AN EVALUATION OF THE NEW TEACHER PERCPETIONS OF THE NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROGRAM IN A SUBURBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT IN SOUTHWEST TEXAS

A Dissertation 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 Professional Leadership

by

Roberto Martinez Jr.

December 2014

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Dedication

To my grandparents – Jose and Angelica Serenil and Pedro and Lenida Martinez – you were always there to support me and were a great example as to the value of hard work and what it means to take care of your family.

To my parents for always being there for me and making all the sacrifices you did so that I could continue my education. Thank you for always being proud of me, your love, and the joy you both bring into our lives. To my brother and sister and their families, who make me proud.

To my loving wife and children, who patiently sacrificed time spent together so that I could continue my education, I love you all more than words can express. I hope you know that your strength carried me through this process and that you all inspire me to be the best version of myself I can be.

To my classmates at the University of Houston, only you all know how demanding this task has been. I am happy to have experienced this with you and I know the future of public education is in good hands with your leadership.

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To my former colleagues and friends in the Texas City Independent School District, I will always be grateful for the relationships and the experiences I shared with you all.

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I am forever indebted to all the members of my dissertation committee for their expertise and guidance. My committee chair, Dr. Angus MacNeil, is a superb educator, who encouraged me to keep going when I didn't think I could go any further. I thank Dr. MacNeil for his wisdom and challenging me. I am also thankful for the support of Dr. Steven Busch; who was patient and willing to assist whenever needed. Dr. Robert Borneman, I would like to thank for exposing me to transformational leadership. This work has opened my eyes to the possibilities of leadership, and I thank him for being a transformational leader. I am equally thankful to Dr. Robin McGlohn for her professional advice and guidance, along with teaching me about the importance of program evaluations! I also thank Dr. Wayne Emerson for his precision and attention to detail.

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program in a suburban school district in southwest Texas. The evaluation provided district leaders with critical feedback from the new teachers on their background, perceptions of their first year of teaching and the teacher induction program. The study consisted of analysis and evaluation of the district-administered *New Teacher Induction Survey* that was sent via a unique survey link to 240 new teachers to the district during the 2013-2014 school year. The quantitative study involved descriptive statistical analysis of closed survey responses.

The results of this quantitative study revealed information as to the various backgrounds of new teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas. It was found that the district had higher averages than the state of new teachers to the profession, along with alternatively certified teachers. The study also revealed new teacher perceptions during their induction period of mentoring and coaching, as well as perceptions about school culture and climate, administration support, teacher performance and evaluation, and professional learning.

Descriptive statistics revealed that the new teachers to the district perceived their mentoring and coaching experiences to be marginal. Overall support provided by mentors was not perceived by new teachers to be at a high level, but new teachers felt positively about the accessibility of their mentors. The new teacher perceptions of their

school's culture and climate were positive. An overwhelming majority felt a sense of belonging and that the whole school community was invested in their development. It was revealed that new teachers received marginal administration support during their first year of induction; particularly in the areas of individual face to face meetings, classroom observations, and the modeling of lessons and behavior management strategies.

The study found that new teachers had a positive experience with the teacher performance and evaluation process. An overwhelming majority felt that information given to them by their administration was in line with the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) process, and that this information was clear and understandable. Also, it was revealed that new teachers had positive experiences with professional learning on classroom management and building relationships. New teachers did not perceive their professional learning opportunities on working with diverse parent and student groups to be effective. In particular, working with special education students and families was the highest reported need for additional professional learning.

In addition to providing perspectives of why induction is necessary due to obvious benefits and teacher attrition rates, the study considered the unique recruitment and retention demands of a rapidly growing suburban school district in southwest Texas. The study provides a historical perspective of induction and describes the components of a successful induction program. Results from the study will allow stakeholders in the district to consider the new teacher perceptions on the success of each component and determine the overall effectiveness of the New Teacher Induction Program, which may influence future practice.

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Chapter I

Introduction

A large number of teachers across the state and nation are entering and exiting the profession in record numbers. In a recent report, Carroll and Foster (2010) offered that there will be a nation-wide loss of as many as a million and half veteran teachers to retirement over the next eight years. Additionally, researchers estimate a need to hire between 2.9 and 5.1 million full-time teachers between 2008 and 2020 (Aaronson & Meckel, 2008). After five years of teaching, it is likely that nearly 1/3 of these new teachers will have left the profession (Carroll & Foster, 2010). Schools and districts will be faced with the challenge of placement and retention of high quality teaching staff to ensure student performance.

This information comes at a time when many states, including Texas, are experiencing rapid population growth. The increase in population, due to the strength of the Texas economy compared to the national economy and job growth opportunities in cities like Houston, has created a scenario where there is an alarming demand for new teachers. According to a recent *State Profile Report* (2013) released by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), approximately one-third of the total teaching staff in the state of Texas for the 2011-2012 school year had less than five years of experience ("Snapshot: School District Profiles," 2013). Furthermore, the attrition rate for teachers in the state of Texas has steadily increased in recent years, reaching an all-time high for the 2011-12 school year with a loss of nearly 36,000 employees (see Table 1).

Staggering population growth, along with the demand for a large number of new teachers has impacted a suburban school district in southwest Texas. The district has

experienced an increase in enrollment of approximately 3,500 students since the 2007-2008 school year. Due to new construction and land development, the district is projected to add over 4,455 students by the 2017-2018 school year (Templeton Demographics, 2013). In an effort to recruit and retain large numbers of new teachers, the district has developed a comprehensive New Teacher Induction Program.

Teacher induction programs provide support and assistance to new teachers for at least one year. Induction supports can come in the form of ethical, professional, and personal assistance (Britton, 2012; Richard M. Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Perry & Hayes, 2011). Literature offers that induction supports can assist organizations with transmitting the culture of the system to new teachers (Huling-Austin, 1988; Wong, 2004). Induction has proven to have a positive impact on teacher retention and student achievement (Glazerman et al., 2010; R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011a; Lesnick, Jiang, Sporte, Sartain, & Hart, 2010). Induction is also necessary due to a perceived lack of preservice preparation for new teachers (Duke, Karson, & Wheeler, 2006; R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011a; Kardos, 2005).

Evidence suggests that induction programs that offer a variety of collective supports have an impact on a teacher's commitment to the profession (R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011a). Research also shows that other factors such as a teacher's background can affect teacher development, teacher retention, and teacher performance. The literature offers conflicting evidence on the impact of a teacher's background on student achievement (Berliner, 2002; Goe, 2002; Rivkin, Hanushek, & Kain, 2005). However, research has confirmed a link with teacher background on teacher mobility, stability, and retention (Allensworth, Ponisciak, & Mazzeo, 2009; Duke et al., 2006).

Mentoring and coaching for new teachers has been proven to assist with new teacher performance and attrition (Adams, 2010; Duke et al., 2006; Moir, 2007; Solis, 2009; Stegmeir, 2014). A growing number of states, including Texas, have some form of formal mentor programs for their teachers (Perry & Hayes, 2011). A school's culture and climate also has a significant impact on new teachers where school climate has been found to impact a new teacher's identity (Rippon & Martin, 2006). Research also suggests that teachers are more likely to remain in schools where they feel like their colleagues work together for the benefit of the school (Allensworth et al., 2009).

School administrators also play a critical role in supporting new teachers. Research shows that a large number of new teachers are dissatisfied with school leadership while many teachers that have exited the profession offer lack of administrative support as reasons for exiting (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009; Richard M. Ingersoll, 2003). It has further been offered that teachers who have had adequate support during their induction period have a better retention rate (Perry & Hayes, 2011).

Additionally, educators are in the midst of a "policy vortex" in regards to reforms calling for transformation of teacher evaluation systems (Coggshall & Ott, 2010). Nationally, there are mixed feelings concerning teacher evaluation systems (Bushaw & Lopez, 2013). As the state of Texas plans changes with its teacher performance and evaluation system, it is important to note that teacher perceptions of such systems influence practice (Bogart, 2013). Successful induction programs will seek to provide additional professional development in this area.

It is also crucial that new teachers experience meaningful professional learning during their induction period. As research shows the benefits of professional learning on

teacher learning (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009), it is also necessary that these opportunities involve educators as whole persons, take into account their prior experiences, and recognize teachers' experiences within their own classrooms (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009; Cranton & King, 2003; Trotter, 2006). District leaders must also provide professional learning opportunities for a new generation of Generation Y educators.

Statement of the Problem

There is a wealth of information readily available as to the various factors that contribute to teachers entering and exiting the teaching profession in record numbers. There is also a substantial amount of research that suggests the benefits of new teacher induction on teacher development, retention, and performance. There is a gap in knowledge concerning new teachers' own perceptions of their induction experience.

A suburban school district in southwest Texas recognizes the benefits of induction and has developed a New Teacher Induction Program involving multiple components for new teachers to the district. The district has also developed a *New Teacher Induction Survey* to better understand new teacher perceptions of each component. An evaluation was performed of the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program involving descriptive statistics to reveal new teacher perceptions during their induction period of mentoring and coaching, as well as perceptions about school culture and climate, administration support, teacher performance and evaluation, and professional learning.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the New Teacher Induction Program, along with determining the success of each component of

induction, in a suburban school district in southwest Texas through analysis of the district administered *New Teacher Induction Survey*. The evaluation of the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program provides district leaders with critical feedback from the new teachers on their background, perceptions of their first year of teaching, and the teacher induction program. Results from the study allow district officials to consider the new teacher perceptions on the success of each component of induction, which may influence future practice.

Significance of the Study

This study examined the overall effectiveness of the New Teacher Induction Program within a suburban school district in southwest Texas. Additionally, the study provided insight into new teachers' own perceptions of mentoring and coaching, school culture and climate, administration support, teacher performance and evaluation, and professional learning. The information provided may impact the future direction of the New Teacher Induction Program in a suburban school district in southwest Texas.

Schools and districts can utilize this data to more closely examine processes for new teacher induction and opportunities for professional learning. The study adds additional perspectives on induction and contributes to the existing literature on the successful components of induction. The study also provides districts and schools that are experiencing a unique demand for additional teaching staff with rich information on new teachers' own perceptions of multiple induction components.

Research Questions

1. What are new teacher perceptions of their professional learning experience within the district? Specifically, what are their perceptions with professional learning experiences and opportunities with:

    a) Classroom management,
    b) Building relationships,
    c) Designing engaging work,
    d) Professional communication,
    e) Working with diverse student and parent groups,
    f) Understanding district standards
    g) Meeting demands of work and family life?

2. What are new teacher perceptions of the culture and climate within their schools? Specifically, what are the new teacher perceptions of their sense of belonging and that the whole school community is invested in their development?

3. What are new teacher perceptions of their mentoring and coaching experience within the district? Specifically, a) the process of mentor assignment, and b) the frequency and type of mentor visits?

4. What are new teacher perceptions of the support provided by their current principal and administrators within their schools? Specifically, a) the new teacher's sense that the administration is approachable and values their concerns, and b) the frequency and type of visits between new teachers and administrators?

5. What are new teacher perceptions of the teacher performance and evaluation process within the district? Specifically, the clarity and expectations of the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS)?

Limitations

This study was limited to a sample of new teachers in a single school district in one geographical region of Texas and might not generalize with other geographical regions or other groups of teachers. Due to the number of new teachers who participated in the survey, this study sample may be viewed as not having enough participants to make a generalization for the perceptions of new teachers across the state. There are also various factors that contribute to the success or effectiveness of a new teacher induction program, which may not be accounted for in this study.

Definition of Terms

Throughout this study, several terms were used that may have multiple definitions in the field of educational literature and research. Additionally, many terms were specific to the professional work in a suburban school district in southwest Texas. For the purpose of this study, the following definitions were used.

1. *New Teachers*: Teachers new to the profession, along with those teachers new to the district that have had prior teaching experience.
2. *Teacher Attrition*: Teachers leaving the profession in record numbers, with more than half of new teachers leaving the classroom within the first five years (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Richard M. Ingersoll, 2001).
3. *Templeton Demographics*: Demographics and Planning Company for school districts that uses current and historic district enrollment information and future housing development data to create enrollment projections. For the purpose of this study, a suburban school district in southwest Texas utilized information obtained from Templeton Demographics for enrollment projections. The

company uses a detailed methodology for enrollment projections; involving breaking district into small geographic sections, calculating housing yields from school district data, and geocoding information into a unique mapping software ("Templeton Demographics - Enrollment Projections," 2014).

4. *Vacant Developed Land (VDL)*: Vacant lot supply for future housing projects and developments.
5. *Induction*: The process by which districts transmit the culture of the system to beginning teachers (Huling-Austin, 1988).
6. *Generation Y*: Those individuals born between 1977 and 1995 (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009).
7. *Preservice Education*: Educational experiences received prior to teachers entering the classroom as teachers.
8. *Beginning Teacher and Induction Mentoring Program (BTIM)*: A beginning teacher induction and mentoring program established in 2006 in the state of Texas designed to increase retention of beginning teachers (Golsan, 2014). The BTIM program supports induction according to Texas Education Code §21.458, and provides grant funds to be used for mentor stipends, mentor training, and mentor release time for meeting and observation purposes.
9. *Mentoring and Inducting New Teachers Program (MINT)*: This program was established by district officials in a suburban school district in southwest Texas to provide assistance to year-one and year-two teachers with mentor support.
10. *New Teacher Induction Program (NTIP)*: Refers to the comprehensive new teacher induction system in a suburban school district in southwest Texas, which

includes components of mentoring and coaching, school culture and climate, administration support, performance and evaluation, and professional learning.

11. *K12 Insight:* A technology-based research and communications firm that assists school districts with survey design ("Stakeholder Engagement for Public Schools through Systemic Surveys," 2014a). District officials collaborated with research assistants from this company to develop a *New Teacher Induction Survey*.
12. *New Teacher Induction Survey*: A census survey that was created by district officials in collaboration with K12 *Insight* to evaluate new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program in a suburban school district in southwest Texas during the 2013-2014 school year.
13. *Full Release Mentors*: Teachers who are out of the classroom on a full-time basis, employed as a mentor for their entire set of responsibilities (Adams, 2010).
14. *eMentors*: Individuals that may assist new teachers during their first years through electronic communication ("PACT: Performance-based Academic Coaching teams," 2014).
15. *Organizational Health*: Refers to the general well-being of the interpersonal relationships in a school (Hoy & Tarter, 1992).
16. *Organizational Climate*: General term that defines teachers' perceptions about their work and environment (Savas & Karakus, 2012).
17. *Professional Development Appraisal System (PDAS)*: The adopted teacher appraisal system in the state of Texas, designed by the Texas Education Agency, to assess the Texas classroom teacher (TEA, 2005).

Chapter II

Literature Review

Introduction

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future recognizes an overwhelming need for new teachers. In a recent report, Carroll and Foster (2010) posited that this need is a result of the baby-boomers that made a career commitment to education will be leaving the profession. Many of these individuals, who in 2004 constituted 1.8 billion in our classrooms, are nearing the age of retirement. This wave of teachers exiting the profession has created a shortage of talented, committed teachers in the classroom.

Literature on teacher labor markets finds that teacher shortages are not from a shortage of the number of teachers that are trained or certified (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009). One researcher discusses this phenomenon from a regional teacher supply and demand analysis and suggests that colleges are overproducing elementary-level teachers; resulting in a need for university systems and their regulatory agencies to cap the number of entrants into educator programs (Sawchuk, 2013). It has also been offered that "neither the much heralded mathematics and science shortage, nor the minority teacher shortage, are primarily due to an insufficient production of new teachers" (R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011a, p. 3). Therefore, the demand for new teachers may be attributed to other factors.

One of the main factors that impacts teacher shortages is *teacher attrition*. Teachers are leaving the profession in record numbers, with more than half of new teachers leaving the classroom within the first five years (Darling-Hammond, 2000;

Richard M. Ingersoll, 2001). Boss (2001) suggests that at least 30 percent of novice teachers leave the profession by their third year of teaching ("New Teachers: From Surviving to Thriving," 2001). Additionally, national data show that the attrition rates of first year teachers have increased over the past two decades (Richard M. Ingersoll, 2012).

The impact of teacher attrition is also evident when looking at state-level data. According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA), over 28% (92,993.8) of total teaching staff had one to five years of teaching experience. In the agency's report, *Employed Teacher Attrition and New Hires 2003 – 2012*, it is noted that teacher attrition has reached its highest level with a loss of employees equaling 35,800 individuals for the 2011-2012 academic year (see Table 1). This number increased by 5,807 more individuals leaving Texas public schools than the previous school year.

Table 1

Employed Teacher Attrition and New Hires 2005-2012

Year	Number of Teachers	Attrition Number	Percent	New Hires Number	Percent
2011-12	329,352	35,800	10.5	24,871	7.6
2010-11	340,281	29,993	8.9	32,084	9.4
2009-10	338,190	28,135	8.4	33,353	9.9
2008-09	332,972	31,417	9.6	37,456	11.2
2007-08	326,933	30,133	9.5	40,480	12.4
2006-07	316,586	30,238	9.8	39,515	12.5
2005-06	307,309	28,257	9.4	36,121	11.8

Teachers leave the profession for various reasons. In a 2003 report published by the Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals and Disabilities (VESID), it was

posited that teachers leave when they are confronted with environments that lack essential professional supports: 1) administrative support; 2) organizational structures and work environments that convey respect and value; and 3) induction and mentoring programs for new teachers (Hidalgo, 2003). Another study recognized that teacher mobility rates were highest in low-performing, predominantly low income African-American schools (Allensworth et al., 2009).

This information comes at a time where enrollment in public schools, in particular Texas, continues to surge. The 2012 – 2013 school year marked the first time that statewide enrollment topped five million students. A recent report released by the Texas Education Agency shows the state public school enrollment growing by 820,019 students or more than 19 percent over the past decade (see Table 2). The growth is even more remarkable when examining student enrollment over a 25 year period. Between the 1987-1988 school year and the 2012-2013 school year, enrollment grew by 57.4 percent or approximately 1.85 million students. Student enrollment by ethnicity is also offered (see A1 in appendices).

Table 2

Change in Statewide Enrollment, Texas Public Schools

Period	Number	Percent
10-year change, 2002-03 to 2012-13	820, 019	19.3
25-year change, 1987-1988	1,850,924	57.4

The spike in enrollment has also greatly affected a suburban school district in southwest Texas. For the 2012-2013 school year, the district had an enrollment of 18,955 students. Enrollment for the spring of 2014 grew by 4.2 percent or 788 students.

Demographers are expecting this growth to continue with a five year enrollment growth of 4,455 students and a projected enrollment growth in ten years of 9,732 plus students (Templeton Demographics, 2013). The district is also projected to have approximately 23,400 students by the 2017-2018 school year (see Figure 1).

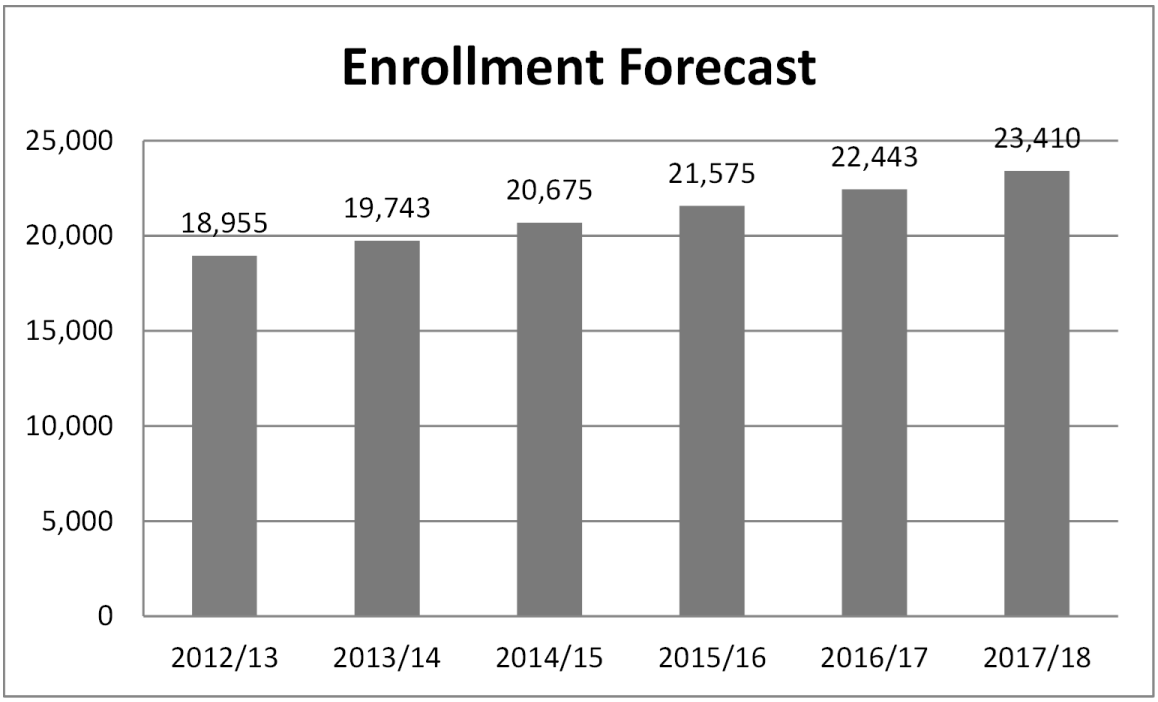

Figure 1. A Suburban School District in Southwest Texas Enrollment Forecast (Templeton Demographics, 2013)

Multiple factors contribute to the enrollment increase. The Texas economy continues to outperform the nation, while Houston is regarded as the top job growth city in the country. Also, the housing market is showing strong growth in increasing values and new construction. The boundaries within the suburban school district in southwest Texas ranks in the top ten school districts in the state with annual starts of new construction, along with having a large amount of *vacant developed land* (VDL) or vacant lot supply (see Table 3). The projections for future new construction rank at the top of the list.

