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by

Tonya D. Jeffery

December 2012

A STUDY OF RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PERCEPTIONS OF POSITION FIT, JOB
SATISFACTION AND RETENTION IN TEXAS SECONDARY TEACHERS

A Dissertation Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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December 2012

Acknowledgements

I am so grateful to the many people who gave their time and energy to help me with this work and throughout my doctoral program. I can never thank each of you adequately for all the help you've provided. Most importantly, thanks to God for giving me the desire and fortitude to complete this journey.

I extend my deepest appreciation to Dr. John M. Ramsey, my committee chair, for guiding me throughout my doctoral studies and educating me on the history of science education, educational theory, constructivism, the difference between teaching and learning and the importance of scholarship and service in higher academia.

I express my sincere gratitude to my committee members, Dr. Margaret Watson, Dr. Allen R. Warner, and Dr. Sissy S. Wong, for their guidance and the unique contributions they made to my journey of learning.

I am forever indebted to the Center for Research, Evaluation and Advancement of Teacher Education (CREATE) staff, Sherri Lowrey, Dr. Mona Wineburg, Dr. William Reaves, Dr. John Beck, and Dr. Dale Johnson, who gave me permission to utilize an archival dataset for my study and who served as a second dissertation committee. Without them this work would not have been possible.

I also wish to thank Dr. Jenny K. Yi who has been a lifelong mentor and friend and who continued to provide guidance with this dissertation and throughout my doctoral career. I hope someday I can be the kind of professor and mentor she has been to me.

In addition, I would like to thank my doctoral colleagues and friends, LaTonya Smith and Leah Shields, who encouraged me and supported me throughout my professional endeavors and who were always willing to lend an ear during challenging

times throughout this journey. I would also like to express thanks to my colleagues, Paige Evans and Perri Segura, who were very supportive and always had motivating words of encouragement to give during this process.

Finally, I am grateful for my family's love, support and encouragement during this journey. My parents, Carolyn and Donald Purchase, instilled in me the importance of education and a strong work ethic that has allowed me to persevere during the many trying times I experienced during this journey. My sister, Monique Purchase, constantly inspired me to pursue my goals and who was been my biggest cheerleader throughout this journey. My brother, Jewell Bowman, applauded and celebrated every accomplishment during this journey via telephone or Skype during his naval tours overseas and on land. My dear son, Eric Cole, for always reminding me that I will always be "Mom" first and that no other task will ever be as challenging, fulfilling or rewarding. Most importantly, I am grateful to my husband and friend, Carey Jeffery, for his love, patience, constant encouragement and support which have enabled me to press on and pursue my dreams.

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Jeffery, Tonya D. "A Study of Relationships among Perceptions of Position Fit, Job Satisfaction and Retention in Texas Secondary Teachers." Unpublished Doctor of Education Dissertation, University of Houston, December 2012.

Abstract

Teacher quality has become a major emphasis of the national education reform movement. Recruiting and retaining qualified and competent teachers are at the center of this concern and have a significant impact on teacher quality. As nationwide attempts are made to improve schools and school systems with increased student achievement, there is a consensus that the quality of our schools depends on the quality of our teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2005). According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, "...teacher turnover is now undermining teaching quality and it is driving teacher shortages" (NCTAF, 2003, p. 8). In addition, new requirements from the No Child Left Behind Act to place "highly qualified" teachers in all core subjects (which make up the majority of the K-12 curriculum) increase the need to recruit and retain qualified teachers (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). All students need highly-qualified, experienced teachers in their classrooms. But the need is extremely great in America's middle and high schools. In middle schools specifically, teacher shortages tend to be even more pronounced than at various other certification levels (Thornton, 2004). The same holds true for beginning high school teachers. According to the Texas Business & Education Coalition (TBEC) (2012), Texas lags in recruiting and retaining secondary math and science teachers, followed by bilingual teachers. Regardless, public secondary schools continue to experience various degrees of difficulty in hiring teachers in recent years (Marvel & Rowland, 2007). Higher rates of teacher turnover are associated with poorer student outcomes (Fuller, Young & Baker, 2007). Researchers and educators are

in agreement that the single most important factor in determining student performance is the quality of his or her teachers (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). Therefore, it is critical that efforts are focused on retaining high-quality teachers, especially at the secondary level.

Too many teachers, both veterans and novices, are leaving the profession (Ingersoll, 2001). Nearly 30% of novice teachers leave the profession within five years of entering teaching (Darling-Hammond, 1999). Ingersoll and Smith (2003) reported that 40-50% of new teachers leave within the first five years of entry into teaching. Several research studies have identified a variety of reasons and factors that impact teacher retention. These include teachers' preparation experiences and pathways into teaching (Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2009), the relationship between traditional and alternative certification programs and public school teachers' preparedness to teach, experiences during the first year of teaching, and job satisfaction (Cohen, 2005), job dissatisfaction (Rhodes et al. 2004; Ingersoll, 2001), position match or fit (Liu & Johnson, 2006), general working conditions in school (Brunetti, 2001), and salary and benefits (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2002; Flowers, 2004; Voke, 2003).

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among teacher preparation pathway, perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention rates in first-year and second-year secondary teachers (N=267) across 13 school districts in Texas. This was a quantitative, non-experimental study in which archival data from the Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (SSTQ) was analyzed. The survey responses were entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 19.0 for analysis.

Bivariate and point-biserial correlations were performed to examine possible relationships among teacher preparation pathway, perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention. Multiple regression analyses were conducted to determine which independent variable (teacher preparation pathway, teacher perception of position fit, or job satisfaction) is the best predictor for the dependent variable (teacher retention). Descriptive statistics (mean, median, variance, and standard deviation) were calculated for each subscale of the survey.

It was found that no correlation existed between the beginning secondary teachers' preparation pathway and their perceptions of position fit. A significant relationship was found between the beginning secondary teachers' perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction. In addition, for this study it was found that no correlation existed between job satisfaction and teacher retention during the 2010 – 2011 school year. However, significant correlations were found between job satisfaction and teacher retention during the 2011 – 2012 school year. In addition, no correlations were found to exist between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among the beginning secondary teachers during the 2010 – 2011 school year. However, significant correlations were found to exist between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention during the 2011 – 2012 school year. Finally, in this study, findings from the multiple regression analyses determined that during the 2010 – 2011 school year, the three independent variables of teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction were not statistically significant and were not contributing predictors for the dependent variable, teacher retention. However, during the 2011 – 2012 school year, all three of the independent variables were found to be statistically significant and were good predictors for teacher

retention. Moreover, position fit showed to be the best predictor for teacher retention during the 2011 – 2012 school year.

A summary, conclusions and implications of the findings are presented. In addition, recommendations for future research are offered.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Teacher quality has become a major emphasis of the national education reform movement. Recruiting and retaining qualified and competent teachers are at the center of this concern and have a significant impact on teacher quality. As nationwide attempts are made to improve schools and school systems with increased student achievement, there is a consensus that the quality of our schools depends on the quality of our teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2005). According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, "...teacher turnover is now undermining teaching quality and it is driving teacher shortages" (NCTAF, 2003, p. 8). In addition, new requirements from the No Child Left Behind Act to place "highly qualified" teachers in all core subjects (which make up the majority of the K-12 curriculum) increase the need to recruit and retain qualified teachers (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). All students need highly-qualified, experienced teachers in their classrooms. But the need is extremely great in America's middle and high schools. In middle schools specifically, teacher shortages tend to be even more pronounced than at various other certification levels (Thornton, 2004). The same holds true for beginning high school teachers. According to the Texas Business & Education Coalition (TBEC) (2012), Texas lags in recruiting and retaining secondary math and science teachers, followed by bilingual teachers. Regardless, public secondary schools continue to experience various degrees of difficulty in hiring teachers in recent years (Marvel & Rowland, 2007). Higher rates of teacher turnover are associated with poorer student outcomes (Fuller, Young & Baker, 2007). Researchers and educators are in agreement that the single most important factor in determining student performance is

the quality of his or her teachers (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). Therefore, it is critical that efforts are focused on retaining high-quality teachers, especially at the secondary level.

