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Josephine Rice
May 2013

WHO STAYS AND WHY? PRINCIPAL RETENTION IN A LARGE URBAN
SCHOOL DISTRICT: ANALYSIS AND IMPLICATIONS

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

In Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education
in Professional Leadership

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DEDICATION

To my husband William and our children, Erin, Jessie and Will, for your unwavering faith in me.

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I wish to take this opportunity to thank Dr. Wayne Emerson, Dr. Steven Busch, Dr. Angus MacNeil, and the University of Houston for giving me the opportunity to join a cohort of scholars. Your support has been invaluable. I would also like to thank Dr. Michele Pola for agreeing to serve on my dissertation committee. I attribute my success to you supporting, coaching, and encouraging me through this process. I can truly say this has been a challenging journey. While it was challenging, it was also gratifying to work with you and to learn from you. Everything about this journey invites me to cherish it.

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ABSTRACT

In this mixed methods study, reasons why principals choose to remain employed with a large urban school district were examined. The district faced challenges with recruiting, hiring, and retaining principals. As such, the purpose of this study was to examine and extract meaningful insights about the personal and organizational reasons that influenced principal retention. Principals who experienced five years uninterrupted service in the same school were surveyed. Principals who stayed were older, had more years of service as educators, and had more tenure in the organization. The results indicated committed relationships with other people, seeing their work as a calling, and job satisfaction were the primary reasons for remaining on the job. Michaels, Handfield-Jones, and Axelrod (2001) reported the war for talent will intensify in all fields. Suggested in the research were questions about job security, principal pay, and commitment provide opportunities for additional research on the organizational and personal reasons that impact principals' success.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

According to Michaels, Handfield-Jones, and Axelrod (2001), a war for talent exists. Hiring and retaining talented leaders is a primary concern for managers in both the private and public sector (Branham, 2005). Given the high-pressure context, understanding why employees stay is an important goal for any organization. In this study, the focus was on principals in a large urban school district regarding the personal and organizational reasons that influence principal retention. Retention was determined by whether or not the principal remained in the same school over a 5-year period from 2006-2011 and remain employed with the district at the time of this study. Also examined in this research study were principals' reasons for staying with the district; the district's talent management strategy; and, lastly, how the talent management strategy impacts principal retention.

In public education, the principal's role is identified as a key driver of student achievement (Seashore, Leithwood, Wahlstrom, & Anderson, 2010). However, according to Chapman (2005), in some countries, the number of individuals seeking principal positions is declining and high turnover is present among incumbent principals. Seashore et al. (2010) also documented that principal turnover has a distinctly detrimental effect on school culture and a measurable negative impact on student achievement.

MacBeath (2006) pointed out that it truly does not matter whether you believe exceptional leaders grow successful schools or you believe successful schools grow successful leaders. Confirmed in recent research findings were no documented instances of failing schools turning around without powerful leadership (Wallace, 2011). Research

by the Wallace Foundation (2011) supported the notion that to achieve results, every school must be led by an effective principal. However, Papa, Lankford, and Wycoff (2002) contended that it was difficult to develop the culture necessary for improvement because nearly two-thirds of principals left their first principalship within six years. Hallinger and Heck (1996) identified stability and sustainability in the principalship as important factors that help ensure school leaders were able to maximize student achievement.

Suggested in current research findings was that increased internal and external pressure to meet accountability standards had contributed to greater instability in principal tenure. Subsequently, these pressures negatively impacted schools' abilities to retain qualified principals (Lambeck, 2003). Such findings were revealing because they point to specific reasons why principals are leaving. Further research into the reasons why principals stay can help inform policies and practices in school districts.

One of the most pragmatic and revealing findings was that the turnover issue is very costly for schools and districts. For example, Fitz-enz (1997) established that the average company loses approximately one million dollars with every managerial and professional employee who leaves the organization. Not only was a monetary loss present; losses were also documented in organization knowledge that result from a departing employee (i.e., something akin to organizational "brain drain"). According to Hale (1998), 86% of employers had difficulty attracting new employees and 58% have difficulty retaining their employees. Organizations that fail to retain high performers would be left with an understaffed and less than qualified work force, which could ultimately hinder the ability to remain competitive (Rapport, Bancroft, & Okum, 2003).

Fishman (2007) predicted that as the war for talent intensified the gap between the winners and losers would get wider and wider. This kind of speculation led to what Michaels et al. (2001) as reported in MacBeath (2006) referred to as a “recruitment and retention crisis in school leadership” (p.183).

Those principals who leave, who stay, as well as their reasons for leaving (or staying) are important in understanding how an organization can be impacted by retention and turnover. Yet, no matter whether good or poor performers leave, inherent consequences are present for the organization as a whole. For example, Hausknecht et al. (2009) suggested that organizations would do well to understand whether their talent management programs are tailored to meet the expectations of those persons who are most responsible for the organization’s success. McCauley and Wakefield (2006) stated the following: “Organizations must have the ability to identify the most talented individuals, provide them with the necessary training and experiences, and retain valuable employees long term” (p. 5). It is important for organizations to identify those employees who add value; to understand what motivates employees; and, to position the organization to retain these key employees.

Statement of the Problem

This urban school district was experiencing challenges with recruiting, selecting, and retaining talented principals. Suggested in a growing body of research was that principal leadership makes a significant difference in the quality of schooling, school development, and student learning (Hallinger & Heck, 1996). According to Hallinger and Heck (1996), stability and sustainability were important factors that helped ensure school leaders were able to maximize student achievement. A number of different

educational researchers within the field suggested that principal turnover can have a detrimental effect on student achievement (Branch, Hausknecht, & Rivkin, 2009; DeAngelis, & White, 2011). To date, educational researchers and leaders understand a great deal about employee turnover, yet very little is known about why employees stay or why employees commit to an employer.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine who stays and why by examining the perceived personal and organizational reasons that influence principal retention. Also examined in this study were the district's talent management strategy, as well as whether the strategy impacted principal retention. The findings of this study add to the current body of research that informs school leaders on how to retain principals and how targeted employee retention strategies can benefit organizations.

Theoretical Framework

The study was designed to explore the phenomenon of principal retention in a large urban school district. The study was not designed to prove or disprove any particular theory. Rather, this study was structured to gain access to principals' lived experiences and how their experiences influenced decisions to remain employed with the district. The basis of the study relied on subjective truths as they were perceived by the people who had experienced the phenomenon (Yeh & Inman, 2007). Questions contained in the study asked participants to share the meaning of shared experiences and shared histories.

The research design was mixed. Mixed methods research allowed the researcher to confirm and cross-validate perceptions data, archived data, and trend data to discover

the relationships between variables in the study (Frankel & Wallen, 2009). The exploratory design involved the identification of relevant variables that undergirded the phenomenon of the principalship in this urban school district. In this investigation, descriptive data on principal tenure were tracked. Demographic data analysis was performed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 2.0). Meaning was developed based on descriptions of phenomenon obtained from participants through the use of cognitive interviews administered through a survey. The research design included establishing the context of the subject's experiences by examining specific district descriptors and relevant research. Principals were asked to construct their experiences by providing background data and by describing the experiences of their daily lives. The researcher reflected on the experiences and created meaning. Finally, phenomenological data and descriptive statistics were analyzed to arrive at the findings contained in the study.

Research Questions

Question 1: What are the principal's perceived reasons for staying with the school district?

Question 2: From the principal's perspective, why do principals believe other talented principal leaders leave the district?

Question 3: What are the principal's perceptions of the district's talent management strategy and how the talent management strategy impacts retention? To what extent does the district's talent management strategy align with an empirically based set of employee retention factors?

Definition of Terms

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP): This term referred to the individual state's measure of progress toward the goal of 100% of students achieving to state academic standards on at least reading, language arts, and mathematics. AYP also established the minimum level of proficiency that the state, its school districts, and schools must achieve each year on annual tests and related academic indicators (No Child Left Behind Act, 2002).

Involuntary Turnover: This term encompassed items such as firings, retirement, disability and death (McEvoy, 1985).

Retention: For the purposes of this study, this term related closely to “successful retention,” which is the ability to create “an environment where people want to stay...and an environment that meets peoples’ needs” (Bittante, 2008; Manion, 2006).

Retention Management: This term referred to the ability to hold onto those employees you want to keep, for longer than your competitors (de Vos, 2006; Johnson, 2000).

Talent Management Strategy: This term referred to the implementation of integrated strategies or systems designed to increase workplace productivity by developing improved processes for attracting, developing, retaining, and utilizing people with the required skills and aptitudes to meet current and future business needs (Lockwood, 2006).

Turnover: This term referred to the permanent movement beyond the boundary of an organization (Macy & Mirvins, 1983).

Voluntary Turnover: This term specifically referred to any employee-initiated turnover (e.g., resignations) (McEvoy, 1985).

Limitations

The findings from this study were limited to the context of a single, large, urban school district. Moreover, this study was limited to individuals in the school district who served in the same principal position, in the same school for a minimum of five years from 2006-2011 and remained employed at the time of this study. The qualitative results from the criterion sampling procedure decreased generalizability across other educational contexts. In addition, circumstances surrounding the recruitment, screening, or selection of principals were not addressed herein. Important implications are present for the broad domain of how principals are selected and whether research-based “job fit” strategies might influence hiring decisions; thereby, impacting performance and retention rates. Although retaining high performers who play key roles in an organization’s success is a critical issue for many organizations (Branham, 2000), principal effectiveness was not examined in this investigation.

Assumptions

An assumption was made that if the principal remains employed, the decision to stay was a joint decision on the part of the principal and the school district. As noted earlier, principal performance is not taken into account in this study. One assumption was that principals who were retained were high performers who likely possessed the knowledge, skills, and experiences needed to contribute to the overall success of the organization.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Evolution of America's Schools

The retention of high performing employees is an important goal for any organization. Even though emerging evidence exists that link leadership and organizational performance, many organizations report they are either unable to hire or unable to retain quality employees (Frearson, 2002; Hallinger & Heck, 1996). Among employees in schools, the principal plays a pivotal role in determining the ultimate success of any school (DuFour, 1991). Examined in this literature review were the principal's evolving role and how the role was impacted by conditions that are external to the school. This review also delved into the importance of the principal's role and his or her impact on student achievement, teacher quality, and school culture. Finally, research into reasons why employees stay or quit was analyzed in this literature review. A discussion on models for best practice in talent management was also present in this review.

American public schooling underwent drastic changes after the common schools model which was utilized in the mid-nineteenth century. Common schools did not charge tuition, rather they were supported by local property taxes. As such, common schools were essentially operated by local committees with little oversight from state legislatures. Common schools also exclusively served White children. America's schools had enrolled 12.7 million students by the 20th century – thus, providing schooling for more children than any other nation in the world (Tyack, Anderson, Cuban, Kaestle, &

Ravitch, 2001). Although many schools served single races, America was still well on its way to providing a universal education for all children.

The era between 1900 and 1950 ushered in a period wherein American schools sprung up around immigrant communities. As a direct result of this shift, schools became increasingly urban during this period. Across the nation, new student arrivals to America embraced the idea that attaining an education was critical to being a successful American. As more families endeavored to educate their children, the sheer number of schools increased rapidly. By 1920, new high schools were opening at the rate of one per day; school systems added kindergarten classes, and began offering transportation; they created specializations for the teacher; and they introduced the concept of tracking and IQ testing (Cuban, 1993). Schools also experienced the influx of millions of dollars in funding when President Eisenhower signed the National Defense Education Act in 1958 (Tyack et al., 2001).

In the 1950s, although schools primarily served communities that resided within their geographic boundaries, Black parents and activists began to question how schools were supported and began to demand widespread excellence in education. Social classes were (by law) separate and (de facto) unequal across schools in America. In fact, rigid segregation existed within the buildings and within classrooms of American schools (Tyack et al., 2001). The landmark case titled *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka Kansas* challenged America's "separate but equal doctrine" (Tyack et al., 2001). However, on May of 1954, the Supreme Court ruled unanimously that separate educational facilities were inherently unequal (Tyack et al., 2001). Broad interventions

that were mostly tied to funding by the government forced states to move toward creating more equality in America's schools.

Influences of No Child Left Behind

The implementation of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act in 2002 ushered in a new era of educational accountability. The goal of the NCLB Act was to ensure academic progress among all students. Accordingly, the NCLB Act mandated that school districts formulate standards, test students in grades 3 to 8 each year, define baseline levels of proficiency, and set school performance based on test scores. Schools were also subject to incentives or negative sanctions based on whether the schools met student performance goals based on proficiency standards set by the state. Moreover, schools were expected to have reached 100% proficiency for all students by the 2013-2014 school year.

In Texas, schools were subject to sanctions when they failed to make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) two years in a row (NCLB, 2001). Overall, schools that did not meet AYP faced sanctions or the threat of sanctions depending on the school's history. Sanctions include allowing students to transfer out of low-performing schools to other schools in the district, requiring schools to provide tutoring services, mandated improvement plans, and extended support services (Minthrop & Trujillo, 2005). Due to pressure induced by the standards movement, combined with the demands of NCLB, principals, teachers and students were under constant scrutiny.

Table 2.1

Tougher Scrutiny: Reported Current “Happenings” Within a District

Happenings	Superintendent	Principal
Principals are evaluated according to their ability to judge and improve teacher quality	78%	57%
Much tougher scrutiny, which results in teachers being much more likely to be refused tenure (or have tenure postponed)	53%	36%
Principals are much more likely to be removed or reassigned when student achievement is low	43%	29%
Students' standardized test scores at classroom level are part of how individual teachers are evaluated	31%	30%

Note. This table was drawn from “Rolling Up Their Sleeves” (Frakas et al., 2012).

This constant scrutiny led to increased teaching to the test (Elmore, 2003), which ultimately led to a narrowing of the curriculum (Coutinho, Hartwick, & Penebad, 2006). Jacobs (2005) also examined the accountability policies of the Chicago Public Schools and documented increases in the number of students who were enrolled in special education. Special education rates increased the most among low-achieving students in low-performing schools amounting to an increase of 18% (Jacobs, 2004). A pattern of teachers retaining marginal students also emerged. Once again, low-performing students' retention rates increased significantly under high-stakes testing. Jacobs and Leavitt (2005) confirmed increases between 130% and 180% depending on whether the students were in a grade that was tested and depending on their position in the district's grade level performance quartiles.

According to Gordon (2006), students' performance on statewide accountability tests became increasingly important to the success of the principal, the school, as well as the school district as a whole. Pressure to improve test scores necessitated greater principal involvement in analyzing student performance data with teachers, coordinating teacher efforts, arranging for staffs development opportunities, and working with an expanded array of community members and business partners. Murphy and Hallinger (1992) called this movement "bureaucratic accountability" or compliance with rules and regulations.

Teachers were denied tenure or tenure was postponed when a gap was present in actual achievement data and the teacher's daily practice (Frakas, 2003). Focus group research from teachers in New York indicated that teachers reported direct instruction and remediation were often used as strategies to increase student achievement scores (Grant, 2000). As a result of the implementation of the NCLB Act, Stevenson and Waltman (2005) reported that teachers spent more time on test preparation activities, which some teachers described as "teaching to the test". Additionally, teachers in Colorado reported concerns regarding decreases in student and teacher morale due to pressure from high stakes testing (Taylor, Shepard, Kinner, & Rosenthal, 2003).

The overall improvement of educational outcomes for all students was one of the primary goals of the NCLB Act. However, according to Jacobs (2005), little evidence is present that students learn more in an atmosphere of high stakes accountability. In fact, researchers have determined that students have experienced perverse and damaging consequences as a direct result of the implementation of the NCLB Act. The perverse consequences were wide ranging. Jacobs and Leavitt (2003), moreover, identified cases

wherein teachers manually changed student answer sheets. Students who were perceived as low-performers were suspended on test day (Figlio, 2006). Other tactics included labeling marginal students as disabled to prevent their scores from being counted (Cullen & Reback, 2002; Figlio & Getzler, 2002). Principals were more likely to be reassigned when student achievement was low. Advocates of the accountability movement believed increased accountability would improve student performance by increasing parent involvement, strengthening curriculum and instruction, as well as raise motivation among teachers, students, and parents (Jacobs, 2004). In some cases, principals also suffered perverse consequences as a result of the school standards movement. Due to the established mandates of the NCLB Act, principals were charged with making objective observations and evaluating teachers. Similarly, principals were evaluated based on the teacher's student achievement results (Fraksa, 2003). Public Agenda surveyed 1,006 superintendents and reported that 63% of superintendent respondents confirmed that the most significant portion of a principal's evaluation was how successful they were in raising student achievement (Frakas, 2003). Unlike years past, schooling had become a complex enterprise. Subsequently, some of today's educational researchers questioned whether principals were adequately prepared to meet the demands of the complex environment created by the standards movement (MacBeath, 2006). For instance, Goodlad (1984) stated those schools that are unable to solve school-wide problems fail due to principals' lack of sufficient skills.

Over the years, America's educational system changed from a system operated by local interests, which served a select group of students, into a system that came under increasing federal influence as a result of *A Nation at Risk* (Jacobs, 2005) and through the

influence of the No Child Left Behind Act. As federal influence expanded, so did the push for schools to meet student performance goals for all students. Although pushing to educate all students represented a worthy goal for the nation, unintended consequences occurred for students, teachers, and principals. Each of these groups came under constant pressure to improve. Principals who did not demonstrate the ability to improve student outcomes sometimes found themselves forced out. Ironically, some individuals speculated that the systems put into place to improve achievement may have hurt the very schools and students they were intended to help.

The Principal's Role Evolved

In this section, empirical evidence concerning the principal's changing role was analyzed. This discussion is structured in three parts. First, the historic evolution of the principal's role is described here. Next, changes in the principal's role are highlighted. Third, fundamental changes in the principal's role that resulted from pressures brought forth by the standards movement are described.

Possessing an understanding of the evolution of the field of school administration was important to understanding the role of the principal. The supervision and implementation of America's earliest schools was locally controlled and run by unskilled agents of local governmental entities. The agent's role was primarily restricted to allocating resources, making sure the school house was kept in good repair, hiring teachers and reporting to town officials how many students enrolled or completed the school program (Beach, 1990).

Since 1894, the agent's role evolved from educational leader, to principal, and then to superintendent. It was not until 1901 that the specialized role of the educational

administrator took root across the nation (Beach, 1990). The revised role of the educational administrator included identifying and appointing a superintendent of public schools who would be responsible for the care and supervision of schools. School communities over time recognized the need to separate the local management of schools and the specialized knowledge and skills needed to operate schools. Part of this recognition for specialized learning about how to operate schools developed into the first programs focused on early training for teachers, administrators, and other educational leaders.

By the 19th century, the basis of school administration had changed. School administrators in training during this period began to reflect concepts of management and constructs extracted from the behavioral sciences rather than simply focusing on resource allocation (Murphy & Vrisenga, 2006). Early school leadership researchers described the principal as having positional power in a hierarchical school organization (Brady, 1984; Firestone & Wilson, 1985). In their view, the principal held unique access to organizational control and influence, and created change through the use of power and influence. Goldring and Rallis (1992), Murphy and Seashore (1994), and Leithwood et al. (1994) also described the principal as the key figure in leading school reform. The positional power theme wherein the principal was the source of power within a school was widely accepted. Accordingly, Anderson (1989) described the principalship as the single most powerful force in improving school effectiveness and for improving student achievement.

Standards Movement Influences

The business alliances and business round tables that emerged after the business community's issuance of *A Nation at Risk* influenced the standards movement. The corporate model could be seen in many aspects of schooling, such as the establishment of clear national goals and high academic standards, giving parents choices among schools, letting schools compete for students, frequent testing, public reporting of test results, and telling parents and taxpayers how schools are doing (Tyack et al., 2001).

Early in the 20th century the view of “school administrator as manager or CEO” emerged. During this period, tools such as benchmarking, total quality management, and management by objectives were marketed as effective tools for school administrators. The framework for school administration eventually developed dual pillars embodying both management principles and concepts from the social sciences. The Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Principles and Standards were developed in 1994 by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA) (Murphy, 2005). These standards were intended to influence the knowledge and skills of current leaders and to shape the knowledge, skills and performance of leaders enrolled in leadership preparation programs. According to Casey and Donaldson (2001), the standards focused on teaching, learning, and students.

While writing about leadership and school improvement, Schmoker (1999), stated, “ If we want sustained improvement on a wide even national scale- only leadership will get us there” (p. 118). Norton (2002) also reinforced this idea – that is, his writing related to studies on school effectiveness, school climate, and student achievement (all of which reveal that what happens in schools depends heavily on the

quality of the school leader). Work conditions, such as workload, school climate, parental support, concerns about relationships with supervisors and others, and lack of administrative leadership, all supported and showed stronger relationships with job satisfaction than with salary and benefits (Norton, 2002). This description was substantially different and more complex than the descriptions described as recent as 1984. The role of the principal in ensuring success of the school and maintaining student achievement changed with the implementation of the NCLB Act (Fullan, 2006). In theory, the NCLB Act created a competitive market environment wherein schools were expected to use resources in more efficient and effective ways, which would result in improved outcomes for all students.

By 2008, the national standards for educational leadership set out a standards-based approach to principal leadership. As denoted in Green (2010), The Educational Leadership Policy Standards described the major work of the principal as follows:

- Facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision for learning that is shared by all stakeholders
- Advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth
- Ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment
- Collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources
- Acting with integrity, fairness and in an ethical manner

- Understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal and cultural context. (p. 42)

These standards described what a principal should know and be able to do.

Moreover, part of the purpose of the standards was to build an infrastructure to measure school effectiveness and to assess the abilities of school leaders to facilitate change and impact student achievement (Green, 2009). The standards describe the traits, work load , and the responsibilities that were expected of school districts and school leaders.