Table 3

New Home Ranking Report

Rank	District Name	Annual Starts	Annual Closings	VDL	Future
1	Katy ISD	3,274	3,136	2,722	3,646
2	Cy-Fair ISD	2,808	2,589	3,655	6,713
3	Houston ISD	2,303	2,131	3,383	4,106
4	Fort Bend ISD	2,501	2,064	3,462	4,841
5	Conroe ISD	1,596	1,497	2,926	3,953
6	Lamar CISD	1,471	1,383	2,818	3,249
7	Tomball ISD	1,315	1,266	2,101	2,421
8	Klein ISD	1,373	1,223	2,618	3,232
9	Humble ISD	1,282	1,192	2,411	3,508
10	Southwest ISD*	733	751	1,371	11,077

* A suburban school district in southwest Texas

Projected increases in enrollment will create a demand for additional campuses and teaching staff to meet the needs of students. Based on projected enrollment trends over the next ten years, there will be an additional need for six elementary campuses, two middle school campuses, and one high school (Templeton Demographics, 2013). If current staffing formulas are applied, this will translate into hundreds of new teaching staff. The district has already experienced an increase in approximately 125 teaching positions from 2012 to 2014 with 1,227 teachers reported for the 2012-2013 school year and a need for 1,350 teachers for the 2014-2015 school year (Ortiz, 2014).

A demand for new teachers due to the spike in student enrollment, coupled with a staggering increase in the rate of teacher attrition, calls for school leaders to more closely examine their efforts to recruit and retain high quality teaching staff. Research also shows that our new teachers tend to experience greater and different stressors than more experienced teachers (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009; Fessler, 1995; Guskey, 2002). Since

new teachers are often presented with the same responsibilities and expectations as veteran teachers, schools and districts across the country often provide support for transitioning into the profession in the form of a formal teacher induction process.

Induction

Teacher induction programs are planned programs intended to provide systematic support and assistance to beginning teachers, for at least one year. Huling-Austin (1990) declared that induction supports provided can offer ethical, professional, and personal assistance (Houston, Haberman, Sikula, & Association of Teacher Educators, 1990; Perry & Hayes, 2011). Such programs have the potential to increase the rate of new teacher retention along with improving the overall effectiveness of the teacher. It has been offered that the goal of the best comprehensive induction programs is to assist beginning and experienced teachers new to the school district acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to experience success (Perry & Hayes, 2011).

Formal induction programs are necessary for a number of reasons. Britton (2012) suggests that a new teacher's need for emotional and moral support is viewed as the most immediate priority for induction. New teachers often experience professional and social isolation and are frequently left to succeed or fail on their own (S. M. Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). Seminal research on induction suggested that, in an effort to help new teachers adjust to their new assignments, induction supports were offered as a systematic organizational effort to acculturate new teachers to the organization (Huling-Austin, 1988).

The importance of the vision and culture of a school or district is supported in research. Early induction research acknowledged that one of the goals of an induction

program should be to transmit the culture of the system to beginning teachers (Huling-Austin, 1988). Researchers also recognized that induction supports assist school leaders with training and acculturating teachers in the academic standards and vision of the district (Wong, 2004). Induction programs that focus on connecting teachers to the vision of the organization also assist with new teacher retention. It was found that a teacher's commitment to remaining at a school was higher where there was a shared commitment among faculty to improve the school (Allensworth et al., 2009).

Teaching has been characterized as an occupation with relatively high turnover compared with other professions (Carroll, 2007; Richard M. Ingersoll, 2003). A growing number of states, schools, and districts have successfully utilized induction to confront this dilemma. A review of four studies from the databases of the National Center for Education Statistics revealed that beginning teachers who received some type of induction had higher commitments to continuing as teachers (R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011a). The authors that performed the review also found a linkage with a teacher's likelihood of turnover and the quantity of induction supports.

Induction programs that offer a variety of collective supports have an impact on teacher retention. The results of the previously mentioned Ingersoll and Strong study (2011) revealed that as the number of components offered in an induction program increased, the probability of teacher turnover decreased. However, it was also recognized that the number of teachers receiving multiple supports decreased (R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011a). Although studies have revealed a positive impact with induction on teacher retention, it is also important to note that a recent randomized controlled study found no impact on teacher retention with a group of teachers who received multiple

years of comprehensive induction (Glazerman et al., 2010; Wechsler, Caspary, Humphrey, & Matsko, 2010).

The qualities an effective teacher must possess have been offered in the literature (Saronge, 2002). Additional research has directly linked teacher quality according to the relationship between a teacher's ability and student performance (Watson, Miller, Davis, & Carter, 2010). It has further been offered that teachers new to the profession are less effective in increasing student achievement than their more experienced colleagues (Wechsler et al., 2010). Induction supports are often meant to improve teacher performance, student achievement, and overall teacher effectiveness.

A wide variety of institutions across the nation assist schools and districts with increasing teacher performance through induction supports. The CADRE Project (Career Advancement and Development for Recruits and Experienced teachers) at the University of Nebraska at Omaha recognizes the connection with induction supports and teacher effectiveness. By providing entry-year assistance to newly certified elementary or secondary teachers utilizing veteran teachers and university faculty, the CADRE Project has been able to enhance the first-year experience, increasing the quality and overall effectiveness of the teacher ("University of Nebraska Omaha | The CADRE Project," 2014). Additional organizations aim to increase teacher performance with induction supports.

The Chicago Office of the New Teacher Center (CNTC) supports new teachers in the Chicago public schools through induction with a mentor-coach over the course of two years. A major goal of this organization is to assist new teachers with better understanding their standards ("Chicago New Teacher Center | New Teacher Center,"

2014). A research study (2009) using data collected from interviews and observations of the interactions between eight second-year and third-year CNTC coaches and sixteen of their new teachers found that this induction experience provided teachers with support that influenced their practice (Lesnick et al., 2010). Another study (2010) also found that teachers who received two years of comprehensive induction had a positive and significant impact on student achievement in the third year (Glazerman et al., 2010).

The literature supports the benefits of induction by assisting new teachers with emotional support and aligning them with the vision of the district. Induction has been proven to impact teacher attrition rates, along with increasing a teacher's effectiveness and job performance. Research also suggests that induction is necessary due to a lack of adequate training prior to new teachers entering the workforce.

An effective teacher possesses preparedness as an important quality (Saronge, 2002). That is, a teacher is prepared for the tasks of teaching before he or she steps foot in the classroom. The current debate concerning teacher preparation has intensified, causing some states to call for uniform standards and additional math, science, and reading instruction (Torff, 2005). Additional evidence suggests that new teachers are often underprepared before entering the classroom.

School administrators across the country recognize the need for a closer examination of teacher preparedness. In the article, "Great Beginnings" by Susan Black, she summarizes the following account of a city superintendent. "What makes me angry is spending $2 million annually training new teachers in what they should have learned in college" (Black, 2004). Another recent study out of New Jersey suggests that new teachers lack curriculum and school experience.

Researchers from the Harvard University's Project on the Next Generation of Teachers recognized the lack of teacher preparedness through a random sampling technique. The researchers noted that although 46 % of the new teachers in their study were on average 35 years old and experienced in other professions, they lacked experience with curriculum, teaching methods, school routines, and working with students (Black, 2004). The teachers lacked the preparation necessary to meet the basic public school demands.

New teachers are presented with the same responsibilities, expectations, and high standards as veteran teachers (Lesnick et al., 2010). However, the literature supports that preservice teacher preparation is rarely sufficient to provide teachers with the knowledge and skills necessary for successful teaching. Therefore, induction programs may be viewed as a bridge from student teaching to teacher of students (R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011a).

Historical Perspective

New Teacher induction programs have been identified as a critical means of supporting and retaining new teachers. Interestingly, teaching has traditionally not had the types of induction supports or orientation programs common to many skilled blue and white collar professions (Richard M. Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). As the educational community has witnessed the benefits of induction supports, the number and types of induction programs have dramatically increased in the past few decades. Federal and state legislation has also mandated formal induction programs for school districts and local education agencies.

There has been a rapid increase in teacher induction programs in recent decades. Although states such as California and New Jersey have been involved in funding and evaluating several induction models since the late 1980s, it has been revealed that a growing number of teachers are participating in formal induction programs. It was offered in 2006 that more than 80 percent of teachers participated in some type of mentoring and induction program, which increased from 40 percent in 1990-1991 ("Teacher Induction Programs: Trends and Opportunities," 2006). Ingersoll (2012) offered that this number was up to 91 percent by 2008. Recent legislation has also passed calling for formal mentoring and induction programs.

The National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance has recognized that formal induction programs have recently garnered congressional interest. In their report, *Impacts of Comprehensive Induction* (2009), the agency cited that the *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB, 2001) emphasizes the importance of teacher quality and student performance (Glazerman et al., 2010). They further posited that Title II, Part A of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (2002) and the *Higher Education Opportunity Act* (2008) authorizes grant funds for the implementation of comprehensive, teacher induction programs (Glazerman et al., 2010).

Although the requirements for mentoring and induction programs have been set forth, it does not necessarily translate into the presence of formal teacher induction programs in districts. A policy review performed by the American Association of Colleges and Universities (AACU) offers insight on the trends and opportunities of teacher induction programs across the nation. In their analysis, it is offered that merely requiring mentoring and induction programs does not equate into comprehensive

induction and secure funding for state programs ("Teacher Induction Programs: Trends and Opportunities," 2006). The association confirmed an *Education Week* report (2003) that only sixteen states require and finance mentoring and induction programs for new teachers ("If I Can't Learn From You...Ensuring a Highly Qualified Teacher For Every Classroom," 2003). However, in a more recent (2012) review of state policies on teacher induction, it is offered that only three states (Connecticut, Delaware, and Iowa) currently require and dedicate funds for first and second-year induction programs (Goldrick, Osta, Barlin, & Burn, 2012).

The state of Texas has increased efforts to support teachers through induction. The Beginning Teacher Induction and Mentoring (BTIM) program was established in 2006 to "enhance a beginning teacher induction and mentoring program designed to increase retention of beginning teachers" (Golsan, 2014). The BTIM program supports induction according to Texas Education Code §21.458, where it states that public school districts and open enrollment charter schools may assign a qualified mentor teacher to each classroom teacher who has less than two years of teaching experience in a subject area or grade level ("EDUCATION CODE CHAPTER 21. EDUCATORS," n.d.). Under the BTIM program, grant funds are to be used for mentor stipends, mentor training, and mentor release time for meeting and observation purposes (Golsan, 2014)

Although the state of Texas has developed a program designed to offer support for beginning teachers through induction, policy analysts have suggested that this is not enough. According to a state policy review released by the New Teacher Center (NTC), which reviews the presence or absence of policies related to induction, it is offered that Texas state policy should require that all teachers receive induction support during their

first two years in the profession (Goldrick et al., 2012). The NTC also calls attention to the fact that the state does not require new school administrators to receive induction support and recommends that state policy should require that all administrators receive induction support during their first two years. The NTC further recommends that state policy outline formal induction program standards, require a rigorous mentor selection process, and require foundational training and ongoing professional development for beginning teachers (Goldrick et al., 2012).

A suburban school district in southwest Texas recognizes the benefits of induction by offering a mentoring and induction program for their beginning teachers. The district has created a program known as *Mentoring and Inducting New Teachers* (MINT) to provide support to year-one and year-two teachers. According to district officials responsible for program implementation, MINT acknowledges the developmental nature of teaching, creates a transition from teacher preparation courses to classroom instruction, focuses on curriculum and instruction, and provides classroom management strategies (Deans, 2014)

The intended benefits of the MINT program for students and schools include higher quality teaching and increased teacher effectiveness, along with less money spent on recruiting and hiring practices. It is further suggested that the program allows for stronger connections among the teaching staff, leading to a more positive and cohesive learning environment for students. The MINT program also has intended benefits for teachers.

MINT aims to benefit teachers by providing them with a larger and more sophisticated repertoire of teaching strategies. The program places an emphasis on

providing new teachers with stronger classroom management skills to equip them with the ability to deal with behavior and discipline problems more effectively. Also, by pairing new teachers with mentors and allowing them opportunities to reflect on teaching practices, the program strives to lower levels of stress, anxiety, and frustration for new teachers. As a result, it is the hope of district officials that the MINT program will ultimately result in increased job satisfaction for both new and veteran teachers.

The MINT program provides ongoing support for the district's new teachers. Program guidelines call for varying support systems with year-one and year-two teachers (see Table 4). The support intended for year-one teachers focuses on inducting new teachers into the profession and providing them with resources for successful teaching from day one, while year-two support allows for constant reflection and a better understanding of teaching standards.

Table 4

Mentoring and Induction (MINT) Program Goals

Program Goals (Year One)
To welcome beginning teachers into the profession, district and schools
To support new teachers as they develop as proficient, knowledgeable, and successful teachers working in a diverse community
To provide new teachers with the resources necessary to perform effectively from their first day in the classroom
To provide opportunities for developing collegial relationships, collaboration and reflective practice among teachers
To retain high quality teachers in the district
Program Goals (Year Two)
To have second-year teachers continue as reflective practitioners by analyzing practice to address strengths and challenges, setting goals, and creating and following action plans for professional development
To build a better understanding of teacher practice and Texas teaching standards

District officials have also taken measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the overall New Teacher Induction Program, while attempting to better understand the comprehensive experiences of new teachers during their induction period. The district has partnered with research company, K12 *Insight*, developing a *New Teacher Induction Survey* that was administered to new teachers during their first year within the district. District officials recognize the positive correlation with the quantity and types of induction supports and its effect on teacher retention (R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011a). Therefore, the *New Teacher Induction Survey* sought to gain information on multiple components of the New Teacher Induction Program such as the new teacher's background, along with their experiences with mentors, school culture and climate, administration support, performance and evaluation, and professional learning (see Figure 2). Additional information on the historical perspective of each component and their effects on new teacher induction will be offered.

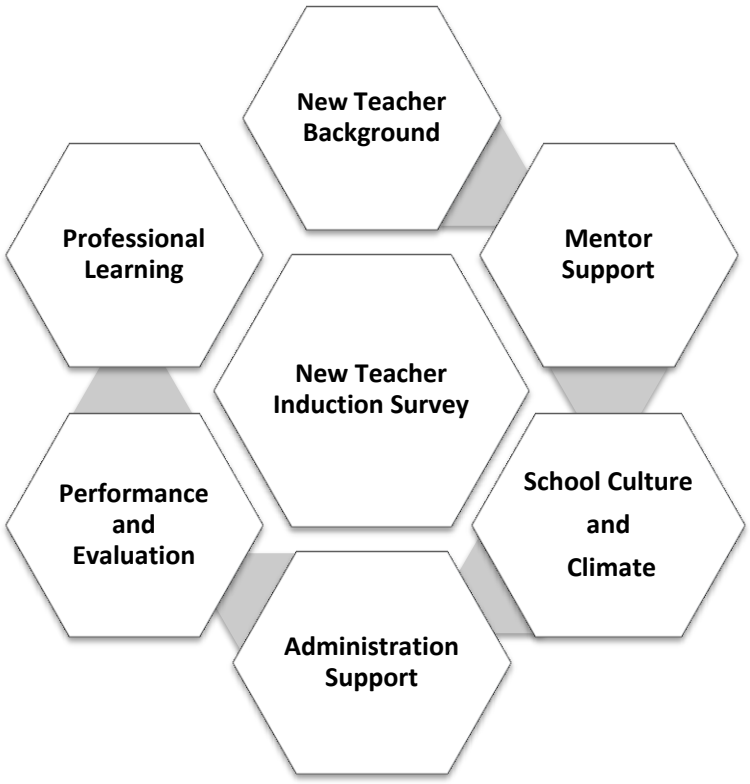

Figure 2. New Teacher Induction Model

New Teacher Background

It is important for districts and school leaders to be knowledgeable of their new teachers' backgrounds and experiences for various reasons. New teachers are allowed multiple preparation routes to enter the public school system, with a growing number of teachers becoming certified by alternative means rather than the traditional university route. It has been offered that "unlike traditional education degree programs at colleges and universities, many of these lateral entry programs require fewer hours of preservice coursework and student teaching" (Duke et al., 2006, p. 62). With varying routes to enter the classroom that may or may not contain elements of student teaching or a substantial

amount of requisite education coursework, it is necessary for districts to become familiar with teacher backgrounds and their pathways to supplement their prior experiences.

A large number of teachers are entering the profession through alternate routes to teacher certification. Stoddart and Floden (1995) recognized this phenomenon as a "radical departure" from the norm of teacher preparation in the United States. The researchers noted that the number of states allowing such programs doubled from 18 in 1986 to 40 in 1992 (Stoddart & Floden, 1995). By 2007, the number of states that offered teachers alternate routes into the profession reached 47 (Walsh & Jacobs, 2007). Currently, every state in the United States and the District of Columbia offers such non-traditional routes or programs ("Research Spotlight on Alternative Routes To Teacher Certification," n.d.)

Alternative certification, since its inception in 1983 in the state of New Jersey, presented a challenge to the education community. Researchers feared that the presence and rapid increase of such routes to teacher certification "dared to break the monopoly grip that colleges of education held over the state certification process" (Walsh & Jacobs, 2007, p. 17). Although initially feared, it has been offered that educational leaders and universities eventually embraced the routes, as evident by the fact that "in addition to their longstanding traditional preparation programs, colleges of education appear to house most of the alternative programs" (Walsh & Jacobs, 2007, p. 18).

The increase in the number of alternative certification programs that are offered nationally has translated to a remarkable increase of the number of teachers in the classrooms that are alternatively certified. It has been offered that nearly one out of every

five teachers has received an alternative certification (Walsh & Jacobs, 2007). This increase is also recognized at the state level.

For the 2011-12 school year, the state of Texas reported 84,083 alternatively certified teachers (Ramsay, 2013). This number constitutes 26.4% of the teacher workforce in Texas, while the remaining percentages are accounted for by teachers that received in-state or out-of- state university training (see A2 in appendices). Although the number of alternatively certified teachers has increased substantially over the years, teachers certified through the university undergraduate route remained a majority of certified, employed teachers for the 2011-2012 academic year.

A review of the research on the influence of a teacher's educational background on their effectiveness offers conflicting arguments. As efforts to ensure quality education were initially focused on teacher effectiveness and degrees (Goe, 2002), several studies were performed and concluded that certified teachers with a background in education coursework elicit greater student achievement (Goe, 2002; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002). However, there is also evidence to suggest that a teacher's background or education has little to do with student achievement.

Rivkin, Hanushek, and Kain (2005) examined results from thousands of teachers and students in Texas and found that variation in strong teacher effects on student achievement could not be explained by education or experience. The researchers further commented that "characteristics such as teacher experience, education, and even test scores of teachers explain little of the true variation in quality" (Rivkin et al., 2005). Additional research is needed in this area to determine the relationship between a teacher's background and student achievement.