According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2008), only 16% of teacher attrition at the school level can be attributed to retirement. The remaining 84% of teacher turnover results from teachers transferring between schools and teachers leaving the profession entirely. Although decisions about whether to enter and remain in teaching are ultimately personal ones that differ according to individuals' needs and circumstances, researchers have examined several factors thought to be related to attrition. These factors include salaries and incentives, working conditions, induction and professional development, and teaching assignments (Herbert & Ramsay, 2004). On the other hand, while it is evident that there is a great need for teachers, not all turnover is bad. School districts do not want to retain teachers who are not effective in terms of increasing student achievement. The good news is that the lowest-quality teachers tend to have higher rates of turnover and the more effective teachers tend to stay (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2008). Furthermore, according to Ingersoll and Smith (2003) too little turnover may indicate stagnancy.

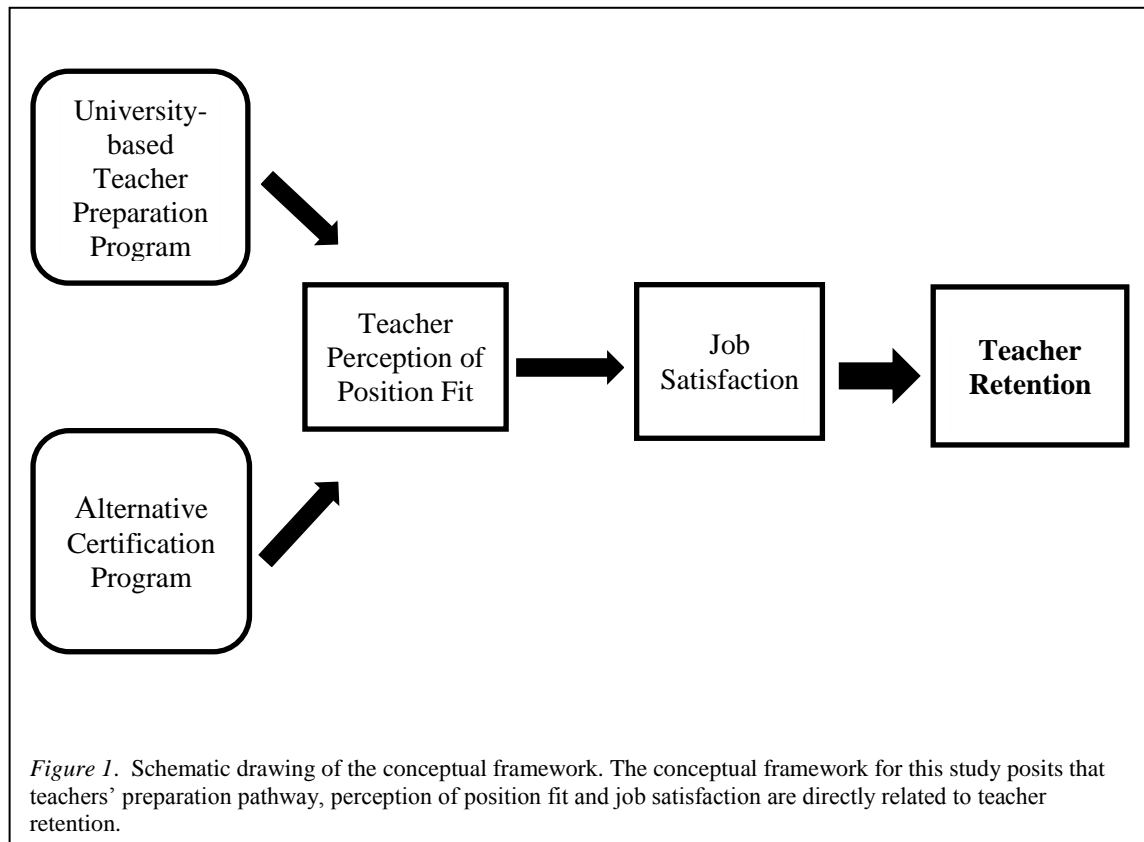
Some research suggests that retention begins during the hiring process of teachers. Increasingly, reports from research and practice suggest that a teacher's hiring experience may influence satisfaction and retention in teaching (Johnson, Berg & Donaldson, 2005). During the hiring process, it is important that teachers get an accurate portrayal of the school campus, students, leaders and job expectations. There is an assumption that if

teachers are provided this information during the hiring process, they will be able to make an appropriate decision as to whether they perceive the job to be a good fit or not. If the position is a good fit, then the teacher will have a higher level of satisfaction with their job. If the teacher is satisfied with employment at a school, chances are the teacher will remain at that campus and in the teaching profession for a longer period of time (Liu, 2005). On the other hand, a hiring process that lacks a substantive, accurate exchange of information between candidate and school can lead to a poor match, which may make the teacher less satisfied in her job (Johnson et al., 2005). Although it is often difficult to separate teacher hiring from other working conditions and thus isolate its effect on teacher outcomes, recent evidence attests to the impact of hiring on new teachers' job satisfaction (Liu, 2004). While it is clear that the hiring process of new teachers influences their later satisfaction and potentially their retention, little research has investigated this link (Johnson et al., 2005).

In addition, the role that pre-service preparation play in job satisfaction and teacher retention has not yet reached a consensus among researchers (Johnson et al., 2005). Johnson et al. (2005) further asserts that there is a great need for more carefully designed studies that examine the relationship between teachers' preparation and their subsequent decision to continue teaching or to leave. Johnson and Birkeland (2003), report that new teachers who find that they cannot achieve a "sense of success" with students are less likely to find teaching rewarding work and to remain in the classroom. The literature is scant on the relationship between perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention, in the context of teacher preparation pathway. The literature is even sparser when studying the relations between secondary teachers and retention, and

novice teachers and retention. Secondary teachers were chosen for this study as previous studies have left this group out of the test pool (Perrachione, Rosser, & Petersen, 2008).

Hence, the rationale for this study evolves.



The design for this study stemmed from a previous research study, the Teacher Selection Study (TSS), conducted by the collaboration between the Center for Research, Evaluation and Advancement of Teacher Education (CREATE) and members of the Texas Public School Research Network (TPSRN) in 2010. The TSS was conducted to analyze Texas public school teachers' selection and assignment practices. One portion of the study focused on examining the relationships among information-rich hiring practices, perceptions of job clarity and position fit. According to Reaves, Lowrey,

Holley, Johnson, and Sullivan (2012) information-rich hiring practices refer to those that allow the candidate and the employer enough information and opportunity to determine if there is a match between the candidate's skills and those demanded by the job and the campus culture. The researcher wished to further investigate the possible link between the variables of perception of position fit and teacher retention. Hence, the conceptual framework for this study posited that teachers' preparation pathway, perception of position fit and job satisfaction are directly related to teacher retention.

Teacher preparation pathway: For the purpose of this study, the researcher analyzed the relationship that teachers' preparation pathway had on their perceptions of how well their teaching assignment and campus match or fit their content knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions.

