

University of the Incarnate Word

## The Athenaeum

---

Theses & Dissertations

---

5-2023

# The Principal's Role as Mentor in New Teacher Attrition Rates: The Importance of Teaching Teachers

William Dockery

University of the Incarnate Word, wdocker1@student.uiwtx.edu

Follow this and additional works at: [https://athenaeum.uiw.edu/uiw\\_etds](https://athenaeum.uiw.edu/uiw_etds)



Part of the Adult and Continuing Education Commons, Adult and Continuing Education Administration Commons, Educational Leadership Commons, Elementary and Middle and Secondary Education Administration Commons, Elementary Education Commons, Other Educational Administration and Supervision Commons, and the Special Education Administration Commons

---

### Recommended Citation

Dockery, William, "The Principal's Role as Mentor in New Teacher Attrition Rates: The Importance of Teaching Teachers" (2023). *Theses & Dissertations*. 415.

[https://athenaeum.uiw.edu/uiw\\_etds/415](https://athenaeum.uiw.edu/uiw_etds/415)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by The Athenaeum. It has been accepted for inclusion in Theses & Dissertations by an authorized administrator of The Athenaeum. For more information, please contact [athenaeum@uiwtx.edu](mailto:athenaeum@uiwtx.edu).

THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE AS MENTOR IN NEW TEACHER ATTRITION RATES:  
THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING TEACHERS

by

WILLIAM S. DOCKERY

A DISSERTATION

Presented to the Faculty of the University of the Incarnate Word  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

UNIVERSITY OF THE INCARNATE WORD

May 2023

Copyright by  
William S. Dockery  
2023

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Canadian novelist and short story writer J. M. Laurence wrote, “it’s not what we have in our life, but who we have in our life that counts.” None of this would have been possible without some very extraordinary people in my life who have provided an incredible network of support. Thank you for your support and encouragement.

A heartfelt thank you to my advisor and chair, Dr. Guzman-Foster, for her support and patience throughout this process. I am grateful for my committee members, Dr. Fisher, Dr. Herbers, and Dr. Nelson, for your expertise and invaluable guidance. Your dedication to creating educational leaders is inspirational. To Dr. Ortiz Aragón for our many meetings over coffee that inspired me to focus on how we can lead and support social change that will help organizations adapt and emerge stronger in an ever-changing world. To Connie Sabo-Risley, thank you for believing in me all those years ago as I made the leap into public education. Your support and friendship over the years has meant more to me than you will ever know.

To Max Harvey for always asking me when I am going to be done so he can be the first one to call me Dr. Dockery. I am sorry it took so long, Max, and that you will not be here to see it.

To James Green III, Inci Yilmazli, Diana Orozco, and Willie Ng Jr., thank you for your friendship, the laughs, shared frustrations, empathetic ears, and accountability. You all made this program enjoyable. To Deyanira Delgado, thank you for your kindness and humanity. I would also like to thank the teachers who took part in this study for generously sharing their time and experiences.

## DEDICATION

For my mother, Selma Dockery, who helped me in all things great and small.

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife, Daisy Dockery, who encouraged me to pursue my dreams and finish my dissertation. And to Isabella and Elizabeth, thank you both for your understanding and support when daddy was working on “his book.”

THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE AS MENTOR IN NEW TEACHER ATTRITION RATES:  
THE IMPORTANCE OF TEACHING TEACHERS

William S. Dockery, PhD

University of the Incarnate Word

Research tells us that it takes years of deliberate practice and ongoing coaching to become an “expert” in any field and that it can take from 3 to 7 years for a new teacher to grow into an effective educator. Yet, in America today, more than 50% of teachers quit in their first 5 years of service. In low performing economically disadvantaged schools, teachers leaving the profession in their first 3 years increases to 60%. The impact of highly effective teachers on students’ success can be seen through the increase in percentile on Math scores, moving the needle from 44th to 96th percentile. Although there are complexities surrounding the issue of teacher effectiveness measurement, we can agree on the fact that effective teachers make an extraordinary and lasting impact on their students’ lives. This research utilized a grounded theory approach to conceptualize why former teachers in a low performing economically disadvantaged urban school district in San Antonio, Texas, left their classrooms. Additionally, this research examined how a campus principal serving as mentor impacted retention rates. The hope is that, by bridging the gap between turnover and retention, districts can better protect their most prized assets and influencers, their teachers.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	ix
CHAPTER 1: TEACHING TEACHERS .....	1
Background of The Problem .....	1
Statement of The Problem .....	2
History of The Problem .....	3
Problem in its Current Context .....	3
Background of the Researcher .....	3
Purpose of the Study .....	5
Research Question .....	6
Assumptions and Limitations .....	7
CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW .....	8
The Impact of Failing to Address Teacher Attrition.....	8
Theoretical Frame .....	9
The Principal’s Role as Leader .....	10
The Principal’s Role as Mentor .....	14
Leadership Effects on Culture .....	17
The Principal’s Role in Supporting Campus Climate.....	21
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY .....	24
Purpose Statement.....	25
The Setting.....	25

## TABLE OF CONTENTS – Continued

## CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The Participants .....	25
Procedures for Collection of Data.....	26
Rationale .....	28
Research Design.....	29
Epistemology .....	30
Research Setting.....	30
Research Site and Participant Recruitment.....	31
Data Analysis .....	31
Memo Writing.....	32
Researcher Positionality .....	33
Validity and Reliability.....	34
Protection of Human Participants: Ethical Considerations.....	35
Significance and Implications.....	36
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS.....	38
Research Design.....	38
Analysis of Research Data .....	38
Challenges of Administrators .....	38
Workload.....	39
High Turnover.....	41
Lack of Cohesiveness/Relationship and Trust Building.....	41



## TABLE OF CONTENTS – Continued

## CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Mentorship Approaches .....	43
Perceived Needs of Teachers .....	44
Support .....	44
Professional Development .....	49
Performance Assessment .....	50
Effective Strategies in Mentorship.....	51
Summary .....	58
CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION .....	60
Sub-Question One.....	62
Challenges of Administrators .....	62
Perceived Needs of Teachers .....	67
Sub-Question Two .....	75
Effective Strategies in Mentorship.....	75
Summary .....	83
Implications for Further Research .....	83
REFERENCES .....	84
APPENDICES .....	96
Appendix A: IRB Information Letter .....	97
Appendix B: IRB Approval Letter.....	101

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Trustworthiness in GTM Research.....	35

## Chapter 1: Teaching Teachers

### Background of the Problem

Teacher shortage occurs when teacher vacancies happen alongside increased rates of teacher attrition (teachers leaving the profession altogether), teacher turnover (teachers leaving their classroom to transfer to another position or school), and an ever-shrinking pool of new teachers who have the qualifications necessary to join the profession. Over the past 40 years, researchers have observed that teacher attrition rates have become a serious issue in public education (Gray & Taie, 2015) and that teacher attrition has led to a teacher shortage (Jotkoff, 2022). If the current growth of teacher demand continues, a 20% increase in annual teacher demand is expected per year, creating a yearly teacher shortage of 316,000 teachers by 2025 (Sutcher et al., 2019). Undeniably, increased attrition rates and the diminishing pool of qualified applicants are the most troubling dynamics that contribute to teacher shortages faced by school districts and are therefore partially responsible for the consequences and costs of the teacher shortage. Also, while policymakers focus on how to recruit more teachers, an issue that is at least as important is keeping existing teachers (Sutcher et al., 2019). Consequently, recruiting, training, and retaining highly qualified teachers is a critical component for reducing teacher attrition rates (Walker, 2022). Research into elements linked to increased teacher attrition rates, such as lack of mentorship programs, may help state and district leadership discover strategies to help in the recruitment, training, and retention of quality teachers.

Teacher turnover, defined in this context as a “change in teachers from one year to the next in a particular school setting” (Sorensen & Ladd, 2018, p. 1), has been an ongoing problem in the field of public education for almost 30 years (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). In urban districts and in schools serving historically marginalized students, turnover rates are higher (Ronfeldt &

McQueen, 2017). Teacher attrition rates in 1992 were at 5.1% annually; by 2008 they were at 8.4% annually (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). This represents roughly 125,000 teachers. While many factors contribute to an individual's reasons for leaving the profession, the most cited one is the lack of support (Redding & Henry, 2018). One of the causal factors in the continued attrition of teachers, which also causes the degradation of the status of the teaching profession, is the effect of a media discourse that prefers to highlight the failures of schools and teachers again and again, rather than their achievements (MacDonald & Cruickshank, 2017).

### **Statement of the Problem**

This study examines not only the shortage of teachers but also the decline of teaching skills as problems that the teaching profession now faces (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Attracting and keeping good teachers became a struggle in school districts in the United States, and seems to be acute in California, Texas, and Oklahoma (Barth et al., 2016). Novice teachers are significantly more likely to leave the profession, with almost 10% of first year teachers either leaving before completing their full first year or not returning for a second year (Loewus, 2021). Another 44% of teachers do not remain in the profession past their fifth year of teaching (Steiner & Woo, 2021). Additionally, many veteran teachers are leaving the classrooms before retirement age.

According to a survey conducted by the Capital News Service (2022), 40% of respondents stated that they were likely to leave the profession within the next 2 years, and 8% of teachers overall are leaving the profession each year compared to 5% 20 years ago (Kamenetz, 2022). As a result, teacher attrition rates have become a major concern for school districts that are struggling to meet the standards set forth for "highly effective teachers" under the Every Student Succeeds Act (Texas Education Agency, 2021). Current teacher attrition rates make it difficult to maintain the consistency and quality of educational influence that teachers have on

students, thereby degrading the academic requirements of the Every Student Succeeds Act (Fuller & Waite, 2016). According to Ronfeldt and McQueen (2017), the direct and harmful effect of teacher turnover on the mathematics and reading achievements of elementary students is well proven.

### ***History of the Problem***

Since 1918, every state in this country has legislated compulsory attendance laws for students, and over the course of the last 100 years it has become progressively more difficult to retain qualified teachers in the classroom (Ndoye et al., 2010). This phenomenon is so widespread that it has become a crucial issue for district level administrators, and for state and national law makers as well (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011).

### ***Problem in its Current Context***

Approximately 500,000 teachers leave the profession annually (Ingersoll, 2009). In terms of human capital investment in teachers, formal professional development training, professional learning communities, and campus socialization events will be lost with the loss of that teacher. That means that the campus loses both the teacher and its investment. The average national cost associated with replacing a teacher is reported to be more than \$15,000 (Watlington et al., 2010). According to Callahan (2016), the cost of recruiting, hiring, and training new teachers nationally was \$2.2 billion per year in the United States in 2012. Also, future students lose the consistency, stability and mastery of a subject that result when tenured teachers remain within the district.

### **Background of the Researcher**

Currently, I am an Associate Principal who serves as a coach and mentor to teachers who are struggling with lesson planning, instructional strategies, classroom management, and behavior intervention techniques. I serve as the observer and rater of dozens of middle school

teachers on an economically disadvantaged campus situated in the urban core of San Antonio, Texas, serving a historically economically disadvantaged community.

My first job in education was not in a classroom but in the role of a classified employee working as a truck driver/warehouseman for a school district in a very wealthy suburb of Los Angeles, California. As I did not have any practical experience working in a school district, driving a commercial vehicle, or working in a warehouse, I was sent to a district-sponsored driving school to obtain a Class B driver license. I was then assigned to a more experienced driver who showed me the routes to all the schools in the district, where and how to access each campus with a large truck, and my point of contact at each location. This training, in conjunction with afternoon training with the warehouse manager, lasted for 2 weeks. During this period, I received formal, paid, on-the-job training before being sent off on my own.

Due to certain life events I moved to a small, rural town in south Texas in the fall of 2002. I was fortunate to find employment quickly working as a paraprofessional in a Disciplinary Alternative School. Not having any background working directly with students in an academic setting, I was sent to numerous professional development trainings, both at the local Education Service Center and at district sponsored trainings. Furthermore, I was working under the guidance and tutelage of experienced classroom teachers and school administrators who guided and mentored me daily. Again, this employment was marked by formal, paid training and guidance. During this time, I began to explore the steps it would take to become a certified classroom teacher.

Unlike my previous two positions in the field of public education, I was now told that I would have to quit my job as a paraprofessional and work for free to receive the required experience needed to become a certified teacher. This was an obstacle I was ultimately able to

overcome but one that certainly demonstrated that uncommon professional expectations are made of teachers—few career fields demand that employees work for free during their training period with no guarantee of being hired. However, I became a fully certified and highly qualified teacher and was assigned to teach second grade. I was excited to learn that I would be attending a week of new teacher orientation before having to report to my campus for professional development. Unfortunately, new teacher orientation merely consisted of gradebook training, school district police training, and facilities training—almost everything but pedagogical instruction.

Upon arriving on campus, I was happy to learn that all but four teachers had at least 10 years teaching experience. However, rather than being assigned to one of them, I was assigned a consulting teacher from the district whom I had never met formally and who only stopped by twice during my entire 1st year. On both of those visits my consulting teacher dropped in unannounced and left behind handwritten notes on a blank piece of copier paper before slipping quietly out of my classroom. I was fortunate, however, that my principal recognized the breakdown in support from the district and gave me time to observe several veteran teachers on my campus. I was able to learn from observing those professionals and having them observe me and provide direct feedback. Unfortunately, this was not the standard; in fact, over my career, it was the exception. As a result, I have seen numerous gifted teachers leave due to lack of support.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to understand the perspectives of low-income public middle school teachers who left the profession within their first 5 years of teaching. Participants were teachers who had left the field already, or who had self-identified as those with intent to leave. Identification of teachers intending to leave occurred through conversations between myself and participants throughout the course of work interactions and those identified to me by other

teachers. I performed an initial inquiry with these teachers to confirm their plans for continued tenure within the profession.

The findings of this study provide information for school administrators that will assist them with increasing teacher retention (the ability to reduce teacher mobility and provide more stable learning conditions in schools). The research objectives that guided this study were to explore the main reasons these teachers left the profession before their 5th year, and to determine if they had received mentorship and what impact that had on their decision to leave the profession.

### **Research Question**

The principal research question that guided this study was:

How can low-income school districts retain highly qualified teachers in the public-school setting?

The following questions served as prompts to facilitate the interviews, complementing the main research question:

1. How do highly qualified novice, low-income, public-school teachers view their campus administrators' roles in their mentorship and guidance as new teachers?
2. Based on novice schoolteachers' perceptions, what role should the mentorship and guidance of school principals play in teacher retention?

I gained an understanding of teachers' perceptions of the role mentoring might have played in their choosing to remain within the profession. While I cannot confirm the significance, the ability to gauge the importance of retention from the teacher's perspective assisted with insight for a path forward and future studies.



## **Assumptions and Limitations**

This study was delimited to a Texas school district that reported a high Hispanic population. The district enrolled more than 77% of students as low income and 96% as Hispanic.

The first assumption was that participants were members of the staff or faculty at the participating Texas public school district. Second, it was assumed that the participants would provide truthful answers during their interviews and would answer the interview questions after signing the informed consent form. Third, it was assumed the data provided about the district would be accurate.

The limitations of this case study on teacher retention being carried out at one school district in Texas affected the transferability of the findings. The study was conducted in South Texas, which has a minority-majority population. The district serves mainly Hispanic students of low income. Therefore, the findings might not apply to school districts located in other geographical regions of Texas, districts serving different income categories, charter school districts that do not have the ability to fund buildings through bond elections, and districts with different compositions of student bodies by ethnicity and those with limited English proficiencies.

## Chapter 2: Literature Review

### The Impact of Failing to Address Teacher Attrition

Increased teacher turnover rates frequently result in the unequal distribution of highly qualified teachers, especially in low socio-economic urban school districts that predominantly serve students of color. Teacher attrition rates in 2022 were 48% higher than the average of the previous 4 years, 2018 to 2021 (TEA, 2021). Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2019) found that these rates were even higher at Title I schools in the southern United States. To be considered a Title I school, at least 40% of the students must be considered low-income (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). According to Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017), public school districts with higher-than-average Title I students also have higher than average teacher attrition rates, which leads to the need to hire new teachers every year. The leave rate of the teachers in Title I schools is nearly 50% greater than those in non-Title I schools.

Additionally, data collected by McFarland and Hussar (2019) in a nationwide survey indicate that a 7.68 % teacher attrition rate equals a loss of 238,000 teachers for that year. Teacher attrition rates contribute towards 100% of open positions for teacher roles in the following school year (Sutcher et al., 2019). This phenomenon leads to inequitable student growth and test scores (Borman & Dowling, 2017). The increase in teacher attrition rates in already underserved schools frequently results in fewer highly qualified veteran teachers applying for those positions, which puts students in these schools at a greater disadvantage than students whose districts have a more stable workforce (Kini & Podolsky, 2016). Nguyen et al. (2019) showed that increased teacher attrition rates directly contributed to lower scores on state mandated standardized tests, not only for those students whose teacher had left but for the entire school, causing lower scores campus wide. Inadequate support from school administration

(McFarland & Hussar, 2019), low salaries, quality of teacher preparation programs, overwhelming workload, and poor working conditions are the causes of a new teacher's decision to leave the profession (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018). The average cost to recruit, hire, and train teachers to fill the void is \$4.5 million dollars a year (Synar & Maiden, 2012). In addition to the financial burdens placed on a school district, the loss of knowledge and experience cannot be overlooked. Goodwyn (2017) stated:

Certainly, we believe that the decade 2010-20 will be a period of attention paid to teachers both as a profession and as individuals and that this is a shift from the previous paradigm, which focused on school improvement. It is not that school improvement has stopped being an issue: what has happened is that a number of different voices from a range of speakers has now become a chorus agreeing that any system can only ever be as good as its actual teachers. So, school leadership is crucial, learning environments are increasingly sophisticated, more technology can help, but *teachers* really are what make the difference in the classroom and to the lives of students. (p. xii)

On average, it takes a teacher 5 to 8 years to hone their teaching skills and gain practical experience in writing and delivering curriculum and instruction (Stronge, 2018). Increased rates of teacher attrition interrupt the stability of students' educational experiences. Faculty collegiality and consistency erode, and the knowledge gained of campus operations and organizational culture is forfeited (Bryk et al., 2015; Simon & Johnson, 2015).

### **Theoretical Framework**

This study was viewed through the theoretical lens of organizational trust, an employee's feeling of confidence that the organization will perform actions that are beneficial, or at least not detrimental, to him or her (Cho & Song, 2017; De Lima Rúa & Araújo, 2016; Tan & Tan, 2000). According to Gilbert and Tang (1998), organizational trust influences an employee's perceptions of and confidence within their organization, as well as their individual confidence in whether the organization is acting on behalf of their best interests. The absence, or even the ultimate loss, of organizational trust is associated with the loss of first-rate employees to other (and frequently

rival) organizations (Gilbert & Tang, 1998). Organizational trust is increasingly accepted by researchers and practitioners alike as an essential element of high-functioning schools. Schools that foster high-trust environments are in a better position to accomplish the challenging task of educating students from diverse backgrounds. This trust supports schools' effectiveness and perseverance in campus-wide reform efforts, as well as supporting a culture of innovation and professional learning (Tshannen-Moran, 2020). In approaching this study, I used this theory to discover possible connections between the ideas in organizational trust, participants' comments, and my observations. Lastly, I attempted to identify concepts that provide associations between the themes and the research question (Bernard & Ryan, 2010).