Non-traditional or alternative certification programs have shown to be effective in certain areas. The National Education Association suggests that, of the features of successful programs, are a strong partnership between preparation programs and school districts, good screening and selection processes, strong supervision and mentoring, and a solid curriculum that includes relevant coursework prior to a teaching assignment ("Research Spotlight on Alternative Routes To Teacher Certification," n.d.). Another report recognizes that alternative certification programs may allow for increased potential in recruiting more minorities, males, and older individuals to teach in urban and rural areas (Mikulecky, Shkodriani, & Wilner, 2004).

Further literature review supports that a teacher's background may reveal more about teacher mobility, stability, and retention. A 2009 study examining the impact of teacher mobility in Chicago's public schools found that personal characteristics highly associated with teacher stability were a teacher's different life and career stages, age, and experience (Allensworth et al., 2009). A teacher's gender, race, and education were also found to have a modest relationship with teacher stability.

Additional research confirms a link between the educational background of teachers and their likelihood to stay in the profession. Duke, Karson, and Wheeler (2005) found a strong positive effect with teachers who do not have bachelor's degrees in education and their commitment to the profession. The researchers also found that induction programs featuring mentoring components had a greater marginal benefit for teachers without education degrees (Duke et al., 2006).

As new teachers come into the profession through a variety of pathways, district leaders will be faced with the challenge of analyzing their prior educational experiences

to determine how to best support them through their induction period. As the trend continues with growing numbers of alternatively certified teachers entering the profession, there is a need to provide targeted, specific induction supports to retain quality teachers. Efforts to provide mentoring and coaching opportunities to new teachers during their induction are proven methods to assist with teacher retention and will be discussed further.

Mentoring and Coaching

New teachers often receive little guidance from supervisors and colleagues upon entering the teaching profession. In order to assist teachers during the process of beginning their teaching assignment in a new district or school, many organizations utilize mentoring and coaching as a useful tool. Solis (2009) suggests that the mentoring and coaching provided to new teachers during the early stages of their careers is critical to teacher excellence, retention, and student success. Behrstock and Clifford (2009) also suggest that one way to retain Generation Y talent is by ensuring that positive relationships are experienced with new teachers and their mentors.

The presence of a formal mentoring program has proven to have an impact on teacher retention. Using data from the 1999-2000 Schools and Staffing Survey, researchers found that teachers who have had mentors in their first year of teaching show a greater commitment to the teaching profession (Duke et al., 2006). The New Teacher Center (NTC) has also offered that high quality mentoring and induction practices support teacher retention, teacher development, and improved student learning ("Mentors | New Teacher Center," 2014).

In Alaska, where teacher retention rate is relatively higher than other states due to many logistical and education challenges (Adams, 2010) the Alaska Statewide Mentor Project (ASMP) was created. The ASMP is the only fully funded, non-mandated, statewide induction program in the nation, which utilizes a number of *Full Release Mentors* to provide ongoing support to new teachers. The model has seen success, due to evidence of a recently completed study which found a statistically significant difference between reading, writing, and science scores of students in classrooms where teachers were provided with mentors (Adams, 2010). Other states have experienced success that may be attributed to an emphasis on mentoring.

Iowa is one of three states that mandate new teachers to complete two years of mentoring to receive their professional certificate. In such cities as Des Moines, Iowa's largest public school district, school officials have restructured their mentoring program to include full release mentors, having released a large number of mentors from their classroom assignments to coach new teachers on a full-time basis. The state has spent nearly $48.5 million on the mentoring and induction program since its inception in 2001-2002, and data shows that teacher retention rates have improved over that time (Stegmeir, 2014).

In a recent article published by the New Teacher Center (NTC), it was suggested that mentors undergo a rigorous selection process based on evidence of outstanding teaching practice and that they receive ongoing professional development and support to assist with skill development. The NTC recognizes that "carefully selected and well-trained mentors are the heart of a new teacher induction program" ("Mentors | New Teacher Center," 2014). It is further suggested that mentor programs should be multi-

year due to the assertion that most deep learning about instruction occurs during the second and third years of teaching.

The Texas A&M University System and the Texas Education Agency (TEA) have developed a resource to provide online help to novice and veteran teachers, teacher candidates, mentors and administrators. This resource, known as Performance-based Academic Coaching Teams (PACT), offers online administrator mentor training and provides a framework for mentors to assist their mentees during their induction period. PACT also offers the availability of *eMentors*, or individuals that may assist new teachers during their first years through electronic communication ("PACT: Performance-based Academic Coaching teams," 2014).

Perry and Hayes (2011) reported that more than 28 states require some form of a formal mentor program for their first year teachers. In Texas, the state has formed a Beginning Teacher Induction and Mentoring (BTIM) program designed to increase the retention of beginning teachers by assigning a qualified mentor teacher to each classroom teacher that has less than two years of teaching experience in a subject or grade level (Golsan, 2014). The state also makes grant funds available to school districts and open enrollment charter schools that can be used for mentor stipends, mentor training, and mentor release time to meet with and observe the beginning teachers.

Table 5

BTIM Mentor Teacher Requirements (Golsan, 2014)

A teacher mentor must:
Teach in the same school
Teach the same subject or grade level as applicable; and
Meet qualifications as deemed by the commissioner
Mentor teachers are required to:
Have at least three complete years of teaching experience and a superior history of improving student performance.
Have completed a research-based mentor and induction training program approved by the commissioner;
Have completed a mentor training program provided by the district.

A suburban school district in southwest Texas recognizes the benefits of mentoring with their Mentoring and Inducting New Teachers (MINT) program. MINT provides mentors to first and second year teachers based on TEA's requirements for mentor selections (Deans, 2014). The mentor and new teacher, often paired by campus administration, are to have a regular schedule of interactions that include grade-level meetings, one-on-one discussions, meetings with campus administrators or mentor coordinators, observations, journaling, and group meetings with other mentors and new teachers. It is the expectation that during these meetings, everyone is sharing, supporting, and working together to improve teaching and learning. Other factors that contribute to a new teacher's experience during their induction period are the school's culture and climate.

School Culture and Climate

School culture and climate are important elements that contribute to a successful school. Positive school climates have been attributed to a teacher's self-identity,

improved student achievement, and impacting teacher retention. Therefore, it is necessary for schools and districts, along with their induction programs to evaluate new teacher perceptions of school climate and environment.

The culture and climate of the school involve multiple factors, including the quality of the school facilities. Research has confirmed a link between the quality of school facilities and student achievement in English and Mathematics (Uline & Tschannen-Moran, 2008). Although there have been connections between the quality of the school physical environment with teacher and student performance, the type of culture and climate that will be further discussed involve the emotional connection to a school.

School climate may also be referred to as school culture. The relationship between culture and climate was "supported by Schein (1985, 1996) when he stated that norms, values, rituals, and climate are all manifestations of culture" (MacNeil, Prater, & Busch, 2009, p. 75). Deal and Peterson (1999) also acknowledged the linkage between climate and culture, with their assertion that a school's climate and culture must support reform if a school is to improve.

School climate, as it relates to school culture has been found to have an impact on a new teacher's identity. Rippon and Martin (2006) offered that "new teachers in schools with a collaborative ethos will be able to acquire the positive teacher identity more easily than those placed in schools with more individualistic styles of working" (Rippon & Martin, 2006, p. 307). In their study, performed with ten focus group participants as members of Scotland's new Teacher Induction System (TIS), it was further assumed that a teacher's self-identity is created in compromise with the teacher culture represented by

their colleagues, and that the emotional need for teachers to belong is equally important as professional development (Rippon & Martin, 2006).

Freiberg and Stein (1999) described school climate as the essence of the school that causes teachers and students to love the school and want to be connected to it. McEwan-Adkins (2008) described climate as "a distinct theme that one feels in the hallways and when talking with teachers" (McEwan-Adkins, 2008, p. 27). An organization's climate has also been described as a "useful sign of interpersonal relationships among people within a working environment" (Savas & Karakus, 2012, p. 67). The *organizational climate* of a school is also closely related to the concept of *organizational health*.

Organizational health was first defined by Parsons, Bales, and Shils (1953) as "the capacity to fit an organizing structure to its working environment to create coherence among its members" (Savas & Karakus, 2012, p. 67). Organizational health has also been connected to climate in school settings by acknowledging the relationship between interpersonal relations in a school with several climate dimensions (Tschannen-Moran, 2001). Furthermore, when concerning the organizational health of a school, measuring school climate has been offered as the preferred construct (MacNeil et al., 2009). Healthy or positive organizational school climates have been linked to the academic success of schools.

A recent study (2009) was performed to investigate whether *Exemplary*, *Recognized*, and *Acceptable* schools have differing school climates, as measured by 10 dimensions of the Organizational Health Inventory. The study found that the organizational health of the schools varied, with the *Exemplary* schools possessing

healthier climates than the *Acceptable* schools (MacNeil et al., 2009). Further evidence of the impact a positive school climate has on student achievement has been offered.

The relationships between school climate, community and school context, and student achievement were analyzed in 59 elementary schools in a southwestern USA city (B. Johnson, Stevens, & Zvoch, 2007). In the study, the researchers assessed the teacher perceptions of a modified version of the School-Level Environment Questionnaire (SLEQ) and found a statistically significant, positive relationship between school mean teacher's perceptions of school climate and school mean student achievement (B. Johnson et al., 2007). There are also connections with school climate and environment with teacher mobility and retention.

The Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) estimated that 157,000 teachers leave the profession each year, while 232,000 change school locations in search of better working conditions (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009). One study (2009) recognized that teachers were more likely to remain teaching in schools where they felt that their colleagues were innovative and worked together for the betterment of the school (Allensworth et al., 2009). Many of those teachers that choose to leave acknowledge that professional and social isolation contributed to their decision to exit (Perry & Hayes, 2011). It has also been offered that when teachers leave, "additional costs include lost institutional memory and lowered morale among those who remain" (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009, p. 5).

Researchers have also found that the difference in varying school cultures have a direct effect on providing a consistent induction experience for teachers within an organizational framework or system (Rippon & Martin, 2006). Characteristics of a

positive and supportive school culture include "fostering trust and ethical behavior; encouraging learning, teamwork, and growth; and creating effective lines of communication" (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009, p. 8). The perceived support of campus administration has also been found to impact school culture, teacher retention, and teacher satisfaction.

Administration Support

The role of the campus principal and the impact that campus administration has on a school is well supported in research. One of the most important actions that campus administration initiates within a school is to promote a strong vision for the organization (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, Wahlstrom, & others, 2004). Fink and Resnick (2001) offered that school principals establish a culture of teaching and learning at each school. The idea that administrators have an impact on school culture is considered in additional research.

It has been proposed that principals do not have a direct impact on student achievement, but rather indirectly effects learning by impacting the climate of the school (Hallinger & Heck, 1998). It has similarly been offered that the overall culture and climate of the school are strongly influenced by the school principal and that "successful school principals comprehend the critical role that the organizational culture plays in developing a successful school" (MacNeil et al., 2009, p. 74). Additional research provides knowledge into the leadership role of principals and their effect on teacher retention.

Research suggests that teachers often feel undervalued in their jobs (Kopkowski, 2014). School administrators can provide encouragement and support for new teachers

and should be aware of the challenges new teachers face. Principal support has also been found to impact the "irreplaceables", or teachers who are so successful that they are impossible to replace (Jacob, Vidyarthi, & Carroll, 2012). A recent article (2012) offered that principals make little effort to retain these individuals, and that less than 30 percent of irreplaceables plan to leave for personal reasons beyond the school's control. It was found that principal's actions had a significant impact on the decisions of the other 70 percent (Jacob et al., 2012). The effect of negative teacher perceptions of school leadership also greatly impacts teacher attrition at both the secondary and elementary levels.

The National Center for Educational Statistics reported that 43 percent of those teachers leaving their school or the teaching profession cited poor administrative support as motivation for their decision (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009; Richard M. Ingersoll, 2003). A survey of first-year teachers conducted by the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality and Public Agenda (2007) found that 35 percent of new high school teachers and 21 percent of new elementary teachers were dissatisfied with their school administration's leadership (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009).

As research has shown the connection between administration support and teacher retention, it is imperative that new teachers receive adequate support during their induction period. History has shown that those teachers who have had good building level support during this time have a better retention rate (Perry & Hayes, 2011). Additionally, Ingersoll and Strong (2011) reported that the data shows that beginning teachers choose to depart due to a lack of adequate support from school administration.

Although there are numerous factors that contribute to teacher retention, poor administrator support is commonly cited as the top reason why teachers choose to leave (Kopkowski, 2014). It is also important to note that there is a perceived lack of support for teachers who work with students with special needs. A recent qualitative study (2010) found that teachers of inclusive classrooms experienced an overwhelming lack of support from administration and special education staff, along with receiving inadequate planning and collaboration time (Fuchs, 2010). Administrators also have a critical role in the performance and evaluation process of new teachers.

Performance and Evaluation

In order to determine teacher effectiveness, teacher performance must be assessed. There is controversy surrounding how such assessment should be conducted (Torff, 2005). It has also been offered that, although school leaders play an important role in teacher evaluation, minimal guidelines, training, and standards are available to support them (Mathers & Oliva, 2008). Successful induction programs provide ongoing supports so that new teachers are knowledgeable of evaluation systems.

The provisions set forth in *No Child Left Behind* (2001) call for highly qualified teachers to be proficient in the content area being taught (Berry, Hoke, & Hirsch, 2004; Pate, 2010). Across the nation, state education agencies and school districts utilize various instruments to assess teacher effectiveness; generally combining analysis of student performance with administrator evaluations. Teacher evaluation systems have recently come under fire, causing school leaders to rethink the procedures utilized to evaluate teacher performance.

Nationally, there are mixed feelings concerning teacher evaluation. Bushaw and Lopez (2013) reported that a majority of Americans (58%) reject using standardized test scores of students to evaluate teacher performance. In their analysis of the 2013 PDK/Gallup Poll, a scientifically based survey of 1,001 Americans over the age of 18, the researchers also found that 60% of Americans believe performance reviews of teachers should be released to the public (Bushaw & Lopez, 2013). In an effort to provide more meaningful feedback on student learning and growth, the state of Texas has made significant strides to improve the quality of individual teacher evaluations ("Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership," 2014).

The Texas Education Agency (TEA) created an instrument, known as the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), which "Texas school districts can utilize to evaluate teacher performance and subsequently measure teacher effectiveness" (Pate, 2010, p. 2). PDAS was created by TEA as a teacher evaluation instrument in accordance with requirements of the Texas Education Code (TEC) and has been in place since 1997. School boards are allowed to determine their use of PDAS as the evaluative instrument for their school district; however, few Texas school districts do not utilize PDAS to evaluate teachers (Pate, 2010; "Region 13 | Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS)," 2014).

The Texas Education Agency's (TEA) approved instrument for evaluating teachers, the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS), is currently used by 86 percent of Local Education Agencies in Texas ("Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership," 2014). PDAS involves 52 evaluation criteria and is utilized

to measure the classroom teacher's effectiveness by rating the teacher on eight domains using performance level standards (see Table 6).

Table 6
Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) Domains ("Region 13 | Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS)," 2014)

Domain I	Active, Successful Student Participation in the Learning Process
Domain II	Learner-Centered Instruction
Domain III	Evaluation and Feedback on Student Progress
Domain IV	Management of Student Discipline, Instructional Strategies, Time and Materials
Domain V	Professional Communication
Domain VI	Professional Development
Domain VII	Compliance with Policies, Operating Procedures and Requirements
Domain VIII	Improvement of Academic Performance of All Students on the Campus

With the Professional Development and Appraisal System, the teacher is evaluated by a faculty member trained in PDAS; usually a school district administrator, such as the campus principal. These individuals are typically former teachers themselves with the background needed to assess teacher performance, and teacher evaluation is part of their training and licensure as school administrators (Danielson & McGreal, 2000). Although an overwhelming majority of school districts and local education agencies in Texas utilize PDAS, TEA has recently revisited the state's approved instrument for evaluating teachers.

In the Fall of 2011, TEA created a workgroup known as the Teacher Effectiveness Workgroup, comprised of its own members, the USDE-funded Texas Comprehensive Center, Educate Texas (an initiative of the Communities Foundation of Texas), and the Region XIII Education Service Center. This workgroup analyzed existing literature and

various national appraisal models to aid in the development of a new Texas appraisal system ("Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership," 2014). The group also used the National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality's publication, *A Practical Guide to Designing Comprehensive Teacher Evaluation Systems: A Tool to Assist in the Development of Teacher Evaluation Systems*, as a key resource.

As the state of Texas has redesigned its performance and evaluation system, it is also important to acknowledge the impact evaluation can have on student achievement. A study in Cincinnati's public schools found that teachers were more effective at raising student math test scores during the school year they were evaluated (Taylor & Tyler, 2012). Another investigation of the impact of merit pay for teachers on student achievement in Nashville found mild benefits for fifth graders (Matthews, 2012). However, it is also important to note that there was little gain for other students. Additional data on teacher evaluation programs suggest that knowledge of these systems can improve the induction experience for teachers.

The NEA Foundation for the Improvement of Education recommends using data on teacher performance and evaluations to improve teacher induction programs. The agency suggests that "direct observations of teaching practice are among the more useful types of data to help educators understand the connection between accomplished pedagogy and participation in induction activities" ("Using Data to Improve Teacher Induction Programs," 2002, p. 5). It is further suggested that observations of teacher performance reveal how new knowledge is actually applied in a variety of instructional settings ("Using Data to Improve Teacher Induction Programs," 2002).

It has been offered that teacher buy-in is critical to the success for any model of performance and evaluation. Marzano and researchers, in their work "*Examining the Role of Teacher Evaluation in Student Achievement*", state that the "examination of teacher perceptions regarding evaluation models provides unique insights regarding the impact on teaching practices" (Marzano, Toth, & Schooling, 2013, p. 7). Therefore, knowledge of the performance and evaluation system, along with evaluation of new teacher perceptions of this process will undoubtedly benefit all involved. This task will also require additional professional learning opportunities for new teachers.

Professional Learning

The professional learning that new teachers receive during their induction period is critical to their success. It has been offered that professional learning and development can have a profound impact on teacher learning (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009). Professional development offers a means of collaborative support and training to collectively conquer the myriad of challenges that teachers face (Beavers, 2009). The supports offered by professional learning can be in a variety of areas.

Professional learning supports can include helping teachers to grow professionally or coordinating a formal professional development program to improve teachers' skills, knowledge, and capabilities (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009). Meaningful professional development should involve educators as whole persons, and take into account their values, beliefs, and assumptions about teaching (Cranton & King, 2003). It is also offered that adult learners tend to resist learning that conflicts with the direction they believe their learning should go (Beavers, 2009).

Historically acclaimed adult learning theorist, Malcolm Knowles, acknowledged that adults come with a variety of experiences that are critical to their learning. He discovered through his work with adults that instructors needed to recognize the interests of learners instead of focusing on what they believed those interests to be (Carlson, 1989). Knowles' work, labeled "andragogy" consists of five assumptions: adults are self-directed learners, adult learners bring a wealth of experience to the educational setting, adults enter educational settings ready to learn, adults are problem-centered in their learning, and adults are best motivated by internal factors (Blondy, 2007). Also, current research aimed at providing Generation Y teachers with leadership abilities based on their values and making most of their expertise (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009) appears to have its roots in andragogy.

The literature shows that professional learning should consider viewing adults as unique learners. Trotter (2006) further suggests that teachers' experiences within the classroom must be respected, and that practical knowledge cannot be ignored. When concerning professional learning, it has also been offered that as professional development courses become mandated and institutionalized, the focus shifts towards credit counting (Hien, 2009). District leaders also face additional challenges when providing new teachers with professional learning opportunities.

School districts are also faced with the unique demand of providing professional learning to a new generation of teachers and educators. Generation Y teachers, or *Millennials,* also have specific needs when concerning professional development opportunities. As this group is typically highly educated, comfortable with technology, creative, and self-confident (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009), creating meaningful

professional development will require some intentionality. It is also offered that customized career paths should be developed to align "Gen Y teacher's responsibilities in a way that is in line with their interests and career ambitions and allows them to grow professionally and contribute effectively to a cause greater than themselves" (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009, p. 9).

A suburban school district in southwest Texas recognizes the demand to provide teachers with adequate training to supplement their prior experiences. District leaders have also developed many professional learning opportunities in a variety of areas for new teachers. Specific trainings are provided on increasing parent and family involvement, designing engaging work, building effective relationships, classroom management, and working with diverse student groups. Additional information is offered as to the benefits of each.