Due to the onslaught of school reform and the press for increased student achievement mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act, principals were required to focus on student achievement for all students. State and national achievement tests outcomes became more important, and principals are judged on how their students perform on said assessments. A principal's involvement in analyzing student results, creating strategies to improve scores, identifying and organizing professional development added to the array of activities that required the principals' time and attention. Murphy and Hallinger (1992) specifically denoted this shift in focus on outcomes as bureaucratic accountability, which included compliance with rules and regulations (see Figure 1).

The New Accountability Movement for 21st Century School Leaders



Figure 1. The new accountability movement for 21st century school leaders. This figure illustrates the standards movement’s new framework for bureaucratic accountability (i.e., compliance with rules and regulations, as well as outcome accountability). Reprinted from *The Four Dimensions of Principal Leadership* (p. 2). Green, R. L., Upper Saddle River, NJ., Prentice Hall, 2010.

Green (2010) described the principal as “the chief learning officer” of the school and as an individual with a vision for the future of the school who can articulate that vision to all stakeholders. This particular statement highlighted the emphasis upon the role of the principal as the instructional leader (i.e., the individual responsible for shaping culture, collaborating with stakeholders and improving teaching and learning). Marzano, Walters, and McNulty (2005) identified that (a) setting high expectations for all children and (b) accountability for accepting responsibility for the education of all children are key components of a principal’s role in a school. Principals are responsible for hiring, supervising and supporting teachers, managing the day-to-day operations of schools, and managing student discipline. A principal’s responsibilities also included managing relationships with constituent groups, which include students, parents, teachers,

community members, public officials, the superintendent and the school board. As time has demonstrated, the role of the principal has not always been defined in this manner.

By 2004, researchers began once again to describe the principal's role in a different way. Leithwood (2004) and his colleagues described the principal's role as building strategic direction, understanding and developing people, redesigning the organization, and managing teaching and learning programs. These new and different expectations are expressed in the current Interstate School Licensures Consortium (ISLLC) Standards which highlight all of the things a principal can and should do.

The changes in the role of the principal from the 19th century to the 20th century highlighted both the speed at which the principal's role changed and the complexity associated with the changing role. The influence of the NCLB Act caused a shift in thinking regarding the roles, responsibilities, and accountability for school leaders. The standards movement emphasized high expectations for all children and increased the accountability of the principal for educating all children (Green, 2009; Lashaway, 1999; Reeves & Dyer, 2002). Murphy and Lewis (1994) reported that many school and principals struggled greatly under the weight of constant and rapid change. Constant change led to uncertainty, confusion, and concern for whether principals would be able to meet the changing demands and (sometimes) mixed signals on priorities identified by local constituents, state and federal government.

The Principal's Role is Important

Frakas et al. (2003) interviewed superintendents who described the principal's job as "difficult but doable" (p. 34). However, principals who were also interviewed described their job as "impossible (Frakas et al., 2003). The principal's description of the

job pointed to the complexity and the challenge within the role of the principal today as a whole. Additionally, Prestine (1993) cited that “the principal’s role is difficult to discern as it is defined by nuances that are subtle, unarticulated, and embedded in context-specific organizational processes and shared understandings” (p. 134). Murphy and Alexander (1992) pointed out that role ambiguity or role overload increased the level of stress for school administrators.

Norton (2002) cited the changing demands of the job as one of the primary concerns expressed by principals. Norton also attributed the changing nature of the job as one of the reasons why principals leave their jobs. Kennedy (2000) identified the changing demands of the job as a factor that influences principal retention. A study conducted by Frakas, Johnson, and Duffett (2003) cited politics and bureaucracy (49%), unreasonable demands brought on by higher standards (38%), low pay (9%), and lack of effort by students (1%) as reasons why principals stated they would leave their jobs. In a comprehensive study designed to determine what was needed to fix public schools in America, 925 K-12 principals and 1,006 public school superintendents participated (Frakas et al., 2003). Subsequent findings from the report, titled *Rolling Up Their Sleeves Superintendents and Principals Talk About What’s Needed to Fix Public Schools*, were that most superintendents and principals believed that a good principal was critical to a successful school (Frakas et al., 2003).

Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (2005) also established that principal influence was second only to teacher influence as an in-school determinant of student learning. Teacher impact accounted for 33% of school-level variations in achievement; followed closely by

the influence of the principal at 25%, and 42% indirect impact based on other factors in the school environment (SRI International, 2011).

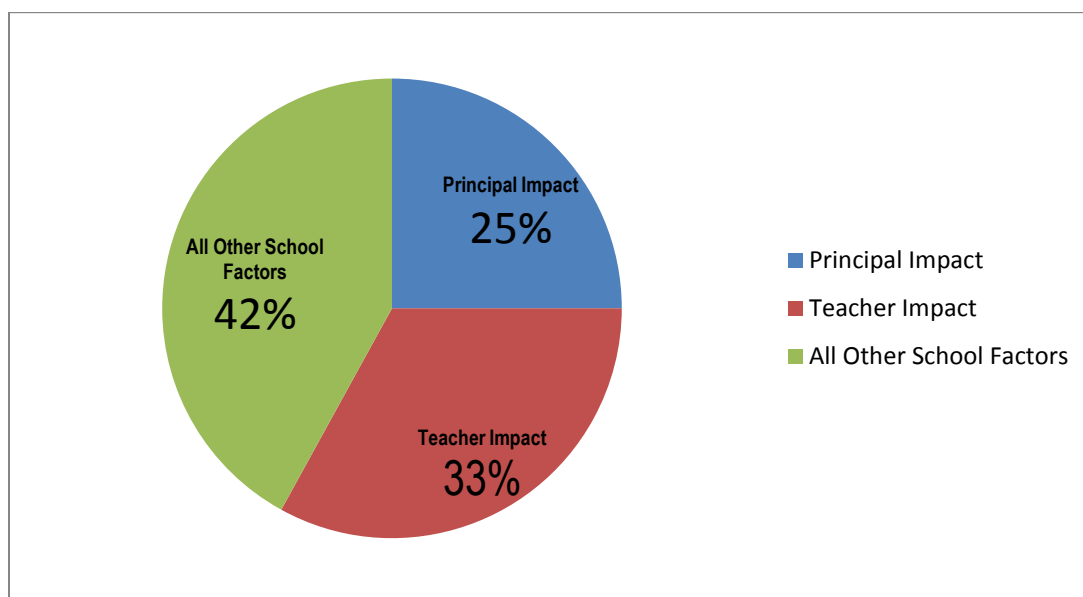


Figure 2. Teacher and principal impact on student learning. Reprint from *School Leadership that Works* by R. Marzano, T. Waters & B. McNulty, (2005).

Similarly, Papa (2007) concluded that regardless of which school reform approach was considered for implementation, the principal played an important role in maintaining the success of the school and ensuring all students achieve. Hallinger and Heck (2010) suggested that the primary role of the principal was to improve learning and to strengthen the school's capacity for improvement. Boyer (1983) determined that in schools with high achievement and a clear sense of community, the principal made the difference. Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, and Lee (1982) linked school leadership with the organization of curriculum and instruction. In subsequent studies conducted by Brookover and Lezotte (1979), Griffith (2000), and Villani (1996), important links were identified between school climate and school leadership.

The scope of principal's efforts to create a sense of community and build capacity in these areas included articulating a compelling vision, setting achievable goals, monitoring performance, promoting effective communication, and providing individual support to staff. Successful school administrators are also expected to support and sustain the performance of students, teachers and other administrators in the school. As indicated, school climate, leadership, and quality instruction are frequently associated with effective schools. Therefore, the principal's impact on teachers, culture, and overall student achievement are closely intertwined.

Principal Impact on Student Achievement

A review of current literature on the role of the principal in impacting student achievement indicated the primary role of the school remains the same. Namely, according to Darling-Hammond (2007), principals were expected to fill many roles in schools, with their primary role being to facilitate effective instruction for optimal student achievement. Similarly, the Wallace Foundation (2011) established that principals primarily impact student achievement in an indirect way – specifically, through their influence on other people and other features of the organization (Leithwood, Seashore-Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004). Leithwood et al. (2004) further described the role of the principal as setting direction, developing people, and redesigning the organization.

Principal Impact on Teacher Quality

As reiterated in SRI International (2011), educational researchers have long demonstrated that teachers are the most important in-school determinant of student learning (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2005). Furthermore, multiple research studies have linked leadership with various aspects of schooling. Given this important connection in mind, the work of Brookover and Lezotte (1979), which also linked leadership and the attitude of teachers, makes logical sense. In addition, Conziemus and O'Neill (2001) identified encouraging teachers to challenge the status quo, helping grade-level and cross-grade-level teams understand and use data, providing direction through inquiry as principal roles that impact teacher attitudes. Leithwood et al. (2010) suggested that a key part of a principal's job is identifying, supporting, and developing teachers. Hirsch and Emerick (2007) identified use of time, facilities and resources, leadership, empowerment, and professional development as five general categories that impact teacher retention. All of the five categories were significantly linked to the principal's role. Ingersoll (2001) suggested high teacher turnover can be a sign of both underlying problems in school performance and a cause of poor performance.

Leithwood et al. (2004) confirmed that teacher quality is important. Wallace's researchers discovered that to achieve teacher effectiveness at scale, schools need effective principals who create a school culture of high expectations focused on learning for both students and adults (Wallace, 2004). Additionally, Darling-Hammond (2007) established that a good principal is the single most important determinant of whether a school can attract and keep the high-quality teachers necessary to turn around schools (Wallace, 2011, p. 2).

Principal Impact on School Culture

The importance of the principal's role in establishing and managing school culture cannot be overemphasized. Educational researchers utilize the terms "school culture" and "school climate" synonymously. Therefore, for the purposes of this study, the terms are also used in the same manner. School culture is defined as "the historically transmitted patterns of meaning that include the norms, values, beliefs, ceremonies, rituals, traditions, and myths understood maybe in varying degrees, by members of the school community" (Stolp & Smith, 1994, p. 1). According to Schein (1997), creating and managing school culture is the only important thing a principal does. Deal and Peterson (1999) further reinforced the notion that, while developing positive school culture is everyone's responsibility on a campus, the principal plays the most important role in framing and modeling the overall school cultural norms.

Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, and Myerson (2005) connected a principal's ability to build a positive school culture to student achievement. In their meta-analysis, Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005) identified the following four principal behaviors were associated with developing school culture: (a) promoting cohesion among staff, (b) promoting a sense of well-being among staff, (c) developing an understanding of purpose among staff, and (d) developing a shared vision of what the school could be like. Additionally, Marzano et al. (2005) reported school climate, leadership, and quality instruction were frequently associated with effective schools.

Hoyle, English, and Steffy (1985) and Freiberg (1998) revealed that a positive school climate improves student achievement, enhances staff performance and improves overall morale. Research supports the conclusion that students excel academically in

schools where principals have created high performance expectations (Hill, Foster, & Gendler, 1990).

This evidence pointed to principals making a positive impact on school culture, teacher retention, and student achievement. Principal leadership is an important driver for change in schools. Hallinger and Heck (2010) suggested that “leadership and school improvement capacity operate as part of a set of systemic relationships” (p. 107). With skillful leadership that is sustained over time, these efforts had the potential to impact the delivery of quality schooling.

Research on the State of the Principalship

A variety of external and internal pressures, such as decentralization at the school level, mandates to meet the NCLB standards, increased state and local accountability, changed the principalship. Although some of these initiatives have given the principal greater latitude in decision-making, the pressures to meet standards also gave principals less and less latitude to make decisions (Fink & Brayman, 2006).

Research on the Large Urban School District

Similar to other school districts across the nation, this urban school district had also been impacted by the changing educational context and by internal and external pressures to improve student achievement. In this section of the paper, some of the significant drivers of change and how the district responded to external and internal stimuli are described. In 1990, the school board identified the need for a new organizational structure within the district. This new structure was driven by the board’s belief that perceptions of inequity were present, and that clear gaps in student achievement were also present (HISD-Budget Book, 2010). The school board partnered

with the Greater Houston Partnership, the Houston Business Advisory Council, and the Commission on District Decentralization to create a decentralized organizational structure (HISD, 2010). Some of the changes that resulted from this collaboration were: (a) structures for campus level decision-making (Shared Decision-Making Committees (SDMC); (b) new rules that gave principals flexibility in spending with reduced oversight from central office; and (c) significant input in principal selection at the school level.

Even as student achievement improved during the period from 2001-2010, the Board of Education aggressively pushed to close the achievement gap for all students. In 2010, the school board publicly affirmed its commitment to children and families in Houston by adopting the *2010 Declaration of Beliefs and Visions*. This particular document reaffirmed that schools would focus on the student-teacher relationship, decentralization, performance over compliance, a common core of academic subjects for all students, accountability, empowerment, and capacity building (*Declaration of Beliefs and Visions* by the 2010 Board of Education). The school board also stated its intention to implement the changes needed to ensure that educating children remained the district's highest priority.

The *2010 Declaration of Beliefs and Visions* placed student achievement and growth at the forefront of what is most important in the district. The school board formally declared, "There can be no achievement gap between socioeconomic groups and/or children of ethnic diversity" (HISD, 2010, p. 2). In addition to focusing on the achievement gap, the board also challenged schools to earn autonomy and expressed a commitment to decentralization as a means of improving schools. The board empowered principals to innovate and make decisions about instruction. However, decentralization

and flexible decision-making were dependent upon whether schools and principals demonstrated acceptable levels of performance. In instances when schools did not demonstrate acceptable performance or progress, the board promised greater oversight combined with central office intervention. In return, the school board committed itself to providing guidance and support, setting high expectations, and establishing clear, consistent standards (HISD, 2010). The district's commitment to decentralize is also documented in board policy AE (LOCAL) (HISD, 2012). The district further confirmed its commitment to use best practices to make optimal use of tax dollars and district resources and to empower principals to make significant decisions at the campus level.

Decentralization in the district studied began in 1990, and the district continues to implement a version of a decentralized structure to this very day. In particular, the district implemented the M-Form of decentralization (Ouchi, 2006). One of the primary elements of the district's adoption of decentralization is that principals control most decisions regarding instruction. Decisions regarding instruction and personnel are conducted at the school level. In the M-Form model, certain important functions, such as data storage, auditing, budgeting, food service, selection and hiring, transportation, payroll and pension services, and constructing new schools are centralized functions which are overseen and guided by central office staff. M-Form budgeting principles provide that schools have greater autonomy over how money is spent at the school level (Ouchi, 2006). This particular tenet is supported by the belief that school level autonomy promotes equity because decisions made at the school level are more likely to meet the needs of specific students. Although the district focused on equity, the school board also acknowledged the need to support equal access to funding to support instruction. The

district created weighted funding formulas to ensure that schools had the resources needed to support students. Weighted formulas are used both in per pupil funding decisions and in the principal pay structure (HISD Compensation Manual, 2011). The impact of weighted formulas on principal salaries is explained later in the paper.

Students are assigned to schools in this district based on a school feeder pattern system. Although feeder patterns exist, families within the district are also provided with the option to apply to a variety of schools that may not be part of the feeder pattern configuration. The district of study touts a wide ranging portfolio of schools that are designed to meet the needs of their diverse student population. The school choice model allows parents the option to make decisions about where their children attend schools. School choice places additional pressure on principals to recruit the best student. This model also forces principals to be keenly aware of the perception about their schools, as well as their overall marketability, so that they can be able to attract parents and student to enroll and attend. The changing context of the principal's role has surfaced differing views on the state of the principalship. Highlighted in the following section of the paper are three studies undertaken to examine the state of the principalship.

Findings from Across Texas

In one study, the rates of newly-hired Texas school principals from 1996 through 2008 were analyzed (Fuller & Young, 2009). This Texas-based study used descriptive statistics and reviewed data sets, including principals' personal characteristics, such as race, ethnicity, age, gender, and state principal certification scores. Also analyzed in this investigation were data purchased from the Texas Education Agency (TEA). According

to Fuller and Young (2009), in Texas, the average tenure for an elementary principal was 5 years and the average tenure for a high school principal was 3.8 years.

Overall, the length of tenure decreased as school level increased. Fuller and Young (2009) also confirmed that stability in the principalship is important – specifically stating that more attention should be placed on principal retention. In particular, Fuller and Young (2009) cited the following overarching conclusions: (a) elementary schools have the greatest retention rates and high schools have the shortest and lowest retention rates; (b) retention rates for high schools are low for all schools; (c) student achievement in the principal's first year of employment to some extent determines whether he or she will be view as a successful principal; (d) principals who lead high-poverty schools with high percentages of disadvantaged students are less likely to be retained; moreover, principals in high schools are less likely to be retained, and high school principals have the shortest tenure and lower retention rates than low-poverty schools; (e) principal retention is somewhat greater in suburban districts populated by White students who are not economically disadvantaged; and (f) a principal's personal characteristics (e.g., race, age, gender) appear to have a small impact on principal retention (Fuller & Young, 2009).

Findings from Illinois

In a second study based on the findings from the state of Illinois, descriptive, inferential, and multivariate analyses were conducted to determine the extent of principals' movements from 2001-2008 (DeAngelis & White, 2011). DeAngelis and White (2011) also identified the following five categories that are representative of principal movement:

- Stayers who stayed in the same school as a principal;
- Movers within District who remained a principal but moved to another school within the same district;
- Movers Out of District who remained a principal but moved to another school in a different district;
- Changers who Changed to a non-principal position within the same system; and
- Leavers who exited the school system altogether.

The researchers used data from state administrative data bases and other sources to track principals from year to year from 2001-2008. Overall, principal turnover rates increased for all principals in Illinois during 2001-2008 – an increase from the rate identified in an earlier period studied from 1987-2001. In particular, during 1987-2001, an average of 86% of principals remained in their schools from one year to the next, as compared to only 79% during 2001-2008. DeAngelis and White (2011) documented that student performance measured by standardized achievement scores declined significantly in relationship to principal turnover. Similarly, principals in higher achieving schools were less likely to move to another school, change positions, or leave all together. The majority of principals who exited the Illinois Public Schools system did not return, and principals who moved within school districts saw little change in school characteristics. Lastly, principals who transitioned across districts tended to move to schools with higher student achievement and lower concentrations of minority students.

Findings from North Carolina and Chicago

In a third study, both North Carolina administrators and administrators from the Chicago Public Schools provided data. Analyzed in this study were principal mobility in both locations and characteristics associated with principal mobility and attrition. The researchers used multivariate analysis to examine career choices of school principals (Gates et al., 2006). Similar to the DeAnglis and White study, Gates et al. (2006) categorized mobility options for principals into the following nine categories:

- Principals in the same school;
- Principal in a different school in the same district;
- Principal in a different district;
- Other administrative position in same district;
- Other administrative position in different district;
- Teacher in same district;
- Teacher in different district;
- Other; and
- Left the state system.

Gates et al. (2006) examined principal turnover and principal mobility in North Carolina and Illinois during 1987-2001. They used a longitudinal event history modeling approach to examine school characteristics and the impact on different types of principal turnover. Gates et al. (2006) specifically documented a substantial degree of stability among school principals. However, some schools, depending on school characteristics had lower levels of administrative stability among the principals who transitioned, less than 20% left the system (Gates, 2006). In North Carolina, the turnover rate was 17%,

whereas in Illinois the rate was slightly lower at 14%. Nevertheless, the majority of movement was due to principals transitioning between schools within both states.

MacBeath (2006) examined an array of issues related to what other researchers (Branham, 2000; Michaels et al., 2001) called the “war for talent” in school leadership. Williams (2001) identified a list of 22 dissatisfiers, which include time, change, support, resourcing, accountability, and parent demands, as the top dissatisfiers for principals in his research on principals in Canada. MacBeath (2006), on the other hand, broadly identified change and the changing nature of the principalship as the root cause of what causes the slow erosion of a principal’s ability to think creatively, act strategically, and accomplish difficult feats. McBeath (2006) identified the following school-based conditions that destroy talent:

- Stress was one of the strongest and most frequent recurring themes in interviews with principals to determine what conditions made their jobs most difficult. Sources of stress included the changing nature of the education system, pressures to produce acceptable scores on standardized tests, pressures from stakeholders, decentralization, and the constant competition to capture a share of the market in systems where principals’ success is also dependent on recruiting the right students (MacBeath, 2006).
- Workload was closely related to stress in the study of school-based conditions that zapped or destroyed talented principals. Principals reported taking on more tasks that were not related to teaching and learning, leaving less time to focus on instruction (MacBeath, 2006).

- Accountability and bureaucracy was also correlated with stress in MacBeath's study (2006). Bureaucratic actions included completing paperwork, constantly warding off the possibility of litigation, and having to justify actions taken at the school level. Principals in the study stated that dealing with the bureaucracy was a demotivating factor.
- Personal and domestic concerns related to long hours, time away from family were also sighted as disincentives for school leaders (MacBeath, 2006). James and Whiting (1998) also speculated that part of the principal shortage may be due to teachers who view the demands of the principalship such as long hours and workload in a negative light, and instead choose to remain in their positions as teachers.
- Salary was frequently cited as an issue that negatively impacts principal retention. MacBeath (2006) posed a question regarding whether principal may earn less per hour than their staff because principals work longer hours.

Social factors were identified as contributing significantly to some of the difficulties associated with the principalship (MacBeath, 2006). Depending on the content and location of the school, the principal may spend a great deal of time dealing with social issues related to drugs, abuse, poverty, absenteeism, and parenting. All of these social issues bring with them considerable challenges for principals, who must provide mediation, intervention and negotiation on behalf of students, parents, and stakeholders.

Given that different factors were analyzed in each study, it was difficult to make comparisons across studies. Yet, the format of each study gave insights into the

movement of principals within their career tracks. Each study occurred in a different context; hence, few findings were aligned. Notable differences were present in the sites studied. Illinois, an example of a Midwestern “rust belt” state, has experienced moderate population growth after population stagnation in the 1980s (Gates et al., 2006).

