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Charlie E. Butler, Jr.

December 2014

CULTIVATING A NURTURING SCHOOL CULTURE: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP
THAT PROMOTES TEACHER RETENTION

A Doctoral Thesis Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education
in Executive Professional Leadership

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Abstract

The National Center for Education Statistics (2008) research found that teacher turnover costs school districts approximately seven billion dollars annually across the nation. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) (2014), the national average leaving the teaching profession is 16.5%. The Texas Education Agency (2012) noted that the state of Texas alone lost nearly 36,500 teachers in 2010-2011. Historically, the Texas teacher-turnover rate hovers between 14% and 16%, which amounts to an enormous loss of between \$329 million and \$2.1 billion per year according to the industry cost model (SBEC, 2000). A review of selected literature revealed frequently cited reasons for teacher retention as leadership support, beginning teacher support, compensation, shared decision-making, professional development, career advancement opportunities, support for working with students, safe facilities, school culture, and teacher workload. Hirsh & Emerick (2007) indicated that "teachers with positive perceptions about their working conditions are much more likely to stay at their current school than educators who are more negative about their conditions of work, particularly in the areas of leadership and empowerment" (p. 14).

This mixed-method study identified factors from teachers' and principals' perspectives of school culture and principal leadership practices that may encourage teachers to stay at their schools. The purpose of this study identified awareness factors that may assist school leaders in implementing practices related to cultivating a nurturing school culture that promotes teacher retention. The study indicated that positive teacher-

leader relationships, supportive school leadership, collegial support, campus mentorship, positive work conditions, compensation, training, and shared decision-making best promoted teacher retention.

Implications for school leaders to consider are teachers input regarding leadership practices and regard for factors that assist in cultivating a school culture conducive to teacher retention.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Can you still remember all of your grade school teachers? Do you remember the teachers who made a difference in your life? Is the teacher still at the school, or at least in the teaching profession? Some of those teachers may have taught you and other members of your family. Students can remember both the good and the bad teachers; both types of experiences help to shape students' lives. Making a difference in students' lives could be a factor in why some irreplaceable teachers chose to become teachers and remain in the profession for many years. Teacher retention matters for the quality of students and teachers alike.

The pressures of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 have created unforeseen challenges on teachers and school leaders. Student programming requirements, such as student interventions, reading level recordings, special education documents, modifications, accommodations, behavior documentation, and other data team notes, can be viewed as factors of an overwhelming workload for teachers. These factors have caused workplace conditions to become challenging by necessitating mountains of extra administrative paperwork, leaving less time for teachers and school leaders to tend to their primary purpose—teaching. Due to unanticipated workloads, many teachers are leaving the profession for other job opportunities or are bouncing from one school or even district to another in a search of job satisfaction. Some teacher turnover is inevitable, but the present high rates can negatively affect the overall capacity of a school to properly serve its students. Major stakeholders in education are increasingly focused on these high rates of teacher attrition. During a time when budgets

are experiencing cuts, teacher turnover costs school districts across the nation approximately seven billion dollars annually (National Center for Education Statistics, 2008). Since economic competition is more global than ever, high teacher turnover weakens America's public school organization and affects students' academic achievement nationwide. Many new teachers look to other P-12 schools or differing careers for employment at the end of their first year of teaching, leaving school systems with vacancies to fill (Cheng & Cheung, 2004). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2007) has reported that 30% of new teachers resign within their first year. That attrition rate increased to 50% at the end of five years when assessed in urban school districts (Barnes, Crowe & Schaefer, 2007). As a result, retaining teachers continues to be an ongoing challenge on both the district and campus levels.

A review of selected literature reveals that the most frequently cited reasons for teacher retention were workplace conditions that include administrative support, beginning teacher support, compensation, shared decision-making, professional development, expanded career opportunities, support for working with students, adequate and safe facilities, curricular support for high standards, school culture, and teacher workload. Another major factor is teachers' perceptions of their colleagues as school leaders. Recent scholars have pinpointed the influence of school leaders' instructional supervision on beginning teachers' growth and development (Alexander, 2007; Jackson, 2008; Protheroe, 2006). Also, according to Allensworth (2012), not only are teachers more likely to stay at schools if they are part of a team that includes the support of school leaders working diligently to improve the school, they are more likely to stay where they have an opportunity to influence the work environment, have built productive and

encouraging rapport with their school leaders, and trust their school leaders' instructional leadership ability. Teachers value administrators who understand and address their problems and concerns (Elfers, Plecki, & Knapp, 2006; Ingersoll 2001; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Shen, 1997).

Teachers also look for administrators who are able to help them become better teachers (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). The behaviors of instructional leaders can either positively or negatively influence teacher retention. The one person in the role of instructional leader who immediately and directly has influence is the principal (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004). A plethora of educational professional practitioners can agree that the role of the principal has evolved over the years. Educators can probably attest that today's principals are facing one of the most difficult and stressful jobs in education. The demands of NCLB have placed insurmountable accountability on the campus leader, and the majority of the load for school reform has trickled down to the principal. As a result, the job of principal has transformed from simply manager to the more important role of instructional leader, a transformation that is critical. The influence of the principal on student learning and achievement is second only to that of the classroom teacher. Today, principals as instructional leaders have more on their plates, fewer staff to assist, and greater stakes with which to contend. Like their classroom colleagues, they are expected to concurrently manage a vast number of responsibilities, and their effectiveness in managing many roles can promote teacher retention.

Instructional leadership refers to the knowledge and skill-set necessary to support an effective academic program (Shellard, 2003). Instructional leadership is the action of

a leader who improves teaching and learning by assembling student achievement data that results in improvement (King, 2002). Principals are to be chief instructional leaders, individuals responsible for developing and supporting a shared school culture with an emphasis on teaching and learning (Green, 2010). This type of leadership is distinguished from other types in that it emphasizes the involvement of change, which is uniquely instructional. The role of an instructional leader is to 1) provide instructional leadership through the establishment, articulation, and implementation of a vision of learning, 2) create and sustain a community of learners who makes student and adult learning the center focus, 3) facilitate the creation of a school culture and climate based on high expectations for students and faculty, 4) advocate, nurture, and sustain a school culture conducive to student learning and staff professional growth, 5) lead the school improvement process in a manner that addresses the needs of all students, 6) engage the community in activities to solicit support for student success, and 7) analyze multiple sources of data to assess, identify, and foster instructional improvement (Green, 2010; Jenkins, 2009; Wanzare & Da Costa, 2001).

School leadership responsibilities have evolved over recent years. The role of the principal has been in a state of transition, progressing from one of school manager to one of instructional leader serving as a transformational, situational, and managerial leader. The principal in the role of instructional leader is the individual who has a hand in every aspect of the school's organizational functions, the answer to the question "Who is the person best suited within the school organization to assess programs, teacher performance evaluation, and the curriculum?" This role demands the instructional leader to become profoundly employed in the school instructional program; consequently, the role of the

principal as instructional leader has become dramatically more complex, overloaded, and imperative.

In past years, principals have established and set campus goals, distributed resources to instruction, managed the curriculum, overseer of lesson plans, and assessed teachers (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008). Today, principals' responsibilities extend to a broader and more in-depth participation in data-informed decision-making processes, the providing of relevant feedback, individual professional development, and the facilitation of research-based teaching and learning strategies. Principals must find a way to marry their managerial and instructional responsibilities to enhance and sustain each other instead of being in rivalry (Shellard, 2003). The Wallace Foundation (2012) suggests principals have five key responsibilities:

1. Shaping a vision for academic success with high standards for all students.
2. Creating a safe, collaborative climate-permeating interaction between students and teachers.
3. Developing teacher leaders to ensure they are part of the manifestation of the school vision.
4. Establishing an environment that facilitates improving instruction to allow teachers to perform at their peak and students to achieve at theirs.
5. Managing people, analyzing data, and implementing processes to foster school improvement.

These tasks can be included in the broader scope of transformational, situational, or organizational managerial leadership.

The instructional leader will be capable of reshaping the individual from the inside outwards. Bass (1985) recognized this moral component when he identified four key behaviors of transformational leadership: *idealized influence*, the charismatic role modeling of high ethical and performance standards; *inspirational motivation*, the articulation of a future-oriented and meaningful vision that advocates excellence and making personal sacrifices for the good of the group; *intellectual stimulation*, the challenging of underlying assumptions and integration of multiple viewpoints to broaden perspectives on problems; and *individualized consideration*, the selfless service to followers through recognizing and appreciating diversity and providing coaching and mentoring. Transformational leadership is the process of how certain leaders can inspire followers to accomplish organizational goals. Transformational leaders must understand and adapt to the needs and motives of followers; they are change agents and good role models. Transformational leaders can create and articulate a vision for an organization, empower others, instill trust, and give meaning to positive rapport (Northouse 2007). Transformational leadership is assessed through use of the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which measures a leader's behavior in seven areas: idealized influence (charisma), inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, contingent reward, management-by-exception, and laissez-faire behavior. High scores on individualized consideration and motivation factors are most indicative of strong transformational leadership (Northouse, 2007).

There are several beneficial characteristics of the transformational approach, including that it is a current model that has received much attention by researchers. Transformational approach emphasizes the importance of followers in the leadership

process. Transformational leadership goes beyond traditional transactional models and broken leadership to include the growth of followers, and it places strong emphasis on morals and values. By demonstrating moral behavior, transformational leaders promote changes in followers, groups, organizations, and nations (Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978). As change agents, transformational leaders use charisma based on their idealized influence to attract committed followers and inspirational motivation to build a common purpose and sense of community (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders use their charisma in a socialized (other oriented) or personalized (self-serving) manner (Northouse 2007).

In the role of situational leadership, the principal as instructional leader will determine the appropriate style to be administered for the development of the teacher, assessing the teachers' skill levels before assigning them tasks. The effectiveness of the instructional leader should assist teachers in becoming successful in his or her task(s). Over time, teachers should become more confident about their job performance. As a result, teacher morale, job satisfaction, and retention should rise. The pace at which novice teachers adapt and develop and the choice either to stay or leave the profession relates to a principal's involvement with beginning teachers (Colley, 2002; Peltier-Glaze, 2005).

Effective organizational managerial leadership supports the staff by building time into the daily schedule for teachers' professional development and establishing systems to provide students who struggle with additional time for learning. Managing human resources, the facilities, and program resources contribute to the satisfaction of the job. Thus, organizational managerial leadership is imperative in the day-to-day operations of the teachers and students, which play a major role in overall work condition satisfaction.

The demands for higher accountability placed on school leaders have necessitated that instructional leaders implement a combination of the three leadership practices to achieve its school's goals. Each of these leadership approaches has components that work collectively to formulate a unified vision of school improvement. Analyzing the daily priorities and practices of effective instructional leaders and emulating desired behaviors and practices are beneficial to school reform. When given professional respect, appropriate support, and adequate time to prepare, teachers are more likely to remain in the teaching profession.

Statement of the Problem

According to Blase and Blase (2000), instructional leaders should provide support to teachers by making suggestions, giving feedback, modeling effective instruction, soliciting opinions, supporting collaboration, providing professional development opportunities, and giving praise. Therefore, current school leaders must understand that their roles as merely managers are evolving into roles driven by increased demands for higher student achievement, including those of instructional, transformational, situational, and organizational managerial leaders. A focus on human capital retention has become a priority in recent years. With teachers' salaries and benefits consuming over 80% of school districts' budgets, it is only reasonable to study the attrition of teachers. As a result of teachers leaving the profession every year, student achievement suffers. In the U.S., there are an estimated 157,000 men and women leaving the teaching profession every year, and more than 232,000 others change schools (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008). These teachers who move and leave make up an estimated 12% of the total teacher workforce, not including teachers who retire (Alliance for Excellent

Education, 2008). Over 50% of teachers leave their positions after serving five years (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). It is imperative that research explores the strategies, skills, and practices instructional leaders embody that positively influence teacher retention. High levels of teacher turnover can have a negative effect on student achievement and teacher morale. It is necessary to study key behaviors of effective principals serving in the role of instructional leaders to understand how to replicate strategies, skills, and practices that improve teacher retention rates.

Purpose of the Study

The intent of this quantitative and qualitative mixed-method research study identified from teachers' and principals' perspectives, important components of school culture and leadership practices that encouraged them to stay at their schools, as well as implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators in recognizing and implementing practices related to teacher retention. The pace at which novice teachers adapt and develop and the choice either to stay or leave the profession relates to a principal's involvement with beginning teachers (Colley, 2002; Peltier-Glaze, 2005). This study highlighted leadership practices and behaviors principals can use to create distinctive school-working cultures and strengthen teacher commitment and satisfaction. Principals and teachers from schools with different teacher retention rates were interviewed to obtain responses that identified characteristics of principals' behaviors and teachers' perspectives of their school leaders' leadership practices. The focus group provided an analysis of the reported data. The analysis of the reported data led to a better understanding of how principals' leadership practices and behaviors encouraged teacher retention.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this quantitative and qualitative mixed-method research study was derived from a review of literature on teacher retention that solidifies school leadership is essential to retaining quality teachers. School leadership is responsible for creating a nurturing school culture that encourages teacher retention. There is an assenting stage relationship linking school leaders' instructional leadership practices to a school culture in which their leadership practices encourage all occurrences in school culture, particularly, the school leadership practices (Sahin, 2011). A review of selected literature revealed the most frequently cited reasons for teacher retention were workplace conditions that include leadership support, beginning teacher support, compensation, shared decision-making, professional development, career advancement opportunities, support for working with students, adequate and safe facilities, curricular support for high standards, school culture, and teacher workload. The behaviors of school leaders can either positively or negatively influence teacher retention. Teachers value administrators who understand and address their problems and concerns (Elfers, Plecki, & Knapp, 2006; Ingersoll 2001; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Shen, 1997). Teachers also look for administrators who are able to help them become better teachers (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). The one person who immediately and directly has influence is the principal in the role of instructional leader (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004).

Research Questions

1. What do teachers perceive as the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?

2. What are the most important factors of school culture from teachers' perspectives that can promote teacher retention?
3. What do principals perceive as the reasons why teachers stay or leave their campuses or teaching profession altogether?
4. What do principals perceive as the best leadership practices in promoting teacher retention?

Definition of Terms

1. *Accountability* is the annual assessments of Texas public schools and districts on the academic performance of their students.
2. *Attrition* is loss of employees. In this analysis, attrition reflects teachers leaving the Texas public school teaching force.
3. *Beginning teachers* are educators obtaining an initial, standard teaching certificate in a particular fiscal year and employed as teachers the following academic year.
4. *Instructional Leadership* is distinguished from other leadership roles because it emphasizes instructional improvement.
5. *Leadership* is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.
6. *Leavers* are teachers who leave the district or the teaching profession entirely.
7. *Movers* are teachers who transfer from one school to another within the district.
8. *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB)* is a United States School Reform Act of Congress concerning the academic achievement in public school

education. NCLB was originally proposed by the George W. Bush administration immediately after he took office. NCLB supports standards-based education reform based on the belief that setting high standards and establishing measurable goals can improve individual outcomes in education. The Act requires states to develop assessments in basic skills to be given to all students in certain grades, if those states are to receive federal funding for their schools. The Act does not assert a national achievement standard; standards are set by each individual state.

9. *Organizational Management* refers to the management of people, data, and processes to foster an organization's improvement.
10. *Race to the Top (RTT)* is a federal program funded by the ED Recovery Act as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 that lets states apply for grants that center on a diminutive list of reforms. Included in the initiative are a national standard for assessment that prepares students for college readiness, incentives for teacher recruitment, development, retention, and teacher- and principal-reward systems, and incentives for constructing data systems that evaluate student success, thereby enlightening teachers and principals about how they can improve their practices and turn around low-performing schools (Burris, 2011). Awards in Race to the Top will go to states that lead the way with ambitious but achievable plans for implementing coherent, compelling, and comprehensive education reform. Race to the Top winners will help trail-blaze effective reforms and provide examples for states

and local school districts throughout the country to follow as they too work on reforms that can transform schools for decades to come.

11. *Situational Leadership* is the theory that leaders change their leadership approach depending on who they lead and the task(s) to be performed.
12. *Transformational Leadership* is a leadership approach that causes change in individuals and social systems. It is the process through which a leader engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower.
13. *Veteran teachers* are educators with standard teaching certificates who have three or more years of classroom teaching experience.

Limitations

A key limitation is the small sample size of this study. The findings of this study were limited to one school district located in Southeast Texas. Another limitation was that this study relied heavily on survey questionnaire and interview data collected from teachers and principals. While interview data can offer valuable information, they are essentially qualitative and can be manipulated by countless factors, including interviewer bias and interviewee truthfulness. It can be difficult to determine the real reason why teachers leave different schools. Furthermore, the researcher was unable to manage the extent to which the principals and teachers interpreted the questions, and the responses were limited by the survey's format of pre-selected answer choices. In order to mitigate these limitations, a focus group was conducted.

Summary

This chapter has given an outline for a mixed-method study. Included is the statement of the problem, purpose of the study, theoretical framework, research questions, term definitions, background information, and limitations. The next chapter focused on the review of the literature related to the influences of teacher retention, including certain school leadership practices.

Chapter II

Literature Review

Purpose of the Study

The intent of quantitative and qualitative mixed-method research study identified from teachers' and principals' perspectives, important factors of school culture and principals' leadership practices that encouraged them to stay at their schools, as well as implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators in recognizing practices related to teacher retention. The rate at which novice teachers acclimate and develop and the choice to either stay or leave the profession relates to a principal's involvement with beginning teachers (Colley, 2002; Peltier-Glaze, 2005). This study highlighted practices to detect leadership behaviors that create distinctive school-working cultures, and to envisage teacher commitment and satisfaction. In the study, principals and teachers of schools with different teacher retention rates were interviewed and/or surveyed by questionnaire to obtain responses that identified characteristics of principals' behaviors and teachers' and principals' perspectives of school leadership practices. A focus group was gathered in order to provide an analysis of the reported data. The analyses of the reported data lead to a better understanding of how principals' leadership practices and behaviors encourage teacher retention.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this quantitative and qualitative mixed-method research study was derived from a review of literature on teacher retention. School leadership is essential to retaining quality teachers, but there is a need to better

understand what practices best promotes teacher retention. School leadership is responsible for creating a nurturing school culture. There is a assenting stage relationship to linking school leaders' instructional leadership practices and school culture in which their leadership practices encourage all occurrences in school culture, especially the school leadership practice (Sahin, 2011).

Teachers value administrators who understand and address their problems and concerns (Elfers, Plecki, & Knapp, 2006; Ingersoll 2001; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Shen, 1997). Teachers also look for administrators who are able to help them become better teachers (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). The one person who immediately and directly has influence is the principal in the role of instructional leader (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004). One key element in teacher retention is teachers' perceptions of their colleagues as campus leaders. Teachers are more likely to stay at a school if they are part of a team that is working to improve the school which includes the support of campus leaders (Allensworth, 2012). Also, according to Allensworth (2012), teachers are more likely to remain in schools where they can influence the work environment, have developed productive and positive rapport with their campus leaders, and trust their campus leaders' instructional leadership ability (Allensworth, 2012). The behaviors of school leaders can either positively or negatively influence teacher retention.

Accountability

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) requires states, districts, and schools to be accountable for student achievement (U.S. Department of Education, 2003). NCLB requires that the best teachers are available to all students, regardless of the teachers' race, ethnicity, or income (U.S. Department of Education, Office of the Deputy

Secretary, 2004). NCLB is educational reform reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA, 1965). Its objective is to close achievement gaps in the midst of students who belong to minority groups, have disabilities, are economically disadvantaged, or have limited proficiency with the English language. With good intentions in mind, few who designed NCLB were able to foresee its influence on teacher retention, a historical issue and problem of enormous magnitude. Requiring that 100% of students in every state score “proficient” on state tests is a rigid accountability modus operandi. Annual yearly progress (AYP) bars were set reasonably low but rose quickly to improbable levels. By the end of the 2012-2013 school year in Texas, 750,000 students will take the end-of-course exams in math, science, reading, writing, and social studies (Mjacher, 2013). Teachers face challenges with high-stakes standardized testing based on federal academic standards, grumbling about the irrationality and consequences of measuring growth through one test, given on one day, without considering other indicators of achievement. The goal of 100% student proficiency by 2014 was intended to push schools to do better, but studies show that teachers fear students’ failures and the harsh consequences that could follow, such as teacher terminations and even school closures (Mancini, 2013). “The problem with student test scores is that children are not evenly distributed. If you are not careful, you will end up with incentives for good teachers to avoid kids in need” (Darling-Hammond, 1998, p. 11).

Educators find that under NCLB there is a one-sidedness of accountability on their parts, with students and parents lacking it. Some students have poor attendance, little homework ethic, and poor turnout at parent-teacher involvement events, creating more challenges for the teacher. A top reason for exiting teaching, especially at the high-

school level, is lack of support from students and parents. As seen by Kohn (2004), the mandate for higher standards and more testing is a movement cultivated from the top-down, rather than originating in the neighborhood school itself. The imbalance in accountability is fed by those who have a disdain for public education and are politically plotting to destroy it. The accountability of educational leaders and political leaders in the educational system remains conflicted. This conflict may result in communities who once believed in their children's school coming to believe in the inadequacy of public education instead.

Teacher Quality: “Highly Qualified”

NCLB requires teachers to be in all public school classrooms across the country. Title I of NCLB mandates that all teachers have pre-serviced credentials and that states develop a plan to fulfill those requirements by the 2005-2006 school year. School districts often face a difficult task finding highly qualified teachers to fill vacancies. The increasing need for highly qualified teachers directly correlates to the growing shortage of teachers. Teacher quality and student achievement goes hand-in-hand in many cases. Two common approaches to ensure teacher quality in all classrooms by current federal and state policies and initiatives are to improve the qualifications of teachers and to increase the quality of teachers (Ingersoll, 2003). Part of RTT allows states to apply for grants based on a small list of reforms, one of the most controversial being that teachers' compensation depending on their students' performance on state tests. Darling-Hammond (2007) stated that NCLB was the driving force in developing more skillful teachers that attained higher and more equitable achievement for students in the United States. But if teachers do not have the skill set for teaching a demanding curriculum to

diverse learners, there will be little to no improvement in the achievement of racial and ethnic students, or of those from low socio-economic backgrounds.

The United States faces a difficult task in reforming our nation's educational system in concordance with the intended goals of NCLB. One of the most decisive factors in achieving the objective of significant reform is to attract and retain highly qualified and effective teachers in the classroom (Joftus & Maddox-Dolan, 2002). The National Commission on Teaching America's Future (2003) report, *No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children*, states that our nation's educational leaders at the state and local levels are in charge of the issues concerning quality teachers.

Teacher Shortage

Students are well deserving of a classroom with a highly qualified teacher, and schools are seeking them. There are several reasons the demand for new teachers has become so great, with the three most commonly cited being the increase in student enrollment, teacher retirement, and teacher attrition (Clewell & Forcier, 2000; Howard, 2003). In the U.S., there are an estimated 157,000 men and women leaving the teaching field every year, as well as more than 232,000 who change schools; these teachers who move and leave make up an estimated 12% of the total teacher workforce, not including teachers who retire (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008). Over 50% of teachers leave their positions after serving five years (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). According to the National Education Association (2008), there were 3,184,994 teachers in 2007-2008; the following year, there were 3,219,317, a gain of 34,000 teachers. In the state of Texas alone, nearly 36,500 teachers left their jobs in the academic year 2010-2011 (SBEC, 2012).

Increased Enrollment. An increase in student enrollment is one reason there is a shortage of teachers in the public school system of America. In 2010, the total public school population was 61 million (National Center for Education Statistics, 2013). According to Jeynes (2004), immigration is a contributing factor in this enrollment increase. The children and grandchildren of the Baby Boomers, those born from 1946 to 1964, are also contributing to the increase in student enrollment. As these numbers continue to escalate, the need for more highly qualified teachers will increase.

According to the Texas Education Agency (2012), Texas public school enrollment was estimated to be 4,998,579 in 2011-12 school year, meaning the statewide enrollment increased 1.3% from the previous year (TEA, 2012).

Teacher Retirement. Research as far back as the 1980s predicted that teacher shortages would be caused by larger number of teachers nearing retirement age (Darling-Hammond, 1984; National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983). Another 30% of teachers are leaving the profession for reasons besides retirement. Howard (2003) also suggested that teacher retirement is a contributing factor in the teacher shortage. Estimates show that approximately 28% of teacher job openings between 2000 and 2010 were a direct result of teacher retirements (Howard, 2003).

