday. If it happens again, we're going to take away dress down day or we're going to take away this. It seems like we weren't always pushing a lot of positivity. We were reacting to all the negative stuff that happened. Pushing really heavy doses of positivity. You're really doing great today. I'm really proud of you today. You get this. It doesn't have to be like where we were giving out candy all the time. I think there's other things we can do besides just handing out the candy we handed out. Something to make the kids feel like they're a part of something bigger than themselves. This is their own community, the school.

To build better relationships with the staff, students and parents, Interviewee 8 wanted administration to be more positive. If something negative happened, then the administration would be negative towards all the students, even though only a handful of students may have been involved in what happened. Interviewee 8 wanted his low-income school to reward positivity instead of negativity. One way to change the school

culture would have been to acknowledge that there were many positive things happening at the school and not focusing only on the negative, according to Interviewee 8.

Lack of Resources

One theme that emerged in both the online survey and interviews and reflects the literature as to why teachers leave low-income schools is a lack of resources led to poorer working conditions because the teachers did not have all the supplies necessary to best meet the needs of the students. Many teachers felt that administration could have done a better job at getting more resources to support learning. The teachers felt that the administration did not support them in helping to reach all students because of the lack of resources provided to the teachers. Interviewee 6 wanted administration to be more involved with providing resources to help meet the needs of low-income students, "It would have been amazing to feel like there was support from administration like giving the kids whatever resources we could come up with. I feel like administration stayed out of it. They weren't involved."

The theme of insufficient resources supports the literature review that teachers who do not have sufficient resources factors into teachers leaving a low-income school (Kraft et al., 2016; Torres, 2016a; You & Conley, 2015). You and Conley (2015) found that the better the working conditions of a school, then the teachers were more likely to remain in the school. Not having enough resources to best support the students was cited by Online Survey Participant 2 as a challenge faced teaching in a low-income school,

"Limited resources with specific grade level teaching, single-parent family, and hard-working parents unavailable to support kids."

Interviewee 1 echoed the theme of insufficient resources, though the insufficient resources were not the main reason why he left his low-income school, "We recognized hardships that were there and some struggles, and let's say resources that were not in place at times but the reason we left was not necessarily related to the low-income or low resource elements of the school."

Echoing the theme of insufficient resources being a challenge faced by teaching in a low-income school, Online Survey Participant 3 stated that "Fewer resources were available to support and extend learning for students." Online Survey Participants 4 and 13 agreed that a "Lack of resources" was a challenge faced by teaching in a low-income school. Many teachers want to provide the best education possible to their students, but Online Survey Participant 5 stated that

> There were often not enough resources to provide students with the best possible learning experience. I also found that students might not have the necessary supports at home to help them be successful at school. Oftentimes, the parents weren't knowledgeable about educational opportunities for their children", according to Online Survey Participant 5.

Online Survey Participant 8 stated that a "Lack of resources and structure made teaching in a low-income school a challenge." Online Survey Participant 10 stated that there was "Not enough funding" to provide the student with the best opportunities for

learning. Not having current textbooks and supplies can be frustrating for teachers and students, as in Online Survey Participant 14's school where they "Lacked funds for supplies and new books." Not having enough supplies for the classroom was a challenge cited by Online Survey Participant 24 "There were not enough classroom supplies."

Online Survey Participant 17 also found that a lack of supplies was a challenge faced teaching in a low-income school, "Lack of funds, supplies, and parental trust." Online Survey Participant 21 echoed the theme of insufficient resources as a challenge faced by teaching in a low-income school, "Didn't have funding for resources and supplies." Online Survey Participant 28 agreed with Online Survey Participants 4 and 13 by stating, "No resources" as a challenge faced by teaching in a low-income school.

Online Survey Participant 32 stated that "Resources not always provided" to offer the students the best possible education. "The resources that were not available and the lack of support from the families" were challenges that Online Survey Participant 29 faced teaching in a low-income school. A challenge faced by teaching in a low-income school according to Online Survey Participant 33 was "Not enough money for teaching supplies."