### **The Principal's Role as Leader**

As the school leadership team directly supervises and evaluates the effectiveness of the curriculum and time and learning processes, communication between campus leadership and the classroom teacher is considered the primary factor that determines the quality of education (Goldhaber, 2022). Close cooperation and involvement between principals, teachers, campus staff, and students would improve school quality. The principal's leadership is an essential part in achieving desired school quality (Sunaengsih et al., 2019). From this perspective, the role of the principal is not simply to manage the building and oversee the staff, but to engage and influence the actions of staff and faculty. The institution must have a leadership structure and the principals must be able to work within this structure. They can provide the necessary tools for their staff to achieve success and reduce the possibility of teacher attrition (Hughes et al., 2015). Moreover, the principal must lead and inspire the teachers' professional attitudes, ideals and beliefs towards academic achievement and culture. Teacher buy-in is crucial for a campus to be

able to engage and cascade the mission and values of their district to their students (Lee & Min 2017).

School culture is considered one of the most complex aspects of today's education system (Bridwell-Mitchell & Fried, 2020). Gruenert and Whitaker (2015) found that significant school improvement must begin with a campus-wide cultural change, and that the change agent must be the school leader. Teachers are quite possibly one of the most significant factors responsible for increased student achievement (Bertolini et al., 2012). To that end, Barth et al (2016), wrote that "It is the culture of the school that determines the achievement of teacher and student alike" (p. 14). Effective principals create a strong and persuasive campus culture focused on student learning and teacher success. These school leaders empower their teachers to take control of their classrooms and their professional development by providing opportunities that adapt to change and tolerate the occasional weekday absence, so that teachers can learn and employ new tools and technology that have been proven to increase student achievement (Osborne-Lampkin et al, 2015). The principal creates an empowering environment where teachers feel they can make decisions in a climate where trying new methods is acceptable, sometimes accepting that failure is a part of striving for excellence. The principal is the instructional leader responsible for advocating for campus-wide achievements that maximize student learning and staff professional development (How Schools Thrive, 2019). Lee et al. (2021) found that principals typically spend most of their time on issues not related to instruction, such as staff supervision and campus operations, with only 10% of their time devoted to staff observations, instructional coaching, and professional development.

Looking at educational leadership from a management perspective, school administrators need to be able to determine what knowledge, skills, training, and characteristics that principals

possess and enable them to be effective leaders who recruit and retain quality teachers in a supportive environment. Knapp et al. (2009) identified five essential functions of principal leadership. First, the principal must establish a clear goal and a vision of academic success for all students, rooted in rigorous standards. Second, they must be able to foster a climate open to new concepts so that teachers can feel safe to try new ideas in the classroom. Third, there must be an accommodating and collegial spirit between the faculty so that a productive and collaborative climate will prevail. Fourth, the principals must cultivate leadership from within the grade levels and/or academic teams so that the teaching staff and support professionals can cascade the school vision. As the lead teacher, it is the principal's role to improve instruction, equipping teachers through motivation and support to be able to teach at their best, which will then sustain all students, regardless of their ability to learn. Finally, Knapp et al. suggests that the principal's role in managing people is best conveyed through their ability to grasp data and process that information in such a way that can be best disseminated to the staff. Loewus (2022) found that "two to three times as many teachers who say they want to remain in their current schools agreed with positive statements about school leadership than did teachers who want to remain in the profession but move to a different school." The factors that influence teacher mobility and their decision to leave are clearly linked to the teacher's relationship to the school principal. In response to a study conducted in South Carolina, more than one-quarter of the teachers identified leadership as the "most crucial working condition in making their decisions about whether to stay in a school" and this factor was "significantly predictive of teacher retention" (Gadson, 2018, p. 22). Furthermore, according to Loewus, Maryland public school teachers emphasized the significance of school leadership in teacher retention. When asked, more than 90% of teachers surveyed agreed that school leadership was the most important condition affecting

teachers' willingness to remain teaching at their school. Teachers who indicated that they planned to remain teaching in their school were twice as likely to agree that they worked in trusting and supportive environments.

Grissom et al. (2021) highlighted the importance of the school principal in making—or breaking—a teacher's 1st year in the profession. Grissom et al.'s report states that 1st year teachers working in schools run by principals they describe as effective and competent had a much easier time during their probationary years than those who did not. Hughes et al. (2015) revealed that few beginning teachers view principals as key figures for support and guidance, and so keeping good teachers should be considered a significant responsibility for any school leader. Teachers reported that the lack of formal support from their administration, coupled with a narrow understanding of day-to-day teaching within the school system, caused them to feel unprepared and overwhelmed. This led to a perceived increase in the power distance between teacher and administrators who are focused on the business side of education versus the side of the child/student. Beginning and experienced teachers both gave high marks to principals who made it easy for them to ask questions and discuss problems, as well those who provided them with assistance, guidance, and solutions. Time to collaborate with veteran teachers and frequent opportunities to communicate and debrief with the principal were cited as the most effective methods of support (Wilson, 2016). Ladd (2019) reviewed data concerning teachers in North Carolina and found that “school leadership emerges as the most consistently relevant measure of working conditions” (p. 29). Moreover, data suggest that novice teachers who leave the profession at or within their 1st year of teaching cited lack of adequate support from their campus administration as one of the primary issues causing them to resign (Ingersoll & Perda, 2010).

## **The Principal's Role as Mentor**

Many considered it implicit in the principal's role as the campus instructional leader that they consider the wants and needs of a new teacher's professional development and support in the classroom (Rowland, 2017). However, there is little research devoted to what it is that principals should do to support this professional growth. What is evident is that the novice teacher requires guidance, inspiration, emotional support, comprehensive induction, and mentorship (Holland et al., 2016). As Gavish and Friedman (2010) stated, "professional and personal support from the school principal . . . refers to support, speedy assistance with disciplinary and pedagogic issues, and appreciation for the teacher's professionalism and capabilities" (p. 11).

Mentoring is typically viewed as a relationship between a person who has had long experience in a particular field and someone with less experience. The interchange between the two, in which the veteran colleague guides and assists the more junior colleague, is called mentorship (Meyer & Maboso, 2007). Daresh (2004) indicated that a mentor can fill many roles—guide, teacher, role model, counselor, and supervisor—and that these relationships can vary in length of time and be both formal and informal learning partnerships. Although emotional support is necessary in building trust and accelerating beginning teacher growth, mentors must do much more on teaching and learning (Watkins, 2016). Mentoring's major impact is that it can serve as a collaborative learning model, being the most practical means by which to transfer skills while providing on-the-job training opportunities in real time and can provide the needed skills that will allow new teachers to perform at a more senior level (Daresh, 2004). According to Watkins (2016):

The principal who knows the strategies and tools that comprise mentor and beginning teacher work—observing and giving feedback, analyzing student work, accessing school



and community resources, planning lessons—avoids misunderstandings and aligns support. Knowing the role and responsibilities of both mentor and new teacher sends a clear message of support and respect (pp. 1-2).

Most large school districts have some form of mentoring program, but these programs vary from district to district. Some districts offer an initial conference between mentor and mentee at the commencement of their 1st year, while other districts have very organized and controlled programs that include normal meeting times and dates at regular intervals for at least 1 year and up to the 3rd year, when most districts release teachers from their probationary status (Hobson et al., 2009). Mentoring programs also differ in how they choose, train, assign, and reimburse these mentors. In many cases mentors are assigned, compared to programs in which mentorship occurs on a voluntary basis. This issue raises concerns of commitment to the teacher and their success, as opposed to checking a box to show compliance with a directive. The mentor and mentee relationship is a lifeline for many educators. The success of beginning teachers is found to be significantly impacted by the quality of the mentor-mentee pairing process (Lozinak, 2016). Regardless of the program, Matsko et al. (2007) suggests that most novice teachers who received some level of induction, versus those who reported receiving none, found that mentoring was a factor contributing to their success. Matsko et al. further concluded that programs should focus on the selection and training of mentors who are invested in the teacher's success, to ensure that high levels of support and teacher collaboration occur. The principal's assistance in this matter ensures that the teacher is not only receiving critical feedback in real time from a member of the campus, but that this feedback will lend itself to the success of the teacher and the students.

Working as a mentor, campus-level administrators can meet the professional needs of novice teachers, helping them become more familiar with the campus, the students, and the

materials with which they will work (Peterson, 2011). Teacher induction includes practices around helping new teachers on their path to becoming educational professionals (Lozinak, 2016). Teacher induction programs are designed to provide examples of the experiences gained by the veteran teachers; however, they are insufficient in transferring the experiences anticipated by new teachers during their 1st year in an actual classroom with pupils present.

Evidence, methods of implementation, and materials must be readily available when a novice teacher encounters the difficulties and veracities of the classroom and school (Peterson, 2011). In general, novice teachers require some degree of assistance in gauging the effectiveness of their teaching. First-year teachers rarely have the experience needed to evaluate the efficacy of their instruction on actual students. Additionally, many novice teachers struggle with making the connection between their instruction and what their pupils learn (Wong & Wong, 2022). With lack of experience, novice teachers are prone to falling back on limited instructional alternatives or on setting unrealistic goals that are assessed more for completion rather than mastery of skill. Both situations necessitate the need for assistance from an experienced and trusted mentor (Peterson, 2011). Induction and mentoring programs are being increasingly used for early-career teachers to combat teacher turnover by policymakers (Ronfeldt & McQueen, 2017). Johnston and Ryan (1983) found that novice teachers require frequent check-ins and routine feedback of their teaching performance as they establish their professional practices.

Sirisookslip et al. (2015) conducted a survey in which over 80% of teachers, across three large low-income districts, stated that support from campus administrators had the strongest and most direct impact on every aspect of the school environment. These participants shared that the combination of the principal as instructional leader and mentor was the single greatest factor in their success. This is further supported by Varrati et al. (2009), who also found that the role of a

principal is summarized as “the critical role of making sure the school environment and its pressure don’t drive teachers away” (p. 490). Furthermore, Minarik et al. (2003) found that accomplished principals are “essential to the successful operation of a school” (p. 232), and that these leaders deliberately and skillfully implement a system of teacher support that impacts the general culture of the school itself. Minarik et al. listed five specific areas of leadership that school administrators must consciously cultivate to have a positive impact on the general culture of a school. These are “authentic leadership, visionary leadership, cultural leadership, quality leadership, and servant leadership” (p. 232). Minarik et al. summarized that these concepts are critical when principals are planning a structure designed to support teacher development and support (p. 232). Brown and Wynn (2007) found that, when administrators provide support for teachers, there are lower teacher attrition rates as well as decreased occurrences of teacher dissatisfaction.

Classroom management, student motivation and discipline, working with parents, and individual student problems are the biggest issues new teachers will face and will probably feel unprepared for. With student teaching internship programs, many soon-to-be teachers have the opportunity to experience being in a classroom; however, they do not have the opportunity to experience any discipline problems or curriculum issues (Dias-Lacy & Guirguis, 2017). The certainty of these issues arising suggests that frequent and systematic support should be anticipated and provided.

### **Leadership Effects on Culture**

Organizational culture is the system of behaviors, beliefs, habits, values, and norms that shape the manner of people in that organization, and it significantly influences the function of that organization (Chatman & Cha, 2003). School culture, in this context, is an environment that

includes the history and traditions of the school. It also maintains bilateral communication among staff members. As school cultures need to be planned, coordinated, examined, and modified, school administrators have the responsibility for forming and managing it. Strong school organizational culture is directly associated with strong principal leadership (Lesigner et al., 2015).

The effects of teacher mobility on school culture cannot be overlooked (Feng & Sass, 2012). Teacher attrition impacts the entire campus, including campus culture, student academic achievement, and even state-mandated test scores (Pham et al., 2020). A school leader who mentors and cultivates their teaching staff will find that they will recruit and develop great teachers who will remain at that campus. Johnson (2006) supports this finding, stating that the principal is the “broker of workplace conditions,” someone whose “influence on the school as a workplace for teachers extends well beyond being in charge of the school” (p. 15). As the campus’s instructional leader, the principal is in a position that can significantly impact the campus culture, not only through their leadership, support, and direction but in being available to brief and debrief novice teacher on instructional strategies and instructional and institutional resources that may help novice teachers. Yet many novice schoolteachers report minimal contact and collaboration with their principal (Varrati et al., 2009). As leaders, campus administrators must examine and reflect upon how their actions impact the climate and culture of the campus, as they are instrumental in developing and maintaining the culture of the school. Varrati et al. (2009) found that “the role of the school principal in conveying the intricacies of the school wide culture and climate is just as significant as the role of the cooperating teacher in conveying the details of the classroom culture” (p. 485).

Campus administrators play a critical role in teacher retention. New teachers consistently cite their principal as a key figure in terms of guidance and support (Varrati et al., 2009).

Darling-Hammond (2003) reported that principals need to not only recognize that they play a vital role in teacher retention and success, but that they must also embrace it. By proactively providing support in the areas of curriculum and instruction, classroom environment, and even emotional well-being, these school leaders will be molding teachers who will become long term assets and force multipliers to the school for years to come. “Keeping good teachers should be one of the most important agenda items for any school leader” (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p. 2).

The need for principals to recognize and accept this role is even more essential in schools in which it is difficult to recruit and retain teachers, such as schools in high-poverty urban areas (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Principals play a crucial role in increasing teacher retention rates by their ability to provide support in their role as instructional leader. In this capacity, the school principal is in a unique position to strengthen the institutional culture of the campus by providing leadership, guidance, and assistance to new teachers (Varrati et al., 2009). According to Varrati et al. (2009), the principal must be mindful of how their actions establish and reinforce the tone and climate of the campus. As the instructional leader, they drive the school culture. In that role, the school principal communicates the complexities of the macro-culture (campus wide) to the teachers and students, and this culture and climate is just as important as the role of the classroom teacher in communicating the details of the micro-culture (class wide) to their students (p. 485).

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation conducted a survey of 40,000 teachers in which they asked teachers about the factors that affect teacher retention (Primary Sources, 2013). The report indicated that “supportive leadership is the standout, top-ranked item” (p. 39) among

participant responses. An unsupportive school leader will cause good teachers, at minimum, to transfer campuses and, in more severe cases, to leave the profession. Meanwhile, the mediocre teachers remain, and, over time, the school slowly declines.

Whenever a teacher leaves a school, they leave an educational void in their absence. America's schools are losing their new teachers, mainly those with fewer than 5 years of experience (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Schools that lose new teachers are then forced to replace them with even newer, more inexperienced, teachers, propagating a cycle that almost guarantees weaker instruction. Consensus holds that teaching effectiveness grows each year during the first few years of a teacher's career (Goodwyn, 2017), meaning that a school that repeatedly loses its new teachers before they become experienced classroom teachers will have students who have been taught by a line of teachers who are 40% less effective than their more experienced colleagues (Sparks & Hirsh, 2000).

Johnson (2006) suggests that the school principal is not only the lead teacher, but also serves as the "broker of workplace conditions whose influence on the school as a workplace for teachers extends well beyond being in charge of the school" (p. 4). This is not a singular occurrence and researchers across the country have reported on the impact of school leadership on teacher satisfaction about working conditions.

Lesinger et al. (2016) suggests that every school has a culture of its own, with its own complex dynamics, including interpersonal relationships and moral codes. All schools, whether public, private, or charter, possess a culture, whether it is weak or strong, effective, or non-effective, and it is both principal and teachers who nurture and feed into the school's culture.

McKibben (2015) supports the assertion that the principal maintains a culture of shared learning and growth by suggesting that a campus has its own shared, unique, and often complex

networks of rituals and practices that have been established over time, as the faculty, students, parents, and administrators work together to resolve crises and celebrate achievements. These cultural patterns are highly enduring, have a powerful impact on performance, and shape the ways people think, act, and feel. Owens (2004) sums up the concept that school culture is an environment that includes the history and traditions of the school and maintains bilateral communication among staff members:

The school culture informs the teachers as to what it means to teach, what teaching methods are available and approved for use, what the pupils or students are like what is possible, and what is not. The culture also plays a large role in defining for teachers their commitment to the task; it evokes the energy of the teachers to perform the task, loyalty and commitment to the organization and its ideals (p. 165).

Attrition is expected in any profession, but teacher attrition rates are 4% higher than that of other professions (Ingersoll, 2009). Turnover in education has a higher price compared to other professions (Watlington et al., 2010) in terms of academic outcomes and annual spending. The State of Texas spent more than \$100 million in 2015 just in the recruitment and training of new teachers (Trahan, 2015).

Teachers must be seen and valued as a significant resource that the school and district rely upon. The recruitment, training, and support required for a new teacher pale in comparison to that of a more experienced veteran teacher (Ingersoll, 2009). Mentorship programs should be designed to support and enhance the performance of new teachers to shore up the loss of a school's human capital (Villar & Strong, 2007).

### **The Principal's Role in Supporting Campus Climate**

The need for a supportive and caring campus climate and culture in which novice teachers can continue to progress and improve as they enter the profession is clear (Dias-Lacy & Guirguis, 2017). This is another area in which administrators wield tremendous power over a

new teacher's ability to adapt to life in the classroom. In their role as the lead teacher, the principal fulfills three main responsibilities with which they mold the organizational, social, and cultural framework in which a new teacher's professional development can thrive. Attard et al., (2017) concluded that for a novice teacher to not only survive, but thrive, in the classroom, they need support, encouragement, mentorship, appreciation, and acknowledgment of the difficulties they are working through.

Exploration into the impact a principal's communication has on campus staff suggests that principals complete most of their daily tasks through person-to-person interactions and digital communication, which is achieved through talking, email, and feedback provided in classroom walk-throughs (Ärlestig, 2007). Through their daily encounters with teachers, the principal creates a shared vision of responsibility towards professional improvement, highlighting the direct link between professional development and improved student outcomes (Begley & Johansson, 2005). Principals who impart the consequence of learning and self-efficacy in professional development establish a culture in which teachers independently and communally begin to see themselves as experts within their profession who constantly seek self-improvement by learning best practices (Robinson et al, 2008). Daily communication with teachers is a central part of a principal's routine, but listening is equally as central. By listening, the principal gives the teacher a sense of agency by recognizing their experiences, knowledge, and proficiency in their daily practice, all of which are vital within a supportive professional learning community (Suntani et al., 2021).

Supporting new teacher growth and development is also a key role that principals fulfil. Participants in a 2000 study responded that a principal's willingness to support and fund conferences, travel expenses, substitutes, materials, and stipends were top among the types of



support they identified as critical in their professional development (Payne & Wolfson, 2000). Another key area that new teachers cited as critical was where a principal provided a campus climate and culture in which teachers felt safe in taking risks and experimenting with new concepts and teaching techniques (Tallerico, 2005). This climate is crucial when teachers encounter difficulties and/or failure as they implement new instructional strategies (Blase & Blase, 1999). The novice teacher also sees their principal as the repository of both professional knowledge and expertise. Principals who effectively execute these tasks assist in establishing a campus climate and culture that supports teachers in their pursuit of learning and professional best practices (Sullivan & Glanz, 2013). Bredeson (2000) suggests that a principal can best support teachers by ensuring that professional development and instructional materials are aligned with both teacher and student needs, as well as federal, state, and school district priorities.

According to Bredeson (2000), teachers have historically been passive recipients of their in-service professional development, which placed the principal in a position, through their role as the instructional leader, to initiate discussions among the faculty concerning the process, delivery, and anticipated outcomes of teacher learning. Bredeson goes on to say that that these discussions provide opportunities for principals to “rethink, restructure, and re-culture” (p. 396) professional development opportunities for teachers on their campuses.