The National Education Association (NEA, 2004) conducted a survey in 2003 that showed that several states had launched legislation to address various teacher retirement plans. This survey further reported that in an effort to alleviate the national teacher shortage, approximately 34 states have made various attractive provisions for retired teachers to reenter the classroom as full-time teachers. Despite such returns, the NEA

estimated that over one million teachers will still retire by 2015. Additional research (Feistritzer, 2004; Swartz, 2003; Whitaker, 2000) supports this retirement statistic.

Although these studies make known that teacher retirement does have an impact on the national teacher shortage, other researchers have found that retired teachers represent a much smaller number of teachers exiting the field. According to Blair (2003), the majority of teachers leave teaching because of inadequate salaries and poor work environments. Teacher turnover includes both teachers who transfer from one school to school within the district (movers) and those who leave the district or the teaching profession altogether (leavers). Leavers accounts for about a third (31.4%) of the retired public school teachers, but when observed in the totality of teacher turnover for public schools, retirees are accountable for nearly 16% of the turnover rate. Teachers leave for personal reasons as well, and these leavers account for more turnover than retirement or dismissal (Hirsch, 2001).

Teacher Attrition. Teacher attrition adds to the national teacher shortages (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Researchers, administrators, and governmental commissions have studied attrition in an effort to understand why schools lose so many teachers. These three groups have recognized several unrelenting and noteworthy problems, such as: (1) inadequate induction and lack of principal support; (2) sense of isolation and lack of community; (3) teacher preparation flaws and limited professional development; (4) minimal rewards for knowledge and skill; (5) unsafe work environments; and (6) student discipline and motivation concerns (Ingersoll, 2001).

In the state of Texas, nearly 36,500 teachers left their jobs in the 2010-2011 academic year (SBEC, 2012). During this time, attrition of beginning and all teachers

was higher for smaller districts than larger ones. For these smaller districts, attrition of beginning teachers was higher than attrition of all teachers. In the 2010-2011 academic year, beginning teachers from all districts across the state showed a higher attrition rate.

While public school systems must aggressively recruit highly qualified teachers, they must also seek to keep those teachers in the classrooms. While the number of individuals who receive teacher certification, whether traditionally or alternatively, has grown, now the challenge becomes how to retain these teachers. Agreeably, many researchers share that more than 30% of newly certified teachers leave the profession within their first five years (Feistritzer, 2004; Swartz, 2003; Whitaker, 2000). Some of these researchers also believe that teachers who take a faster route to certification, that is, those who become certified alternatively, have higher than average rates of attrition. Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Love, and Wyckoff (2007) and Darling-Hammond and Sikes (2003) concur that one-third of beginning teachers leave the profession within five years. According to Swartz (2003), another reason for the national shortage of highly qualified teachers is low job satisfaction. Other noted reasons are low salaries, student disciplinary issues, and lack of support from administrators (Ingersoll, 2001). Teachers from alternative certification programs, who are not required, as candidates, to student teach or complete critical areas of coursework, are twice as likely to quit teaching after his or her first year (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003).

There is a national teacher shortage in public schools throughout America (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Howard, 2003). In 2008, teacher attrition was reported by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) to be at a rate of 17% at the end of the 2003-2004 school year and 16% in 2004-2005. This loss denoted over 621,000 teachers

of the 5.5 million employed to teach in public and private schools across the nation, 3.2 million of which are currently in the public school system (NCES, 2008). Adding to the shortage, many more teachers will be retiring each year.

New teachers entering education are eager to influence students. Filled with the enthusiasm, novice teachers begin to affect lives in the classroom. Many times, they are overwhelmed with the demands and accountability associated with teaching. The rates of retirement and teacher attrition add to the frustration of maintaining the highly qualified staff needed for our public schools in particular. Teacher shortages may not affect all schools in the same way, but the economically disadvantaged students do suffer more as a consequence. Many districts and schools, especially those with high numbers of minority and low-income students, have more difficulty attracting and retaining qualified teachers. In a recent study, Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (2007) found that in Texas, the percentage of teachers leaving low-performing schools (20%) is significantly higher than those leaving high-performing schools (15%) (“The Revolving Door,” 2004). A significant result of high teacher turnover is a shortage of quality teachers for each classroom, which leads to inferior quality of instruction. Teacher turnover may be perceived as a loss of stability within the school and can adversely affect school reform. Shared and sustained school commitment by the staff is necessary for school reforms. Time, attention, and funds devoted to recruiting new teachers rather than the classrooms drain district and school budgets.

Teacher Turnover and Associated Cost

Since NCLB was passed in 2001, school leadership and teaching staff’s accountability requirements have increased, which have led to increase in costs. In the

2008-2009 school year, teacher attrition costs in the U.S. were estimated at nearly \$2.4 million dollars, based on the Department of Labor's estimated costs for replacing employees (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). Moreover, over 50% of newly hired teachers were brand new to the profession, and another 20% were hired with less than three years of teaching experience. Darling-Hammond (2003) found that teachers often leave in the first few years of teaching, with one-third of new teachers leaving within five years. Teacher turnover is particularly high among new teachers, those most dependent upon principal leadership and support.

According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) (2014), the national average school leaver rate is 16.5%. According to Texas Education Agency (2012), the state of Texas alone lost nearly 36,500 teachers in 2010-2011. Urban school turnover is valued at \$8,400 per teacher and non-urban school turnover estimates a value of \$3,600 per teacher (NCTAF, 2014). If Texas used the (NCTAF) Teacher Turnover Cost Calculator to estimate its teacher turnover cost, it would be a loss estimated as high as \$302.4 million for the 2010-2011 school year. Historically, the Texas teacher turnover rate has hovered between 14% and 16%, which amounts to an enormous loss of between \$329 million and \$2.1 billion per year according to the industry cost model (SBEC, 2000). Teacher turnover may vary from school to school from 5% to 40%. To estimate these costs for the 2004-2005 academic year, the State Comptroller's office used the most conservative method and updated it to reflect teacher turnover and average salaries for 2004-2005. Based on the most conservative method, the cost of turnover for 2004-2005 was estimated at \$13,329 per teacher. SBEC (2000) calculated the following factors in determining teacher attrition: recruitment,

number of paid substitutes, and additional trainings. The learning curve for new teachers can be devastating for schools' student achievements and districts' budgets. Whenever a teacher leaves, the district must reinvest financial resources and time for a new teacher to learn district expectations and become acclimated to a new school, where he or she must learn the culture and rules as well as the selected curriculum and instructional programs.

Teacher Turnover and Student Achievement

The value of student academic achievement and teacher retention cannot be appropriately determined by monetary assessment. However, retaining teachers is crucial to the progress of schools and districts in reaching the goals of NCLB. Constant turnover results in less experienced, less competent and less effective teachers in the classroom setting. Guarino, Santibbanez, and Daley (2006) stated, "in the face of growing school-aged population, schools and districts struggle to maintain standards for teaching quality while simultaneously recruiting bright new teachers and seeking to retain their most effective existing teachers" (p. 173). A teacher with fewer than three years of experience might be a contributing factor to lower student academic performance. Clotfelter, Ladd, and Vigdor (2007) found that acquiring a highly qualified teacher compensated for students' racial and socioeconomic disadvantages. Similarly, Aaronson, Barrow, and Sander (2007), in a study of a Chicago public school, found that a higher quality teacher provided the maximum impact on African American students. As mentioned, attracting, recruiting, developing, and retaining teachers in the schools is imperative to provide an equitable and quality education to all children, regardless of race, language, and socioeconomic status.

Influences on Teacher Retention

The first step in teacher retention is to understand why teachers leave. In its 2003 report *Making the Case for Teacher Retention*, the Vocational Land Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities reported that teachers leave when they encounter environments that lack such essential professional supports as: (1) induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers; (2) leadership support; and (3) respect and value-oriented organizational structures and workforce conditions. The four major factors Darling-Hammond (2003) listed as influencing teachers' decisions to leave the profession are mentoring support for beginning teachers early years, preparation, working conditions, and salary.

Teacher Preparation Programs

Nagy and Wang (2007) surveyed 145 "alternatively" certified teachers in New Jersey and concluded that school districts with induction support and professional development were more likely to retain teachers; that is, teachers who received support from principals and mentors were more likely to remain in teaching. Darling-Hammond et al.'s 2005 analysis of Teach For America (TFA) teachers and other certified Houston teachers over a three-year period found high rates of attrition for TFA teachers, with between 57% to 90% departing after their second year and between 72% to 90% departing after the third year. In comparison, the rates of attrition for non-TFA teachers ranged between 32% and 55% after three years. Boyd et al.'s 2006 study of pathways into teaching in New York City, which followed teachers from point of entry in 1999-2000 through 2003-2004, found significant differences in attrition rates across pathways. In the first year, the attrition rates for TFA teachers (9%) and Teaching Fellows (10%)

were lower than the attrition rate of college-recommended teachers (14%). However, the attrition rate for TFA teachers shifted dramatically after the second (48%), third (66%), and fourth (81%) years, with TFA teachers less unlikely to remain in the classroom than college-recommended teachers and Teaching Fellows. Boyd et al. (2006) predicted that fewer than 20% of TFA teachers would remain in New York City schools after four years. Similarly, Kane et al. (2008) examined pathways into teaching in New York City from 1998-1999 through 2004-2005. In keeping with previous findings, they found that rates of attrition increased over time and were higher for uncertified and TFA teachers than for certified teachers. After five years, approximately 50% of both Teaching Fellows and traditionally certified teachers remained in the classroom, compared to 45% of uncertified and 18% of TFA teachers. Donaldson and Johnson (2010) used survival analysis to analyze the relationship between teaching assignment and retention for 2,029 TFA teachers. While approximately half of the TFA teachers left their initial schools at the end of two years, 44% continued teaching. Teachers with the most challenging assignments, such as responsibilities for multiple grade levels, multiple subjects, or teaching outside their fields, were more likely to leave. Across these studies the findings are consistent; TFA teachers are more likely to remain in the classroom initially, but the rate of attrition increases drastically in comparison with university-prepared and other certified teachers at the end of the second year and beyond. Of course, the two-year time frame coincides with TFA teachers' two-year commitment and may be an indication that teachers perceive the program as a mechanism for temporary community service as opposed to a career.

Mentoring Teachers

Ingersoll and Smith (2004) found that teachers who experience strong support are less likely to leave teaching or change schools. Being part of an external network of teachers and having a mentor in the same field, a common planning time within the same department or subject area, and regularly scheduled collaboration time with other teachers are all support types that have the biggest impacts associated with teacher retention (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Hoffmeyer, et al. (2005) studied the role of mentoring and coaching first year public schoolteachers; these teachers indicated mentoring was one of the most encouraging ways to improve effectiveness in the classroom.

Mignott (2011) stated that mentoring new teachers is a good practice with regard to retention within the field of education. Mentor programs are geared toward helping inexperienced teachers learn the job, improving instructional performance via modeling and coaching by an experienced teacher or administrator, collaboration with others, and nonthreatening feedback based on observation. Such programs should select mentors who will serve the mentee as a nurturer. Through nurturing beginning teachers, mentors create an environment that promotes job satisfaction and self-confidence, positively influencing teacher retention.

According to Bartell (2005), the first few years of teaching are considered the most challenging for new teachers in which teachers may become discouraged and disillusioned with the tasks assigned; therefore, the relationship established by mentoring creates a bond that will help the teacher stay on a particular campus. Selecting mentors that communicate effectively is a key influence in teacher retention. Communication

should be positive, relevant, and conveyed with a supportive approach. Proper communication can lead to a strong relationship by making the mentor approachable to the mentee. The mentor will assist in the beginning teacher's dealings with parents, students, and other staff on campus. An effective mentor helps the new teacher become successful.

Gardiner (2011) stated that mentors' and new teachers' joint work provided a context conducive for professional learning and contributed to the mission of a larger social justice. Instruction is an educator's main focus when selecting a mentor for beginning teachers. Selected mentors should know the vision of the campus and have the necessary skill set to share with the beginning teacher. Both the delivery of instruction and use of related teaching materials will allow the new teacher to get familiar with best teaching and learning practices. Since the method of mentor instruction will influence that of teacher instruction in the classroom, teacher mentors and instructional leaders should establish classroom management plans and disciplinary practices that will proactively address potential disciplinary issues.

Effective mentoring imbues new teachers with the necessary tools needed for success. Confidence will lead to developing as an effective teacher and teacher leader. Bartell (2005) describes the characteristics of an effective mentor, stressing that they understand that a beginning teacher's skill evolves and that different approaches should be used to deal with an ever-changing teacher's development, and that these mentors persist in regular communication with the school administration so that support and motivation will guide the mentee toward being a master teacher and assessing his or her mentor's effectiveness. Bartell (2005) suggests mentors assess all roles and programs

that deal with beginning teacher retention and preparation, using both informal and formal assessments. As the relationship matures, the mentor will be able to provide constructive criticism. Conversely, the mentee will be more receptive to receive the criticism and use it for professional development, which is itself another way to reach and retain new teachers. To summarize, new teachers should be provided with an effective mentor, a special orientation prior to the opening of school, and opportunities to work with their mentor during the school day, both inside and outside the classroom.

Professional Development

According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF, 2008), high quality teacher preparation is a strong predictor of both good teaching practice and teacher retention. School districts and schools must provide teachers with the opportunity to be continual learners and to develop the skills necessary to meet the needs of all students. Professional development is an effective tool concerning retention, and may be offered in a variety of ways and settings. On campus, professional development may occur during the school day and in after-school meetings. Other forms of professional development opportunities can be achieved online, as well as at local, state, and national conferences. Instructional leaders must plan effectively and implement staff development to create and sustain change and growth opportunities for the staff. Effective staff development empowers beginning teachers with the knowledge and skills to be successful. Generally, when there is success and intellectual stimulation, job satisfaction increases, and so does retention.

The opportunity to learn from colleagues in a professional environment that fosters development can influence beginning teachers to stay at a particular campus. The

New Teacher Center (NTC) has decided to take another approach to retain beginning teachers, with the goal to present a more individualized creative plan on both a teacher-by-teacher and school-by-school basis (Olson, 2007). Revamping staff development for beginning teachers in certain areas of content, focusing on teacher recruitment (especially in hard to staff areas), signing bonuses and other financial incentives were the major routes explored by the NTC. However, the NTC focuses less on recruitment and other financial incentives. Again, their major focus is individualized staff development.

The committee on professional development for the NTC reported an increase in beginning teacher retention and as a result, both teachers and student satisfaction rose (Olson, 2007). The NTC gives beginning teachers improved levels of growth and achievement in the following areas: addressing teachers' concerns of limited collaboration and planning time with peers; establishing a committee consisting of various teachers, school administrators, and professional development consultants to address beginning teacher needs; and creating an environment that teaches teachers to analyze student data and plan lessons based on that data that are also engaging for the students. The initial data collected showed the efforts related to beginning teacher retention yielded a significant and positive effect on standardized math and reading comprehension assessments (Olson, 2007).

There are many areas that need to be accounted for when planning and implementing professional development, including the number of participants, location, learning styles of your audience, and most importantly, the topic covered. Typically, large group trainings are held that disseminate an abundance of material. This form of professional development is a model that can be ineffective for teachers. It leads to

speaking to a group of adults who may show no interest and are unengaged; in large groups like these it can be highly difficult for presenters to address the professional developmental needs of the group. Therefore, teaching strategies that include case studies, role playing, simulations, and self-evaluation are more useful as instructors embrace the roles of facilitators or resources rather than lecturers or graders (Knowles, Holton, & Swanson, 2011).

According to Olsen (2007), school districts and all levels of school administrators should take a more individualized approach to beginning teacher professional development as a mean to retention. Retention of effective beginning teachers can be obtained by linking professional development to teacher interests and offering both individualized and collaborative staff development (Knight, 2006). Knight (2006) also suggested that beginning teacher staff development addresses the obstacles a novice teacher faces in the first few years in the classroom.

What one teacher may get out of a staff development meeting may not fit the needs of another teacher. The results of such meetings may be very different and may produce unfavorable outcomes. Instead of a “one size fits all” approach, professional development should identify the specific needs and strengths of individual teachers and campuses so that they can then prescribe the appropriate remedies. Just like a doctor does with a patient, medicine is prescribed according to the symptoms. A good teacher’s instruction will become differentiated according to the individual needs of the students. Regardless of focus, staff development should be collaborative, connected to improving instruction and student achievement, and established around trust and relationships. Knight (2006) suggests additional training or opportunities for those teachers identified

as potential leaders, providing opportunities for teachers to visit other classrooms—both within their own school and at other schools, while providing specific opportunities within their own school for teachers to learn continually (e.g., peer coaching, study groups).

Work Conditions

As states and districts are implementing programs to encourage retention, one body of research highlights the importance of supportive working conditions. Factors such as time, leadership opportunities, resource availabilities, professional development, and teacher empowerment all exert a substantial impact on the degree of satisfaction teachers feel in their jobs. Hirsh and Emerick (2007) indicated that “teachers with positive perceptions about their working conditions are much more likely to stay at their current school than educators who are more negative about their conditions of work, particularly in the areas of leadership and empowerment” (p. 14). Efforts to improve student academic achievement have marked teachers’ motivations (e.g., increasing competition among schools for students) and capacities (e.g., the teaching standards movement), while inadequate working conditions severely weaken the potential these efforts could have (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007). Working conditions in schools is a major issue, although it may not be the focus as it should. Ken Leithwood was sought out by the Elementary Teachers’ Federation of Ontario to conduct an investigative assessment of the literature on teachers’ working conditions; the outcome was published in *Teacher Working Conditions That Matter: Evidence for Change*. The theoretical framework for this publication is based upon teachers’ feelings and knowledge (“internal states”), which are the immediate “causes” of what teachers do; many of these internal

states are impacted by the conditions in which they work. Among the list of reasons for job dissatisfaction were: 1) lackluster support from school administration; 2) low salaries; 3) lack of teacher influence over decision making; 4) lack of student discipline. All were factors in the decision to leave the teaching profession. Ingersoll (2000) also found that poor working conditions, lack of job training and leadership support were the key reasons teachers left the profession within their first five years. Working conditions include things such as safety, student discipline, and availability of materials, collegial opportunities, decision-making participation, principal support, and principal leadership. ("The Revolving Door," 2004). A study by Loeb and Darling-Hammond (2005) brought to light that working conditions were the most significant factors in teacher retention, even more than salary; the study's authors argued that workplace conditions were the strongest predictor in teacher turnover.

Salary and Incentives

While increases in salary alone will not improve teacher retention long-term, districts with higher salaries tend to have lower attrition rates. In contrast, a study by Hanushek et. al. (2007) determined that the influence of salary increases may not have as great an impact as many may believe. Researchers have determined that sizeable increases in salary (25-43%) are required to retain teachers in low-achieving, high minority urban schools at rates comparable to suburban schools in Texas. The findings also specify that salary differentials for female teachers with 10 years or more tenure are virtually irrelevant. They concluded that teacher working conditions if improved would be more effective in teacher retention.

Researchers have found evidence that wages are as significant to teachers' decisions to enter and leave the profession as they are to workers in other occupations (Baugh & Stone, 1982). These factors are more influential at the start of the teaching career (Hanushek, Kain & Rivkin, 1999; Gritz & Theobald, 1996) and in high-demand fields like math and science (Murnane & Olsen, 1990; Murnane, et al., 1991). In many cases, benefits are considered an added deciding factor in teacher retention. According to the National Education Association (2004), benefits are a major factor in teacher recruitment, hiring, and retention. When taking into account the benefits factor, the bargaining incentives for teachers are strengthened.

Does a pay increase result in achievement? To answer, some analysts have studied the relationship between adjusted teacher salaries and student achievement. For example, in a meta-analysis of 60 production function studies, Greenwald, Hedges and Laine (1996) discovered that there was a greater correlation between larger effects for high student achievement and increased teacher salaries (along with teacher experience and education, which are rewarded in salary scales) than there was between other resources such as decreased pupil-teacher ratios. Ferguson's (1991) analysis concluded that Texas' student achievement gains were related to signing higher quality teachers. Higher salaries appeared to attract better prepared teachers (Pogodzinski, 2000). Lastly, Loeb and Page (2000) found that states and districts with increased teacher wages noticed gains in student educational accomplishments.

Organizational Culture and Climate

School climate is the quality and character of school life based on the patterns of students, parents, and school personnel that reflect the school's norms, goals, values,

interpersonal relationships, teaching and learning practices, and organizational structures (Cohen, Guffey, Higgins-D'Alessandro, & Thapa, 2012). The National School Climate Center researchers, Cohen, Guffey, Higgins-D'Alessandro, and Thapa (2012) further state that school leaders should consistently conduct comprehensive assessments of the major components of school life, such as safety, relationships, teaching and learning, and the environment, as well as larger organizational patterns (e.g., from fragmented to shared). Feelings associated with being in a school in conjunction with these larger group trends in learning and student development are the driving forces for a positive or negative school climate.

ASCD (2014) defines both school climate and school culture as the sum of the values, cultures, safety practices, and organizational structures within a school that cause it to function and react in particular ways. Schools that make students and teachers feel part of the decision-making are said to have a nurturing environment that recognizes them as individuals. Conversely, other schools may have an authoritarian feel that is strictly enforced from the top down. Although culture and climate are used interchangeably, school climate is normally associated with the school's effects on students, whereas school culture refers more to the everyday actions of teachers and other staff members' behaviors.

Kafele (2013) states that school climate can be defined as a "mode" that is gauged by the overall feel and tone of the classroom or school that affects the teacher's ability to teach and the student's ability to learn. He further states that school and classroom culture can be defined as a "lifestyle" that is gauged by the overall way school life affects teachers and students. When school leaders assess school climate and school culture,

they should gauge what the students and teachers see, hear, feel, and experience in their learning environments.

Kilman, Saxton, and Serpa (1985) offer a fitting analogy that helps to elucidate the character of organizational culture: “Culture is to the organization what personality is to the individual – a hidden, yet unifying theme that provides meaning, direction, and mobilization” (p. 9). As such, culture is emotional and indefinable (Connor & Lake, 1988), individually and socially constructed (Hall & Hord, 2001; Rousseau, 1990), and develops over a period of years (Wilkins & Patterson, 1985). As organizations find solutions to internal and external problems or threats, and attempt to integrate more effectively internally (Schein, 1985, 1992), these elements of culture create and teach organizational members through the association of behaviors with outcomes and through various supporting mechanisms and agents (Thompson & Luthans, 1990). Culture can be acquired through the diminution of fretfulness and pain or through positive rewards and reinforcements (Schein, 1985).

An easy and commonly used explanation of organizational culture is “The way we do things around here” (Deal, 1993, p. 6); although this statement appears in many books and articles, the earliest entry of it was by Deal. Profound discussions expand this meaning of organizational culture to cover up such issues as the organization members’ shared assumptions and beliefs about the nature of reality, truth, time, space, human nature, human activity, and human relationships (Schein, 1985). This meaning also consists of the members’ shared philosophies, ideologies, concepts, ceremonies, rituals, values, and norms that help shape their behaviors (Connor & Lake, 1988; Kilman, Saxton, & Serpa, 1985; Owens, 2004; Rousseau, 1990).

Organizational culture embraces such organizational necessities as shared concepts, common language, defined organizational boundaries, member selection by the organization, authority allocation methods, power, status, resources, norms for handling interpersonal relationships, standards for rewards and punishments, and coping mechanisms for unpredictable and stressful events (Schein, 1985). This shared culture assists in creating solidarity and meaning while inspiring commitment and productivity (Deal, 1985).

In organizations, culture can exist consciously and subconsciously simultaneously (Rousseau, 1990; Schein, 1985; Wilkins & Patterson, 1985). From the outside looking in, culture can be observed through the assessment of behaviors, such as formal procedures, and conversations. Digging a bit deeper, organizational culture is defined by the unwritten rules and norms of behavior, often illustrated through stories, rituals, language, and symbols. At the core of the culture, often existing totally subconsciously, are such things as the basic assumptions and core values of individuals, groups, and the organization (Connor & Lake, 1988). At this subconscious level, the organizational culture can be at its most powerful (Wilkins & Patterson, 1985).

Members of the organization experience culture differently (Rousseau, 1990). Sub-cultures can form within an organization as groups share values, perceptions, norms, or even celebrations that differ from those of the wider organization (Cooper, 1988; Louis, 1985; Thompson & Luthans, 1990). In many high schools, the male coaches form a sub-culture within the faculty; they can be perceived as being disengaged and generally found at the rear of the room. Often, their participation may be limited due to immediate after-school activities. They may be inattentive while other faculty members are more

engaged with the content of the faculty meetings. Similarly, new teachers to the faculty may form a sub-culture somewhat separate from veteran teachers who have been on the campus longer.