Conversely, North Carolina is a state experiencing rapid population growth (Gates et al., 2006). In comparison to the above states, Texas is a diverse state – both in terms of the number of districts, schools, principals, and teachers. Moreover, the state has an abundance of inner-city, suburban, small city, rural districts, and schools that serve large percentages of poor and minority students and large percentage of affluent and White students (Fuller & Young, 2007).

As observed through the work of DeAngelis and White (2011) and the Gates et al. (2006), school characteristics seemed to play an important role in predicting principal transition. In the literature reviewed, researchers addressed characteristics that included, but were not limited to: (a) race/ethnicity, (b) match between the principal and the plurality of students, (c) quality of undergraduate institution, (d) principal’s gender and race, (e) education/experience, (f) pay, (g) student achievement outcomes, and (h) school level. Researchers also established that the turnover rates of principals varied based on their personal characteristics and the characteristics of the school in which they work (Fuller & Young, 2009).

Further, Fuller and Young (2009) documented that principal tenure and retention rates varied dramatically across school levels – with elementary schools having the longest tenure and greatest retention rates and high schools having the shortest tenure and lowest retention rates. However, Gates et al. (2006) determined that principals of large

schools were less likely to leave the system and were also less likely to assume a principalship in another school or leave the principalship to assume another position in the school system (Gates et al., 2006). Similarly, Gates et al. (2006) reported large schools had more problems, but that principals of large schools also received higher salaries. This analysis suggested that salary differentials may be enough to keep the principal in place (Gates et al., 2006).

Overall, principal race and ethnicity did not appear to influence tenure substantially (Fuller & Young, 2007). Gates et al. (2006) documented that, on average, Black principals were slightly less likely to leave their positions in Illinois and North Carolina, whereas Hispanic principals experienced a high positive effect for the probability of changing schools and changing positions, but no effect on leaving the system (Gates et al., 2006).

The personal characteristics of race, age, and gender appear to have only a small impact on principal retention rates (Fuller & Young, 2009). Gates et al. (2006) documented that women were more likely to leave the system and change positions than men; yet, not at a significant rate. Fuller and Young (2007) argued that women administrators tend to have an average of 10 more years of teaching experience than men and are older than most men when they enter administrative positions. Gates et al. (2006) concluded that the proportion of principals who are members of ethnic or racial minority groups increased over time. These researchers also concluded that principals who were the same race as the largest minority group in the school were less likely to switch schools or leave the principalship to take another position in the school system.

Gates et al. (2006) established that, as compared to turnover in the federal government and in the private sector, principal turnover was relatively low. Gates et al. (2006) also acknowledged that principal turnover was not necessarily a negative occurrence. Although a school may struggle when a good principal leaves; comparatively, they are likely to benefit when a weak principal either leaves or is removed. Gates et al. (2006) argued that it is better to remove an ineffective principal than worry about turnover. Branch, Hanushek, and Rivkin (2009) and Clotfelter, Ladd, Vigdor, and Wheeler (2006) determined that turnover can have a detrimental effect on student achievement. Similarly, an ineffective principal can also have a detrimental impact on student achievement, particularly if he or she resides within the same school building for the long-term.

Fuller and Young (2009) contended that stability within the principalship was crucial to enacting effective school reforms. Any school reform effort will depend heavily on the principal to create a common school vision that focuses on implementing school reform efforts over multiple years (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Heck & Hallinger, 1999). Yet, Fuller and Young (2006) also revealed that slightly over 50% of newly-hired high school principals in Texas stayed for three years and less than 30% stayed for five years. Additionally, Fuller and Young (2009) revealed that most of the principals in Texas who leave a school actually leave the principalship altogether. As reported in Fuller and Young (2009), these results mirror the findings from Gates et al. (2006), who found that, among principals from North Carolina, only 18% remained in their schools over a 6-year period. Fullan and Steigelbaur (1991) also suggested that principals must be in place five years for the full implementation of a large-scale effort. Fullan (2006)

further asserted that districts must combine their focus on accountability and capacity building to meet the needs of public schools. Similarly, Papa (2007) defined principal retention as a principal who has remained in the same school for four years or more. Given the documented evidence of the increasing need for talented leaders and the importance of the role of the principal, these conditions should be enough to convince school districts that retention of quality principals must be a national priority (Norton, 2002). Seashore Louis et al. (2010) reported schools experience fairly rapid principal turnover on average (i.e., approximately one new principal every three-to-four years). As quoted in Lashaway (2003), in a study of recruitment and retention practices in New York City reported a flow of urban schools principals to schools with higher test scores, better qualified teachers, and lower proportions of students on free and meals, leaving inner cities with a less qualified cadre of school principals creating a self-perpetuating downward spiral (Papa et al., 2002).

Fuller and Young (2007) determined that principal retention rates were heavily influenced by the level of student achievement in the principal's first year of employment, with principals in the lowest achieving schools having the shortest tenure and the lowest retention rates. In Texas, according to Viadero (2009), the average tenure for principals at elementary school, middle school, and high school that ranked in the top fifth in student achievement was a year or more longer than it was for principals of schools in the bottom fifth. Findings from the Illinois study were that 29% of the principals who were identified as having been removed from their positions left schools that failed to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements (DeAngelis & White, 2010). Hence, schools with large concentrations of minority, low-performing students

experience more turnover. Papa (2007) concluded that schools with higher proportions of at-risk students and less-qualified teachers are highly disadvantaged with respect to their ability to attract and retain effective principals.

When focusing holistically on the broad and complex nature of schooling today, it is not some principals are experiencing a great deal of difficulty leading and managing schools. The external pressures to improve student achievement, the workload created by operating a school, and the complex social context of the school, and the constantly changing demands to innovate make it difficult to lead.

None of the major school studies raised concerns regarding principal turnover. Studies from each of the three states provided evidence of a substantial degree of stability within the principal career path. Entry and exit rates into the profession matched. According to Gates et al. (2006), little evidence exists that school administrators are being lured into other career fields. In some states concern has grown that the very accountability measures put into place to improve school performance are, in fact, damaging their ability to attract and retain qualified principals. Low performing, low income students, and students of color are more likely to have a less qualified, less experienced principal (Rice-King, 2010). Research seems to indicate it is the least and most effective principals who tend to leave schools. This pattern suggests that forces are present that push principals out and lure principals out to either other schools or other professions. Questions still remain regarding whether principal turnover necessarily places a school at a disadvantage. The research is inconclusive. School boards and superintendents are holding principals accountable for student outcomes, which is resulting in the ouster of principals who are not producing satisfactory result in student

outcomes. The constant drive to improve student achievement outcomes may yet have a profound impact effect on retention and turnover among principals.

Why Staying is Important

Considering this context, research related to turnover raises a number of important concerns. Price (1977) suggested that one of the most serious and persistent problems confronting the personnel manager is that of selecting employees who will render a long period of service to the organization (Schuh, 1967). Workplace trends point to an impending shortage of highly-skilled employees who have the requisite knowledge and ability to perform at high levels (Hausknecht, Rodda, & Howard, 2009). Given this context, it is surprising to discover the limited research related to retention. Turnover is the most investigated topic in human resource management (Dalton & Tudor, 1979).

Despite the vast literature on employee turnover and the importance of the role of the principal, much less is known about the factors that compel employees to stay (Hausknecht et al., 2009). Fitz-enz (1997) documented the average company loses approximately one million dollars with every managerial and professional employee who leaves the organization. Not only does a loss of money occur, but also a loss of the knowledge that the departing employee takes with him/her. It is important, then, for organizations to identify employees who add value to the organization and to position the organization to retain these key employees. According to Kyndt, Dochy, Michielsens, and Meeyaert (2009), it is also essential that organizations recognize the authentic interplay between personal and organizational factors when identifying and meeting the needs of skilled employees. If the organization plans to secure the employee's ongoing commitment to the organization, then those individuals within the organization must

understand the employee's perspective. The employee's view of retention policy is based on employee perceptions and is therefore subjective. According to Rousseau (1996), retention practices must be understood by both the employee *and* the organization. Organization/personal dynamics are important variables in ensuring the employee understands the employer's commitment and the organization's intentions. For employees to commit to the organization, the employee must agree with the organization's values and objectives and value the sense of belonging to the organization. It is proposed that a combination of personal and organizational factors impact employee retention. The first step in the exploration of personal and organization factors includes a review of a theoretical framework and the research associated with targeted employee retention.

Organizational Structure

Ongori (2007) suggested that organizational stability was a key factor in ensuring that employees commit to an organization. According to Ongori (2007), organizational instability was associated with high turnover. This notion was confirmed by Zuber-Skerrtt (2002) in his finding that a predictable work environment had a positive impact on an employee's decision to remain with an employer.

In 2006, the district was organized into five geographic regions, which included 23 feeder patterns. Each geographic region was managed by a regional superintendent who worked with a team of executive principals to provide guidance and support for elementary, middle, combination/other schools, and high school principals (HISD, 2007). In 2010, the district re-organized to focus on an effective principal in every school and an effective teacher in every classroom. These planks were included in the district's

Strategic Direction. The board stated, “The goal of the new organizational structure is to (1) optimize functions and services for schools through economies of scale and use of best practices, and (2) ensure accountability at all levels” (HISD, 2010).

The reorganization eliminated the geographic regions, eliminated the executive principal function, and changed some central office departments and their functions. Regional superintendents were replaced by three Chief School Officers, one for each school level (elementary, middle and high school). Executive principals were also replaced by 21 School Improvement Officers who were tasked with providing leadership to principals, aligning resources, supporting teachers, and making certain the district provided quality, equitable opportunities for all students (HISD, 2011). These reorganizations resulted in the assignment of different managers or supervisors for principals.

Other organizational factors that contribute to employee retention also emerged from the review of the literature. In summary, these positive organizational factors include:

- Employees experiencing a strong communications system (Labov, 1997);
- Employees feeling they have a voice in decision making (Magner, Welker, & Johnson, 1996); and
- Strong Human Resources practices, which include employee recruitment, selection, general personnel policies, equitable and clear promotion and grievance procedures, strong, fair supervisory policies and organizational practices that promote and enhance employee motivation. (Ongori, 2007)

Research on Retention Factors

A review of current literature on retention is discussed in the next section of the paper. The American Psychological Association (APA) (2012) identified work-life fit and enjoying what they do as the top reasons why employees stay with their current employer. Given the amount of time many employees spend at work, workers stated that they valued the harmony between their job demands the other parts of their lives.

According to an APA (2012) survey, most of the employees who indicated they would stay with their current employer for more than two years cited enjoying their work and having a job that fit well with their lives as reasons for staying. Job satisfaction, according to Hausknecht et al. (2009), refers to the degree to which individuals like their jobs. Porter and Steers (1983) and Locke (1976) identified a consistent and negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover. Liberman (2005) determined that major decreases in job satisfaction centered on employee dissatisfaction with supervisors, a lack of team-wide recognition, and lack of celebration of accomplishments. Liberman's findings were also confirmed by Ramllal (2003), who documented that employee satisfaction with rewards and recognition, feedback received on work, and positive task identity significantly affected employee satisfaction levels. In the area of task identity, Ongori (2007) stated, "Workers who have a greater variety of tasks tend to stay on the job" (p.52). Multiple researchers identified five job characteristics that were positively associated with retention: (a) an employee's perception of his or her ability to utilize a variety of skills and talents in completing his or her work; (b) the employee's perception of whether visible results are present from job tasks that require the completion of a portion of whole piece of work rather than the completion of a portion of a task; (c) the

employee's perception of whether his or her work has a significant impact on people; (d) the extent to which the employee perceives he or she has autonomy and decision making authority regarding scheduling work and determining how work is accomplished; and, (e) the employee's perception of whether he or she receives feedback on job performance (Dittrich, Couger, & Zawacki, 1985; Garden, 1989; Hackman & Oldman, 1975).

Cotton and Tuttle (1986) ascertained that overall job satisfaction – that is, satisfaction with the work itself, pay satisfaction and satisfaction with supervision, and organizational commitment – was negatively related to turnover. As cited in Chavetz et al. (2009), employees begin to consider leaving and also begin evaluating alternate employment opportunities when job satisfaction decreases. Thus, if employees perceive that it is likely they will find a job that will bring them more tangible and intangible benefits than their current one, they will begin to have a turnover intention (Chavetz et al., 2009). Griffeth, Hom, and Gaertner (2000) also noted that once an employee begins to have turnover intentions, it is likely he or she will leave the organization because turnover intention is strongly positively correlated with voluntary turnover.

According to Hausknecht et al. (2009), the first and most important indicators of employee retention were extrinsic rewards or benefits and advancement opportunities. By definition, extrinsic rewards are the amount of pay, benefits, or equivalents distributed in return for service (Hausknecht et al., 2009). These researchers established that employees were sensitive to issues related to fair pay and might leave an organization if they perceived opportunities to earn greater rewards with a different organization (Hausknecht et al., 2009). Scholars disagree on the equivocality of how pay or extrinsic rewards influence both turnover and retention. Regarding principals and pay, Papa

(2007) determined that higher principal salaries can be used as a differential, especially in school populated by at-risk students and less-qualified teachers. However, it is not definitely clear whether pay for principals is a motivator for retention. In the American system, principal movement is not unusual. Principals move because they make decisions to move or they may be moved in, out or up by school district administration. However, in other countries principal movements are more controlled. For example, in Australia, all principals are appointed on 5-year management contracts (Sclafani & Tucker, 2006). Conversely, in Japan, teachers and administrators are required to change schools every five-to-seven years. In the American system, principals change schools or move up to earn more money. However, Tang et al. (2000) noted that earning more money influences retention when job satisfaction is low, and therefore has an indirect influence on retention.

Since the early 20th century, the world of industry relied on forms of variable pay to incentivize workers who did piece work. Variable pay is defined as pay that is tied to some measure of worker output (Lazear, 2008). The concept of variable pay is experiencing resurgence; in that, executive pay is now sometimes tied to output through mechanisms like bonuses or stock options. This phenomenon is somewhat new for school principals – some of whom receive high-powered annual incentive pay or pay for performance for outputs based on standardized test scores or cumulative student growth. Lazear (2000) argued that better outcomes result from continuous pay schemes opposed to discreet pay formulas where only minimum output is relevant.

In a meta-analysis of research on pay for performance in the public sector, Weibel, Rost, and Osterloh (2009) suggested that the areas where pay for performance

might be beneficial are work areas that require less interesting tasks, or tasks that require low investment in policy expertise. Weibel et al. (2009) also explained that lower level public service employees were more likely candidates for pay for performance because their job tasks were not intrinsically rewarding and performance pay might serve to enhance motivation for the tasks they were required to complete. Weibel et al. (2009) concluded their study by acquiescing with a previous study, as conducted by Deci, Koestner, and Ryan (1999), which held that pay for performance in the public sector might have more disadvantages than advantages.

In the district studied, principal compensation is outlined with the following section. The district's Compensation Manual outlined a Principal Pay Model that is based on experience, school type, school size and complexity (Houston ISD, 2010). The Principal Pay Model is a placement structure for new or transferring principals. Campus-based variables in the Principal Pay Model are calculated by the district's Research and Accountability Department, and are determined by averaging school data taken from the Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS), which are reported on the last Friday in October, and taken again the last Friday in April of the same school year. This model was implemented in the 2006-2007 school year. Some principals' salaries were not aligned with the pay model when the plan was adopted in 2006-2007. In case of the misalignment of principals' salaries at the time the model was adopted, principals were held harmless and their salaries were "grandfathered" for three school years (i.e., School Year [SY] 2006-2007, SY 2007-2008, and SY 2008-2009). The "Hold Harmless Rule" stipulates that principals, assistant principals, and deans with grandfathered salaries of \$5,000 or less would be held harmless until their salaries matched the pay model level.

If the principals' salary still exceeded the salary quoted in the Principal Pay Model after the 2008-2009 school years, the amount of the principal's salary over the amount of the model would remain grandfathered. To remain eligible for the \$5,000 hold harmless rule, the district developed a "6-Year Rule", which required that school administrators remain in the same or an equivalent pay level position for six years to protect salaries that were not aligned with the Principal Pay Model (HISD Compensation Manual, 2009).

Experience Component

The experience component is capped at 15 years for all principals.

- The inclusion of a \$7,500 Performance Contract Pay, which is reflected in the base pay amount for principals at each school level.
- The inclusions of longevity pay, which is reflected in the base pay amount for principals at each school level.

Based on the Experience Component, principals' years of experience are assessed by the district's Human Resources Department. After meeting the minimum experience requirements, additional experience as principal or equivalent (or higher), will be considered for placement on the experience ladder (HISD Compensation Manual, 2009-2010). A principal may enter the experience ladder at 0 years with no increase in the initial year up to 15 years, with a \$650 per year increase in salary. Beginning pay for an elementary principal with no experience is \$68,000; middle school beginning pay with no experience is \$73,000; and beginning pay for a high school principal with no experience is \$86,000. On the other hand, in 2004, and by the 2010-2011 school year, the base pay for 15 years of service for an elementary principal increased from 2007-2011 (from \$86,500 to \$89,800), whereas the base pay for a middle school principal was \$94,8000,

and \$107,200 for a high school principal. In addition to experience, a number of additional factors are considered in determining principal pay.

Size of School Component

The Compensation Manual indicates principal pay is also dictated by the number of students served on a campus (HISD, 2011). The district places a dollar value on the size component, which resulted in principals of campuses that served more students earning more pay. Principals of campuses of the following sizes receive no additional pay: elementary campuses of 0-599 students, middle school campuses of up to 699 students, and high school campuses of up to 1,149 students. To receive additional pay for the size of the campus, elementary principals of campuses of 600-899 students may earn up to \$7,000. Middle school principals of campuses of 700 students may earn up to \$7000, and high school principals of campuses of 2,000 students may earn up to \$10,000. The maximum earning potential for any principal based on school size is for high school principals who may make up to \$13,000 as leaders of schools of more than 3,000 students. The compensation structure also provides that pay is determined by the school type with the greater values in those cases where a principal is assigned to multiple campuses.

Complexity Component

The Principal Pay Model also includes a Complexity Component wherein values were assigned for certain components on the campus.

	<i>D</i>	<i>C</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>A</i>	<i>X</i>
Economically Disadvantaged Value	0-35% \$0	36%-50% \$2,700	51%-75% \$4,000	76%-90% \$5,000	91%+ \$6,000
G.T. Value	0-11% \$0	12%-40% \$2,000	41%-80% \$3,000	81%+ \$4,000	

Figure 3. Principal Salary Complexity Component. Reprinted from HISD Compensation Manual, 2011. (The alphabets in the table are correlated with a program component in the PeopleSoft program. They are not significant in interpreting the salary chart).

- Size of school-number of students;
- Economically Disadvantaged-overall percentage increase; and
- Gifted and Talented-overall percentage increase.

If a principal transferred to a new campus, his or her pay was recalculated using the current component values for the new campus. Campus components may increase or decrease when a campus component decreases by 50% from the time the component was established, at which time the component value will be reduced accordingly. When component values were decreased, the decrease may impact all three of the components listed above. Similarly, a component may increase. When component values increase, they increase by 25% from the time the component was established, at which time the component value will be increased accordingly (HISD, 2011).

Exceptions

Although not reflected in the pay model, school administrators (including principals, assistant principals and deans) who earn doctorate degrees were also paid an additional \$1,000. However, if the principal's salary already exceeds the Principal Pay Model, then the principal was not eligible for the additional \$1,000 payment for a doctorate degree.

Pay for Performance

When the district adopted the *Beliefs and Vision in 2010*, part of their overall educational philosophy included a belief that high performing employees should be rewarded for their work. In 2010, the district cited the ASPIRE Award Program as a major force in helping the district accelerate student progress and achievement (HISD 2010). The ASPIRE Awards program is supplemental to the district's regular remuneration for principals. The ASPIRE Awards program provided that employees would be compensated and salaries would be differentiated based on performance and value-added measures (HISD, 2010). The district's growth-based performance pay model measures a teacher's effectiveness on a group of students' academic growth from year to year. In the model, students are compared to themselves in that the student's own academic performance is used to determine his or her academic growth. The value-added model, which is called EVAAS, was developed by Dr. William Sanders, a senior researcher for SAS Inc. (HISD, 2010). While teacher performance remains at the heart of the Teacher Performance Pay Model (TPPM) and the value-added system, principals are also awarded under the ASPIRE program. According to district records, for the 2006-2007 award year, a total of \$24,653,724.71 was paid to employees for performance; for

the 2007-2008 award year, a total of \$31,581,703.46 was paid; for the 2008-2009 award year, a total of \$440,564,693.83 was paid; for the 2009-2010 year, a total of \$42,670,370.00 was paid; and for the 2010-2011 award year, a total of \$35,362,083.25 was paid. Of the amount paid in 2010-2011, principal payments ranged from a minimum of \$240 to maximum of \$15,530 with an average award of \$6,300.54 (HISD, 2011). Figures have not been released for the 2011-2012 school year.

The district conducted a survey of the ASPIRE program in the 2009-2010 school year. The survey was designed to gain insight into the level of knowledge and teacher and principal perceptions after four years of implementation of the district's growth-based performance pay program. Of the 20,048 employees surveyed, 6,083 employees responded to the survey. Of the number who responded, 5.3% of the respondents were either principals or assistant principals. Overall, the survey results indicated (a) that an increase was present in the percent of respondents who were in favor or somewhat in favor of the concept of performance pay, and (b) a large percent of respondents indicated they agreed or strongly agreed that the award program encouraged them to use value-added data to make instructional decisions and that the program encouraged them to use standardized data to make instructional decisions. Survey results also indicated that an increase was present in the percentage of employees who were in favor or somewhat in favor of the concept of the TPPM (HISD, 2011).