Parent and family involvement. New teachers are confronted with an array of challenges upon entering their first days in a classroom. A 2009 report based on a nationally representative survey of 890 teachers found that teachers view lack of parental support as their most pressing challenge (J. Johnson, Yarrow, Rochkind, & Ott, 2010). Interestingly, many teachers lack training on how to incorporate parent and family involvement into their curriculum. This information is alarming due to the fact that a substantial amount of research suggests the benefits of parent and family involvement.

Preparing teachers for parent and family involvement has been linked to a more effective teacher workforce and positive school climate (Caspe, Lopez, Chu, & Weiss, 2011). Research has shown that teachers are more likely to remain in schools, in particular elementary schools, where there are high levels of trust with parents

(Allensworth et al., 2009). There are also connections with student academic improvement and family involvement.

Parent and family involvement via interactive homework has proven beneficial for educators to increase academic achievement. Epstein, Salinas, and Jackson (1995) found that middle school teachers that involved parents in an interactive homework program (Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork [TIPS]) reported notably higher completion rates than other parent groups (Hoover-Dempsey et al., 2005). Another researcher also reported significant improvements in family involvement via TIPS with science curriculum and higher science report card grades in her quasi-experimental study of 253 sixth and eighth grade students in 10 science classrooms of four teachers in a suburban middle school (Voorhis, 2001).

Although researchers suggest the benefits of parent, family, and community involvement, it has been offered that educator preparation programs often struggle with incorporating family engagement into their curriculum (Shartrand, Weiss, Kreider, & Lopez, 1997). As a result, many teachers are not equipped with the skills necessary to successfully involve parents and families in their children's education. In order to be effective, teachers must be prepared to work with diverse students and families (Caspe et al., 2011).

The lack of training on parent and family involvement has created a need for educator preparation programs to design new strategies to train the next generation of teachers to meet the needs of students and families (Hill et al., 2010). School districts across the country are also confronted with a need to train teachers in this area. The necessary skills for professional development for family engagement and parent

involvement are often embedded in a system of training and professional learning (Caspe et al., 2011).

The obvious benefits of parent and family involvement suggest the demand for school districts and their induction programs to evaluate a new teacher's prior knowledge or experience with family engagement strategies. Through professional learning, a suburban school district in southwest Texas has attempted to address this need. New teachers are also provided professional learning opportunities on instructional strategies geared towards student engagement.

Designing engaging work. The concept of engagement has been explored extensively in educational research. It has been offered that classroom engagement involves a range of concepts, such as providing a caring environment, making the classroom interesting, demonstrating why content is important, and helping students realize that personal effort is the key to success (Marzano, 2013). Taylor and Parsons (2011) offered that student engagement has historically focused on increasing student achievement, positive behaviors, and identifying a sense of belonging that connects students to school. There is also a survey to assess student engagement, the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), which is administered to colleges and universities to assess and improve undergraduate education.

Engagement, as it applies to teachers and their work has also been studied. Strong, Silver, and Robinson (1995) found through their research that people who are engaged in their work are driven by four essential goals, all of which satisfies a particular human need: success, curiosity, originality, and relationships. Interestingly, a recent Gallup Report found that nearly seven in ten teachers report that they are not emotionally

connected or engaged to their work (*Gallup Report -- State Of America's Schools: The Path to Winning Again in Education*, 2014).

It has been offered that the term *engagement* is used in so many ways, there is a need to define it so that others have a clear understanding of what is meant by the term (Schlechty, 2011). This assumption is essential to district leaders in a suburban school district in southwest Texas, where extensive professional learning opportunities have been organized on student engagement. The district has made a commitment to providing professional learning opportunities centered on Phillip C. Schlecty's understanding of engagement and effective teachers. Schlechty offers that "effective teachers get students to do the right things, and they design things for them to do that are right for the students they teach" (Schlechty, 2011, p. 4).

As the expectation for new teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas are to be designers of engaging work (Schlechty), it will be essential for district leaders to analyze prior knowledge and provide unique professional learning in this area so that the new teachers might rise to the challenge. The district has also made strategic attempts to equip all staff with knowledge on how to build effective relationships with students.

Building effective relationships. Teachers are charged with the task of not only designing engaging work for their students, but creating an environment that is caring and supportive. Christiansen (2002) suggests that exemplary teachers create an alliance with their students, and offers that "an emotional commitment to teaching becomes evident when the teacher and student are capable of demonstrating a mutual respect, trusting that

together they have a shared responsibility for learning" (Christiansen & others, 2002, p. 7). Teachers have the capacity to build effective relationships with their students.

The American Psychological Association (APA) recognizes the importance of improving students' relationships with teachers. The association has claimed that teachers who foster positive relationships with their students create classroom environments more conducive to learning and meet students' development, emotional, and academic needs (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). The APA also cites research that teachers who experience close relationships with students report that their students are more likely to attend school, appear more self-directed, more cooperative, and more engaged in learning (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Klem & Connell, 2004). A closer examination of the teacher-student relationship is further described.

The relationship between the student and teacher is characterized by an emotional activity that involves a connection. Researchers explained this with the assertion that students appear to need an emotional connection and validation from their teachers in order to move forward academically (Fouts & Poulsen, 2000). Additional research suggests that relationships within the school setting can have an impact on school improvement efforts. A one year single-site case study (1997) in an urban public elementary school in California sought to assess the role of respect, caring, and trust with school improvement efforts. It was found that changing school cultures and patterns of relating had a greater impact for school improvement than making only structural changes (Kratzer, 1997). More recent research examined the importance of trust as it pertains to building effective relationships within the school setting.

Tschannen-Moran and Hoy (2000) recognize that trust is pivotal in efforts to improve the educational system. The researchers offered that when there is a lack of trust, "a student's energy is diverted toward self-protection and away from learning" (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2000, p. 584). The concept of "relational trust" and its impact on school improvement has also been explored in research. Bryk and Schneider (2003) described relational trust as an interrelated set of mutual dependencies that are embedded within the social exchanges in the school community. The researchers found that elementary schools with high relational trust were more likely to demonstrate improvements in student learning (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). Trust is also an essential element in professional learning focused on equipping school staff with strategies to build positive relationships with students.

The Flippen Education Group provides training and professional development to organizations and schools across the globe, and operates under the assumption that remarkable outcomes are possible in classrooms where trust, respect, and caring relationships flourish. Founder, Flip Flippen, has also coined the phrase, "If you have a child's heart, you have his head" ("The Flippen Group," 2014). The Flippen Group has developed a wide variety of trainings for schools to provide school faculty with tools to build positive, trusting, relationships among themselves and with their students.

A suburban school district in southwest Texas has utilized the Flippen Group and their trainings to assist in the development of relational capacity within the district. The district understands the importance of the emotional connection between student and teacher, and district leaders have made a commitment to train a large number of staff in *Capturing Kids Hearts*, which is a three-day off site learning experience that aims to

provide participants with skills to develop safe, trusting, and self-managing classrooms ("The Flippen Group," 2014).

Classroom management. Robert J. Marzano, in his book, "Classroom Management That Works", acknowledges that the effective teacher performs many functions that can be categorized into three major roles, one of them being effective use of classroom management techniques. It is further offered that learning cannot take place in a poorly managed classroom and that well managed classrooms provide environments where learning can flourish (Marzano, 2003). It is, as one author suggests, "one of the responsibilities of the job to bring order and respect sufficient to protect all students' right to learn" (Lemov, 2010, p. 167). However, it is common knowledge that many teachers struggle with managing student behaviors.

According to various studies, classroom management continues to be one of the greatest challenges for new teachers. According to a 2012 survey of new teachers, over 40 percent reported feeling "not at all prepared" or "only somewhat prepared" to handle classroom behaviors. Another 2013 survey described classroom management as "the top problem" identified by teachers (Greenberg, Putman, & Walsh, 2014). The problems associated with poor classroom management may be attributed to a lack of preservice preparation in this area.

A recent study (2014) examining the degree to which 122 teacher preparation programs taught and provided opportunities to practice research-based classroom management strategies revealed alarming results (Greenberg et al., 2014). It was found that that while all programs required coursework on classroom management, the average time spent on this was extremely minimal. Another interesting result of this particular

study was that only one-third of programs required teacher candidates to practice classroom management skills as they were learned (Greenberg et al., 2014). Classroom management as a component of induction has also been explored in research.

It has been offered that induction training with components of classroom management via professional learning "produces the most fruitful outcome when the processes of induction are comprehensive, collaborative, systematic, coherent, and sustained" (Nard, 2007, p. 30). Another review of 15 empirical studies conducted since the mid-1980s on the effects of induction for beginning teachers found that new teachers who participated in some kind of induction performed better with maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere and demonstrating successful classroom management (R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011b). Effective teachers not only know how to successfully manage a classroom, but also understand how to work with diverse student groups.

Working with diverse student groups. Teachers are faced with the challenge of working with diverse student groups. Diversity comes in the form of teaching students with varying cognitive abilities, differing levels of English-language proficiency, and from multiple ethnic and cultural backgrounds. However, as one researcher recognized of the push for the inclusion of diverse learners into the classroom, "(It) has not always been echoed by increased knowledge, collaboration and preservice experiences for future teachers" (Fuchs, 2010, p. 30). New teachers, in particular, attribute many first years' struggles with working with diverse student groups.

The *Individuals with Disabilities Act* (IDEA) and its amendments have enabled students with disabilities to be more included in the general classroom setting. Although the goal of inclusion of all students is necessary, historically, a number of studies have

reported that as many as 75 percent of teachers were not in favor of inclusion and felt that inclusion would not be successful (Scruggs & Mastropieri, 1996). Since the inception of inclusion, teachers consistently report that they have difficulties with meeting the instructional needs of students with disabilities.

It has been offered that teachers feel unprepared to successfully meet the needs of diverse students in the classroom (Fuchs, 2010). Of the many challenges that working with diverse student groups can present, teachers report the need for more training in accommodating and modifying instruction, assessment techniques, and utilizing a variety of instructional strategies to meet the needs of students with disabilities (Avramidis, Bayliss, & Burden, 2000; Buell, Hallam, Gamel-McCormick, & Scheer, 1999; Kamens, Loprete, & Slostad, 2000). A recent qualitative study (2010) seeking to reveal common challenges within classroom contexts that inhibited success for educating students with disabilities also found that teachers lacked support from administration and special education staff, along with a lack of sufficient preparation from their educator preparation programs (Fuchs, 2010).

Educating diverse student groups also involves teaching students with high levels of cognitive ability. Such abilities are evident with students classified as "gifted", which the federal definition of giftedness includes exceptional intellectual, leadership and academic ability, artistic talent, and creativity (Jellinek, Henderson, & Pfeiffer, 2009; Warner, 2011). Gifted and Talented (GT) learners, according to researchers Berman, Schultz, and Weber (2012), "tend to endure unchallenging curriculum, a slow pace of instruction, and a state of ignorance by many of their general education teachers"

(Berman, Schultz, & Weber, 2012, p. 19). Teacher perceptions of giftedness and GT learners can also vary greatly across all levels.

It was found in previous research that the more knowledge that teachers had regarding gifted students resulted in more positive perceptions of the gifted and the special participation of gifted students in their classrooms (Morris, 1987). A more recent study (2012) sought to examine how in-service teachers, preservice teacher candidates, and preservice education students viewed GT learners. In this particular study, which involved qualitative data through analyses of survey responses of undergraduate students, a perceived need was revealed for specialized training associated with GT learners (Berman et al., 2012).

The perceived need for additional training for such special populations as students with special needs and GT learners should be of serious concern for educational leaders within a suburban school district in southwest Texas. Recent statistical analysis reveals that 8.7% of the student populations within the district are classified as GT (Caffey, 2014), which is slightly higher than that of the state average (7.9%, excluding charter schools) for GT students ("Snapshot: School District Profiles," 2013). Another student group that has increased dramatically over the past few years is that of the limited-English proficient (LEP) student population.

Teachers are required to teach a growing number of English language learner (ELL) students. These are students classified as limited English proficient (LEP), and this group represents one of the fastest growing student populations in the nation. According to a report from the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA), *The Growing Number of Limited English Proficient Students* (2006), the

growth rate of LEP students increased by 60.76% nationally from the 1994-95 to the 2004-05 school year. More recent data shows that ELL students in cities made up an average of 14.2% of total public school enrollment ("The NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) Fast Facts," 2014).

English Language Learners (ELLs) in the United States have various family backgrounds and cultures. Recent data shows that 31% of immigrants relocating to the United States are from Asia, 24% from Mexico, 12% from Central and South America, 11% from the Caribbean, 10% from Southern and Eastern Europe, and 8% a combination from all other countries (O'Neal, Ringler, & Rodriguez, 2008). The wide variety of cultures contributes to the population of limited English proficient students, however, data also shows that nearly 60% of ELL students are born in the United States and are overwhelmingly of Hispanic background (Manning & Baruth, 2009).

Evidence also suggests that a large number of English language learners are settling in more rural areas which present unique educational challenges for those districts and schools. O'Neal, Ringler, and Rodriguez (2008) recognized this phenomenon and suggested that challenges include: poor attendance for seasonal migrant workers, lack of proficiency in the native language, and lack of cultural support in their communities. The researchers also posited that due to the high number of ELL students in rural areas, many classrooms are no longer a majority of monolingual (English only) students, but a majority of ELL students (O'Neal et al., 2008).

The population of English language learners is highest in suburban and city areas. A recent report released by the National Center for Education Statistics (2014) offered that ELL students in cities made up 14.2% of total public school enrollment, ranging

from 10.9% in small cities to 16.7% in large cities. The same report also shows in suburban areas, ELL students accounted for an average of 9.0% of public school enrollment, ranging from 6.4% in midsize suburban areas to 9.4% in large suburban areas ("The NCES (National Center for Education Statistics) Fast Facts," 2014).

Texas has seen a dramatic increase in the number of ELL students in recent years and now has the second largest number of ELL students (about 832,000 ELL students in 2011, behind California's 1.1 million) in the nation (Flores, Batalova, & Fix, 2012). Results from a recent summary profile also showed the percent of ELL students in the state at 17% (excluding charter schools) with 16.6% participating in Bilingual/ESL education (*Snapshot 2013: State Totals*, 2014).

The increase in the number of ELL Learners has impacted a suburban district in southwest Texas. According to a recent report (Camacho, 2014), the district has seen an overall increase of nearly 1,000 ELL students since the 2009-2010 school year (see Table 7). The nearly seven percent increase has demanded a response from school officials to prepare all teachers with strategies to meet the educational needs of a rapidly growing number of students.

Table 7

Change in ELL Enrollment in a Suburban School District in Southwest Texas

School Year	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	2013-2014
Total ELLs	2,233	2,434	2,673	3,209

Along with the alarming increase of English Language Learners, the district serves students from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. At the end of the 2013-2014 school year, it was reported that sixty-two languages were represented by the

student populations within the suburban school district in southwest Texas. The myriad of cultures suggests that all teachers must create classrooms where all students regardless of their linguistic and cultural backgrounds are welcomed, supported, and provided with the best opportunity to learn (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2006). Teachers must be not only culturally sensitive, but culturally responsive.

Policy makers and school leaders often attempt efforts to diversify the teaching pool as a means to address the growing diversity in schools. However, research on the relationship of student-teacher racial congruence and student achievement has revealed no differences in overall achievement of students who were racially matched with their teachers and those who were not (Strange, 2011). Therefore, other methods to ensure that teachers are prepared to work with diverse student groups are necessary.

Researchers maintain that culturally responsive pedagogy can be utilized to address the instructional needs of a diverse student population. It is offered that in a culturally responsive classroom, "effective teaching and learning occur in a culturally supported, learner-centered context, whereby the strengths students bring to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement" (Richards et al., 2006, p. 4). Culturally responsive pedagogy also involves school leaders more closely examining the impact of school policies and allocation of resources.

Chapter III

Research Methods

Research Design

The type of study that the researcher performed was a quantitative study, involving an evaluation of the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program in a suburban school district in southwest Texas As the primary purpose of evaluation is "to render judgments about the value of whatever is being evaluated" (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2011, p. 13), a quantitative analysis of the new teacher perceptions of the components of the induction program within the district was chosen to provide district officials and other stakeholders with crucial information as to the effectiveness and overall quality of the program. Additionally, the study provided district leaders with critical feedback from the new teachers on their background, perceptions of their first year of teaching and their experience with the New Teacher Induction Program.

The research study involved a descriptive statistical analysis of district archival data. Analyses of descriptive statistics allow researchers to summarize data about a category of people or objects and summarize the information with accurate mathematical figures, tables, and charts (Ritchey, 2008). The study involved quantitative data through analysis of closed survey responses.

The *New Teacher Induction Survey* was administered as a census-type survey. A census is a study of every unit, everyone or everything, in a population, which may also be described as complete enumeration or a complete count ("Statistical Language - Census and Sample," 2014). According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the benefits of a census is that it provides a true measure of the population, benchmark data

may be attained for future studies, and detailed information about small subgroups within the population is more likely to be available. The *New Teacher Induction Survey* was analyzed to answer the following questions related to new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program:

Research Questions

1. What are new teacher perceptions of their professional learning experience within the district? Specifically, what are their perceptions with professional learning experiences and opportunities with:

a) Classroom management,
b) Building relationships,
c) Designing engaging work,
d) Professional communication,
e) Working with diverse student and parent groups,
f) Understanding district standards
g) Meeting demands of work and family life?

2. What are new teacher perceptions of the culture and climate within their schools? Specifically, what are the new teacher perceptions of their sense of belonging and that the whole school community is invested in their development?

3. What are new teacher perceptions of their mentoring and coaching experience within the district? Specifically, a) the process of mentor assignment, and b) the frequency and type of mentor visits?

4. What are new teacher perceptions of the support provided by their current principal and administrators within their schools? Specifically, a) the new teacher's sense that the administration is approachable and values their concerns, and b) the frequency and type of visits between new teachers and administrators?

5. What are new teacher perceptions of the teacher performance and evaluation process within the district? Specifically, the clarity and expectations of the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS)?

Setting

This study consisted of an evaluation of the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program in a suburban school district in southwest Texas for the 2013-2014 school year. The school district is accredited with a recognized rating from the Texas Education Agency. The school district expands nearly 250 square miles and serves both large and small cities within the county. There are two high schools, two alternative schools, five junior high schools, and fourteen elementary schools within the district. There are approximately 18,955 students that make the school district the second largest in the county. The district's ethnic composition is 44.5% Hispanic, 34% White, 12% African American, 8% Asian, and 1% other.

The district has experienced considerable growth recently causing student populations to increase 33% since 1999. The district is also projected to have an enrollment increase of nearly 4,500 students by 2018 (Templeton Demographics, 2013). The district employs approximately 2,500 individuals. Of the employed individuals, 240 teachers were classified as new teachers to the district.

Subjects and Participants

Those individuals that participated in this study were new teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas. There were 240 new teachers to the district for the 2013-2014 school year that were targeted as participants for the study. The new teachers differed in years of experience in the profession, ranging from beginning teachers with

zero years of experience to veteran teachers that were new to the district. The new teachers also came to the district from a variety of backgrounds with some having received alternative certifications and others from universities with traditional classes held face-to-face. The new teachers to the district had multiple experiences prior to their current teaching positions with some participating in student teaching assignments and internships.

The new teachers to the district also represented various campuses levels within the district (see Table 8). Approximately one half (50.4%) of the new teachers were from elementary campuses. A number (28.8%) of new teachers to the district taught at the junior high level with one fifth (20%) having taught at one of the two high schools. There were also two teachers (.8%) that represented one of the two alternative campuses within the district.

Table 8

Total Number of New Teachers in a Suburban School District in Southwest Texas by Campus Level

Number of New Elementary Teachers	Number of New Junior High Teachers	Number of New High School Teachers	Number of New Alternative School Teachers
121	69	48	2

Procedures

The data that was used to answer the research questions were drawn from a census *New Teacher Induction Survey* that was administered to 240 new teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas. The *New Teacher Induction Survey* was developed by district officials in collaboration with the research firm, K-12 *Insight* and

was conducted between January 27, 2014 and February 24, 2014. Two hundred forty email invitations were sent from a unique survey link to the district's new teachers during this time period.

The researcher requested and received permission from district leaders within a suburban school district in southwest Texas to analyze data collected from the *New Teacher Induction Survey*. All teacher names were masked in order to comply with the FERPA regulations ("Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)," 2014) and to protect the identities of teachers. Participation by the new teachers, along with answering all questions was voluntary.

Data that was collected from the *New Teacher Induction Survey* involved information on new teacher background, perceptions of mentor support, perceptions of school culture and climate, perceptions of administration support, perceptions of teacher performance and evaluation, and perceptions of professional learning. An evaluation of the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program in a suburban school district in southwest Texas was also performed to provide will provide district officials with information on new teacher background, along with additional insight on each component of the new teacher induction program.