As far back as 1932, Waller noted that “schools have a culture that is definitely their own” (p. 103). Waller recognized rituals in individual relationships, illogical endorsements, ethical codes, ceremonies, traditions, and laws that were comparable in numerous schools and in clearly defined school activities. Observed by many of the sociologists who visited schools, including Deal (1993), Sarason (1996), and Swidler (1979), this perception of rituals is a shared culture among schools. Schools have diverse personalities, distinctive ceremonies, and differing disciplinary norms. Some schools glamorize their athletic teams, whereas in other schools the fine arts programs get great attention, or academic achievement is paramount. Owens (2004) noted that organizational culture may be the most powerful determinant of the course of change in an organization. Given the description of culture, it can be a prevailing force in the school improvement process.

National School Climate Center (2013) noted that school leaders should regularly perform comprehensive assessments of the major components of school life. Feelings related to being part of a school and bigger group trend to contribute to learning, and student development is the prevailing factor in creating a positive or negative school climate, which then encourages the school culture. According to Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral (2009), a positive school climate is linked with and foretelling of academic achievement, school accomplishment, healthy student development, effective risk prevention efforts, and teacher retention. School climate is a term used to denote the

ethos, or spirit, of the organization; more recently, school climate symbolizes the attitude of an organization. During this new age of accountability, the collective mood, or morale, of a group of people has become a topic of concern. Perceivably, a happy teacher is considered a better teacher, and these feelings influence the quality of instruction. If happy people actually perform better, then leaders by necessity should cultivate conditions in which happiness thrives. Instead of relying on extrinsic rewards, some leaders should research the most effective strategies for creating a nurturing school climate. Providing edible treats in the faculty lounge on meeting days may satisfy a few teachers' hunger, but this act will not affect the morale of the entire building. If culture is the personality of the school or organization, then climate is its attitude. It is much easier to change an organization's attitude (climate) than it is to change its personality (culture).

Rhodes and Hemmings (2012) stated that a positive school culture depends on strong principal and teacher leadership. School leaders play pivotal roles in the fostering and maintenance of school cultures. According to Leithwood et al. (2007), a school's climate and culture can encourage the learning process and the manageability of workload complexity, as well as innovation in the absence of instructional resources. When the culture of a school is beneficial to teachers' happiness, they tend to value and support their safety and the safety of their students while also striving to meet high academic expectations for students and themselves (Leithwood et al., 2007). In encouraging teachers to find their work meaningful, school culture is the primary ingredient in the development of clear and morally inspiring goals and has a positive influence on teachers' affective dispositions (Leithwood et al., 2007).

School Leadership

Berry (2008) reviewed a substantial number of National Board Certified Teachers about their thoughts on the challenges of teacher retention. Berry intended to find the factors that would attract and retain the most desirable teachers for careers at under-performing or high-need schools. The first factor he discovered was that certain teachers desired a principal's style of leadership (Berry, 2008).

Leadership has been conceptualized in various ways; however, in this literature review, the following components can be identified as fundamental to educational leadership: (a) leadership is a process; (b) leadership requires influence, (c) leadership transpires in a group context, and (d) leadership entails goal attainment with attendant results (Northouse, 2009). Grounded on these components, the following definition of leadership is used in this text: Leadership is the process of an individual's influence on a group of followers to achieve common goals. Describing leadership as a process means that it is not an attribute or feature that inhabits the leader but rather a transactional occurrence between the leader and his or her followers. *Process* implies that a leader has an effect on and is affected in turn by followers. It emphasizes that leadership is not a one-way or even linear but rather an interactive affair. Once leadership is described in these terms, it becomes accessible to one and all. It is not solely confined to the person who is designated leader of the group.

According to Northouse (2009), leadership requires influence; it is based on its impact on its followers. Influence is foundational in leadership; without it, leadership is nonexistent. Leadership entails influencing a group of individuals who share a common purpose. The size of a group can range from small to including a whole organization.

Leadership also includes consideration of goals; it should provide direction for the group of individuals in accomplishing organizational goals. Leaders' decisions should be directed toward individuals attempting to accomplish results collaboratively. For that reason, leadership takes place and has purpose when individuals are moving toward a common goal.

Throughout this literature, the people who engage in leadership shall be called principals, instructional leaders, or school leaders, and those under the influence of leadership will be called teacher(s) or followers. Both principal(s) or leaders and teacher(s) or followers work together in the leadership process. Leaders need followers, and followers need leaders (Burns, 1978). Although leaders and followers are closely linked together, it is the leader who often initiates the relationship, generates the communication, and carries the burden of maintaining the relationship.

Principals as Instructional Leaders

The definition of instructional leadership has expanded to encompass deeper involvement in the core business of schooling that is teaching and learning. Attention has shifted from teaching to learning, and some have proposed the term “learning leader” over “instructional leader” (DuFour, 2002). Instructional leadership is defined as a leading learning community (The National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2001). In a learning community, staff members meet to discuss how to perfect their craft, work to come up with collaborative solutions, share reflections, and take the initiative for assuring all students learn. People in a learning community “own the problem” and become agents of its solution. Instructional leaders set high expectations for performance, make adult learning a priority, which enhance a culture of continuous

learning for adults, and foster community support for school success. Blase and Blase (2000) located instructional leadership in specific behaviors, such as making suggestions, giving feedback, modeling effective instruction, soliciting opinions, supporting collaboration, providing professional development opportunities, and giving praise. The role of principal has transformed from one of simply manager to that of the instructional leader. To some degree, principals always have been instructional leaders. Traditionally, principals engage more in the management phases, like making sure buses arrive on time and the cafeteria is properly supervised. In the early 1990s, attention was lacking in the areas of instruction in the principal's role. Recently, instructional leadership has become one of the main focal points of increasing student academic performance. While most would agree that instructional leadership is crucial to high performance, it is not always the priority in a principal's day-to-day activities. For example, of the many tasks performed by principals, only one-tenth of their time is devoted to instructional leadership (Stronge, 1988). Lack of in-depth training, limited time, amplified paperwork, and the community's view of the principal's position as that of a manager are cited as reasons for this low emphasis on instructional leadership (Flath, 1989; Fullan, 1991). Educational leaders are to be the chief instructional leader of their institution, responsible for developing and supporting a shared school culture that focalizes teaching and learning (Green, 2010).

Along with having knowledge in the core areas of education, to carry out the tasks of an instructional leader, the principal must possess skills in areas including interpersonal, planning, instructional observation, and research and evaluation. According to Pesavento-Conway (2010), interpersonal skills are essential for a principal

to be successful, as these incite motivation, sustain trust, provide empowerment, and boost collegiality. Creating relationships based on trust is achieved through motivation and empowerment, which teachers gain when they are included in campus planning, devising, and evaluating instructional programs. Empowering teachers leads to their ownership of and commitment to identifying problems and implementing strategies for themselves. Collegiality encourages teamwork, sharing, and partnership by the principal and teachers discussing teaching and learning as a group. Planning starts with a clear vision of goals or results to work toward by way of inducing commitment and enthusiasm in those working toward these goals. Next, the plans undergo changes via collaborative discussions about what these changes should be and what parties will be responsible for them. Three hundred sixty observations that would provide teachers with relevant feedback to consider and reflect upon from supervisors and other teachers would be an ongoing practice. Such feedback would permit teachers to make their own judgment calls and reach their own conclusions on their performance as teachers. Research and evaluation skills are a must to evaluate the success of instructional programs critically.

The task of being an instructional leader is both complex and multidimensional. If principals believe that growth in student learning is the primary goal of schooling, it is a task worth learning. If a principal possesses these knowledge and skills, he or she is likely to become an effective leader who shares, facilitates, and guides decisions about instructional improvement for student achievement (Pesavento-Conway, 2010).

Brewer (2001) outlines the “dramatically different role” of the principal as an instructional leader as:

“one that requires focusing on instruction; building a community of learners; sharing decision making; sustaining the basics; leveraging time; supporting ongoing professional development for all staff members; redirecting resources to support a multifaceted school plan; and creating a climate of integrity, inquiry, and continuous improvement.” (p. 30)

Principals should take the roll of instructional leader critically, by freeing themselves of the bureaucratic tasks and focusing their efforts on improving teaching and learning.

Instructional improvement is a goal worth seeking because when put into practice, allows both students and teachers to take ownership of making a purposeful and collaborative learning environment. Brewer (2001) suggests that the role of the instructional leader expands to incorporate a shift away from “management” (working in the system of administrative tasks) toward “leadership” (working on the system itself). To achieve this quest, it takes more than a strong principal with concrete ideas and technical expertise. Redefining the role of principal requires that one remove the barriers to leadership by eliminating bureaucratic structures and reinventing relationships.

Principals as Transformational Leaders

Although there are many challenging factors that exist in schools, transformational school leaders can positively impact teacher commitment to that school (Dumay & Galand, 2012). Principals as transformational leaders will be capable of reshaping the individual from the inside outward. Bass and Riggio (2006) suggested that the popularity of transformational leadership may be due to its emphasis on intrinsic motivation and follower development. This leadership style fits the needs of today’s work groups who want to be inspired and empowered to succeed in uncertain times. As

its name implies, transformational leadership is the process by way people change and transform in an organization. It is concerned with feelings, standards, standards, and long-term goals, and includes considering reports' motives, nourishing their needs, and treating them as valued employees. Transformational leadership involves a form of inspiration that motivates followers to accomplish more than what is typically expected of them. It is a method that frequently integrates charismatic and visionary leadership.

An encompassing approach, transformational leadership can be used to describe a wide range of leadership, from very specific attempts to influence followers on a one-on-one basis to very broad attempts to influence whole organizations and even entire cultures (Dumay & Galand, 2012) . Although the transformational leader plays a pivotal role in precipitating change, followers and leaders are inextricably bound together in the transformation process.

The term “transformational leadership” was first devised by Downton (1973); yet, its rise as an essential approach to leadership began with a work, political sociologist James MacGregor Burns' *Leadership* (1978). Burns attempted to link the roles of leadership and followership. For Burns, leadership is quite different from power because it is inseparable from followers' needs. Transformational leadership is the process whereby a person engages with others and creates a connection that raises the level of motivation and morality in both the leader and the follower. This type of leader is attentive to the needs and motives of followers and tries to help followers reach his or her fullest potential. Burns points to Mahatma Gandhi as a classic example of transformational leadership. Gandhi raised the hopes and dreams of millions of his people and in the process he was changed.

Bass (1985) recognized this moral component when he identified four key behaviors of transformational leadership. They include idealized influence, the charismatic role-modeling of high ethical and performance standards, inspirational motivation, the articulation of a future-oriented and meaningful vision that advocates excellence and making personal sacrifices for the good of the group, intellectual stimulation, the challenging of underlying assumptions with the integration of multiple viewpoints to broaden perspectives on problems, and individualized consideration, the selfless service to followers through recognizing and appreciating diversity and providing coaching and mentoring.

Transformational Leadership Behavior

Transformational leadership's focus is improving followers' performances and developing them to their maximum potential. Individuals who demonstrate transformational leadership habitually have a well-established set of internal values and ideals, and they are mostly successful at motivating followers to perform in manners that support the organization rather than their own self-interest (Kuhnert, 1994). The four transformational leadership behaviors include: idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration.

Idealized influence. Leithwood (1993) stated that transformational leadership is essential to effective school restructuring. When restructuring a school effectively as a transformational leader, the school leader must consider their behavioral influence. The first behavior is charisma, or idealized influence, which demonstrates strong role-modeling for followers; followers can identify with leaders who lead by example and want to emulate them. This behavior exemplifies high standards of moral and ethical

conduct and can be trusted as the right thing to do. Principals who demonstrate these behaviors are respected by their followers, who usually place a great deal of faith in them. They provide followers with a vision and a sagacity of mission. Principals that have charismatic behaviors are special and make others want to follow the vision they set.

Inspirational motivation. Inspiration or inspirational motivation is behavior two. This leadership behavior entails effective communication of high expectations to followers, inspiring and motivating their commitment to the organization's shared vision. To put into practice, leaders use signs and emotional applications to focus group members' efforts to achieve beyond what they would normally do by themselves. Transformational leadership is the ability for a leader to inspire and motivate those led to accomplish common goals of the organization while having an impact on collective teacher efficacy of the school; teacher efficacy alone predict teacher commitment (Ross & Gray, 2006). Team Spirit is elevated by this type of leadership behavior; through it a principal might motivate his or her staff to excel in their teaching through encouraging words and motivational speeches during faculty meetings that clearly communicate the vital role they play in the overall success of each student and the entire school.

It is important that school leaders are equipped with the knowledge and skills of how to motivate. Frataccia and Hennington's (1982) study examined the needs that teachers appear to have difficulty satisfying that are based on the two-factor Herzberg's Hygiene-Motivation Theory. This theory is aligned with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, which basically states that all humans have two sets of needs: one for psychological growth and one to avoid unpleasantness. The factors that are associated with the

motivational aspect of Herzberg's theory and are directly related to self-actualization are achievement, recognition, work, advancement, and responsibility. The factors associated with the hygiene aspect involving security and social needs are: company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions. In the study, thirty-seven teachers who resigned from teaching responded to two ten-item questionnaires in which two hypotheses were tested: (1) Teachers who resigned from teaching reported job dissatisfaction relative to the motivation aspect of Herzberg's theory; and (2) Teachers who resigned from teaching reported job dissatisfaction relative to the hygiene aspect. The study determined that the role of the school principal in accepting responsibility for meeting these needs was particularly important.

As transformational leaders, school leaders must implement motivational knowledge in order to satisfy some teachers. One of the most notable among achievement motivation theories was that of a group of researchers for whom achievement motivation was supported as a personality characteristic that marked a dispositional drive to improve and perform according to a particular standard of excellence (McClelland, Atkinson, Clark & Lowell, 1953). The researchers labeled this achievement motive as *n Achievement*, or *nAch*. It was believed to form during the infant stage of life through parents' child-rearing practices—mainly, how early parents set expectations and rewarded them with warmth and affection. McClelland and his colleagues hypothesized that these early experiences led to the tendency to experience a heightened emotional arousal when environment cues were inferred as a chance to achieve.

Intellectual stimulation. Intellectual stimulation is behavior three and includes practices that inspire followers to be innovative and pioneering and to defy their own convictions and assessments as well as those of the leader and the organization. Transformational leadership and organizational learning have significant positive relationship influence on organizational innovation (Hsiao & Chang, 2011). Further, this type of leadership behavior allows followers to take risks and explore innovative ways of solving organizational issues. It encourages followers to be problem solvers. An example of this type of leadership would be a principal who promotes teachers' unique individual efforts to instruct slower learners to ensure learning for all students.

Individualized consideration. Individualized consideration is behavior four, indicative of leaders who create a supportive climate by listening to the individual needs of followers. Leaders act as coaches and advice-givers while still lending a hand to the followers in becoming successful. These leaders utilize a delegation approach to assist followers in dealing with professional and personal development challenges. An example of this type of leadership would be a principal who provides relevant feedback and prescribes individualized professional development training in a caring and unique way. For some teachers, the principal may suggest broad ideas; for others, the principal may give directives with a high degree of structure. Another individualized consideration for teachers to experience continual professional development is for school leaders to provide effective leadership in instructional and learning capacities to address the demand for schools to become more effective and efficient learning communities through the use of technology (Afshari, Bakar, Luan, Samah, & Fooi, 2009). Individualized consideration is highlighted more in situational leadership later in the literature.

There are several features of the transformational approach. It is a current model that has received plenty of attention by researchers, has strong intuitive appeal, emphasizes the importance of followers in the leadership process, goes beyond traditional transactional models and broken leadership to include the growth of followers, and places strong emphasis on morals and values. By demonstrating these behaviors, transformational leaders promote changes in followers, groups, organizations, and nations (Bass, 2008; Burns, 1978). To promote change, transformational leaders use charisma based on their idealized influence to attract committed followers and provide inspirational motivation to build a common purpose and sense of community (Bass, 1985). Transformational leaders use their charisma in a socialized (other oriented) or personalized (self-serving) manner.

How does the transformational approach to leadership work? Generally, it describes how leaders can initiate, develop, and carry out significant changes in organizations. While not absolute, the processes performed by transformational leaders usually take the following form:

It is common for transformational leaders to create a vision, one that emerges from the collective interests of various individuals and units in an organization; thereby, creating a climate hospitable to education in order that safety, a cooperative spirit, and other foundations of fruitful interaction prevail (Wallace Foundation, 2012). This vision is a focal point for transformational leadership. It gives the leader and the organization a conceptual map for where the organization is headed; it gives meaning and clarifies the organization's identity. Furthermore, the vision gives followers a sense of identity within the organization as well as a sense of self-efficacy.

Throughout the process, transformational leaders are effective at working with people. They build trust and foster collaboration, encourage others, and celebrate their accomplishments. In the end, transformational leadership results in people cultivating confidence in themselves and their contributions to the greater good. Further, transformational leaders cultivate leadership in others so that teachers and other adults assume their part in realizing the school vision (Wallace Foundation, 2012).

Principals as Situational Leaders

The Situational Leadership Theory was developed by Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard. Building on Reddin's (1967) idea that leader or manager success varies according to style, Hersey and Blanchard (1969) proposed a life-cycle theory of leadership. In it, tasks and relationships must be taken into consideration with the maturity level of the individual or group. The core of this theory is that as a follower matures and develops, effective leaders will adjust and move on to a less directive style. Hersey and Blanchard (1977) found that during the new stages of an employee's tenure, a low relationship and high task orientation is recommended. As employees mature, their needs for their supervisors' socio-emotional support increases, while their needs for structure decreases. Beyond that, an employee's maturity, supervisor's task, and social behaviors become irrelevant to effective employee performance. The premise of situational leadership is that different situations require diverse leadership practices. To be an effective leader, one must be able to adapt leadership approaches to the situation, such as serving as an instructional leader with new versus tenured teachers. The best action of the leader depends upon the prevailing situational factors (Bryan, 2011). When a quick decision is optimal, the effective leader never follows any single style; instead,

the leader tends to change style according to the change in any given situation. In fact, to use diverse styles at different times with the same individual is imperative for a situational leader. The bottom line of Situational Leadership Theory is that there is no one “best” style of leadership.

Within Situational Leadership Theory, there are four leadership approaches and responses in nature (Hersey & Blanchard, 1973). The leader must assess the skill level of the follower and respond appropriately in their style. The leadership practices are categorized into four behavior types, S1, S2, S3, and S4:

1. S1: Telling/Directing – One-way communication in which the what, when, why, where, and how to do the task are defined by the leader for the individual’s roles.
2. S2: Selling/Coaching – Two-way communication in which directing is still going on, with added socio-emotional support built in.
3. S3: Participating – A shared decision-making process of accomplishing the task with less task behavior and high relationship behavior.
4. S4: Delegating – A process of handling the task by passing it on to the individual or group (Northouse, 2009, p. 93-94); the leader is still involved mainly for monitoring.

The first style (S1) is a high directive and low supportive style, also called a directing style. The approach focuses on the communication of goal achievement and rarely infuses supportive behaviors. A leader uses these behavior types interchangeably to be effective and must be flexible in his or her approach to leadership in special

situations (Ladkin, 2010). No one approach is a cure-all in leading various subordinates in multiple situations; even the same subordinate will require diverse behavior types when it comes to different tasks. The second style (S2) is the coaching approach and is a high directive and high supportive method that focuses communication on both goal achievement and the socio-emotional needs of the subordinates by encouraging and welcoming their participation. However, this method of coaching may be an extension of S1, as it still requires the leader to be in charge of making the final decision about whatever and however some things are done. The next style (S3) is a supporting method that demands a high supportive and low directive style. This approach lessens the goal orientation, but utilizes behaviors of support to generate the employee's skill set to carry out tasks. This style requires the leader to praise, listen, summon collaboration, and provide feedback. This approach relinquishes some of the control to the subordinates but remains available to assist in problem-solving. The final style (S4) is a delegating method with a low supportive and low directive style that allows for decreased task directives and reduced support, which in turn boosts employees' confidence. Depending on the task at hand, this method does not require much motivation for subordinates. Style four allows the leader to transfer the power of planning from beginning to end, entrusting to followers that goals will be reached (Northouse, 2011).

The Situational Leadership Model below shows how directive and supportive leadership behaviors unite the four styles. As shown by the directions of the arrows, S1 and S2 are high directive and S3 and S4 are lower, while the supportive behaviors are higher in S2 and S3 and low in S1 and S4. One can use this model to guide their choice of leadership practices to implement (Hersey & Blanchard, 1973). According to the

task(s), a leader can place the subordinates in each quadrant to refer to when pondering the best style to implement. Be mindful that subordinates may regress and progress through the continuum depicted below in Figure 1.

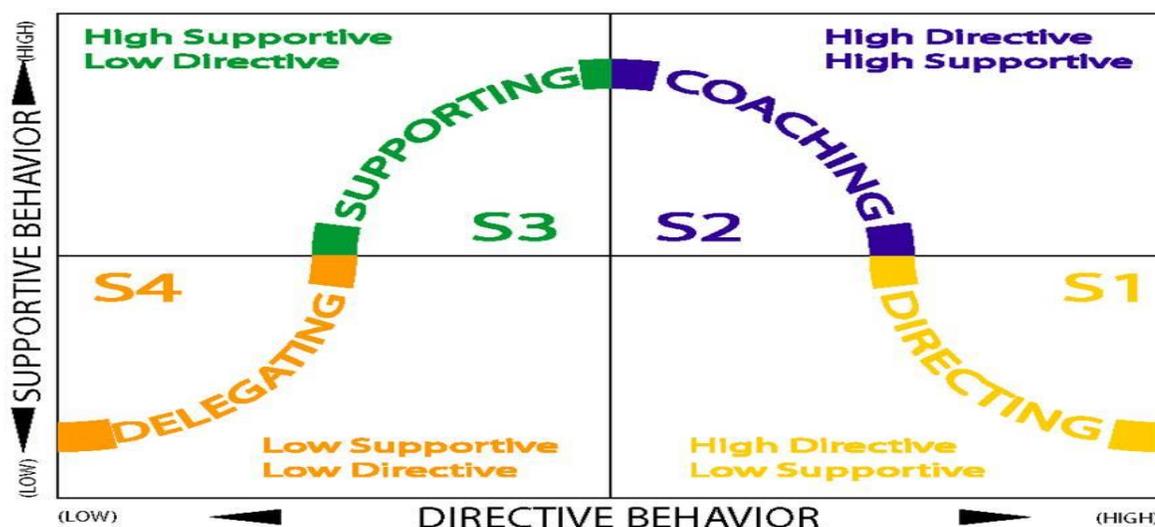


Figure 1. The Situational Leadership Model. The model above shows how instructional leaders use directive and supportive leadership behaviors with developing teachers (Northouse, 2007).

The factors of the followers' maturity levels further attest that situational leadership is a "must" in effective leadership. Hersey and Blanchard state that an "individual" or a "group" is the focus (1982, p. 151). They recognized that the group's maturity level is important when addressing the group as a whole (e.g., a teacher speaking to the entire class of students). Conversely, when employees are addressed individually, the individual's maturity level is most important (e.g., a teacher speaking one-on-one with a student). Leaders must understand their own behavior, the behavior of their subordinates, and the presenting situation (Ladkin, 2010).

Situational leadership is a tool used for assessing leadership responses to the maturity level of teachers. There are four levels of maturity (M1 through M4) identified by the Hersey-Blanchard Situational Leadership Theory (1973):

1. M1 – The subordinates are generally incompetent in their skill set and are not capable or loath to tackle the task at hand.
2. M2 – The subordinates are still rather incompetent for the task; however, they are keen to attempting to get the task completed.
3. M3 – The subordinates are competent and have the experience to do the tasks, but do not have the self-confidence to take on the task.
4. M4 – The subordinates are competent and well experienced as well as having the confidence and ability to complete the task with minimal directions.

Understanding the four levels of maturity provides insight as to how individual teachers will respond to varying tasks according to his or her specific level of task proficiency. For example, the maturity level may vary for a new teacher in comparison to a tenured teacher having to teach with multiple learning styles through a district's curriculum while maintaining and managing a classroom. Most minimally skilled work environments require the ability to do multiple tasks, which the subordinate may not possess the skills to be able to perform (Hersey & Blanchard, 1973). These tasks should be maturity-level specific, while the maturity level of a subordinate may be high in one task and low in another. A subordinate may have the necessary skill set, assurance, and enthusiasm for their job, but have a lower maturity level to complete the task. For example, a new teacher may have an M4 level in technology but an M1 in implementing technology in their lesson planning. Considering the varying responses to task-oriented assignments, the leader must know when to recognize the maturity levels of teachers, especially new and tenured ones, to be an effective leader. This is further rationale that the leader should use situational leadership to be effective.