Further research on pay and retention indicates that pay only influences when an employee's job satisfaction is low (Tang et al., 2000). In addition, the results of a survey conducted by Lieberman (2005) on why employees stay found that salary ranked as number 6 and number 5 in 2000-2001 and 2003-2005, respectively. Lieberman argued

that money was not a motivating factor for an employee if other factors, such as job satisfaction, respect, advancement, and work environment were being met. On the other hand, Steers and Mowday (1981) noted that high performance led to greater expectation for rewards, which led to turnover if rewards were not met. Similarly, Federico et al. (1976) established that while higher salary was associated with longer tenure, differences in expected salary and actual salary were associated with shorter tenure.

A review of a meta-analysis conducted by Krau (1981) indicated that a consistent negative relationship was present between pay and turnover. Trevor et al. (1997) determined that salary growth was associated with reduced voluntary turnover and that this relationship was strongest among high performing employees. Nyberg (2010) ascertained that because bonuses and salary growth moderated the performance-voluntary turnover relationship, some companies use both salary and bonuses to try to achieve retention goals. Papa (2007) confirmed that schools with higher proportions of at-risk students and less qualified teachers are at a disadvantage in their efforts to retain quality principals. Papa (2007) further suggested that salary or extrinsic rewards could be a moderator for retention among principals. At the same time, Papa (2007) asserted that higher salaries can be used as a compensatory differential.

Overall, researchers did not find evidence that principal pay greatly contributed to principal turnover. Papa (2007) concluded that little is known about the effectiveness of increasing principal salaries as a means to attract and retain highly qualified principals. Papa examined but did not obtain a correlation between salary as a means of compensating for working conditions that were less than desirable nor for schools populated by higher proportions of at-risk students. Between 1984 and 1994, the salaries

of administrators kept pace with the salaries of other managerial professionals whose positions required similar levels of training. No evidence exists that administrators left to take jobs in other sectors of the economy (Gates et al., 2006). Similar to pay, benefits were identified as an important consideration for employees. Lockwood (2007) established that benefits, such as 401(k) plans, defined benefits plans, paid vacations, sick days and holidays, were important considerations for employees seeking employers of choice. Lockwood (2007) also concluded that employees were more likely to gravitate to companies with better benefits. The APA (2012) survey found employees between the ages 35-44 were most likely to cite pay as a reason for staying with an employer.

Advancement opportunities were identified as the perceived amount of potential for movement to higher levels within the organization (Hausknecht et al., 2009). Unemployment rate and pay growth findings together show that managers should focus extra attention on higher performing employees during difficult economic times, because if pay growth is slowed, high performing employees are more likely to leave. Ramlall (2003) also cited employees' unmet desires to be challenged in their positions along with lack of adequate opportunities to acquire new knowledge and develop new skills as reasons why employees leave a company. Although Lockwood (2007) contended that advancement opportunities were important, she noted that they were less important than some other factors because employees tend to want job satisfiers that provide definitive results rather than long-term possibilities.

Lack of alternatives was also identified as a retention strategy. Lack of alternatives is a belief about the unavailability of jobs outside the organization (Hausknecht et al., 2009). Chavetz et al. (2009), in a Deloitte study, concluded that,

while the number of alternative opportunities is a factor in voluntary turnover, it is not an overall driving force. Neither the research on advancement opportunities nor the research on lack of alternatives explicitly examined situations involving employees who choose to take advantage of opportunities to move from job to job within the organization. Fuller and Young (2009) and DeAngelis and White (2011) determined that significant movement was present among principals who moved from one school to another, moved out of district but assumed a job as a principal of a school in another district, or changed from a principal's position to a non-principal position. This kind of internal mobility might result in transfers or promotions within or outside the organization. Lucero and White (1996) contended that the flexibility that comes with the availability of voluntary transfers is an effective retention strategy for some high quality employees who may otherwise leave the organization if these kinds of opportunities did not exist.

Constituent attachments were also identified as a retention factor in the literature. Constituent attachments is a term that refers to the degree of attachment to individuals associated with the organization, such as supervisor, coworker, or customer (Hausknecht et al., 2009). Hausknecht et al. (2009) reported the presence of positive relationships between effective supervision and positive peer group relations. Furthermore, Dirks and Ferrin (2002) stated that employees' trust in leaders had a significant impact on constituent commitment, job satisfaction, job performance, and reduced turnover. A study by Keyes, Hysom, & Lupo (2000) also noted that an employee's relationship with his or her immediate supervisor was more important for retention than pay, perks, or company-wide policies. Comparatively, Mobley et al. (1979) did not obtain statistically significant relationships between satisfaction with supervision and turnover. These

researchers suggested further microanalyses in this area. Koch and Steers (1978) obtained statistically significant relationships between satisfaction with co-workers and turnover, however, only 4% of the variance was explained. Mobley et al. (1979) suggested that these findings were not generalizable. Krau (1981) also commented that overall job satisfaction, satisfaction with the work itself, satisfaction with supervision provided, and organizational commitment were negatively related to turnover.

Flexible work arrangements constitutes a term that refers to the nature of the work schedule or hours. Ramlall (2003) contended that a flexible work schedule was part of a company's regard or recognition strategy and a step a company could take to reduce turnover. A study in the *Harvard Management Review Update* (2012) identified flexible work arrangements as a highly successful strategy in retaining employees. Identified in the Harvard study were flexible work plans, virtual teams, and telecommuting as examples of flexible work arrangements. Flexible work arrangements include honoring employees' preferences regarding when and where they perform their work. A Flexible work arrangement, according to Hausknecht et al. (2009), positively impact retention.

Similar to flexible work arrangement, investments were identified as a retention strategy in the literature. According to Hauschecht et al. (2009), "Investments" are perceptions about the length of service to the organization. As confirmed by Porter and Steers (1983), the longer an employee invests in an organization or the longer employee builds tenure, the more likely the employee is to stay. This finding was confirmed by Mobley, Griffeth, and Hom (1979) who revealed that tenure is the single best predictor of turnover.

Location refers to the proximity of the workplace relative to one's home (Hausknecht et al., 2009). Positive relationships have been documented in the literature between distance to work and absenteeism (Murchinsky, 1997; Scott & McClellan, 1990). In a study by Ramlall (2003), employees cited the location of the company as the most important reasons for choosing the current organization as their employer. Ramlall (2003) identified location as the relation between the employee's home and his commute to and from work. Within the context of retention, location or living close to work is identified as an influence on continuance commitment (Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972).

Non-work influences were associated with retention. Non-work influences were defined as the existence of responsibilities and commitments outside the organization (Hausknecht et al., 2009). Non-work influences such as family responsibilities, ties to the community, and activities outside work also positively impact retention (Mitchell, Holton, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001). A meta-analysis of non-work influences found family responsibility, including marital status, is associated with decreased turnover (Federico et al., 1976; Ferreira, 2012; Mobley, Griffeth Hand, & Meglino, 1979; Waters et al., 1976). Uren (2011) also recommended that organizations supplement on the job training with off-the-job development. These kinds of opportunities might include opportunities such as working on community programs, charitable work, or peer mentoring,

Organizational commitment was identified as one of the factors related to retention. In the work of Hausknecht et al. (2009), organizational commitment was defined as "the degree to which individuals identify with and are involved in the organization" (p. 33). Porter et al. (1974) offered a more expansive definition of

organizational commitment, which states that organizational commitment is the strength of an individual's identification with and involvement in a particular organization and is characterized by: (a) a strong belief in and acceptance of an organization's goals and values, (b) a willingness to extend considerable effort on behalf of the organization, and (c) a definite desire to maintain organizational membership. Porter and Steers (1973) proposed that satisfied employees were more likely to commit to the organization because they believe in the organization's goals and values and were willing to exert efforts to ensure the organization's success. Bennis and Nannus (1985), as well as Dries and Peperman (2007), revealed that high performers are more likely to commit to the organization and will have a relatively high employee retention rate.

Organizational justice was another retention factor identified in the literature. Organizational justice refers to perceptions about the fairness of reward allocations, policies, procedures, and interpersonal treatment. Additionally, researchers identified distributive justice or organizational justice as an important retention factor (Aquino, Griffeth, & Hom, 1997; Price & Mueller, 1981). Defined broadly, organizational justice includes the employee's perceptions of fairness related to a variety of topics (e.g., outcomes, procedures, and interpersonal reactions).

In the literature on retention, organizational prestige was defined as the degree to which the organization is perceived to be reputable and well regarded (Fombrun & Shanley, 1990; Hausknecht et al., 2009). Herrbach and Mignoac (2004) determined that an organization's image may impact employees' attitudes and both internal and external consequences may exist for employees based on the organization's image. Similarly, Ramdlall (2004) likened organizational prestige to the company's reputation. The

company's reputation was cited as one of the major contributors in an employee's decision to choose an organization. Organizational prestige also included an organization's efforts to communicate the positive benefits for working for the particular organization.

The rate of unemployment was negatively related with turnover (Tuttle & Cotton, 1986). However, Blau and Khan (1981) and Farber (1980) reported that the unemployment rate correlates positively with turnover. However, the latter analyzed turnover at the group rather than individual level. According to Lazear and Speletzer (2012), employee turnover declines during recessions because workers are reluctant to quit their jobs and businesses or organizations may be reluctant to fill positions in some instances. Employee turnover or employee churn decreases in a poor economy in that employees may be inclined to remain on the job, whether they are satisfied with the job or not.

Motivation and Retention

In the war for talent, schools compete to hire the best candidates for school leadership positions. Once employees are hired, organizations position themselves to retain quality hires. Employee motivation plays an important role in determining whether employees choose to, or not to, commit to an organization. Key employees must be retained if organizations are to meet strategic goals and objectives. According to Ramllal (2004), employee motivation impacts employee retention; moreover, he suggested that retention policies should be based on theoretically grounded practices. Kooij, De Lange, Jansen, Kanfer, and Dikkers, (2011), reported a variety of researchers attempted to use motivation theories to explain, understand, or predict human behavior (Alderfer, 1969;

Maslow, 1943; McClelland, 1958). In doing so, these researchers have developed a number of theories that seek to explain why we do what we do. In the following section, motivation theories and how employee motivation theories can inform employee retention are examined.

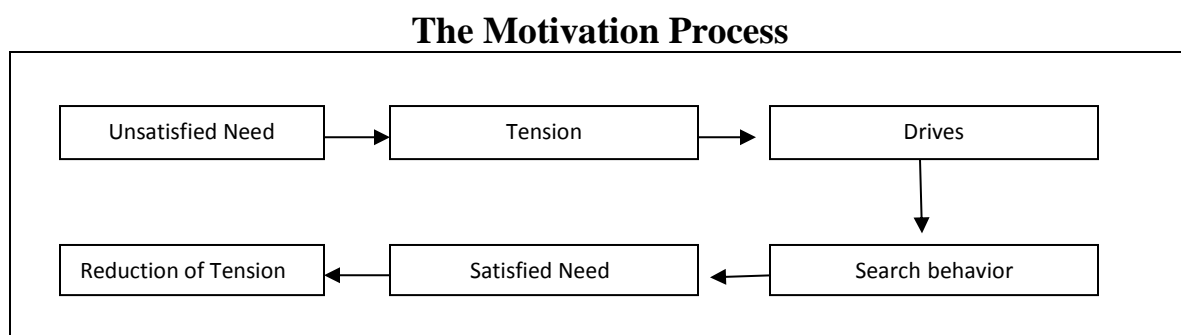


Figure 4. The motivation process. This illustration depicts the overall process of employee motivation by which individuals make decisions to reduce work-related tension to improve dissatisfaction within the workplace. Adapted from, “Managing employee retention as a strategy for increasing organizational effectiveness. *Applied Human Resources Research*, 8(2), 68.

As defined by Robbins (1993), “Motivation” is the “willingness to exert high levels of effort toward organizational goals, conditioned by the effort’s ability to satisfy some individual need” (Ramllal, 2003, p. 65). Robbins’ definition of motivation was built upon the theory that a motivation process exists that functions and informs how employees meet needs. Robbins (1993) theorized that employees live in a state of tension while trying to satisfy an unsatisfied need. This tension drives the employee to exert effort designed to satisfy the need. Finally, once the need is satisfied, the tension is reduced. In addition to need theory, other researchers cite equity theory, expectancy theory, and job design model as factors having significant impact on motivation and

employee retention. Needs are psychological or physiological deficiencies that arouse behavior and are influenced by environmental factors (Ramlall, 2004).

Need Theories

In this section, a brief overview is provided of needs theories, equity theory, expectancy theory, and Motivator-Hygiene Theory in the context of how these theories may impact/ or influence retention.

Maslow's Need Hierarchy Theory. Maslow's work is based on the overarching hierarchy belief that a hierarchy of human need exists. For example, Maslow believed that psychological safety, love, esteem and self-actualization are basic needs. Additionally, Maslow believed humans are a perpetually wanting group and humans are only unfulfilled needs motivate humans. In term of work in an organization, it can be implied that managers and supervisors should create work environments designed so that workers can develop their full potential. Failing to create the conditions that would enable workers to develop fully could result in workers becoming frustrated, failing to perform, and potentially withdrawing from the organization by seeking employment in a more supportive environment (Porter & Steers, 1983).

McClelland's Need Theory. McClelland's Need Theory emphasizes an individual's desire to experience achievement, power, the need to feel affiliated, or the desire to have friendly and close interpersonal relationships are motivators (Pate, 2007). McClelland believed an individual's performance is based on the strength of his or her desire to accomplish something difficult. Unlike Maslow's theory, McClelland did not advocate that needs are hierarchical. Rather, from an organizational perspective,

McClelland posited that all of man's common needs fall within the categories of the need for achievement, the need for power, and the need for affiliation (Pate, 2007).

Expectancy Theory. According to Kreitner and Kinicki's (1998), expectancy theory purports that people are motivated to behave in ways that produce desired combinations of expected outcomes. In a work environment, for instance, performance is psychologically tied to the degree to which employees believe performance will result in a desired outcome. Porter and Lawler (1968) extended the expectancy model by stating that employees exhibit more effort when they believe they will be rewarded for accomplishing a task.

Motivator-Hygiene Theory. The Motivator-Hygiene Theory, which basically asserts that there are satisfiers and dissatisfiers in the work environment, was developed by Frederick Herzberg in 1959 (Pate, 2007). Satisfiers are considered motivators and include conditions such as the work itself, achievement, and recognition. Herzberg also described dissatisfiers or hygiene factors to include extrinsic, non-job related factors, such as policies, salary, co-worker relations, and supervisory styles (Ramlall, 2004; Steers, 1983). Herzberg (1987) argued that managers could guide employees to a mutual state by attempting to mediate hygiene factors. However, to motivate employees, he recommended strategies that include enriching the employee's job by giving him or her more responsibility for personal achievement, giving the employee greater authority over his own job and introducing new, more difficult tasks thereby enabling employees to become experts in work tasks.

Job Characteristics Model. The Job Characteristics Model of employee motivation is built on three premises: (a) employees must feel personal responsibility for

their jobs, (b) employees must feel their effectiveness impacts the entire organization, and (c) employees must be aware of how effectively they are translating effort into performance (Oldham, Hackman, & Pearce, 1976). According to Yitzak and Ferris (1987), employees are motivated by five core job characteristics: (a) skill variety, (b) task identity, (c) task significance, (d) autonomy, and (e) job feedback. It is recommended that employers might improve psychological and behavioral outcomes at work by focusing on two characteristics which seem to moderate turnover-task identity and job feedback. With the level of competition to retain high value employees, it seems rational that organizations should understand, analyze and critique the motivations that underlie employee decisions regarding retention. Because retention issues cross industries, beyond analysis, understanding and critique, employers should be proactive about responding to the identified needs of employees if they want to increase retention rates.

Turnover Theory and Retention

Employee retention cannot be examined without understanding employee turnover. Employee turnover is one of the most investigated aspects of human resource management and, unfortunately, is also a growing concern for many organizations. In this section, the empirical findings from the turnover literature are summarized. The principal's role is identified as key in ensuring student achievement of all students. Given the role of the principal, this study seeks provide clarification around implications for reducing turnover among principals.

When an organization loses a critical employee, a negative impact exists on innovation and service delivery may be impacted (Abbassi & Hollman, 2000). In turn, the loss of critical employees means the organization will be staffed with individuals who

are less qualified, and may actually hinder the organization's ability to meet its objectives (Rappaport, Bancroft, & Okum, 2003).

How Turnover Impacts Organizations

The personal and organizational costs of leaving a job are often very high (Mitchell, Holton, Lee, Sablinski, & Erez, 2001). Harkin and Tracey (2000) indicated that the cost of filling key positions was escalating. Replacement costs for filling key positions may now be in excess of \$10,000 per resignation (Harkin & Tracey, 2000). Norton (2002) established that a conservative estimate for replacing a mid-management administrator in a school district (i.e., principal, central office supervisor) was approximately \$25,000. Based on this projection, the cost for replacing six principals is an estimated \$150,000. Therefore, over a 10-year period, replacement costs could easily reach \$1,500,000. Mobley (1992) concluded that the possible organizational consequences of turnover include both the loss of good performers and the displacement of poor performers. Similarly, compared to low performer turnover, higher performer turnover can be disproportionately detrimental to organizational success (March & Simon, 1958; Wright & McMahan, 1992). To this end, employers can benefit from knowing why employees make long-term commitments, whether the talent management strategy supports reported reasons for staying, and in terms of overall student achievement, and whether retention matters. Harkin (1998) defined turnover as the loss of a human resource that requires a replacement. In the literature a distinction is made between planned turnover, which may be personnel changes due to layoffs, retirements, transfers, promotions, and other actions resulting in employees having to move on. Unplanned turnover, on the other hand, occurs when key employees find employment

outside the organization and move on (Harkins, 1998). Unplanned turnover can result in disruptions in organizational functions, productivity, and motivation.

Functional and Dysfunctional Turnover

Functional Turnover	Dysfunctional Turnover
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High performers stay. Low performers leave. • Poor performers leave voluntarily. Employee evaluations are negative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor performers stay. High performers leave voluntarily. • High performers leave voluntarily. Employee evaluations are positive.

Figure 5. Functional and dysfunctional turnover. This figure illustrates a comparison

between how employees leave within the themes of functional or dysfunctional turnover.

Dalton and Todor (1979) contended that turnover was functional when high performers stay and low performers leave. Similarly, turnover was dysfunctional when poor performers stay and high performers leave. Dysfunctional turnover occurs when the employee leaves voluntarily, yet the organization's evaluation of the employee is positive. Functional turnover occurs when an employee leaves voluntarily and the organization's evaluation of the employee is negative (Dalton, Todor, & Krackhardt, 1982). Therefore, all turnover is not necessarily bad.

Involuntary and Voluntary Turnover

Involuntary Turnover	Voluntary Turnover
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher among poor performers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher among the very best performers.

Figure 6. Involuntary and voluntary turnover. This figure illustrates a comparison

between involuntary and voluntary employee turnover.

Jackofsky (1984) postulated that involuntary turnover would likely be higher among very poor performers whom organizations might likely push out. Hom and Griffeth (1995) defined voluntary turnover as a decision to quit. Jackofsy (1984)

predicted voluntary turnover would likely be higher among the very best performers in the organization.

Turnover Theory

A great deal has been written about employee turnover; however, no firm conclusions exist about the turnover process (Cotton & Tuttle, 1986). Economic conditions, work conditions, gender, background, industries, organizational size, and other factors all combine and moderate turnover under certain conditions. In spite of the moderating factors, researchers suggest that two employee intentions are very important: (a) intention to quit and (b) intention to search (Mobley, 1992). Both intentions generally precede turnover. Turnover research is inconclusive on the reasons why employees turnover. Two competencies appear to be critical to high levels of success in most complex leadership jobs: (a) achievement and impact and (b) influence (Gordon, 2006).

Gates et al. (2011) reported that, when compared to turnover in the federal government and the private sector, principal turnover is relatively low. Also acknowledged in this study was that principal turnover was not necessarily negative. Even though a school may struggle when a good principal leaves; comparatively, they benefit when a weak principal either leaves or is removed. Gates et al. (2011) argued that it is better to remove an ineffective principal than worry about turnover.

How Turnover Decisions Are Made

The seminal research on turnover is based on Lee et al.'s (1996) Unfolding Model of Voluntary Turnover. The unfolding model is based on the premise that prior to making a decision to leave an organization, an employee experiences a shock or jarring event that triggers thoughts or deliberations about leaving the organization (Lee et al.,

1994). As a result of the shock, the employee may make a quick decisions or a long, deliberative decision about whether he should leave the organization or remain employed with the organization. According to Lee et al. (1994), four decision paths may be taken by an employee in making a decision to quit. The first decision path is based on a script or a previous experience. If the employee has a pre-existing script and the script matches the shock, according to the researchers, the employee will make a decision to stay or leave, depending on the previous experience.

Suggested in Decision path 1 was that an employee will voluntarily quit so that he or she can carry out a previously developed action plan. The action plan may be based a pre-determined set of professional opportunities, or what the employee views as a professional advancement (Dalton & Todor, 1979). One of the implications of decision path 1 is that professional employees may leave a job to take on a more challenging job even if the job pays less (Lee et al., 1997).

The second decision path is based on the theory that the shock will prompt the employee to re-evaluate how much he wants to remain employed in the current organization. In making the decision to leave or stay, the employee assesses the shock in relation to his basic values, his goals, and his plans to reach his goals (Lee et al., 1994). If the shock is compatible with the employee's images of his values, his goals, his plan for reaching his goals, he will remain with the employer (Steers, Mowdy, & Porter, 1981). If the shock turns out to be incompatible, the employee will leave or quit. Lee et al. (1994) contended that none of the traditional retention practices (e.g., staffing, training and development, compensation, career planning) were effective in relating to an employee in decision path 2.