Perceptions of position fit: For this study, the researcher examined the relationship between the teachers' perceptions of how well their position match or fit their content knowledge, skills, expertise and professional dispositions and their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction in their position and at their workplace.

Job satisfaction: The researcher also studied the relationship between the teachers' level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their position and campus and their retention.

Teacher retention: The researcher analyzed the relationship among the constructs preparation pathway, perception of position fit, and job satisfaction and their ultimate influence on teacher retention. Finally, the study identified which variable was the best predictor for teacher retention.

Research Questions

1. Does a significant relationship exist between pathway of teacher preparation and perceptions of professional preparedness among beginning secondary teachers?
2. Does a significant relationship exist between the perceptions of professional preparedness and job satisfaction among beginning secondary teachers?
3. Is there a significant relationship between job satisfaction and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers?
4. Which independent variable in the conceptual framework is the best predictor for teacher retention?

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined:

Hiring process refers to the various procedures that were implemented and conducted prior to the educator accepting the position of teacher at the respective campus. These procedures can include submitting a job application, the interviewing process, observations of campus interactions, and others (Reaves et al., 2012).

Beginning teacher refers to state-licensed educators who self-identified as being in either their first or second year of teaching, including the probationary year of teaching. Other terms synonymous to beginning teacher in this study are novice teacher and new teacher.

Secondary teacher refers to a state-licensed educator who teaches in grades 6-12, which represents middle and high schools. The researcher is aware that the state

of Texas, defines a secondary teacher as an educator who teaches in grades 7-12 (TEA, 2012).

Teacher refers to a state-licensed educator. For this study, teacher will refer to first-year or second-year secondary teachers.

Teacher preparation refers to any pre-service teacher preparation program completed (traditional undergraduate teacher preparation program, university post baccalaureate teacher preparation program, university alternative certification program, private alternative certification program, school district certification program, service center certification program, no formal teacher preparation, or other program specified) to obtain a teaching certificate.

University-based teacher preparation program refers to a traditional university-based undergraduate teacher preparation program, university post-baccalaureate program or a university ACP that offers a degree in an academic major, training that includes coursework and a teaching field experience in a K-12 setting, which meets Texas Education Agency (TEA) requirements (Reaves et al., 2012).

Alternative certification program refers to a teacher preparation program, other than a university-based teacher preparation program. Such programs include private alternative certification program; school district certification program; service center certification program; no formal teacher preparation; community college; or other program specified on the survey instrument (Reaves et al., 2012).

Traditionally prepared teacher refers to a teacher who has completed a university-based undergraduate teacher preparation program, received a degree in an academic major, and training that included coursework and a teaching field

experience in a K-12 setting, which meets Texas Education Agency (TEA, 2012) requirements.

Alternatively prepared teacher refers to a teacher who completed an alternative certification program. Alternatively prepared teachers already have a college degree and have sought an accelerated route into teacher. Many of these programs can be completed in a year, during which the individual may have a paid teaching position in a public school classroom (SBEC, 2012).

Perception of Position Fit will refer to whether teachers received an accurate portrayal about their position, campus, staff, students, and job expectations, during the hiring process (Liu, 2005; Reaves et al., 2012).

Job Satisfaction refers to teacher's emotional perception of their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their position and/or campus. It involves intrinsic and extrinsic factors. In addition, it is the teacher's self-identified level of satisfaction with their position, teaching assignment and school campus on the *Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire* (Johnson et al., 2005; Reaves et al., 2012).

Teacher Retention refers to the process by which teachers 'stay' and/or 'remain' at their school campuses for one academic year or more (Ramsay, 2011). For the purposes of this study, this will include teachers who are in the probationary status (Reaves et al., 2012).

Teacher Attrition refers to loss of employees or those teachers leaving the public school teaching force (Ramsay, 2011; Ingersoll, 2001).

Turnover is utilized as an umbrella term to describe "the departure of teachers from their teaching jobs" (Ingersoll, 2001).

Migration refers to the transfer of teachers from one school to another (Ingersoll, 2001).

Stayers refer to those who remain at their campus (Ramsay, 2011).

Movers refer to those educators who moved from one public school to another public school in the same district; or those who moved from one public school to another public school district (Ramsay, 2011).

Leavers refer to those who have left their role as classroom teacher; those who may be working in the field of education, but not as regular K-12 classroom teacher; or those who are working outside the field of education; or those working in a position in the field of Pre-K or postsecondary education (Ramsay, 2011).

Significance of the Study

As early as the 1980s, researchers began reporting on the impending teacher turnover and attrition crises (Ingersoll, 1995). The turnover problem, although high for the entire teaching occupation, affects beginning teachers more than others. Teaching has lost and continues to lose many of its newly trained members early in their careers, long before their retirement (Murnane, Singer, Willett, Kemple, & Olsen, 1991). Furthermore, “trends in teacher supply and demand have been influenced by many factors over the years, including changing demographics, changes in the labor market, modifications to public policy, and political and social consideration” (TEA, 1995).

Teacher shortages, especially in high demand areas such as mathematics, science, and special education, have become a major concern nationally and regionally (Cochran-Smith, 2004). According to the Texas Business & Education Coalition (TBEC) (2012), Texas lags in recruiting and retaining secondary math and science teachers, followed by

bilingual teachers. In middle schools specifically, teacher shortages tend to be even more pronounced than at various other certification levels (Thornton, 2004). The same holds true for beginning high school teachers. According to Marvel and Rowland (2007) public secondary schools continue to experience various degrees of difficulty in hiring teachers in recent years. Too many teachers, both veterans and novices, are leaving the profession (Ingersoll, 2001). Nearly 30% of novice teachers leave the profession within five years of entering teaching (Darling-Hammond, 1999). Ingersoll and Smith (2003) reported that 40-50% of new teachers leave within the first five years of entry into teaching. Furthermore, the attrition rate for those who enter the classroom through an alternative path can be as high as 60% (Darling-Hammond, Berry, & Thoreson, 2001).

In Texas from 2006-2010, the one-year retention rate was similar for all preparation routes. Alternative certification programs are now the largest source of new teachers in the state of Texas (TBEC, 2012). The 5-year retention rate for teachers in Texas from 2006-2010 was 71.3%, for all teacher preparation pathways (Ramsay, 2011). However, by the fifth year, differences emerged. The university undergraduate route had a higher retention than the university post baccalaureate or alternative certification routes (Ramsay, 2011). In academic year 2010, attrition declined to its lowest level since 2001 (Ramsay, 2011). Although the attrition and retention rates of Texas teachers have slightly improved in the past few years, recruiting and retaining qualified, competent teachers continues to be an ongoing concern in Texas. Additionally, even though there was only an 8.4% attrition rate, this equals 28,135 educators leaving the teaching profession.

The cost of teacher turnover can be substantial. Boyd (2009) validated that high turnover can be costly in that time and effort is needed to continuously recruit teachers. A research study in Texas estimated the enormous cost of teacher turnover to be about \$329 million per year, or at least \$8,000 per teacher (Texas Center for Educational Research, 2000). However, in contrast, not every state has experienced high turnover rates. Research conducted by the Alliance for Excellent Education (2005) showed varied rates of teacher attrition in the country. For example, states such as Alaska, Rhode Island, Vermont, Idaho, and Maine reported much lower rates of teacher attrition than the rest of the country.

In addition to the fiscal consequences, high rates of turnover harm school environments and student performance (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). The single strongest predictor of student achievement gains, according to several studies, is quality of teaching (Whitehurst, 2002). Evidence indicates that quality of teaching can make a full school-year's difference in student learning gains, and ineffective teaching can lead to declines in achievement (Odden, Borman, & Fermanich, 2004).