Online Survey Participant 35 wanted to provide the students with a great education but found that "It was hard to always have the supplies needed and kids would need special care." Online Survey Participant 43 taught music and stated that "I was a music teacher, and it was very difficult to obtain what was needed to teach well." Sometimes teachers are not able to obtain all the supplies they feel they need to be the

best teacher, but "You must do what you can within the budget," stated Online Survey Participant 44. Finally, Online Survey Participant 47 stated that some challenges faced teaching in a low-income school were "Few resources, outside factors more important than school for families."

Administrator Transparency and Consistency with Discipline

Collier et al. (2019) found that most administrators understand that teachers want more transparency in how discipline is handled, but the administrators must balance the needs of the students with the needs of the staff to know. The administrators in the study tried to balance the safety of the students with trying to modify the student behavior. Most of the teachers who were interviewed did not have any safety concerns at their low-income school. Interviewee 1 said, "It was an elementary building…. It was a mid to low-income neighborhood but certainly not an unsafe neighborhood at all. There wasn't safety for our school." Interviewee 3 echoed Interviewee 1 by saying, "I never felt unsafe." Interviewee 4 said, that she does not notice much of difference in school safety between her low-income school and her new placement in a higher-income school, "They behave the same. I still think the same thing happens like fights in the hallway and whatnot. I wouldn't say that I ever felt like I was in danger going to school."

Several of the teachers felt that frequent fights in their low-income school was unsafe. Kokka (2016) found that administration's response to safety issues factors in teacher retention. Interviewee 2 also felt safety was an issue because she was pregnant

and coached at the low-income school and she did not feel safe when leaving the parking lot at night after games,

> There was a lot more fights. I was pregnant at the time when I left, when I left the middle school and I just, the kinds of sights, the surrounding area wasn't the best. Being a white female and leaving buildings at 8 o'clock at night in that area is not always the safest.

Interviewee 2 felt that during the school day, the administration did a good job of keeping the school safe, but that administration could have dealt better with referrals and offering help to students who struggled with behavior issues, "Inside the school, the school tried to do a really good job of trying to keep things safe, but it was more the area than the school itself. I think handling of referrals would have helped." The administration were not consistent with regards to discipline, according to Interviewee 2, "I felt like the discipline there was, 'Oh, we'll just do this and just move them on'." Interviewee 2 felt that the school could have used the resources it had available to better meet the needs of the students who struggled,

> I felt like there wasn't enough, not that we had enough time in the day, but counseling and reach out programs to help those children that needed the help with anger and lashing out and the defiancy to get those students the help they needed so they could be successful. I felt like that wasn't there.

Interviewee 5 felt threated by students and felt that administration did not help her because they did not enforce the rules or give appropriate consequences to the students

who threatened her and broke the rules, "A feeling of constant danger from the students. Taunting, threatening, name calling. They never enforced the rules. There was no parental contact that made any difference. Students were given detention and not suspended."

Interviewees 2 and 5 felt like administration were not consistent with consequences for student behavior. For Interviewee 5, administrator inconsistency was a push factor in her leaving not only the low-income school but teaching for several years. At Interviewee 2's higher-income school, she feels like the administration is more consistent and transparent with discipline. An intervention to help increase teacher retention is for administration to be consistent and as transparent as possible in regards to discipline.

Interviewee 6 felt like administration did not listen to her concerns about safety issues for the students, so she tried to make the best of the situation with her first graders,

> The only one I can think of is that they had a bunch of mobile classrooms and they basically parked us all out in the corner way across the field away from everyone. They had all the first graders out there. When a first grader had to go to the bathroom, they had to walk from a mobile classroom, across the field, up a hill, into the building and then go to the bathroom and then come back. I would send mine in pairs but not everybody did. 'Oh, crap. I hope you come back.' We were in a big city. There were lots of people there. It would be easy for a kid to

> go AWOL and no one have a clue what happened. That was the only safety concern I had.

At one point Interviewee 6 did try to bring the issue to the principal's attention, but the principal was not receptive to Interviewee 6's input,

> At one point I chatted with the principal about it. I brought it to her as in hey, here's my concern. I wonder if going forward, is it worth thinking about pointing older kids out here? The first graders are so little. You've seen them at the beginning of the year. They are peanuts. She was super upset with me for even asking the question. I think even be willing to listen or think about. What can we do? Even if they stay out there, maybe put a walkie-talkie system in place so someone in the building or someone in the mobile. Maybe hey, heads up, have a couple coming into the bathroom. There were security guards in the building but we didn't have any in the mobile but we had two guys that walked around the main campus area. Putting any kind of system in place would have been better.