Situational Leadership Theorists contend that the most effective type of leadership depends on the needs of the group (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Howard, Nance, & Myers, 1986). Specifically, Hersey and Blanchard contend that the leader should be completely task-oriented and have no relationship orientation at the beginning of the group's convening, and move through a series of steps toward non-task orientation or relationship orientation by the time the group dissolves. An effective leader develops the knowledge and competence of his or her staff. Situational leadership style develops subordinates' commitment so that they will move to self-direction rather than dependence. According to Blanchard (1977), the four combinations of competence and commitment make up what we call "development level": D1 – low competence and low commitment; D2 – low competence and high commitment; D3 – high competence and low commitment; and D4 – high competence and high commitment.

To develop subordinates through the succession of levels to becoming self-directed, a leader must be able to motivate appropriately. Motivation to do assigned task(s) is an important part of the principal's leadership role (Blanchard, 1977). Most teachers, veteran or new, may have learned the job, but may have lost some of the initial motivation to do it. The motivational approach is designed so that employees' developmental progress is tracked to determine their dedication and proficiency as teachers. The effective leader must be able to determine the development level of the teacher, which may move back and forth on the developmental continuum, and apply the appropriate leadership style for the task. The leader's style of choice should directly match the development level of the teacher, depending on the task(s).

Situational leadership emphasizes leader flexibility, indicating there is no one way to lead; leaders must diversify their styles for the situation. Situational leaders recognize that individuals respond differently to various tasks and functions even through the duration of the same tasks. Situational leadership affords the instructional leader the ability to treat each teacher differently based on his or her individual skill level and to suggest professional development opportunities to assist teachers in learning new skills and becoming more confident in his or her craft. Basically, individuals should not all be treated the same way; the specific circumstances should always be considered (Hersey & Blanchard, 1977; Howard, Nance, & Myers, 1986). Overall, the situational leadership approach considers the unique needs of the individual, putting the teacher in a better position for completing his or her duties. Ultimately, the effective use of situational leadership can increase morale, retention, and overall school climate. In a given situation, the first task for a leader is to determine that situation's specific nature. The leader should consider the nature and complexity of the task(s) to be performed in conjunction with the subordinates' skill level and desire to complete the task(s). These considerations will help leaders properly identify the appropriate development level at which their subordinates are functioning. For example, excited new employees that may lack job knowledge are identified as DI-level employees. Conversely, veteran workers with proven abilities and commitment to an organization are identified as D4-level employees. Having identified the correct development level, the second task for the leader is to acclimate his or her style to the one prescribed in the SLII model. There is a one-to-one correlation in the development level of subordinates (D1, D2, etc.) and the leader's style (S1, S2, etc.): if followers are at the initial level of development (D1), the

leader must apply a high directive and low supportive leadership style (S1). If followers are further along in the continuum at the succeeding development level (D2), the leader should apply a coaching style (S2). There is a precise style that the leader should adopt for each level of development.

As subordinates move back and forth along the development continuum, it is of the essence for leaders to be flexible in their leadership approaches. Followers may move from one development level to another fairly swiftly over a short period (e.g., a day or a week), or move about at a snail's pace on tasks over much longer time frames (e.g., a month). This process of tracking development levels can guide the principal to develop his or her situational leadership skills, which affords the principal in the role of organizational manager the necessary knowledge in attracting, developing, and retaining teachers (Blanchard, 1977).

The situational leadership approach has come to be considered one of the most effective leadership models (Northouse, 2011). This leadership style has stood the test of time year after year; Hersey and Blanchard (1993) reported that it has been a factor in training programs of more than 400 Fortune 500 companies. Corporations have perceived it as a reliable model for preparing employees to become effective leaders. Situational leadership is also easy to understand and implement (Northouse, 2009), applicable to a range of situations and settings as determined by the leader. While some leadership approaches provide complex and sophisticated ways to access your own leadership behavior (e.g., the decision-making approach in Vroom & Yetton, 1973), situational leadership provides a straightforward approach that can be apprehended and acquired quickly. Due to its simplicity, it is easy to apply in multiple settings, including

but not limited to schools, private business, and family. Situational leadership also has prescriptive value (Northouse, 2009). While many leadership practices are more descriptive, the situational provides more guidelines to use, telling a leader what to do in certain situations. For example, if a teacher is new, situational leadership suggests a more directive approach to this low-competent subordinate; on the other hand, for tenured teachers, the situational leadership style is more supportive. Another strength of situational leadership is its importance on leader flexibility (Graeff, 1983; Yukl, 1989), prescribing that a leader first get to know the subordinate's needs and then figure out the appropriate leadership style to apply. Finally, situational leadership reminds us to treat each subordinate differently based on the task at hand and to seek opportunities to help subordinates learn new skills and become more confident in their work (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Yukl, 1998). Overall, the situational leadership style considers the unique needs of the individual, which should position the subordinate to complete assigned tasks successfully.

According to Northouse (2009), there are some limitations to situational leadership. There are five criticisms of its applicability in the educational setting: (1) the deficiency of a solid frame of study on situational leadership advances questions about the theoretical basis of the approach (Fernandez & Vecchio, 1997; Graeff, 1997; Vecchio & Boatwright, 2002); (2) it is not made clear by the authors how commitment is combined with competence to form four distinct levels of development (Graeff, 1997; Yukl 1989); (3) the conventionalization is unclear (Graeff, 1997); (4) there has been no support in finding prescriptions suggested in the Situational Leadership model—in a study using university employees, Fernandez and Vecchio (1997) found similar results;

and (5) it fails to account for demographics—a study conducted by Vecchio and Boatwright (2002) showed that level of education and job experience were inversely related to directive leadership and not related to supportive leadership.

Principals as Organizational Managers

Strong instructional leadership is essential for a school to be successful. However, instructional leadership and other instructional and curricula approaches are less likely to increase student learning without organizational management skills. Increased student learning and teacher development come more from organizational management for instructional enhancement than it does from observations of classrooms by the principal or direct coaching of teachers. School leaders impact classroom teaching, and therefore student learning, by staffing schools with effective teachers and supporting those teachers with effective teaching and learning conditions, rather than focusing on their own influences towards classroom instruction.

Organizational Management is used in order to reduce chaos in organizations. The primary functions of management, as first identified by Fayol (1916), were planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling. These functions are still representative of management today. The dominant role of management is to arrange for order and uniformity to organizations, whereas the main purpose of leadership is to produce improvement through change. Management is about seeking order and stability; leadership is about seeking adaptive and constructive change. For example, in an organization that has strong management without leadership, the leadership's outcomes can be stifling and bureaucratic. On the other hand, if an organization has strong leadership without management, the leadership's results can be meaningless or

misdirected change for change's sake. To be effective, organizations need to nurture both skilled management and practiced leadership.

To *manage* means to complete activities and direct routines, whereas to *lead* means to create visions for change and influence others. When managers are involved in influencing a group to meet its goals, they are involved in leadership. When leaders are involved in planning, organizing, staffing, and controlling, they are involved in management (Beteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb 2009). Both processes involve influencing a group of individuals toward goal attainment.

What does it mean to be a strong organizational manager? Effective school managers develop the organizational constructions for quality instruction more than they spend observing and coaching teachers. Strong organizational managers are effective in hiring and supporting staff, allocating budgets and resources, and maintaining positive learning and working conditions. Schools that indicate academic improvement tend to have effective organizational managers.

Managing personnel is one of the most important responsibilities of strong organizational managers. Effective organizational school managers strategically hire, support, and retain high quality teachers while developing or removing less effective low quality ones. School leaders' organizational management practices—particularly in the area of personnel management appear to play a critical role in improving schools (Beteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb 2009). Balu, Horng, and Loeb (2010) found that these personnel management practices are particularly successful when applied strategically, when efforts to recruit, support, retain, develop, and remove teachers are clearly targeted.

With this in mind, principals as organizational managers will need to focus on being managers of human capital. According to Balu, Horng, and Loeb (2010), Human Capital Management is the process of recruiting, developing, managing, and retaining employees to maximize organizational performance to reach organizational goals. The recognition of human capital has gained attention from educational practitioners. Federally regulated incentives, such as the Bush Administration's Teacher Incentive Fund Program and the Obama Administration's Race to the Top Initiative, have resulted in or led to better teacher evaluations and compensation practices that recruit, develop, and retain quality teachers in challenging schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). "Human capital" initiatives to improve instructional quality have grown tremendously as a result of the incentives.

Generally, human capital management in U.S.' PK-12 public education is recognized as multi-level, involving state, district, and campus components. It is important to study the campus level of human capital management, in which many of the basic functions are carried out (Milanowski & Kimball, 2010). On the campus level, principals as instructional leaders also fulfilling the role of human capital managers are delivering or managing human resources programs. They are the extension of the district's human capital management that teachers are connected to after their initial staffing and selection. In many districts today the instructional leader recruits, hires, orientates, and acclimates new staff, guides individual teachers' planning for professional development through appraisals, and makes decisions on campus-level professional development activities. The importance of school leaders' influence on teacher retention and attrition has long been recognized; however, recently more emphasis has been placed

on the principal as the instructional leader in this area. Instructional leaders effective in human capital management play a major role in teachers' decisions to stay with a school or school district. While they have little to no direct influence on teacher compensation by principals, they may have a more subtle but no less influential impact on teacher motivation through the school's vision, working environment, climate and culture (Leithwood et al., 2004; Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005). It seems likely that the effectiveness of school leaders in carrying out their function as human capital managers will influence the effectiveness of a school's faculty (Milanowski & Kimball, 2010).

Balu, Horng, and Loeb (2010) stated that human capital management deals with how the organization treats employees. Gone are the days of treating your employees as mere numbers. Principals as instructional leaders ensure that every teacher develops in a reasonable time to perform to the utmost of his or her capabilities. To accomplish such timely development, instructional leaders as human capital managers must diversify leadership practices. They must be skilled at recognizing and assessing good teaching practices and providing relevant feedback, at effective recruiting and selecting, at coaching and inspiring subordinates for improvement, at utilizing different leadership practices to transform and develop subordinates, at seeking and finding staff interests and concerns, at transforming and individualizing approaches to decision making to finalize a collaborative one, and at analyzing and taking appropriate action to improve school climate and culture.

In PK-12 public education, the role of the human capital manager is more essential today than ever before. With over 80% of most school districts' budgets allocated to human resources (such as staffing and benefits), the human capital manager's

role should be of the utmost of importance to the instructional leader. Consequently, the staff guides and influences the daily achievement of students, who are the primary reasons for the principal's existence. The teacher is the most influential human capital schools can supply to the students; teacher quality is the best resource a student has to increase their academic achievement. Therefore, effective school administrators should focus more on attracting, retaining, and developing a quality staff of teachers.

Increasingly, instructional leaders are becoming more aware of the importance of their roles as school leaders in the attrition of teachers. Beteille, Kalogrides, & Loeb (2009) stated that recruitment, hiring, orientation, acclimation, evaluation, and relevant feedback on performance are keys to the effectiveness of the instructional leader as the human capital manager.

Without effective human capital management, it will be difficult for an instructional leader to be successful. The tasks of evaluating, providing meaningful feedback, and coaching teachers on data analysis and classroom management are all the responsibilities of both the human capital manager and instructional leader. Principals as effective instructional leaders act as human capital managers by recruiting, retaining, developing, and motivating staff to ensure the organization performs. The effectiveness of the principal as the instructional leader in mastering human capital management responsibilities can influence teacher retention (Wallace Foundation, 2012). Beyond the interview, principals as instructional leaders fulfilling the role of human capital managers help the applicant make the appropriate employment decision by providing realistic information about job requirements, working conditions, performance expectations, and organizational culture. Thus, the information helps applicants assess their "fit" with the

job and the organization. Additionally, proper human capital management can reduce turnover of disappointed new hires down the road. If a principal as instructional leader facilitates his or her role as human capital manager in recruiting, developing, and retaining talented people, prospective and existing teachers should better understand why he or she would want to join and stay with the organization (Balu, Horng, & Loeb, 2010). The principal as organizational manager focusing on human capital management can positively influence retention and ensure improvement of staff quality.

More than likely, teachers led by effective organizational managers refer to school leaders and other teachers on their campus for resources or advice on how to improve their teaching practices. Novice teachers turn to this form of resource for instructional improvement. On the contrary, principals who are poor organizational managers are more likely to have teachers who look outside the school for support (Horng, Loeb, & Mindich, 2010).

In the Organizational Management Approach, strong organizational managers can support classroom instruction without providing that support directly to individual teachers. Instead, these managers develop a working environment in which teachers have access to the support they need (Horng, Loeb, & Mindich, 2010). For example, creating leadership positions for good teachers such as department chairs, team leaders, or content area leaders can be used to attract and retain valuable teachers. Effective organizational managers erect strategies using professional development as a way to reward and retain valuable and effective teachers. Another example would be to set aside monies for the most effective teachers to use for professional development opportunities that may allow

them to accomplish other teaching goals and career advancement. This strategy also promotes teacher morale and job satisfaction by considering individual motivation.

The use of organizational management strategies for professional development can assist with low-performing teachers, helping to develop or get rid of ineffective ones. For example, by using campus-level professional development as coaching, and conversely, as punishment, can influence teacher retention. As coaching, professional opportunities to address specific teacher needs for improvement can be established routinely for teacher successes (Balu, Horng, & Loeb, 2010). As punishment, professional development routines and mandates can be used to encourage teachers to leave. Documenting from the first week of school all of the face-to-face meetings, requiring weekly classroom observations, and assigning reading for discussion throughout the year can influence ineffective teachers' departures.

Another organizational management strategy is to place teachers in their areas of strength to ensure teacher success and improved student achievement. Through observations, data analysis, and teachers' preferences, to name a few, principals can reassign teachers to different grade levels or content areas, allowing teachers to teach in content areas of expertise and increase teacher efficacy, which has been associated with student achievement gains (Horng, Loeb, & Mindich, 2010).

When strategic organizational management is effectively used, managers can better understand why teachers are not performing. There will be some cases in which teachers perform ineffectively due to limited knowledge, skills, training, collegial support, financial support, confusion over organizational goals, and tasks that consume hours of the day (e.g., paperwork), while others will perform poorly due to their simple

unwillingness. On the other hand, organizational managers can create positive cultures and working conditions that provide constructive support such as inclusive and exciting teaching, enthusiastic teachers and engaged students, and teacher leaders for career advancement (Busher, 2006).

Conclusion

The retention rate for beginning and veteran teachers is a national problem. With the accountability pressures of NCLB, principals must be able to redefine school leadership and transform supports through the use of various leadership approaches to achieve school-wide improvement (Horng, Loeb, & Mindich, 2010). In the era of instructional accountability, it is imperative for principals to create a working environment that supports positive instructional practices. Skilled principals as instructional leaders have an opportunity to offer the support and understanding necessary to cultivate an environment that contributes to the retention of highly qualified teachers.

As school leaders transform from roles that are primarily managerial to ones of instructional leadership, the use of leadership practices that establish a supportive culture can positively promote teacher retention. The retention of our highly qualified and effective teachers should be an ever-increasing priority for educators; it is the future of public education. The high attrition rates of our teachers leave the students with the most needs without the most prepared teachers. “Until we reverse this trend, it will be virtually impossible for education to make the kind of progress that policymakers, parents, and the general public are demanding” (Berry & Hirsch, 2005, p. 2).

Chapter III

Methodology

This chapter outlines the procedures for identifying both teachers' and principals' perspectives on school leadership and the factors of school culture that promote teacher retention. This chapter includes a description of this study's design, setting, subjects, procedures, instruments, analysis, and limitations.

Description of Research Design

This quantitative and qualitative mixed-method research study collected data from principal questionnaires and interviews, a teacher survey, and a teacher focus group. Qualitative research produces observations and descriptions of behaviors that involve participants' perceptions. Research methods in this category included interviews, focus groups, reviews, and observations. Qualitative research allows for the discovery of qualities, themes, and words to assist the researcher in drawing conclusions. A quantitative approach measures information in numbers and statistics. A quantitative approach can tell you when, where, and how often things happen without considering participants' perceptions.

The purpose of this data collection explored the reasons teachers stay or leave their campus or the educational profession altogether. More specifically, its purpose was to reveal school leadership practices that promote teacher retention. A questionnaire including five open-ended questions were directed to the three participating principals. The researcher conducted an open-ended interview with each principal with the same wording and question order, which was established prior to the interviews. The interviews permitted the three principals the opportunity to identify practices and to

confer educational changes in leadership practices (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). The principal questionnaire and interviews allowed the principals to share their perceptions on best practices concerning teacher retention. The three principals gave specific examples of how they demonstrate the key components of leadership on their campus. This method of uniform interviewing will limit the researcher's effects and partiality (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

In an online survey, teachers from the three middle-school campuses answered a series of questions related to their background, experiences, years of teaching, preferred school leadership practices, and what makes them remain at their campus and what will make them leave.

The teacher focus group consisted of eight teachers. These teachers discussed questions about preparation, work conditions, leadership practices, mentorship, and salary in order to provide the researcher additional knowledge of teacher retention and school leadership. Data from all three sources were analyzed for consistent factors, themes and trends in teacher retention. Common factors, themes, and trends were identified based on an analysis of teachers' perceptions of school leadership behaviors and practices of school culture that played a role in whether they stay or leave a campus. Once the findings were revealed, this study provided implications for school leaders that might assist them in implementing school leadership practices that best promote teacher retention. The participants' responses prioritized key themes in perceptions of school leadership (see Appendix K).

Research Questions

1. What do teachers perceive as the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?
2. What are the most important factors of school culture from teachers' perspectives that can promote teacher retention?
3. What do principals perceive as the reasons why teachers stay or leave their campuses or teaching profession altogether?
4. What do principals perceive as the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?

Setting

For the purpose of this study, three middle-school principals were interviewed and their identities documented with predetermined codes to maintain confidentiality of the results, e.g., P1, P2, and P3. The teachers were identified by T1 being associated with P1, T2 with P2, and T3 with P3. T1, T2, and T3 correspond to the three different campuses the teachers who took the survey came from. These three different campuses are the same ones with the principals who were interviewed.

All of the principals and teachers are associated with a large school district located in the Gulf Coast region of Texas, which encompasses 170 square miles within a suburban area and is one of the ten largest public school districts in the state of Texas. The school district has a diverse population of students comprised of 74 campuses (45 elementary, 14 middle, and 15 high schools), which includes over 70,000 students. The representative demographics of the district are 26.63% Hispanic, 19.08% Caucasian, 29.27% African American, 22.46 Asian, and 0.45% Native American. Three hundred

thousand nine hundred and seventy-four teachers serve this diverse population of students, each with an average experience of 11.7 years. The data in Figure 3 below provide a summary of ranges of teacher ethnicities in the district for the 2013-2014 school year.

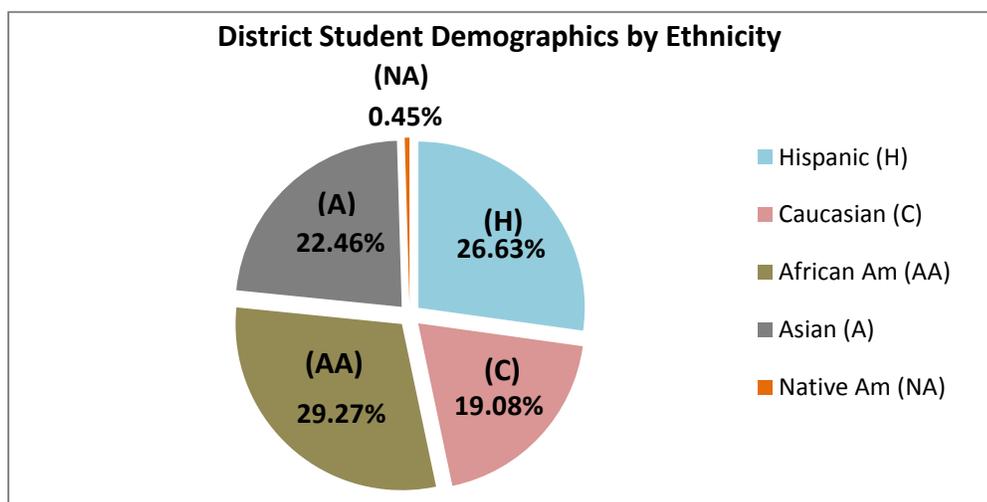


Figure 2. District Student Demographics by Ethnicity for the 2013-2014 School Year.

The student demographics of the three participating schools in the study for the 2013-2014 school year are depicted below in Figure 3:

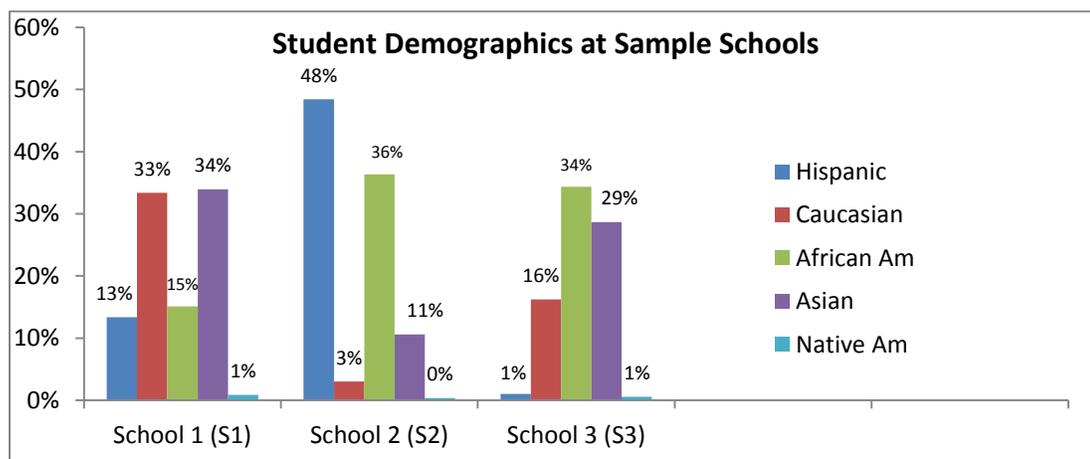


Figure 3. Student Demographics of Three Participating Schools in Study for the 2013-2014 School Year.

The three participating schools in the study listed above were identified as S1, S2, and S3, in which student demographics are aligned accordingly: School 1 (S1): 13.34% Hispanic, 33.36% Caucasian, 15.11% African American, 33.92% Asian, and 0.88% Native American; School 2 (S2): 48.40% Hispanic, 3.03% Caucasian, 36.36% African American, 10.57% Asian, and 0.33% Native American; and School 3 (S3): 1.02% Hispanic, 16.23% Caucasian, 34.36% African American, 28.66% Asian, and 0.55% Native American. The total number of students represented at each school is as follows: S1: 1,172 students; S2: 1,021 students; and S3: 1,182 students, respectively.

Subjects

The participants consisted of a sample population of beginner and veteran certified teachers and their principals from three middle schools in a suburban Region IV school district.

Other demographics of participants represented in sample schools S1, S2, and S3 are:

Total teaching staff.

S1: 61 certified teachers or 76% of staff;

S2: 51 certified teachers or 69% of staff; and

S3: 64 certified teachers or 75.4% of staff.

Total minority staff.

S1: 21 staff members or 30% of staff;

S2: 29 staff or 40% of staff; and

S3: 45 staff or 53% of staff.

Economically disadvantaged students.

S1: 167 students or 14% of students;

S2: 254 students or 25% of students; and

S3: 847 students or 72% of students.

Teachers by ethnicity.

S1: 6 teachers or 10% of teachers are African American, 3 teachers or 5% of teachers are Hispanic, 49 teachers or 81% of teachers are Caucasian, 2 teachers or 3% of teachers are Asian;

S2: 14 teachers or 28% of teachers are African American, 5 teachers or 10% of teachers are Hispanic, 25 teachers or 49% of teachers are Caucasian, 3 teachers or 6% of teachers are Asian; and

S3: 21 teachers or 32% of teachers are African American, 6 teachers or 9% of teachers are Hispanic, 33 teachers or 52% of teachers are Caucasian, 3 teachers or 5% of teachers are Asian. The data in Figure 4 provide a summary of these ranges.