With this in mind, the idea of examining the relationships between perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention among beginning secondary teachers in Texas could further impact the trend of the state's ever-improving attrition and retention rates. While most of Texas' school districts are very small with average enrollments of less than 4000, the districts in six major metropolitan areas are among the largest in the Nation (Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007). In addition, the Texas data are consistent with national statistics on proportion of movers contributing to teacher

turnover (Kersaint et al., 2007). This study investigated teacher retention in 13 school districts in Texas, which represented urban, suburban, and rural localities.

Several research studies have identified a variety of reasons and factors that impact teacher retention. These include teachers' preparation experiences and pathways into teaching (Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2009), the relationship between traditional and alternative certification programs and public school teachers' preparedness to teach, experiences during the first year of teaching, and job satisfaction (Cohen, 2005), job dissatisfaction (Rhodes, C., Nevill, A., & Allan, J., 2004; Ingersoll, 2001), position match or fit (Liu & Johnson, 2006), general working conditions in school (Brunetti, 2001), and salary and benefits (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2002; Flowers, 2004 & Voke, 2003). The critical problems of first-year teachers leaving the profession are well documented in the literature (Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005). However, although limited, some studies have also identified reasons that influence retention specifically among beginning secondary teachers. These include lack of administrative support, collegiality, and classroom management (Bang, Kern, Luft, & Roehrig, 2007), job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Weiqi, 2007), and the hiring process, teacher selection and position fit (O'Donovan, 2012). Guarino, Santibanez, and Daley (2006) observed that the basic principles driving the supply of teachers are the fact that individuals will become or remain teachers if teaching represents the most attractive activity to pursue among all activities available to them. By attractive, they meant desirable in terms of ease of entry and overall compensation: salary, benefits, working conditions, and personal satisfaction.

This study attempted to analyze the relationships among perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention within the context of teacher preparation pathway. In addition, this study identified which of the independent variables was the largest predictor of retention. Although there is ample research from quantitative studies with different datasets and samples on most of the individual constructs in the conceptual framework, limited studies have investigated these constructs together in one study. The results of this study will contribute to the current research on beginning secondary teachers and the factors that impact their retention.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

The study of teacher retention is an area in the literature that has steadily increased over the past few decades. This study considered teacher retention from the perspective of novice secondary teachers' perceptions of their position fit in their teaching assignment and at their school campus, job satisfaction and teacher preparation route. In order to achieve and maintain a strong workforce, schools need to attract high-quality teachers, select the best teachers from the pool of candidates available, and retain those teachers who are particularly effective (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Ronfeldt, & Wyckoff, 2010). However, half the current teaching force was projected to retire between 2000 and 2010 (Johnson, Berg, & Donaldson, 2005). Additionally, there is evidence that teaching has become a less attractive career than it was thirty years ago among both prospective and new teachers. Furthermore, turnover rates among new teachers are rapidly increasing, particularly in low-income schools (Johnson et al., 2005). In middle schools specifically, teacher shortages tend to be even more pronounced than at various other certification levels (Thornton, 2004). The same holds true for beginning high school teachers. Regardless, public secondary schools continue to experience various degrees of difficulty in hiring teachers in recent years (Marvel & Rowland, 2007).

Studying teacher retention involves many variables. In Johnson et al. (2005), the authors stated that teachers' decisions to remain in their schools and in teaching are influenced by a combination of the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards that they receive in their work. Intrinsic rewards include such things as the pleasure of being with children,

the exhilaration of contributing to students' learning, the enjoyment of teaching subject matter one loves, or the chance to develop new skills and exercise expanded influence on the job. Extrinsic rewards would include salary, benefits, and bonuses, public recognition for one's accomplishments, or being chosen to take on special responsibilities (Johnson et al., 2005).

Understanding why teachers elect to leave teaching altogether, migrate to another campus or remain in the profession requires knowing about some of the potential factors that may influence these decisions. This is important because information gleaned from this study will aid policymakers in providing states and districts with empirically-based evidence when making key decisions regarding future education policy and funding. In addition, findings from this study will inform teacher education programs, districts, policymakers, researchers and practitioners about factors that influence retention and how addressing and focusing on these factors can offer insight on teacher recruitment, retaining quality teachers and ultimately increasing student achievement.

For this particular study, retention was studied in relationship to the teachers' preparation pathway, perceptions of position fit, and job satisfaction. This literature review is divided into four sections: Teacher Attrition and Retention, Teacher Preparation Pathway, Position Fit and Job Satisfaction. The final section draws connections between the previous sections and articulates how the connections between the literatures further accentuate the support for the research contained in this study.

Teacher Attrition and Retention

The turnover problem, although high for the entire teaching occupation, affects

beginning teachers more than others. In middle schools specifically, teacher shortages tend to be even more pronounced than at various other certification levels (Thornton, 2004). The same holds true for beginning high school teachers. According to the Texas Business & Education Coalition (TBEC) (2012), Texas lags in recruiting and retaining secondary math and science teachers, followed by bilingual teachers. According to the Policy Research Initiative in Science Education (PRISE), the retention of high school science teachers is a mounting concern confronting 21st century stakeholders. Furthermore, Texas mirrors the nation in terms of lacking a system that coherently recruits and retains highly qualified high school science teachers (PRISE, 2009).

With respect to retention, the focus appears to be on issues of work environment and new teacher induction (Ingersoll, 2001; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Others suggest that professional preparation prior to recruitment may play a more important role (Reynolds, Ross, & Rakow, 2002). Darling-Hammond (2002) stated that an increasing number of teachers are entering the education field without sufficient preparation to teach a diverse and urban student population. According to Burstein, Czech, Kretschmer, Lombardi and Smith (2009) the shortage of qualified teachers is particularly a concern in urban areas where teachers are working with students who face the greatest challenges as learners. Teachers working in urban settings often face conditions that set them up to fail, such as overcrowded schools, a lack of resources, student discipline issues and a number of newly hired and inexperienced teachers paired with a discouraged veteran staff (Ingersoll, 2001). Moreover, Au and Blake (2003) found that students in high-poverty schools are twice as likely to have inexperienced teachers or those with 3 or fewer years of teaching.

Teaching has lost and continues to lose many of its newly trained members early in their careers, long before their retirement (Murnane, Singer, Willett, Kemple, & Olsen, 1991). Ingersoll (2003), using the Schools and Staffing Survey, a national survey of thousands of teachers and administrators, found that about half of teachers reported leaving teaching to pursue other careers or because they were dissatisfied with teaching (25% left to retire). Of those who were dissatisfied with teaching, 61% cited poor salaries, 32% poor administrative support, and 24% student discipline problems. Furthermore, he found that teachers in schools with higher salaries, more administrative support, and fewer student discipline problems were less likely to leave teaching or move to other districts. These results also resemble findings of Boyd et al. (2009) in that they found that besides teacher job satisfaction, teacher background characteristics and work experience also consistently predicts turnover.

A very stable finding in the literature shows that attrition is higher for younger inexperienced teachers, and lower for teachers who retire after teaching more than five years. This well-established U-shaped plot of attrition against age and experience is true irrespective of individual or school characteristics, geography, and economy (Guarino et al., 2006). For example, Kirby, Berends, and Naftel (1999) reported that approximately 16% of those who entered teaching in Texas between 1987 and 1996 left the public school system in their first year and 26% had left by the second year.