Having a principal who did not value her opinion, factored into Interviewee 6 leaving her low-income school for a higher-income school. Interviewee 6 saw a safety concern and had to address it as well as she could without administrative support. In today's world, safety is a concern in schools and administration should listen to any concerns that teachers have regarding safety and address the concerns as completely as possible.

The low-income school where Interviewee 7 worked had frequent fights and a security guard at his school, but he did not see many safety issues in his low-income school outside of many fights,

> There were safety concerns at the school all the time. There was a security guard, but there were no metal detectors. They weren't overdoing it. So there were safety concerns form administration point of view, from my point of view, there wasn't as much of those. I didn't see them, so either admin was doing a good job, or just kind of blown up by the teachers. There were some fights in my class. There were fights in other people's classes. Fights were a common thing amongst the gentleman in our area.

One time Interviewee 7 was returning to school when he saw some of his students fighting in the street,

> I do remember once I was coming back between my two buildings, and I was at the elementary school, coming back to the middle school to work a little bit, and I happened to see some of my kids in the street fighting. So I actually got out of the car. Stopped the fight and just went about the day. You know I separated it up and went back to school. I told this same story to another teacher, and he's like, 'You're lucky you're alive.' I was like, 'What are you talking about?' He's like, 'They probably had knives on them.' That's really hurtful for me to think that that would have been a thing. I didn't even think about it. I went to stop two kids from fighting.

Interviewee 7 felt that the safety issues at his school were because of the different messages that the students received. The school participated in Positive Behavior Intervention System (PBIS), but then the school also dealt very seriously with any infractions from students. The students did not receive a consistent message,

> There wasn't a lot of problems from my classroom. Just looking at building culture. They were implementing the PBIS (Positive Behavior Intervention System) system very strongly. But they had on the other hand a resource officer. My classroom had three closets in it. One of which was. I had the classroom. The band director had a closet. The resource officer had a closet and the PE teacher had a closet. That the PBIS system was being implemented strongly throughout the school, but there was an equally heavy hand with sending kids to the resource officer. Which means they were coming into my classes on a daily basis, many long-terms in there. There were the same kids, or separate kids. I even got to know those kids pretty well. They were being dealt a heavy hand. So I don't know if there was more that could have been done because they were trying both approaches and the assistant principal did what I thought was a productive job, but then again those resource kids were making more and more efforts into the room by the end of the year. So I don't know how effective it was with him.

Even though Interviewee 7 saw many fights at his low-income school he thought that the administration did a good job of protecting the students and staff at school. One

method that administration used to protect students and staff was to have a security guard in the building. Interviewee 7 left because of the commute but experiencing frequent fights in and around school can be a push factor for teachers in a low-income school. If teachers do not feel safe at school, then they will feel a push factor to leave the school. Administrators need to ensure that everyone is safe and if a teacher has a concern about safety, then the administrator needs to listen to the concern and address the concern as completely as possible. If the administrator is not able to address the concern, the administrator should discuss with the teachers, as much as possible, why the concern will not be rectified.

To help with safety concerns, Interviewee 8 felt that administration could have been more consistent with discipline. Interviewee 8 stated:

> Personally I never had any safety concerns but I could see where some students would kind of push the envelope a little bit with what they could get away with. There was a student that pushed (a dean's assistant) last year and got a few days out of school suspension. (This student) was just a repeat offender to where he was a really bright kid but he came in with a lot of baggage. I think there's that safety concern. I know there was that bigger fight towards the end of the year with the eighth-grade girls downstairs. In that regard, I wasn't involved, I didn't see it. I heard about it, but that could be a safety concern where there's 10+ girls fighting. I always fight that even though I didn't have the CPI (Crisis Prevention Institute) training, you really have to step in to break this up. Going back to the

> (girl who hit a teacher) thing, I had to break up the initial fight. When that initial fight stopped, that's when she was able to break free and strike (the teacher). It felt like there was always something physical happening. As staff you felt like you would have to get involved. I think that's kind of a safety issue a little bit.

An intervention that Interviewee 8 would have liked to have receive was training in how to respond to fights. Studies show that a lack of professional development can lead to teacher turnover (Avalos & Valenzuela, 2016; Howes & Goodman-Delahunty, 2015; Odden, 2011; Shaha, Glassett, Rosenlund, Copas, & Huddleston, 2016).