The third decision path is based on the theory that the shock will prompt the employee to evaluate how much he wants to become part of another organization. If the employee finds compatibility in values, goals, or plans for reaching goals, he or she will stay with the current employer. If the employer does not find compatibility, the alternative result is a level of dissatisfaction or image violation which may lead the employee to assess his or her job alternatives (Steers et al., 1981). In this case, the employee will follow the path that best aligns with his personal preferences or his or her values, goals, and plan for reaching his goals. If the alignment supports his goals, the employee will stay. If the alignment does not support, his or her values, goals, and plans for reaching his or her goals, the employee will conduct a job search, will evaluate alternatives, consider job offers and may quit the organization.

Decision path 4 does not include a shock (Lee et al., 1994). Employees who make continuing employment decisions based on decision path 4 do so gradually. Over time, therefore, the employee comes to feel he or she is no longer a fit for the job because of differences in personal or organizational values or due to changes in goals. As a result of this disconnect, the employee no longer sees him or herself as a fit for the organization and gradually makes the decision to leave. The gradual decision to leave the organization may evolve into a level of job dissatisfaction, slow withdrawal from the organization, and general alienation. Judge and Watanabe (1995) reported that individuals who were dissatisfied with their jobs but positively disposed to life in general were most likely to quit. In other words, employees with more positive dispositions are more willing to change their lives proactively. On the other hand, employees who are negatively disposed toward life are less likely to change jobs and instead withdraw from work

psychologically and develop an indifferent orientation (Tosi, 1990). Lee et al. (1999) recommended that organizations attempt to re-energize these employees by redirecting them. The redirection may take the form of using the disaffected employees as consultants in new roles, or re-training for another profession altogether. The researchers admitted this strategy may not be cost effective and ultimately recommended that organizations who were dealing with disaffected employees may advise or encourage these employees to quit (Lee & Maurer, 1994).

The Unfolding Model of Employee Turnover confirmed voluntary turnover is an individual decision based on the employee's perspectives about the organization and his or her role in the organization. Researchers have recommended that organizations strategically intervene in decision processes by creating strategies that result in retaining employees who are in decision paths 1-3 (Lee et al., 1997, Steers et al., 1981). However, employers should also recognize and recommend that employees in decision path 4 move on to another employer (Lee et al., 1996). It is critical that leaders of organizations examine more closely at the cost of turnover and assess how, when, and whether the employer should intervene in a turnover scenario. As substantiated by Mitchell et al. (2001), the personal and organizational costs of a person leaving a job are often very high.

Research Based Talent Management Strategies

Although the research literature is replete with numerous studies related to employee turnover, little is known regarding reasons why employees actually remain within organizations. Understanding why employees stay is an important goal for any organization. If an employer knows why employees commit, the organization can take

strategic actions to create policies and practices that will impact retention. Uren (2011) confirmed three facts related to retaining talented individuals: (a) talented individuals have high expectations of their organizations, (b) organizations do not have a firm grasp on knowing what talented individuals want, and (c) when organizations do know what talented individuals want, the organization does not always provide what they want. According to Hausknecht et al. (2009), organizations would do well to understand whether retention reasons differ based on the employee's role in the organization. Uren (2011) recommended that organizations segment their populations to provide the most effective talent management support. Segmentation allows the organization to determine who to focus on, helps the organization understand what employees really want from the organization, and also helps the organization differentiate supports that are provided. Segmentation should occur at both the group and the individual level (Uren, 2011). Senior staff in the organization should play a key role in the organization's retention strategy. Hausknecht et al. (2009) and Ramlall (2003) examined retention among targeted employees. They analyzed many, but not all, of the variables that are believed to influence employee retention. The studies cited below provide insights into organizational policy and practice development.

The Role of Human Resources in Talent Management

Hausknecht and Trevor (2011) posited that high commitment and high-performance Human Resource (HR) management systems were linked to collective turnover. Wright and Boswell (2002) established the combination of core HR functions (e.g., recruitment, selection staffing) lead to higher retention. Mobley, Griffith, Hand, and Meglino (1979) suggested turnover was an individual choice behavior and that the

decision to leave or stay was made based on a specific construct that differs based on the individual employee's previous experiences, values and goals. Lee, Mitchell, Wise, and Fireman (1996) noted that Human Resources departments may intervene in voluntary decision to quit by addressing staffing, compensation, training, and development issues.

Based on the findings of Lee et al. (1996) and Maurer (1997), managers should be aware, should observe, and respond to employees' needs based on what they learn about their employees and how they react to their work situations. Human Resources Departments should also build a comprehensive talent management plan based on what they learn from both formal and informal interactions with employees. The talent management plan should include organizational level retention goals that are focused on making certain valued employees are engaged. In addition, human resource managers should strive to minimize the likelihood of compensation related shock. Researchers suggested that managers should be proactive by offering challenging work assignments and should be reactive in ways which may include making counter offers to keep valued employees. Whereas Lee and Mitchell (1997) focused on professional engineers, they identified strategies which may be generalizable across other professions. To moderate the turnover factor, Lee and Mitchell (1997) recommended several strategies that can be driven by HR managers. These strategies are outlined in the following sections below.

According to Lee, Mitchell, Wise and Fireman, (1996), staffing strategies may be an effective tool for improving retention. Human Resources should be aware of high performing employees who seek out challenging work (Brewer, 1996). Also described in the research were individuals who seek out and proactively obtain challenging work assignments that maximize their potential. As such, these employees should be assisted

in meeting their goals. Also, human resource managers then should work to mitigate shocks associated with the fear of losing one's professional identity or technical competency. Mitigation might look like promotional opportunities that provide increasing technical challenges and result in heightened professional status.

Organizations that clearly articulate a pathway to a managerial career are more likely to retain certain professional employees (Lee & Maurer, 1997). In other words, staffing strategies may be an effective tool that contributes to increased employee retention.

Lee and Maurer (1997) recommended that employers focus closely on training and development as a component of comprehensive retention strategy. Training and development opportunities should enhance the perceived advantages for remaining with an organization. Training and development may look like short-term learning opportunities, formal long-term learning opportunities focused on securing additional certifications or credentials, pursuing advanced degrees, paid, or partially paid leaves of absence (& Mitchell, 1997). Learning opportunities should be readily accessible, widely known, continuous, and supported by changes in work schedules, release-time arrangements, and financial assistance, which may include tuition reimbursement, or payment of program fees (Lee & Maurer, 1997). Furthermore, Ramllal (2004) stated that an organization should create an intellectual capital environment where the transmission of knowledge takes place throughout the organization's structure or continue to lose important individual knowledge that has been developed over time. The availability grievance procedures have little to no impact on retention efforts (Lee & Maurer, 1997). Because a grievance can exacerbate a shock, human resources departments should work to preempt grievances or lessen the magnitude of shock associate with a grievance.

Talent Management in the Urban School District

The district's talent management strategy, which was part of the *2010 Declaration of Beliefs and Visions* was named by the Board of Education as the *Strategic Direction* (HISD, 2010). The *Strategic Direction* (HISD 2010) articulated five core initiatives that would transform the district into the model urban school district. Of the five core initiatives, two focused on human capital management strategies for teachers and principals. Core Initiative II: Effective Principal in Every School-focused on making sure every school was led by an effective principal. One of the district's goals was to ensure that principals were empowered human capital managers and that they had the necessary resources to support teaching and learning. The elements of the district's *Strategic Direction* (HISD 2010) addressed strategies that were designed to help retain and develop talented principals and aspiring principals who already worked in the district. The talent management strategy focused on four key areas – namely, appraisal, decision-making, instructional leadership and safety. Specifically, the *Strategic Direction* (HISD, 2010) included these provisions:

1. Design and implement a rigorous and fair appraisal system;
2. Implement quality assurance standards and recommended practices to guide principals' decision-making, with expectations and clear accountability;
3. Strengthen school leader recruiting practices to attract top talent;
4. Establish a comprehensive instructional leadership program to develop and retain top talent; and
5. Create a safe, secure and healthy environment conducive to learning in all schools.

Design and Implement a Rigorous and Fair Appraisal System

The district proclaimed that the principal appraisal tool that was in place in 2010 (when the *Strategic Direction* was written) “did not provide a measure of principal effectiveness that was as accurate or as comprehensive as the leading principal appraisal tools” (Strategic Direction, 2010, p. 4). As recently as the spring of 2012, the district received approval from the Board of Education to implement the School Leader Framework – a principal appraisal model that was developed in collaboration with Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (McREL, 2010). The framework was based on McREL’s 21 Responsibilities and 66 practices for school leaders. The new appraisal system was undergirded by McREL’s Balanced Leadership Framework, which is a research-based assessment developed based on a study of the effects of principal leadership practices on student achievement. The primary components of the new system outlined principal responsibilities that are associated with three uniquely defined categories: Managing Change, Focus on Leadership, Purposeful Community (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2010).

The new appraisal system featured a self-assessment, a conversation protocol, goal setting criteria, and multiple measures of student learning. The multiple measures of student learning provided a definitive way of measuring results for principals. The system also included mid-year and end-of-the year summaries which afford school leaders an opportunity to gauge their progress at mid-year, adjust goals if needed, and then reviewed goals and progress for the whole year. Part of the power of the new system was the requirement that School Improvement Officers provide deep, meaningful feedback and individual support to principals. While the appraisal framework was approved and adopted in 2012, the district has not achieved 100% implementation of the

model. Currently, the appraisal model has been revised to include three components: Student achievement results in mathematics, reading, and safety. Principals may select two of the 66 practices contained in the Balanced Leadership Framework for inclusion in the appraisal process.

Quality Assurance Standards and Decision-Making

The district identified the need to provide principals with clear guidance to assist with decision making. This guidance would be provided by the Central Office. The *Implementation Plan* for the *Strategic Direction* (HISD, 2010) included specific examples where principals expressed frustration by what they saw as a lack of support and guidance from Central Office. In addressing principals' concerns, the district articulated the view that neither a fully centralized nor fully decentralized decision-making framework would provide optimal results for schools. Rather, the school board proposed that more clarity should be present around which decisions would be made at the school level and which decisions would be retained by central administration. The district cited savings in time and money and improved relationships between school and central office as benefits of fine tuning the decision-making process. In doing so, the district's ultimate goal was to improve student achievement by improving the systems and processes that impacted student achievement.

Recruiting School Leaders

The district also proposed creating a robust principal recruitment process and a component of its talent management strategy. The district's goal was to create a best-in-class talent pool to fill every vacancy. In response to this challenge, the district recruited and hired a team of veteran recruiters who developed a national recruitment campaign.

At the same time, the district created a separate Leadership Development Department. Part of the Leadership Development Department's charge was to create a "grow your own" model that would focus on identifying and training internal talent to supplement the external talent recruitment efforts. The district's vision was to create partnerships with local university preparation programs and national programs like the University of Virginia and New Leaders for New Schools (HISD, 2010). While the recruitment efforts were under development, the district also simultaneously created a structured, situational interview process, and made plans to survey principals regarding their perceptions on what attracted them to the district and began to examine incentives or principal pay. The talent management strategy also mentioned having every principal remain in every school for five years if they were successful.

Instructional Leadership Development

The district identified support in instructional leadership and continuous professional development as strategies to support principals. Under the proposed model contained in the *Strategic Direction*, professional development support would be individualized by performance level and differentiated job-related training would be provided based on performance categories. The bottom 15% of principals would be targeted for the highest levels of support which would include mentorship by highly effective HISD principals (HISD, 2010). Additionally, the district proposed the development of clear career pathways for principals. The career pathways would be outlined, would define the competencies needed to grow in the district, and would create transparency around how principals could advance to higher leadership roles in the district.

Safety and Security

The talent management strategy identified safety as an important component for making certain every school is led by a highly effective principal. The district's vision for safety was developed based on feedback from a broad range of stakeholders who indicated schools should be healthier and safer. The district believed that safer campuses would create better learning environments for students and better workplace conditions for adults.

High impact human resource department can play a key role in helping manage and develop quality retention practices and policies. Many empirically-based strategies exist that may be reviewed and tailored to the organization's needs. If and when these strategies are combined with a focus that includes involvement with the organization's senior leadership, these policies and practices can improve retention outcomes.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the researcher presented the research questions and a description of collection processes which were used to accomplish the objectives of the study. The purpose of this study was to examine critically the perceived personal and organizational reasons that influence principal retention and to extract meaning from the principals' responses. These responses helped to determine who stayed and why. Additionally sought in this study was an examination of the district's talent management strategy, as well as whether the talent management strategy impacts retention. In particular, the findings from this study add to the current body of research that informs how to retain principals and how targeted employee retention strategies can benefit organizations. Thus, the study was descriptive and exploratory in nature and was not intended to test any theory. In the next section, a description of the instrumentation used and the data collection procedures used in this study is provided.

Research Questions

The study aimed to answer these research questions:

1. What are the principal's perceived reasons for staying with the district?
2. From the principal's perspective, why do principals believe other talented principal leaders leave the district?
3. What are the principal's perceptions of the district's talent management strategy and how the talent management strategy impacts retention? To what extent does the district's talent management align with an empirically based set of employee retention factors?

Description of Research Design

Used in this mixed methods study was an exploratory design to answer questions about principal retention. Demographic questions were included in a survey completed by principals. Demographic data were used to identify common characteristics among principals who stayed. Creswell (2013) recommended that qualitative researchers should protect participants' identities by developing composite profiles. Principal perceptions were obtained from principal responses to a survey. According to Hancock, Windridge, and Oeckelford (2007), phenomenological research begins with the acknowledgement that "there is a gap in our understanding and that clarification or illumination" will come from those studied. In constructing a phenomenological study, the subjects share their lived experiences and these experiences were expressed as subjective or objective viewpoints. In qualitative research "the emphasis is on describing the conscious/central meaning or essence of the lived experience of the phenomena (concept) under study" (Yeh & Inman, 2007, p. 375). According to Creswell (2013), phenomenological research can be used to understand several individuals' common experiences and how these common experiences can be used to develop policies and practices. Stufflebeam (2006) suggested that, through introspection, subjects look within themselves to report what is going on in their minds, to report how they feel, or what it is like to be them. Therefore, based on the nature of the questions studied, the phenomenology is an appropriate method for this studying, which focuses on understanding perceptions and lived experiences.

The structure and organization of the study followed Van Manen's (1990) guide for conducting phenomenological research, which outlined the following four research

activities: (a) investigating a phenomenon that is interesting and important; (b) investigating an experience as it is lived rather than as it is conceptualized; (c) applying reflection to the themes that emerge from the data analysis; and (d) using writing and rewriting to describe the phenomenon (Vagle, 2009).

Moustakas (1994) posited that in phenomenological research, participants were asked two broad general questions. In particular, one broad question should be related to what the study participants have experienced in terms of a particular phenomenon. The second question should be related to the contexts or situations that have typically influenced or affected participant's experiences of the phenomenon (Moustakas, 1994). In this study, the phenomenon was principal retention as it occurs within the context of the participant's lived experiences as principals in the school district.

District archived primary, secondary, and tertiary documents were also used to identify relevant data. Included were digital collections, board meeting minutes, reports, and other documents that were either created during the time period being studied or were created at a later date by participants in the event being studied. These documents were reviewed to identify relevant district policies and procedures. The triangulation of data from these sources provided specific descriptions of the phenomenon being studied and also provided a variety of perspectives which lent credibility to the study. Creswell (2009) identified triangulation as one of the strategies that can be used to validate the accuracy of findings in a mix methods study.

Setting

The school district upon which the study was based is the seventh largest school district in the United States and the largest school district in Texas. The district covers

approximately 301 square miles and is organized to focus on teaching and learning. The district is the area's largest employer and had an operating budget of over \$1.4 billion dollars in 2006. For the purposes of this study, all schools in the district were reviewed.

Table 3.1 describes the number of schools and the student enrollment in each school by school level in 2006.

Table 3.1

Campuses and Enrollment 2006-2007

Academic Level	Number of Schools	Student Enrollment
Elementary School	198	113,540
Middle School	47	39,368
High School	39	46,891
Combination/Other	11	3,137
Total	295	202,936

The table above indicates that, at the end of the 2006 school year, the school district served approximately 202,936 students. Specifically, these students attended 6 early childhood centers, 198 elementary schools, 47 middle schools, 39 high schools, and 11 combined or other schools – for a total of 295 schools. The district is ethnically diverse. By ethnic groups American Indians, Asians, and Multi-racial students comprised 4% of the student population; Whites comprised 7.8%; Blacks comprised 26.5%; and, finally, Hispanics constituted 61.7% of the overall student population. Of the 295 schools, 78% met AYP, 14% missed AYP, and 8% of schools were not rated. By the end of 2011, the urban school district included a total of 279 schools.

Table 3.2 below describes the number of schools and the student enrollment in each school by school level in 2011.

Table 3.2

Campuses and Enrollment 2010-2011

Academic Level	Number of Schools	Student Enrollment
Early Childhood	6	2,387
Elementary School	160	105,684
Middle School	41	33,346
High School	44	46,661
Combination/Other	28	14,898
Total	279	203,066

The table above indicates that, at the beginning of the 2011 school year, the school district served approximately 203,066 students. Specifically, these students attended 6 early childhood centers, 160 elementary schools, 41 middle schools, 44 high schools, and 28 combined or other schools – for a total of 279 schools. The district remained ethnically diverse. By ethnic groups American Indians, Asians, and Multi-racial students comprised 4.3% of the student population; Whites comprised 8.1%; Blacks comprised 25.1%; and, finally, Hispanics constituted 62.4% of the overall student population. Of the 279 schools, 74% met AYP, 26% missed AYP, and 4% of schools were not rated.

Subjects

The present study was based on a sample of principals drawn from the large urban school district that is part of this study. In May of 2006, the district employed 295 principals. Of the principals employed, 32% were Hispanic, 35% were Black, 28% were White, 2% were Asian, and 2% were Multi-Racial (HISD, 2006). By 2011, the district employed 248 principals, of which 66% of the principals were female and 34% were males. Of these principals, 32% were Hispanic, 35% were Black, 28% were White, 2% were Asian, and 2% were Multi-Racial (HISD, 2011). Each of the participants in this study was an adult who had worked as a principal at his or her school for five uninterrupted years from 2006-2011 and remained employed with the district at the time of this study.

Sampling

The principals who participated in the study were identified using criterion sampling. In qualitative research, the inquirer selects the individuals and sites for study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon of the study” (Creswell, 2009, p. 156). The criteria for selecting persons to participate in the study was based on principals who had served in the principal’s role in the same school for 5 uninterrupted years (from 2006-2011) and remain employed in the district at the time of this study. The common element for the group is they had all worked as principals in the same school for five uninterrupted years. These principals were asked to complete a survey. Weller and Romney (1988) suggested that in qualitative research, the size of the population can be limited to a sub-culture

within a larger society, to a specific population that needs exploration about their behaviors, beliefs, or relevance to the larger group.

Targeted in this investigation were principals who served in the principal's role in the same school for 5 uninterrupted years (from 2006-2011) and remained employed in the district at the time of this study. Fullan and Steigelbaur (1991) suggested that principals must be in place five years for full implementation of a large scale effort. Papa, Lankford, and Wycoff (2002) defined principal retention as a principal who had remained in the same school for four years or more. According to Heck and Hallinger (1999), stability and sustainability are important factors that help ensure school leaders are able to maximize student achievement. For the purposes of this study, retention was defined as returning to the same school as principal over a 5-year period from 2006-2011. An Excel database, which is part of the Microsoft Office ©suite, was used to track data on principal movements. Descriptive statistics were used to describe findings from the tracked data. The tracking process resulted in the development of a list of principals of 76 principals who had served for five uninterrupted years of incumbency. For the population of principals in the district each year, principals were identified based upon the principals' status from the previous year. However, between the time the tracking process was complete and the time the survey was conducted, the number of principals decreased to 72. All 72 of these principals were invited to participate in the survey. Of the sample, 61 (or 85%) were elementary or early childhood center principals, 3 (or 4.1%) were middle school principals, 7 (or 9.7%) were high school principals and 1 (or 1.3%) represented a combination/other schools. Of the 72 principals who were invited to

participate, 43 principals actually completed the survey. The sample size was reduced to 42 principals because of missing data from one respondent.

Instrumentation

The researcher constructed a two part survey that included both open-ended and close-ended questions. The survey served two purposes: (a) collecting data that would be used to create a demographic profile of principals who stay, and (b) gathering perception data on why principals remain employed with the district, why (from the principal's perspective) other talented leaders left, and the principal's perception on the effectiveness of the district's talent management strategy. The open-ended questions were structured to elicit participants' perceptions about their lived experiences as principal and how and why their lived experiences impacted their decisions to remain employed with the district.

Within the survey design, all respondents were asked the same questions in the same order. The language was purposefully straightforward and free of educational jargon or references to district specific nomenclature. Sensitive questions that might give respondents pause were placed in the middle of the survey rather than at the beginning. Participants were asked to be as honest as possible and to respond in detail. The survey design, providing ample space for writing individual responses, was intended to encourage participants to write as much as they felt comfortable writing. The researcher was careful to see that the questions in the survey would yield information that was relevant to the study. The following chart describes the variables and the source of data from the survey questions.

Table 3.3

Survey Variables and Questions

Variable	Source of Data
Participant's Age	Question 2
Participant's Sex	Question 3
Years as principal in current school	Question 4
Years in field of education	Question 5
Perceptions on why you remain employed with the district	Question 1
Degrees held	Question 6
Ethnicity	Question 7
School location	Question 8
Grades in the school	Question 9
Number of teachers	Question 10
Number of students	Question 11
% of students receiving free and reduced lunch	Question 13
Your perceptions on why other talented principals left the district	Question 14
Perceptions about the impact of "Effective Principal in Every School"	Question 15

Careful completion of the survey took approximately 20 minutes. Participation in the survey was voluntary and all responses were submitted anonymously.

Procedures and Time Frame

All procedures established by the school district (See Appendix A) and by the University of Houston Institutional Review Board-Human Subjects Committee (See Appendix B) were followed while conducting the research. The protection of participants was of key importance to the researcher. Every effort was made to maintain the anonymity of the participating principals.