Hanushek, Kain, and Rivkin (2004) analyzed data on more than 300,000 Texas teachers during 1993-1996 to construct empirical salary schedule for the first ten years of experience for each school district within the state. Their data suggested that 82% of teachers remained in the same school, while 7% exited, 6.5% moved within districts and

5% switched districts each year. The researchers also found that school characteristics, particularly race and achievement, rather than teacher salary played a larger role in influencing teacher retention. Schools serving low-achieving students and greater proportions of minority students had greater problems retaining than high-achieving, low minority schools. Hanushek et al. (2004) also found that those teachers who left Texas public schools were generally either young teachers in their first 2 years of teaching or very experienced teachers nearing retirement eligibility.

To summarize, there is sufficient research from quantitative studies with different datasets or samples on teacher retention and attrition that have looked into the reasons why some teachers leave the profession entirely and why some stay. However, some of the research had contrasting findings. This study assumes that the attrition rate will be relatively high and the retention rate relatively low for the beginning secondary teachers in the study.

Teacher Preparation Pathway

Across the country, teachers are prepared in more than 1,300 large and small, public and private colleges and universities, as well as through alternative programs offered by districts and states (Wilson, Floden, & Ferrini-Mundy, 2001). Public concern about the quality of teachers who enter the classroom includes concern about the quality of the education program that prepared them. There are two competing views about how best to prepare, license, and hire teacher's years ahead (Peske, Liu, Johnson, Kauffman, & Kardos, 2001). One favors the traditional, university based teacher preparation route and certification requirements (Darling-Hammond, 2000). The other argues for allowing more alternative certification routes to teacher and possibly deregulating teacher

certification (Ballou & Podgursky, 2000). According to Good et al., (2006), this “crisis” in public confidence about the quality and effectiveness of teacher education programs has spurred several recent attempts to review research on the effectiveness of teacher education. Ironically, schools with difficulty filling their vacancies with traditionally prepared candidates have a higher percentage of alternatively credentialed teachers, especially in mathematics, science and special education (Darling-Hammond, 2004).

Typically, programs labeled traditional are sponsored by four-year colleges and universities and require more than a year to complete coursework and a student teaching (field-based) experience of two to ten months (Johnson et al., 2005). Alternative certification is a general term for nontraditional avenues that lead to teacher licensure. Alternative teacher certification programs (ACPs) are generally geared toward aspiring teachers who already have an undergraduate degree but who require additional education methods coursework and classroom experience. Such programs vary in requirements and sophistication and can be administered at the federal, state or district levels (Mikulecky, Shkodriani, & Wilner, 2004). In addition, most individuals who enter these programs already have a bachelor’s degree and usually a certain number of college credit hours in the field they wish to be certified to teach. The eligibility requirements for each program are different and the length of the program ranges from a few months up to two years (Mikulecky et al., 2004).

According to Mikulecky et al. (2004), since 1985, an estimated 200,000 candidates have pursued alternative routes to become certified teachers. Driven by teacher shortages and changing requirements – including passage of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 – close to one-third of all new teachers certified annually in

the United States enter the field via alternative certification program. Consistent with this fact, Darling-Hammond and Sykes (2003) posited that in response to the critical shortage of teachers, a variety of alternative certification programs have been created, however teachers participating in such programs lack adequate training when they enter the teaching profession. In addition, Texas was a forerunner in developing ACPs in the mid-1980s. During that time, the only other state to follow Texas' lead was New Jersey. Currently, ACPs are offered in 45 states and the District of Columbia. Program development increased with the NCLB provisions that recognized alternative certification programs as an effective method to train teachers; states were encouraged to become involved in this effort. Title II of the 2001 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (NCLB), *Preparing, Training, and Recruiting High Quality Teachers and Principals*, supports programs that recruit qualified professionals from other fields and provides them with alternative routes to teacher certification, including two in particular, Transition to Teaching and Troops to Teachers (Mikulecky et al., 2004).

Due to the explosion of alternative teacher certification programs, the backgrounds of individuals entering the teaching field have changed. Research indicates that alternative route programs have been successful in recruiting a more diverse pool of teachers (Wilson et al., 2001). Johnson (2006) highlighted the shift in the mechanisms by which teachers enter the profession. She found that the current supply of teachers differ from the retiring generation in that many new teachers are entering the field mid-career, having worked for a period in another field; new teachers are entering through a variety of certification routes; and, many new teachers are no longer committed to teaching for a lifetime (Johnson, 2006).

Teacher certification has evolved from the familiar college and university-based teacher education programs to a multitude of different forms and formats (Tai, Liu & Fan, 2007). As mentioned above, ACPs can be found in nearly every state and are offered in a variety of formats through four-year colleges and universities, school districts, regional education service centers and for-profit education providers (Mikulecky et al., 2004). For example, *Teach for America* tends to attract recent college graduates with little or no teaching experience, while community-based alternative certification programs offering evening and weekend classes tend to attract people who hold full-time jobs, but wish to transition into teaching. Tai et al. (2007) further asserts that some mid-career entrant programs are more time intensive and require full-time enrollment, while still others place pre-service teachers in schools with limited teaching loads and mentors (e.g. *New York City Teaching Fellows Program*). Some researchers still contend that substantive research about the quality of ACPS is still needed. Furthermore, Mikulecky et al. (2004) stated that “this ambiguity makes it difficult to judge whether alternative certification programs provide quality preparation comparable to traditional routes to teaching.”

Some researchers speculate that teachers’ preparation experiences and pathways into teaching are related to attrition behavior (Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2009). Moreover, according to Darling-Hammond et al. (2001), at one time, the attrition rate was as high as 60% for teachers who entered through “alternative” career pathways. In an effort to address the critical shortage of quality teachers and high turnover rates and inadequacies in teacher preparation, policy makers have responded with policies such as alternative routes to certification to attract more teachers (Harris,

Rutledge, Ingle, & Thompson, 2010). On average, teachers from early-entry routes (such as Teach for America and the Teaching Fellows) are more likely to leave than teachers from more traditional routes (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2006). Research about how alternative and traditional programs affect the recruitment and effectiveness of teachers ultimately has implications for retention (Johnson et al., 2005). Several studies have examined whether a difference in rates of retention exists between the two pathways. The literature on teacher retention is conflicting, however, due to the variety among alternative certification preparation programs. For example, Guarino et al. (2006) reviewed six studies that dealt with four alternative certification programs, Massachusetts Signing Bonus Program, Pathways to Teaching Careers, Teacher Fellows Program and the Provisional Teacher Program. Only two of the studies offered evidence that the retention rates for program participants were higher than the national retention rates and only one of these two studies had a large sample to examine.

One study conducted in four central Florida public school districts during the 2001-2002 school years, by Christophel (2003), was comprised to compare attrition and retention rates, and education factors of exceptional education teachers from traditional and alternative certification preparation programs. A survey instrument containing 54 questions designed to measure components related to early teaching experience, support and influence, working conditions and job satisfaction was developed, piloted, and implemented by the researcher. The data were analyzed using SPSS 10 and data analysis techniques included independent t-tests, multivariate analyses of variance, and Pearson Product-Moment correlations. The study identified statistically significant differences in retention rates, and the education factors of job satisfaction and early teaching experience

based on certification preparation program. Traditionally certified teachers remained in the classroom longer than teachers from alternative certification programs and a statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and teacher preparation program was found.

There have also been many studies evolving on the relationship of teacher preparation pathway and the urban school setting. A study by Ng (2003) examined the impact of teacher recruitment approaches via university-based and alternative certification programs. The study found that traditional and alternative certification efforts are by themselves limited in their potential to address the problem of teacher shortages in urban schools. Ng (2003) suggests that an organizational view of schools, which looks beyond individual teachers as lone indicators of instructional performance and educational equity, might better guide future research and policy formation.