> I would think everyone has to be CPI trained. You got to have CPI training. Everyone's got to have it regardless. If that's a day out of the classroom, it's well worth it. I would absolutely push that. This might be a little bit more on the hippie side, but maybe push some kind of mindfulness training for the teachers and for the staff and for the students. I gave it a shot last year where we'd do a little 5-minute mindfulness breathing thing on occasion. It worked sometimes. I think some of the students weren't really hip to it, but I think the CPI training making it mandatory. Everyone's got to have it. I think that's great. I know the gym teachers had it. We would talk about it when we worked on the bus stop in the morning and the afternoon. I would say boy I wish I really had that because I had the incident with (the female student) last year. I don't know if you recall (another student, a male) a couple of years ago, but I had to restrain him one day. I had to physically pull him out of the classroom and restrain him. I held him up

> against the locker, and the whole time thinking, I don't know if I'm doing this correctly. Like physically holding back a 12-year-old who's pretty darn strong for a little kid but thinking I don't know if this is the way to do it. And the same thing with (the female student), after she hit (the teacher), I kind of had to restrain her, drag her down the hallway of sorts and hold her until one of the deans came up. And I thought boy if they look at the camera, I don't know if I did that properly. I didn't have the opportunity to have the CPI training, but going back, if I didn't do that, I wonder if things could have been a little worse.

The administration in Interviewee 8's low-income school were not consistent with disciplinary consequences and expectations for the students and staff. It was difficult for the staff to know what to do when a fight broke out because there was never any consistent message from administration about teacher expectations. Interviewee 8 was not aware of the expectations of how he should handle students during a fight:

> I think it's because there was never any consistency in that regard. Let's say there were the beginnings of a fight on our side. We were upstairs. one teacher might shout out, there's a fight. They're fighting. They're fighting and point out the students that are fighting. By the time they're doing that, there's a congregation of maybe 10-20 kids circling the fight kind of like stoking the flames of that. I wouldn't be so sure what to do and I felt like someone's got to step in because it be the deans who were on the floor might be close to being senior citizens, they could be pushed over and hurt pretty quickly. I hate to say it that way, but I love

> (the dean's assistant), but I didn't want a 13-year-old kid who's like 6 ft 2 push her over. You were unsure of it. On one hand you wouldn't want to be held liable if you grabbed a student and not break their arm, but if you injured them in some way. Because you're trying to help them and you're trying to break up a fight. For example, that fight with (the female student) and the other girl that led to her hitting (the teacher), they were really going at it. And I grabbed (the female student) and I held her against one of the doorways by the science room upstairs. I could have been hit easily by the other girl. (Another teacher) came over to help and she could have been hit by the other girl. It's a long-winded answer of saying every teacher doesn't quite know what to do when something happens. They're unsure. Are you calling down for a dean? Are you asking another teacher to go into the classroom and call downstairs and wait for a dean to come up? In the meantime, the fight could escalate in 30 seconds to a minute. There's a lot of inconsistency there.

Interviewee 2 said about her higher-income school, "The discipline is different and that helps with student and staff and school culture when discipline is actually dealt with and it's not just because 'He is that way.'" She also felt that at her last low-income school teacher retention was higher because of administrative support for teachers,

> You know I look at when I left (my last school), when I left (the previous low-income school) and went to (my last low-income school), most of (my last school's) teachers had been there for years. They didn't have a high teacher

turnaround and they were a very, very low-income school. Their population area is a little bit better than (my prior school), but it's literally five minutes down the street from each other. I honestly think some of it has to do with district administration and union and building leaders interactions with staff and the interaction with students. I think a lot of teacher's problems this day and age is they don't feel like they're supported. And especially when you're in a low-income school and you're battling behavior issues. You're battling the lack of homework, disrespect to educators daily it comes to taunting. So a way to find that they could get the school environment to change, the school culture to change and to respect teachers. I think would be huge. I feel like in schools like that if you do not have a good rapport with students, the students quote unquote have it out for you. So I think that's a big thing. Honestly discipline's always a huge issue. You know from the in mid fight hit the teacher and your administration thinks you don't step in front of a fight. We're human that's our first instinct to do is to break up kids from fighting. Where they would yell at you there and we're not taking things away, we're not giving you any time. Here you get hit, the kid's out. You even get scratched, the kid's out a minimum of 3 days starting on day one. So I feel like that also helps the school culture a little bit, because the administration has your back. Where there you didn't have that feeling. Like if something went wrong, they jumped the fence on either side.