### Chapter 3: Methodology

This chapter provides an overview of the research design along with the research methods used to investigate what issues were the main reasons that teachers, within their first 5 years of teaching, chose to leave the profession. This study was qualitative in nature. Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, based on building a complex, holistic picture formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting (Creswell, 2017). This methodology involves direct examination and explanation of the phenomenon as experienced by participants (Merriam & Simpson, 2000). Another way of looking at it is that qualitative research designs “are naturalistic to the extent that the research takes place in real-world settings and the researcher does not attempt to manipulate the phenomenon of interest” (Patton, 2002, p. 39). According to Corbin and Strauss (2015), qualitative inquiry refers to research about an individual’s life, their lived experiences, behaviors, emotions, and feelings. This type of research calls for getting into the field and seeking to understand what people are thinking and doing in an effort to better comprehend the meaning or nature of their experiences.

This study utilized a qualitative approach to exploring teachers’ views on the role of campus administrators in mentorship and the effects that mentorship programs would have on teachers. As the main research question guiding the study focuses on exploring ways to retain teachers in public-school setting through the experiences of teachers, a constructivist grounded theory (CGT) approach was utilized to identify the underlying themes as to why teachers are leaving their profession. CGT is grounded in constructivism. The methodological underpinning of CGT is to focus on how participants construct meaning in relation to the area of study.

The intention of CGT is to develop concepts discovered in data to help understand the related phenomenon in a social context. CGT is a “qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon” (Strauss & Corbin, 1990, p. 24). Creswell (2007) wrote that this method is intended to assess how an issue is discovered within the domain of a limited system—in this case, a school district. In the CGT methodology, the researcher uses the data gathered to find and develop a theory in the process of conducting a study (Leedy, 2019).

### **Purpose Statement**

This study sought to answer the question “How can low-income school districts retain highly qualified teachers in the public-school setting?” by exploring the perspectives of low-income public middle school teachers. In seeking answers to the research question, five teachers who had left the profession within their first 5 years were interviewed.

### **The Setting**

The student population in the district where the participants worked comprised 45,780 students, of which 65.7% were considered at-risk and 22.7% were enrolled in bilingual and English language learning programs. Of those students, 89.9% identified as Hispanic, 6% identified as African American, 0.1% identified as American Indian, 0.5% identified as Asian, 2.8% identified as white, 0.6% were listed as two or more races, 87.6% were economically disadvantaged, and 21% were emergent bilinguals.

### **The Participants**

All participants in this study taught fewer than 5 years for the same low-income school district, at several different campuses. Patricia self-identified as a Hispanic female who started teaching at 22 years of age right out of college. Patricia taught middle school mathematics and

left at the end of her 4th year of teaching. David self-identified as a Hispanic male and stated he began teaching right out of college and worked as a high school special education resource teacher who was pushed into the classrooms to co-teach special education students in the General Education setting. David left teaching at the end of his 2nd year. Kimberly self-identified as a White female who decided to become a teacher her senior year of college. Kimberly was an elementary reading intervention teacher and left the profession at the end of her 2nd year. Tina was an elementary special education life skills teacher who self-identified as a White female and chose teaching special needs students after working at a summer camp for children with disabilities in college. Tina left after her 4th year. Karen self-identified as a bi-racial female with Anglo/Hispanic parents and began teaching when she was 24 years old, after working in another industry right out of college. Karen was a dual language second grade teacher who left after her 3rd year of teaching.

Four of the participants identified as female, with the last one identifying as male. Two of the five participants identified as Anglo, with the other three identifying as Hispanic. Three of the five participants had master's degrees, and the other two had bachelor's degrees.

### **Procedures for Collection of Data**

Data collection included semi-structured interviews, focus group sessions, and participant observation notes. The semi-structured interviews provided me with flexibility to modify some of the phrasing, based on participant responses (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). The interview questions were directed towards the ideas and topics related to the research questions. As data collection was conducted, I logged entries in a journal throughout the study, in addition to any field notes I used to reflect upon my potential biases.

Participants were asked to share information concerning their experiences working as novice teachers, along with information on what processes could have enabled them to want to remain in the profession and would have helped them master the skills required to be a successful teacher. Additionally, participants were asked how they felt mentorship from their principals may have encouraged them to remain in the profession. The goal was to understand why the participants left teaching and how a direct mentorship program with their principal might have enabled them to remain in the profession.

There are conflicting views on what constitutes rich data. Some researchers embrace the quantity of data, while others (Glaser & Strauss, 2009) do not attend to the quantity, considering that the purpose of grounded theory methods is to develop conceptual categories. Thus, data collection should be directed to shed light on the properties of a category and the relationships between categories. In evaluating the data in terms of richness and sufficiency, Charmaz (2014) provides a list of questions to consider:

- Have I collected enough background data about persons, processes, and settings to have ready recall and to understand and portray the full range of contexts of the study?
- Have I gained detailed descriptions of a range of participants' views and actions?
- Do the data reveal what lies beneath the surface?
- Have I gathered data that enable me to develop analytic categories?
- What kinds of comparisons can I make between data? How do these comparisons generate and inform my data? (p. 33)

Initially I interviewed participants one-on-one. Participants were invited to a facilitated joint meeting/interview with the other participants, when the research dictated it (e.g., two of the participants were TFA alum and wanted to have a joint conversation with me about their experiences), and at the participants' discretion. The interviews and focus groups were video and

audio recorded. Additionally, I took field/observation notes that were used as another data source. As a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and the city-wide precautionary measures taken, data collection occurred through Zoom.

### **Rationale**

The purpose of this study was to understand the perspectives of teachers who taught in low-performing, economically disadvantaged urban public-school districts and who left the profession within their first 5 years. My goal was to identify their main reasons for leaving the classroom and to determine what effect, if any, an on-campus mentorship program with their principal may have had. The data gathered in this study will provide information to school administrators in low-income school districts to assist them with increasing teacher retention.

The study had the following research objectives:

1. Identify how highly qualified novice, low-income, public-school teachers view their campus administrators' role in their mentorship and guidance as new teachers.
2. Assess the possibilities and challenges of setting up a multi-actor, campus mentorship program for new teachers.
3. Identify indicators of an effective and sustainable mentoring program, beyond (but including) increased retention rates?

The principal question that guided this study was: How can low-income school districts retain highly qualified teachers in the public-school setting? This study was guided by the following sub- questions:

- How does the mentorship between the principal and new teachers impact the teacher's ability to adapt to the campus?

- What mentorship program elements provide insights useful for new teacher professional development to maximize their impact on student success?
- How does new teacher retention become a priority of campus leadership?
- How do teachers and campus administrators come together to support new teachers on campus?
- What do new teachers consider to be challenges to sustaining an on-campus new teacher mentorship program?
- What do new teachers assess to be solutions to those challenges?

### **Research Design**

This study employed a qualitative case design using constructivist and interpretivist paradigms. According to Mills et al. (2006), to ensure a solid research design, the researcher must select a research paradigm that is consistent with their own views about the nature of reality. Denzin and Lincoln (2005) describe paradigms as the researcher's net, which contains ontological, epistemological, and methodological beliefs.

Using Charmaz's (2000) approach, this study employed CGT as a qualitative approach to explore the principal's role as mentor in reducing new teacher attrition rates. I targeted middle teachers within a specified school district in San Antonio, Texas, to eliminate variation factors of location and school cultures. Charmaz (2006) developed CGT from a constructionist paradigm and stated that CGT can be explored from the viewpoint of multiple social realities. CGT is an ontologically relativist and epistemologically subjectivist approach that reshapes the interactions between the researcher and participants in a research process. In engaging with CGT, researchers are expected to go deeper than the surface in meaning-seeking in the data, searching for meanings about values, beliefs, and ideologies (Charmaz, 2014).

## **Epistemology**

The study of knowledge, or epistemology, is defined as “a way of understanding and explaining how I know what I know” (Crotty, 1998, p. 3). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) explain that epistemological investigation is about examining the relationship between the knower and the knowledge. The goal of research is to uncover laws and suggest theories that can describe natural or social phenomena and expand the body of scientific knowledge (Bhattacharjee, 2012). The objective behind this knowledge, from the epistemological perspective, would be used to clarify, predict, and control (Grant & Giddings, 2002). Subjectivism is grounded in the principle that understanding is “always filtered through the lenses of language, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 21). In this research lens of subjective epistemology, the value of the researcher’s background in education is acknowledged. The aim of subjective research is to improve knowledge and enhance sensitization to ethical and moral issues, as well as to individual and professional release (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

## **Research Setting**

The rationale for using a qualitative approach lies in an assertion by Patton (2002) that this type of study does not necessitate a large, diverse group of participants. Instead, the emphasis is on the meanings of individual behaviors and recognizing the importance of context in the participants’ normal surroundings (Patton, 2002). Accordingly, this study was conducted in a low-performing, economically disadvantaged school district with multiple beginner teachers who had intended to remain in the profession. Participants who met the criteria of being a beginner teacher (defined as a teacher within their first 3 years of teaching) who were willing to participate in this study were from schools within a specific school district in San Antonio, Texas. This selective sampling process served to eliminate variations of location and school



culture. The participants were suggested to the researcher through a mutual contact in the district office, contacted through e-mail, and asked to fill out and return a consent form before they engaged in the study.

### **Research Site and Participant Recruitment**

This study was conducted in a low-performing, economically disadvantaged low-income school district in San Antonio, Texas. In CGT designs, participants and data sources are selected purposively to answer the research question(s). In alignment with the approach utilized in this study, participants were recruited through purposeful sampling. In using purposeful sampling, the inclusion criteria for participants were (a) to be in their first 3 years in the profession, and (b) planning to leave within the first 2 to 3 years in the profession. Five participants were identified and included in the study.

I contacted participants via email to explain the study that I was conducting. The participants were invited to participate in the study on a voluntary basis. A copy of the IRB approval letter was provided, along with the informed consent form. After signed informed consent forms were obtained, the data collection phase of the study began.

### **Data Analysis**

Qualitative research is used to interpret data in depth using a reflective process. Unlike researchers who use a quantitative method and wait until the end of the study to analyze their data, qualitative researchers call for the analysis and then re-analysis of their data over the course of their research process (Stake, 2010). Before analyzing the data, I compared the transcripts of the session with the recordings. Utilizing this approach, I had the opportunity to make corrections in the transcripts when necessary and familiarize myself with the data.

In grounded theory, coding is defined as the process of defining the data and what the data are about. Coding provides the link between data collection and the development of an emergent theory to explain the data. Charmaz (2014) suggests staying close to the data during initial coding and paying attention to the actions taking place in the data rather than the concepts or themes. Additionally, Chamaz recommends coding with gerunds to make the actions visible in the data. Initial coding can be done at multiple levels: word-by-word, line-by-line, or incidence by incidence. The selection of the coding style will depend on the nature of data collected. Additionally, to establish analytic distinctions between each level in this phase, a constant comparison method was used. For example, comparisons can be made between the data to seek differences or similarities, or between earlier and later interviews. Constant comparison methods, when used in inductive processes, help generate abstract concepts and theories. It is a continuous and iterative process used throughout the analysis.

The second phase of the data analysis was focused coding, which refers to using the most significant or frequent initial codes to analyze large amounts of data in the same data set. In line with Charmaz (2014), in selecting focused codes, I paid attention to the codes that had the most analytic characteristic. The purpose of focused coding is to synthesize, analyze, and conceptualize larger segments of data. The next step after the focused-coding phase was theoretical coding, which is an emergent process to help theorizing the data and focused codes. Through theoretical coding, the analysis process moved forward in a more theoretical direction, as theoretical codes can help with identifying relationships between categories.

### **Memo Writing**

Memo writing is a key component in the data analysis phase because it relates to ensuring quality in grounded theory. Memo writing is a reflective interpretive practice that allows the

researcher to document ideas generated through the interaction with data, such as ideas, events, and thought processes that are embedded in the research process, as well as the researcher's thoughts, insights, and feelings (Charmaz, 2014).

Memo writing enabled me to document and analyze findings in real time rather than having to wait until after all the data was initially coded. During the memo writing process I was able to identify and note interesting discrepancies, concepts, or anomalies. This process provided me with unrestricted reflections on what was occurring during the research process. Unlike categories, memos are not limited to thinking about one thing or another but serve as textual representations of the questions researchers begin to ask themselves as they analyze the data (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1995). Memos were used by me to elaborate on concepts, vocabulary, in vivo codes (i.e., "catch phrases" embedded in the data), or connections among concepts.

### **Researcher Positionality**

The process of qualitative research has an interpretive nature that requires researchers to take a reflexive stance throughout. The constructivist approach to grounded theory distances it from objectivity and allows researchers to be a part of the research process. As Charmaz (2014) argues, "we stand *within* our research process rather than above, before, or outside it" (p. 321). Thus, it is the researcher's responsibility to be reflexive about what they bring to the scene, what they see, and how they see. In qualitative research the researcher is considered an instrument of data collection (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). As a teacher and a researcher, I was aware that my professional experiences may have influenced the way I conducted this study and the way I analyzed the data. Having served both as a beginner and veteran teacher in this same district, and now as an administrator, there is no way I could have approached this topic with 100%

objectivity. Thus, I kept a reflection journal throughout the study to record my observations and thoughts, and the insights I brought in as I engaged in the research process.

### **Validity and Reliability**

Having worked in the field of education for 20 years, it was impossible to remove my own experiences. While my intimate knowledge of the subject may have provided insights, it could also have been a source of bias. The four steps defined by Sikolia et al. (2013) to improve the trustworthiness of this study were utilized, and were accomplished through an evaluation of the credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability of the study. See Table 1.

Credibility is a notion of trustworthiness that generally corresponds to validity (Morrow 2005; Rolfe, 2006). In this study, credibility referred to what extent the data collected accurately reflected the multiple realities of the participants. This was achieved through extended interviews with the participants, followed by the triangulation of data from their interviews, recordings, and transcriptions (Carcary, 2020). Additionally, the verbatim text transcribed from each of the interviews was shared with the participants and reviewed while discussing the emerging concepts and trends, ensuring respondent validation via member checking (Morrow, 2005).

Transferability is a notion of trustworthiness that can validate the research as it is generalized across disciplines (Taherdoost, 2016). Transferability suggests the relevance of one set of conclusions to another. It can be developed through the explanations of the research, the implementation and validation of the participant's perspectives and experiences, and contributions from other participants (Brown et al., 2002). Additionally, collegial relationships between the researcher as an instrument in the process and the research participants enhance transferability (Morrow, 2005).

**Table 1***Trustworthiness in GTM Research*

Trustworthiness dimension	Steps to improve Trustworthiness
Credibility (Internal validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prolonged engagement with participants</li> <li>• Triangulation of data (data from interviews, observations, documents etc.)</li> <li>• Thick descriptions of data and sufficiency of data assessment or saturation</li> <li>• Respondent validation of interview transcripts and emerging concepts and categories (participant checks)</li> <li>• Participant guidance of inquiry (theoretical sampling)</li> <li>• Use of participant words in the emerging theory</li> <li>• Negative case analysis</li> <li>• Peer debriefers</li> </ul>
Transferability (External validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Thick descriptions” of the research, the participants, methodology, interpretation of results and emerging theory.</li> </ul>
Dependability (Reliability)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination of a detailed audit trail by an observer</li> </ul>
Confirmability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examination of a detailed audit trail by an observer</li> </ul>

Dependability is a notion of trustworthiness that parallels reliability (Morrow 2005; Rolfe 2006). It validates the data and embodies the changing conditions of the phenomenon under study (Brown et al., 2002).

Confirmability is validated when an alternative researcher substantiates the results of the findings when presented with the same data. Confirmability analyzes the objectivity of the research (Brown et al., 2002).

### **Protection of Human Subjects: Ethical Considerations**

The dependability and validity of any study depends upon the ethics of the researcher conducting the study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). Recognizing the spirit of ethics that existed in my own accountability, it was imperative to consider the ethical issues that permeated the research process (Rowain & Zinaich, 2003). Being aware of the ethical issues associated with a

study using human participants, I sought approval from the university's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Participant recruitment and data collection did not begin until the IRB approval was obtained. The research participants were asked to sign an informed consent at the onset of the investigation prior to any interviews. This form safeguarded the rights of the participants and ensured that they were protected throughout the study. The utmost care and consideration were taken to protect the identity of the participants throughout the study by paying careful attention to not attributing any comments that could be tied directly to, or used to determine the identity of, a participant (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015).

I stored the collected data and other relevant documents on a password-protected personal laptop and in the cloud. The participants were given the option of using a pseudonym to remain anonymous or using their real names. All participants chose a pseudonym. Any cross reference between their real identity and participant pseudonyms was stored on my local computer in an encrypted file. Cloud-based files were also encrypted and required multi-factor authentication. Both the names of the schools and the participants were changed to pseudonyms to ensure confidentiality.

### **Significance and Implications**

My goal was to add to the body of knowledge addressing the needs of new teachers and finding ways to mentor and support them as they navigate through the challenges they face in their first few years in the classroom. My desire was to better understand how the principal could incorporate organizational factors to support new teacher retention. Creswell (2017) further elucidates this point by stating that qualitative researchers approach their inquiries with a certain perception that ultimately directs their study. To that end, I chose this topic not for the participants' objectivity, but because of the experiences the participants faced having endured an

unsupported rookie year. An additional area of possible bias stemmed from my background in education, through extended fields of study both at the undergraduate and graduate level, and through the roles I have held in my last 20 years as a public-school educator working with at-risk students.

## **Chapter 4: Findings**

### **Research Design**

This study utilized a qualitative approach to explore teachers' views on the role of campus administrators in mentorship and the effects that mentorship programs would have on teachers. As the main research question guiding the study focused on exploring ways to retain teachers in public-school setting through the experiences of teachers, a CGT approach was utilized to identify the underlying themes as to why teachers are leaving their profession. CGT is grounded in constructivism. The methodological underpinnings of CGT are to focus on how participants construct meaning in relation to the area of study.

The intention of grounded theory is to develop concepts discovered in data to help understand the related phenomenon in a social context. It is a “qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived grounded theory about a phenomenon” (Corbin & Strauss, 2015, p. 24). Creswell (2007) writes that this method is intended to assess how an issue is discovered within the domain of a limited system—in this case, a school district. Using the grounded theory methodology, the researcher uses the data gathered to find and develop a theory in the process of conducting their study (Leedy et al., 2019).

### **Analysis of Research Data**

The analysis of research questions of this study yielded three themes: Challenges of Administrators, Perceived Needs of Teachers, and Effective Strategies in Mentorship.

#### **Challenges of Administrators**

I reviewed the findings related to the first research question: How do highly qualified novice, low-income, public-school teachers view their campus administrators' role in their



mentorship and guidance as new teachers? While the participants discussed the role of principals as mentors, the discussion points centered on the challenges of administrative staff. Although it is not unusual to expect administrators to serve as mentors for new teachers, it should not be overlooked that the administrators may have obstacles or challenges that prevent them from serving as mentors. Around the challenges that administrators face, four sub-themes were identified: workload, high turnover, lack of cohesiveness/relationship and trust building, and mentorship approaches.