Voluntary consent was obtained from all participants. Potential participants were contacted by phone and were given an explanation of the study (See Appendix C). The survey was also sent to potential participants by email (See Appendix D), and each was asked to complete the survey. The researcher also provided participants with a written explanation of the study (See Appendix E). This explanation described the intent of the study, outlined the criteria for participating, described the safeguards, explained how the survey was set up, provided an estimate of the time required to complete the survey, and informed participants how the survey results would be used. Names were not used to identify respondents nor did documents contain references to employees.

Next, the researcher administered the survey. To ensure confidentiality, all surveys were administered using Survey Monkey. Survey Monkey is an online survey tool that enables secure transmissions, tabulates data, and provides a statistical breakdown of results (Massat, McKay, & Moses, 2009). Survey Monkey can support descriptive text, open-ended questions, and multiple-choice questions

Demographic Variables

Descriptive statistics were gathered and calculated on gender, age in years, years as principal in current school, years in education, degrees held, ethnicity, school location, grades in school, number of teachers, number of students, and percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch. The demographic data are reported in the results of this dissertation. The data analysis was performed using SPSS 20.0 through the SPSS integration component of Survey Monkey. Surveys were administered from Fall March 1-March 12, 2013. Creswell (2013) recommended that qualitative researchers protect

participants; identified by developing composite profiles. Composite profiles are included in Chapter Four.

Perception Variables

The open-ended questions asked the respondents to provide detailed reasons why they chose to remain employed with the district, why (from their perspective) other talented principals left the district and they were also asked to provide their perspectives on the effectiveness of the district's talent management strategy which is "An Effective Principal in Every School".

Data Analysis

Open-ended questions yielded data on perspectives held by the participants regarding questions related to retention. Responses were analyzed using a content analysis methodology. Krippendorff (2004) stated, "Content analysis is a research framework used for making replicable and valid inferences from text (or other meaningful matter) to the context of their use" (p. 118). Both latent and manifest methods were used to analyze content responses. Manifest content refers to the obvious, surface content and latent content refers to underlying meaning (Frankel & Wallen, 2009). Additionally, responses were read and re-read multiple times. Subsequently, synonyms and themes in the responses were also evaluated. Responses were then transcribed, assigned a category code, and placed in a master response file categorization matrix. The protection of the subject was of key importance to the researcher. Every effort was made to maintain the anonymity of all participants.

Methods

The qualitative research method selected for this study was a phenomenological research design. Principals were asked to articulate their lived, human experiences as principals. Through the data collected, principals described what they experienced in the principalship and how they experienced it. The principals provided their personal, subjective views of the lived experience.

Limitations

Given the nature of the study, a number of research questions were not included. Not included in this study were data on the principal's success in demonstrating student achievement on their campuses. The study did not include how principals were selected to lead the schools where they are presently assigned. Exploration of selection tools and processes could help explain job fit and job match issues. The study did not examine the movements and current status of principals who changed schools but remained with the district. The study is intentionally limited to the principal's perceptions on why they have chosen to remain employed with the district and the articulation of the personal and organizational reasons associated with their decisions to remain employed. The articulation of perceptions held by incumbents is important if we are to understand the principals' decisions to remain employed with the district. A more sophisticated analysis may be undertaken to study other phenomenon and conditions that impact principal retention.

The sample size of this study based on the school level for middle and high school may be too small to make generalizations about principal experiences. Of all principals retained in 2011 (out of a total of 279), only three middle school principals, seven high

school principal, and one principal of a combination or other school, and 61 elementary principals qualified to be included in the survey. For that reason, the researcher did not report perceptions by school level. Secondary principals could have been identified easily based on the small sample size. The researcher did not risk breaching confidentiality. The low number of incumbents at the secondary level may be predictive of other issues at the secondary level (e.g., an indication of the high turnover rate at the secondary level). The topic of turnover at the secondary level may lend itself to further study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to examine why principals stayed in a large urban school district, explore personal and organizational reasons for staying, and determine who stays and why. Specifically explored in this investigation was principal retention in a large, urban school district and principals' perceptions influence long-term commitment to the district. A growing body of evidence links sustained principal leadership and student achievement (Heck & Hallinger, 1999). This study sought to determine principals' perceptions about their reasons for staying with the district. Perceptions about how the principal's perceptions about the talent management strategy and how the strategy impacts principal retention were analyzed. Retention was determined by whether or not an individual returned to the same school over a 5-year period from 2006-2011. A number of researchers have suggested principal turnover can have a detrimental impact on student achievement (Branch, Hausknecht, & Rivkin, 2009; DeAngelis & White, 2011). In this chapter, the results of this mixed methods study are presented. Data for the study were obtained from three sources: (a) *Texas School Directories* for the years 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2010, and 2010-2011; (b) archived primary, secondary and tertiary documents; and (c) feedback from a survey.

During approximately two weeks in February and March of 2013, principals who had been employed in the district for five uninterrupted years from 2006-2011 and who remained at the same school for the 5-year period were asked to complete a survey. Principals were asked about the personal and organizational reasons for remaining employed with the district. The survey was administered using the district's online portal

system. Survey Monkey, which is an online tool that enables secure transmissions, was used to administer the survey and tabulate data. Descriptive statistics were drawn from the indexed data for the purpose of characterizing the profile of the entire set of data. Descriptive statistics were gathered and calculated on gender, age in years, years as principal in current school, years in education, degrees held, ethnicity, school location, grades in school, number of teachers, number of students, and percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch. The demographic data are reported in the results of the dissertation. The data analysis was performed using SPSS 20.0 through the SPSS integration component of Survey Monkey.

Table 4.1 displays the descriptive demographic profile of the principals who participated in the survey.

Table 4.1

Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Age, Gender, Years as Principal in Current School, Years in Education, Degrees, and Ethnicity (n = 42)

Characteristics	Male		Female	
	#	%	#	%
Respondents				
Age				
30 and under	0	0	1	4
31-37 years	0	0	0	0
38-45 years	1	8	3	10
46-55 years	7	54	17	59
56-62 years	3	23	3	10
Over 63	2	15	5	17
Gender	13	100	29	100
Years as Principal in Current School				
5-15 years	10	77	27	93
26-35 years	3	23	2	7
Years in Education				
15-25 years	7	54	12	41
26-35 years	4	31	10	35
36 years and over	2	15	7	24
Degrees Held				
Bachelors/Masters	10	77	25	86
Doctorate	3	23	4	14
Ethnicity				
White/Non-Hispanic	6	46	12	41
Black/Non-White	4	31	9	31
Hispanic	2	15	8	28
Asian/Pacific Islander	1	8	0	0

Note. No respondents described the following: years as principal in current school

between “26 years and over” and ethnicity (“American Indian/Alaskan Native and Non-Resident/International”).

Frequency Distribution of Respondents by Gender, Age, Years as Principal in Current School, Years in Education, Degrees, and Ethnicity

To characterize the frequency distribution of respondents by age, gender, years as principal in current school, years in education, degrees, and ethnicity, descriptive statistics were conducted. A total of 42 respondents completed the surveys: 29 (or 69%) female and 13 (or 31%) were male. A majority (57%) of the respondents identified themselves in the age cluster of 46-55 years. The second largest cluster was over 63, reflecting the responses of 17% of respondents. The third largest cluster was 56-62 years, reflecting 14% of respondents, with the remaining 12% representing 10% of respondents who identified themselves as 38-45 years and 2% of respondents who identified themselves as 30 and under.

A majority (88%) of the respondents classified themselves as years as principal in current school for 5-15 years. The second cluster was 16-25 years, reflecting the responses of the remaining 12% of respondents. No respondents classified themselves as principal in current school for more than 26 years. The largest (45%) representation of the respondents categorized themselves as years in education for 15-25 years. The second largest representation was 26-35 years, reflecting 33% of responses of respondents, with the remaining 21% representing respondents who had identified years in education as 36 years and over. The classification of degrees combined bachelors and masters degrees, while the doctorate degree was analyzed as a single variable. A majority (83%) of the respondents described themselves as obtaining a bachelors/masters degree. The remaining 17% represents respondents who had identified themselves as having a doctorate degree.

The largest (43%) classification of respondents identified themselves as White/Non-Hispanic. The second largest classification was Black/Non-Hispanic, reflecting the responses of 31% of respondents. The third largest classification was Hispanic, reflecting 24% of respondents. The remaining 2% represents Asian/Pacific Islander; only one respondent described him/herself by this category.

Table 4.2

Frequency Distribution of Respondents by School Location, Grade Configuration, Number of Teachers, Number of Students, and Percentage of Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch (n = 42)

Characteristics	Male		Female	
	#	%	#	%
Respondents				
School Location				
Urban	12	92	29	100
Suburban	1	8	0	0
Grades in the School				
Elementary (PK, K, 1-5)	8	62	26	90
Middle (6-8)	1	8	0	0
High (9-12)	3	22	3	10
Other (K-8)	1	8	0	0
Number of Teachers				
14-25	2	15	4	14
26-50	8	62	21	72
51-75	0	0	2	7
76 and over	3	23	2	7
Number of Students				
65-350	1	8	1	4
351-550	7	54	8	28
551-750	1	8	14	48
751-950	1	8	3	10
951 and over	3	22	3	10
Free and Reduced Lunch				
0-25	1	8	0	0
26-50	2	15	1	4
51-75	0	0	5	17
76-100	10	77	23	79

Note. “Free and Reduced Lunch” = Percentage of Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch.

Frequency Distribution of Respondents by School Location, Grade Configuration, Number of Teachers, Number of Students, and Percentage of Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch

To characterize the frequency distribution of respondents by school location, grade configuration, number of teachers, number of students, and percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch, descriptive statistics were conducted. A total of 42 principals participated in this study. Of those, 41 or (98%) were located in the urban context, and 1 or (2%) was located in suburbia.

A majority (81%) of the respondents identified schools as elementary (i.e., pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and/or grades 1-5). The second largest classification was high schools (i.e., grades 9-12), reflecting the responses of 14% of respondents. The remaining 5% represented one middle school (6-8) and one K-8 school. A majority (69%) of the respondents described faculty size (i.e., number of teachers) as 26-50 teachers. The second largest cluster was 14-25, reflecting the responses of 14% of respondents. The third largest cluster was 76 and over, reflecting the responses of 12% of respondents. The remaining 5% represented two respondents who described faculty size as 51-75.

Seventy-one percent of the respondents classified number of students (i.e., student enrolled) as 351-550 (35.5%) and 551-750 (35.5%). The second largest classification was 951 students and over, reflecting responses of 14% of respondents. The remaining 15% represents 10% of respondents who classified enrollment size as 751-950, and 5% who classified the number of students as 65-350.

Students who receive free and reduced lunch have met the poverty eligibility criteria to participate in the governmental food program. A majority (79%) of respondents identified student poverty level percentages as 76-100. The second largest identification was 51-75, reflecting the responses of 12% of respondents. The remaining 9% represents 7% of respondents who identified free and reduced lunch percentages as 26-50, and 2% who identified the percentage as 0-25. The results for frequency distribution of respondents by school location, grade configuration, number of teachers, number of students, and percentage of students receiving free and reduced lunch are presented in Table 4.2.

Research Question One

Principals were asked to provide a response to the following questions: “What are your reasons for staying with the school district?” Reported reasons for staying within the district generated more than six pages of single-spaced qualitative data. Responses were assigned a code. The researcher used content analysis, a research method that can be used to make appropriate inferences from data to their context, for the purpose of providing understanding, new insights, and a representation of facts (Krippendorff, 2004). The responses were then read and re-read. According to Polit and Beck (2004), the researcher should become immersed in the data which is why the written material was read several times. Obvious meanings and underlying meanings were explored. The researcher looked for emerging themes, patterns, and synonyms. Participant responses that were not obviously related to the question were also analyzed. Disagreement exists among researchers about whether hidden meaning can be ascertained from text because determining hidden meaning sometimes involves interpretation (Elo & Kyngas, 2007).

However, according to Robson (1993), researchers should be guided by the content of the research question in determining what should be analyzed. All responses to question one were analyzed. Only the responses that directly related to question one were included in the analysis. The analysis structure was based on 12 categories identified by Hausknecht et al. (2009). The researcher was keenly aware of the potential for difficulty interpreting data in qualitative research when using pre-existing or a priori codes. When new or different categories emerged during the analysis, additional categories would have been established. Codes were assigned based on the categories identified in Hausknecht et al. (2009). A categorization matrix was developed next (see Table 4.3).

Table 4.3 below contained the categories were identified in Hausknecht et.al (2009).

Table 4.3

Categorization Matrix

Retention Factors	Key Words and Phrases
Job satisfaction, job fit, job match	I like what I do, I'm making a difference, personal fulfillment
Pay and benefits	Make money, pay is good
Relationships	Relationships, support from my supervisor, belief in students, teachers and community, commitment to children
Identification with and involvement in the district	A good place to work, grew up in this district, like to retire here, believe in district's mission
Pride in the district	Great district, capable district, leader in education
Lack of alternatives	N/A
Investments	Lot of time invested, rather than start over, vested interest, I've spent 17 years
Advancement opportunities, room to grow	Opportunities
Location	Work close to home, I love Houston
Organizational justice	N/A
Flexible work arrangements	Summer schedule, flexibility in schedule
Influences outside work	Bills to pay

The primary reasons for remaining with the district are reported in Appendix F along with frequencies, percentages and representative quotes. Relative to other categories and when viewed across the entire sample, constituent attachment (41.4%) was the retention reason that was most frequently cited. Constituent attachment was followed by job satisfaction (19.8%), organizational commitment (13.5%), investments (7.2%),

organizational prestige (6.3%), advancement opportunities (5.4%), extrinsic rewards (3.6%), location (1.8%) flexible work arrangements (.9%), and non-work influences (.9%). No respondents indicated organizational justice or lack of alternatives as retention reasons.

In describing job satisfaction, principals mentioned loving their jobs, personal fulfillment, and autonomy. Markos and Srideri (2010) described being engaged in rewarding work as a fundamental condition that must exist to improve organizational performance and guarantee employee engagement. Regarding extrinsic rewards, respondents mentioned opportunities to earn additional money and good pay. For constituent attachment, respondents mentioned relationships, support, and beliefs in student, parents, community and teachers. Regarding organizational commitment, respondents mentioned having attended the district, having sent their children to the district, and their belief that they should stay and help solve problems. Concerning organizational prestige, respondents described the district as a leader in education, described the district as capable, and referred to the district as “a great district”. With respect to investment, participants mentioned time spent with the district, and seeing themselves retiring from the district. For advancement opportunities, participants commented on opportunities provided by the district. Regarding location, respondents mentioned living close to school and their love for living in Houston. Concerning flexible work arrangements, one respondent mentioned the summer schedule and general flexibility in the work schedule. With respect to non-work influences, one respondent mentioned having bills to pay as an outside influence on retention. No respondents

mentioned lack of alternatives or organizational justice as a reason for remaining with the district.

Research Question Two

Principals were asked why they believed other talented principals left the district. This question was asked because the researcher wanted to learn more about how the constant churn impacted principals who stayed. Content analysis was used to create categories that described the principal's perceptions on why other talented leaders left the district.

Table 4.4

Categorization Matrix - Why Other Talented Leaders Left the District

Reasons for leaving	Key Words and Phrases
Job or workplace not as expected	Too much unrest; bureaucracy; politics; no power to influence outcomes
Mismatch between job and person	"Grass is greener syndrome"; could not keep pace with district
Too little coaching and feedback	Too little support, lack of consistent support, no support from central office,
Too few growth and advancement opportunities	Lack of opportunities to advance, outsiders know less than principals; lack of opportunity;
Feeling devalued and unrecognized	Input from principals not taken seriously; underappreciated and over looked; inequitable reward system; not valued as a leader
Stress from work	Pressure of working with at-risk students, too much pressure to work on things not related to instruction; stress from high stakes testing
Loss of trust or confidence in leadership	Lack of loyalty from district
Better offer somewhere else	Got a better offer
Fired/Involuntary Resignation	Forced out because someone thought they were not good enough
Non-Work Influences	Family commitments

To develop the categories, the researcher used turnover literature as a guide for the development of the categories. The responses from the principals did not distinguish between voluntary and involuntary leaving. An analysis of the reasons principals cited for staying and their perceived reasons why peers left the district is displayed in Table 4.5 below. The reason for leaving mentioned most frequently was job or workplace not as expected (24.7%), stress from work (21.5%), too little coaching and feedback (20.4%), followed by too few growth and advancement opportunities (14.0%), feeling devalued and unrecognized (7.52%), loss of trust or confidence in leadership (3.22%) mismatch between job and person (1.07%), followed by a number of outlier responses which included being fired, involuntary resignation and family commitments (.45%) (See Appendix F).

Research Question Three

In 2010, the district established a talent management strategy or core initiative known as “Effective Principal in Every School”. Principals were asked their perceptions on the district’s talent management strategy and who the strategy impacts principal retention. This question was asked to determine the principals’ perspectives on how well the district’s talent management strategy worked.

Table 4.5

Principals' Perceptions of the District's Talent Management Strategy and How the Talent Management Strategy Impacts Retention (n = 50)

Principal's Responses	Percent of Respondents
None/Not Doing Enough	48%
No Answer	18%
Not Sure	10%
Some Strategies Work	24%

This question was included to ascertain principals' perceptions about the districts efforts to retain principals and to determine from their perspectives, if they believed the talent management strategy which targeted principals in particular worked. Over half (58%) of the respondents indicated that the district was not doing anything, was not doing enough, or that they were not sure what was occurring to retain principals. As noted in the literature review on retention practices, retention practices must be understood by the employee and the organization (Rousseau, 1995) to be effective. The appendix (Appendix H) contains a summary of research based talent management strategies.

Not responding to this question were 18% of the principals. Of the 18% who did not respond to question four, one principal did not provide a written answer to the questions. Other respondents provided answers; yet, these answers did not address the questions. Strategies were used to determine the underlying meaning of the responses and the obvious meanings of the responses. Review of the "non-responses" indicated that principals responded to the question by offering responses that were not relevant to the question. For example, one principal wrote, "Make sure everyone understands what

coaching look like.” Another principal wrote, “The multiplicity of redundant requirements takes away from the effectiveness of the talent management system.” On the other hand, in talking about the effectiveness of the talent management strategy, 24% of the principals identified strategies that they believed were effective in impacting principal retention. The strategies are listed below in rank order based on how many times the strategies were mentioned:

1. Support provided by (School Support Officers, Teacher Development Specialists, Curriculum Department, Leadership Development)
2. Multi-Year Contracts
3. ASPIRE Awards
4. Choice of School Assignments
5. Promotions (when principals threaten to leave the district)
6. (The) District’s Grow-Your-Own Program

Principals identified a broad range of retention practices that are supported by the district based on their perspectives. The principals viewed the support offered by Central Office Departments as the strongest retention strategy, followed by extending multi-year contracts to principals, followed by ASPIRE bonus pay, which was followed by principals exercising choice in determining where they would serve as principal. Last, principals cited the district’s grow-your-own program. Proportionately, the responses were evenly divided between elementary and secondary respondents.

The review of overall principal responses indicated the majority of principals (41.4%) indicated they remained employed with the district because of strong, committed relationships with students, teachers, and the school community. Principals indicated

that relationships, support from supervisors, and beliefs in students, teachers, parents, and community were important in making their decisions to remain with the district. Strong committed relationships were followed by job satisfaction (19.8%) as a reason for remaining with the district. The principals cited liking their jobs, liking the autonomy that decentralization afforded them, and achieving personal fulfillment from the work they do. None of the respondents cited organizational justice or lacking alternatives as reasons for staying. However, several principals commented on being recruited (often) by other districts.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

Findings for the Study

Typically, turnover research measures the turnover rate by dividing the number of leavers during a period by the size of the workforce (Hausknecht & Trevor, 2011). This was not a typical turnover study. Instead, a cohort of principals who entered the principalship in particular schools in a district in August, 2006 were tracked for five years. All of the principals who were in the same school at the end of 2011 and who were still employed with the district at the time of the study were included in the study. The 2006 cohort began with 295 principals who were assigned to elementary, middle, high school and combination/other schools. Through the tracking process, 76 principals were identified as having spent five uninterrupted years in the principalship in the same school from 2006-2011. Of the 76 principals who were identified, 72 were still employed with the district at the time the study was conducted. All 72 principals were invited to participate in a cognitive interview which was conducted through a survey. A total of 43 principals, out of the 72 principals who were invited, participated in the survey (for a response rate of 60%). However, one participant's responses could not be counted in the analysis. Of the principals, 57% identified themselves in the age cluster of 46-55 years of age. The second largest cluster was over 63, which reflected the responses of 17% of respondents. The third largest cluster was 56-62 years of age, which reflected 14% of respondents. The remaining 12% represented 10% of the respondents who identified themselves as 38-45 years of age.

A majority (88%) of the respondents indicated they had been principals of their schools for 5-15 years. The largest classification (43%) of respondents identified themselves as White/Non-Hispanic, with the second largest classification being Black/Non-Hispanic, which reflected 24% of respondents. The third highest classification was Hispanic, which reflects 24% of respondents.

Of the participants, 98% described themselves as principals of urban schools. A majority (81%) of respondents were elementary principals (including pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and/or grades 1-5). The second largest classification was high schools, which reflected 14% of respondents, whereas middle school principals comprised 5%.

A majority of the principals, 69%, described their faculty size (i.e., number of teachers) as 26 to 50 teachers. The second largest cluster was 14 to 25 teachers, which reflected the responses of 14% of respondents. The third largest cluster was 76 and over, which reflected the responses of 12% of respondents. The remaining 5% represented two respondents who described faculty size as 51 to 75.