Instruments

The instrument that the researcher used for the study was a close-ended *New Teacher Induction Survey*. The study involved a census survey administration where the results reflected the views of survey participants only and did not necessarily represent the views of non-respondents. The *New Teacher Induction Survey* instrument was developed within the suburban school district in southwest Texas with collaboration from

researchers from the district research consultant organization, K-12 *Insight*. This organization is a technology-based research and communications firm that helps school district leadership better engage in conversations with parents, teachers, staff, students and the public on critical district issues. K-12 *Insight* assists school districts with survey design, and aims to "transform school districts into organizations that grow trust capital by engaging the silent majority of their stakeholders through transparency and collaborative decision-making" ("Stakeholder Engagement for Public Schools through Systemic Surveys," 2014b)..

Chapter IV

Research Findings

A suburban school district in southwest Texas recently administered a *New Teacher Induction Survey* to gather feedback from new teachers to the district on their experiences during their induction period. The survey was conducted between January 27, 2014 and February 24, 2014 and was administered to 240 new teachers in the district from a unique survey link. Of the 240 email invitations that were sent, there were 106 responses, which gave the study a 44% response rate. The survey was a census survey administration. All questions were voluntary and the results from the survey reflected the views of survey participants only and did not necessarily represent the views of non-respondents. Information on new teacher respondent background is further offered.

New Teacher Background

The *New Teacher Induction Survey* provided a variety of data on the background of new teachers to the district. Results included information on respondent background (Figure 3), respondent preservice program participation (Figure 4) and prior classroom teaching experience (Figure 5). Additional information on specific new teacher educator preparation programs is provided in the appendices (Table B1). The results on the respondent background (Figure 3) revealed that new teachers to the district have various professional backgrounds, with 13% having held a full-time position outside the field of education, 57% having served as classroom teachers in another district, and 30% new to the profession and district. The participants also attended various universities and educator preparation programs, with 35% of participants indicating that they received alternative teacher certification (Table B1).

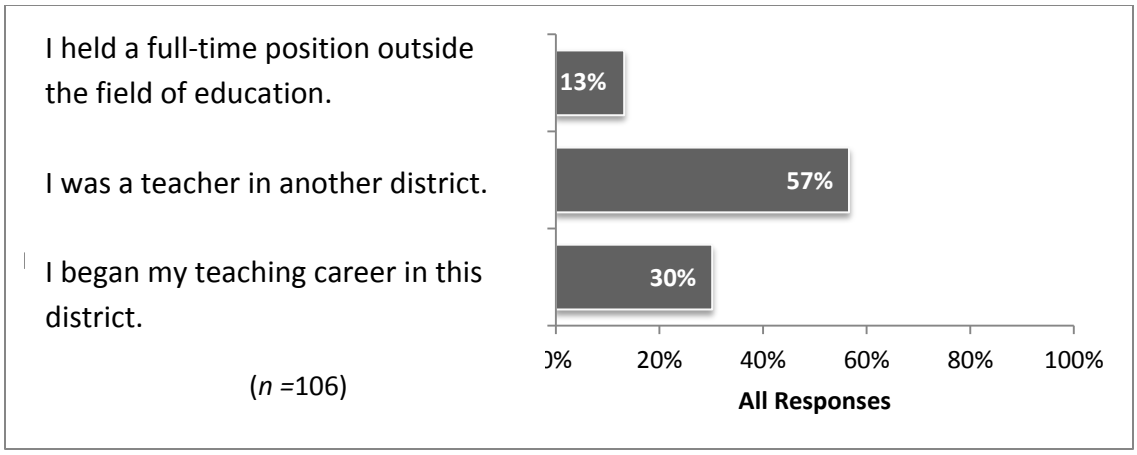

Figure 3. Respondent Background

Respondent preservice program participation. Data gathered from new teachers in the district via the *New Teacher Induction Survey* revealed additional information on new teacher preservice program participation (Figure 4). It was revealed that 70% of respondents participated in a traditional preservice program, with all classes held face-to-face. Thirteen percent participated in a hybrid-style preservice program where some classes were held online and some face-to-face and 16% participated in an online preservice program with all classes offered via an online platform.

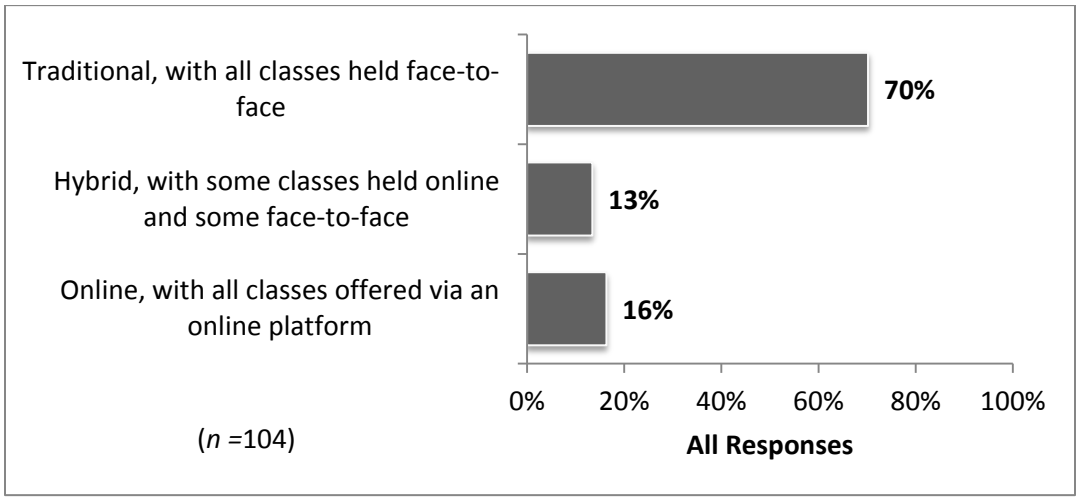

Figure 4. Respondent Preservice Program Participation

Prior classroom teacher experience. Descriptive statistics showed that new teachers to the district have had different experiences related to prior classroom teaching (Figure 5). Nearly one half (45%) of new teachers to the district reported that their prior classroom teaching involved an element of student teaching, while 27% reported that they participated in an internship to prepare them for entering the classroom. Another 28% of respondents indicated that they did participate in neither student teaching, nor an intern opportunity, but had other prior classroom teaching experience.

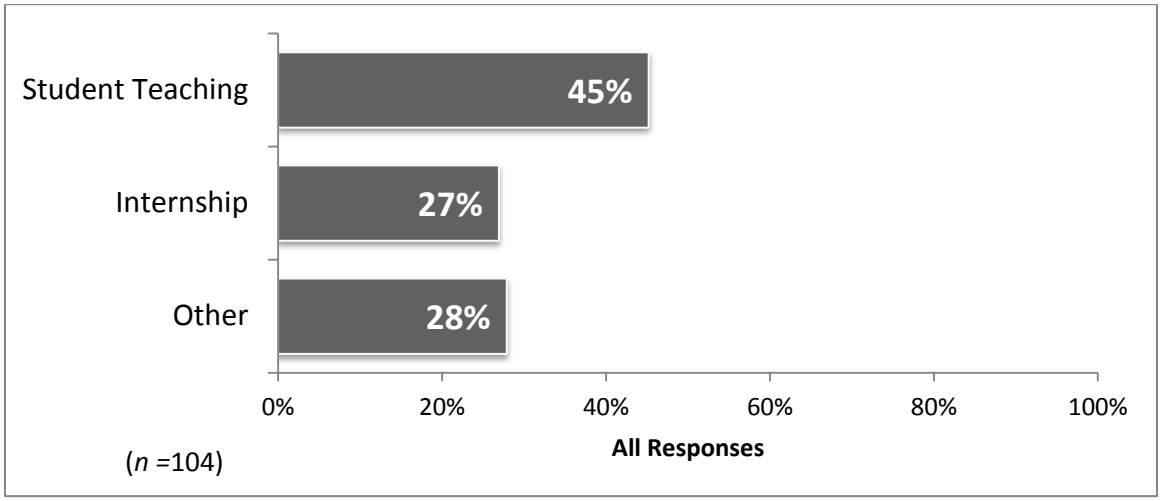

Figure 5. Prior Classroom Teaching Experience

Research Questions

An evaluation of the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program was performed involving descriptive statistics to reveal new teacher perceptions during their induction period of mentoring and coaching, as well as perceptions about school culture and climate, administration support, teacher performance and evaluation, and professional development. The following research questions were posed to determine new teacher perceptions of each component of induction:

Research question 1. What are new teacher perceptions of their professional learning experience within the district? Specifically, what are their perceptions with professional learning experiences and opportunities with:

a) Classroom management,
b) Building relationships,
c) Designing engaging work,
d) Professional communication,
e) Working with diverse student and parent groups,
f) Understanding district standards
g) Meeting demands of work and family life?

Research question 2. What are new teacher perceptions of the culture and climate within their schools? Specifically, what are the new teacher perceptions of their sense of belonging and that the whole school community is invested in their development?

Research question 3. What are new teacher perceptions of their mentoring and coaching experience within the district? Specifically, a) the process of mentor assignment, and b) the frequency and type of mentor visits?

Research question 4. What are new teacher perceptions of the support provided by their current principal and administrators within their schools? Specifically, a) the new teacher's sense that the administration is approachable and values their concerns, and b) the frequency and type of visits between new teachers and administrators?

Research question 5. What are new teacher perceptions of the teacher performance and evaluation process within the district? Specifically, the clarity and expectations of the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS)?

Data Analysis

Data was collected from the district-administered *New Teacher Induction Survey* that was sent to 240 new teachers to the district. Of the 240 new teachers that were asked to complete the census survey, there were 106 responses (44% response rate). The survey involved quantitative data through closed survey responses. An evaluation of the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program was completed involving descriptive statistical analysis of the district-administered *New Teacher Induction Survey* responses.

Research question 1. In order to determine the new teacher perceptions of their professional learning experience within the district, specifically professional learning opportunities on classroom management, building relationships, designing engaging work, professional communication, working with diverse student and parent groups, understanding district standards, and meeting demands of work and family life, various survey responses were analyzed.. As shown in Figure 6, a number of new teachers (n = 104), 36%, reported that they did not receive the opportunity for professional learning on *Classroom Management* during their induction period, while 45% suggested that training in this area was "Good" or "Great". According to survey responses (n = 104), 71% percent of new teachers rated their professional learning opportunities on *Building Effective Relationships* as "Good" or "Great", while 16% reported that they did not receive the opportunity for professional learning in this area.

Survey responses also revealed that (n = 105) 66% percent of new teachers responded favorably to their experiences with professional learning opportunities during their induction period on *Designing Engaging Work*. Only 10% of teachers reported that

they did not receive professional learning in this area. Nineteen percent (*n* = 104) of respondents indicated that they did not receive specific professional learning in the area of *Professional Communications*, while 62% suggested that their experiences were "Good" or "Great".

Over one half (54%) of new teachers (*n* = 101) reported that their professional learning experiences with *Working with Diverse Student Groups* was "Good" or "Great". Another 22% responded that they did not receive training in this area during their induction period. Exactly (*n* = 101) 25% of new teachers offered that their experiences with professional learning opportunities on *Working with Diverse Parent Groups* was "Poor" or "Fair", while 35% reported that they did not receive the opportunity for training in this area.

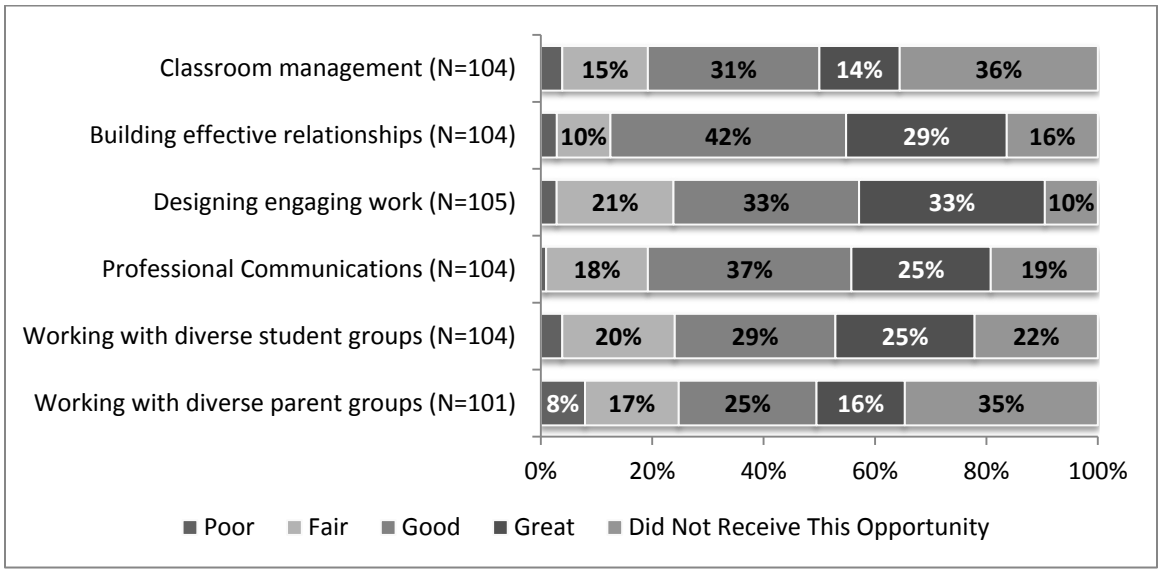

Figure 6. Received Professional Learning Opportunities During Induction Period
**Note: Data labels of 5% or less are not shown on chart.*

Additional information is revealed on new teacher perceptions of professional learning opportunities received during the new teacher induction period in Figure 7.

According to respondents, (*n* = 103) 36% suggested that they did not receive training on *Meeting Demands of Work and Family Life*, while 42% reported that training received in this area was "Good" or "Great". Descriptive statistics also revealed that (*n* = 103) 23% of new teachers suggested that professional learning opportunities received on *Understanding Assessment and Student Data* was "Poor" or "Fair". Another 26% reported that they did not receive professional development in this area.

Nearly (*n* = 104) 70% of new teachers reported that the training received on *Understanding District Standards* was "Good" or "Great". It is also offered that (*n* = 103) 28% of new teacher respondents suggested that received professional learning opportunities on *Working with Special Education Students and Families* was "Poor" or "Fair". Another 37% indicated that they did not receive professional learning in this area. According to responses to the *New Teacher Induction Survey*, it was revealed that (*n* = 102) 31% of new teachers did not receive the opportunity for training on *Working with Non-native English-speaking Students and Families*, while 26% suggested that training received in this area was "Poor" or "Fair". Forty three percent of new teachers suggested that professional learning in this area was "Good" or "Great".

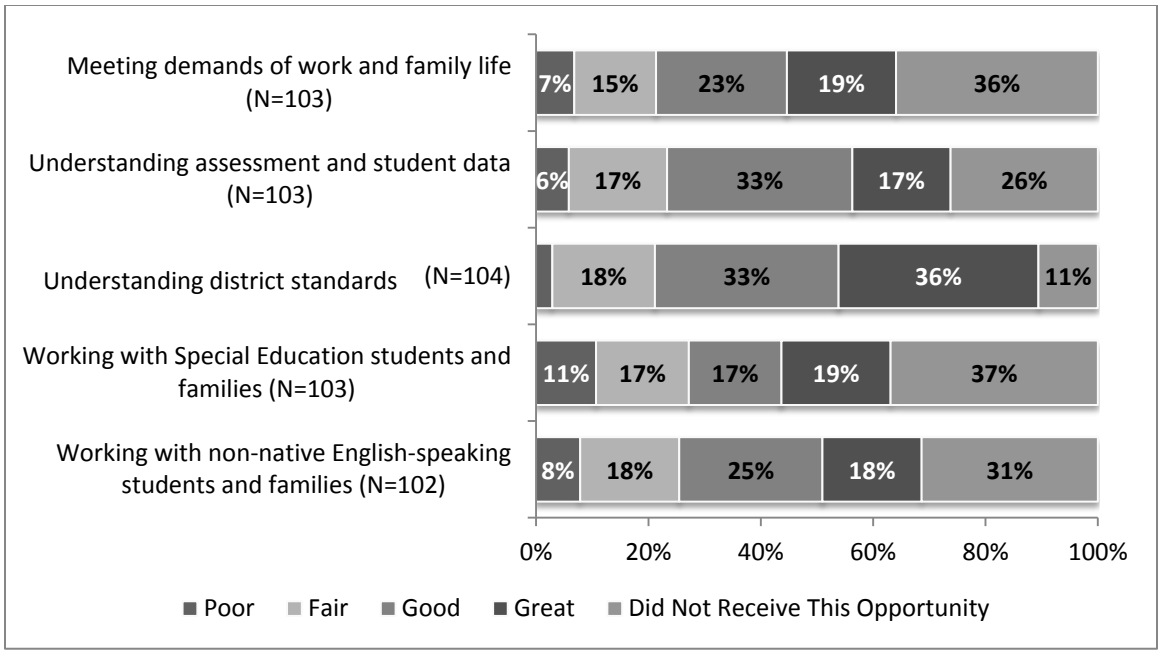

Figure 7. Received Professional Learning Opportunities During Induction Period
**Note: Data labels of 5% or less are not shown on chart.*

New teachers also provided the researcher with information on their overall experiences with professional learning in the district, which can be seen in Figure 8. When new teachers were asked if they needed additional training or support in certain areas, (n = 101) 41% reported that they would like additional professional learning opportunities with *Working with Special Education Students and Families*, while 39% offered that they needed additional support with *Designing Engaging Work*. Another 37% reported that *Working with Non-native English-Speaking Students and Families* was needed, while 34% suggested that *Working with Diverse Parent Groups* was a priority. Twenty nine percent of new teachers suggested that additional support with *Classroom Management* was needed, while 19% offered that they needed further professional learning on *Building Effective Relationships*.

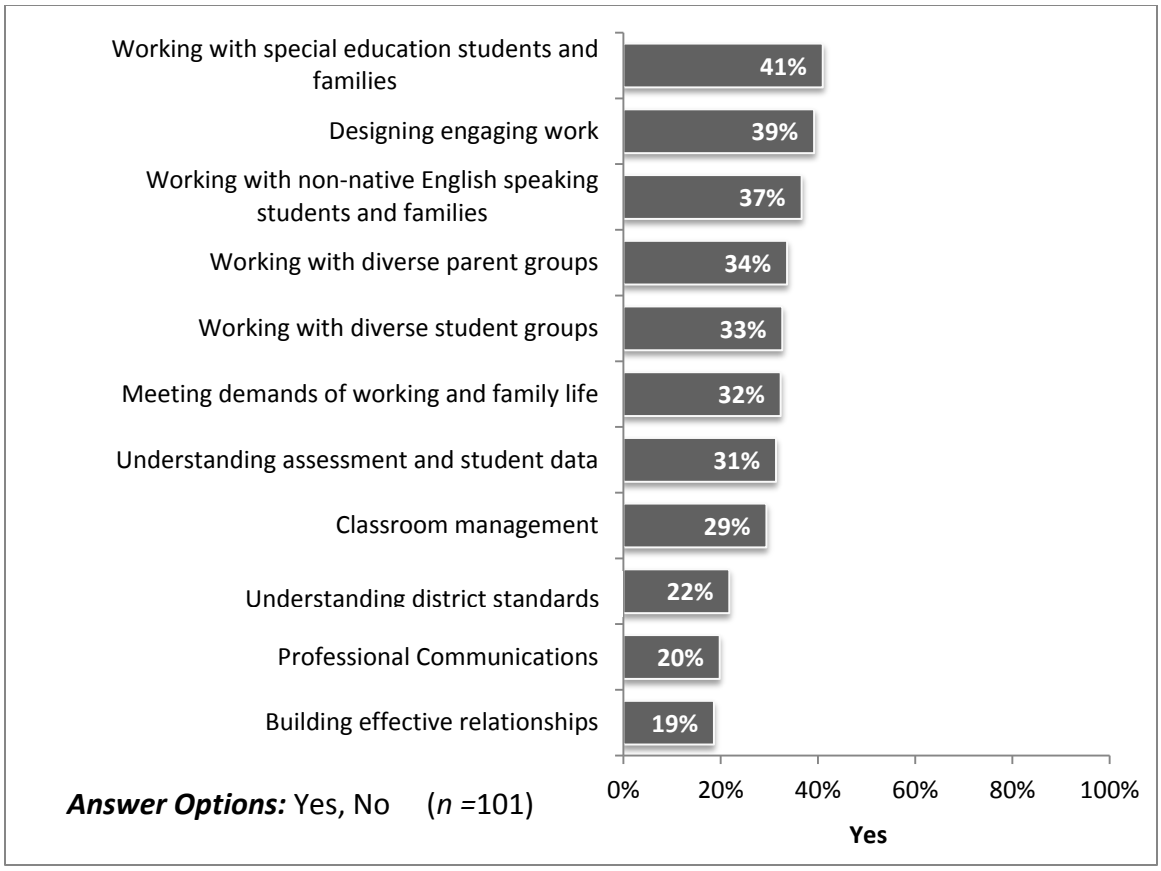

Figure 8. New Teacher Perceptions of Needed Professional Learning

Additionally, new teachers to the district with prior classroom teaching experience in another district responded favorably of their professional learning experiences during their induction period (Figure 9). According to respondents, (n = 57) 62% reported that the professional learning in the district is "Excellent" or "Above Average". Only 5% of new teachers reported that their professional learning experiences would be considered as "Below Average" or "Extremely Poor".