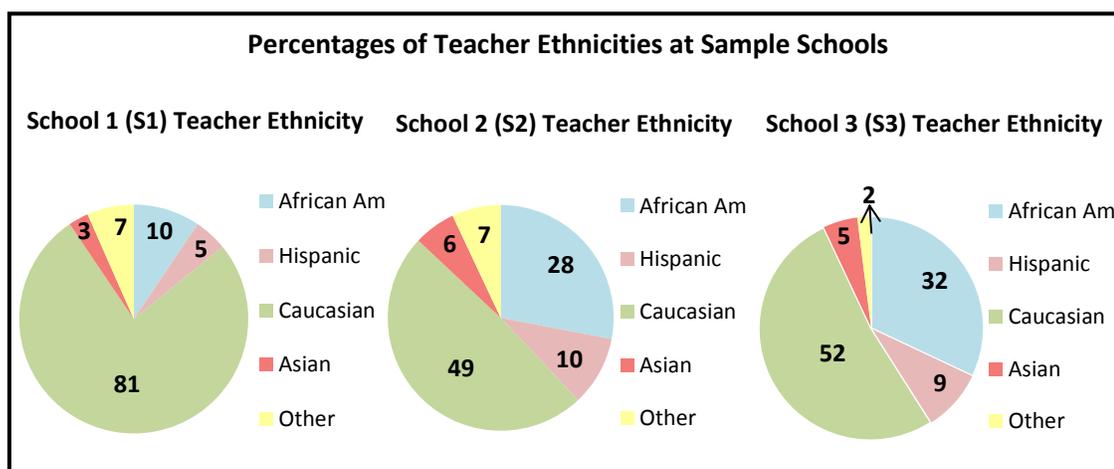


Figure 4. Percentages of Teacher Ethnicities Represented at Sample Schools.

Teachers by sex.

S1: 21 teachers or 34% of teachers are males and 40 teachers or 66% of teachers are females;

S2: 18 teachers or 36% of teachers are males and 32 teachers or 65% of teachers are females; and

S3: 16 teachers or 25% of teachers are males and 48 teachers or 75% of teachers are females.

Teachers by years of experience.

S1: 2 teachers or 3% of teachers are beginning teachers, 8 teachers or 14% of teachers have 1-5 years of experience, 19 teachers or 31% of teachers have 6-10 years of experience, 15.1 teachers or 25% of teachers have 11-20 years of experience, and 17 teachers or 28% of teachers have over 20 years of experience;

S2: There are no beginner teachers, 16 teachers or 31% of teachers have 1-5 years of experience, 14 teachers or 7% of teachers have 6-10 years of experience, 17 teachers or 34% of teachers have 11-20 years of experience, and 4 teachers or 8% of teachers have over 20 years of experience; and

S3: 6 teachers or 9% of teacher are beginning teachers, 10 teachers or 16% of teachers have 1-5 years of experience, 17 teachers or 27% of teachers have 6-10 years of experience, 19 teachers or 29% of teachers have 11-20 years of experience, and 12 teachers or 19% of teachers have over 20 years of experience.

Average years of experience of teachers.

S1: 13.6 years;

S2: 10.6 years; and

S3: 12.3 years.

The data collected on teachers' years of teaching experience is represented by S1, S2, and S3 as summarized in Figure 5.

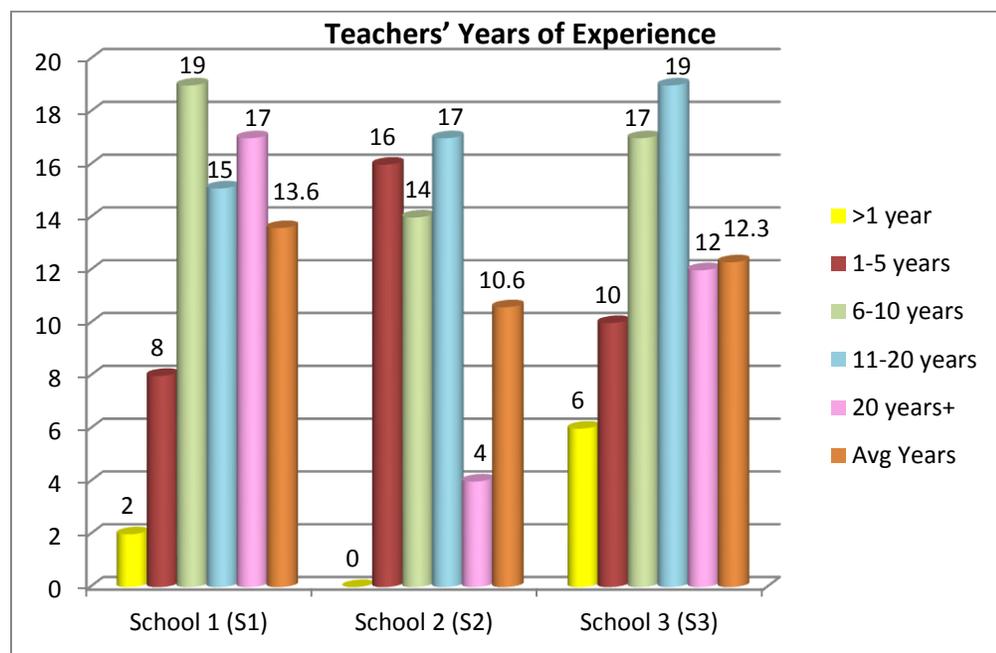


Figure 5. Teachers' Years of Experience Represented at Sample Schools.

The sample included responses from teachers who were invited to participate in the study. The teachers that were sampled worked in an urban and suburban school district located in Region IV of Texas during the 2012-2013 school year. The researcher of this study contacted over 150 teachers by email and invited them to fill out the online survey.

Procedures

The University of Houston, Committee of the Protection of Human Subjects, granted approval of this study. To remove all identifiers that might indicate individual schools or districts, the interviewed principals' schools, districts, and names were replaced by predetermined codes to maintain an anonymous procedure for reviewing the

data. Three middle-school campus principals and their teaching staff, along with a volunteer teacher focus group, participated in this research study. Each participant signed a “Consent to Participate in Research” form before the interview, online survey, and a teacher focus group was conducted.

Interviews

The principals received the “University of Houston Consent to Participate in Research” form that fully explains the study’s purpose, procedures, confidentiality, risks and discomforts, benefits, alternatives, publication statement and the agreement for the use of audio recordings. This form also included the “Subject Rights,” and all the principals initialed each page and signed the consent form before the interviews were conducted. The principals received the five predetermined questions prior to the interview to help them prepare responses with accurate reflections. The three principals’ responses were audio recorded and then transcribed. The principals were allowed to respond to the questions in writing. All of the principals received a copy of their interview transcript and given an opportunity to make revisions. A copy of the interview questions is found in Appendix H. The single interviews took place at the principal’s campus at a date and time that was convenient for their schedule. Each principal was asked five open- ended questions relating to their leadership practices.

OPENED-ENDED RESPONSE QUESTIONS

Instructions: Please respond to each question based upon your experiences as campus principal. Responses should honestly reflect your feelings.

1. Describe any training you have been given regarding teacher retention. How do you plan to address the issue of retaining “good” or “highly qualified” teachers?

2. What are the two most important things you do to promote teacher retention on your campus?
3. What is your perception of why teachers do not return to a school campus?
4. What is your perception of why teachers do not return to your school campus?
5. What is your perception of what teachers want principals to do that promotes teacher retention?

Instruments

A confidential online survey, a principal questionnaire and interviews, and a teacher focus group were the instruments used to collect data. The principal interview included five questions relating to effective leadership practices. The survey was created online at the Survey Monkey website. The researcher used a question bank for this study based on teaching-environment factors that influence leavers outlined in the 2003 report *Making the Case for Teacher Retention*. The focus group consisted of a background questionnaire and five questions related to four factors Darling-Hammond (2003) listed as influencing leavers (early mentoring, preparation, working conditions, salary). The participants had unlimited time to complete the online teacher survey, answering each of the questions.

Analyses

A review of selected literature revealed the most frequently cited reasons for teacher retention were workplace conditions that include administrative support, beginning teacher support, compensation, shared decision-making, professional development, career opportunities, support for working with students, adequate and safe facilities, curricular support for high standards, school culture, and teacher workload.

With this in mind, this research study collected data to analyze factors that impacted teacher retention from the perspectives of teachers and principals. Data was collected through transcripts from principal interviews, a principal questionnaire, an online teacher survey, and a teacher focus group and analyzed in three phases. First, each question was analyzed by transcribing all participants' statements. The second phase analyzed the online teacher survey and principal questionnaire from all three sample campuses by identifying common themes. Finally, the results were compiled into an overview relating teacher perspectives on principal leadership practices that influence teacher retention.

The results from the online teacher surveys established key components of principals' practices and behaviors that promote teacher retention. The outcome provided recommendations that will provide knowledge to school leadership to why teachers leave or stay at their campus.

Limitations

The findings of this study were limited to one school district located in the Southeast Region of the U.S. Another limitation was that this study was only conducted in one school district in which only three of its middle schools' teachers and principals participated in the research. While interview data can offer valuable information, they are essentially qualitative and can be manipulated by countless factors, including interviewer bias and interviewee truthfulness. It can be difficult to determine the real reasons why teachers stay or leave different schools. Further limitations of this study were that the researcher was unable to manage the extent to which the principals interpreted the questions, and that the principals' and teachers' responses were limited by the survey's format of pre-selected answer choices.

Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

This chapter includes a review of the data analysis, findings for each research question, and a summary of the research findings. The purpose of this data collection explored reasons why teachers stay or leave their campus or the educational profession altogether. More specifically, the purpose revealed school leadership practices that best promote teacher retention as well as what factors were most important in school culture in promoting retention from teachers' and principals' perspectives. This chapter presented the results of a quantitative and qualitative mixed-method research study that were collected using a confidential online teacher survey, a principal questionnaire and interviews, and a teacher focus group that identified factors teachers and principals perceived as significant in their decisions to stay or leave their campus. The confidential online survey was used to provide anonymity as respondents who might be challenging to recruit in person may feel safer disclosing their honest opinions from the privacy and security of their secluded settings (Van Selm & Jankowski, 2006).

The confidential online survey of teachers from the three middle-school campuses consisted of two sections. Section One was a demographic questionnaire. Section Two included multiple-choice questions that required a Likert scale response of Strongly Agree, Somewhat Agree, Neutral, Somewhat Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The results of the surveys were analyzed and organized into two major categories—School Culture and School Leadership—to address the four research questions. The teacher survey was created at the Survey Monkey website. The researcher used a question bank

for this study based on a 2003 report, *Making the Case for Teacher Retention*, which detailed that teachers tend to leave environments that lack essential professional supports, induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers, leadership support, respect and value-oriented organizational structures and workforce conditions. Linda Darling-Hammond (2003) listed four major factors for teachers' decisions to leave the profession: mentoring support for beginning teachers early years, preparation, working conditions, and salary. The Likert-style survey was developed from an instrument that was created by David Hinkel. The survey was a validated instrument and permission was obtained to use or modify the instrument in the study. The confidential online teacher survey instrument contained a brief description of the researcher, project title, purpose, estimated time to complete survey, benefits of the research, and a link lead to the survey, assurances, and contact information. Within the survey, questions were written to solicit information necessary to identify those factors teachers perceived as important contributors to teacher retention. Teachers were directed to the website to complete the survey (see Appendix K).

A principal questionnaire was completed by three principals that included questions about the principal's educational history, experience, preferred leadership practices, along with five open-ended interview questions (see Appendix G and Appendix H). The researcher conducted an open-ended interview with the same wording and order of questions, which were established prior to the interview. The interview permitted the three principals the opportunity to identify practices and to discuss educational changes in leadership practices (Marshall & Rossman, 1989). Both the interview and questionnaire allowed principals to share their perceptions on best practices concerning teacher

retention. The three principals gave specific examples of how they demonstrate key components of leadership on his or her campus. This method reduces the researcher's interference and partiality (Johnson & Christensen, 2008).

To gain greater insight into school leadership and teacher retention, the researcher conducted a teacher focus group consisting of eight teachers. Teachers responded to a questionnaire consisting of eight questions related to Darling-Hammond's four factors of teacher retention. In the absence of the researcher, the participants completed the teacher focus group's questionnaire to discuss preparation, work conditions, leadership practices, and mentorship in order to provide additional knowledge of teacher retention and school leadership. The focus group session and the principal interviews were tape-recorded in which these recordings were transcribed. The transcriptions were printed and vigilantly examined by the researcher. Key words and phrases to formulate themes regarding school culture and school leadership were imbedded in the questioning (see Appendix L).

An examination of the data from these three sources was conducted for consistent factors, themes, and words pertaining to teacher retention. Common factors, themes, and words were identified based on the researcher's analysis of teachers' and principals' perceptions of school leadership practices and factors related to school culture that played a role in whether they stayed or left a campus or the teaching profession altogether. This study provides implications for school leaders that may assist them in implementing school leadership practices that best promote teacher retention.

Research Questions

The intent of this quantitative and qualitative mixed-method research study identified factors in school culture and leadership practices from teachers' and principals'

perspectives that encouraged them to stay at their schools as well as implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators in recognizing and implementing practices related to teacher retention. This study highlighted leadership practices and behaviors that create distinctive school-working cultures. The four research questions were as follows:

1. What do teachers perceive as the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?
2. What are the most important factors of school culture from teachers' perspectives that can promote teacher retention?
3. What do principals perceive as the reasons why teachers stay or leave their campuses or teaching profession altogether?
4. What do principals perceive as the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?

Research question one examined whether or not leadership practices contributed to the teacher's decision to stay or leave a school. Research question two examined the school culture and pertinent factors in school culture from teachers' perspectives.

Research question three examined three principals' perceptions to why teachers may have stayed or left their campus and teaching profession altogether. Research question four examined principal perceptions of school leadership practices that best promoted retention.

Teacher Surveys and Teacher Focus Group

The analysis of the data from the three different middle-school campuses teachers' surveys indicated that mentoring was selected as the most important factor for

teachers in the study remaining in the teaching profession, while leadership was the second most important factor. The data in Figure 6, Figure 7, and Figure 8 below provide a summary of findings from the data analysis of the teachers' surveys.

The results of this study, according to the online teacher survey and teacher focus group analyses, showed that teachers perceived leadership practices and school culture as major factors in their staying at their respective schools. Teachers' responses revealed that their preferred practices of leadership consist of laid back, not micromanager behaviors, practices which consisted of nurturing leadership support that included being approachable, family-oriented, and visible, partners in decision-making, and a positive leader-teacher relationship builder. Another identified trait in preferred leadership practices by teachers was trustworthiness between teachers and school leaders as a strong teacher retention component.

School Leadership. Research question one examined whether or not the leadership practices of school leaders promoted teacher retention in accordance with Berry's finding that certain teachers desired a principal's style of leadership (Berry, 2008). According to participants who responded to the online teacher survey, the majority of the teachers (T1) felt that when something is NOT working, the principal and teachers work together to solve the problem. 21.43% strongly agreed with this assessment, 50% somewhat agreed, and 7.14% were neutral, while 17.86% somewhat disagreed and 3.57% strongly disagreed. Of the teachers (T2), 22.22% strongly agreed, 47.22% somewhat agreed, and 19.44% were neutral. Nevertheless, 8.33% somewhat disagreed and 2.78% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 23.91% strongly

agreed, 32.61% somewhat agreed, and 15.22% were neutral. However, 19.57% somewhat disagreed and 8.70% strongly disagreed.

The majority of teachers (T1) felt that they are empowered to make instructional decisions rather than waiting for the principal to tell them what to do. They reported that 50% strongly agreed with this assessment, 32.14% somewhat agreed, and 7.14% were neutral, while 10.71% somewhat disagreed. Overwhelmingly, teachers (T2) showed that 44.44% strongly agreed, and 55.56% somewhat agreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 32.61% strongly agreed, 50% somewhat agreed, and 4.35% were neutral. Yet 10.87% somewhat disagreed and 2.17% strongly disagreed.

Most of the teachers (T1) felt that their principal goes out of his/her way to help teachers. They reported 39.29% strongly agreed with this assessment, 32.14% somewhat agreed, and 10.71% were neutral, while 3.57% somewhat disagreed and 14.29% strongly disagreed. The teachers (T2) responded that 63.89% strongly agreed, 22.22% somewhat agreed, and 5.56% were neutral, while 5.5% somewhat disagreed and 2.78% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 34.78% strongly agreed, 39.13% somewhat agreed, 17.39% were neutral, and 8.70% somewhat disagreed.

Teachers (T1) felt that their principal used constructive criticism. They showed 25% strongly agreed with this assessment, 32.14% somewhat agreed, and 28.57% were neutral, while 3.57% somewhat disagreed and 10.71% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) showed that 52.78% strongly agreed, 27.78% somewhat agreed, and 13.89% were neutral, while 2.78% somewhat disagreed and 2.78% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) showed that 30.43% strongly agreed, 36.96% somewhat agreed, and 23.91% were neutral, while 6.52% somewhat disagreed and 2.17% strongly disagreed.

The majority of teachers (T1) felt that their principal listens and accepts their suggestions. Of those teachers, 21.43% strongly agreed with this assessment, 57.14% somewhat agreed, and 3.57% were neutral. However, 7.14% somewhat disagreed and 10.71% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) reported 63.89% strongly agreed, 25% somewhat agreed, and 5.56% were neutral, while 2.78% somewhat disagreed and 2.78% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) responded that 30.43% strongly agreed, 36.96% somewhat agreed, and 15.22% were neutral, while 17.39% somewhat disagreed.

According to the teachers who responded, they felt that their principal delegates leadership responsibilities to them. Teachers (T1) responded that 35.71% strongly agreed with this assessment, 35.71% somewhat agreed, and 7.14% were neutral, while 10.71% somewhat disagreed and 10.71% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) responded that 50% strongly agreed, 33.33% somewhat agreed, and 13.89% were neutral, while 2.78% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) responded that 26.09% strongly agreed, 50% somewhat agreed, and 15.22% were neutral, while 6.52% somewhat disagreed and 2.17% strongly disagreed.

According to the survey results, teachers (T1) felt that their principal treated them and other staff members as equals. 35.71% strongly agreed with this assessment, 32.14% somewhat agreed, 14.29% were neutral, 7.14% somewhat disagreed and 10.71% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) reported that 69.44% strongly agreed, 19.44% somewhat agreed, 5.56% were neutral and 5.56% somewhat disagreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 39.13% strongly agreed, 26.09% somewhat agreed, 8.70% were neutral and 26.09% somewhat disagreed.

The participants in the study felt that their job gives them the opportunity to learn. Teachers (T1) reported that 35.71% strongly agreed with this assessment, 53.57% somewhat agreed, 7.14% were neutral and 3.57% somewhat disagreed. Teachers (T2) reported that 38.89% strongly agreed, 47.22% somewhat agreed, and 5.56% were neutral, while 5.56% somewhat disagreed and 2.78% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) responded that 50% strongly agreed, 39.13% somewhat agreed, 6.52% were neutral and 4.35% somewhat disagreed.

Of the responding participants, the majority of the teachers felt that the work expected of them is reasonable. Teachers (T1) reported that 25% strongly agreed with this assessment, 28.57% somewhat agreed, 35.71% somewhat disagreed and 10.71% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) reported that 25% strongly agreed, 38.89% somewhat agreed, 5.56% were neutral, 16.67% somewhat disagreed and 13.89% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 19.57% strongly agreed, 41.30% somewhat agreed, 4.35% were neutral, 21.74% somewhat disagreed and 13.04% strongly disagreed.

When asked if their principal/supervisor actively listens to their suggestions, most of the teachers from the three participating schools agreed. Of the teachers (T1), 25% strongly agreed with this assessment, 50% somewhat agreed, and 14.29% were neutral, while only 3.57% somewhat disagreed and 7.14% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) had similar findings, reporting that 52.78% strongly agreed, 27.78% somewhat agreed, and 8.33% were neutral, while 8.33% somewhat disagreed and 2.78% strongly agreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 34.78% strongly agreed, 34.78% somewhat agreed, 23.91% were neutral, and 6.52% somewhat disagreed.

The survey showed that 35.71% of teachers (T1) strongly agreed that their supervisor promotes an atmosphere of teamwork, while 35.71% somewhat agreed. Although 10.71% were neutral, 3.57% somewhat agreed and 14.29% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) showed that 58.33% strongly agreed with this assessment, 25% somewhat agreed and 5.56% were neutral, while 8.33% somewhat disagreed and 2.78% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 36.96% strongly agreed, 32.61% somewhat agreed, 15.22% were neutral, and 13.04% somewhat disagreed, while only 2.17% strongly disagreed.

Participants in the study reported that their principal/supervisor provides them with actionable suggestions on what they can do to improve. Teachers (T1) 28.57% strongly agreed with this assessment, 35.71% somewhat agreed, and 14.29% were neutral, while 14.29% somewhat disagreed and 7.14% strongly agreed. Of teachers (T2), 36.11% strongly agreed, 38.89% somewhat agreed, and 11.11% was neutral, while 11.11% somewhat disagreed and 2.78% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 36.96% strongly agreed, 34.78% somewhat agreed and 21.74% were neutral, while 6.52% somewhat disagreed.

Responding to “when I have questions or concerns, my principal/supervisor is able to address them,” teachers (T1) responded that 50% strongly agreed, 21.43% somewhat agreed, and 7.14% was neutral, while 14.29% somewhat disagreed and 7.14% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) showed that 52.78% strongly agreed, 33.33% somewhat agreed, and 2.78% were neutral, while 5.56% somewhat disagreed, and 5.56% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 43.48% strongly agreed, 32.61% somewhat agreed, and 19.57 was neutral, while only 4.35% somewhat disagreed and no

one strongly disagreed. The data collected and analyzed from T1, T2, and T3 online teacher survey are summarized in Figure 6 below.

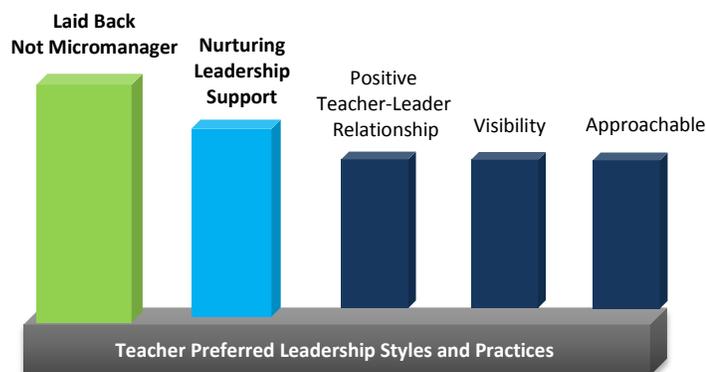


Figure 6. Teacher Preferred Leadership Styles and Practices of School Leaders. The model above shows factors perceived by teachers of school leaders that can promote teacher retention.

School Culture. Research question two examined school culture in which teachers were asked questions that were associated with the day-to-day routines and activities that may happen at a particular school. An easy explanation of organizational culture is “The way we do things around here” (Deal, 1993, p. 6). The findings below are the participants’ responses to the online survey.

Futernick (2007) indicated that teachers are more likely to leave because of inadequate support from colleagues and school leaders. Mentoring and leadership support factors were mentioned most frequently in teacher responses regarding teacher retention. Mentorship was identified as the most important factor in teacher retention at sample schools, S1 and S2; however, training was identified for S3. The second most important factor mentioned was teachers’ view of school leadership for S1 and S2; however, mentorship was identified for S3. Other factors identified were ideal work conditions consisting of feeling safe, receiving support with student discipline, having necessary

resources, and paperwork workload. Research indicates that teachers with positive perceptions about their working conditions are much more likely to stay at their current school than educators who are negative about their conditions of work, particularly in the areas of leadership and empowerment (Hirsch & Emerick, 2007).

Teachers reported that they desired principals that created a culture of mentorship, leadership and collegial support, collegial collaboration, and positive work conditions. Collegiality encourages a partnership, collaboration, and sharing through school planning. The majority of the teachers from the three schools felt that teachers and staff discussed instructional strategies and curriculum issues. Teachers (T1) reported that 32.14% strongly agreed, 60.71% somewhat agreed, 3.57% were neutral and 3.57% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) reported that 33.33% strongly agreed, 55.33% somewhat agreed, 2.78% were neutral and 5.56% somewhat disagreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 45.65% strongly agreed, 41.30% somewhat agreed, 8.70% were neutral, while only 2.17% somewhat disagreed and 2.17% strongly disagreed.

The majority of teachers (T1) felt that they were included in the decision-making process regarding materials and resources. Of those teachers, 21.43% strongly agreed with this assessment, 57.14% somewhat agreed and 3.57% were neutral, while only 10.71% somewhat disagreed and 7.14% strongly disagreed. Of teachers (T2), 25% strongly agreed, 52.78% somewhat agreed and 8.33% were neutral, while only 8.33% somewhat disagreed and 5.56% strongly disagreed. The findings showed that 13.04% of teachers (T3) strongly agreed, 45.65% somewhat agreed and 19.57% were neutral, while only 15.22% somewhat disagreed and 6.52 strongly disagreed.