### ***Workload***

Four of the participants addressed the issue of workload and emphasized how serious this problem was. Patricia's statement was quite remarkable:

I think it's so hard for admin to be able to build relationships with everyone on campus because you all do so much, it's like you are the captain of a ship, there are a thousand things in motion all at once, and I am just one of them.

Unfortunately, the volume of responsibilities that administrators must carry causes them to approach their work with a checklist mentality and creates a barrier for building authentic engagements. Patricia continued by sharing that

they're setting administrators up to fail, and you're just like giving them this checklist because they're only going to treat it as a checklist and not like as something to help build up and support the teachers...

This checklist mentality of administrators may stem from the fact that administrators are overloaded with administrative and operational tasks that prevent them from connecting with teachers on a personal level and in a meaningful way to provide the support teachers need in their teaching practices. Participants shared their understanding that administrators' workload needs to be reduced so that they can be more effective mentors for teachers. One idea that surfaced during the interviews was that administrators could delegate some of their

responsibilities to the teachers, which could partially contribute to the solution. This way, administrators could focus on building relationships and a campus culture could be created. Unfortunately, administrators who want to be supportive and provide constructive criticism may not be able to provide the support needed, due to their excessive workload.

The lack of support, which was frequently mentioned by participants, could also be caused by this excessive workload. One of the participants, David, expressed his opinion on the administrator's ability to provide support when there was a need:

It's not like administrators are just there, around, in the halls, or even on campus, for me to check in with, ask questions of due to the number of times they are pulled off campus with all the meetings they have to attend, but an administrator actually being present in my room, engaged with the students, and then with the teachers was a very rare sight...

Karen shared:

I don't know if this is the right answer, but I wonder about the feasibility of making that happen. I guess maybe this is just a question for you. Would the principal be expected to be the mentor for all the new teachers?

This comment, in a sense, reflected the perception that this job should not be expected from principals who already have a heavy workload. In the continuation of the meeting, Karen once again drew attention to the intensity of the workload of the administrative staff:

Putting the responsibility of mentorship on the administration... it will just be one more thing that gets added to their plate, and then it falls by the wayside. That would be my one fear ... if it's just like one more thing that they must do.

Campus administrators are already overworked/overloaded, which is why it would not be beneficial for either the mentee or the mentor to put the mentorship responsibility on the administrative staff. In addition, some of the teachers who are likely to be assigned as an administrator may not be aware of this workload. Another participant, Kimberly, described the situation from her own perspective:

I think one of the biggest shocks that came to me when I started teaching was all the administrative tasks that we had to do. I really didn't know what I was doing. And I knew that there was obviously going to be some administrative stuff, but not to the extent that we were expected to not only fill everything out, but track it, file it, keep a record of it.

### ***High Turnover***

Another challenge that was identified was related to the issue of high turnover.

Administrators are assigned to campuses for a certain period, and then another administrator is assigned. Meanwhile, the mentorship bonds that were established between the mentor-mentee were interrupted. Relationships that were beneficial for both parties were reset with the arrival of new relationships that impacted teachers' motivation and development negatively. Patricia expressed her negative experience: "we don't have the same administrator that we got used to for more than 2, maybe 3 years in a row." Karen narrated similar experiences:

I don't have memories of a close one-on-one relationship with him [her principal]. But then again, I think he moved on, too. I think that's another element. There's the rotating cast of characters at any given school. So even if a principal was your mentor, that's not saying that they're not going to be on a different campus or in a different district next year.

According to the results obtained from the interview analyses, it was also revealed that the mentor should be well experienced. However, the high turnover problem can also mean a change in administration, losing one who has gained a certain experience level, perhaps appointing an inexperienced teacher into the role of campus administrator. Patricia, who worked with three different mentors from different departments separately, shared about the principal who was there during her 1 year in the classroom:

She had also only been there for 1 year, but they're supposed to check on you and support you, but she never really did, and it was enough to understand the difficulties of working with a mentor who was not even from that school.

### ***Lack of Cohesiveness/Relationship and Trust Building***

Another factor that emerged in the definition of mentorship based on the results is that a mentor should provide a cohesive environment, establish a campus culture that promoted good working relationships, provide trust in their relationships, gather people together, bind them together, and provide information/experience exchange. However, this was not always possible due to the character of the person and/or for organizational reasons. First, the excessive workload of the administrative team prevented them from establishing one-on-one relationships. At the same time, not being able to foster a campus climate where new teachers feel like they can fail forward can negatively affect the formation of campus culture. However, according to Kimberly, “where there is climate fostering, there is that trust in one another.” When there is no cohesiveness on campus, people’s ability to empathize will also decrease, and motivation will decrease rapidly in parallel. To create a sense of community by personalizing events and encouraging people to attend those events and let them know that they can share back with others after the event, would make a difference in their willingness to attend or participate in events. When teachers attend such events and share with others, a sense of community can develop over time. One participant, David, emphasized the significance of relationships: “As new teachers, you’re coming into a brand-new environment not only with students, but also with other teachers. So, [you are] finding a way to build rapport with your teachers as well. I think it’s key.”

Additionally, without relationship and trust-building, authenticity may not be achieved.

Patricia also questioned the mentor’s competency and expressed the importance of authenticity:

There has to be authenticity behind it...we didn’t really have a great relationship and he [her principal] had only been in the classroom for 2 years before he became an AP and he was telling me what to do so I thought, does he really know, or should I listen to him? He never taught here, or for that matter even taught at an inner-city school.

Authenticity can also be evaluated in terms of high turnover and lack of support. Also, there is a misperception that principals and assistant principals spend time together, which may

be caused by lack of cohesiveness. Another participant, Tina, also expressed her thoughts on relationship-building by sharing from her own experiences:

I think the constant turnover of the administrative team needs to stop; every 2 years it was change, change, change. Each time I had developed a relationship with them and implemented their coaching suggestions, a new administrator came with sometimes conflicting advice. I wondered, what do I do with this?

### *Mentorship Approaches*

Although the mentor-mentee relationships may have seemed relevant to the relationship building sub-theme, it was more suitable to address it as a separate sub-theme because it was connected to the career aspirations of the mentee. Some of the administrators who take on the responsibility of mentorship treat their relations with new teachers like a parent-child rather than coach-athlete. This approach, however, creates a feeling of punishment for teachers, rather than a feeling of being guided. David outlined his experience: “I think the most important part of the mentorship aspect with the campus I worked at was the opportunity to not only ask questions, but also to ensure that my questions were answered in a respectful manner.”

The connection between the mentor and teacher is necessary for mentorship to work. The parent-child relationship experienced with some administrators/mentors reduced the opportunities for new teachers to have a chance to ask questions and receive answers to their questions. In addition, some participants stated that mentor-mentee meetings were held in public environments instead of being personalized in private environments. According to the participants, the only necessity here was to hold a meeting in a private environment. As

Kimberly explained:

I feel like with my administrators when I was a teacher, I would get called out anywhere. It wasn't always necessarily a private conversation. And everyone else heard about it all the time. Mentor-mentee engagements that are not made regularly and appropriately also minimize the possibility of new teachers receiving feedback. Therefore, teaching practices cannot develop and may cause an increase in the attrition rate.

The assumption that an administrator had their favorite teachers and spent more time with and/or supported them more was expressed by Kimberly: “It was interesting to see the favorites get lots of support. Or get away with whatever they wanted.” David, on the other hand, specifically mentioned micromanagement:

I knew that if I was doing what I needed to do, there was not going to be micromanaging, but that when and if I made a mistake, I was going to have every decision I made, every lesson plan I wrote, second guessed and criticized.

This factor also affected the mentor-mentee relationship.

### **Perceived Needs of Teachers**

Participants also highlighted factors that contributed to teachers’ needs in terms of mentoring. The analysis of these factors yielded three sub-themes: support, professional development, and performance assessment. Although performance assessment could be addressed under constant training because it contributes to professional development, it is also a necessity for the success of the teacher. For this reason, I found it appropriate to address it as a separate sub-theme.

#### ***Support***

This is a very broad concept and an important aspect of direct mentorship and the mentor-mentee relationship. The results showed that the discussion points of participants were centered on two types of support: instructional and emotional support.

**Instructional Support.** Patricia, as a teacher who has worked with three direct mentors simultaneously who were not her campus administrators, pointed out the importance of direct mentorship and made the point that this type of approach would make a big difference. Also, she drew attention to the mistaken assumption of a decreased need for support over time:

Once you're maybe a 3rd, 4th, 5th year, everyone says, Oh, you're okay. As if you don't need really any support. . . . I loved the campus, and I loved those kids, and I loved the campus culture. But the bigger systems are failing us and not supporting us. And I felt that I could only control what was happening in the four walls of my classroom.

She further emphasized the lack of a supportive environment:

I feel like no one's really helping us out. We're each doing our own thing and trying to survive day to day . . . they are supposed to check on you and support you, but she [mentor] never really did.

Patricia clearly showed both the need for and the lack of support. When David reflected on his 1st year experiences, he drew attention to the fact that there were many people coming into the classroom and telling him what to do. He described how he felt because of these interactions:

And there were so many different people coming in that it became super overwhelming, as a 1st year teacher, to have different people telling me to change things, and not really know who to listen to.

This experience led him to think that it would be beneficial to have a campus administrator there "filtering" what needed to be done as a teacher appraiser who knows what is done in the classroom every day. This approach, in David's words, would make it "a lot easier to filter all that was coming in and identify what is going to be the most important to make a significant impact on students right now."

These statements were examples of the lack of support from campus administration. However, the excessive workload of administrators hindered their supportive ability. Karen, on the other hand, drew attention to structured support and underlined the lack of support from her campus administrator: "TFA [Teach for America] is a good way because at least you have this additional support on the side."

The negative experiences of Tina, a special education teacher, in relation to support received, stemmed from the absence of someone who could provide direct special educational mentorship at her school:

It was weird for me, because I was so new, and no one on the campus could provide direct support or even give me suggestions on how to proceed if I had a question. Sure, they would call the district, who would send someone to my room, usually several days after the fact. But it was rarely the same person, and usually they would begin by telling me everything that I did wrong and making me feel inadequate, when I was the one reaching out for help.

There was no one on campus to provide the support she needed. Various district level personnel would come to campus to provide support, but that created challenges in relation to building trust with district people. Because students did not know the district people, they would not want them in their classroom. This created minor behaviors that drew me away from instruction, which became a vicious circle. In their attempt to help me, they were causing bigger issues in my room and then reporting that I needed more support.

**Emotional Support.** In the theme of the challenges of administrators, lack of cohesiveness/relationship and trust-building aspects emerged as sub-themes that were particularly discussed by almost all the participants. While addressing trust building, Patricia expressed a need that she felt, which implied emotional support, as: “It would be helpful to start off by building that relationship and building that trust, and I think that helps with campus culture too.”

David clearly emphasized the weight of feeling valued, the morale and motivation that emotional support would provide: “Feeling valued is crucial because, at the end of the day . . . you’re going to remember how you feel.”

Kimberly expressed a feeling of being undervalued, caused by the lack of a campus climate that could not be created by the administrators:



The 4 years didn't wear me out physically completely, or mentally, but besides you know those factors that you can't control like I said, building a sense of community among the teachers and having their backs, I feel like we were always the first ones to get thrown under the bus.

In cases where the cohesiveness aspect of an administrator was lacking, a welcoming environment was not provided, which David emphasized as "being comfortable not only in the classroom but being comfortable in the school/work setting." David continued to share his point of view by comparing his experiences in different schools:

I look at my time at the first campus I worked at, and I look at my time at the campus I left, and emotions and passion definitely have an impact as to what I remember. And I do not remember very many things that I was taught at either of the schools. But I do remember how I felt at each of those schools and the way that I was appreciated at one versus the way I was appreciated at the other—or I guess I should say, the lack of appreciation at the other.

Appreciation was an identified element within the scope of emotional support, in terms of morale and motivation. Providing time and space for teachers to support their mental health/self-care was also a key parameter in terms of providing emotional support. Patricia's words about the need for and importance of self-care were quite striking:

And I think it was a big question of, Is this worth sacrificing everything for my own mental health? And I obviously feel guilty. It was just long hours, and I felt like I was overworked. I felt burnt out by the end of the year, obviously. And I felt like I was failing the kids because I was burnt out, and I wasn't caring as much. . . . I don't feel like I was performing at my best . . . I was a 1st year teacher, again, failing the kids; but my mental health was also at risk.

Again, while describing the need for emotional support, David touched on the genuineness of interactions between teachers:

Additionally, just doing check ins with teachers: "Hey, what are you doing?" I feel that a lot of people wouldn't want to, or wouldn't be open to answering this: "What are you doing outside of school to take care of yourself?" . . . Instead of just asking "how are you doing?" but actually being intentional: "How are you doing? How is everything going? Be open with me. What can I do? How can I help?"

Communication between teachers that cannot be established by the administrator may cause negativity among teachers. In this case, the morale and motivation of new teachers may be adversely affected. As Tina said: “what’s the motivation to do better if I’m only ever hearing about things that I’m doing wrong?” Kimberly added her experience: “I remember one of the last times Mrs. Betta called me into her office, and I had done something wrong again and she said, ‘if you want a nine to five job you need to leave teaching’.”

David contributed to the topic by sharing that negativity causes low motivation and low morale:

Especially when I was at the first campus, morale was at an all-time low, and it made it very difficult to be excited about being in the classroom and excited about teaching when your coworkers have a super negative mentality on what’s going on.

The common complaint beyond lack of mentorship was the expectation that teachers work uncompensated time off contracted hours. David further expressed his difficulty with the phrase, “compensation for time is also a need for teachers,” saying:

Some of the challenges that I faced were kind of what we were talking about before, compensation for time. My brother is a lawyer, and he always laughed when I told him that working at home, for free, after hours was part of the profession. He charged clients for hours worked, doctors bill for hours worked, yet here I was, making a fraction of what they made, working for free . . . and talking to so many special education teachers, “hey, where do you find the time to do this?” and they say, “oh, you do them when you’re at home,” and that’s just the expectation: to do them when you’re at home because you’re going to be with the students all day throughout the school day.

Since the issue of working at home causes the problem of unpaid labor, it stands out as a serious morale/motivation source, especially for new teachers. In fact, payment itself is a source of motivation and morale. It is noteworthy that most participants mentioned this issue.

I would also like to draw attention to the issue of private meetings, which are mentioned about mentor-mentee relationships. Not having private meetings negatively affected morale and

motivation and constituted a clear example of lack of emotional support. A final example of morale and negativity in teachers was based on Tina's experience:

I know which campus has the successful group of teachers that want to collaborate and work together. And I know which campus I avoid at all costs because I don't want to, I walk away feeling heavy and negative because they don't facilitate any kind of campus culture of collaboration, or even just medium high morale. As if it doesn't exist.

This statement also characterized the need for collaboration that could be provided with emotional support.

### ***Professional Development***

Teaching is an important method of personal development, made visible in Karen's statement that "having teaching as my first job was so useful for my personal maturity because I had to come in and be in charge immediately!" However, consistent training is a serious need in professional development. Karen shared her past experiences, and she underlined the fact that new teachers felt that the process contributed to their development through having regular meetings, especially in their first year:

We had monthly professional Saturdays where we would spend hours out at Region 20 [the Education Service Center] on a variety of topics. And it was very nice to have that sort of consistent training, especially in year 1. By year 2, we all were burnt out, but year 1 was a place for us to build community among ourselves.

According to the results obtained from the analysis of the interviews with the participants, who knew that they were inexperienced, the fact that they could not receive support, despite their serious need, prevented new teachers from feeling that they were improving. In fact, they exhibited individual effects, as Karen outlined when she said: "In the beginning, we were not equipped for what we needed to do. I don't know, I was sort of a passive observer, I guess."

The need for training new teachers starts right before a teacher enters the profession.

Karen indicated that teachers question their pre-service education as well: "I've had 6 months of

training. Okay. This is all on me. I have to know this. I have to be good.” Karen emphasized that there were training opportunities for new teachers within the district, but initial training for new teachers who had just started was not sufficient:

The district had a lot of trainings. Once we got into it, there was a lot of training at your feet. But in the beginning, we were not equipped for what we needed to do, you don’t know what you don’t know, so I didn’t even know which trainings to sign up for...

In line with Karen’s statement, Kimberly expressed the necessity for comprehensive pre-service education and discussed the issue from a policy point of view:

Some people get a degree in something completely different, right? So, they don’t even learn any of that [pedagogy] stuff at all. They just take the teacher certification exam. So they would have absolutely no clue. If I had no clue and I went to school for it, I don’t even know how anyone does it that doesn’t go to school for it . . . especially those teachers that aren’t formally trained in education or in how to be a teacher.

Karen, who had worked as a special education teacher before, re-stated the conditions of that time: “We were not trained as well as we could have been for the special ed aspect of things.”

During the COVID pandemic, a need and obligation for distance education had emerged. Experienced teachers who were far from digitalization had a lot of difficulties. One of the best examples of how consistent training is crucial in teacher development was expressed by Kimberly:

I can’t imagine older teachers being very adapted to the technology side of it, and I can see how that would frustrate them and cause them to retire much earlier than they had planned. I know that’s why my mother-in-law retired this year. It was too much!

As mentioned before, it is a mistaken assumption that the need for support decreases as experience increases.

### ***Performance Assessment***

Performance assessment is a necessity, even indispensable, in terms of measuring the success of teachers. Tina’s words on this topic covered the situation on several counts, including

what success is, what to measure and how, and using different approaches to measure different indicators:

You'd really have, prior to implementing anything, to do some front-end evaluation of what is and is not successful and what your goal is and how you would measure that to be successful. The easiest way to do that is student performance on tests, which I don't think is how you would measure it; but perhaps doing some staff satisfaction surveys, or staff knowledge surveys, prior to starting any kind of intervention from the admin team, and then doing the same survey at the end of whatever mentorship program they want to put you in, or every two weeks, or however often they're meeting. But I think you'd have to really consider how you're measuring success with that and whether it's with the students and their performance, or where the teachers are and their performance, and then consider who's evaluating that. I think each campus probably has its own culture on campus. And so, success everywhere will look a little bit different.

Karen supported Tina's point of view and drew attention to the lack of tools, such as performance reviews, and more intentional and purposeful meetings: "I remember those, but I remember them being kind of in a vacuum at the district level, or even at the school level. More of a check the box than an actual kind of useful growth tool."

### **Effective Strategies in Mentorship**

Participants provided suggestions on how a mentor should behave to meet their stated needs. It was almost impossible to examine these suggestions separately as they were the factors that directly affected each other. Failure of one caused disruption of the others. For this reason, I found it more effective to examine each of them separately, instead of under separate sub-themes.

According to Kimberly, developing a community among the staff was the administrator's ultimate role. It was crucial that the mentor establish the right relationship both between the mentee and him/herself, and between the new teachers and all other teachers. David focused on the relationship between teachers:

As new teachers, you're coming into a brand-new environment, not only with students, but also with other teachers. So, finding a way to build rapport with your teachers as well

is, I think, key. We always focus on building rapport with students. But you want to also build rapport with your fellow teachers. And I think that also has an impact on teacher retention rates as well; not only if you have leaders that you want to follow, but if you also have peers that you want to work with.

David revealed a challenge that new teachers may experience. Having the ability and capacity to build relationships among all teachers and to foster a campus climate were central for the morale and motivation of new teachers, and therefore for their success. It was also an important parameter for the formation of a campus culture. Karen expressed her thoughts on the subject as follows:

It also helps create loyalty if you do something like this because people . . . don't leave firms or organizations, they leave bosses. And so, I think that it will help create, help strengthen those bonds and keep people there longer than they may be otherwise.