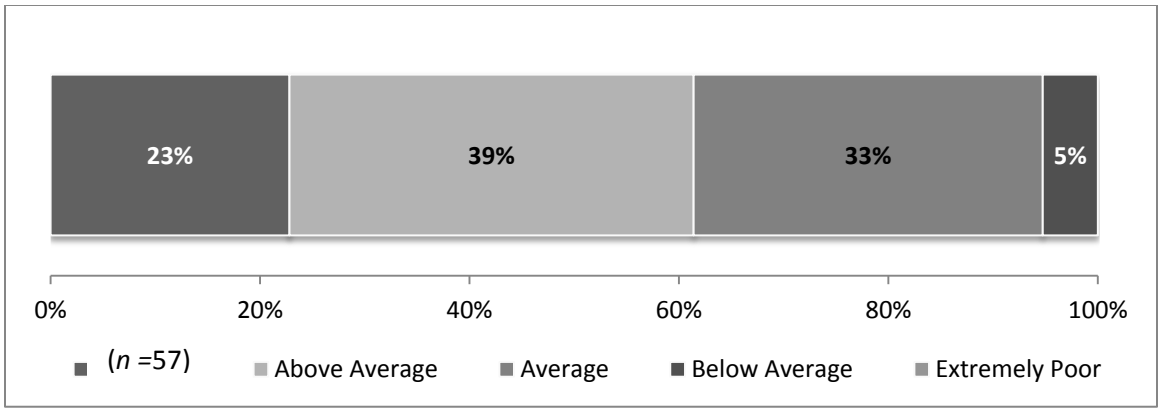

Figure 9. New Teachers to District Perceptions of Professional Learning Compared to Previous School Districts

Research question 2. School culture and climate are also important factors that contribute to new teacher success during their induction period. New teacher perceptions of the culture and climate within their schools, specifically the new teacher's sense of belonging and that the whole school community is invested in their development, can be seen in Figure 10. According to survey responses (n = 105) 84% of new teachers felt like they belonged at their particular school. Another (n = 105) 81% reported that they felt like the whole school community was invested in their development as a teacher. Nineteen percent (n = 106) offered that they would not recommend their school to a friend or family member.

The relationships that exist between new teachers and their administrators also impact new teacher perceptions of school culture and climate, which can also be found in Figure 10. Descriptive statistics revealed that (n = 104) 81% of new teachers felt that their principal and school administrators were approachable and interested in their concerns during their induction period. Nineteen percent of new teachers would "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" with this assertion. Additionally, (n = 105) 85% of

new teachers felt like they were treated as valued members of the school community during their induction period, while the remaining 15% would "Disagree" or "Strongly Disagree" with this statement.

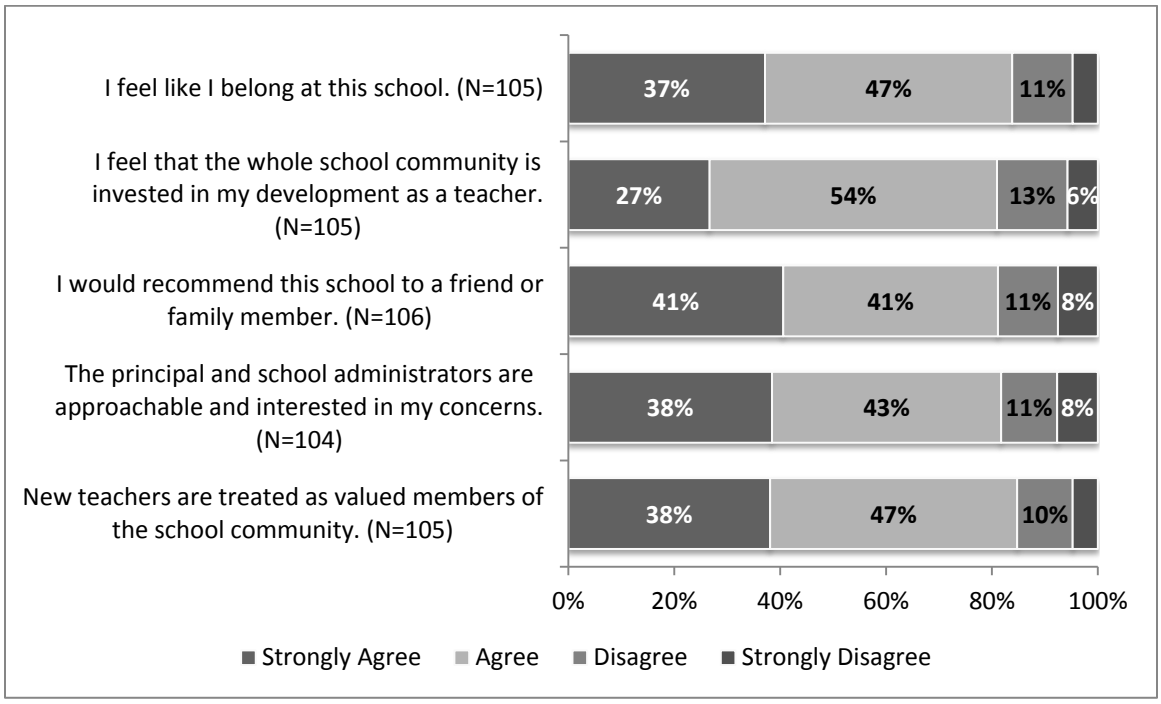

Figure 10. New Teacher Perceptions of School Culture and Climate
**Note: Data labels of 5% or less are not shown on chart.*

Research question 3. Mentoring and coaching are essential elements of new teacher induction programs. New teacher perceptions of their mentoring and coaching experience were gathered via the *New Teacher Induction Survey*. Specific information was asked and obtained in regards to the process of mentor assignment, along with the frequency and type of mentor visits and perceived levels of satisfaction. According to survey responses (n = 106), 78% of new teachers reported that they were assigned a mentor. Of those teachers with a mentor (n = 89), 74% offered that their mentor was in their subject or grade area (Figure 11). Descriptive statistics also revealed variations in the frequency of mentor visits that can be seen in Figure 12. It was found that (n = 89)

27% of new teachers met with their mentors less than once per week. Twenty two percent of respondents reported that their mentor meetings were at least once per week. Over one half (51%) of new teachers reported that they met with their mentors a minimum of two times per week with 25% suggesting that they met four or more times within a week.

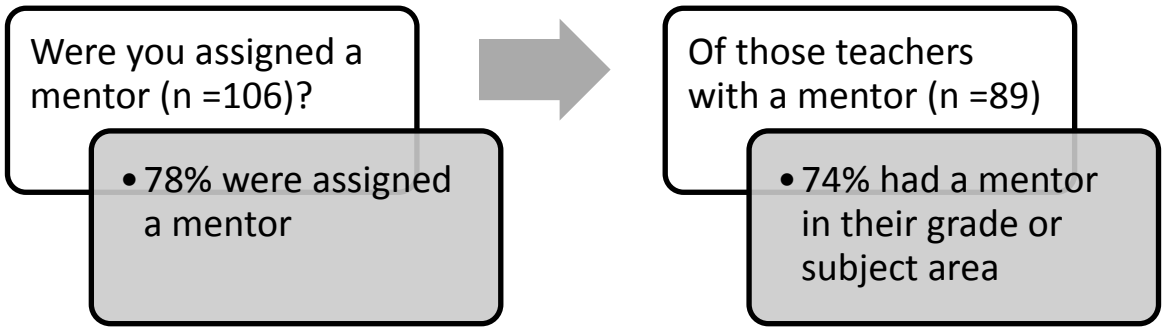

Figure 11. Assigned Mentors and Subject Areas

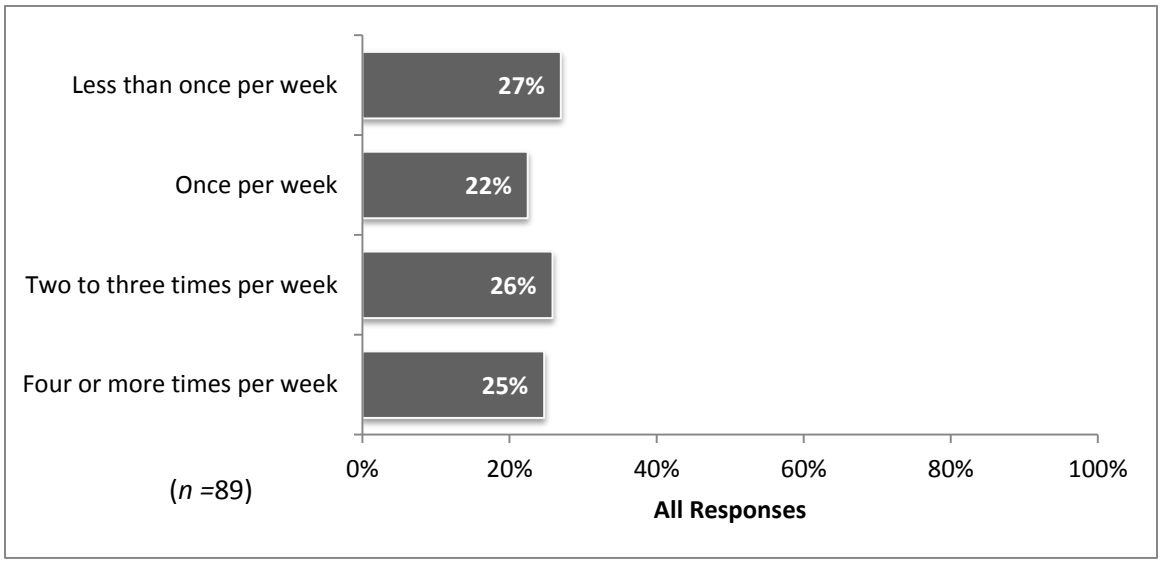

Figure 12. Frequency of New Teacher and Mentor Meetings

The process for new teacher and mentor meetings are also offered in Figure 13. Descriptive statistics revealed that the preferred method for mentor meetings during the new teacher induction period were individual face-to-face meetings, with (*n* = 89) 39% reporting having met at least three times per week in this method. Another 28% suggested that emails accounted for communications at least three times weekly. Response data also showed that 37% of new teachers attended group meetings with other new teachers one to two times per week. Twenty one percent of new teachers suggested that their mentors observed their classrooms one to two times weekly.

Census-survey data also revealed that (*n* = 89) 70% of new teachers indicated that they observed their mentor's classroom "Seldom or Never". Sixty four percent suggested similarly that they also did not have their mentors observe their own classrooms. Additionally, it was offered that group meetings with other teachers took place "Seldom or Never" for 54% of new teacher respondents.

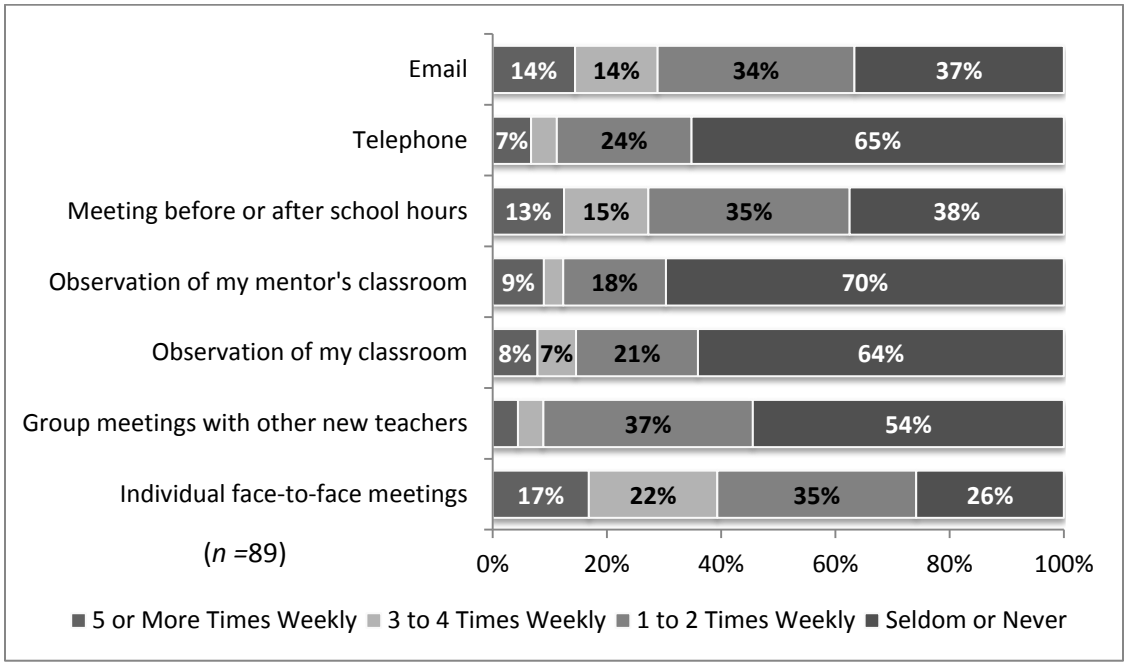

Figure 13. Process for New Teacher and Mentor Meetings
**Note: Data labels of 5% or less are not shown on chart.*

New teachers also contributed as to the various supports that they were offered by their mentors during their induction period, which can be seen in Figure 14. According to survey responses (n = 89), 46% of new teachers felt that their mentors "Always" or "Usually" supported them with understanding school and district policies. Another 23% indicated that they "Always" received assistance with lesson planning, while 20% reported that their mentors "Always" supported them with building confidence in the classroom. Additionally, (38%) suggested that they did not receive mentor assistance on working with parents, while 37% suggested they did not receive mentor assistance with classroom management techniques. Sixty four percent of new teachers offered that they "Sometimes" or "Never" received mentor support with designing formative and summative assessments, while 63% reported that mentor assistance "Sometimes" or "Never" involved differentiated instruction strategies.

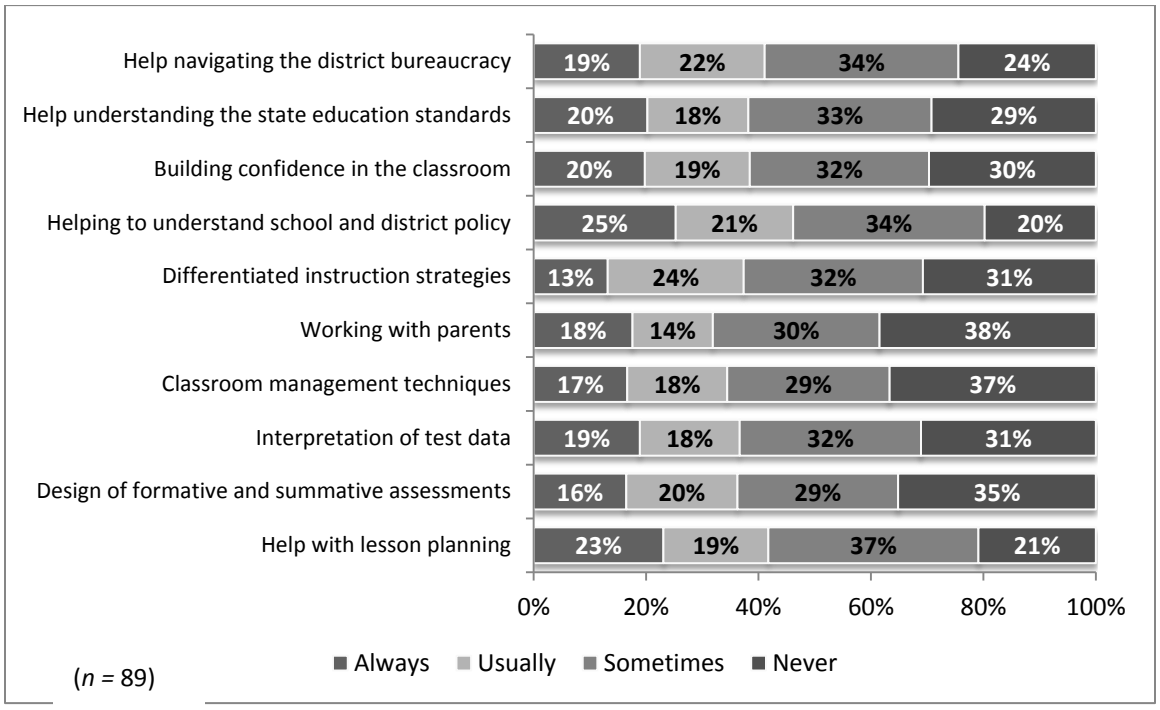

Figure 14. New Teacher Perceptions of Mentor Assistance

New teacher perceptions of their overall satisfaction with their mentors are also offered in Figure 15. According to survey responses (n = 92), 70% of new teachers were satisfied with the accessibility of their mentors, while 14% strongly disagreed with this statement. Seventy one percent (n = 92) of new teachers strongly agreed or agreed with the assertion that their mentor was a valuable resource for helping them transition into the district, while 29% strongly disagreed or disagreed. Another (n = 91) 69% of new teacher respondents felt that the mentor program helped them to develop teacher confidence and helped them to be more effective in the classroom, while 14% disagreed with this statement. New teacher perceptions of mentor support are also offered on a scale from A to F (Figure 16). It is offered that (n = 92) 58% would administer their mentor an "A", while 10% suggested a "B" would be appropriate. Another 24% would give them a "C" or "D", while 9% reported that a grade of "F" would accurately describe their perception of mentor support.