Over 17.86% of the teachers (T1) felt that they have weekly time to plan as teams. Of teachers (T1), 39.29% somewhat agreed with this assessment, 14.29% were neutral, 17.86% somewhat disagreed, 10.71% strongly disagreed. The majority of teachers (T2) also felt they have time weekly to plan as teams; 22.22% strongly agreed, 36.11% somewhat agreed, 13.89% were neutral, 8.33% somewhat disagreed, and 19.44% strongly disagreed. Of the teachers (T3), 26.09% strongly agreed, 19.57% somewhat agreed, 17.39% were neutral, 21.74% somewhat disagreed, and 15.22% strongly disagreed.

The majority of teachers felt that they have the tools and resources needed to do their job. Teachers (T1) reported that 21.43% strongly agreed with this assessment, 60.71% somewhat agreed, 14.29% somewhat disagreed and 3.57% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T2) reported that 27.78% strongly agreed, 52.78% somewhat agreed, and 8.33% were neutral, while 2.78% somewhat disagreed and 8.33% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) responded that 23.91% strongly agreed, 54.35% somewhat agreed, and 10.87% were neutral, while 6.52% somewhat disagreed and 4.35% strongly disagreed.

The majority of teachers (T1, T2, and T3) felt principals and teachers talked or visited off school property socially in a professional manner. Of teachers (T1), 32.14% strongly agreed with this assessment, 32.14% somewhat agreed, 25% were neutral and 10.71% somewhat disagreed. Of teachers (T2), 22.22% strongly agreed, 47.22% somewhat agreed, 19.44% were neutral and 11.11% somewhat disagreed. Likewise, of teachers (T3), 17.39% strongly agreed, 43.48% somewhat agreed, 26.09% were neutral and 8.7% somewhat disagreed, while 4.35% strongly disagreed.

The majority of teachers (T1) felt that our school reflects a true sense of community. 67.86% strongly agreed with this assessment, and 14.29% somewhat agreed. Teachers (T2) reported that 33.33% strongly agreed, 25% somewhat agreed, 25% were neutral and 13.89% somewhat disagreed, while 2.78% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) showed that 26.09% strongly agreed, 39.13% somewhat agreed, 15.22% were neutral and 13.04% somewhat disagreed, while 6.52% strongly disagreed.

Of teachers (T1), an evenly split 46.43% agreed and 46.43% disagreed with the assessment that their school schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff, while the other 46.43% disagreed. Of the agreed, 25% strongly agreed and 21.43% somewhat agreed. Of the disagreed, 39.29% somewhat disagreed and 7.14% strongly disagreed. The majority of teachers (T2) reported that 25% strongly agreed, 38.89% somewhat agreed, 5.56% were neutral, 22.22% somewhat disagreed and 8.33% strongly disagreed. Of the teachers (T3), 26.09% strongly agreed, 39.13% somewhat agreed, 19.57% were neutral, 13.04% somewhat disagreed and 2.17% strongly disagreed.

The majority of teachers (T1) felt that teachers and staff are interdependent and value each other's individuality. 28.57% strongly agreed with this assessment, 50% somewhat agreed, 7.14% were neutral, 10.71% somewhat disagreed and 3.57% strongly disagreed. Of the teachers (T2), 38.89% strongly agreed, 38.89% somewhat agreed, 13.89% were neutral, 5.56% somewhat disagreed and 2.78% strongly disagreed. The results show that the majority of teachers (T3) felt similar to the other two schools; 26.09% strongly agreed, 45.65% somewhat agreed, 10.87% were neutral and 17.39% somewhat disagreed.

The majority of teachers (T1) felt that they come to work at the school because of its high morale. 42.86% strongly agreed with this assessment, 32.14% somewhat agreed, 7.14% were neutral, 14.29% somewhat disagreed and 3.57% strongly disagreed.

Teachers (T2) showed that 30.56% strongly agreed, 33.33% somewhat agreed, 11.11% were neutral, 16.67% somewhat disagreed and 8.33% strongly disagreed. Teachers (T3) reported that 15.22% strongly agreed, 43.48% somewhat agreed, 17.39% were neutral, 10.87% somewhat disagreed and 13.04% strongly disagreed.

How likely were teachers to look for a job within the district? Teachers (T1) were less likely to look for another job within the district. 42.86% disagreed with this assessment, 25% somewhat disagreed, 10.71% were neutral, 14.29% somewhat agreed and 7.14% strongly agreed. The majority of teachers (T2) were more likely to look for another job within the district; 19.44% strongly agreed, 19.44% somewhat agreed, 30.56% were neutral, 16.67% somewhat disagreed and 13.89% strongly disagreed. A slight majority of teachers (T3) were more likely to look for another job within the district; 15.22% strongly agreed, 21.74% somewhat agreed, 28.26% were neutral, 15.22% somewhat disagreed and 19.57% strongly disagreed.

How likely were teachers to look for a job outside of the district? The majority of teachers (T1) were less likely; 42.86% strongly disagreed with this assessment, 14.29% somewhat disagreed, 7.14% were neutral, 21.43% somewhat agreed and 14.29% strongly agreed. Similar results were found for teachers (T2) being less likely to look for another job outside of the district; 27.78% strongly disagreed, 11.11% somewhat disagreed, 30.56% were neutral, 19.44% somewhat agreed and 11.11% strongly agreed. The majority of teachers (T3) were also less likely to look for another

job outside of the district; 26.09% strongly disagreed, 17.39% somewhat disagreed, and 28.26% were neutral, while 15.22% somewhat agreed and 13.04% strongly agreed. The data in Figure 7, Figure 8, and Figure 9 provide a summary of these findings.

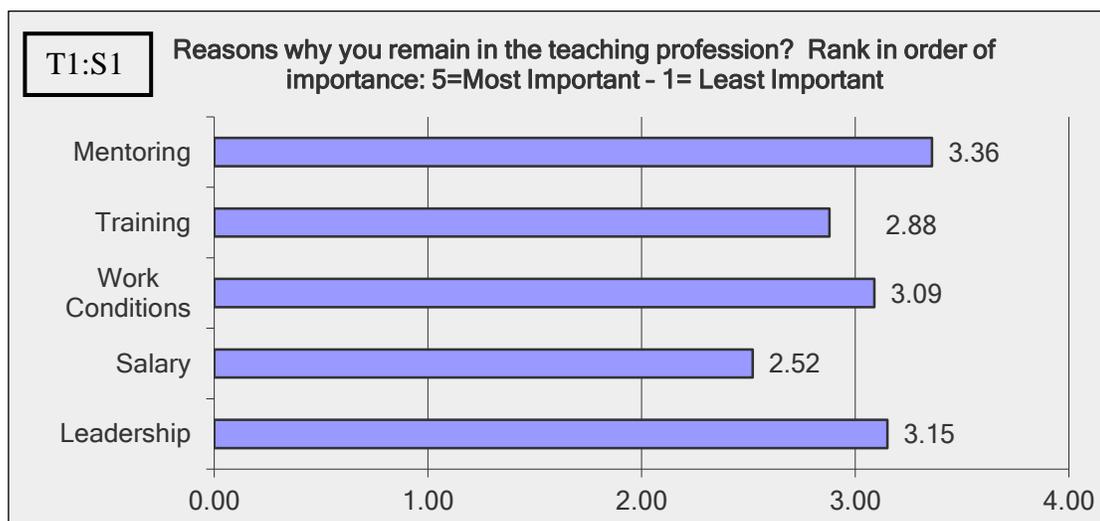


Figure 7. Teacher (T1) Retention Factors Related to School Culture. The model above shows the ranking of reasons that can promote retention of teachers.



Figure 8. Teacher (T2) Retention Factors Related to School Culture. The model above shows the ranking of reasons that can promote retention of teachers.

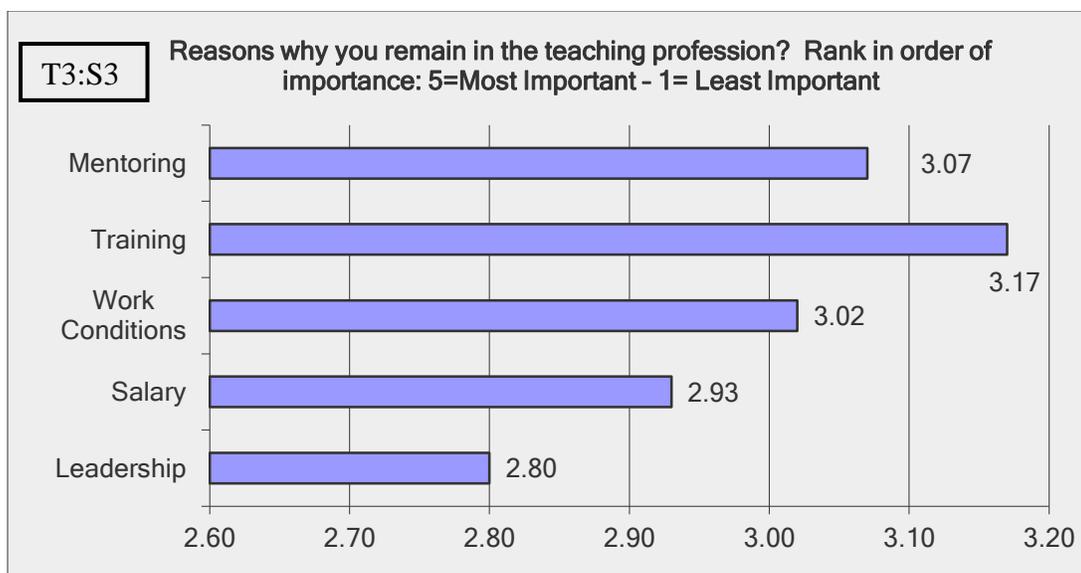


Figure 9. Teacher (T3) Retention Factors Related to School Culture. The model above shows the ranking of reasons that can promote retention of teachers.

Focus Groups

During the focus group discussions, eight teachers were asked to respond openly to a series of questions describing their background, culture of school experiences, and leadership characteristics. The focus group described different school cultures from when they first became classroom teachers up to the present.

Background with teacher responses:

1. How/Why did you decide to become a teacher?

T1 – To make a difference in a child’s life, my favorite subject is Math, love teaching students math.

T2 – To help in a poverty community, teaching can help children get out of poverty and wanted to be part of the change in the community.

T3 – Know that the children are our future, my teachers set the path for me and I want to set the path for others.

T4 – My ultimate goal is to become a counselor, so I became a teacher in order to do that.

T5 – I wanted to be off when my kids were off. I enjoy being with the kids. I love math.

T6 – I love kids and education has always been important in my family.

T7 – To influence children, I truly care about kids and want to get to know them and build relationships with them and am there for the teens when they need it the most, especially at the middle-school level where they need to know that somebody cares about them.

T8 – Was a history major and would work as a tutor in college and enjoyed building the relationships. Had a disheartening student/teacher experience and tried some other industries, but wanted to give teaching another try when moved to Houston and love it.

2. *How long have you been teacher?*

Less than 1 year 1-2 years 3-4 years 4+
years

T1 – 13 years

T2 – over 24 years

T3 – 4 months

T4 – 4 years

T5 – 6 years

T6 – 29 years

T7 – 14 years

T8 – 1 year

3. Describe your first teaching assignment?

T1 – My first teaching assignment was Math – had wonderful mentors in the math department, planned together, did lesson plans together, and always knew what I was doing. I had everything that I needed. I wish everybody could have the same experience I had as a first-year teacher.

T2 – First assignment was in a high school in a different country, I taught English (ELA) and had a mentor who was helpful. I came in mid-year after the current teacher had walked out and my mentor helped a lot.

T3 – I'm still waiting on my first full-time teaching assignment, currently I'm a resident sub. It is a great experience because it lets me see the ins and outs of every classroom, not just general education, but special education as well. It's challenging in the sense that it makes me realize that this is what I want to do. I love helping around the campus and making a difference with the students and leaving a lasting impression with the students.

T4 – 4th grade ESL, I did have mentors on campus, not specific to 4th grade. It was a struggle, but co-workers were helpful with ideas.

T5 – Taught 6th grade in the elementary school setting – SS, Science and Math. Two weeks into the school year I got moved to 4th grade ELA but did have a mentor that was motivating.

T6 – First year was at a brand new school and there were three of us that were first year teachers – principal called them the Three Blind Mice.

T7 – First assignment was 7th grade math, happened to be in the same classroom where I was student teaching, so I already knew the kids and it was an easy transition. I started in the middle of the year when the teacher left to become a professor at HBU. Felt like I had a lot of support and mentors because we were teamed and could meet and discuss the kids.

T8 – In my first year now - 8th grade Social Studies – U.S. History. I have a great mentor, who helps a lot – even emotionally, she gives me good ideas and my helping teacher has been great too with sharing her work and ideas so it gives me lots of material to incorporate into my teaching.

a. What grade?

T4 – 4th

T5 – 6th & 4th

T7 – 7th

T8 – 8th

b. Did you have a building mentor? All – YES

c. Did you feel prepared for the classroom as a new teacher? Yes No

Why or Why not?

T1 – yes

T2 – yes, I studied to become a teacher and felt prepared for the classroom

T5 – no, I wasn't really prepared because I got prepared for 6th grade SS and Science and went to all the training for that

T6 – yes, felt prepared going in, but wasn't really, but loved being there

T7 – yes felt very prepared

d. What areas, if any, did you struggle with?

__ Classroom management

T4 – because I have moved around a lot so it is different every year

T6 – eventually the principal got us help from some of the veteran teachers that would sit with us and show us what to do, also had a lot of parent volunteers which was helpful

T7

T8

__ Student behavior

__ Building protocol/routines

T3 – I struggle with protocol/routine – I like try new things and different approaches, but understand the importance of

T5 – sometimes hard because move around and learn new routines

__ Lesson planning

T5 – but had a good partner

T7 – hard in the beginning, but working with a team helped

T8

__ Deadlines

__ Implementation

T2 – have trouble implementing some of the training sometimes because there is something new all the time, so hard to keep up with it all

T6 – hard to implement everything – not enough time

The teachers in the focus group reported that the leadership of their principals ranged from very supportive and nurturing to very strict. Some of the teachers reported working with administrators who were encouraging, motivating, and approachable, to name a few qualities. Teachers seemed to respond to a combination of leadership behaviors as long as they were generally supported.

School Leadership Responses.

4. Was your principal supportive during your first years? Yes No

If so, how? If not, why, do you think?

T1 – yes, very supportive

T2 – yes, very supportive

T3 – yes

T4 – yes, very supportive

T5 – yes, very supportive

T6 – yes, very supportive

T7 – yes, supportive

T8 – yes, very supported

5. What did that support look like?

T1 – Made sure I had everything I needed – materials and support and very nurturing.

T3 – Encouraging words and motivation.

T5 – Gave lots of feedback – good and bad. Had an open door policy and could always talk to her.

T7 – Very visible and approachable and encouraging.

T8 – Easy to talk to – feel comfortable to bring anything to him.

a. What type of leader was your principal?

___ *strict*

___ *laid back*

___ *supportive*

___ *nurturing*

T1 – laid back, supportive & nurturing

T2 – strict, but nurturing

T3 – supportive & nurturing

T4 – laid back & supportive

T5 – supportive & nurturing

T6 – all – strict when need be, laid back, supportive and nurturing with teachers and kids

T7 – all – strict when needed but also supportive with teachers and students

T8 – supportive

b. Did this leadership style influence you to stay or leave? Explain:

T1 – definitely influenced me to stay – she wasn't a micromanager and very supportive

T3 – influenced me to stay and still my constant motivation

T5 – influenced me to stay because of the ongoing support

T6 – yes, feel like all these qualities influenced me to stay

T7 – same as T6

T8 – yes, feel supported and influenced to stay

6. Describe, in your own words, the culture of your school?

a. Relaxed, tense, happy, etc.

T1 – very diverse – our students have lack of discipline in the home and the administrators do a good job keeping the kids in line

T2 – mixed students – happy students and students with tension; hard for some teachers to handle

T3 – diverse, but one huge family – very encouraging adults and students

T4 – hostile environment with students

T5 – happy

T6 – diverse

T7 – very diverse, very supportive, very caring – family

T8 – wonderful

b. How did you feel as a teacher in the building?

T1 – love going to work – have great administrative team

T2 – feel very secure in building, but sometimes feel like principals have let us down when we send down a discipline issue and nothing gets done

T5 – happy to be teaching, family environment

T6 – same as T1

T7 – Bobcat way - great family – we all take care of each other

T8 – confident and unconfident – depends on the day, but love the diversity at the school, but wish there was a way to bring the students together more as a whole

c. Did the culture influence you to stay or leave? Explain:

T1 – yes, I don't want to be somewhere where the kids are perfect; I want to make a difference

T2 – same as T1

T3 – same as T1

T4 – influenced me to leave – looking for the next thing

T5 – yes stay, a great supportive place to be

T6 – same as T1

T7 – yes, love the culture of my school and the people that I work with

T8 – yes

7. What suggestions would you make to principals that you believe would be beneficial to the relationship between them and a teacher in their building?

T1 – Stop by and check on teachers. Show the teachers that you care about them.

One principal brought snacks to the classroom, not just put in the box. One principal offered to teach my class when I had a death in family.

T2 – Continue to build relationships with teachers – some teachers feel left out.

T3 – Be a person of the people for the people. Always be visible and being compassionate to the students and parents.

T4 – Being available and being consistent. Give feedback.

T5 – Support the teachers, if teachers are doing a good job – leave them alone, if not give feedback. Ask questions of your teachers.

T6 – All of the above. Respect us as teachers; let us know when we are doing well and when we are not doing well.

T7 – Get to know the teachers – be supportive of everyone – all staff members.
Do small things to let us know we are appreciated.

T8 – Be a leader, be seen, be positive and develop relationships.

8. *What else would you like me to know about your experience as a teacher?*

T1 – loved all my administrators had great experiences so far

T2 – taught in different countries – lots of differences, but lots of similarities

T4 – I love teaching and being a teacher

T5 – teaching is hard

T7 – love my campus and family

T8 – I knew it was going to be hard, but I have had a lot of support

9. *If applicable, why did you leave your first assignment?*

T1 – moved

T2 – was promoted from a boys-only school to a girls school as head of
department

T4 – left to go to another grade level within the school

T5 – followed a principal

Principal Questionnaire and Interviews

Interview data of the three middle school principals participating in this study was used to examine question three. According to the analysis of the principal interviews, the perceived reasons why teachers stayed were leadership supported teachers with work conditions concerns such as addressing student discipline and parent concerns, teachers were valued partners in shared-decision-making at the school, and were recognized for their contributions. The principals' perceived reasons why teacher left were retirement,

relocation, career advancement, adverse teacher-leader relationships, and overwhelming workload with excessive documentation requirements for beginning teachers. The responses of the three interviewed principals' perceptions of teacher retention were transcribed as follows:

Question 1 - *Describe any training you have been given regarding teacher retention and how do you plan to address the issue of retaining highly qualified teachers?*

Principal 1 – A couple of things, one was hiring with attitude training, which helped with hiring strong teachers that matched your campus needs. Made me realize how to impact the teachers we currently have to keep them on campus. Had another training for documentation of teachers – how to grow your teachers and help them if they have weak areas and that also is a part of helping retain teachers. When we are helping improve them professionally they are going to get more satisfaction in their job.

Help to retain by having personal conversations – visiting with those that I really want to keep on campus and giving them positive comments – let them know that I appreciate what they are doing on the campus. That goes along way with them – making them feel appreciated.

Principal 2 – Feel like training for teacher retention has been lacking. To address issues we need to identify those teachers and include them at the highest level, make them feel a part of what is going on at the school – put them in leadership roles, let them know that their opinions, their backgrounds, their qualities are of the utmost importance to the campus, really let them take ownership in what they are doing, let them be a part of what's going on at the campus, not just an employee of the campus. The training is

lacking and it is up to the principal and leadership team to make way to try and retain good teachers.

Principal 3 – The training I've been given has been through ongoing administrator training meeting (ATM) and then in the SEAL program, which was supporting administrators in leadership – the mental program for new principals. The training we were given was to start off hiring well and then supporting teachers throughout and in doing that hiring the right people that want to be in the education field. Secondly, touching base with them throughout the year, seeing where they need support, getting them help with curriculum and making sure that they had a quality mentor whether they were new or returning – by doing walk-throughs and having informal conversations. The way that I plan to address the issue of retaining good highly qualified teachers is hiring the right people and then even those that are seasoned – making sure that they have what they need. Sometimes we tend to forget because they are seasoned or because they have been with you for five or more years that they have it, they don't need as much so we don't go by as often to see what they need. We need to make sure there is somebody to help them get better at their craft and continuously go in and check on everybody.

Question 2 - *What are the two most important things you do to promote teacher retention on your campus?*

Principal 1 – Try to build relationships with the teachers, get to know them professionally but also on a personal level – letting them know that you care about who they are and what's going on in their lives. Things that are happening at home impacts what happen at work too. Relationship building is number one. Number two would be

making sure each teacher is placed in the best position that matches their skill set, make sure they are in the right subject area and grade level matches their personality. Also, when you are developing the master schedule, really thinking ahead of time, making sure the schedules work for the teacher so that they have time to collaborate with their peers makes it is easier for the teachers to do their job.

Principal 2 – A simple philosophy of a happy work environment is a productive work environment. People have to want to be in your building, want to be at work. They're happy in what they are doing. Retention is something that will take care of itself. Going back to Q1, promoting teacher growth, getting to know the teachers, and getting to know their career aspirations and what makes them tick. Get to know them on an individual basis.

Principal 3 – I'm constantly talking to the teachers and asking, what are their goals? If their goal is to be a department head or to be in administration, I want to know where to focus to help them reach their goals. Make sure that they have the supplies that they need and helping them in various ways from discipline to curriculum and making sure that you are visible constantly.

Question 3 - *What is your perception as to why teachers do not return to a school campus?*

Principal 1 – Sometimes it's personal, either they are retiring, family circumstances change, they moved or they get a job that's closer to home. A lot of times recently teachers are overwhelmed by the reality of the teaching versus what they thought it would be like and the amount of pressure placed on teachers nowadays with a widening

load. What they are responsible for, not only the content of the subject matter but also the character education of it, the emotional and physical welfare side of it, the data, making sure they are managing the data and making sure they are paying attention to it and recording the data. Testing mandates tutorials that are mandated, there's a lot more mandated, things that overwhelm young teachers.

Principal 2 – Other than moving, career change, out of our control type things, I think in today's day and age, teachers are not returning as a whole because too much is put on them at this point. They are here for the right reasons, to make a difference, for the kids, then all of a sudden paperwork, parents and unrealistic expectations and all the things that get in the way of the enjoyment of teaching gets put on their plate and they are put at a crossroads with “is this really what I want to do?”

Principal 3 – Teachers don't return because they were not clear on what the expectations were. Sometimes you get a teacher who comes in under one person and they are allowed to do a wide variety of things and then a new person comes in and their expectations are different and the person is thinking that's not what I was hired to do. I think being up front from day one every year – letting everybody know what the expectations are and for administrators to follow what they say. If we say we want people to work on time, then we need to monitor that, if we say we want teachers teaching bell to bell then we need to be in the classrooms, if we say we want teachers monitoring the halls, then administrators need to be out there making sure it is happening. When it isn't happening, having those conversations to make sure they understand the outcome when they are not where they are supposed to be.

Question 4 - *What is your perception of why teachers did not return to your campus?*

Principal 1 – I had several retire, one moved closer to a campus closer to where she lived, one had a baby and chose to stay home.

Principal 2 – Fortunately on my campus it has been very minimal as far as not returning because of negative or not liking the profession, it's been moving up in career path or moving out of state, but feel that teachers sometimes leave because of difficult students, if you have a unique campus with a difficult clientele so they think the grass is greener on the other side, sometimes it's hard to convince a teacher who has had to deal with a lot of behavior issues, high class sizes – they may look for a campus that they perceive as less discipline issues and smaller class sizes.

Principal 3 – They realize their goals are not in line with the goals of the campus or they desire to do something else and some of them have said that teaching has changed – that there is a lot more accountability and a whole lot more expected of them and they cannot get it done between 8:10 and 4:10, so in their thought they need to find something else that does not require and expect so much more of them. As we get more technology savvy and parents can see grades immediately, they don't feel like they need to answer to them as often – why can't we just wait until report cards come out, why does everything have to be live? Their expectation of the education field has changed.

Question 5 - *What is your perception of what teachers want principals to do that promotes teacher retention?*

Principal 1 – They want to feel supported through discipline taking; if they are having trouble with a student, they want to know that they are being heard and then the

principal is going to give them ideas how to handle things better and handle things differently and follow through if consequences need to be given. I think they want to feel like they have a partnership with the principals and not just mandates coming down, that there are conversations being had, that they have input on things, they want a sense of autonomy on how they can present and how they need to adjust lessons to meet the needs of their kids. That's been lost over the years. Having that professional standard of being able to make decisions and follow through on them and then if the results aren't what they thought, then adjusting and correcting and doing it better but still having autonomy on what they do.