Interviewees 2, 5, 7 and 8 thought that safety was a concern in their low-income school specifically in regards to the number of fights that occurred. Several of the teachers from low-income schools thought that an intervention administration should have done was to be more consistent and transparent with discipline. The teachers felt that administration would give behavioral consequences inconsistently and that led to more fights. The teachers wanted administration to consistently and with fidelity give consequences to the students who disrupted the learning environment and caused a safety concern for others. The teachers also wanted the students to receive the help that they needed to learn how to modify their behavior. An intervention for administration is to consistently discipline the students who cause behavior and safety disruptions in the learning environment. Safety issues were a pull factor for several of the teachers from low-income schools, though only Interviewee 5 stated that safety was a major push factor in her leaving her low-income school, though not the only factor.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Creswell (2012) stated that the researcher should analyze each source of data to develop a theme. To ensure validity and trustworthiness, triangulation was used by having multiple sources of information, multiple methods of data collection and obtaining perceptions from teachers across multiple districts (Creswell, 2012; Flick, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2014). The sources to ensure triangulation were online surveys from multiple participants, interviews and obtaining perceptions from teachers across multiple districts. Member checking helps the researcher know that the data are accurate

(Stake, 2014). Member checking allows the participants the opportunity to analyze their data and comment on accuracy and meaning (Stake, 2014). The participants could only see and be able to comment on their text. They could not see other participants' data (Stake, 2014).

To ensure credibility, the research questions were field tested to see if there were any ambiguities or unclear items. The feedback suggested that some of the questions be reworded to ensure clarity. The questions should be credible so that the data are credible (Creswell, 2012). Other methods to ensure credibility were to check to see if the transcripts were accurate and to revisit the codes to make sure that the meaning of the codes did not shift during the study (Creswell, 2012). For intercoder reliability, another person was asked to see if they agreed with the codes (Creswell, 2012).

For dependability, using data from multiple participants helped to triangulate. The participants had the opportunity to member check the data to ensure that the descriptions were accurate. The report used a rich, thick description of the data by describing the setting. The study has transferability by generalizing the findings to a broader theory. Transferability occurs when other researchers use the findings for new cases (Stake, 2014).

Summary

The interview contained five questions and one background question. The interview questions can be found in Appendix B. The research question was: How can

school leaders implement interventions to help with teacher retention rates in low-income schools, specifically relating to school culture, parental involvement, and safety?

Chapter 5 will conclude the study and offer a discussion, conclusions and recommendations for further study. Chapter 5 will contain an interpretation of the findings, the limitations of the study and recommendations for further research. The last part of Chapter 5 will show how positive social change can occur as a result of the findings from this study.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this basic qualitative study was to describe how low-income schools can implement interventions that will positively address challenges teachers face that lead to teacher attrition through support of administration, parental support, coworker relationships, and safety as perceived by teachers who formerly taught in low-income schools. The study was a basic qualitative study using an online survey and interviews to collect data. I conducted the study to discover what interventions would help teachers remain in low-income schools. Some key findings from the study are that schools need to build connections with the parents and community, teachers want to have input on school policies and procedures, salary factors in teachers leaving low-income school and the ability of schools to hire and retain teachers, and teachers want administrators to be more transparent and consistent with regards to student discipline and safety.

Interpretation of the Findings

In the literature review in Chapter 2, I focused on factors that contribute to teacher turnover from low-income schools. There were three emergent themes in this study: (a) support from administration, (b) compensation, and (c) working conditions. These themes were confirmed in the literature review in Chapter 2. None of the themes found in this study disconfirmed the findings of the literature review. One theme that emerged in this study that was not a focus of my review of the literature was the role parental and community support plays in teacher turnover.