For campus administrators to establish the right relationships between new teachers and all other teachers, David suggested: "Deconstruct the groups that have already been created and ensure that there's additional opportunities for people to match and to learn. It also sets a good example for peer-learning."

David stated that it would be beneficial for the administrators to participate in those conversations that would also eliminate the misperception of principals and assistant principals only associating with each other. Patricia reflected on the effects of the relationship on development:

I think it's the relationships offering ways to build teachers up, because I think that's what I crave: what are ways I can continue to grow and continue to learn and take on more roles and action on the campus level.

David's words supplemented those of Patricia:

It's important. I think that would have made a world of difference for me because you can tell me what to do. Fine, okay, I'll do it. But knowing the why behind it is crucial for any person that's in the classroom, because once you know, the why gives meaning behind it.

Karen shared her thoughts on direct mentorship through her own experiences:

Honestly, being as young as I was, I started when I was 22, and I think I left by the time I was 24, and it being my first job, I didn't even know what I didn't know to get my arms around. But I do think some more direct mentorship from the administration would have been helpful. I can't say that it would definitely have kept me teaching for longer, but it probably would have given me more reasons to stay.

Tina considered that the relationship between the administrator and the teacher was based on relationship building and that the direct mentorship relationship with teachers should be based on performance evaluation. However, she excluded the new teachers from this generalization when she said: "but I think other teachers who are not 1st year teachers who really don't know what they're doing anyway, could benefit from check-ins that don't involve formal performance evaluations."

The importance Patricia attached to the concept of direct mentorship was emphasized in the previous sections. She demonstrated that this concept would be mutually beneficial if it was applied properly:

When she's [the principal] mentoring new teachers and young teachers, she feels like she gains from it and she grounds herself back into watching where and why she's continuing to do the work that she does, and she gets that satisfaction out of it. I feel like getting that perspective or someone fresh you get to work with, who's still excited and still has that energy and has new ideas and new teaching philosophies can keep her up to date. What is the new way? What are the best teaching practices that they're saying nowadays? So, I think that would have been helpful. And I think that also develops teacher capacity.

With direct mentorship, not only would new teachers benefit, but administrators would also keep themselves constantly updated. As mentioned in previous sections, consistent training is crucial for development. This aligns with David's thoughts on this subject:

Because you're getting direct feedback from your supervisor on a regular basis to kind of help you improve your teaching practice as well as your hard and your soft skills in the classroom. I think we would also help kind of create that. It helps you feel more a part of the school community, especially because you're a new teacher.

Karen added that “this will probably increase retention rates.” In addition, how she expressed it emphasized the centrality of having a structure. Getting feedback and regularity or consistency were key points to help with teaching practice, as Karen shared:

I felt was very useful as a new teacher, and especially in that GEC role, was having a defined curriculum. I had System 44; it was all laid out for me... I was like, I’ve got my teacher’s guide. I’ve got all the materials ready. I can just use all of that.

Karen emphasized the centrality of having a structure for new teachers, which would allow teachers to receive intentional and purposeful trainings. Karen considered that, if more consistent training were provided through the structured organization and in real time, it would be more beneficial. According to Patricia, bonds established during direct mentorship should be a connection at a personal level with teachers. She reinforced this with the following example:

I think that would sway me more to going to a training, rather than, “Hey, everyone, there’s a professional development opportunity on Saturday. It’s optional.” Obviously, teachers won’t respond well, if you force it on them, but giving it a personal touch, like you’re going to do this thing with your coach or friend, and I think it would help. Personal touch through direct mentorship will make things a little easier for the mentoring administrator in terms of ensuring the participation of teachers in the process of creating a sense of community.

Approaching teachers personally to encourage them to attend those events and sharing direct and specific feedback with others about what they learned or experienced in those events might positively influence their willingness to attend. Then, if they attended such events and shared back with their colleagues afterwards, that would help in developing a sense of community among teachers over time. Patricia expressed some of her thoughts on the benefits of a sense of community:

It’s a community thing. And everyone benefits from it. Because I’m sure some teacher would probably feel like they want to take on that role of, you know what, I will go and I’m going to share this information and the whole campus, like a training-the-trainer thing. When that sense of community develops, peer-to-peer learning would emerge.



In Tina's opinion, organizing meetings within departments and facilitating small group discussions were key, both in terms of peer-learning and benefiting development in general:

I think both parties, veteran, and novice groups, could have benefited from crossing paths and sharing best practice. Yeah, they [the veteran teachers] have been teaching longer than us [the novice teachers], but each of us has something to offer, and I think that that could have been facilitated by administration.

Karen used the term indirect mentorship when talking about her positive experience in this regard. Since this term included the concepts of peer-to-peer learning or learning from each other, it would benefit both parties. Karen shared her thoughts on peer-to-peer learning:

I would say pairing teachers up as soon as you can, to get some sort of support or mentoring or whatever you want to call it early enough, so that you're not losing people is key, but late enough that some of those natural bonds have already started to form, I think, makes it more effective. Because if you feel like you can relate to these people and it's not just like a randomly assigned mentor, I think that could help, I think. I don't know, maybe like, maybe sharing lessons learned at staff meetings or department meetings or something like that.

Karen's statement contains notable strategy recommendations. Patricia also shared her experience with peer-to-peer learning: "peer-to-peer I think we learn more just because we're already planning with each other weekly, and we're all at the same school, let's just break that down, intentionally to partner veteran teachers with newer ones." Additionally, with peer-to-peer learning, all teachers, new and experienced, would be up to date. Otherwise, other new teachers could experience the negativity that Karen experienced:

I was teaching at a time when things had evolved . . . my supervisors had done Special Ed the old way. And those ways did not align with what I was taught and believed in. They would physically restrain them at the first sign of an undesired behavior rather than using verbal de-escalation; they would put them in front of a television screen or a computer program rather than working with them in small groups or one on one. I didn't get as much value there as I would have liked to.

Differences in teaching practices (veteran teachers vs. new teachers) between more experienced teachers and new teachers did not yield positive results. Another benefit that a sense

of community provides is a welcoming environment. Stating that he had a structure that asked many questions, David's contribution to the subject was through his experiences. He said, "So, having the opportunity to actually ask questions and know what's going on . . . made a key difference in my time working at my second campus school."

David's statement showed that a welcoming environment could foster an effective learning environment for new teachers:

What comes to mind first is just the opportunity to really follow what you want to do to improve the school... like having the opportunity to actually do things that you're passionate about within the school, but outside of the classroom. That support and encouragement from my administrator I think, is what will keep teachers, especially, like, first couple of years teachers in the classroom.

David stated that having opportunities to introduce new things in his classroom and even campus wide would improve not only the teacher but also the school. He emphasized encouraging new teachers in their success: "[H]aving projects that new teachers are working on, that they're passionate about and trying in the classroom, I think that that would be key to seeing success with new teachers."

Another parameter that was effective in the success of new teachers as stated by the participants was goal setting and planning according to that goal. Tina said, "I think that's first and foremost; it will give you a lot of insight as to if it's successful or not."

David wondered if these goals were a suggestion for their performance assessment and evaluation. Again, considering formal observations of teachers in the classroom as a type of mentor-mentee relation, Karen shared some remarkable ideas:

I think it would be cool to have opportunities to see teachers in action. That's hard, obviously, because everyone has full class loads that they need to teach. But to see kind of people in their elements would be very useful. I think having a couple of months of actual teaching under your belt and then doing those observations would be super helpful.

Karen's statement suggesting an opportunity for observation also drew attention to having structure. Providing more structure and an order to the activities could contribute to teacher retention. It was also an notable strategy recommendation because it provided, in Karen's own words, "in-the-moment coaching." Another suggestion she made was self-reflection, which allowed you to learn from practice, and identify your strengths and areas for improvement. Practitioners and new teachers needed that component. As Karen said, "That's something I think would be useful to have at a campus level, thinking more critically about what it is you do and why you do it."

Since a sense of community was to be created by the administration, negativity would also disappear. New teachers also could experience what David did: "I could ask my administrator as many questions as I wanted. I knew he wouldn't get annoyed."

Tina emphasized positive feedback:

If there was a way to implement positive feedback, more frequently, which should be, should happen between every relationship on every campus, no matter where you are. Kids to teachers, teachers to admin, all of them need to be sharing things that are going well.

Removing negativity also opens space for empathy. David expressed his thoughts on the subject:

It's easy to forget to be empathetic for teachers. It really is. And yeah, I think that having that opportunity to actually sit down and see what's going on and say, "oh, this is very difficult." It really does give a different perspective. I think that would be really important as well.

In this way, it could be ensured that the teacher feels valued. In fact, these feelings had a huge impact on teachers' mental health, self-care, morale, and motivation. David suggested:

They're still doing everything, but they're doing it on campus. Gives them time to recoup and make sure that they can get caught up on grading. Or they can get caught up on lesson planning. Or they can just sit down talk for a second. But

having something . . . that [says] “okay, cool”—this is them valuing me and them valuing my mental health. I think that’d be really cool to do.

In addition, being intentional in relationships would provide emotional support. Patricia summarized her expectations about mentorships: “I would want a mentor who likes the community and has been there for a while, who can share their personal experiences and have that relationship with me.”

Karen expressed both her expectations and her concerns about the problems that the administrators might experience regarding time management:

Being a better principal is like being a conduit to all of those resources, which could be a very good role. But just from a time management perspective, I wonder what type of direction that the principals get from the districts about how to divide and conquer their time, because they’re trying to develop and train their staff and keep their test scores up and do everything to their kids and manage all of the things.

Dedicating time and making it consistent were key elements of mentorship.

Patricia provided the following suggestion on mentorship:

[B]ut I think maybe if there was a mentorship program, where I got to be the mentor of a new teacher, I think that would have helped me. . . . It would be helpful to start off by building that relationship and building that trust and what that’s like, and I think that helps with campus culture, too.

Patricia also stated that it would make contributions to the formation of campus culture.

According to Karen, every mentor had a different way of doing things:

What I’m going to need is a process that’s codified, with all these things in writing. And so, it’s easy to share it with someone to replicate. But it could probably be done faster and probably cheaper to source it out to off campus personnel who don’t make what a principal makes.

Karen emphasized the benefit of having a mentorship program.

It was very important that the mentor be an expert in the same field. According to Kimberly, “even a mentor from a different grade level would have been more helpful.” From this

statement, it was concluded that the participant expected that their mentor was either in, or had experience in the same role, but with more experience. Kimberly also made an analogy for the relationship between mentor and mentee in different roles, saying that “it would be like giving baseball advice in a football game.”

In Kimberly’s opinion, another issue where teachers were negatively affected in the current practice was related to deadlines that were not set for administrative tasks. Kimberly cited tasks such as At-Risk Management Documentation, Multi-Tiered Systems of Support/Response to Intervention as a few. With a mentorship program, this problem would also likely be solved.

### **Summary**

In Chapter 1, I pointed out that nearly 10% of new teachers left the profession before completing their first full year, and that another 44% of teachers do not remain in the profession beyond their 5th year. I assessed a need to address the cause of this early exodus and to see how campus mentorship programs could help increase teacher job satisfaction while exploring the role of principal and mentor. In Chapter 5, I will discuss how the data reflects these findings.

Based on the responses of teachers I interviewed, and the data collected, my initial perceptions that decreasing new teacher attrition rates through on-campus mentorship between the principal and the teacher would have increased teacher job satisfaction were correct. The teachers surveyed felt that the campus principal was their primary support person as their boss, the lead-learner, and their appraiser. However, as mentioned by respondents, many times the principal did not have the answer, because s/he had not worked in certain aspects of the field. In addition, participants reported that the relationship between the principal and the novice teacher needed to be built on trust. The group expressed that, although there were numerous other factors that contributed to their early exit from the profession, the perceived lack of trust and support

from their principal was a key component. Mentorship thus became a key theme. All participants expressed that they felt that the role of the principal was to guide and coach new teachers through their probationary period.

## Chapter 5: Summary and Discussion

Research has shown that the rate of teacher attrition in public education has reached concerning levels in the last 13 years (Nguyen et al., 2019). The pool of new teachers who are qualified to join the profession is getting smaller and smaller, creating a teacher shortage (Holmqvist, 2019). To help with recruitment, training, and retention of quality teachers, state and district leadership may benefit from studies involving possible factors linked to increased teacher attrition rates, such as lack of support and mentorship programs. While there is rich literature focusing on teacher retention topics, this study addressed the issue from a perspective that may be more helpful to administrators.

With the purpose of understanding the perspectives of teachers who left the profession at the beginning of their teaching lives, five participants were interviewed in this study, and three themes were identified from the findings obtained from the data analysis. Although reported separately, these identified main themes overlap and complement each other. The results of this study shed light on the perceptions of new teachers about the profession, revealed difficulties and needs those teachers face, and contributed to the literature and public education through the recommendations they offer.

In this study, I used a CGT approach to explore the principal's role as a mentor, and their role in reducing new teacher attrition rates was explored. I found that the responsibility for mentorship should not be limited only to principals and that all administrative staff on campus could be given mentorship responsibility. Schwabsky et al. (2019) made a distinction between principals and mentorship and addressed the responsibilities for each separately. However, Agre (2014) found that mentoring could provide a way to reach the essence of instructional leadership

for principals. Agre used the term administrators, which included the principal, vice/assistant principal, academic dean, and campus instructional coach.

Interviews carried out in this study revealed that new teachers should be guided and encouraged to remain in the profession/school. It was equally clear that they need mentors and guidance in accomplishing retention. Karen, one of the participants interviewed, made the degree of teacher's inexperience clear when she said, "I didn't even know what I didn't know."

In this study, the perspectives of low-income public middle school teachers who left the profession within their first 5 years of teaching were investigated to seek answers to the question, "how can low-income school districts retain highly qualified teachers in the public-school setting?"

Three main themes emerged as a result of the analysis of the answers given by the participants in the interviews:

- Challenges of administrators
- Perceived needs of teachers
- Effective strategies in mentorship.

Challenges of administrators and the perceived needs of teachers addressed the first sub-question, "How do novice teachers of low-performing, economically disadvantaged urban, public schools perceive their campus administrator's role in their mentorship and guidance as new teachers?" The "effective strategies in mentorship" theme addressed the second sub-question, "Based on novice schoolteacher's perception, what role should the mentorship and guidance of school's principals play in retainment?"



### **Sub-Question One**

Under sub-question one, “How do novice teachers of low-performing, economically disadvantaged urban, public schools perceive their campus administrator’s role in their mentorship and guidance as new teachers?” two themes were identified: the challenges of administrators and the perceived needs of teachers. In this section, I present and discuss each theme with their sub-categories.

#### ***Challenges of Administrators***

Although the participants of this study were public middle school teachers who left the profession within their first 5 years of teaching, as a result of the analyses of the study data it was understood that additional support should also be given to administrators. In addition to the difficulties that administrators are currently experiencing in their professional lives, one participant, Karen, had concerns that the perception of “one more thing has been added to the worklist” may occur in administrators. The challenges of administrators were examined under four titles: workload, high turnover, lack of cohesiveness/relationship and trust building, and mentorship approaches.

**Workload.** Referring to the nature of mentorship, which is defined based on the findings obtained, it would not be fair to put the responsibility only on principals. The findings showed that there was an expectation that all administrative staff should shoulder this responsibility. However, administrators are constrained under a serious workload. In fact, it was stated by the participants that this workload negatively affected the new teachers’ desire to become an administrator. Administrators are frequently engaged with a variety of tasks, from managing daily routines to providing organizational leadership. Consequently, connecting with new teachers is likely to be listed at the bottom ranks in their to-do list. Most of the participants who

experienced a mentor-mentee relationship in their past professional life stated that they could not reach the mentor when they needed them.

Agre (2014) drew attention to the systematic and continuous principal interaction in her study and suggested that its absence would limit the possibility of consistent feedback and development of a trusting relationship and, therefore, would have a negative impact on professional growth. The effort of carrying out both mentorship and administrative work together may push some administrators to carry out the work with a check-list approach. Authenticity cannot be established if administrators look upon mentoring as another “to-do” on their list. According to Pogodzinski (2013), since formal mentoring may impact the level of support novices receive, administrators need to attend to overall working conditions within their schools to ensure that formal mentoring meets the needs of novices. In order for administrators to provide adequate mentorship to new teachers, they would need a reduction in other administrative tasks, which would allow them to focus more on the relationship-building aspect that may increase the likelihood of creating a positive campus culture.

**High Turnover.** Administrators have limited tenure and high turnover. Administrators who have completed their term in the principal’s office are replaced by another colleague. Due to this high turnover, the established mentor-mentee relationship is replaced with a new relationship that needs to be established. For new teachers to benefit from mentorship, it is crucial that the mentor-mentee relationship last as long as possible. The high turnover problem may also lead to the expectation that the person who will be responsible for mentorship cannot meet those responsibilities. Mentors’ familiarity with the culture of the campus where they work is also important for the adaptation of their mentees, who are novices both to the profession and the school they work in.

**Lack of Cohesiveness/Relationship and Trust Building.** The cohesiveness/relationship and trust-building aspect is an essential parameter that allows new teachers to extend their time in the profession. Administrators are seen as the people who make a difference. Therefore, Proctor Günter (2020) recommend that administrators and teachers work to build trusting relationships within the campus (, 2020). Pogodzinski (2013), in estimating logistic regression models, stated that in setting a tone of collaboration among teachers and administrators and among teachers themselves, the key role belongs to administrators.

One of the participants in a study by Cunningham (2020) also addressed the communication skills of school leaders by pointing out a double standard in which teachers are given the responsibility to teach students effective communication while teachers themselves lack good communication with their leaders. According to the participants of this study, developing a community within the staff is the administrator's ultimate role. Ensuring novice teachers have positive relationships meets Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Pichère & Cadiat, 2015) and Bandura's Self-efficacy Theory (Martin, 2012) to help the support and professional growth of teachers, so they would have greater potential to stay in the education profession (Proctor Günter, 2020). However, heavy workloads can forestall the responsibility of building relationships. Barth et al. (2016) indicated that school leaders simply do not have the authority or strategies to create such an environment, which supports the findings of this study. The fostering climate that cannot be created on campus prevents the creation of a campus culture. If there is a lack of a sense of community, a sense of belonging cannot be created.

According to the literature, providing a sense of belonging is among the responsibilities of administrators (Proctor Günter, 2020). Stating that new teachers are not only outsiders to the students but also to this new environment, David (one of the participants) pointed out that they

cannot feel comfortable. One of the major consequences of the lack of a sense of community is negativity, which increases the attrition rates of new teachers. The contribution of the administrator is crucial in establishing the right relationship. Failure to establish an appropriate relationship, especially with experienced teachers and departments grouped among themselves, may feed into this negativity, and ultimately, the morale and motivation of the new teacher may be negatively affected.

**Mentorship Approaches.** This study found that the mentor-mentee relationship directly affects the retention rates of new teachers. While the direct mentorship expected by the participants in the mentor-mentee relationship was based on these relationships for new teachers, it also should be provided for experienced teachers. According to the participants, there should be bonds established during direct mentorship, and these should be connections at a personal level with teachers. The bonds that form in these relationships would be necessary in order for the mentorship to be beneficial. Regular meetings are of great importance for the development of these bonds.