Principal 2 – They want to feel appreciated, they want to feel like what they are doing does matter and want to be recognized by their direct report supervisor, they want to be involved in decision making, they want to be a part of the team, not just an employee of the team – they just want to be recognized. That recognition is different for everybody, some want public recognition, some want a pat on the back, they just want to know that their principals know how hard they are working.

Principal 3 – Be an active listener and not just take notes and walk away and then nothing happens, but really address the concerns they have consistently.

The data collected and analyzed from P1, P2, and P3 interviews are summarized in Figure 10 below showing principals' perceived reasons teachers stayed at their schools and in Figure 11 below showing principals' perceived reasons why teachers left their schools.

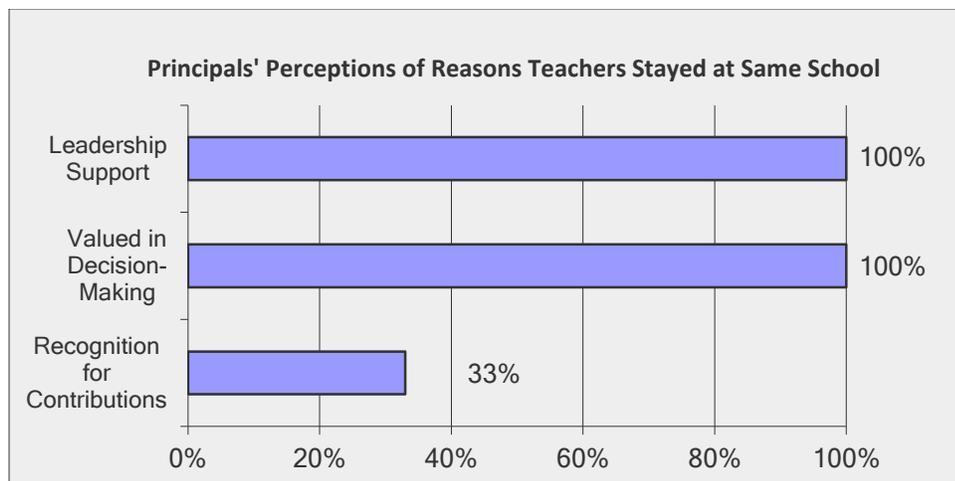


Figure 10. Principals' Perceptions of Reasons Teachers Stayed at Same School. The model above shows the most identified reasons teachers were retained.

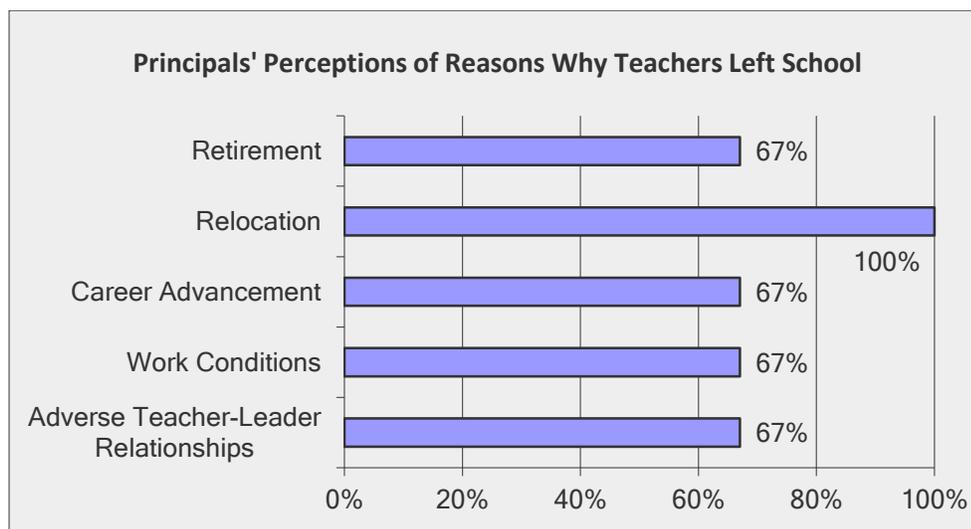


Figure 11. Principals' Perceptions of Reasons Teachers Left School. The model above shows the most identified reasons that caused a loss in teacher retention.

In examining question four, analysis of the principal questionnaire and along with question two of the principal interview questions, the perceived principal leadership practices that best promoted teacher retention were positive teacher-principal relationships, positive work conditions, and teacher placement for success. In the principal questionnaire, the principals were asked to rank the leadership strategies that they perceived to be most effective in retaining teachers. The top three in five school

leadership areas were compiled to make a list of principal preferred leadership practices that they perceived as most effective in retaining teachers. The findings were:

- Provide Teachers Time to Collaborate
- Perform Needs Assessments
- Create a Shared-Vision
- Encourage Research-based Planning
- Facilitate Meetings on Improving Instruction
- Conduct Formal/Informal Classroom Visits
- Involve Teachers in Campus Decision-making
- Acknowledge Teacher Concerns/Solutions
- Allow Teacher-led Professional Development
- Allow Teacher-to-Teacher Classroom Visits
- Allow Teachers to Attend Workshops
- Provide Campus-Level Teacher Training
- Provide New Teacher Orientation
- Assign New Teacher Mentors
- Provide New Teacher/ Mentor Meeting Time

Table 4.1

*Principals' Responses Related to Perceived Best Leadership Practices**(N = 3)*

Principal Identified Leadership Practices	N	%
Provide Teachers Time to Collaborate	3	8.33
Perform Needs Assessments	3	8.33
Create a Shared-Vision	2	5.56
Encourage Research-based Planning	2	5.56
Facilitate Meetings on Improving Instruction	2	5.56
Conduct Formal/Informal Classroom Visits	2	5.56
Involve Teachers in Campus Decision-making	3	8.33
Acknowledge Teacher Concerns/Solutions	2	5.56
Allow Teacher-led Professional Development	2	5.56
Allow Teacher-to-Teacher Classroom Visits	3	8.33
Allow Teachers to Attend Workshops	3	8.33
Provide Campus-Level Teacher Training	2	5.56
Provide New Teacher Orientation	2	5.56
Assign New Teacher Mentors	3	8.33
Provide New Teacher/ Mentor Meeting Time	2	5.56
Total	36*	100.0

Note. *Total number of answers from 3 teachers is 36 since there are multivariate answers from some of the teachers.

Conclusion

Chapter Four presented the results of this study. As affirmed by the results of the responses from a majority of the teachers and principals, school leadership was one of the most important reasons that they stayed at their campuses. Although prior research has been done to give insight on the various reasons teachers leave or stay at a particular campus, it is significant to recognize the link between school leadership and the school culture they create as it relates to teacher retention. The teachers and principals in this study perceived that school leadership, collegial support, positive teacher-leader relationships, training, and campus mentorship for new teachers were the most critical factors promoting teacher retention. Participants' responses on the significance of support are consistent with previous research indicating the relationship between school leadership and teacher retention. "Support" was described as having access to collegial support for the day to day assistance with classroom issues, collegial collaboration, and enforced student discipline.

Teachers' and principals' perceptions as to why teachers stay or leave campuses or teaching profession altogether were closely aligned. Teachers and principals perceived that positive teacher-leader relationship and positive work conditions were the most important factors in promoting teacher retention. Additionally, principals felt when teachers were placed in the proper grade level or subject area that fits their abilities; they gained success and would stay at their present campus. Chapter Five will present an interpretation of the results, implications for school leaders, implications for further research, and conclusion.

Chapter V

Conclusion

This mixed-method quantitative and qualitative research study identified factors of school culture and leadership practices from teachers' and principals' perspectives that encouraged teachers to stay at their schools and implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators to recognize and implement practices related to teacher retention. This study highlighted leadership practices and behaviors that created distinguishing school-working cultures. The research questions were:

1. What do teachers perceive as the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?
2. What are the most important factors of school culture from teachers' perspectives that can promote teacher retention?
3. What do principals perceive as the reasons why teachers stay or leave their campuses or teaching profession altogether?
4. What do principals perceive as the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?

The four research questions were addressed through a principal questionnaire, one-on-one interviews with three principals from the three middle schools, a teacher focus group, and a confidential online teacher survey used to gather data on teachers' and principals' perspectives of teacher retention. The findings for each research question led the researcher to develop the following implications related to retaining teachers: school leadership and collegial support, a positive teacher-leader relationship, and positive work conditions are the most important factors contributing to teacher retention.

Implications for School Leaders for School Leadership

When asked in the teacher focus group, “What does leadership support look like?” The teacher group responded that principals made sure they had the materials needed to be nurturing, provided encouraging words and motivation and an abundance of feedback (good and bad), had an open-door policy, were visible, approachable, encouraging, and easy to talk to, and that the teachers felt comfortable bringing anything to them. This research study implies that teachers prefer a transformational leadership style in their principal, which encompasses the aforementioned leadership traits. In the focus group, teachers were asked, “What type of leader was your principal?” They responded that theirs was laid back; supportive and nurturing; strict but nurturing; laid back and supportive; strict when need be; laid back; supportive and nurturing with teachers and kids. These responses imply that school leaders might apply an approach that best fits the situation at hand. The behaviors of the principals described by most of the teachers in this study were similar to the characteristics of a situational leader. The teacher focus group was also asked, “Did this leadership style influence you to stay or leave?” The responses were: definitely influenced me to stay – she wasn’t a micromanager, but very supportive; influenced me to stay and still my constant motivation; influenced me to stay because of the ongoing support; yes, feel like all these qualities influenced me to stay; yes, I feel supported, it influenced me to stay. These responses imply that teacher-principal relationships can benefit from school leaders adopting a more transformational leadership approach to promote teacher retention. Furthermore, the supportive and motivational leadership practices preferred by teachers imply that if used, the teacher will be inspired to do their best. Another question posed to

the teacher focus group was, “What suggestions would you make to principals that you believe would be beneficial to the relationship between them and a teacher in their building?” Their responses were principals should stop by and check on teachers; show the teachers that you care about them; continue to build relationships with teachers; be a person of the people for the people; always be visible; compassionate to the students and parents, consistent, give feedback, support the teachers that are doing a good job – leave them alone, if not provide feedback; respect us as teachers, let us know when we are doing good and when we are not doing good; get to know the teachers, be supportive of everyone, do small things to let us know we are appreciated; and be a leader, be seen, be positive and develop relationships. These responses imply that teachers prefer school leaders that have a people person’s personality (charismatic traits), which allows them to have professional relationships and to help develop them professionally. Principals might be aware of developing positive working relationships within a school. This study affirmed teachers’ desires to possess working relationships with their school leaders. Teachers also look for administrators who are able to help them become better teachers (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

As noted during the principal interviews, many teachers are overwhelmed with the responsibilities allocated to them. The loads of paperwork and other mandates imbedded in the day-to-day responsibilities can consume most of the day for many teachers. The ability of school leaders to be organizational managers is imperative in decreasing teacher workload, which can greatly affect teachers’ job satisfaction. This implies that school leaders must find ways to effectively balance managerial and instructional leadership responsibilities to be effective in retaining teachers.

Implications for School Leaders for School Culture

As the leader of the campus, the principal sets the tone for the school's culture, which was found to contribute to retaining teachers. All focus group participants revealed that leadership support and mentoring was vital to their teaching success. Overwhelmingly, teachers expressed that having a mentor was vital to their success and promoted them to stay in the profession, which implies that school leaders might consider fully investing in a campus mentorship program. School leaders might consider new teachers be assigned a veteran teacher mentor to address their immediate concerns. The veteran teacher should preferably be working with the same grade level or department. Designated time during the school day should be allotted for collaboration between the teachers and their veteran mentors. Teachers expressed that they desired support, which implies that school leaders might consider using proven research-based best practices that help teachers become successful in the classroom. Whether it is classroom management or instructional practices, school leaders should know how to individualize support in various situations. The research supports that salary plays a key role in the recruitment and retention of teachers, though there is evidence that working conditions sometimes supersede salary as a factor in teacher retention. This implies that while most districts' salaries are comparable, salary isn't as influential as working conditions in certain schools. The teachers expressed that being involved in the decision-making process was important, which implies that schools leaders might consider soliciting teacher input on school-wide solutions. It also implies that teachers want school leaders to value them which will also recognize them for their contributions. Support from school leaders made them feel like part of a family, which implies that principals might consider making

building relationships with teachers a priority and regular practice. Teachers felt staff was supportive and caring, which implies that an environment of sharing and celebrations has been created. Additionally, the teachers expressed the culture of their school made them feel safe, which implies that school leaders do a good job with handling student and parent issues. When asked, “How did you feel as a teacher in the building?”, most teachers said they love going to work, they have great administrative teams, they feel very secure in the building, they are happy to be teaching, it feels like a family environment, we all take care of each other, they feel confident most days, they love the diversity at the school – all which implies that morale is high and they will most likely stay at their respective schools. Asked, “Did the culture influence you to stay or leave?”, a teacher in the focus group shared, it’s a great supportive place to be, and another said, love the culture of my school and the people that I work with.

The researcher has acquired meaningful insight from this study. State, district, and campus school leaders should be encouraged to examine teacher retention in-depth. This study has identified factors of school culture and leadership practices from teachers’ and principals’ perspectives that encouraged them to stay at their schools, and implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district school leaders in promoting teacher retention. This study highlighted leadership practices and behaviors that were desired by teachers that may influence them to remain in a particular school and in the teaching profession. Chapter Four presented the findings from the confidential teacher online survey, principal interviews, and a teacher focus group. Data was gathered through the use of the survey *Teacher Confidential Online Survey* (see Appendix K), a principal questionnaire and interviews (see Appendix G and Appendix H), and a teacher

focus group (see Appendix L) to signify leadership practices and factors of school culture perceived by teachers to be reasons that promote teacher retention. The statistical results pointed toward several leadership practices teachers perceived as desirable factors contributing to staying at a particular campus.

Implications for Further Research

The results of this study suggest the need for additional research. From the data gathered in this mixed-method study, the researcher offers the following recommendations for future research on retaining teachers:

1. This study focused on teachers' and principals' perspectives on school leadership practices that best promote teacher retention. Future studies might examine the teachers' and principals' perspectives on leadership practices of school leaders in low-socioeconomic schools compared to the leadership practices of school leaders in more affluent schools.

2. This study also focused on the factors of school culture from teachers' and principals' perspectives that can promote teacher retention. Future studies might examine if there are different components of school culture that matter at low-socioeconomic schools compared to school culture components at more affluent schools.

3. This study also focused on principals' perceptions of reasons why teachers stay or leave their campuses or the teaching profession altogether. Further studies might examine the relationship between school leaders and teachers of low-socioeconomic schools as compared to more affluent schools.

Recommendations

Based on the responses from the teachers and principals, salary is a factor in teacher retention. Simple recommendations can be made to stay competitive with neighboring districts and states to attract and retain the best talent. One recommendation would be to increase the salary of teachers at low-socioeconomic schools. More importantly, aspects such as support and mentorship have been found to supersede the compensation impact. The researcher recommends training for school leaders that would address the need to provide support and establish effective mentorship programs at the district and campus level. Additionally, principals identified that teachers didn't realize the workload (i.e., mandated paperwork) expected of them in the classroom post NCLB. The researcher suggests that special consideration in university and other preparation programs be given to leadership students, inspiring them to be school leaders with the knowledge and skills to promote quality teacher retention. Better ways that programs and school organizations can provide a more realistic picture of classroom responsibilities would help in the initial revelations of the classroom. Once teachers are fully acclimated to the campus, it is recommended that school leaders develop relevant instructional roles, such as mentors, instructional coaches, and assistants. It is recommended that school leaders establish formal and informal opportunities to garner teacher input on the devising and implementation of district and campus policies and procedures. The researcher suggests that professional development in-services to campus principals should call attention to creating a nurturing school culture that promotes teacher retention through teacher support and their professional growth. School districts and campuses might consider investigating why teachers stay and leave a campus through exit

interviews mailed to last known addresses, emails, or confidential online surveys. Principals might consider performing self-evaluations along with their superiors on performance indicators based on transformational leadership components. Districts might consider offering transformational leadership training to develop principal leadership needs in this area. This study can lead to awareness factors that will assist the education profession in reducing teacher attrition and promoting teacher retention.

Conclusion

School leadership is responsible for creating a nurturing school culture that encourages teacher retention. This research study revealed that teachers perceived school leadership practices that promoted teacher retention were a laid back style of leadership, leader visibility, leader approachability, nurturing leadership support, and shared decision-making. School leaders that were reported to be visible and approachable had teachers that felt comfortable sharing their concerns which allowed the principal to address issues immediately. Teachers value administrators who understand and address their problems and concerns (Elfers, Plecki, & Knapp, 2006; Ingersoll 2001; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Shen, 1997). As reported by the teachers in this study, these school leadership practices led to higher teacher motivation and empowerment which transformed into increased teacher ownership and commitment. As an outcome, the increased teacher ownership and commitment fostered positive professional relationships between teachers and school leaders which were found to be one of the most influential factors in teacher retention reported by teachers and principals alike. The leadership practices of school leaders can either positively or negatively influence teacher retention.

The one person who immediately and directly has influence is the principal in the role of instructional leader (Leithwood, Louis, Anderson & Wahlstrom, 2004).

The research study also revealed principals' perceived factors as to why teachers stay or leave. Factors identified by principals as reasons teachers stay are positive leadership support, valued in shared decision-making, and recognition for contributions. Additionally, principals felt when teachers were placed in the proper grade level or subject area that fits their abilities; they gained success and would stay at their present campus. Factors identified by principals as reasons teacher leave are retirement, relocation, career advancement, adverse teacher-leader relationship, and overwhelming workload for beginner teachers. Principals' perceptions were mostly aligned with teachers' perceptions as to why teachers stayed at their campuses or the teaching profession altogether. However, there was a slight variance to why principals perceived that teachers left their individual campuses. The principals in this study perceived retirement to be the main reason teachers left their campuses.

Teachers' and principals' perceptions as to why teachers stay or leave campuses or teaching profession altogether were closely aligned. Teachers and principals perceived that positive teacher-leader relationship and positive work conditions were the most mentioned factors in promoting teacher retention. More specifically, the teachers and principals in this study perceived that school leadership, collegial support, positive teacher-leader relationships, training, and campus mentorship for new teachers were the most critical factors promoting teacher retention.

Although prior research has been done to give insight on the various reasons teachers leave or stay at a particular campus, it is significant to recognize the link

between school leadership and the school culture they create as it relates to teacher retention. There is an assenting stage relationship linking school leaders' instructional leadership practices to a school culture in which their leadership practices encourage all occurrences in school culture, particularly, the school leadership practices (Sahin, 2011). With this in mind, this research indicated that teacher shortage does not lie solely on attracting certified teachers but in retaining them through nurturing leadership. The challenge of retaining highly qualified teachers lies in the abilities of school leaders to create a nurturing environment through their practices once teachers are on campuses.

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APPENDIX A

IRB APPROVAL LETTER

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

DIVISION OF RESEARCH

May 22, 2014

Charlie Butler c/o Dr. Michael Emerson Educational Leadership & Cultural Studies

Dear Charlie Butler,

Based upon your request for exempt status, an administrative review of your research proposal entitled "CULTIVATING A NURTURING SCHOOL CULTURE: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP THAT PROMOTES TEACHER RETENTION" was conducted on April 4, 2014.

At that time, your request for exemption under **Category 2** was approved pending modification of your proposed procedures/documents.

The changes you have made adequately respond to the identified contingencies. As long as you continue using procedures described in this project, you do not have to reapply for review. * Any modification of this approved protocol will require review and further approval. Please contact me to ascertain the appropriate mechanism.

If you have any questions, please contact Samoya Copeland at (713) 743-9534.

Sincerely yours,

Kirstin Rochford, MPH,
CIP, CPIA Director,
Research Compliance

*Approvals for exempt protocols will be valid for 5 years beyond the approval date. Approval for this project will expire **May 1, 2019**. If the project is completed prior to this date, a final report should be filed to close the protocol. If the project will continue after this date, you will need to reapply for approval if you wish to avoid an interruption of your data collection.

Protocol Number: 14323-01

316 E. Cullen Building Houston, TX 77204-2015 (713) 743-9204 Fax: (713) 743-9577 COMMITTEES
FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

APPENDIX B

DISTRICT APPROVAL LETTER

[REDACTED] Department of Accountability and Program Evaluation

April 10, 2014

Dear Mr. Bulter:

Based on the review committee's review of your research application, we give permission for you to conduct the study entitled **"Cultivating a Nurturing School Culture"** (Application No. 2014-6) within [REDACTED]. As part of this study, I authorize you to conduct your study in [REDACTED] **ISD from March 24, 2014 to Dec. 1, 2014**, depending on when you obtain the university IRB approval. Your study will involve surveying principals and teachers at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]. Please note that despite the district approval, individual staff's participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

When you complete your research, please submit the Data Collection Completion Notification Form (available on the [REDACTED] research website) and share with us your findings in a summary.

We wish you good luck in your research efforts. If you have any further question, please let us know.

Yours Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
Coordinator of Research and Program Evaluation
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM FOR PRINCIPALS

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

PROJECT TITLE: “Cultivating a Nurturing School Culture: School Leadership that Promotes Teacher Retention”

You are being invited to take part in a research project conducted by **Charlie Butler** from the **College of Education at the University of Houston**. This project is part of a dissertation and being conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Michael Emerson**, my faculty advisor.

NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Taking part in the research project is voluntary and you may refuse to take part or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any research-related questions that make you uncomfortable.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this mixed method study is to identify aspects of school culture and leadership practices from principals’ perspectives that encourages teachers to stay at their schools and implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators to recognize practices related to teacher retention. Three middle schools with different teacher retention rates will participate in the study. Principals will be interviewed and complete an online confidential questionnaire to obtain responses that will identify characteristics of principals’ behaviors in leadership practices of school leaders. Principal expected time in this study is approximately less than one hour comprised of 15-20 minutes for online questionnaire completion and 20-30 minutes for open-ended question interview. This research study will officially conclude December 1, 2014.

PROCEDURES

You will be a single study of subjects invited to take part in this project. A total of 3 subjects consisting principals from 3 locations combined. You will be one of the 3 subjects invited to take part in the study.

- This will be a mixed methods study to collect data to be closely examined.
- The data will consist of findings from principal interviews to explore causes why teachers stay or leave their campus or the educational profession altogether and to identify school leadership behaviors that promotes teacher retention.
- A confidential online questionnaire for principals will be administered prior to interview to identify professional background and identify school leadership practices and behaviors in cultivating school climate and school culture that promotes teacher retention.
- A five question open-ended principal interview will be conducted regarding school leadership perspectives on teacher retention of three principals.

- The principal interviews will be audio taped and transcribed to generate findings.
- An analysis of the data will be analyzed for consistent factors, themes and trends of teacher retention.
- An exploration of similarities and differences in terms of leadership behaviors and practices, and other factors that will cause them to stay or leave a campus is expected to be determined.

Research Questions

1. What do teachers perceive are the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?
2. What are the most important components of school culture from a teacher's perspective that can promote teacher retention?

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your participation in this project. Each subject's name will be paired with a code number by the principal investigator. This code number will appear on all written materials. The list pairing the subject's name to the assigned code number will be kept separate from all research materials and will be available only to the principal investigator. Audio tape(s) will not specify any names or codes as participants remain anonymous in providing feedback to principal researcher. Confidentiality will be maintained within all legal limits.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks during this study.

BENEFITS

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand the importance of increasing teacher retention, reducing expenditures for teacher turnover, and increasing principal knowledge of leadership behaviors that promote teacher retention.

ALTERNATIVES

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

COSTS

There are no costs involved in this study.

INCENTIVES/REMUNERATION

There are no incentives or remuneration in this study.

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The results of this study may be published in scientific journals, professional publications, or educational presentations; however, no individual subject will be identified.

AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF AUDIO TAPES

If you consent to take part in this study, please indicate whether you agree to be audio taped during the study by checking the appropriate box below. If you agree, please also indicate whether the audio tape(s) can be used for publication/presentations.

- I agree to be audio taped during the interview.**
 - I agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.
 - I do not agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.
- I do not agree to be audio taped during the interview.**

Subjects can still participate in confidential online survey for teachers/confidential online questionnaire for principals although a non-participant in the audio taped focus group/principal interview.

CIRCUMSTANCES FOR DISMISSAL FROM PROJECT

Your participation in this project may be terminated by the principal investigator

- if you do not keep study focus group/principal interview appointment;
- if you do not follow the instructions you are given;
- if the principal investigator determines that staying in the project is not in your best interest

SUBJECT RIGHTS

1. I understand that informed consent is required of all persons participating in this project.
2. I have been told that I may refuse to participate or to stop my participation in this project at any time before or during the project. I may also refuse to answer any question.
3. Any risks and/or discomforts have been explained to me, as have any potential benefits.
4. I understand the protections in place to safeguard any personally identifiable information related to my participation.