Wayman, Foster, Mantle-Bromley and Wilson (2003) conducted a study comparing the professional concerns of over 237 traditionally prepared and 154 alternatively licensed new teachers in Colorado. The researchers found that first-year teachers rank their work-related concerns similarly, regardless of their route (traditional or alternative) to teaching. Although the order of concerns was similar, the alternatively certified teachers indicated higher levels of concern in almost every area. These areas of significant difference typically came from effective instruction and classroom management. For example, the teachers from alternative certification routes indicated concerns about lesson planning more so than the traditionally prepared teachers. This study addressed some of the negative effects of the alternative certification route to teacher preparation. In addition, the researchers were a bit biased in their conclusion in

that they inferred that traditional certification programs have a more positive effect on retention. Other studies of alternative certification programs have shown teachers from various ones to have higher levels of concern regarding preparation, and in some cases, actually display lower skills in the area of instructional methods (Miller, McKenna, & McKenna, 1998).

This study will contribute to the knowledge base of teacher retention in the context of teacher preparation routes by comparing the retention rate of beginning secondary teachers who entered teaching via a university-based preparation route compared to the various categories of alternative certification routes: university post-baccalaureate teacher preparation program; university alternative certification program; private alternative certification program; school district certification program; service center certification program; no formal teacher preparation; community college; or other program specified on the survey instrument. This study assumes the beginning secondary teachers prepared via the university-based teacher education routes will have a higher retention rate than those teachers prepared via an alternative certification route.

Perception of Position Fit

If a position does not closely match a person's preparation, interests, and preferences (regarding grade level, curricular approach, pedagogical philosophy, school culture, student population, etc.), he or she may not stay in it for long (Liu & Johnson, 2006). In a study by Cohen (2005), the relationship between traditional and alternative certification programs and public school teachers' preparedness to teach, experiences during the first year of teaching, and job satisfaction were investigated. The researcher utilized the National Center for Education Statistics' 1999-2000 Schools and Staffing Survey released

in November 2003. The sample included 6,322 traditionally certified teachers and 2,011 alternatively certified teachers, across grade levels. Data analyses revealed that pre-service training in the preparation and coursework of pedagogical skills and knowledge are needed by both traditionally and alternatively certified teachers to achieve positive first year teaching experiences. Furthermore, of teacher preparation programs, the study respondents consistently ranked first year experiences low indicating a lack of consistent support and communication.

Darling-Hammond, Chung, and Frelow (2002) suggested that teachers' sense of preparedness and sense of self-efficacy are related to their feelings about teaching and their plans to stay in the profession. The beginning teachers were surveyed regarding their views on their preparation for teaching, beliefs and practice, and plans to remain in teaching. Teachers prepared in teacher education programs (university-based programs) felt significantly better prepared than those prepared through alternative programs or without preparation. Teachers' views of their preparation varied and the extent to which teachers felt prepared significantly related to their plans to continue teaching.

Liu and Johnson (2006) surveyed a representative random sample of 486 first-year and second-year teachers in California, Florida, Massachusetts, and Michigan about the fit between new teachers and their jobs and between new teachers and their schools. The findings showed that overall, new teachers in the pooled group of four states reported a good fit with their job ($M = 4.04$) and just a moderate to good fit with their school ($M = 3.50$). A paired-samples t test revealed that the .54 difference between new teachers' mean fit with position and their mean fit with school were statistically

significant ($t = 5.90$; $p < .001$). The researchers contended that the fit between a new teacher and his position can have implications for his job satisfaction and retention. If a position does not closely match a new teacher's preparation, interests, or preferences, he may quickly become dissatisfied and not stay in the job (or in teaching) for long. In addition, the researchers theorized that to the extent that a poor fit compromises a new teacher's effectiveness on the job and therefore their sense of success, it may contribute to their leaving their school or exiting teaching altogether (Liu & Johnson, 2006).

The literature is very scarce, but evolving for the construct of 'position fit' in educational research. Historically, this concept has been linked to research in organizational behavior and management studies, in which relationships have been found between person-organization or person-job fit and work outcomes such as job satisfaction and intentions to quit (Liu, 2004). This study will add to the knowledge base in secondary education in this area and focus on how teachers' perceptions of their position and campus fit relates to retention. In addition, this study assumes relationships exist between beginning secondary teachers' perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction and between position fit and teacher retention.

Job Satisfaction

In addition to the research mentioned above, some studies have examined the relationship between job satisfaction and teacher retention. In one study, Boyd (2011) examined the relationship between job satisfaction and intention to remain in teaching among 89 beginning teachers. He found that there were no significant differences in job satisfaction and intention to leave in beginning teachers relative to teacher preparation (traditional versus alternative methods). In another study, Sands (2011) surveyed a group

of teachers to examine their job satisfaction and critical factors that influence teacher retention. She found that although the teachers derived joy from close relationships with the students, a large fraction of the teachers were disappointed in the environmental factors of their jobs. Furthermore, the data showed that almost half of the study participants anticipated retiring, changing jobs or moving to other institutions within the next five years.

Weiss (1999), examining data on first-year teachers in a Schools and Staffing Survey, found that teachers expressed an intention to remain in the profession when they perceived strong support from administrators and colleagues together with control over disciplinary problems. These findings, supported by a nationwide Schools and Staffing Survey of approximately 8,400 teachers, by Luekens, Lyter, and Fox (2004), showed that public school teachers moved to a new school because of a desire for a better teaching assignment (40%), dissatisfaction with support from administrators (38%), and dissatisfaction with working conditions more generally (32%) those who moved to a new school also were much more dissatisfied with their instructional leaders than were teachers who remained. Moreover, about 20% reported that they left to pursue another career and obtain a better salary or benefits.

Ingersoll (2001), in a nationwide Schools and Staffing Survey, found that the most important reason for leaving schools and the profession was job dissatisfaction, and the most frequently reported causes of job dissatisfaction, both for migrating teachers and those who left the teaching profession, were low salaries, lack of support from school administration, and student discipline problems. Furthermore, Ingersoll (2001) reported that schools providing autonomy to teachers, more administrative support, as reported by

teachers, and schools with fewer disciplinary problems have lower levels of teacher attrition.

Additionally, Kelly (2004), combining a Schools and Staffing Survey with a Teacher Follow-up Survey, also found that behavioral problems in classrooms increased attrition. Stockard and Lehman (2004), utilizing the same datasets, found that new teachers reported lower job satisfaction when they worked in schools with higher rates of behavioral problems, and when they perceived limited administrative resources and support.

Furthermore, job satisfaction literature suggests that urban secondary schools with predominantly minority and low income students are places where teachers' job satisfaction seems to be the lowest (Ingersoll, 2003; Turner, 2007). Gander, Maxwell-Jolly, and Driscoll (2005) found in their study that the beginning teachers indicated that they are unprepared for the challenges they face in urban schools, with only 20% reporting that they feel confident in working with students from diverse backgrounds. On the other hand, several other studies reviewed by Guarino et al. (2006) indicate positive relationships between longevity in a particular school and support from administration, professional development opportunities, and control over disciplinary problems.

Current literature on job satisfaction and teacher retention, in general, is plentiful. However, current research on job satisfaction and retention among secondary teachers in the U.S. is sparse. In addition, many of the studies focused on job satisfaction among elementary school teachers and these studies took place in the mid-1980s. Most of the recent studies found on job satisfaction and secondary teachers came from studies conducted in foreign countries, such as China and England. Therefore, a gap in the

literature exists on this construct in relationship to secondary teachers, especially novice secondary teachers. This study assumes a relationship exists between the beginning secondary teachers' job satisfaction and teacher retention.