According to Pogodzinski (2013), the choice of when a mentoring pair would meet was not always left to the mentor and mentee. Administrators can make appointments for the early career teacher and their mentor, to help cultivate more frequent informal interactions and encourage a more meaningful and sustained relationship. Based on the findings of this study, it can be said that this relationship should be like a coach-athlete relationship rather than a parent-child relationship. Early career teachers should not feel like they are being punished for the mistakes they make or the new ideas they want to implement. On the contrary, they should receive guidance that includes a causal link. Asking questions is as important as getting answers to the questions asked. In his interview, David stated that these answers were expected to be

given in a respectful manner. This expectation was not isolated to the participants of this study. Demir (2015) reported that trust between teachers and administrators happens when teachers feel motivated, encouraged to participate in school-related decision-making processes, supported in self-development, and respected.

Another aspect of this category is related to the nature of mentorship engagements. All mentor-mentee engagements should be held on a regular basis and personalized in a private setting. Otherwise, the morale and motivation of new teachers may be adversely affected, and they may not be able to have the opportunity to receive proper feedback. Confidentiality was also emphasized in the grounded theory design study conducted by Agre (2014), where it was stated that face-to-face communication was vital. Demoralized and demotivated new teachers were more likely to leave the profession. Negative or positive feedback was like a performance assessment for new teachers and could improve teaching practice, support the development of self-confidence in the new teacher, and result in an increase in the retention rate.

There is also the issue of lack of equity, which was emphasized by participant Kimberly. While narrating this negative experience within the scope of the mentor-mentee relationship, Kimberly emphasized that she could not get enough support from the administrators, but that some of the teachers who were the favorites of the school leader could get all the support they wanted. Research suggests that this situation is one of the factors that can cause new teachers to leave the profession (Iqbal, 2016). Achinstein (2012) stated that mentoring practices often fall short of equity and diversity and argues that the problem is partially related to a lack of an articulated knowledge base.

Another issue that David shared was on micromanagement, which narrows the field of development of the new teacher and may result in them leaving the teaching profession.

Additionally, Karen stated that she worked with several mentors and would receive feedback, but some of the feedback was meaningful in terms of development while other feedback was not useful. This led to the conclusion that not all the mentors are at the same level of quality. As noted in Podolsky et al. (2019), programs for mentoring and induction have become more widely available in the United States over the past two decades, and the fact that variability in the quality of these programs exists may be the corollary for this quality level difference in mentors.

### *Perceived Needs of Teachers*

During the interviews, participants revealed that they needed mentorship, and provided insights into ways they required mentors. According to Warren (2018), administrators should be aware of the situations that have an impact on attrition and retention rates. When participant insights were analyzed, the results showed that they need mentorship in three main areas: support, professional development, and performance assessment.

**Support.** In a dissertation study conducted through a 10-question interview with 30 early-career teachers, participants reported that they expected their administrators to provide them with emotional, environmental, and instructional support (Proctor Günter, 2020). Agre (2014), on the other hand, stated that the support, supervision, and evaluation of new teachers are directly tied to the principal's role. Administrative support is shown to be a factor that has a significant impact on teachers' retention (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Cunningham, 2020).

Since they do influence teachers' futures in education, these supportive relationships between teachers and administration are critical. The willingness of administrators to support the needs of their novice teachers and make efforts to build relationships with each of them is crucial to making teachers feel valued (Proctor Günter, 2020). The need for such leadership and all types of support was evident in this study's interviews as well. The concept of support, which appeared

to be the most basic need of the new teacher, is discussed separately for both professional practices and emotional needs.

***Instructional Support.*** Warren (2018) has noted that instructional support is particularly critical for individuals who work in schools, and stated that the provision of administrative support has a major effect on the rate of teacher retention. Similarly, Kent et al. (2012) stated that, with neither adequate assistance nor guidance, novice teachers are expected to assume the same job responsibilities in their first years of profession as skilled teachers who have years of experience.

Agre (2014) stated that, just as beginning teachers want to know what their principal expects of them, principals need to know and understand their roles and responsibilities regarding beginning teacher induction. Agre has recommended that the principal dedicate time that is specifically designed for mentorship and new teacher learning opportunities to promote clarity and confidence in all of the teachers in their role as instructional leaders. Similarly, Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) have recommended that rigorous accreditation and licensure standards in training programs for principals' professional development should be aligned with research on effective school leadership. Teachers who are inexperienced need serious guidance and need to receive support in every subject from more experienced administrators, especially in the first 2 years, which are defined as the induction years (Agre, 2014).

Through the data obtained and from the previously cited studies, there appears to be an inadequate amount of support from administrators and colleagues, which leads to a higher level of stress and frustration (Dias-Lacy et al., 2017). Instructional support is important for teacher development to enable them to become qualified in the profession. It is a necessity to provide

support in all kinds of work-related activities that need to be done and are within the scope of this profession. Inadequate support from school administration (Podolski et al., 2019; Warren, 2018; Watkins, 2016), low salaries (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Cunningham, 2020; Podolski et al., 2019; Sedivy-Benton & Boden-McGill, 2012; Warren, 2018), quality of teacher pre-service programs, excessive workload, and poor working environments are the causes of a novice teacher's decision to leave the profession (Corbin & Strauss, 2015; Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018).

Instructional support is a pillar of mentor-mentee relationships. This type of support is not only needed by new teachers, but also by more experienced teachers. In her interview, Patricia referenced the pandemic period we are in and stated that, when it comes to distance education, teachers had a lot of trouble with digitalization. It is a mistaken assumption that the need for support will disappear as experience increases. At this point, however, there is a contrast between the need for direct mentorship and the reality of overloaded administrators.

The participants, who stated that they could not reach a mentor when they needed one, felt inadequate and said that this lack of support was a large reason for leaving the profession. Lack of support is usually the first reason why teachers leave (Barth et al., 2016; Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Warren, 2018). Support and leadership from administrators might increase retention if implemented in a consistent and positive manner and might also prove significant to most teachers who might be in the various roles of leadership (Warren, 2018).

In addition, most of the participants drew attention to having a structure in the support of professional practice. In other words, it is not enough just to have support, there must also be a structure, such as a teacher's guide (Holloway, 2001)

***Emotional Support.*** As the findings of this study showed, one of the major subscales of teacher-leader support includes the provision of emotional support; administrators can use it to



show endorsement towards teachers (Warren, 2018). The morale and motivation of novice teachers is a factor in their continuing in their profession. Motivation was stated to be a factor that has influential consequences on teacher retention in schools (Warren, 2018). At the point of meeting this need, the first step would be to establish the right mentor-mentee relationship. Thanks to this relationship, it may be possible for the teacher to feel valued and to have high morale and motivation. Another way outlined in the study for teachers to feel valued was to feel a sense of belonging. Feeling valued and having a sense of belonging constitute encouraging factors for every new teacher to continue in the profession.

Schanke (2021) claims that one of the principal's roles is to motivate and support teachers so that they can improve their teaching. Relationships and collaboration are important emotional supports that administrators can provide between teachers. In schools where a sense of community cannot be established, it is very difficult for teachers to develop a sense of belonging and to receive emotional support, which may increase the attrition rate. The establishment of a sense of community is crucial for ensuring a fostering climate, which is a responsibility of the administrators. In cases where the administration is not cohesive, it does not seem possible to create the fostering climate and welcoming environment needed by all teachers.

Appreciation was also a source of morale and motivation. Teachers who felt that they were more appreciated had a high likelihood of increasing their levels of job satisfaction (Warren, 2018; Watkins, 2016). Teachers who received only negative feedbacks and experienced a lack of appreciation were more likely to leave the profession. Administrators who succeeded in building a community where every person was valued made a novice teacher feel appreciated and respected (Watkins, 2016).

Teachers' mental health/self-care is an essential factor for continuing in or leaving the profession. According to Ford and Ware (2018), having a concern with the well-being of both teachers and students is inevitable for effective school leaders. Providing time and space for teachers was also stated as a need by the participants of this study. The participants all cited that it was critical that teachers be compensated for their time and that the expectation to work off contract hours be eliminated, or at the very least that they be compensated for the time spent beyond contract time; otherwise, the burnout that may occur can result in an increase in the attrition rate. Hiring more teachers and fewer non-teaching personnel, offering a more streamlined curriculum with fewer low-enrollment courses, organizing time in longer blocks to produce reduced teaching loads, and using time when students are in clubs or internships for teacher collaboration were presented as examples that have been implemented in redesigned high schools, and which have improved teacher effectiveness and retention and good time management (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

During his interview, while talking about the need for emotional support, David mentioned the significance of supportive interactions between teachers. On the issues that novice teachers may encounter, Glazer (2020) addressed the relationship with other adults, and the findings he obtained in his analysis of the anecdotes of 25 former teachers have suggested that teachers' preparation and professional development training also should include methods to be used when interacting with the other adults, both colleagues and administrators. There may even be negativity in a general sense in cases where a sense of community, which is the responsibility of the administrator, is missing and there is no communication between teachers. Therefore, new teachers may not get the emotional support they need; they would also experience this negativity, and soon may come to the point of leaving the profession. In her interview, Tina, who had left

the profession, explained that a person can't have a motivation to do the right thing, if only the mistakes they make are reported to them.

As highlighted earlier, the low pay mentioned within the scope of professional practices also affects the morale of teachers negatively. According to Sedivy-Benton and Boden-McGill (2012), who examined the factors in the work environment that influence teachers' intentions to remain in or to leave the profession, salary has been found to be a statistically significant indicator regarding a teacher's intentions of remaining in the profession. Along with low morale and motivation, this strengthens the sense of burnout and may result in the teacher leaving the profession. According to Gonzales et al. (2017), burnout decreases as morale increases, and administrators should try to minimize those factors that teachers have identified as potential stress agents. They should focus on improving morale. In the same study, a statistically significant relationship was found between teacher job-related stress and teacher self-efficacy, which indicated that, as teacher stress increased, teacher self-efficacy levels decreased.

**Professional Development.** Teaching requires continuous development, but development is possible only with consistent training. Therefore, consistent training is a need for all teachers. The participants stated that they lacked self-efficacy because they did not receive the consistent training they needed. Gonzales et al. (2017) indicated that the role of school administrators could both positively and negatively impact teachers' self-efficacy. In addition, they have shown that as the stress level increases, the self-efficacy of teachers also decreases, which is consistent with the findings of this study. Teachers are more likely to stay at the school where school building administrators focused on authentic student success and were supportive of teachers' professional growth and development (Leithwood, 2011). It understandable that a teacher who feels inexperienced and incompetent at the beginning of their professional life may think about

leaving the profession. For this reason, the widespread application of pre-service programs is an important step in increasing the retention rates.

In a study conducted by Barth et al. (2016), pre-service programs were considered as the best practice for teacher shortage problem. Opportunities for collaborative or paired teaching during pre-service training help build pedagogical skills among new teachers (Behm Cross & Thomas, 2017). Bastian et al. (2017) studied the outcomes of university-based pre-service support programs and found that teaching performance and retention rates of teachers were generally positive, and instructional coach visits were positively viewed as a valuable component in teaching and teachers' retention. In her interview, Karen stated that she needed to employ her own individual efforts to meet her professional development needs. Cunningham (2020) examined the effects of professional identity on teacher retention; one of the participants also complained about their experiences of self-growth. Having a structured organization such as a teacher's guide seemed to be a factor that could reduce the attrition rate of new teachers.

Establishing structures by gaining prior knowledge has been accepted as a necessary step in helping principals retain teachers and avoid repetitious mistakes from previous administrations (Holmes et al., 2019). Considering that some of the participants in this study, who were trained to be teachers, found their training insufficient, it is reasonable to expect that those who have simply received a teaching certificate would leave the profession at a high rate. In addition, alternate paths into teaching are considered a growing part of the pipeline (Barth et al., 2016). However, according to Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017), teachers who enter the profession through alternative certification pathways are 25% more likely to leave their schools and the profession. This may cause attrition rates to increase.

When discussing the need for support for professional practices, I mentioned the situations where former teachers could be lacking the skills to be successful teachers in a remote or hybrid learning environment, such as during the pandemic, and highlighted that professional development is necessary for teachers of all experience levels. It is equally beneficial that veteran teachers have access to ongoing opportunities to learn from other teachers as well. Access to relevant professional development not only keeps teachers up to date on best practices, but it also provides them with opportunities to learn how to implement the ever-evolving technological assets that can be used to promote students' growth. The best professional development is on-going, practical, cooperative, and connected to and derived from working with students.

**Performance Assessment.** Performance assessment is imperative for a teacher's development, so that they can understand what is right and what is wrong in their practices. I emphasized that the regular feedback that new teachers should receive is a performance evaluation. According to Proctor Gunter (2020), feedback from peers and colleagues influences self-efficacy. Providing positive feedback, especially through regular meetings to be held within the scope of direct mentorship, may positively affect the development of teachers, make teachers feel self-confident, and increase their self-efficacy.

The positive effects of constructive feedback on teachers' retention have also been addressed (Barth et al., 2016; Proctor Gunter, 2020), decreasing the rate of teachers leaving the profession. Performance assessment, like training, must be continuous. In fact, some of the participants stated that their professional competencies were not evaluated, due to the lack of classroom observation and real-time assessment and coaching. Therefore, they constantly felt a sense of guilt that they might not be living up to their own expectations. Observations from both

administrators and colleagues were considered in providing the feedback that novice teachers needed, as well as having supportive feedback to provide novice teachers with opportunities to help them perfect their craft and professional development (Proctor Gunter, 2020).

### **Sub-Question Two**

Under sub-question two, “Based on novice schoolteacher’s perception, what role should the mentorship and guidance of school principals play on retainment,” one theme was identified: effective strategies in mentorship. In this section, I present and discuss the theme with its sub-categories.

#### ***Effective Strategies in Mentorship***

Within the scope of the second sub-question some effective strategies and suggestions about the role and quality of the mentor were brought together. These suggestions and strategies are considered holistically, as they directly affect each other and form parts of a system.

**Definition of Mentorship/Mentor.** When the data obtained from the interviews were analyzed, the need to define a mentorship/mentor emerged. This requirements suggested by the participants stated that a mentor must complete a mentorship program, be sufficiently experienced, have good communication skills, be a leader, be supportive and cohesive, and communicate as needed. In addition, a mentor should attach importance to personal and professional development and to providing continuous training in this direction. When the training is completed, and at routine intervals, the mentor should evaluate the performance and the results through feedback with the teachers. In her interview, Patricia’s shared that among her expectations, was that the mentor should be someone who knows the school community very well. Lozinak (2016) considered assignments in the same school as another area of interest for mentors and administrators and argued that new teachers benefited from having a go-to person in

the building. On the other hand, Karen, expressed her concerns in terms of mentorship and the principal's role as mentor in terms of time management, given the heavy workload of administrators.

Considering all the statements from the participants on the issue of the principal being the instructional leader responsible for advocating for campus-wide achievements that maximize student learning and staff professional development, the overlapping consensus was that the principal must dedicate time to providing consistent and on-going support in terms of mentorship. According to Kent et al. (2012), mentoring is not a choice but a responsibility of everyone within the school system, because all have a vested interest in the success of new teachers.

In her interview, Karen shared that every mentor has a way of providing mentorship. Their contributions occur on different subjects and levels. Ensuring that the contribution and support provided by the mentor reach equivalent levels and quality is possible by applying a mentor's guide. As Pogodzinski (2013) noted, mentors also need to receive training but, since this training is left to districts, and participation is voluntary, the quality of mentors also varies. Receiving mentorship from someone who knows what they are doing or who is an expert can make a difference in providing guidance. While narrating her negative experience completing the tasks outside of instruction such as At-Risk Management System and RTI/MTSS, Kimberly stated that she knew the tasks she was responsible for, but she had no information about deadlines. Considering that the administrators would also take responsibility for mentoring, including this subject in the scope of the mentor's guide would be beneficial to the solution of the problem.

**Relationship Building.** The role of the administrator in relationship building among teachers is a distinct responsibility. According to Kent et al. (2012), the principal is the person who creates a culture that supports the mentor-mentee process and provides an environment that supports the development of productive relationships between mentor and mentee. This argument supplements the findings of this study. As a result of a fostering climate created by the administrators, a campus culture may be created and the morale and motivation of the new teachers, as well as their success rates, may be increased, a factor that will directly affect the retention of new teachers in the profession.

In one interview, Karen stated that building relationships would strengthen bonds, create loyalty, and increase the length of time teachers stay in the profession. In order to establish the right relationship between teachers, subjects recommended deconstruction of existing groups and creation of new opportunities. This approach would allow people to meet different people, establish relationships, and gain mutual benefits. The participation of administrators in these meetings could also eliminate the misperception that administrators just socialize with each other.

**Direct Mentorship.** Director contact and communication between the mentor and the mentee are important for the development of the teacher's craft. Communication is regarded as a crucial part of developing positive, synergistic, and trustworthy relationships between teachers and administrators, and contributes to the development of positive work environments (Warren, 2018). According to data collected in an electronic survey by Kent et al. (2012), a mentoring program helped increase the number of novice teachers who remained in the profession.

Mentoring programs advance the professional growth of novice teachers, making them more effective in the short-term, and increasing the retention rate of new teachers (Callahan,



2016). In fact, it is one of the factors that may directly affect the retention rate of teachers. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) have stated that novice teachers were more committed to their jobs, had higher job satisfaction, and were more likely to stay within the profession of teaching when they specifically participated in a mentoring program. With regular feedback provided through direct mentorship, not only the teaching practice is developed, but the morale and motivation of the teacher are maintained and even increased. In fact, in her interview, Karen said that this would help the teacher feel like she was a part of the school community. Additionally, according to Tina, sharing positive topics and feedback more frequently in every possible environment, and between administrator and teacher, teacher and teacher, and teacher and student would facilitate the formation of a campus culture. Not only would the teacher stay at the school, but consequently the success of the school also would rise.

Teachers and administrators should be able to establish bonds through direct mentorship. While communicating with the mentee, the mentor should consider all their needs in guiding their professional practices and should show that they care about the mentee with a personal touch through sincere approaches in terms of emotional support. According to Warren (2018):

Teacher leaders who have the objective of contributing to a teacher's development and improvement prefer to depend on the teacher's strengths that they bring to the table. These teacher leaders require a knowledge of the teachers as individuals; authentically, pedagogically, and culturally. (p. 36)

With this type of implementation, the novice teacher is much more likely to engage, be satisfied, and remain in the profession.

**Performance Assessment.** Contributing to the success of new teachers through direct mentorship, goal setting, and planning was suggested by participants as one of the main parameters in this regard. After the goals were determined, the evaluation of whether these goals have been achieved was among the expectations of the participants. For this reason, emphasis

should be placed on performance assessment. The best performance assessment that can be provided to novice teachers should be by watching them in class and assessing the situation with a short meeting immediately after class, using direct and specific feedback (DeLuca et al., 2015). In her interview, Karen used the term “in the moment coaching” for this direct mentorship approach. Another participant suggested that the teacher be filmed while they were in class. This was a method of self-reflection they had experienced in the past and it provided learning from practice and allowed them to identify strengths, weaknesses, or areas that need improvement.

**Mentorship by Peers.** In her interview, Tina shared that the other expectation was that the mentor should have the same role as the mentee. As the lone special education teacher on campus, there was no other peer teacher who could take responsibility for mentoring her. Callahan (2016), in her study on mentoring strategies for encouraging retention of new teachers, highlighted the skills and qualities that mentors should have, which included interpersonal skills, instructional effectiveness, leadership qualities, appropriate work experience, and content and grade-level expertise similar to the mentee.