One theme from the literature review confirmed by the findings of this study was that the support of administration is a factor in teacher turnover from low-income schools (Barnatt et al., 2016; Fuller et al., 2016; Hughes et al., 2015; Kraft et al., 2016; Lindqvist & Nordänger, 2016; Mason & Poyatos Matas, 2016; Rice, 2014; Robertson-Kraft & Zhang, 2016; Sutcher et al., 2016; Thibodeaux et al., 2015; Tiplic et al., 2015; You & Conley, 2015). Some teachers felt that the lack of administrative support was from the school and district level. The lack of administrative support ranged from not supporting teachers with classroom discipline, administrators not communicating with teachers, administrators not supporting the teachers with parents to not allowing teachers input on school policies and procedures.

Compensation and working conditions were also themes that emerged from this study confirming findings from the literature review. Several teachers from the online survey and one teacher from the interviews stated that low compensation factored into their leaving the low-income school for a higher-income school. Many teachers stated that working conditions factored significantly into their decision to leave the low-income school for a higher-income school, confirming the literature review (see Ellis et al., 2017; Kraft et al., 2016; Ryan et al., 2017; Torres, 2016a; You & Conley, 2015). Another theme that emerged from the study is that beginning teachers leave low-income schools at higher rates than do teachers who are experienced (see Glennie et al., 2016; Goldhaber et al., 2016; Ingersoll, 2001; Lochmiller, Adachi, et al., 2016; Lochmiller, Sugimoto, et al., 2016; Papay et al., 2017; Player et al., 2017; Ryan et al., 2017; Steele et al, 2015). .

One theme not addressed in the literature review but that emerged from the data in this study was the role of parents. Many former low-income teachers in this study commented on how many of the parents of their students did not engage with helping their child succeed. The former low-income teachers hoped the schools could build better relationships with the community, which would help parents feel like they were a part of the school community and lead to higher parental involvement in the educational process for their children.

One theme from the online survey that extends the knowledge found in the literature review is student engagement in learning. The literature review showed that teacher attrition from low-income schools factors in student learning (Hanushek et al., 2016; Ost & Schiman, 2015). According to the results of this study, student learning is not a major factor in teacher attrition from low-income schools, but data from the online survey and teacher interviews indicates that students not participating in learning factors into teacher attrition from a low-income school.

There were no data from this study backing the themes found in the review of literature indicating that teachers who receive certification via alternative methods are more likely to leave low-income schools than teachers who earn certification via traditional methods (see Bastian & Marks, 2017; Boggan et al., 2016; Morettini, 2016; Player et al., 2017; Redding & Smith, 2016). Other themes not addressed in the data from this study are a lack of professional development leads to higher teacher attrition

and teacher preparation factors into teachers leaving low-income schools for higher-income schools.

According to the human capital theory by Kirby et al. (1993), people remain in jobs where they have the most opportunities for career promotion. There were no participants from this study who stated they would have remained teaching in their low-income school if they had more opportunities for advancement. Most of the participants stated that they left because the negative factors of low salary, geography, parental involvement, and administrative communication outweighed the positive factors, such as positive collegial relationships.

Limitations of the Study

I identified the following limitations of this study: the limited time frame for collecting data, the number of respondents due to preparations for state testing, and collecting data via the use of an online survey instead of face-to-face interviews for the first phase of the study. The time frame for collecting data was limited to the calendar year of 2019. The first district only resulted in six teachers who responded to the survey out of 539 teachers who received invitations. After gathering data from only six teachers, I expanded the setting to include any teacher in the greater metropolitan area of the study location who formerly taught in a low-income K–12 school but currently teaches in a higher-income K–12 school. The second setting provided an additional 42 participants. For data collection, instead of face-to-face interviews, the first district requested that the teachers have the opportunity to respond to the research questions via an online survey.

After receiving IRB approval, the data collection via an online survey began. The responses to the online survey were not as in-depth as the responses to a face-to-face interview might have been, so the sample expanded from 10 to 48 participants. Several responses were not valid because the participants did not fully answer the questions or wrote nonsensical answers. Since the teachers on the online survey did not respond thoroughly to the questions, I carried out a second phase of the study using interviews to collect more in-depth data. In this study, I only focused on the viewpoints of K–12 teachers from a one-unit district and the greater metropolitan area of a large city in the Midwest of the United States. The findings of this study will not transfer to other situations because the study was qualitative, limited to one specific time, and the participants teach in one geographical area.