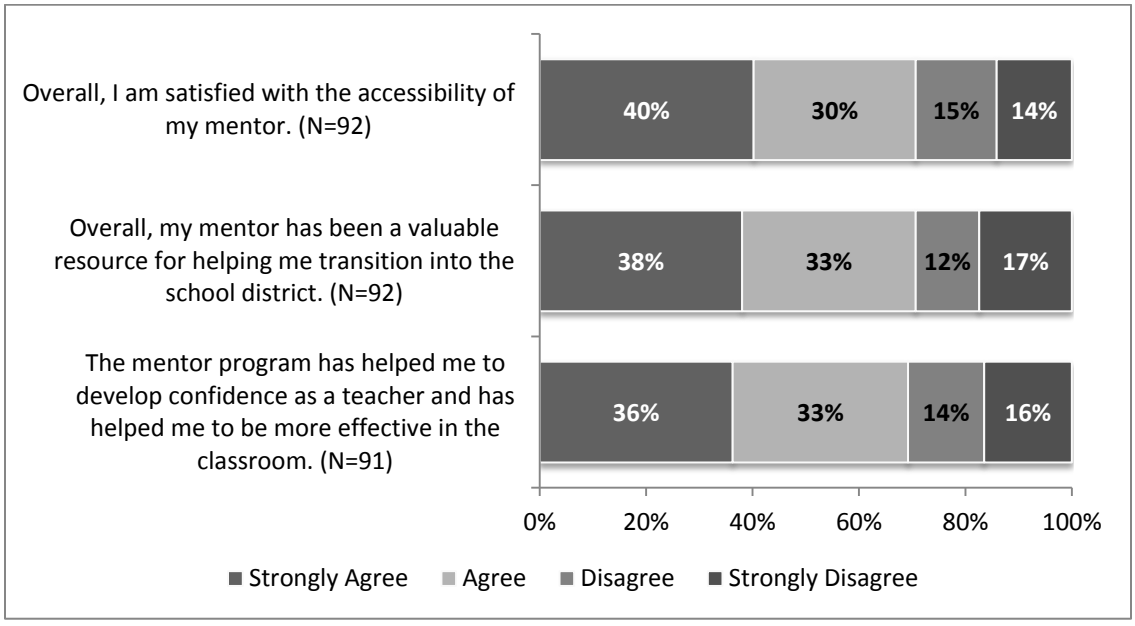

Figure 15. New Teacher Perceptions of Satisfaction Level of Mentor Support

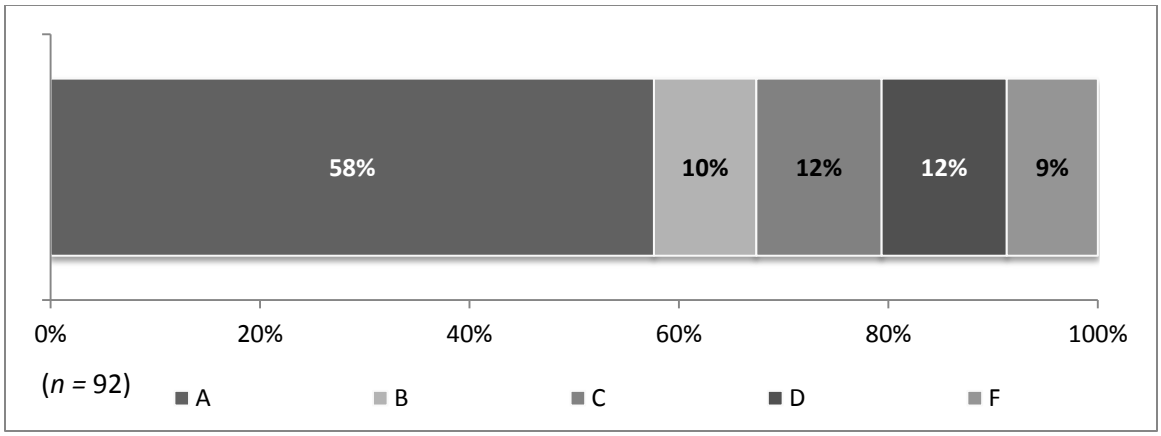

Figure 16. New Teacher Perceptions of Overall Support by Mentor on a Scale from A to F

Research question 4. Administration support is another successful component of new teacher induction. New teacher perceptions of the support received by their administrators were documented via responses to the *New Teacher Induction Survey*. Information was gathered from new teacher respondents on administrator approachability (Figure 10), along with information on availability and experiences with administrator observations, which may be seen in Figure 17.

A connection was previously made with school culture and climate with administration support (Figure 10). According to this information, descriptive statistics revealed that (n = 104) 81% of new teachers felt that their administrators were approachable and interested in their concerns. The remaining new teachers (19%) disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement. Additional information showed that (n = 104) 61% of new teachers felt that administrators "Seldom or Never" observed their classroom (Figure 17). It was also revealed that (n = 104) 77% of new teachers hardly experienced instances where administration modeled lesson and behavior management strategies in the classroom. Another (n = 104) 48% reported that administrators made

themselves available by telephone at least three times weekly, while (*n* = 105) 63% offered that their administrators were accessible through email communication at least three times per week. Additionally, it has been revealed that (*n* = 105) 49% of new teachers experienced individual face-to-face meetings with their building principal or school administrators "Seldom or Never".

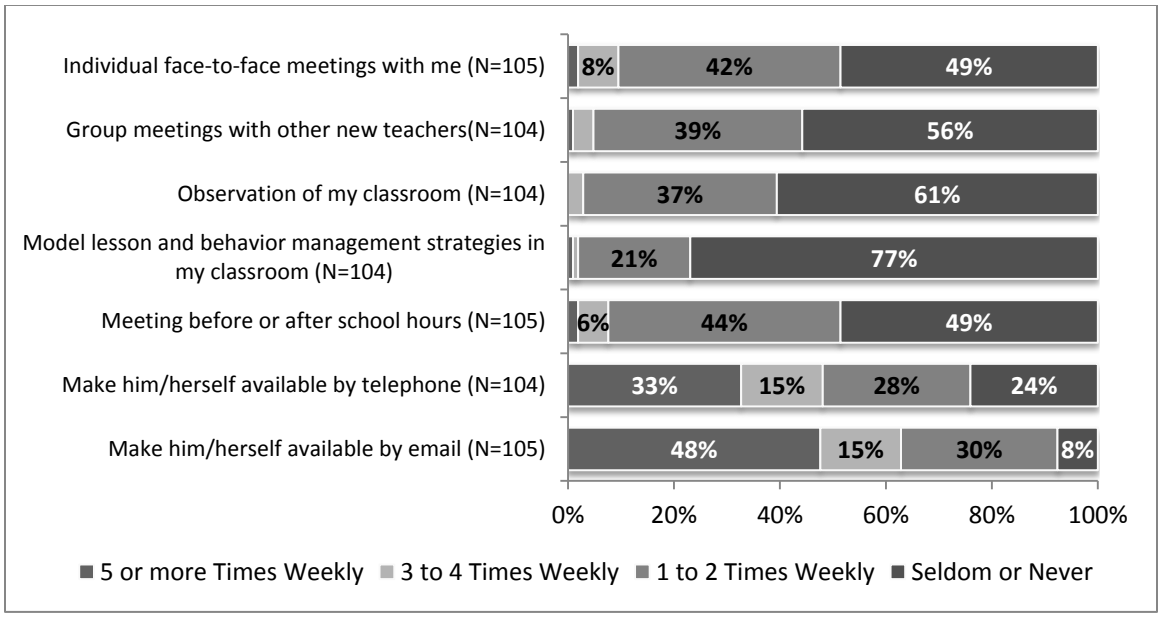

Figure 17. New Teacher Perceptions of Administration Support

Research question 5. The performance and evaluation process for new teachers is an important component of induction programs. New teacher perceptions of the knowledge gained of the teacher performance and evaluation was revealed through descriptive statistics in Figure 18. According to the *New Teacher Induction Survey* response data, (*n* = 103) 51% reported that they received information on the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) from the district, while 49% offered that they received PDAS information from an outside source. Another (*n* = 103) 91%

reported that the expectations given to them by their principal or administration was in line with the PDAS evaluation process, while 9% stated that it was not.

Descriptive statistics also revealed that (n = 102) 92% of new teachers felt that the information on the PDAS evaluation process was clear and understandable, while 8% felt that it was not. According to survey response data, it was also offered that (n = 105) 82% of new teachers received information on the PDAS evaluation process during their initial New Teacher Induction training, while 18% reported that they did not.

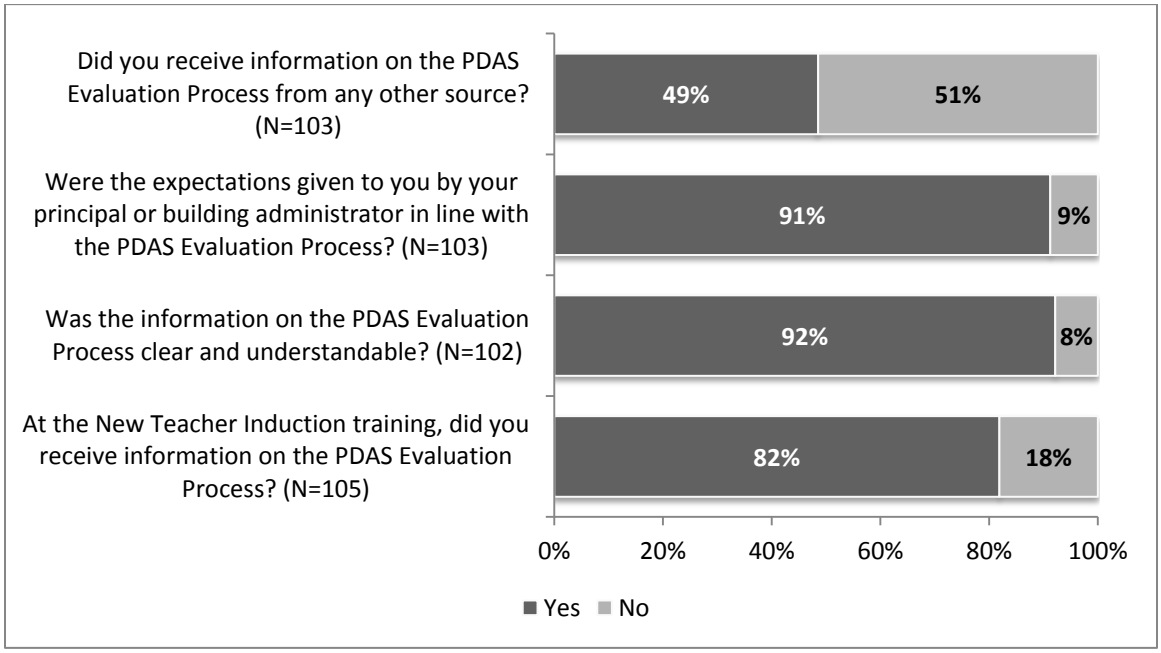

Figure 18. New Teacher Perceptions of the Performance and Evaluation Process

Chapter V

Discussions and Conclusions

Summary and Purpose of the Study

The present study focused on an evaluation of the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program in a suburban school district in southwest Texas. The study involved an in-depth analysis of the district-administered *New Teacher Induction Survey*, which focused on various components of the induction program during the new teacher induction period. Descriptive statistics revealed information on new teacher background, along with providing specific information on each component of induction. Therefore, the research problem addressed the questions: (a) What are new teacher perceptions of their professional learning experience within the district? (b) What are new teacher perceptions of the culture and climate within their schools? (c) What are new teacher perceptions of their mentoring and coaching experience within the district? (d) What are new teacher perceptions of the support provided by their current principal and administrators within their schools? (e) What are new teacher perceptions of the teacher performance and evaluation process within the district?

Summary of the Results

New teacher responses to the *New Teacher Induction Survey* were analyzed to examine the new teacher perceptions of each component of induction. The study used quantitative methods (descriptive statistics) to reveal new teacher perceptions of their induction experience during their first year of induction. The data for this study included analysis of the *New Teacher Induction Survey* responses gathered from new teachers in a

suburban school district in southwest Texas between January 27, 2014 and February 24, 2014.

For purposes of this study, participants were classified as new teachers to a suburban school district in southwest Texas. There were 240 new teachers to the district during the 2013-2014 school year. Of the new teachers (240) that were targeted for this study, there were 106 respondents (44% response rate). Data that was collected from the *New Teacher Induction Survey* revealed information on new teacher background, perceptions of professional learning, perceptions of school culture and climate, perceptions of mentoring and coaching, perceptions of administration support, and perceptions of the teacher performance and evaluation process.

New teacher background. The Texas Education Agency (TEA) has reported that over 30% (31.7%, excluding charter schools) of total teaching staff in the state in the state had one to five years of teaching experience (*Snapshot 2013: State Totals*, 2014). According to respondent information for this study, 30% of new teachers to the district were in their first year of teaching (Figure 3). Texas has also reported that approximately 26% of the teacher workforce in the state is alternatively certified (Ramsay, 2013). Participants in this study indicated that they attended various universities and educator preparation programs with 35% of respondents having received alternative certification (Table B1).

It is clear that the number of new teachers to the profession in a suburban school district in southwest Texas, along with those that are alternatively certified, is higher than that of the state average. Although research has been offered suggesting that variation in strong teacher effects on student achievement could not be explained by a teacher's

education or experience (Rivkin et al., 2005), additional studies have concluded that certified teachers with a background in education coursework elicit greater student achievement (Goe, 2002; Laczko-Kerr & Berliner, 2002). Further information has been provided on the relationship between teacher background and their commitment to the profession.

Researchers have found a strong positive effect with teachers without bachelor's degrees in education and their commitment to the profession (Duke et al., 2006). Also, a 2009 study in Chicago's public schools found that personal characteristics, such as career stages, age, and experience were highly associated with teacher stability (Allensworth et al., 2009). As new teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas come from a variety of educational backgrounds and with multiple experiences prior to entering the classroom, it will be necessary for district leaders to better understand their new teacher backgrounds to supplement their prior experiences with appropriate induction supports and professional learning to assist with raising student achievement and retaining high quality teaching staff.

Professional learning. Meaningful professional learning opportunities can have a profound impact on teacher learning and should involve educators as whole persons (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009; Cranton & King, 2003). A suburban school district in southwest Texas offered a variety of professional learning opportunities for new teachers during their induction period. Descriptive statistics from the *New Teacher Induction Survey* revealed new teacher perceptions of the professional learning during their induction period, specifically professional learning opportunities with classroom management, building relationships, designing engaging work, professional

communication, working with diverse student and parent groups, understanding district standards, and meeting demands of work and family life.

Classroom management. According to various studies, classroom management is one of the greatest challenges that new teachers face. A recent survey (2013) described classroom management as the main problem identified by teachers (Greenberg et al., 2014). According to new teacher respondents (n = 101) on the *New Teacher Induction Survey*, this was their fourth lowest priority concerning needed professional learning (Figure 8). Another (n = 104) 15% reported that professional learning opportunities received on classroom management during their induction period were "Fair", while 45% reported that these opportunities were "Good" or "Great" (Figure 6). Thirty six percent responded as having not received an opportunity for professional learning on classroom management. Although professional learning on classroom management does not appear to be a high priority for new teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas, it is routinely cited as a top problem for teachers. Additionally, with (n = 104) 36% of new teachers not receiving professional learning on classroom management, it will be important for district leaders to ensure that future induction supports and professional learning contain elements of classroom management training.

Building relationships. It has been offered that teachers who develop close relationships with their students experience success with student attendance, increased cooperation, and more student engagement (Birch & Ladd, 1997; Klem & Connell, 2004). Researchers have also found that elementary schools with high relational trust were more likely to improve student learning (Bryk & Schneider, 2003). According to results of the *New Teacher Induction Survey*, a suburban school district in southwest

Texas has adequately prepared teachers for building effective relationships. It was reported that (n = 101) 19% of teachers felt that additional professional learning in this area was needed, which was the lowest reported (Figure 8). Of new teacher respondents (n = 104), 71% reported that professional learning in this area was "Good" or "Great" (Figure 6). It may be concluded that professional learning received in this area has been perceived as effective by new teachers.

Designing engaging work. It is the expectation of teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas to be "designers" of engaging work (Schlechty, 2011). New teachers received professional learning opportunities related to designing engaging work during their induction period. According to survey responses, (n = 105) 10% of new teachers indicated that they did not receive professional learning in this area, which was the smallest percentage for any reported category (Figure 6). However, (n = 101) 39% reported that additional professional learning in this area was needed, which was the second highest area of perceived need (Figure 8). Therefore, it may be concluded that although it was revealed that a large majority of new teachers had received training in this area, more support is needed. District leaders must implement processes to ensure that both district and campus level professional learning opportunities involve additional training in this area.

Professional communication. It may be concluded that new teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas had a positive experience with professional learning in the area of professional communication. According to survey responses, (n = 104) 62% reported that professional learning in this area was "Good" or "Great" (Figure 6). It was also revealed that only (n = 101) 20% of new teachers felt that additional

professional learning was needed in this area, which was the second lowest perceived need by new teachers (Figure 8).

Working with diverse student and parent groups. Research suggests that many teachers feel unprepared to successfully meet the demands of diverse students in the classroom (Fuchs, 2010). Additionally, a 2009 report found that teachers view lack of parental support as their most pressing challenge (J. Johnson et al., 2010). Descriptive statistics revealed from the *New Teacher Induction Survey* that these were also areas of perceived need by new teachers. According to survey results, working with special education students and families was the highest reported need for additional professional learning with (n = 101) 41% of new teacher respondents reporting this was an area of need (Figure 8). Another (n = 102) 31% suggested that they did not receive the opportunity for professional learning with working with non-native English-speaking students and families (Figure 7). Also, (n = 101) 8% of new teacher respondents reported that professional learning received on working with diverse parent groups was "Poor" (Figure 6), while (n = 101) 34% needed additional professional learning in this area. The lack of training received in these areas calls for district leaders to offer increased professional learning opportunities on working with diverse student and parent groups, along with adding elements of culturally responsive pedagogy into induction supports.

Understanding district standards. As each school district is unique, it is necessary for district leaders to provide professional learning opportunities on understanding district standards. An evaluation of the new teacher responses on the *New Teacher Induction Survey* revealed the new teacher perceptions of professional learning

in this area. According to survey responses, (n = 104) 36% of new teachers reported that the professional learning received on understanding district standards was "Great", which was the largest reported category for the response, "Great" (Figure 7). Also, (n = 101) 22% of new teachers reported that they needed additional training in this area, which was the third lowest area of perceived need (Figure 8). Therefore, it may be determined that district leaders have adequately addressed this area with professional learning opportunities.

Meeting demands of work and family life. Descriptive statistics also revealed new teacher perceptions of professional learning received in the area of meeting the demands of work and family life. Survey responses revealed that a number, (n = 103) 36% of new teachers, did not receive professional learning in this area (Figure 7). Additionally, (n = 101) 32% of new teachers reported that this was an area of need, which was in the median range for all categories reported (Figure 8). It may be determined that district officials might provide additional professional learning opportunities in this area; however it should not be a high priority.

School culture and climate. It has been offered that an overwhelming number of teachers leave the profession each year in search of better working conditions (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009). Positive school climates have been linked to the academic success of schools (MacNeil et al., 2009). Researchers have also found that the difference in school cultures have a direct effect on providing consistent induction experiences (Rippon & Martin, 2006). A suburban school district in southwest Texas recognizes the impact that a school's culture and climate can have on new teachers and has attempted to gather new teacher perceptions of their school's culture and climate during their induction period.

According to survey responses to the *New Teacher Induction Survey*, it was revealed by new teachers that their overall perceptions of their school's culture and climate were positive. A large number of new teachers, (n = 105) 84% reported that they felt they belonged at the school, while 81% offered that they felt like the whole school community was invested in their development as a teacher (Figure 10). Another (n = 106) 82% reported that they would recommend the school to a friend or family member while (n = 105) 85% of new teachers felt that they were treated as valued members of the school community during their induction period (Figure 10).

Although it may be determined that the overall perception by new teachers during their induction period of their school's culture and climate was overwhelmingly positive, additional information may be needed to compare this information to student achievement. As research has found a positive relationship between school climate and school mean student achievement (B. Johnson et al., 2007), additional data may add to the existing research in this area. Also, the obvious benefits of healthy school climates on student achievement and teacher retention may prompt district leaders to more thoroughly assess district and campus climates through more formal means, such as the School-level Environment Questionnaire (SLEQ).

Mentoring and coaching. The presence of a formal mentoring program in districts has proven to positively impact teacher retention rates (Duke et al., 2006; Stegmeir, 2014). Research has also shown the positive impact on student achievement in classrooms where teachers were provided with mentor support (Adams, 2010). A suburban school district in southwest Texas has a formal mentoring program and recent attempts were made to determine new teacher perceptions of their mentoring and

coaching experience during their first year of induction, specifically; the process of mentor assignment and the frequency and type of mentor visits.

According to new teacher responses to the *New Teacher Induction Survey*, it may be determined that the new teachers perceived their mentoring and coaching experiences as marginal. Of the 106 respondents, 78% of new teachers reported that they were assigned a mentor (Figure 11). Additionally, (n = 92) 68% of new teachers reported that they would give their mentors a grade of "A" or "B" (Figure 16). Another 75% reported that they viewed their mentor as a valuable resource (Figure 15). It is also important to note that (n = 84) 38% of new teacher respondents suggested that they never received any assistance from their mentors on working with parents (Figure 14). This information is consistent with findings on perceived areas of need for professional learning.

Positive areas reported by new teachers were revealed when concerning the accessibility of their mentors. Descriptive statistics revealed that (n = 92) 70% of new teachers were satisfied with mentor accessibility (Figure 15). Less than one third of new teachers, (n = 89) 27% reported that they met less than once per week with their mentors (Figure 12). Another (n = 89) 62% reported having met at least once per week through electronic means with 74% suggesting that mentor meetings were held face to face (Figure 12).

Based on new teacher perceptions of their mentoring and coaching experience within their first year of induction, district leaders must consider additional means to support new teachers and their mentors. Such options as providing *Full Release Mentors* to campuses have seen success (Adams, 2010) and would provide additional support to campuses with their new teachers. Also, due to the high frequency of mentor visits

through electronic means, in addition to the face to face visits, the utilization of *eMentors* could be an option. Resources such as the Performance-based Academic Coaching Teams (PACT) can offer a framework for electronic communication between mentors and new teachers. Also, with the high number of alternatively certified teachers in the district (Table B1), along with research that suggests that induction programs featuring mentoring components have a greater marginal benefit for teachers without education degrees (Duke et al., 2006), it is necessary for district leaders to reexamine processes for mentoring and coaching provided to new teachers, especially those that are alternatively certified.