Lozinak (2016) also pointed out this issue and stated that pairs should be at least of a similar grade or content area. Induction, identified as a new teacher’s transition from novice to professional, is aimed at improving the performance of beginning teachers, and ensuring that qualified novices remain in the profession (Schwabsky et al., 2019). According to Ingersoll and Strong (2011), “teacher induction can refer to a variety of different types of activities for new teachers—orientation sessions, faculty collaborative periods, meetings with supervisors, developmental workshops, extra classroom assistance, reduced workloads, and, especially, mentoring” (p. 5). Research on the topic reveals that well-designed induction programs for novice teachers result in teachers staying in the profession at higher rates, accelerated

professional growth, and improved student success (Bastian et al., 2017; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Podolski et al., 2019). Considering that induction serves as a passageway that supports novice teachers as they enter the profession, Dias-Lacy et al. (2017) have identified an effective induction program design to assign mentees with mentors who are on the same grade level in elementary schools, or who teach the same subject in the middle and secondary grades. It does not seem feasible in professional practice for teachers of different subjects to exchange information. Receiving mentorship from someone who's in the same role helps significantly, particularly in special education. Not only does the mentee benefit from direct mentoring, but it creates a mutually beneficial situation. In this way, the mentor may be constantly updated with new information. To achieve this, it is essential to have regular and intentional meetings.

**Importance of Structure.** At this point, having a structure should also be emphasized, based on the analysis of the data obtained because of the interviews with participants. Getting feedback with regularity or consistency was considered by the participants as key points in terms of help with teaching practice. Having structure allowed teachers to receive in-time, regular, constant, intentional, and purposeful trainings, which were crucial for teacher development.

**Building Community.** Building a sense of community was identified as another responsibility of administrators. In fact, in her interview, Kimberly suggested that this was the administrator's ultimate role. Regularly holding meetings with the participation of teachers, encouraging people through personalized approaches to attend events, and ensuring that people shared their ideas at these events would allow a sense of community and, therefore, a campus culture to be formed. Collaboration has been reported to play a key role in limiting teacher attrition (Behm Cross & Thomas, 2017). Cunningham (2020) cited collaboration as a professional behavior, which was compatible with the literature.

According to Tina, another participant, a sense of community evolves when peer learning is triggered. It is a commonly accepted fact that people can build strong relationships with peers only when they have established mutual trust. “Without such a trust relationship, teachers fail to build a community that can learn together and share information” (Demir, 2015, p. 631).

Peer learning and general development are possible by facilitating small group discussions within the departments. In fact, it seems to be the most suitable environment in which more experienced teachers and their younger colleagues can share their experiences with each other and keep their knowledge up to date. In her interview, Karen used the term “indirect mentorship” while narrating her past positive experiences on this subject, suggesting that the alternative of “choosing veteran teachers who are very experienced as mentors instead of administrators who already have too much workload” may be a better approach.

Callahan (2016) argued that retired teachers have more time and flexibility to contribute both to the development of novice teachers and to the growth of the teaching profession. Along with the expertise needed by mentor teachers, there are also specific skills needed in helping support novice teachers. Supporting adults is significantly different from teaching children and adolescents, but effective veteran teachers were found to be able to transmit their skill set to novice teachers through the mentoring process (Pogodzinski, 2013).

A sense of community creates another benefit: the welcoming environment. This way, new teachers, who are completely unfamiliar with both students and campus, will not feel alone. In addition, the more comfortable they feel in their classroom, which they consider their own environment, the more comfortable they will feel on the campus. Thus, success rates may increase while attrition rates may decrease. Schuck et al. (2018), using an online survey sent to 2,500 early career teachers, found that “schools that were deemed supportive featured

environments that were collaborative, challenging yet helpful, open to divergence in views and practices, and empowering” (p. 217), which is consistent with the literature. In such environments where negativity disappears, novice teachers may feel safer and more confident, so they will ask questions, explain their ideas, and be guided correctly instead of experiencing negative approaches.

Positive relationships between novice teachers and the principal can lead to increased self-efficacy in novice teachers. Er (2021) drew attention to the relationship between teachers and their principals, interviewing 310 campus principals and teachers. He concluded that a strong, positive relationship built on trust and support was a key factor in high-performing schools. Similarly, it was found that in low-performing schools the lack of strong, positive relationships between teachers and their school principal was a common factor. Schuck et al. (2018) emphasized that school leaders and their staff should endeavor to work together to build a welcoming and supportive structure in their school. Such working environments, where teachers are encouraged in their professional practices and where ideas and information are exchanged and discussed, are a key to teacher success and retention. Also, since empathy promotes welcoming environments, everyone can listen to each other and feel mutually valued. These feelings are factors that may help in increasing the retention rates.

## **Summary**

This chapter highlights the importance of mentoring new teachers. The mentor serves as both a guide to accessing and understanding the curriculum as well as helping teachers adapt to the campus climate and culture. A crucial component of the mentoring process is trust and communication. The new teacher must feel safe approaching their mentor, otherwise the novice teacher may be reluctant to seek assistance. In this role, the principal must serve as coach, cheerleader, role model, and trusted confidant, as well as appraiser and manager.

## **Implications for Further Research**

Research focusing on the expectations of a campus principal's role as mentor should be explored. For example, does the mentoring process look different on a large campus? Are there limitations to the development of a formal, on-campus mentoring program between teachers and administrators? Should principals' preparation programs emphasize new teacher mentoring? These questions would provide critical information to help districts be better prepared to implement formal on-campus mentoring programs, with the ultimate goal of retaining teachers.

## References

- Achinstein, B. (2012). Mentoring for diversity and equity: Focusing on students of color and new teachers of color. *Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, 111(2), 289-308.
- Agre, R. G. (2014). *Partnering for success: The principals' role in beginning teacher-mentor-principal relationships*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of North Dakota].
- Ärlestig, H. (2007). Principals' communication inside schools: A contribution to school improvement? *The Education Forum*, 71. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ763216.pdf>
- Attard, M., Bjerkholt, E. & Holland, E. (2017). Teacher mentoring and the reflective practitioner approach. *International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education*, 6(3), 2046–6854. <https://www.emerald.com/insight/content/doi/10.1108/IJMCE-04-2017-0032/full/html>
- Barth, P., Dillon, N., Hull, J. & Holland-Higgins, B. (2016). *Fixing the holes in the teacher pipeline: An overview of teacher shortages* [White Paper]. Center for Public Education. <https://www.nsba.org/-/media/NSBA/File/cpe-fixing-the-holes-in-the-teacher-pipeline-report-april-2016.pdf?la=en&hash=0C7A0EC38C6C448C0281A6AC4B0FDCD8A297D4D5>
- Bastian, K. C., McCord, D. M., Marks, J. T. & Carpenter, D. (2017). A temperament for teaching? Associations between personality traits and beginning teacher performance and retention. *AERA Open*, 3(1), 1–17.
- Begley, P. T. & Johansson, O. 2005. *Democratic school leadership: A matter of professional values and social ethics*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, April 11–15, Montreal, Canada. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268469800800404>
- Behm Cross, S. & Thomas, C. (2017). Mitigating first year burnout: How reimagined partnerships could support urban middle level teachers. *Middle Grades Review*, 3(1), Article 3.
- Bernard, H. & Ryan, G. (2010). *Analyzing qualitative data*. Sage Publications.
- Bertolini, K., Stremmel, A. J. & Thorngren, J. T. (2012). Student achievement factors. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED568687>
- Bhattacharjee, A. (2012). *Social science research: Principles, methods, and practices*. Scotts Valley, CA: CreateSpace.

- Blase, J. & Blase, J. (1999). Principals' instructional leadership and teacher development. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 35, 349-378. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0013161X99353003>
- Borman, G. & Dowling, N. (2017). *Teacher attrition and retention: A meta-analytic and narrative review of the research*. Sage Publications.
- Bredeson, P. V. (2000). The school principal's role in teacher professional development. *Journal of In-Service Education*, 26(2), 385-401. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13674580000200114>
- Bridwell-Mitchell, E. N. & Fried, S. A. (2020). Learning one's place: Status perceptions and social capital in teacher communities. *Educational Policy*, 34(7), 951-991. <https://journals.sagepub.com/eprint/gvJK3GPQmBrZjf7XJXKI/full>
- Brown, K. M. & Wynn, S. R. (2007). Teacher retention issues: How some Principals are supporting and keeping new teachers. *Journal of School Leadership*, 17(6), 664–698. <https://doi.org/10.1177/105268460701700601>
- Brown, S. C., Stevens, P. R. A., Troiano, P. F. & Schneider, M. K. (2002). Exploring complex phenomenon: Grounded theory in student affairs research. *Journal of College Student Development*, 43(2), 1-11.
- Bryk, A. S., Gomez, L. M., Grunow, A. & LeMahieu, P. G. (2015). *Learning to improve: How America's schools can get better at getting better*. Harvard Education Press.
- Callahan, J. (2016). Encouraging retention of new teachers through mentoring strategies. *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin: International Journal for Professional Educators*, 83(1), 6-11.
- Capital News Service. (2022, October 6). Maryland teachers quitting, larger exodus could follow. *Maryland Matters*. <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2022/10/06/maryland-teachers-quitting-larger-exodus-could-follow/>
- Carcary, M. (2020). The research audit trail: Methodological guidance for application in practice. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, 18.
- Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what can we do about it? *Learning Policy Institute*. <https://doi.org/10.54300/454.278>.
- Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2019). The trouble with teacher turnover: How teacher attrition affects students and schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 27(36). <https://doi.org/10.14507/epaa.27.3699>
- Charmaz, K. (2000). Grounded theory: Objectivist and constructivist methods. In N. K. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*. (pp. 509-535). Sage Publications



- Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London: Sage Publications.
- Charmaz, K. (2014) *Constructing grounded theory* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Chatman, J. A. & Cha, S. E. (2003). Leading by leveraging culture. *California Management Review*, 45(4), 20–34. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41166186>
- Cho, Y. J. & Song, H. J., (2017). Determinants of turnover intention of social workers: Effects of emotional labor and organizational trust. *Public Personnel Management*, 46(1).
- Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (2015). *Basics of qualitative research: Techniques and procedures or developing grounded theory*. Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundation of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Sage.
- Cunningham, E. A., (2020). *Exploring the impact of a professional identity on teacher retention: A phenomenological study*. [Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Abilene Christian University].
- Darehsh, J. (2004). Mentoring school leaders: Professional promise or predictable problems? *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 40(4), 495–517. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013161x04267114>
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2003). Keeping good teachers: Why it matters what leaders can do. *Educational Leadership*, 60(8), 6-15.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine our future*. Teachers College Press.
- DeAngelis, K. J. & Presley, J. B. (2011). Teacher qualifications and school climate: Examining their interrelationship for school improvement. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 10(1), 84–120. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700761003660642>
- De Lima Rua, O. M. M. M. & Araújo, J. M. C. (2016). Linking transformational leadership and organizational trust: has organizational commitment a mediating effect on it? *Cuadernos de Gestión*, 16(1), 43-62.
- DeLuca, C., Klinger, D., Pyper, J. & Woods, J. (2015) Instructional rounds as a professional learning model for systemic implementation of assessment for learning. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, 22(1), 122-139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0969594X.2014.967168>

- Demir, K. (2015). The effect of organizational trust on the culture of teacher leadership in primary schools. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 15(3), 621-634.
- Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (2003) (eds.). *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and Issues* (2nd ed.). London: Sage.
- Denzin, N. K. & Lincoln, Y. S. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed., pp. 1-32). Sage.
- Dias-Lacy, S. L. & Guirguis, R. V. (2017). Challenges for new teachers and ways of coping with them. *Journal of Education and Learning*, 6(3), 265-272.
- Er, E. (2021). The relationship between principal leadership and teacher practice: Exploring the mediating effect of teachers' beliefs and professional learning. *Educational Studies*. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2021.1936458>
- Feng, L. & Sass, T. R. (2012). Teacher quality and teacher mobility. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2020373>
- Ford, T. G. & Ware, J. K. (2018). Teacher self-regulatory climate: Conceptualizing an indicator of leader support for teacher learning and development. *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 17(1), 27–5.
- Fuller, B. & Waite, A. (2016). Explaining teacher turnover: School cohesion and intrinsic motivation in Los Angeles. *American Journal of Education*, 122(4), 537–567. <https://doi.org/10.1086/687272>
- Gadson, C. E. (2018). *Perceptions of principal Leadership on Teacher Morale*. [Doctoral dissertation]. <https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/etd/5042>
- Garcia, E. & Weiss, E. (2019). U.S. schools struggle to hire and retain teachers. *Economic Policy Institute*. <https://www.epi.org/publication/u-s-schools-struggle-to-hire-and-retain-teachers-the-second-report-in-the-perfect-storm-in-the-teacher-labor-market-series/>
- Gavish, B. & Friedman, I. A. (2010). Novice teachers' experience of teaching: A dynamic aspect of burnout. *Social Psychology of Education*, 13, 141-167.
- Geiger, T. & Pivovarova, M. (2018). The effects of working conditions on teacher retention. *Teachers and Teaching*, 24(6), 604-625. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2018.1457524>
- Gilbert, J. A. & Tang, T. L. P. (1998). An examination of organizational trust antecedents. *Public Personnel Management*, 27(3), 321–338. <https://doi.org/10.1177/009102609802700303>

- Glaser, B. G. & Strauss, A. L. (2009). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative research*. Transaction Publishers.
- Glazer, J. (2020). Tales out of school: Tracing perspective change through the stories of former teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 90. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103032>
- Goldhaber, D. (2022). In schools, teacher quality matters most. *Education Next*, 16(2).
- Gonzales, A., Peters, M. L., Orange, A. & Grigsby, B. (2017). The influence of high stakes testing on teacher self-efficacy and job-related stress. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, 47(4), 513–531.
- Goodwyn, A. (2017). *Expert teachers: An international perspective*. Tylor & Francis.
- Grant, B. M. & Giddings, L. S. (2002). Making sense of methodologies: A paradigm framework for the novice researcher. *Contemporary Nurse: A Journal for the Australian Nursing Profession*, 13(1), 10-28. <https://doi.org/10.5172/conu.13.1.10>
- Gray, L. & Taie, S. (2015). Public school teacher attrition and mobility in the first five years: Results from the first through fifth waves of the 2007–08 beginning teacher longitudinal study. *National Center for Education Statistics*. U.S. Department of Education. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2015/2015337.pdf>
- Grissom, J., Egalite, A. & Lindsay, C. (2021). How principals affect students and schools: A systematic synthesis of two decades of research. *The Wallace Foundation*. <https://www.wallacefoundation.org/knowledge-center/pages/how-principals-affect-students-and-schools-a-systematic-synthesis-of-two-decades-of-research.aspx>
- Gruenert, S., & Whitaker, T. (2015). *School culture rewired*. ASCD.
- Henwood, K. & Pidgeon, N. (1995). Grounded theory and psychological research. *The Psychologist*, 8(3), 115–118.
- Hobson, A. J., Ashby, P., Malderez, A. & Tomlinson, P. D. (2009). Mentoring beginning teachers: What we know and what we don't. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 25(1), 207–216. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2008.09.001>
- Holloway, J. (2001). The benefits of mentoring. *Educational Leadership*, 58(8), 85-86
- Holmes, B., Parker, D. & Gibson, J., (2019). Rethinking teacher retention in hard-to-staff schools. *Contemporary Issues in Education Research*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/10.19030/cier.v12i1.10260>

- Holmqvist, M. (2019). Lack of qualified teachers: A global challenge for future knowledge development. In R. B. Monyai (ed.), *Teacher education in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Intech Open. <https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.83417>
- Hughes, A. L., Matt, J. J. & O'Reilly, F. L. (2015). Principal support is imperative to the retention of teachers in hard-to-staff schools. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 3(1), 129-134.
- Ingersoll, R. M. (2009). *Who controls teachers' work? Power and accountability in America's schools*. Harvard University Press.
- Ingersoll, R. & Perda, D. A. (2010). Is the supply of mathematics and science teachers sufficient? [https://repository.upenn.edu/gse\\_pubs/224](https://repository.upenn.edu/gse_pubs/224)
- Ingersoll, R. M. & Smith, T. M. (2003). The wrong solution to the teacher shortage. *Educational Leadership*, 60, 30-33.
- Ingersoll, R. & Strong, M. (2011). The impact of induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers: A critical review of the research. *Review of Educational Research*, 81(2), 201-233.
- Iqbal, Q. (2016). Preferential treatment: An empirical study in the education sector of Pakistan. *International Journal of Management*, 3(9), 486-497.
- Johnston, J., & Ryan, K. (1980). Research on the beginning teacher: Implications for teacher education. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED209188.pdf>
- Johnson, S. (2006). The workplace matters teacher quality, retention, and effectiveness [Working Paper]. *Best Practices NEA Research*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED495822.pdf>
- Jotkoff, E. (2022). NEA survey: Massive staff shortages in schools leading to educator burnout; alarming number of educators indicating they plan to leave profession. *National Education Association*. <https://www.nea.org/about-nea/media-center/press-releases/nea-survey-massive-staff-shortages-schools-leading-educator>
- Kamenetz, A. (2022, February 1). More than half of teachers are looking for the exits, a poll says. *NPR*. <https://www.npr.org/2022/02/01/1076943883/teachers-quitting-burnout>
- Kent, A. M., Green, A. M. & Feldmann, P. (2012). Fostering the success of new teachers: Developing lead teachers in a statewide teacher mentoring program. *Current Issues in Education*, 15(3).
- Kini, T. & Podolsky, A. (2016). Does teaching experience increase teacher effectiveness? A review of the research. *Learning Policy Institute*. [https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Teaching\\_Experience\\_Report\\_June\\_2016.pdf](https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/sites/default/files/product-files/Teaching_Experience_Report_June_2016.pdf)

- Knapp, M., Copland, M., Honig, M., Plecki, M. & Portin, B. (2009). *Learning-focused leadership and leadership support: Meaning and practice in urban systems* (2nd ed.). University of Washington.
- Ladd, H. F. (2019). Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 33(2), 235–261. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373711398128>
- Lee, M., Pollock, K. & Tulowitzki, P. (2021). *How school principals use their time* (1st ed.), 1-6. Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429327902-intro>
- Lee, S. W. & Min, S. (2017). Riding the implementation curve: Teacher buy-in and student academic growth under comprehensive school reform programs. *The Elementary School Journal*, 117(3), 371-395.
- Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2019). *Practical research: Planning and design*. Pearson.
- Leithwood, K. (2011). Leadership and student learning: What works and how. *Leadership and Learning*, 41-55. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781446288931.n4>
- Lesinger, F., Dagli, G., Altinay Gazi, Z., Bin Yusoff, S. & Altinay Aksal, F. (2016). Investigating the relationship between organizational culture, educational leadership, and trust in schools. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, 15(1-20), 178-185. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09751122.2016.11890527>
- Loewus, L. (2021, May 5). Retaining great teachers in a time of turmoil. *Education Week*. <https://www.edweek.org/leadership/retaining-great-teachers-in-a-time-of-turmoil>
- Loewus, L. (2022). Why teachers leave—or don't: A look at the numbers. *Education Week*. <https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/why-teachers-leave-or-dont-a-look-at-the-numbers/2021/05>
- Lozinak, K. (2016). Encouraging retention of new teachers through mentoring strategies. *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin: International Journal for Professional Educators*, 83(1), 12-24.
- MacDonald, A. & Cruickshank, V. (2017). Good teachers grow: Disrupting negative depictions of teachers through relational a/r/tographic inquiry. *Australian Art Education*, 38(2), 319-338.
- Martin, L. (2012). The musical self-efficacy beliefs of middle school band students: An investigation of sources, meanings, and relationships with attributions for success and failure. *Bulletin of the Council for Research in Music Education*, 191, 45–60. <https://doi.org/10.5406/bulcouresmusedu.191.0045>

- Matsko, K. K., Coca, V. & Easton, J. Q. (2007). *Keeping new teachers: A first look at the influences of induction in the Chicago public schools*. Consortium on Chicago School Research.
- McKibben, S. (2015). *The principal as lead learner*. ASCD, 57(7). <https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/the-principal-as-lead-learner>
- McFarland, J. & Hussar, B. (2019). The condition of education 2019. *IES National Center for Education Statistics, 2019*(144). <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2019/2019144.pdf>
- Merriam, S. & Simpson, E. (2000). *A guide to research for educators and trainers of adults*. Krieger Publishing.
- Merriam, S. D. & Tisdell, E. J. (2016) *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation* (4th ed.). Jossey-Bass.
- Meyer, M. & Mabosa, J. (2007). *Mentoring as a way to transfer learning and accelerate empowerment*. <http://workinginfo.com/free/Downloads/33.htm>.
- Mills, J., Bonner, A. & Francis, K. (2006). The development of constructivist grounded theory. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 5(1), 1-10.
- Minarik, M. M., Thornton, B. & Perreault, G. (2003). Systems thinking can improve teacher retention. *Clearing House*, 76(5), 230-234.
- Morrow, S. L. (2005). Quality and trustworthiness in qualitative research in counselling psychology. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 52, 250-260. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-0167.52.2.250>
- Ndoye, A., Imig, S. R. & Parker, M. A. (2010). Empowerment, leadership, and teachers' intentions to stay in or leave the profession or their schools in North Carolina charter schools. *Journal of School Choice*, 4(2), 174–190. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15582159.2010.483920>
- Nguyen, T., Pham, L., Springer, M. & Crouch, M. (2019). *The Factors of teacher attrition and retention: An updated and expanded meta-analysis of the literature*. <https://www.edworkingpapers.com/ai19-149>
- Osborne-Lampkin, L., Folsom, J. S. & Herrington, C.D. (2015). A systematic review of the relationships between principal characteristics and student achievement. *National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED561940>
- Owens, R. G. (2004). *Organizational behavior in education: Adaptive leadership and school reform*. Pearson Education.