To ensure data saturation, validity, and trustworthiness, I used triangulation by collecting data from 56 participants (see Creswell, 2012; Flick, 2007; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 2014). The sources to ensure triangulation were the completion of online surveys by 48 participants, eight teachers participating in an interview, and obtaining perceptions from teachers across multiple districts. The interviewees had the opportunity for member checking to analyze their data and comment on the accuracy and meaning from their text (see Stake, 2014). The opportunity for member checking helped me know that the data were accurate (see Stake, 2014). The participants did not see other participants' data (see Stake, 2014). Of the eight interviewees, seven chose to take part in member checking.

Recommendations

One recommendation for additional research is expanding the geographical area of the study from one district and one geographical area of a large city in the Midwest to different districts and geographical areas of the United States. Future studies in this field could center on methods to help low-income school districts better reach the community. My last recommendation for further study is examining the role of teacher preparation in equipping teachers in low-income schools with best practices in involving parents and engaging all students in learning because 4 of the 8 interviewees were new teachers who left their low-income school.

Implications

Beginning teachers can feel overwhelmed with everything required to be a successful teacher (CITE). The findings of this study have some implications for social change, including promoting the idea that teachers should receive training on interventions to help them remain at their low-income schools, reducing teacher turnover in low-income schools and leading to improved student learning (see Hanushek et al., 2016). Low-income districts should incorporate professional development showing teachers ways to involve parents to gain the parents' trust and support for educating their child. In addition to low-income districts providing professional development on how to win the support of parents, teacher training programs in colleges and universities should incorporate methods to win parents' support and involve the community in the learning process as part of the curriculum. Prospective teachers should receive the training before

they begin student teaching. If teachers learn how to involve parents, then they will be able to engage the parents and gain the parents' trust and support in educating their child.

Administrators have many stakeholders to whom they must be accountable. One of the stakeholders that administrators need to ensure that they are supporting is teachers. As many of the teachers in this study stated, one reason for leaving the low-income school was because of the inadequate support of administration. Administrators need to learn to better communicate with teachers, especially regarding student discipline. Recognizing the need for student privacy, administrators need to balance student and staff needs when deciding how to communicate about student discipline. Another recommendation is to allow teachers greater input in the school so that the teachers will feel that they have more of a say in the school policies and procedures and so that the teachers will feel greater ownership of school policies.

Conclusion

Teachers leave low-income schools for higher-income school for reasons like low salary, geography, and safety factors related to student fights (CITE). To help increase teacher retention in low-income schools, schools can do several things. One thing that districts can do to help with teacher retention in low-income schools is to ensure that administrators communicate with teachers and parents by building relationships. When administrators communicate effectively, it helps the teachers and parents feel that they are more involved in the school. Another thing that administrators and teachers can do to increase parental involvement is to invite the parents into the school to share about

themselves and their culture. The students will learn about the people in their community and the parents will feel like the school is a safe place for their child to learn.

Low-income schools need to expand their methods to find better means to compensate teachers. When teachers can make significantly more money working in a higher-income school with better working conditions, then it is difficult for low-income schools to retain teachers, especially if the teachers need a second job to support themselves. If schools can implement some of these interventions, then teachers might remain in low-income schools at a higher rate.

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Appendix A: Online Survey Questions

SurveyMonkey Questions:

1. Did you previously teach in a low-income school? Low-income is defined as more than 50% of the students received free or reduced lunch.
2. If you feel you understand the study well enough to make a decision about it, please indicate your consent by clicking I consent.
3. Why was teaching in a low-income school a challenge?
4. What were the top three challenges you faced teaching in a low-income school? How did these challenges influence your decision to leave the low-income school?
5. How was your school leader able to support you with the challenges you faced in a low-income school? Examples?
6. What else could your school leader have done to support you?
7. How were your colleagues a resource in addressing the challenges in teaching in a low-income school?

Appendix B: Interview Questions

1. How could your school leaders have implemented interventions to help with parents who were not as involved as you would have liked?
2. How could your school leaders have implemented interventions to help with parents who were resistant to suggestions to help their child in school?
3. How could your school leaders have implemented interventions to improve the school culture?
4. Were there any safety factors that contributed to you leaving your low-income school? If so, what were those factors? What could your school leader have done differently to mitigate those safety factors?
5. How could your school leaders have helped to support you and other teachers of low-income schools to improve teacher retention rates?