Administration support. The importance of the principal and school administration is well supported in research, along with information on how school administrators impact the climate of the school (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; MacNeil et al., 2009). Additionally, the National Center for Education Statistics has reported that over 40 percent of those teachers choosing to leave the profession cited poor administration support as the reason for their departure (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009; Richard M. Ingersoll, 2003). The New Teacher Induction Program in a suburban school district in southwest Texas offers administration support as a component of induction. New teacher perceptions of the support provided by their administrators were gathered via the *New Teacher Induction Survey*.

According to the new teacher survey responses, the support provided by their administration may be described as marginal. It was reported that (n = 105) 49% of new teachers "Seldom or Never" experienced individual face to face meetings with their administrators, while (n = 104) 61% percent reported that administrators "Seldom or

Never" observed their classrooms (Figure 17). It was also revealed through descriptive statistical analysis that (n = 104) 77% of new teachers reported that administration "Seldom or Never" modeled lessons and behavior management strategies in their classrooms.

An evaluation of the new teacher perceptions of administration support during their induction period revealed a need for district leaders to consider additional means to ensure that new teachers receive adequate administration support during their induction period. It is recommended that administrators are meant to experience additional trainings or professional learning opportunities on how to successfully support new teachers during their induction period. As recommended by the New Teacher Center (NTC), Texas state policy should also require that administrators receive induction support so that they might better understand how to support new teachers (Goldrick et al., 2012).

Teacher performance and evaluation. Although provisions set forth in *No Child Left Behind* (2001) speak to the need for highly qualified teachers to be proficient in the content area being taught (Berry et al., 2004; Pate, 2010), teacher evaluation systems have recently come under fire prompting drastic changes to teacher performance measures. Texas has also taken steps to revise its current preferred evaluation system, known as the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) by forming a Teacher Effectiveness Workgroup. This workgroup, through their analysis of various national appraisal models, has developed a new Texas appraisal system to replace the PDAS, which is used by 86% of the districts in the state ("Principle 3: Supporting Effective Instruction and Leadership," 2014).

As there are connections with teacher perceptions regarding teacher performance evaluation models and the impact on teaching practices (Marzano, Toth, & Schooling, 2013), a suburban school district in southwest Texas gathered new teacher perceptions of performance and evaluation during their induction period. According to new teacher responses to the *New Teacher Induction Survey*, (n = 103) 49% received information on the PDAS evaluation process from a source outside of the district (Figure 18). However, it was also reported that (n = 105) 82% of the new teachers received information on the PDAS evaluation process at their initial new teacher induction training. New teachers additionally reported that (n = 103) 91% of the expectations given to them by their administration was in line with the PDAS evaluation process, while (n = 102) 92% of new teachers felt that this information was clear and understandable (Figure 18).

Although the new teachers responded favorably as to their experiences with performance and evaluation, additional information is needed from their teacher performance evaluations. This information could provide a link between teacher perceptions of support with performance and evaluation and their actual performance. Information gathered from the various criterions could also supply district leaders with critical information on how to supplement professional learning opportunities according to the new teacher evaluations. It will also be necessary for district leaders to revise their New Teacher Induction Program according to the new measures set forth by the newly developed Texas appraisal system.

Conclusions. As teaching has been characterized as an occupation with high turnover compared to other professions (Carroll, 2007; Richard M. Ingersoll, 2003), districts and schools across the nation and state utilize induction supports to address this

problem. Researchers have also found that teachers who have received some type of induction had higher commitments to remaining as teachers (R. M. Ingersoll & Strong, 2011a). There is also a connection between the quantity of induction supports and a teacher's likelihood of turnover. A review of the literature also revealed that induction programs featuring mentoring components are of greater benefit for teachers without education degrees (Duke et al., 2006).

A suburban school district in southwest Texas is growing at a rapid pace and will continue to be faced with the demand of recruiting and retaining high quality teachers. As the district has experienced unique growth, a formal induction program was developed to acculturate new teachers to the district. Recent attempts were made to evaluate new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program through analysis of the *New Teacher Induction Survey* administered during the 2013-2014 school year. An evaluation of new teacher perceptions of the multiple components of induction provided district leaders with critical feedback from the new teachers on their background, perceptions of their first year of teaching and the teacher induction program.

The results of this quantitative study revealed information as to the various backgrounds of new teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas. It was found that the district had higher averages than the state of new teachers to the profession, along with alternatively certified teachers. The study also revealed new teacher perceptions during their induction period of mentoring and coaching, as well as perceptions about school culture and climate, administration support, teacher performance and evaluation, and professional learning.

In addition to providing perspectives of why induction is necessary due to obvious benefits and teacher attrition rates, the study considered the unique recruitment and retention demands of a rapidly growing suburban school district in southwest Texas. The study provides a historical perspective of induction and describes the components of a successful induction program. Results from the study will allow stakeholders in the district to consider the new teacher perceptions on the success of each component and determine the overall effectiveness of the New Teacher Induction Program, which may influence future practice.

Implications for practice and policy. As the new teacher perceptions of the mentoring and coaching component of the New Teacher Induction Program has been described as marginal, it is likely that district officials will need to reexamine the procedures of this component of induction. The New Teacher Center (NTC) offers that carefully selected and well-trained mentors are the heart of a new teacher induction program ("New Teacher Center," 2014). The district could explore successful national induction models, such as that of the NTC for mentor guidelines. This organization offers that among other things, mentors undergo a rigorous selection process based on evidence of outstanding teaching practice and the mentors themselves receive ongoing professional learning to assist with skill development.

It is equally important for new teachers and their mentors to receive additional time for planning and learning. The NTC recommends that that mentors and new teachers spend between 1.25 and 2.5 hours per week focusing on new teacher development ("Mentors | New Teacher Center," 2014). An additional recommendation would be that mentoring be related to the teacher performance and evaluation process. If

the goal of the district is to have successful teachers as evident by their performance evaluations, mentors must assist new teachers with this process.

District leaders should also make additional attempts to analyze the prior experiences and backgrounds of their new teachers. As the district has received information from the *New Teacher Induction Survey*, on new teacher preservice preparation routes, this information might be useful in determining which preservice institution produces a better candidate for teaching within a suburban school district in southwest Texas. The age of the new teacher candidate might also have implications for induction.

Behrstock and Clifford (2009) suggest that induction programs would benefit from specifically targeting Generation Y workers or *Millennials*. It is offered that this group is highly educated, technology driven, creative, and self-confident, and that there is a need to offer customized career paths to this group (Behrstock & Clifford, 2009). As this group is also projected to make up 44 percent of the U.S. working population by 2020, it would be smart for districts and schools to develop induction supports based on their needs. The NAS Recruitment Communications recommends the following strategies for Gen Y employees that districts should also consider:

- Encourage their values, individuality, and self-expression.
- Provide appropriate training as the basis for a job well done.
- Provide mentors, feedback, and the reasons behind decisions.
- Convey how their work will make an impact for the company.
- Be fully honest and ethical with them.
- Create customized career tracks that give them some control over their advancement as well as feedback on their progress.
- Provide the newest and the best technology.

(Behrstock & Clifford, 2009)

A suburban school district in southwest Texas should also require induction supports for new teachers and new administrators for more than a year. Current practices allow for induction for new teachers to the district during their first year. According to a state policy review by the NTC, it is recommended that Texas state policy should require that all teachers and administrators receive induction support during their first two years (Goldrick et al., 2012). Professional learning opportunities for administrators on how to support Gen Y teachers might also increase the lack of perceived administration support by new teachers.

Another policy implication would be for national and state governments to also consider successful international models for induction practices. The Teacher Induction System (TIS) for new teachers in Scotland, implements a mandatory one-year, government funded training placements for new teachers to "create a nationally consistent experience for new teachers" (Rippon & Martin, 2006, p. 306). This is a prerequisite for all new teachers who wish to be eligible for employment in Scotland's public schools. Such programs could also be replicated across the nation and state to allow for consistency of induction experiences.

Limitations of the study and recommendations for further research. This study evaluated the new teacher perceptions of the New Teacher Induction Program in a suburban school district in southwest Texas. This study was limited to a sample of new teachers in a single school district in one geographical region of Texas and might not generalize with other geographical regions or other groups of teachers. Due to the number of new teachers who participated in the survey, this study sample may be viewed as not having enough participants to make a generalization for the perceptions of new

teachers across the state. There are also various factors that contribute to the success or effectiveness of a new teacher induction program that are not accounted for in this study.

The data for this study were collected from survey responses to the *New Teacher Induction Survey* in a suburban school district in southwest Texas. The survey was developed in collaboration with the technology-based research firm K12 *Insight*. Although the survey did provide district leaders with useful data, there is no evidence to suggest that the survey was created with multiple stakeholder input, which would provide greater reliability to the results. A future study could be performed with a participant-oriented evaluation approach (Fitzpatrick et al., 2011) to allow multiple stakeholders that have an interest in the program to "define the evaluation questions and, later, to interpret the findings and make recommendations" (p. 190).

The participants in this study were representative from all campuses within the district. The participants also included both new teachers to the profession and new teachers to the district, with no general distinction between the two. Therefore, the results of this study were limited in the ability to be generalized. To compensate for this limitation, the researcher recommends that a future study evaluate the perceptions of new teachers to the profession and new teachers to the district separately. This information would provide clarity on the perceptions of both groups on their induction experiences.

In conclusion, the study evaluated new teacher perceptions of various components of induction during their first year of induction. The study answered the questions: (a) What are new teacher perceptions of mentoring and coaching during their induction period? (b) What are new teacher perceptions of their school's culture and climate during their induction period? (c) What are new teacher perceptions of administration support

during their induction period? (d) What are new teacher perceptions of teacher performance and evaluation during their induction period? (e) What are new teacher perceptions of professional learning during their induction period? The answers are that new teachers in a suburban school district in southwest Texas during their induction period perceived some components of induction to be positive, while others were marginal.

Descriptive statistics revealed that the new teachers to the district perceived their mentoring and coaching experiences to be marginal. Overall support provided by mentors was not perceived by new teachers to be at a high level, but new teachers felt positively about the accessibility of their mentors. The new teacher perceptions of their school's culture and climate were positive. An overwhelming majority felt a sense of belonging and that the whole school community was invested in their development. It was revealed that new teachers received marginal administration support during their first year of induction; particularly in the areas of individual face to face meetings, classroom observations, and the modeling of lessons and behavior management strategies.

The study found that new teachers had a positive experience with the teacher performance and evaluation process. An overwhelming majority felt that information given to them by their administration was in line with the Professional Development and Appraisal System (PDAS) process, and that this information was clear and understandable. Also, it was revealed that new teachers had positive experiences with professional learning on classroom management and building relationships. New teachers did not perceive their professional learning opportunities on working with diverse parent and student groups to be effective. In particular, working with special

education students and families was the highest reported need for additional professional learning.

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Appendix A

Texas Student Enrollment and Teacher Preparation Routes

Table A1

Student Enrollment in Texas Public Schools for 2012 – 2013

Demographic	Percent
Hispanic	51.3
White	30.0
African American	12.7
Asian	3.6
Multiracial	1.8

Table A2

Certified, Employed Teachers by Preparation Route 2009-2012

Year/Total	Alternative. Cert. Pgm. Number/Percent	University Undergraduate Number/Percent	Out of State Number/Percent
2011-12 /317,952	84,083/26.4	188,721/59.4	20,029/6.3
2010-11/322,295	79,997/24.8	195,008/60.5	21,723/6.7
2009-10/317,667	73,010/23.0	196,581/61.9	22,710/7.1
2008-09/308,962	64,610/20.9	195,415/63.2	23,995/7.8

Appendix B

Respondent Background

Table B1

New Teacher Educator Preparation Programs

Alternative Certification	35%
Baylor University	1%
Foreign University	1%
Houston Community College- ACP	1%
Kansas State University	1%
Loyola University	1%
McMurry University	1%
Park University- Missouri	1%
Prairie View A&M University	1%
Sam Houston University	7%
Southwestern Adventist University	1%
St. Thomas University	1%
Stephen F. Austin State University	4%
Sul Ross State University	2%
Texas A&M	8%
Texas State University	1%
Texas Tech University	1%
University of Houston	22%
University of Incarnate Word	1%
University of Maryland at College Park	1%
University of Texas	5%
Western Governors University	1%
Unknown	5%

Table B2

Response Rate by School

Responses	Maximum Possible Responses	Number of Responses	Response Rate for Group
Alternative Campus	0	0	0%
Elementary 1	6	2	33%
Elementary 2	9	5	56%
Elementary 3	12	7	58%
Elementary 4	13	6	46%
Elementary 5	16	5	31%
Elementary 6	3	1	33%
Elementary 7	15	7	47%
Elementary 8	4	1	25%
Elementary 9	7	3	43%
Elementary 10	4	2	50%
Elementary 11	5	0	0%
Elementary 12	13	6	46%
Elementary 13	6	0	0%
Elementary 14	8	5	63%
Junior High 1	13	4	31%
Junior High 2	11	3	27%
Junior High 3	9	3	33%
Junior High 4	15	4	27%
Junior High 5	21	8	38%
High School 1	22	13	59%
High School 2	26	11	42%
Alternative High School	2	2	100%
Non-School Location	0	0	0%
Total	240	98	41%

Appendix C

New Teacher Induction Survey

page 1

Dear Teachers,

I hope that you had a restful break and are ready to tackle the second half of the schoo year. One of the ways that the district can continue to make your career in [redacted] successful is to gather feedback about your experience with the new teacher induction process and your experiences regarding your interactions with:
Mentoring/Coaching
Administrative Support
Professional Evaluation
School Climate
Professional Development

Thank you for taking the time to complete the New Teacher Mentoring Survey, and for your careful consideration of each response.

Sincerely,

[District Provide Name]
[District Provide Title]

page 2

Personal Background

In order to better understand the responses, and to implement recommendations, please answer the following questions about yourself.

1. Prior to my current teaching position at [redacted]: (Select one option)

- ○ I held a fulltime position outside the field of education
- ○ I was a teacher in another district (not [redacted])
- ○ I began my teaching career at [redacted] (This is my first time teaching)

2. Please tell us about which school you received your teacher license from: (Select one option)

- ○ Texas A&M
- ○ University of Texas (if, which campus [Open Text])
- ○ University of Houston
- ○ Texas Tech University

- ○ Sam Houston University
- ○ Other, Please specify

3. What type of program did you participate in : (Select one option)

- ○ Traditional, all classes were held face to face
- ○ Hybrid, some classes were online some face-to-face
- ○ Online, all classes were offered via an online platform

4. Which type of classroom experience did you participate in: (Select one option)

- ○ Student teaching
- ○ Internship
- ○ Other, Please specify

Page 3

Mentor Support

The following questions concern your experience with your mentor. Please think about your experiences as you answer each of the following questions.

5. Were you assigned a mentor(Select one option)

○ Yes ○ No

_____
_____

Skip to #10

7. Did you choose your mentor, or was the mentor assigned? (Select one option)

○ I choose my own mentor ○ My mentor was assigned

8. Was your mentor in the same grade/subject? (Select one option)

○ Yes ○ No

9. During a typical week, the number of times I meet with my mentor has been: (Select one option)

- ○ Less than once per week
- ○ Once per week
- ○ Two to three times per week
- ○ Four or more times per week

page 3

How often do you work with your mentor in the following ways?

10.

	Seldom or Never	1 to 2 times weekly	3 to 4 times weekly	5 or more times weekly
(a) Individual face-to-face meetings (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(b) Group meetings with other new teachers (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(c) Observation of my classroom (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(d) Observation of my mentor's classroom (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(e) Meeting before or after school hours (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(f) Telephone (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(g) Email (Select one option)	○	○	○	○

page 4

How often does your mentor assist you with each of the following?

11.

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always
(a) Help with lesson planning (Select one option)	○	○	○	○

(b) Design of formative and summative assessments (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(c) Interpretation of test data (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(d) Classroom management techniques (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(e) Working with parents (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(f) Differentiated instruction strategies (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(g) Helping to understand school and district policy (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(h) Building confidence in the classroom (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(i) Help understanding the state education standards (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(j) Help navigating the district bureaucracy (Select one option)	○	○	○	○

page 5

12. Overall, I am satisfied with the accessibility of my mentor. (Select one option)

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

13. Overall, my mentor has been a valuable resource for helping me transition into the school district. (Select one option)

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

14. The mentor program has helped me to develop confidence as a teacher and effectiveness in the classroom. (Select one option)

- ○ Strongly Disagree

- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

15. What grade would you give for the overall support provided by your mentor? Please use the scale from A to F where "A" denotes outstanding, "C" is average, and "F" is failure. (Select one option)

- ○ A
- ○ B
- ○ C
- ○ D
- ○ F

page 6

School Climate and Environment

The following questions concern your experience with your current school. Please think about your experiences as you answer each of the following questions.

16. I feel like I belong at this school. (Select one option)

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

17. I feel that the whole school community is invested in my development as a teacher. (Select one option)

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

18. I would recommend this school to a friend of family member. (Select one option)

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

page 7

Administrative Support

The following questions concern your experience with your current principal and school administrators. Please think about your experiences as you answer each of the following questions.

19. The principal and school administrators are approachable and interested in my concerns. (Select one option)

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

20. How often does the building the principal or school administrator do the following:

	Seldom or Never	1 to 2 times weekly	3 to 4 times weekly	5 or more times weekly
(a) Individual face-to-face meetings with myself (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(b) Group meetings with other new teachers (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(c) Observation of my classroom (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(d) Model lesson and behavior management strategies in my classroom (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(e) Meeting before or after school hours (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(f) Make him/herself available by telephone (Select one option)	○	○	○	○
(g) Make him/herself available by email (Select one option)	○	○	○	○

21. The principal and school administrators are approachable and interested in my concerns. (Select one option)

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

22. New teachers are treated as valued members of the school community. (Select one option)

- ○ Strongly Disagree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Strongly Agree

page 8

Performance and Evaluation

The following questions concern your experience with the performance and evaluation process at [redacted]. Please think about your experiences as you answer each of the following questions.

23. At the new teacher induction training, did you receive information on the PDAS evaluation process? (Select one option)

○ Yes ○ No

DATE FIELD

25. Was the information on the PDAS Evaluation process clear and understandable? (Select one option)

○ Yes ○ No

26. Where the expectations given to me by my principal or building administrator in line with the PDAS evaluation process? (Select one option)

○ Yes ○ No

27. Did you receive information on the PDAS evaluation process from any other source? (Select one option)

○ Yes ○ No

28. If yes, select all that apply.

☐ [redacted] website or district office

☐ Texas Education Authority website or office

☐ Another teacher (non-administrative staff)

☐

page 9

Professional Development

The following questions concern your experience with your personal professional development while at [redacted]. Please think about your experiences as you answer each of the following questions.

29. Please rate the following professional development opportunities you received during the New Teacher Induction:

	Poor	Fair	Good	Great	Did not receive this opportunity
(a) Classroom management (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○
(b) Building effective relationships (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○
(c) Designing engaging work (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○

(d) Professional Communications (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○
(e) Working with diverse student groups (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○
(f) Working with diverse parent groups (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○
(g) Meeting demands of work and family life (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○
(h) Understanding assessment and student data (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○
(i) Understanding [redacted] standards (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○
(j) Working with special education students and families (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○
(k) Working with non-native English speaking students and families (Select one option)	○	○	○	○	○

If Q1 = "I was a teacher in another district (not [redacted])" Than:

30. Compared to previous school districts, the professional development at [redacted] is: (Select one option)

- ○ extremely poor
- ○ below Average
- ○ average
- ○ above average
- ○ excellent

31. Do you need additional training support in any of the following areas?

	Yes	No
(a) Classroom management	○	○
(b) Building effective relationships	○	○
(c) Designing engaging work	○	○
(d) Professional Communications	○	○
(e) Working with diverse student groups	○	○

(f) Working with diverse parent groups	○	○
(g) Meeting demands of working and family life	○	○
(h) Understanding assessment and student data	○	○
(i) Understanding [redacted] standards	○	○
(j) Working with special education students and families	○	○
(k) Working with non-native English speaking students and families	○	○

32. Please select your campus (Select one option)

[District School List]

_____
_____