Regarding the survey participants, 71% classified the number of students enrolled as 351 – 550 (35.5%) and 551 – 750 (35.5%). The second largest classification was 951 students and over, which reflected the responses of 14% of respondents. The remaining 15% represented 10% of respondents who classified enrollment size as 751 – 950, and 5% who classified the number of students as 65 – 350.

Students who receive free and reduced lunch have met the poverty eligibility criteria to participate in the governmental food program. A majority (79%) of respondents identified student poverty level percentages as 76 – 100. The second largest identification was 51 – 75, which reflected the responses of 12% of respondents. The

remaining 9% represents 7% of respondents who identified free and reduced lunch percentages as 26 – 50, and 2% who identified the percentage as 0 – 25.

Overall, general agreement was present around constituent attachments, job satisfaction, and organization commitment as the most frequently mentioned reasons for remaining with the school district. When viewed holistically, the more an employee articulates these reasons for staying with the employer, the less likely he or she is to leave (Resto, 2012).

Key Findings

The demographic profile that was created indicated that most of the respondents who remained employed (69.8%) were females. This finding confirms the research presented in the APA (2012) study which indicated women were more likely to remain with their employer for variety of reasons which included relationships with co-workers, relationships with managers, and connections to the organization.

Interestingly, 57% of the respondents indicated that they were between the ages of 46 and 55 years. The second largest cluster of principals was over the age of 63 years. The majority of respondents fell within the age cluster 46-55, which represented 57% of all respondents. These data appear to indicate that the “stayers” are a veteran group. Their average years of experience in education spanned from 15-36 years. Gates et al. (2006) suggested that aging trends among principals could lead to shortages due to the exodus of veteran principals. Gates et al. (2006) suggested that districts’ recruitment efforts should focus on getting younger people to fill administrative positions in schools.

Question One

What are your perceived reasons for staying with the district? Overall, school level differences were not revealed in reasons for remaining with the district. Principals overwhelmingly (41.4%) indicated that because of their beliefs that what they did mattered, feelings of being appreciated for their work, and strong relationships with students, teachers and the community, as well as ownership and commitment to their work influenced why they chose to remain with the district. Representative statements from principals include:

- “I absolutely love my community, staff and school. We have an amazing culture so I can visibly see the differences we make in the lives of children and families.”
- “I am a product of HISD and I believe in the students and teachers of this district. I believe there is nothing that can prevent us from becoming the best in the nation. I personally have stayed because of the students I have, the ones other schools and society state can’t be reached, that they are unteachable. I believe not only are they extremely teachable, but they can teach us a thing or two on a daily basis.”
- “I have a vested interest in HISD and more importantly, in the school community where I am assigned. My entire career has been spent in HISD and I attended HISD schools as a child. Even through the many changes and challenges, my desire has always been to do my part to help the children I serve.”

Principals also expressed consistent reasons for committing to the district based on job satisfaction. Job satisfaction was characterized as doing work that they really enjoyed and enjoying the fact that no day was ever the same. Representative comments from principals include:

- “I choose to remain with this district because I love my job”.
- “First, I have a job that I really, really enjoy. My job allows me to do the things that I really like and sometimes I do things I don’t enjoy so much. Because each day is different, coming to work is a joy. A lot of people would find this unnerving, but it is a plus for me.
- “I have a great sense of personal fulfillment in my position”.

Of the participants in this study, 20% identified satisfaction with their jobs as a reason for remaining employed with the district. From a demographic perspective, this finding confirmed the APA (2012) survey results which indicated 80% of working Americans over the age of 55 were likely to cite enjoying the work they do as a reason for staying with the current employer. Of the respondents participating in the survey, 57% were between the ages 46-55 and 17% were over 63 years of age. Principals also mentioned having a sense of being in control their destinies because of the autonomy afforded to them through decentralization. Autonomy was viewed as a condition that improved job satisfaction. In contrast, Leithwood et al. (2002), contended that decentralization and the competitive nature of the schooling (e.g., recruitment demands, standardized test scores) also contributed to the rise in principals’ stress levels.

Principals also mentioned having participated in on-going learning as another reason why they found their jobs satisfying. This finding was confirmed by Hytter

(2007) as reported in Kyndt et al. (2008) in their finding that training and skill development have an indirect influence on retention.

The third most frequently cited reason for staying was organizational commitment (13.5%). Organizational commitment involved believing in the goals and values of the organization and being willing to exert effort to help the organization meet its goals (Hanushek et al., 2009). However, organizational commitment was more often expressed as a commitment to the campus and community as opposed to a commitment to the district. Representative statements from principals include:

- “I am committed to the students, district and community”.
- “I am committed to the district because I am valued as an employee of the district and most of all, this is where I began my career”.
- “I choose to stay mostly because of the families I serve and the community in which I serve. I am serving in the community in which I grew up.”
- “I stay because I am committed to my school. I have an amazing group of teachers that inspire me, work with me, go above and beyond every day to support every child. I stay because I have a parent community that doesn’t just support our school...they LOVE the school.”

Nevertheless, Kyndt et al. (2009) indicated the closer the employee fit with the organization; the more likely he is to stay. Some principals mentioned having had life-long dreams of working for in the district, having attended schools in the district themselves, or having sent their children to schools in the district.

Numerous researchers have identified extrinsic rewards (e.g., pay and benefits) as important (Lieberman, 2005; Lockwood, 2007; Papa, 2008). In this study, however, extrinsic rewards ranked seventh (2.7%) out of 10 retention indicators as reasons for making long-term commitments to the district. Disagreement exists among researchers on the costs and benefits of performance pay in the public sector. Findings in this study seemed to support findings from researchers who believe performance pay negatively impacts the effect of employee job satisfaction, especially under conditions where employees are intrinsically motivated and perform out of enjoyment, loyalty, or a sense of duty (Weibel, Rost, & Osterloh, 2010). In other words, giving performance pay to an employee for something she or he already enjoys doing can decrease the employee's motivation to perform the task (Lepper & Green, 1978). However, other researchers argue that pay for performance boosts employee performance so long as said performance pay is administered appropriately (Swiss, 2005).

It is also noteworthy that no principals cited organizational justice as a reason for remaining with the district. Organizational justice refers to employee's perceptions about the fairness of reward allocations, policies and procedures and interpersonal treatment. Numerous researchers have linked perceptions about fair procedures and job satisfaction (Irving, Coleman, & Bobocel, 2005). This finding suggests that organizations should be very intentional about making certain fair procedures are evident in policy and practice in everyday life and in times of organizational change.

Question Two

The number one reason cited regarding why other talented leaders left the district was that the job or workplace was not what the principals expected. The evidence cited by 24.7% of the responses related to remarks that ranged from dealing with the bureaucracy, perceptions that the district was becoming re-centralized (as opposed to decentralized), low compensation for elementary principals, and job insecurity. When incumbent principals wrote about why they believed other talented leaders left the district, they cited two additional reasons which are explained below.

The second most frequently cited reason by incumbents' principals was work related stress. Work related stress was described as pressure brought on by the rapid pace of constant change in the district, pressure to achieve results in high stakes testing, stress from dealing with at-risk students, and feeling over worked due to requirements that principals focus on non-instructional issues. MacBeath (2006) described "unrelenting change, the multiple and simultaneous demands placed on principals as factors contributing to work related stress. Murphy (1998) confirmed that work overload contributes to the principal's stress level and also factors into decisions to leave the job. Similarly, the same reasons identified by principals were confirmed in a study conducted by Public Agenda (2003) wherein the researchers determined that a majority of principals stated job related stress, the pressures to meet higher standards, dealing with politics, and the bureaucracy were confirmed as reasons why principals might leave their jobs.

In this investigation, 14% of the principals surveyed indicated they felt they received too little coaching and feedback from their supervisors. MacBeath (2006) identified external support (e.g., coaching, mentoring, and critical friendships) as

powerful tools for developing talented employees. Also, Brewer (1996) argued that managers or supervisors play an important role in helping organizations develop commitment from employees. Uren (2011) suggested that organizations should remove barriers to organizational commitment by dealing with managers who are negative or non-supportive.

Principals' comments about growth and advancement indicated they believed few opportunities were present for advancement in general and that systems and processes for advancement were not transparent. Additionally, principals wrote about outsiders who were less prepared were promoted or hired in higher level positions ahead of principals who had paid their dues and had demonstrated track records for creating/developing high performing campuses.

According to the turnover literature, the shock associated with image violation and lack of image compatibility is a powerful driver in a turnover decision (Lee & Maurer, 1997). Additionally, Irving et al. (2005) confirmed that when an organization's actions or values do not align with the employee's values, or when image violations occur, turnover can result. Interestingly, though, principals also commented that opportunities for advancement existed. Yet, those principals who left failed to recognize the opportunities that were available to them. If an offer was presented to the employee, the employee was likely to make a turnover decision and accept the offer because this action aligned with his psychological script. Lack of alternatives was not mentioned (at all) by principals who stayed. This non-response might suggest that some principals are not predisposed to changing jobs. Also, it could mean these principals recognize that

they can leverage their unique certifications, experiences and skills in the labor market to get another position if they choose to move to another job.

Question Three

Based on the findings, 48% of the respondents who answered this question indicated that nothing was being done to retain principals, not enough was being done, or they were not aware of what was occurring. Of the entire group of survey participants, 66% indicated they believed the district's efforts did not impact principal retention. With respect to this question, 18% of respondents did not answer; rather, they elaborated on other issues related to their lived experience. Regarding participants, 10% indicated they were not sure what was occurring and 24% identified programs that they believed impacted retention.

The 24% of the principals who responded to the study identified five strategies that they believed impacted principal retention in this district. These five factors were:

1. Support;
2. Multi-year contracts for principals;
3. Performance pay (ASPIRE Awards);
4. Choice in school assignments; and
5. (The) Grow-your-own model for leadership development.

Respondents identified coaching and guidance provided by School Support Officers and classroom level coaching provided by Teacher Development Specialists as positive efforts that supported retention. Additionally, principals identified the district's recent strategy of awarding multi-year contracts from principals as a retention strategy. Prior to this year, all principals were awarded one year contracts. Additionally, some

principals identified pay-for-performance as a meaningful retention strategy.

Furthermore, some principals identified having the opportunity to decide where they worked as a positive retention strategy. Finally, principals identified the district's grow-your-own model for leadership development as a retention strategy. The grow-your-own model is built on the premise that while the district will recruit, select and hire outside candidates, the district was also intentional about identifying and selecting and hiring internal candidates for principal positions.

These responses came from 24% of the respondents. However, the review of the district's archived primary and secondary documents indicated the district's talent management strategy focused on:

1. Designing and implementing a rigorous and fair appraisal system;
2. Implementing quality assurance standards and recommended practices to guide principals' decision-making, with expectations and clear accountability;
3. Strengthening school leader recruiting practices to attract top talent;
4. Establishing a comprehensive instructional leadership program to develop and retain top talent; and
5. Creating a safe, secure and healthy environment conducive to learning in all schools.

In addition to these foci, the district has placed a great deal of attention on the *2010 Declaration of Beliefs and Visions* (HISD, 2010) statement. The *Declaration of Beliefs and Visions*, which is also referred to as the district's intent, also articulated the district's intent which was to identify high performers and provide performance pay as a means of achieving instructional excellence and improving student achievement (HISD,

2010). The research on pay-for-performance confirms pay is an incentive for some employees in some organizations (Lazear, 2008). However, researchers are not in agreement that a pay-for-performance model is well suited for public employees (MacBeath, 2006).

Parts of the district's talent management strategy definitely align with an empirically-based model for employee retention. Depending on the literature that was reviewed, numerous references were present that aligned with and supported the district's strategy (Harvard Business School Review, 2012; MacBeath, 2006; Snipes, 2005; Uren, 2011). Additionally, frequently cited research-based talent management strategies are included in the Appendix.

Recommendations

These results emphasize the importance of why organizations should both increase communication and target communication related to how it retains quality principals. Findings also highlight the importance of differentiating talent management strategies based on the organization's ability to identify which employees are most responsible for the organization meeting its primary goals. The *Strategic Direction* was segmented to targeted teachers and principals as recommended by Uren (2011). Based on research by Marzano et al. (2005), teachers account for 33% of the impact on student learning, whereas principals account for 25% of the impact on student learning. However, researchers with the Wallace Foundation (2004) determined that to achieve teacher effectiveness at scale, schools need effective principals who create a school culture of high expectations, focused on learning for both students and adults.

Create accountability for talent management. Human Resources staff should be familiar with the existent literature on turnover. That is, Human Resources managers should recognize, anticipate, and react to what they learn about employees' decision paths. To the extent that an Human Resources department can act to mediate shock by offering different work assignments, making counter offers, among other variables, this department can assist with decreasing turnover. Although some sources recommended counter offers as a retention strategy, general disagreement is present regarding whether counter offers actually work as an incentive for retention. Depending on how the counter offer is handled, the counter offer may actually encourage other employees to seek and obtain outside offers solely for the purpose of driving up salaries. If employee's expectations are not met or if the organization creates the appearance of inequity based on compensation, turnover could still occur (Lee & Maurer, 1997).

The extent to which Human Resources departments execute basic human resource management practices, retention can result in increased retention rates. These basic practices include ensuring basic staffing needs are met, managing compensation and benefits issues, ensuring that grievance procedures are administered equitably and transparently, providing quality training and development opportunities, and, finally, assisting with career planning (Lee & Maurer, 1997). The Human Resources Department and senior leadership should work together to develop a comprehensive plan for recruiting, selecting, hiring, and engaging talented leaders. The plan should be based on a realistic view of the organization's future based on the follow questions: (a) where are we going, and (b) who do we need to get us there? Human Resources should develop

robust workforce analytics that anticipate staffing needs and includes strategic plans for meeting the identified needs.

Create targeted messaging for high value target employees. Work proactively and strategically to convey the message that the organization recognizes and supports work-life balance (MacBeath, 2006). The Human Resources Department should lead efforts to create outlets for employees to participate in activities that require the use of knowledge and skills that are not related to their primary roles in the organization. The activities should be championed by district leadership.

Continue to build and expand on the system for training and support. Principals mentioned having received quality training in core content areas (Bernsen, Segers, & Tillema, 2009). They also mentioned having received relevant training needed to deal with special populations such as students in special education. This training strand should be expanded to include strategies to deal with other hard to reach, hard to teach students who may benefit from working with principals and their staffs who have received high quality training. Bernsen et al. (2009) confirmed workplace learning enhances problem-solving skills. Principals expressed a desire to be coached and to work with coaches who have been trained in how to use genuine coaching strategies. The organization should provide formal coaching training for principals so that they can effectively coach teachers and for School Support Officers and others in central administration so that they can develop a culture of coaching and support.

Ask principals how they would like to be recognized. The district should begin a practice of asking high performers how they would like to be recognized (Uren, 2011). District data indicate that the district awarded \$35,362,083.52 in performance pay, which

was paid to principals and teachers in 2011 (HISD, 2011). Principals received \$6,300.54 in bonus pay on average (HISD, 2011). However, few principals recognized performance pay as a retention strategy. The district's retention plan states, "Employees identified as high performers by using value-added data should be rewarded" (HISD 2010). The statement continues by stating the district must establish levels of compensation and differentiated salaries driven by performance, value-added data and accountability for all employees. Tang (2000) posited that pay only influences employee retention when employee job satisfaction is low. Lieberman (2005) agreed by that stating money is not a motivating factor when other factors like job satisfaction, respect, advancement, and work environment are satisfactory. However, the principals barely mentioned performance pay as an effective retention strategy. The organization should delve into principal's motivations and development needs so that leaders in the organization will know that the organization's efforts are meeting the needs of the employees it seeks to keep.

Recommended in this study is that the school district explore retention strategies for employees who are successful and have demonstrated sustained service to the district. Retention strategies might include paid sabbaticals, choice assignments, or scheduled salary reviews based on industry standards, and creating more flexibility in the compensation schedule. Most importantly, the district should talk to long-termers and ask them what they expect from the district. Branham (2000) recommended that when an organization focuses on star performers or high performers, the focus should be on challenge, growth, and recognition. The principals who participated in the survey indicated they are challenged by the fast pace and changing nature of the principalship in

this urban school district. The principals who participated in the survey simultaneously expressed satisfaction with their jobs. Although a large percentage expressed satisfaction with their jobs, they also expressed desires for growth, advancement and recognition.

Differentiate. Organizations differentiate the work assignment of high performing employees so that they continue to develop their skill sets and continue to be engaged (Markos & Srideri, 2010). On the organization's side of the equation, differentiating work assignments will also enable the organization to get to know the strengths and weaknesses of the employees and provide guidance to the employee or the organization when considering another work assignment (Ramllal, 2003).

Implications

Besides determining which principals made long-term commitments to remain in the district over a 5-year period, some of the personal and organizational reasons why principals made the employment decisions that they made were identified in this investigation. Successful schools must be led by talented principals who can engage teachers, motivate students, and create and sustain quality relationships with stakeholders (MacBeath, 2006). Researchers have shown that principal leadership impacts a wide range of school outcomes (Rice-King, 2010). Principals identified constituent attachments, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment as the most frequently cited reasons for staying. When writing about other talented leaders who left the district, principals cited the job or workplace not being what was expected, stress from overwork and work-life imbalance, and feeling devalued and unrecognized as the reasons their colleagues left. The analysis indicates the reasons for leaving are different than the reasons for staying.

Knowing why talented principals stay is important for the school district.

Without a consistent pipeline of skilled, smart, motivated leaders, the nation's worthy goal of educating all of the nation's children may not be met. Capitalizing on human capital potential to lead schools will not happen by chance. The organization must position efforts on recruiting, selecting, hiring, training, and retaining the talent needed to reach organizational goals. According to Uren (2011), organizations that focus on talent management make a commitment and the organization ensures that commitment starts at the top.

Fernandez-Araoz, Groysberg, and Nohira (2013) recommended that the talent management focus should begin when employees join the organization and should continue throughout the employer/employee relationship. Principals in the survey wrote about "getting off on the right foot", which they described as having a mentor assigned, meeting in learning cohorts and attending relevant training. For the most part, the principals who participated in this study are veteran principals. Participants in the survey reported having between 15 and 36 years of experience in education. As such, the needs of these veteran principals may be different from the needs of new principals and of other employees in the district. How can the organization implement measures to determine what the principal's personal and professional needs are based on tenure and job context?

Conclusions

We know a great deal about principals. A substantial body of scholarly writing exists about principals. Rand Education (2012) described the principal's role as "[a] complex mix of leadership and administration" (p. 1). The principal's responsibilities are far reaching and impact the lives of children who attend the school, adults who work in

the school, and community members who have different expectations for the principal. All of the expectations have human implications. The findings from this study are descriptive and not causal. These results extend and confirm some of the findings from previous studies. Overall, principals who stay are older, have more years of service as educators, have more tenure, and have developed committed relationships with other people. They have developed significant relationships with their teachers, their students, and their communities. These principals see their work as a calling, they believe they are supporting something that is larger than themselves and through their work they will impact the lives of children and communities. Additionally, principals indicated they take great pleasure in the work that do, they love their jobs.

Nevertheless, the findings are suggestive in and of themselves, and they also raise as many questions as they answered. These questions warrant further research:

1. Principals are placed in a position that seems to be a position of power and authority. However, principals wrote about the “recentralization” of the district. Additionally, within the past five years principals were assigned another level of supervision (Executive Principals and School Support Officers). What is the power structure in the current relationship? What was the intent of the current structure? How does power flow in the current principal/supervisor relationship? Can the district model a relationship that relies less on formal authority and more on relationships based on shared professional expertise?
2. Has the principal’s job security been destabilized by what the principals view as constant organizational change and turnover? Has the constant change

caused principals to develop job insecurities related to their positions in the organization? If job insecurities exist, has principal performance been affected? Hellgren and Naswall (2002) and Daniels and Guppy (1994) established that the longer perceptions about job insecurity persist, the stronger the employee will react to the situation which might impact the employee's attitude, work place behavior and his health.

3. Can the district survive and thrive in an organizational structure that rests on loyalty to the unit (i.e., the school) rather than loyalty to the district? On the one hand, Robinson and Perryman (2004) (as reported in Markos & Srinderi, 2010) argued that employee commitment to the organization is strengthened when the employee experiences a positive attitude toward the organization and its values. Principals indicated in great numbers that they care deeply about their teachers, their students, their parents, and their communities. Far fewer mentioned loyalty to the district. However, according to Drucker (1997) new organizations are characterized less by their bonds to the organization and more toward attachments to project teams or units. What changes need to be made in the district to address this shift in organizational loyalties? How can the district look objectively at this phenomenon and make sense of it? What are the challenges and opportunities that this alignment presents for principals and for district leadership? What should or could look different based on the alignment of loyalties of principals who are most responsible for the district meeting its strategic student achievement goals?

4. Based on this study we know who stayed and why they stayed. It might also be important for the organization to understand who left and their reasons for leaving. According to research by Hinkin and Tracey (2000) and by Hausknecht and Trevor (2011), organizations should also utilize quit-reason data and leaver characteristics to develop retention policies. Are unique conditions present in schools and in individuals who work in schools that require deeper understandings of the dynamics that exist when employees deal with the kind of intensity associated with school improvement? This intensity may take the form of competition for students, competition for performance pay, or guidelines for exiting employees who are not meeting a standard. According to Hargreaves and Fink (2005), the traditions of public education frown on competition and aggression and see it as a zero sum game.