5. I understand that, if I have any questions, I may contact Charlie Butler at cebutler2@uh.edu. I may also contact Dr. Michael Emerson, faculty sponsor via email at memerson@central.uh.edu or phone at (713)743-7597.
6. **Any questions regarding my rights as a research subject may be addressed to the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713-743-9204).** All research projects that are carried out by Investigators at the University of Houston are governed by requirements of the University and the federal government.

SIGNATURES

I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form and have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received answers to my questions to my satisfaction. I give my consent to participate in this study, and have been provided with a copy of this form for my records and in case I have questions as the research progresses.

Study Subject (print name): _____

Signature of Study Subject: _____

Date: _____

I have read this form to the subject and/or the subject has read this form. An explanation of the research was provided and questions from the subject were solicited and answered to the subject's satisfaction. In my judgment, the subject has demonstrated comprehension of the information.

Principal Investigator (print name and title): _____

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX D

CONSENT FORM FOR TEACHERS

**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH**

PROJECT TITLE: “Cultivating a Nurturing School Culture: School Leadership that Promotes Teacher Retention”

You are being invited to take part in a research project conducted by **Charlie Butler from the College of Education at the University of Houston**. This project is part of a dissertation and being conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Michael Emerson**, my faculty advisor.

NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Taking part in the research project is voluntary and you may refuse to take part or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any research-related questions that make you uncomfortable.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this mixed method study is to identify aspects of school culture and leadership practices from teachers’ perspectives that encourages them to stay at their schools and implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators to recognize practices related to teacher retention. Three middle schools with different teacher retention rates will participate in the study. Teachers will participate in a focus group and complete an online confidential survey to obtain responses that will identify characteristics of principals’ behaviors and teachers’ perspectives of leadership practices of school leaders. Teacher expected time to in this study is approximately one hour comprised of 15-20 minutes for online survey and 45 minutes for teacher focus group. This research study will officially conclude December 1, 2014.

PROCEDURES

You will be a single study of subjects invited to take part in this project. A total of approximately 150 subjects consisting teachers from 3 locations combined will be invited to take part in this project. You will be one of approximately 150 subjects invited to take part in the study.

- This will be a mixed methods study to collect data to be closely examined.
- The data will consist of findings from a survey of teachers and a teacher focus group to explore causes why teachers stay or leave their campus or the educational profession altogether and to identify school leadership behaviors that promotes teacher retention.
- The confidential online survey for teachers at the three middle school campuses will answer a series of questions related to their background, experiences, years of teaching, preferred leadership practices, and what makes them remain at their campus and what will make them leave.
- The teacher focus group will consist of 6-8 teachers to discuss questions about preparation, work conditions, leadership practices, mentorship and salary,

potentially to gain additional knowledge of the teacher retention and school leadership.

- The teacher focus group will be audio taped and transcribed to generate findings.
- An analysis of the data will be analyzed for consistent factors, themes and trends of teacher retention.
- An exploration of similarities and differences in terms of leadership behaviors and practices, and other factors that will cause them to stay or leave a campus is expected to be determined.

Research Questions

1. What do teachers perceive are the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?
2. What are the most important components of school culture from a teacher's perspective that can promote teacher retention?

CONFIDENTIALITY

Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your participation in this project. Each subject's name will be paired with a code number by the principal investigator. This code number will appear on all written materials. The list pairing the subject's name to the assigned code number will be kept separate from all research materials and will be available only to the principal investigator. Audio tape(s) will not specify any names or codes as participants remain anonymous in providing feedback to principal researcher. Confidentiality will be maintained within all legal limits.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks during this study.

BENEFITS

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand the importance of increasing teacher retention, reducing expenditures for teacher turnover, and increasing principal knowledge of leadership behaviors that promote teacher retention.

ALTERNATIVES

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

COSTS

There are no costs involved in this study.

INCENTIVES/REMUNERATION

There are no incentives or remuneration in this study.

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The results of this study may be published in scientific journals, professional publications, or educational presentations; however, no individual subject will be identified.

AGREEMENT FOR THE USE OF AUDIO TAPES

If you consent to take part in this study, please indicate whether you agree to be audio taped during the study by checking the appropriate box below. If you agree, please also indicate whether the audio tape(s) can be used for publication/presentations.

I agree to be audio taped during the interview.

I agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.

I do not agree that the audio tape(s) can be used in publication/presentations.

I do not agree to be audio taped during the interview.

Subjects can still participate in confidential online survey for teachers although a non-participant in the audio taped focus group.

CIRCUMSTANCES FOR DISMISSAL FROM PROJECT

Your participation in this project may be terminated by the principal investigator

if you do not keep study focus group appointment;

if you do not follow the instructions you are given;

if the principal investigator determines that staying in the project is not in your best interest

SUBJECT RIGHTS

I understand that informed consent is required of all persons participating in this project.

I have been told that I may refuse to participate or to stop my participation in this project at any time before or during the project. I may also refuse to answer any question.

Any risks and/or discomforts have been explained to me, as have any potential benefits.

I understand the protections in place to safeguard any personally identifiable information related to my participation.

I understand that, if I have any questions, I may contact Charlie Butler at cebutler2@uh.edu. I may also contact Dr. Michael Emerson faculty sponsor, via email at memerson@central.uh.edu or phone at (713)743-7597.

Any questions regarding my rights as a research subject may be addressed to the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713-743-9204). All research projects that are carried out by Investigators at the University of Houston

are governed by requirements of the University and the federal government.

SIGNATURES

I have read (or have had read to me) the contents of this consent form and have been encouraged to ask questions. I have received answers to my questions to my satisfaction. I give my consent to participate in this study, and have been provided with a copy of this form for my records and in case I have questions as the research progresses.

Study Subject (print name): _____

Signature of Study Subject: _____

Date: _____

I have read this form to the subject and/or the subject has read this form. An explanation of the research was provided and questions from the subject were solicited and answered to the subject's satisfaction. In my judgment, the subject has demonstrated comprehension of the information.

Principal Investigator (print name and title): _____

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX E

COVER LETTER FOR PRINCIPAL SURVEY

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

ANONYMOUS RESEARCH

PROJECT TITLE: "Cultivating a Nurturing School Culture: School Leadership that Promotes Teacher Retention"

You are being invited to take part in a research project conducted by **Charlie Butler from the College of Education at the University of Houston**. This project is part of a dissertation and being conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Michael Emerson**, my faculty advisor.

NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any question.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this mixed method study is to identify components of school culture and leadership practices from principals' perspectives that encourages teachers to stay at their schools and implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators to recognize practices related to teacher retention. Three middle schools with different teacher retention rates will participate in the study. Principals will be interviewed and complete an online confidential questionnaire to obtain responses that will identify characteristics of principals' behaviors of school leaders. This research study will officially conclude in December of 2014.

PROCEDURES

Principals will complete a confidential online questionnaire that will take 15-20 minutes for completion. This research study will officially conclude December 1, 2014.

Research Questions

1. What do teachers perceive are the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?

2. What are the most important components of school culture from a teacher's perspective that can promote teacher retention?

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your participation in this project is confidential and your response will remain anonymous. Please do not write your name on any of the research materials to be returned to the principal investigator.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks during this study.

BENEFITS

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand the importance of increasing teacher retention, reducing expenditures for teacher turnover, and increasing principal knowledge of leadership behaviors that promote teacher retention.

ALTERNATIVES

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

COSTS

There are no costs involved in this study.

INCENTIVES/REMUNERATION

There are no incentives or remuneration in this study.

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual subject will be identified.

If you have any questions, please contact me via email at cebutler2@uh.edu, or you can also reach my advisor, Dr. Michael Emerson, via email at memerson@central.uh.edu or phone at [713.743.7597](tel:713.743.7597).

Any questions regarding my rights as a research subject may be addressed to the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713-743-9204). All research projects that are carried out by Investigators at the University of Houston are governed by requirements of the University and the federal government.

- I agree to participate in this study
- I do not agree to participate in this study

APPENDIX F

COVER LETTER FOR TEACHER SURVEY

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

ANONYMOUS RESEARCH

PROJECT TITLE: “Cultivating a Nurturing School Culture: School Leadership that Promotes Teacher Retention”

You are being invited to take part in a research project conducted by **Charlie Butler from the College of Education at the University of Houston**. This project is part of a dissertation and being conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Michael Emerson**, my faculty advisor.

NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

Your participation is voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any question.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this mixed method study is to identify components of school culture and leadership practices from teachers’ perspectives that encourages teachers to stay at their schools and implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators to recognize practices related to teacher retention. Teachers will participate in a confidential online survey to obtain responses that will identify characteristics of principals’ behaviors and teachers’ perspectives of leadership practices of school leaders. This research study will officially conclude December 1, 2014.

PROCEDURES

Approximately 150 teachers (subjects) combined from three middle schools are invited to take part in this project. You are one of the subjects invited to take part at your location.

Research Questions

1. What do teachers perceive are the leadership practices that best promote teacher retention?

2. What are the most important components of school culture from a teacher's perspective that can promote teacher retention?

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your participation in this project is confidential and your response will remain anonymous. Please do not write your name on any of the research materials to be returned to the principal investigator.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks during this study.

BENEFITS

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand the importance of increasing teacher retention, reducing expenditures for teacher turnover, and increasing principal knowledge of leadership behaviors that promote teacher retention.

ALTERNATIVES

Participation in this project is voluntary and the only alternative to this project is non-participation.

COSTS

There are no costs involved in this study.

INCENTIVES/REMUNERATION

There are no incentives or remuneration in this study.

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

The results of this study may be published in professional and/or scientific journals. It may also be used for educational purposes or for professional presentations. However, no individual subject will be identified.

If you have any questions, please contact me via email at cebutler2@uh.edu, or you can also reach my advisor, Dr. Michael Emerson, via email at memerson@central.uh.edu or phone at [713.743.7597](tel:713.743.7597).

Any questions regarding my rights as a research subject may be addressed to the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713-743-9204). All research projects that are carried out by Investigators at the University of Houston are governed by requirements of the University and the federal government.

- I agree to participate in this study
- I do not agree to participate in this study

APPENDIX G

PRINCIPAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Principal Questionnaire: Cultivating A Nurturing School Culture: School Leadership That Promotes Teacher Retention

General/Introduction

Section I: BACKGROUND VARIABLES

Directions: Please circle the numerical response that provides accurate background to each question.

- 1 . What is your gender?
1 = Male 2 = Female
2. With what ethnic group do you identify?
1 = Black 2 = White 3 = Hispanic 4 = Asian
3. How many years have you served in your present position as principals?
1 = (1-2) 2 = (3-5) 3 = (6-8) 4 = (9+)
4. What was your total enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year?
1 = less than 500 2 = 501 to 1000 3 = 1001 to 1500 4 = 1501+
5. How many full-time classroom teachers do you serve?
6. Of the teachers who did NOT return, what is your perception of why they did not return to teach on your campus? Choose all that are applicable.
 - A. Dissatisfaction with teaching as a profession
 - B. Retirement age
 - C. Health reasons
 - D. Left for a better paying job
 - E. Felt unsupported
 - F. Reduction-In-Force (RIFs)
 - G. Other

How important has each of the following principal's "preparation" components been to your effectiveness as a school leader? (Circle the appropriate rating.)

Section II: Preparation

Rating

Undergraduate education

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
4	3	2	1	NA

Graduate education

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
4	3	2	1	NA

Formal professional development sessions (i.e., conducted by the district or other organizations)

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
4	3	2	1	NA

Self-directed professional development (e.g., personal reading and research)

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
4	3	2	1	NA

Networking / mentoring relationships with other school leaders

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
4	3	2	1	NA

Experience as a school teacher

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
4	3	2	1	NA

Experience as an assistant principal

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
4	3	2	1	NA

Experience on job as a principal

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
4	3	2	1	NA

Innate characteristics (e.g., perseverance, sense of humor, assertiveness, etc.)

Very Important	Important	Somewhat Important	Not Important	Not Applicable
4	3	2	1	NA

Section III: Leadership Practices

Indicate the 3 Most Effective Strategies rank the three (3) strategies in EACH major category (e.g. *Use of Time*) you consider to be most effective in retaining teachers. A one (1) would be the **MOST EFFECTIVE** strategy, then (2) = *Next most effective* strategy in that category.

Leadership: Organizational Management

- ___ Provide teachers with time set aside specifically to collaborate with other highly effective teachers such as Team Meetings or Professional Learning Communities
- ___ Have *grade level* meetings, which are different from *team* meetings
- ___ Enable teachers to have fewer than 4 *different* preparations per day
- ___ Rotate teacher planning periods (e.g., switch planning times so that the same group of teachers will not always have planning during first period)
- ___ Perform needs assessment for a specific area, such as student achievement *or* staff development *or* resource allocation, etc. If *yes*, please specify which individual areas you assess _____
- ___ Refer to School Plan in decision-making
- ___ Solicit teacher, parent, student input (e.g., through surveys, conversations, etc)
- ___ Create and/or actively maintain a vision for the school that is supported by the staff and the parents
- ___ Create goals, objectives, and priorities for school and actively maintain urgency in meeting them
- ___ Lobby the district office for school needs
- ___ Other _____

Leadership: Instructional

- ___ Specifically encourage research-based planning by your teachers
- ___ Assist teachers in knowing how as a team to develop an assessment system that analyzes student achievement, develops appropriate instructional assignments, and assesses whether these assignments have produced changes in student achievement
- ___ Personally create a lesson plan and use it to model good instructional practices

- ___ Personally facilitate Team Meetings or Grade Level Meetings or Subject Area meetings focused on improving instruction
- ___ Hold faculty meetings for *educational instruction* purposes
- ___ Informally and formally visit classrooms of new teachers, t.i.n.a., and veteran teachers
- ___ Personally review the written Professional Assessments with individual teachers to help them become more effective
- ___ Review specific individual students achievement (and other) data
- ___ Use of personnel to provide teachers with additional human resources supporting classroom instruction (may include administrative support, specialist, and/or volunteers.)
- ___ Other _____

Teacher Empowerment and Collaboration

- ___ Involve teachers in *meaningful* decision-making
- ___ Provide teachers with an avenue to express their concerns and their solutions
- ___ Offer *structured* opportunities for teachers to share their knowledge in mini *professional development* sessions
- ___ Assisting teachers in leadership positions (e.g. lead teacher, mentor, team leader, representative to key district committees) building leadership capacity
- ___ Offer opportunities for teachers to lead meetings Provide ways for teachers to be recognized for a “job well done” – both formally and informally

Professional Development

- ___ Provide opportunity for teachers to visit other classrooms – both within school and at other schools
- ___ Provide opportunity for teachers to attend workshops, conferences, etc. – *in addition to the ones required by district*
- ___ Actively encourage teachers to be involved in formal advanced training
- ___ Provide specific opportunities within the school for teachers to learn continually (e.g. peer coaching, study groups, etc.)

- ___ Provide additional training or opportunities for those teachers identified as potential leaders
- ___ Specifically budgeting funds for building leadership capacity (local and national conferences, professional association memberships, etc.)

New Teacher Support

- ___ Have special orientation for new teachers prior to the opening of school in your school
- ___ Assist teachers in learning and understanding the community they serve
- ___ Differentiate class size, composition, or workload for new teachers
- ___ Provide all new teachers with an *effective* mentor, which include written mentor guidelines and/or training for mentors, *other than what the system provides*
- ___ Provide opportunity for the new teacher and mentor to work together during the school day – both inside and outside the classroom
- ___ Provide specific times during the year for all mentors and new teachers to meet
- ___ Provide other special support throughout the first year
- ___ Provide special support throughout the 2nd and 3rd years
- ___ Provide special training, workshops, or planning sessions for the new teachers
- ___ Provide the opportunity to visit other classrooms or even other schools

A principal must be both an instructional leader and a manager of the school.

1. What percentage of your time would you estimate is spent in your role as:
 - a. an *instructional leader*? _____
 - b. as a *school manager*? _____
2. What percentage of your time do you feel Central Office would like for you to spend as:
 - a. an *instructional leader*? _____
 - b. as a *school manager*? _____
3. In which of these roles do you feel are most effective? Why?

APPENDIX H

PRINCIPAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Principal Interviews: Cultivating a Nurturing School Culture: School Leadership That Promotes Teacher Retention

Directions: Each participating principal will provide responses to the five open-ended questions below:

Question 1 - *Describe any training you have been given regarding teacher retention and how do you plan to address the issue of retaining good highly qualified teachers?*

Question 2 - *What are the two most important things you do to promote teacher retention on your campus?*

Question 3 - *What is your perception as to why teachers do not return to a school campus?*

Question 4 - *What is your perception of why teachers did not return to your campus?*

Question 5 - *What is your perception of what teachers want principals to do that promote teacher retention?*

APPENDIX I

RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR PRINCIPALS

Dear Principal:

You are being invited to take part in a research project conducted by **Charlie Butler, a doctoral student in the Executive Professional Leadership Doctoral Program at the University of Houston**. This project is part of a dissertation and being conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Michael Emerson**, my faculty advisor.

Project Title: "Cultivating a Nurturing School Culture: School Leadership That Promotes Teacher Retention"

Taking part in the research project is voluntary and you may refuse to take part or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any research-related questions that make you uncomfortable.

Purpose:

The purpose of this mixed method study is to identify components of school culture and leadership practices from principals' perspectives that encourages teachers to stay at their schools and implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators to recognize practices related to teacher retention. Three middle schools with different teacher retention rates will participate in the study. Principals will be interviewed and complete an online confidential questionnaire to obtain responses that will identify characteristics of principals' behaviors of school leaders. This research study will officially conclude in December of 2014.

Time Duration: Participants' length of time to be spent in study is as follows:

- Principal - less than one hour comprised of 15-20 minutes for confidential online questionnaire completion and 20-30 minutes for open-ended question interview. This research study will officially conclude in December of 2014.

Benefits:

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand the importance of increasing teacher retention, reducing expenditures for teacher turnover, and increasing principal knowledge of leadership behaviors that promote teacher retention.

The survey can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JSKJQ32>

There are no foreseeable risks, no costs involved, and no incentives or remuneration in this study.

This project has been reviewed by the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713) 743-9204.

If you have any questions, please contact me via email at cebutler2@uh.edu or you can also reach my advisor, **Dr. Michael Emerson**, via email at memerson@central.uh.edu or phone at **713.743.7597**.

Thank you for your participation,

Charlie Butler
Principal Investigator

APPENDIX J

RECRUITMENT LETTER FOR TEACHERS

Dear Certified Teachers:

You are being invited to take part in a research project conducted by **Charlie Butler, a doctoral student in the Executive Professional Leadership Doctoral Program at the University of Houston**. This project is part of a dissertation and being conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Michael Emerson**, my faculty advisor.

Project Title: "Cultivating a Nurturing School Culture: School Leadership That Promotes Teacher Retention"

Taking part in the research project is voluntary and you may refuse to take part or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may also refuse to answer any research-related questions that make you uncomfortable.

Purpose:

The purpose of this mixed method study is to identify components of school culture and leadership practices from teachers' perspectives that encourages teachers to stay at their schools and implications for awareness factors that may assist campus and district level administrators to recognize practices related to teacher retention. All participating teachers will complete a confidential online survey and randomly selected teachers will participate voluntarily in a focus group to obtain responses that will identify characteristics of principals' behaviors and teachers' perspectives of leadership practices of school leaders. This research study will officially conclude in December of 2014.

Time Duration: Participants' length of time to be spent in study is as follows:

Teacher - approximately one hour comprised of 15-20 minutes for completion of a confidential online survey and 45 minutes for teachers participating in the focus group. This research study will officially conclude in December of 2014.

Benefits:

While you will not directly benefit from participation, your participation may help investigators better understand the importance of increasing teacher retention, reducing expenditures for teacher turnover, and increasing principal knowledge of leadership behaviors that promote teacher retention.

The survey can be viewed at the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/JSKJQ32>

There are no foreseeable risks, no costs involved, and no incentives or remuneration in this study.

This project has been reviewed by the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713) 743-9204.

If you have any questions, please contact me via email at cebutler2@uh.edu or you can also reach my advisor, **Dr. Michael Emerson**, via email at memerson@central.uh.edu or phone at **713.743.7597**.

Thank you for your participation,

Charlie Butler
Principal Investigator

APPENDIX K

TEACHER ON-LINE SURVEY

Teacher Online Survey

Please supply brief information about yourself.

1. Your Age

- Less than 30
 30-39
 40-59
 60+

2. Your Gender

- Male
 Female

3. How did you obtain your teacher certification?

- Undergraduate degree
 Alternative Certification Program
 Post Graduate Online

4. Do you feel you were adequately prepared for your first year in the classroom? Yes or No Explain your response

5. Since becoming a classroom teacher, how many schools have you worked in?

- Less than 1
 1-2
 3-4
 4+

6. Since becoming a classroom teacher, how many districts have you worked in?

- Less than 1
 1-2
 3-4
 4+

7. What is your current assignment?

8. What is your highest degree level?

- Bachelors
 Masters
 Doctorate

9. Reasons why you remain in the teaching profession?

Rank in order of importance: 5=Most Important – 1= Least Important

___ Leadership

___ Salary

- ___ Work Conditions
- ___ Training
- ___ Mentoring

10. Would you be interested in participating in a small focus group (6-8 teachers) to answer more questions?

Yes No

1. Teachers and staff discuss instructional strategies and curriculum issues

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

2. Teachers and staff are involved in the decision-making process with regard to materials and resources

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

3. Teachers have time weekly to plan as teams

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

4. Our school reflects a true “sense” of community

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

5. Our school schedule reflects frequent communication opportunities for teachers and staff

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

6. There is a tradition of rituals and celebrations of special events and goal attainment at our school

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

7. When something is not working in our school, the principal and teachers work together to solve the problem

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

8. Teachers are empowered to make instructional decisions rather than waiting for the principal to tell them what to do

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

9. Teachers and staff are interdependent and value each other's individuality

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. I come to work at this school because my school has high morale

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

11. Your principal goes out of his/her way to help teacher

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

12. Your principal uses constructive criticism

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

13. Your principal listens to and accepts teachers' suggestions

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

14. Your principal delegates leadership responsibility to you

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

15. Your principal treats teachers and staff members as equals

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

16. Your principal goes out of his/her way to show appreciation to teachers

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

17. My job gives me the opportunity to learn

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

18. How likely are you to look for another job within the district?

Definitely Will Most likely Somewhat likely Neutral Less Likely Definitely Not

19. How likely are you to look for another job outside the district?

Definitely Will Most likely Somewhat likely Neutral Less Likely Definitely Not

20. I have the tools and resources I need to do my job

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

21. The amount of work expected of me is reasonable

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

22. My principal/supervisor actively listens to my suggestions

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

23. My supervisor promotes an atmosphere of teamwork

Strongly Agree Somewhat Agree Neutral Somewhat Disagree Strongly Disagree

24. My principal/supervisor provides me with actionable suggestions on what I can do to improve

Strongly
Agree

Somewhat
Agree

Neutral

Somewhat
Disagree

Strongly
Disagree

25. When I have questions or concerns, my principal/supervisor is able to address them

Strongly
Agree

Somewhat
Agree

Neutral

Somewhat
Disagree

Strongly
Disagree

APPENDIX L

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Teacher Focus group questions

Interview # _____

Tape # _____

Date: May 27, 2014

Time: 4:30

Location: First Colony Middle School

1. Why did you decide to become a teacher?

2. How long have you been teacher?

Less than 1 years

1-2 years

3-4 years

4+ year

3. Describe your first teaching assignment?

a. What grade?

b. Did you have a building mentor?

c. Did you feel prepared for the classroom as a new teacher?

Yes

No

Why or Why not?

d. What areas, if any, did you struggle with?

4. Was your principal supportive during your first years? Yes No

If so, how? If not, why do you think?

a. What did that support look like?

b. What type of leader was your principal?

___ strict

___ laid back

___ supportive

___ nurturing

c. Did this leadership style influence you to stay or leave? Explain:

5. Describe, in your own words, the culture of your school?

c. Relaxed, tense, happy, etc.

d. How did you feel as a teacher in the building?

c. Did the culture influence you to stay or leave? Explain:

6. What suggestions would you make to principals that you believe would be beneficial to the relationship between them and a teacher in their building?

7. What else would you like me to know about your experience as a teacher?

8. If applicable, why did you leave your first assignment?

If necessary, would you be willing to participate in a follow-up interview to help provide clarification to any answers?)