Summary

This chapter presented earlier works on the phenomenon of teacher retention and attrition of public school teachers. Additionally, this literature review supports the need to conduct further research in this area of education to identify the factors that influence teacher retention, specifically in Texas public schools. Chapter 3 will highlight the quantitative methodology utilized in this study.

Chapter III

Methodology

This chapter addresses the research design and questions, background of the study, purpose of the study, the population and sample, sampling procedures, instrumentation, reliability and validity, and data collection procedures.

This study employs a causal-comparative design (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009) seeking to identify associations among the variables of position fit, job satisfaction and retention between two preexisting sub-groups: teachers certified via university-based teacher preparation programs and teachers certified through alternative certification routes. Causal-comparative research is also referred to sometimes as ex post facto research, which is research conducted in a retrospective manner.

Background of the Study

This study is an extension of another study, the Teacher Selection Study (TSS), conducted during spring of 2010 by the collaboration between two entities the Center for Research, Evaluation and Advancement of Teacher Education (CREATE), along with members of the Texas Public School Research Network (TPSRN). The Teacher Selection Study (TSS) was conducted to analyze Texas public school teacher selection and assignment practices. CREATE is a university research and development consortium comprised of 46 universities within the state of Texas whose research agenda focuses on teaching quality and effectiveness issues. The TPSRN is a university-public schools research collaborative consisting of selected school districts throughout the state and administered by CREATE, in partnership with the Texas Association of School

Administrators (TASA). TASA is a professional organization for public school administrators in Texas (Texas Association of School Administrators, 2011).

CREATE's Teacher Selection Study led to the development of a survey called the Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (SSTQ), comprised of select items taken from the Survey of First-Year and Second-Year Teachers. The Survey of First-Year and Second-Year Teachers was created by Susan Moore Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers at Harvard Graduate School of Education (2002) to explore teachers' experiences during the hiring process, position fit and job satisfaction (Johnson & Liu, 2002; Liu & Johnson, 2006) and to analyze new teachers' experiences of hiring and information exchange (Liu, 2005). Permission to utilize and modify portions of this survey was granted to CREATE by Dr. Susan Moore Johnson.

The sample population for the Teacher Selection Study consisted of 13 school districts in Texas. Within each participating district, researchers utilized purposive sampling to select a sample of schools comprised of pairs of the highest and lowest performing campuses at the elementary school, middle school, and high school levels, yielding a total of 92 campuses: 31 elementary schools, 32 middle schools, and 29 high schools (Reaves et al., 2012). The study participants included principals and teachers who completed surveys about hiring practices.

Newly-employed teachers in the sample campuses during the 2008-2009 and 2009—2010 academic years were asked to respond to the Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (SSTQ). Of the 1,430 teachers who were sent the electronic questionnaire 761 teachers responded, representing a 53% return rate (Reaves et al., 2012).

The Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (SSTQ) consisted of 91 total questions divided into three parts: 5 background Information questions, 23 general information questions, and 63 items on teachers hiring process. One portion of the SSTQ, titled Hiring Practices, was utilized as a source of data to examine the relationship among information-rich hiring practices and perceptions of job clarity and position fit. The rationale was that the more teachers understood what the position entailed, the more likely they could decide if the fit between their own professional skills/attributes and the current classroom assignment and campus was a good one. Quantitative methodology was utilized to analyze the survey data. According to Reaves et al. (2012) findings supported the researchers' hypothesis that information-rich hiring practices contribute to teachers' perceptions of job clarity, which in turn, contribute to teachers' perceptions of position fit. In addition, CREATE researchers found that teacher perceptions of job clarity were highly and significantly correlated with teacher perceptions of position fit ($p = .000, r = .87$). Hence, the motivation and design for this study was based on CREATE's Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire. The researcher wished to further investigate the possible link between the variable of position fit and its possible influence on teacher retention.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to extend the previous line of research described above to analyze the relationships among perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention in beginning secondary teachers in Texas within the context of teacher preparation pathway: university-based teacher preparation versus alternative certification program. This study examined the relationship between teacher preparation pathway and

perceptions of position fit among the beginning secondary teachers. This study also analyzed the relationship between position fit and job satisfaction. Moreover, this study examined the relationships between job satisfaction and retention and between position fit and retention over a three-year period. Additionally, this study identified which variable was the best predictor for teacher retention. Specifically, this study addressed the following research questions:

1. *Does a significant relationship exist between pathway of teacher preparation and perceptions of position fit among beginning secondary teachers?*
2. *Does a significant relationship exist between the perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction among beginning secondary teachers?*
3. *Is there a significant relationship between job satisfaction and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers?*
4. *Is there a significant relationship between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers?*
5. *Which independent variable (teacher preparation pathway, teacher perception of position fit, or job satisfaction) is the best predictor for teacher retention?*

Population and Sample

The participants of this research were 267 secondary first-year and second-year teachers, certified to teach in grades 6 - 12 in public schools in the state of Texas. In addition, the teachers were representative of 13 school districts in Texas.

Texas is the second largest state, in area, with over 26 million people (Texas Department of State Health Services, 2012). The state has approximately

1,235 school districts with almost 4.6 million students enrolled in grades K-12.

The 13 districts representing the study sample were: Birdville ISD, Dallas ISD, Fort Worth ISD, Harlingen ISD, Highland Park ISD, Lamar Consolidated ISD, Northeast ISD, Northside ISD, Richardson ISD, Round Rock ISD, San Antonio ISD, Stephenville ISD, and Weatherford ISD. According to the Texas Education Agency's district classification system, the 13 districts represented in this study include four urban districts, five suburban districts, two central city districts, one district is classified as covering both urban and rural areas, and one district is classified as an independent town (TEA, 2012).

In Texas, an urban district is classified as one if: (a) it is located in a county with a population of at least 775,000; (b) its enrollment is the largest in the county or at least 75 percent of the largest district enrollment in the county; and (c) at least 35 percent of enrolled students are economically disadvantaged. A student is reported as economically disadvantaged if he or she is eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program. A suburban district is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is contiguous to a major urban district; and (c) its enrollment is at least 3 percent that of the contiguous major urban district or at least 4,500 students. A district also is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) it is located in the same county as a major urban district; and (d) its enrollment is at least 15 percent that of the nearest major urban district in the county or at least 4,500 students. A

district is classified as central city if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in either of the previous subcategories; (b) it is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) it is located in a county with a population of between 100,000 and 774,999; and (d) its enrollment is the largest in the county or at least 75 percent of the largest district enrollment in the county. A district is classified as independent town if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories; (b) it is located in a county with a population of 25,000 to 99,999; and (c) its enrollment is the largest in the county or greater than 75 percent of the largest district enrollment in the county. Lastly, a district is classified as rural if it does not meet the criteria for classification in any of the previous subcategories. A rural district has either: (a) an enrollment of between 300 and the median district enrollment for the state and an enrollment growth rate over the past five years of less than 20 percent; or (b) an enrollment of less than 300 students.

Of the 267 teachers in the study population, 110 teachers taught in urban districts, 103 teachers taught in suburban districts, 31 teachers were from two central city districts, 18 teachers were from a district classified as both urban and rural, and 5 teachers taught in an independent town.