At the outset of the study the researcher had no idea what the data might reveal. It was difficult for the researcher to bracket herself out of the study because she knows all of the principals and has worked with or for most of them for many years. Principals' concerns and frustrations were clearly articulated. The author cheered their abilities to persevere and reach their goals and also applauded their hard work and the hopeful optimism they have for their students, their teachers, and their communities. The turnover rate and the principal's perceptions about retention seemed to indicate the district is not making an effort, or not enough of an effort, to retain principals. These perceptions are indicative of a need for the district to focus time and attention on two very important areas. The first area is communication. Although the school board and central office place a great deal of attention and on implementing Core Initiative 2: An

Effective Principal in Every School, principals were either not aware of the efforts or believed the efforts did not go far enough, even though the district awarded an average of \$6,000 in performance pay per principals in 2011 (HISD, 2012). Performance pay ranked third in the principals' perceptions about the effectiveness of the talent management strategy.

The second area related to change management. Due to the unpredictability of the most benign restructuring, principals were feeling vulnerable and uncertain that they will hold on to their jobs. The shocks that principals experience (whether they are due to perceptions of being passed over, constant changes in supervisor and supervisor's leadership styles, or changes due to unmet expectations associated with extrinsic rewards, all of these actions involve violations associated with role violations and perceptions about the organization's failure to follow standard practices. Principals may need assistance with adjusting to the discomforts of change. Principals would be helped by having the organization provide accurate and timely information about reporting relationships, background information on decision makers who are involved in their work, and clearer explanations about supports available to principals. Lee and Maurer (1997) confirmed that these kinds of events set in motion the psychological deliberations involved in making turnover decisions. However, not all turnover is bad.

In reviewing the district's philosophy and actions, it is clear that the superintendent and the school board have a strong commitment to make sure students learn. The unrelenting drive to improve student achievement is a constant narrative throughout all of the action steps the board has taken since taking on the challenge to improve learning for all. The district's policies and practices match the vision that has

been consistently articulated. Upon the review of the research, it is clear that the district and the principals want the same thing – that is, they both want what is best for children. To achieve the best, everyone can do a better job of making motives public, of talking about areas where intellectual and creative dissonance is present. Together, tremendous potential exists in the power of the collective to improve the lives of children now and for generations to come.

Final Conclusions

This study was a narrow, focused exploration into the reasons why principals choose to remain employed with the district. A more detailed analysis might be undertaken to examine a host of other potential influences on retention. Not explored in this investigation was principal performance, thus not known is whether the principals who left or if the principals who stayed were among the most talented. However, the organization is currently experiencing challenges in filling key principal positions. This research could potentially be used to identify and develop strategies to stem turnover among principals. Communication was a constant thread in the responses from principals, in the literature on how to build an effective talent management strategy, and in the disconnect between principal's perceptions and the district's intent. Gordon's statement in *Engaged Schools* summarized the essence of the need for relationships between people who work in schools. Gordon said:

The relationships among adults in schools are the basis for the precondition, the *sine qua non* that allow, energize, and sustain all other attempts at school improvement. (p.214)

To remain competitive, the American Psychological Association (2012) recommended that organizations work to create an environment where employees feel connected to the organization and have positive fulfilling experiences. Future research should continue to focus on the complexity of the principals' job and the combination of identified organizational and personal reasons that impact decisions to remain in the principal's role. This research suggested that, while we know a lot about principals and the important role they play in meeting student achievement goals, enormous opportunity remains to learn more about this topic.

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APPENDIX A

HISD APPROVAL TO STUDY “WHO STAYS AND WHY?”

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HOUSTON INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
HATTIE MAE WHITE EDUCATIONAL SUPPORT CENTER
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Josephine Rice
5406 Candlecrest Drive
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Dear Ms. Rice:
January 17, 2013

The Houston Independent School District (HISD) is pleased to approve the study "Who Stays and Why? Principal Retention in a large Urban School District: Analysis and Implications". The study is being conducted in partial fulfillment of doctoral degree requirements at the University of Houston. The purpose of the study is to explore why principals choose to remain employed with HISD. The research will be used to inform district policies and practices regarding retention. The projected date of study completion is June 30, 2013. Approval to conduct the study in HISD is contingent on your meeting the following conditions: • The target population is approximately 30 principals who have served in their principal role at the same school for an uninterrupted five-year period, from 2006-2011. The Chief School Officer supports the study. It is at the principals' discretion to participate in the study.

Participating principals will be surveyed using an online tool between January 20 and February 2, 2013. The survey will explore their perceptions regarding principal retention. The survey will take approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. Voluntary consent is required of principals who participate in the study. • The researcher must follow the guidelines of HISD and the University of Houston regarding the protection of human subjects and confidentiality of data. The HISD Department of Research and Accountability will monitor this study to ensure compliance to ethical conduct guidelines established by the Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Human Research Protection (OHRP) as well as the disclosure of student records outlined in Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

In order to eliminate potential risks to study participants, the reporting of proposed changes in research activities must be promptly submitted to the HISD Department of

Research and Accountability for approval prior to implementing changes. Non compliance to this guideline could impact the approval of future research studies in HISD. • The final report must be submitted to the HISD Department of Research and Accountability within 30 days of completion. Any other changes or modifications to the current proposal must be submitted to the Department of Research and Accountability for approval. Should you need additional information or have any questions concerning the process, please call (713) 556-6700.

CS:vh

cc: Michele Pola

Mark Smith

Julie Baker

Lenny Schad

Sidney Zullinger

Sam Sarabia

Michael Cardona

Karla Loria

Orlando Riddick

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW OF RESEARCH

PROPOSAL

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

DIVISION OF RESEARCH

February 26, 2013

Josephine Roca
c/o Dr. Michael Emerson
Curriculum and Instruction

Dear Josephine Roca,

Based upon your request for exempt status, an administrative review of your research proposal entitled "Who Stays and Why? Principal Retention in a Large Urban School District: Analysis and Implications" was conducted on November 14, 2012.

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

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

If you have any questions, please contact Nettle Martinez at 713-743-9204.

Sincerely yours,



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

*Approvals for exempt protocols will be valid for 5 years beyond the approval date. Approval for this project will expire **November 1, 2017**. If the project is completed prior to this date, a final report should be filed to close the protocol. If the project will continue after this date, you will need to reapply for approval if you wish to avoid an interruption of your data collection.

Protocol Number: 13133-EX

APPENDIX C

TELEPHONE SCRIPT CONTACT WITH POTENTIAL SUBJECTS

SCRIPT for TELEPHONE CONTACT WITH POTENTIAL SUBJECTS

Hello (Name of Principal)

As a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Education in Professional Leadership at the University of Houston, I am conducting research relative to principals' perceptions regarding principal retention. I am calling you because you have been identified as one of the district's principals who served for at least five uninterrupted years in the principal's role in the same school from 2006-2011. This study has been reviewed by the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects. They can be reached at (713) 743-9204.

I also serve as the in the Interim Assistant Superintendent for Leadership Development so I have a deep and abiding interest in this topic. The district has also publicly committed its support of principal retention through the *Strategic Direction* which was adopted in 2010. I am hoping to discover how your lived experience can help inform policies and practices in the district. It is important to understand the motivations of leaders who make long term commitments to HISD. There is a growing body of research that recommends that organizations understand the motivations of "stayers" and that the organizations should develop talent management strategies that meet the expectations of key employees who help the organization meet its mission and vision.

I would be grateful if you would consider completing a survey which you will receive via email within three days of this call. All responses will be held in confidence. You will not be identified in the study. Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your participation in this project. Your name will be paired with a code number. The code will appear in all written material and will be kept separate and apart from the research materials. Also, your participation in the study is voluntary. You may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

After this call, I will mail a letter an informed consent document that provides additional details on the project. Please read the letter carefully. If you agree to participate, please sign the Consent to Participate in Research document. Make one copy for yourself and send one back to me via school mail.

Thank you very much for considering participating in this survey. Do you have any questions for me? If you have any questions before, during or after completing the survey, please contact me at jrice1@houstonisd.org or 713-696-0600.

Thank you in advance,

Josephine Rice

APPENDIX D

SURVEY ON PRINCIPAL RETENTION

SURVEY ON PRINCIPAL RETENTION

1. Section I.

The purpose of this survey is to explore reasons why principal choose to remain employed with the Houston Independent School District. Principals who have five years of uninterrupted service in the principals' role in the same school from 2006-2011 are being asked to participate. As a participant you will have the opportunity share your perceptions on why you choose to continue working in HISD. Your ideas will help inform district policy and practices regarding retention. Additionally, demographic data will be collected for the purpose of building a composite profile of all subjects. Individual subjects will not be identified. The success of the project depends on your honest answers. It is my hope that this process will lead to recommendations that HISD can implement to increase retention among principals. Please respond to the questions below. Click DONE after you have provided responses to the questions.

*

1. Please describe for me, as thoroughly as you can, why you choose to remain employed with the district? Why do you stay?

Please describe for me, as thoroughly as you can, why you choose to remain employed with the district? Why do you stay?

*

2. Demographic information will be used to build a composite profile of the subjects participating in this study. Individual respondents will not be identified.

Age in Years:

☐

Demographic information will be used to build a composite profile of the subjects participating in this study. Individual respondents will not be identified. Age in Years: 30 and under

☐

31-37

☐

38-45

☐

46-55

☐

56-62

☐

Over 63

3. Sex:

☐ Sex: Male

☐ Female

*

4. Years as a Principal in current school:

Years as a Principal in current school:

*

5. Years in Education:

Years in Education:

6. Degrees Held: (Check All That Apply)

☐ Degrees Held: (Check All That Apply) Bachelors

☐ Masters

☐ Doctorate

*

7. Ethnicity:

☐ Ethnicity: White/Non-Hispanic

☐ Black/Non-Hispanic

☐ Hispanic

☐ Asian/Pacific Islander

☐ American Indian/Alaskan Native

☐ Non-Resident/International

*

8. School Location:

☐ School Location: Urban

☐ Suburban

*

9. Grades in the School:

Grades in the School:

*

10. Number of Teachers:

Number of Teachers:

*

11. Number of Students:

Number of Students:

*

12. Percentage of Students:

Percentage of
Students: Black/Non-
Hispanic

Hispanic

Asian/Pacific Islander

American Indian/
Alaska Native

Non-
Resident/International

*

13. Percentage of Students Receiving Free and Reduced Lunch:

2. Section II.

*

14. If you had the opportunity to ask other talented leaders who have left the district why they left, what do you think they would say?

If you had the opportunity to ask other talented leaders who have left the district why they left, what do you think they would say?

15. In 2010 the district established a Talent Management strategy or Core Initiative known as "Effective Principal in Every School." From your perspective, what does the district do to retain principals? From your perspective how does the talent management strategy (Effective Principal in Every School) impact retention?

Thank you very much for completing this survey. Your input will help position the district to strategically provide support with the ultimate goal of retaining principals, one of the district's high-value employee groups.

APPENDIX E

INFORMED CONSENT ELECTRONIC VERSION



UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

PROJECT TITLE: Who Stays and Why? Principal Retention in a Large Urban School District: Analysis and implications

You are being invited to take part in a research project conducted by Josephine Rice from the College of Education at the University of Houston. This project is part of a dissertation in Professional Leadership. The project is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Wayne Emerson and Dr. Angus Mac Neil.

NON-PARTICIPATION STATEMENT

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

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to determine why principals remain employed with the Houston Independent School District. Additionally, the study will examine the district's talent management strategy and its impact on principal retention. The duration of this study is nine months. Your participation will last for approximately four weeks.

PROCEDURES

You will be one of approximately 70 subjects invited to take part in this project.

Describe the research project in clear, concise language appropriate to the targeted subject population (for a non-scientific subject, language should be readable at an 8th grade level). This should include, but not be limited to:

1. Consent to conduct the study will be obtained from: Houston Independent School District's Research and Accountability Department, the University of Houston's Division of Research, Institutional Review Board (IRB), the district's Chief of Schools, and the subjects identified in the study.
2. Texas School Directories for the years 2006-2007, 2007-2008, 2008-2009, 2009-2020, 2010-2011 will be obtained from the Texas Education Agency

(TEA) website located at

[www.http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA.AskTed.web/Forms/Home.aspx](http://mansfield.tea.state.tx.us/TEA.AskTed.web/Forms/Home.aspx).

3. Using a tracking process, the researcher will create an Excel© spreadsheet that tracks all principal movements in the school district from 2006-2011. At the end of the analysis of five years of data, principals who have served as principal of the same school for an uninterrupted five year period and remain employed in the district at the time of the study will be identified. For tracking purposes, principals and schools will be assigned identification codes to protect the identification of the principal and to de-identify the school.
4. All principals identified for the study will be sent a formal letter via US Mail requesting their participation in the study. The letter will contain (1) a description of the study and (2) an informed consent document. The description of the request to participate in the survey will include a description of the intent of the study, an outline of the criteria for participating, a description of the safeguards that are built into the study, and an explanation of the questions contained in the survey. The description will also provide an estimate of the time required to complete the survey and will provide information on how survey results will be used. You are asked to return the informed consent form via school mail. Return the survey to Josephine Rice, Ryan Professional Development Center, Route 2. Also the survey states completion of the survey constitutes consent.
5. You will receive a personal telephone call asking you to complete the survey. The personal telephone call is intended to increase the completion rate for the survey by making you aware that the survey will be sent within three days of receipt of the letter. The subject line will read: Retention Survey.
6. Surveys will be sent to you via email. Completing the survey will require 15-20 minutes. Completion of the survey will constitute voluntary consent.
7. Names will not be used to identify participants nor will documents contain references to employees. Access to surveys will be limited to the researcher. Participation in the survey will be voluntary and responses to the survey will be anonymous. The survey will be administered by the researcher. Prospective participants will be told their participation is voluntary and that refusal to participate will have no impact on their employment. Prospective participants will also be advised that they may withdraw from the study at any time without prejudice. Prospective participants will be informed that information collected during the study will be kept in the strictest confidence and their identities will not be revealed in the study.
8. After receiving survey responses from participants, the researcher will (1) create a profile of the principals identified as “stayers” and (2) transcribe all of the responses under the questions.
9. From the transcribed text document, the responses will be read and re-read. The reader will make notes and examine the data looking for synonyms, themes, and patterns. Next, similar topics will be listed and clustered.
10. Thematic analysis will be used to identify, analyze and report themes within the data and to develop codes.

11. This coding and categorization processes will be repeated several times until the researcher feels all themes have been identified and sorted.
12. The themes will be compared to findings from the literature. Any new themes will be noted.
13. Findings from the analysis will be used in a report to the district. The final report will document principal perceptions and the reasons that impact retention.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your identity will be held in confidence. Every effort will be made to maintain the confidentiality of your participation in this project. Each subject's name will be paired with a code number by the principal investigator. This code number will appear on all written materials. The list pairing the subject's name to the assigned code number will be kept separate from all research materials and will be available only to the principal investigator. Confidentiality will be maintained within legal limits.

RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

There are no foreseeable risks for participating in this study. Neither the participant's employment nor status in the district will be impacted. Participation is voluntary and participants may refuse to participate or withdraw at any time without penalty or loss of benefits to which he/she is otherwise entitled.

BENEFITS

Participants will not benefit directly from participating in this study. While you will not benefit from participating, there is a potential benefit to the school district by helping the district better manage personal and organizational costs associated with employee turnover. Additionally, the district will benefit from having a clearer understanding of individual principal perceptions on why they make decisions regarding retention.

ALTERNATIVES

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

COSTS

You will not be expected to incur any costs related to participating in this project,

INCENTIVES/REMUNERATION

Participants will not receive any form of incentive or remuneration.

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

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

SUBJECT RIGHTS

1. I understand that informed consent is required of all persons participating in this project.
2. I have been told that I may refuse to participate or to stop my participation in this project at any time before or during the project. I may also refuse to answer any question.
3. Any risks and/or discomforts have been explained to me, as have any potential benefits.
4. I understand the protections in place to safeguard any personally identifiable information related to my participation.
5. I understand that, if I have any questions, I may contact Josephine Rice at 713-696-0600 at Houston ISD. I may also contact Dr. Wayne Emerson or Dr. Angus MacNeil, faculty sponsor, at (713) 743-5002.
6. **Any questions regarding my rights as a research subject may be addressed to the University of Houston Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects (713-743-9204).** All research projects that are carried out by Investigators at the University of Houston are governed by requirements of the University and the federal government.

SIGNATURES

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

a copy of this form for my records and in case I have questions as the research progresses.

Study Subject (print name): _____

Signature of Study Subject: _____

Date: _____

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

Principal Investigator (print name and title): _____

Signature of Principal Investigator: _____

Date

APPENDIX F

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION – RETENTION FACTORS

Frequency Distribution of Retention Factors and Representative Quotes ($n = 111$)

Retention Factor	Frequency	%	Representative Quotes
1. Job satisfaction, job fit, job match	22	19.8%	I like it that we have a lot of autonomy; Decentralization; I have a great sense of personal fulfillment; I love my job; Job match; I have a job that I really, really enjoy.
2. Pay and benefits	3	2.7%	The pay is good; The district has offered me so much; There are several opportunities to make more money.
3. Relationships	46	41.4%	I stay because of the relationships; The support from my supervisor has greatly influenced my decision to stay; I believe in the students and teachers; I have developed lasting and meaningful relationships
4. Identification with/Involvement in the district	15	13.5%	I believe I should stay and help solve problems; I am a product of HISD; I have been part of HISD since I was five years old, I sent my children to school here; I believe in HISD
5. Pride in the district	7	6.3%	We are leaders in education; we are a capable district; I can't imagine a better place to work; It's a great district.
6. Lack of alternatives	N/A	N/A	N/A
7. Investments	8	7.2%	I have spent the last 17 years in HISD. I plan to retire here; I'm close to retirement, rather than start over, it is easier to stay here; I have been in this district many years; I am invested to the point I cannot see myself working in any other school district
8. Advancement opportunities, room to grow	6	5.4%	I look with appreciation at the opportunities HISD has given me; I prefer to work for a district with opportunities; I stay because I want to be considered for advancement
9.Location	2	1.8%	The location of the building is a factor. I am no more than 20 minutes from home; I live in Houston and I love it!
10.Organizational justice	N/A	N/A	N/A
11. Flexible work arrangements	1	.9%	Summer schedule is revitalizing; I enjoy the flexibility in my schedule
12.Influences outside work	1	.9%	I have bills to pay

Frequency refers to the number of reported reasons for remaining with the district, and % represents the frequency divided by the total number of reported reasons in question one. (i.e., 111).

APPENDIX G

FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION – WHY OTHERS LEAVE

Frequency Distribution Why Other Talented Leaders Leave and Representative Quotes ($n = 93$)

Reason for Leaving	Frequency	%	Representative Quotes
1. Job or workplace not what they expected	23	24.7%	The bureaucracy outweighs the joy and benefits they received when helping kids that appreciate the help; the “re-centralization of the district has led to loss of talent; low pay (elementary) job insecurity;
2. Mismatch between job and person	2	2.15%	They could not keep up with the pace of the district; The time had come for them to retire or leave the district to do something else;
3. Too little coaching and feedback	13	14.0%	Lack of support; lack of consistent support; No support from Central Office;
4. Too few advancement opportunities	7	7.52%	Lack of opportunity for upward mobility; limited opportunities for promotion
5. Feeling devalued and unrecognized	19	20.4%	Input from principals not taken seriously; Under appreciated and over looked; Not feeling valued; Not valued as a leader
6. Stress from overwork and work-life balance	20	21.5%	Stress and pressure placed on principals associated with federal, state and local testing mandates; Too much focus on using test scores as a measure of being effective as a school leader; Too little teaching, too much testing; Stress from dealing with communities that have child abuse, poor parent participation, poor home training, aggressive behavior from children
7. Loss of trust and confidence in leadership	3	3.22%	Lack of leadership; lack of respect and common decency; they felt disrespected and disillusioned; the district appears not to value loyalty
8. Better off somewhere else	1	1.07%	Better working conditions in other districts; many would rather leave than fight
9. Fired/Involuntary Resignation	1	1.07%	They were either pushed out or left because of job insecurity
10.Non-work Influences	1	1.07%	Family commitments
11.Work alternatives	4	4.0%	Opportunities; left by choice; Better offer somewhere else

Frequency refers to the number of reported reasons for leaving the district, and % represents the frequency divided by the total number of reported reasons in question one. (i.e., 93).

APPENDIX H

SUMMARY OF MAJOR RESEARCH FINDINGS ON TALENT MANAGEMENT

STRATEGIES

Frequently Cited Research Based Talent Management Strategies that Impact Retention

Identification <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create accountability for talent management. Make talent management a priority. • Use assessment tools to test candidates in three areas: ability, engagement and aspirations. • Select high potential employees using a combination of nominations and objective assessments 	<p>(Michaels, Handfield-Jones, & Axelrod, 2001)</p> <p>(Martin & Schmidt, 2010)</p> <p>(Fernandez-Arazoz, Groysberg, & Nohria, 2011)</p>
Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Align development with strategic organizational strategy • Create individual development plans that link individual growth to the organization's growth • Rotate high potential employees through jobs that match their goals • Create opportunities for off-site growth and development (ex. volunteering) which allow for developing corporate citizenship • Create multi-disciplinary rotation programs or development assignments as regular components of the leadership experience 	<p>(Fernandez-Arazoz, Groysberg, & Nohria, 2011)</p> <p>(Martin & Schmidt, 2010)</p> <p>(Martin & Schmidt, 2010)</p> <p>(Martin & Schmidt, 2010)</p> <p>(MacBeath, 2006)</p>
Communicate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold regular open dialogues with high potential employees and managers • Communicate openly about who the high potential employees are • Provide job-related feedback • Talk to high potential employees about challenges they face in their daily work. Find out what they want and need 	<p>(Martin & Schmidt, 2010)</p> <p>(Fernandez-Arazoz, Groysberg, & Nohria, 2011)</p> <p>(Harvard Business School Review, 2012)</p> <p>(Uren, 2011)</p>
Differentiate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace broadcast communication with targeted communication and individual messages. • Talk to high potential employees about how their development fits in the organization's broad plans 	<p>(Martin & Schmidt, 2010)</p> <p>(Martin & Schmidt, 2010)</p>