- Patton, M. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Payne, D. & Wolfson, T. (2000). Teacher professional development—The principal’s critical role. *NASSP Bulletin*, 84, 13-21. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/019263650008461803>
- Peterson, K. (2011). Assistance and assessment for beginning teachers. *The New Handbook of Teacher Evaluation* (pp. 104-115)
- Pham, L. D., Crouch, M. & Springer, M. G. (2020). The correlates of teacher turnover: An updated and expanded meta-analysis of the literature. *Educational Research Review*, 31, 100355. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2020.100355>
- Pichère, P. & Cadiat, A. C. (2015). *Maslow’s hierarchy of needs*. Lemaitre.
- Podolsky, A., Kini, T., Darling-Hammond, L. & Bishop, J. (2019). Strategies for attracting and retaining educators: What does the evidence say? *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 27(38).
- Pogodzinski, B. (2013). Administrative context and novice teacher-mentor interactions. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 53(1), 40-65.
- Primary sources: America’s teachers on teaching in an era of change. (2013). *Scholastic Inc. and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation*, 3. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED562664.pdf>
- Proctor Günter, C. (2020). *Improving teacher retention in a South Carolina school district*. [Unpublished dissertation, Liberty University.]
- Redding, C. & Henry, G. T. (2018). New evidence on the frequency of teacher turnover: Accounting for within-year turnover. *Educational Researcher*, 47(9), 577–593. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189x18814450>
- Robinson, V. M. J., Lloyd, C. & Rowe, K. J. (2008). The impact of leadership on student outcomes: An analysis of the differential effects of leadership types. *Education Administration Quarterly*, 44, 635–674
- Rolfe, G. (2004). Validity, trustworthiness, and rigor: quality and the idea of qualitative research. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 53(3), 304–310. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2648.2006.03727.x>
- Ronfeldt, M. & McQueen, K. (2017). Does new teacher induction really improve retention? *Journal of Teacher Education*, 68(4), 394–410.
- Rowland, C. (2017, February). Principal professional development: New opportunities for a renewed state focus. *Education Policy Center at American Institutes for Research*.

<https://www.air.org/sites/default/files/downloads/report/Principal-Professional-Development-New-Opportunities-State-Focus-February-2017.pdf>

- Schuck, S., Aubusson, P., Buchanan, J., Varadharajan, M. & Burke, P. F. (2018). The experiences of early career teachers: new initiatives and old problems. *Professional Development in Education*, 44(2), 209–221.
- Schwabsky, N., Goldenberg, J. & Schatz-Oppenheimer, O. (2019). Principals' and mentors' shared responsibilities in induction of beginning teachers. *Roxzniki Pedagogiczne*, 11(47)(3), 5-26. <https://doi.org/10.18290/rped.2019.11.3-1>
- Sikolia, D., Biros, D., Mason, M. & Weiser, M. (2013). Trustworthiness of grounded theory methodology research in information systems. *MWAIS 2013 Proceedings*, 16. <https://aisel.aisnet.org/mwais2013/16/>
- Simon, N. & Johnson, S. (2015). Teacher turnover in high-poverty schools: What we know and can do. *Teachers College Record*, 117, 1-36.
- Sirisookslip, S., Ariratana, W. & Ngang, T. K. (2015). The impact of leadership styles of school administrators on affecting teacher effectiveness. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 186, 1031–1037. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.04.022>
- Sorensen, L. C. & Ladd, H. F. (2018). The hidden costs of teacher turnover. *National Center for Analysis of Longitudinal Data in Education Research*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED591843.pdf>
- Sparks, D. & Hirsh, S.A. (2000). A national plan for improving professional development. *National Staff Development Council*. <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED442779>
- Stake, R. (2010). *Qualitative research: Studying how things work*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Steiner, E. & Woo, A. (2021). *Job-related stress threatens the teacher supply*. Rand Corporation.
- Strauss, A. & Corbin, J. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Stronge, J. H. (2018). *Qualities of effective teachers* (3rd ed.). ASCD Books.
- Sullivan, S. & Glanz, J. (2013). *Supervision that improves teaching and learning: Strategies and techniques*. Corwin Press.
- Sunaengsih, C., Anggarani, M., Amalia, M., Nurfatmala, S. & Naelin, S. D. (2019). Principal leadership in the implementation of effective school management. *Mimbar Sekolah Dasar*, 6(1), 79-91.



- Suntani, U. T., Sasongko, R. N., Kristiawan, M., Walid, A. & Kusumah, R. G. T. (2021). The Role of Principal Interpersonal Communication on Teacher's Work Motivation. *Education Quarterly Reviews*, 4(2). <https://doi.org/10.31014/aior.1993.04.02.206>
- Sutcher, L., Darling-Hammond, L. & Carver-Thomas, D. (2019). A coming crisis in teaching? Teacher supply, demand, and shortages in the U.S. *Learning Policy Institute*. <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/product/coming-crisis-teaching-brief>
- Synar, E. & Maiden, J. (2012). A comprehensive model for estimating the financial impact of teacher turnover. *Journal of Education Finance*, 38(2). <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23353969>
- Taherdoost, H. (2016). Validity and reliability of the research instrument; How to test the validation of a questionnaire/survey in research. *International Journal of Academic Research in Management*, 5, 28-36. <https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3205040>
- Tallerico, K. (2005). *Supporting and Sustaining Teachers' Professional Development: A Principal's Guide*. Corwin Press, A SAGE Publications Company.
- Tan, H. H. & Tan, C. S. F. (2000). Toward the differentiation of trust in supervisor and trust in organization. *Genetic, Social and General Psychology Monographs*, 126, 241– 260.
- Texas Education Agency (2021). *ESSA consolidated compliance report* [Press release]. <https://tea.texas.gov/finance-and-grants/grants/essa-program/essa-consolidated-compliance-reports-resources>
- Trahan, L. (2015). Why do teachers leave? *ATPE News*, 35(2), 16-40.
- Tschannen-Moran, M. (2020). *Trust matters: Leadership for successful schools*. John Wiley & Sons.
- U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2019). *Digest of Education Statistics, 2018 (NCES 2020-009)*. <https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2020/2020009.pdf>
- Varrati, A. M., Lavine, M. E. & Turner, S. L. (2009). A new conceptual model for principal involvement and professional collaboration in teacher education. *Teachers College Record*, 111(2), 480-510.
- Villar, A. & Strong, M. (2007). Is mentoring worth the money? A benefit-cost analysis and five-year rate of return of a comprehensive mentoring program for beginning teachers. *ERS Spectrum*, 25(3), 1-17.
- Walker, T. (2022, February 1). Survey: Alarming number of educators may soon leave the profession. *National Education Association*. <https://www.nea.org/advocating-for-change/new-from-nea/survey-alarming-number-educators-may-soon-leave-profession>

- Warren, L., (2018). The relationship between teacher leaders and teacher attrition. *Teacher Education and Curriculum Studies*, 3(4), 34-38.
- Watkins, A. (2016). Role of the principal in beginning teacher induction. *New Teacher Center*.  
<https://newteachercenter.org/wp-content/uploads/Role-of-Principal-in-Teacher-Induction.pdf>
- Watlington, E., Shockley, R., Guglielmino, P. & Felsher, R. (2010). The high cost of leaving: An analysis of the cost of teacher turnover. *Journal of Education Finance*, 36(1), 22-37.  
<https://doi.org/10.1353/jef.0.0028>
- Wilson, A. (2016). From professional practice to practical leader: Teacher leadership in professional learning communities. *International Journal of Teacher Leadership*, 7(2), 45-62.
- Wong, H. K. & Wong, R. T. (2022). *The first days of school: How to be an effective teacher* (4th ed.). Harry K. Wong Publications.

## Appendices

## APPENDIX A: IRB Information Letter

Subject Consent to Take Part in a Study of  
The Principals Role as Mentor: The Importance of Teaching Teachers  
University of the Incarnate Word

### Authorized Study Personnel:

William S. Dockery, M.A.T  
Dreeben School of Education  
(210) 535-7427  
[email: wdocker1@student.uiwtx.edu](mailto:wdocker1@student.uiwtx.edu)

Dr. Sandra Guzman-Foster  
Associate Professor, Dreeben School of Education  
University of the Incarnate Word  
(210) 832-3215  
sfoster@uiwtx.edu

**Key Information:** Your consent is being sought for a research study. The purpose of this research is to explore what impact, if any, an on-campus mentorship program has in supporting new teacher retention. By conducting a qualitative study, the research will provide an in-depth analysis in understanding the relationship between new teacher attrition rates and how a campus principal, serving as mentor can impact new teacher retention rates. If you agree to participate in this study, the project will involve:

- Procedures will include a series of 9 interviews conducted using the asynchronous technology known as Flipgrid. Interviews will be done using the asynchronous method so participants can answer questions on their own time. Each participant will be given the option to choose their own pseudonym so that they feel comfortable with telling me their story or they can choose to use their real names should they feel comfortable having their stories publicized. The interviews will be conducted in a semi structured format so that the questions will be guided but still allow for flexibility to ask to follow up questions that could be necessary during the interview. The interviews will be conducted in a semi structured format so that the questions will be guided but still allow for flexibility to ask to follow up questions that could be necessary during the interview. The interviews will be conducted at the leisure of the participants with a 2-week time frame to reply to the questions asked on Flipgrid. Flipgrid allows for a video recording of the participant as well as transcribing the conversation, I will also be taking notes to monitor my thoughts and feelings during the review of the interview recording as well as to monitor my own objectivity. The journal will contain specifics of the interview such as the setting of the interview, the emotions that occur and the relevant experiences that can be used in data analysis.
- 9 visits are required.
- These visits will take about 1 hour each to complete.
- There is minimal risk associated with this study: Risks include the possibility that a participant could be identified based on their responses. Extra measures will be taken to protect each participants privacy. Only the researcher will have access to the participants recordings and associated data obtained from the asynchronous interviews. Any transcripts from the interview process will be destroyed at the end of the study.
- You will not be paid for your participation.
- Your participation is voluntary, and you may decide not to participate at any time.

**Invitation:** You are invited to volunteer as one of 5 subjects in the research project named above. The information in this form is meant to help you decide whether or not to participate. If you have any questions, please ask.

**Why are you being asked to be in this research study?** You are being asked to be in this study because you meet the criteria of being (teachers in their first five years of teaching) who have left or are in the process of leaving the profession.

**What is the reason for doing this research study?** The purpose of this research is to explore what impact, if any, an on-campus mentorship program has in supporting new teacher retention. By conducting a qualitative study, the research will provide an in-depth analysis in understanding the relationship between new teacher attrition rates and how a campus principal, serving as mentor can impact new teacher retention rates. Through conducting this research, the study will cover a gap in the literature that fails to explore the role a campus administrator plays in supporting new teacher achievement and retention. This study will focus on new teachers (teachers in their first five years of teaching) who have left or are leaving within the same time period and the role mentoring might have played in changing their decision to leave the profession.

**What will be done during this research study?** Using Flipgrid, you will answer a series of questions designed to elicit responses around the reasons you chose to leave the profession and what impact, if any a mentorship program between you and your campus principal could have had in keeping you in the profession.

I would like to use Flipgrid to video-record this interview to make sure that I remember accurately all the information you provide. I will keep these recordings on a secure server, and they will only be used by myself for the purpose of this study. If you prefer not to be recorded, I will take notes instead.

I may quote your remarks in presentations or articles resulting from this work. A pseudonym will be used to protect your identity, unless you specifically request that you be identified by your true name.

**How will my data/samples/images be used?** Your specific data will not be used or distributed for future research studies, even if identifiers are removed. Your data will be destroyed within 1 year(s) after the completion of this study.

**What are the possible risks of being in this study?** Your participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk to you beyond that of everyday life. There is minimal risk to the participants of this study. Risks include the possibility that a participant could be identified based on their responses. Extra measures will be taken to protect each participants privacy. Only the researcher will have access to the participants recordings and associated data obtained from the asynchronous interviews. Any transcripts from the interview process will be destroyed at the end of the study. You may feel emotional or upset when answering some of the questions. Tell the interviewer at any time if you wish to take a break or stop the interview. You may be uncomfortable with some of the questions and topics we will ask about. If you are uncomfortable, you are free to not answer or to skip to the next question.

As with all research, there is a chance that confidentiality of the information we collect from you could be breached – we will take steps to minimize this risk, as discussed in more detail below in this form.

**What are the possible benefits to you?** You are not expected to receive any benefits from being in this study.

**What are the possible benefits to other people?** The benefits to science and/or society include bridging a gap in the existing literature in the area of on campus mentorship programs between new teachers and the campus principal.

**What will being in this research study cost you?** There is no cost to you to be in this research study.

**Will you be compensated for being in this research study?** You will not be paid for your participation in this research study.

**How will information about you be protected?** Everything we learn about you in the study will be confidential. The only persons who will have access to your research records are the study personnel, the Institutional Review Board (IRB), and any other person, agency, or sponsor as required by law. If we publish with results of the study, you will not be identified in any way.

The data will be stored electronically on a secure server and will only be seen by the research team during the study and for 1 years after the study is complete.

**What will happen if you decide not to be in this research study or decide to stop participating once you start?** You can decide not to be in this research study, or you can stop being in this research study at any time, for any reason. You do not have to answer any question you do not want to answer. Deciding not to be in this research study or deciding to withdraw will not affect your relationship with the investigator or with the University of the Incarnate Word. You will not lose any benefits to which you are entitled.

If you decide to withdraw from the study, the researchers will ask you if the information already collected from you can be used.

**What should you do if you have a problem or question during this research study?** If you have a problem as a direct result of being in this study, you should immediately contact one of the people listed at the beginning of this consent form.

If you have any questions now, feel free to ask us. If you have additional questions about your rights or wish to report a problem that may be related to the study, please contact the University of the Incarnate Word Institutional Review Board office at 210-805-3555 or 210-805-3565.

#### **Consent for future use of data**

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

\_\_\_\_\_ I give permission for my deidentified data to be used in the future for additional analysis or other relevant research studies. I understand that no additional informed consent for this use will be sought. I understand that my deidentified data can be stored indefinitely.

\_\_\_\_\_ I give my permission for my data to be used for this research study only. I do not give permission for any future use beyond the scope of this research study. I understand that my data will be destroyed within 1 year(s) after completion of this study.

#### **Consent for use of contact information to be contacted about participation in other studies.**

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

\_\_\_\_\_ I agree to allow the researchers to use my contact information collected during this study to contact me about participating in future research studies.

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not agree to allow the researchers to use my contact information collected during this study to contact me about participating in future research studies.

**Consent**

Your signature indicates that you (1) consent to take part in this research study, (2) that you have read and understand the information given above, and (3) that the information above was explained to you, and you have been given the chance to discuss it and ask questions. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name of Principal Investigator/Designee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Principal Investigator/Designee

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

## APPENDIX B: IRB Approval Letter



July 21, 2021

To: Mr William Dockery

From: University of the Incarnate Word Institutional Review Board, FWA00009201

William:

Your request to conduct the study titled Principals Role as Mentor: The Importance of Teaching Teachers was approved by exempt review on 07/21/2021. Your IRB approval number is 21-07-005. You have approval to conduct this study through 7/21/2022.

**The stamped informed consent document is uploaded to the Correspondence section in the Research Ethics Review system. Please use only the stamped version of the informed consent document.**

Please keep in mind the following responsibilities of the Principal Investigator:

1. Conducting the study only according to the protocol approved by the IRB.
2. Submitting any changes to the protocol and/or consent documents to the IRB for review and approval prior to the implementation of the changes. Use the **IRB Amendment Request** form.
3. Ensuring that only persons formally approved by the IRB enroll subjects.
4. Reporting immediately to the IRB any severe adverse reaction or serious problem, whether anticipated or unanticipated.
5. Reporting immediately to the IRB the death of a subject, regardless of the cause.
6. Reporting promptly to the IRB any significant findings that become known in the course of the research that might affect the willingness of the subjects to participate in the study or, once enrolled, to continue to take part.
7. Timely submission of an annual status report (for exempt studies) or a request for continuing review (for expedited and full Board studies). Use either the **IRB Study Status Update** or **IRB Continuing Review Request** form.
8. Completion and maintenance of an active (non-expired) CITI human subjects training certificate.
9. Timely notification of a project's completion. Use the **IRB Closure** form.

Approval may be suspended or terminated if there is evidence of a) noncompliance with federal regulations or university policy or b) any aberration from the current, approved protocol.

If you need any assistance, please contact the UIW IRB representative for your college/school or the Office of Research Development.



Sincerely,

Mary Jo Bilicek

Research Compliance Coordinator

University of the Incarnate Word

(210) 805-  
3565

[bilicek@u](mailto:bilicek@u)

[wtx.edu](http://wtx.edu)