Sampling Procedures

This study used purposive sampling procedures for selecting the sample of teachers in the study. A spreadsheet containing a list of all teachers and their survey responses to the SSTQ was provided by CREATE. The size of the sample was affected by the total number of first-year and second-year secondary

teachers who taught in grades 6-12 within the 13 districts, during the 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 academic years. From the original pool of 761 teachers, 317 participants were first-year and second-year teachers. Since this study aimed to focus on beginning secondary teachers, 50 elementary school teachers in grades K-5 were excluded because they did not meet the inclusion criteria. After removing the ineligible teachers, the sample consisted of 267 (N=267) secondary first-year and second-year teachers. Permission to conduct research using this sample population was granted to the researcher by CREATE (see Appendix A).

Instrumentation

This study utilized a survey design (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009) to identify issues in the attrition and retention of beginning secondary teachers in Texas. Thus, the study is quantitative, non-experimental in nature. One instrument measured the relationships among the variables of teacher preparation pathway, perceptions of position fit, and job satisfaction of the novice secondary teachers. Quantitative data were collected using the survey instrument. The survey, which included closed-ended questions and items measured on a Likert scale regarding teacher preparation pathway, perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction allowed the researcher to identify if the variables that exist were linked to a decision of job retention.

Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (SSTQ). The Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (SSTQ) was an existing survey designed by CREATE. For the purpose of this research the survey instrument retained the title Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (see Appendix B). According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) questionnaires are one of the most common types of instruments used in survey research,

which is usually self-administered by the respondent (p. 395). Slavin (2007) posits that the purpose of a survey is to describe the opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of a population of interest and to find correlations between variables (p. 105).

This questionnaire was chosen for this study, because it was constructed by experts in the field of education, and had validity and reliability estimates reported. The issues of validity and reliability are very important for establishing credibility and trustworthiness of the instruments used in any investigation. Instrument validity refers to whether or not an instrument is measuring all of what it is supposed to be measuring and only in that particular domain (Creswell, 2003). The validity of the instrument was assessed by both CREATE's and TPSRN's design teams. The process involved individuals from public schools, universities, and professional associations during the development of the survey. The CREATE and TPSRN staff pilot tested the questionnaire with school districts and formatted the survey electronically. The two entities were confident in both their measurement of the constructs and the outcome of their data. An "alpha (α)" coefficient to represent the internal consistency or reliability of the instrument for the study's purposes was calculated. Cronbach's alpha is the most common measure of scale reliability (Field, 2009, p. 674). Since there were no opportunities to do a test-retest design for this study, Cronbach's Alpha was the most logical to use as an estimate of reliability. For the purposes of this study, the values of Cronbach's Alpha are .932 for the construct of 'Perception of Position Fit' and .890 for the construct of 'Job Satisfaction'. Additionally, the questionnaire was designed for and utilized in the past for beginning teachers, which was appropriate for this study.

In this study, the SSTQ was used to describe the characteristics of secondary teachers in the sample and to investigate if any correlations existed among the variables of teacher preparation pathway, perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention.

This study utilized 33 items from the existing SSTQ which contains 14 general information questions, 14 items related to the constructs of teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction and five demographic questions. The instrument also contains a section on teacher hiring not used in this analysis.

The first part of the survey consisted of 14 general information questions regarding teachers' current teaching assignment, career stage, factors that played a role in their decision to enter teaching and commitment to teaching.

The next part consisted of one question that requested new teachers to select the teacher preparation pathway completed for teaching certification: 1) Which of the following best describes the teacher preparation program you completed? This item was used to address the construct of teacher preparation pathway: university-based teacher preparation versus alternative certification program.

Teachers completed 11 items regarding their perceptions of how well their teaching assignment and campus match or fit their content knowledge, skills, expertise and professional dispositions and the position they ultimately obtained using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (very good fit) to 1 (very poor fit). This part of the survey contained two larger questions, with five sub-questions in the first question and six sub-questions in the second question: 1) How closely would you say that your current teaching assignment matches the following? and 2) How closely would you say that your campus matches the

following? To obtain a score for each subscale, the average score was calculated. A higher score indicated a higher perception of position fit.

In terms of job satisfaction, two questions asked teachers to score their level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with teaching and at their school campus on a 7-Point Likert scale ranging from 7 (very satisfied) to 1 (very dissatisfied): 1) So far, how satisfied are you with teaching? and 2) So far, how satisfied are you with your school as a place to teach? To obtain a score for each subscale, the average score was calculated. A higher score indicated a higher level of job satisfaction.

The final section consisted of five questions regarding teachers' demographic and profile data. Questions were asked regarding age, gender, ethnic background, highest degree earned, and years taught in education.

Data from the select items on the survey mentioned above was analyzed to address the research questions. Teacher retention data were retrieved utilizing methods discussed in the next section.

Data Collection Procedures

This study was an extension of a larger survey study, the Teacher Selection Study, designed collaboratively by CREATE and TSPRN to analyze Texas public school teacher selection and assignment practices. Therefore, for this study the researcher utilized archival data. All data for this study were collected during spring of 2010 via SurveyMonkey.com, which is an on-line survey host. Utilizing self-reported data from the SSTQ, the researcher examined the relationships among teacher perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction, and retention, within the context of teacher preparation.

In addition to the data collected above utilizing the SSTQ survey instrument, attrition and retention data for the sample population was retrieved from the Texas Education Agency's (TEA) State Board for Educator Certification online database, using the participants' custom identification (ID) number. The State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC) was created by the Texas Legislature in 1995 to recognize public school educators as professionals and grant educators the authority to govern the standards of their profession. The Board oversees all aspects of the preparation, certification and standards of conduct of public school educators (Texas Education Agency, 2011). Certification records for the secondary teachers in this study was extracted from the SBEC database, with the assistance of a CREATE liaison.

The PEIMS and AEIS databases was utilized to retrieve teacher attrition and retention data (employment records) for the secondary teachers employed in the 13 Texas public school districts between 2008 and 2012, with the assistance of a CREATE liaison. The Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS) is one of the largest education databases in the world. It provides a wealth of information for researchers, parents and the public at large to mine and learn about the workings of 1,200 districts and charters in Texas, as well as TEA (TEA, 2011). The PEIMS Standard Reports are provided to meet general requirements for information concerning public education in Texas. Other PEIMS Standard Reports include information concerning superintendents, staff or teachers employed by school districts. The Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) is a database consisting of reports generated by the PEIMS data that provides state performance and profile reports on schools, districts, regions and the state by academic year (TEA, 2011).

The attrition and retention data retrieved from the databases informed the researcher as to whether the participant had left their teaching position or was still employed as a teacher. Additionally, the databases were utilized to measure how long the participant had worked as a teacher by tracking the 3-year retention rate of those individuals who were first-year teachers and 4-year retention rate for those who were second-year teachers during the spring 2010 survey administration.

Impact on Participants and Non-participants

Informed consent forms from the human subjects participants were completed for the Teacher Selection Study by CREATE in 2010. The study participants were informed of their rights as potential participants, that the survey was voluntary, and assured that their information would not be used against them in any way. In addition, participants were told that the survey was a one-time administration and that they would not be contacted in the future for follow-up purposes. Identification numbers were assigned to each participant for anonymity and to compare survey responses for each participant. The survey instrument took no longer than 20 minutes to complete. Since this study utilized archived data from the Teacher Selection Study, the researcher's university Institutional Review Board (IRB) approved the study under exempt status (see Appendix C) in April 2012.

Dissemination of Findings

The major action to be taken upon the conclusion of this study is dissemination of important findings. The results of this study add to the literature base regarding the relationships that exist among teacher preparation pathway, perceptions of position fit, and job satisfaction and teacher retention in beginning secondary teachers. The results of

this study also add to the literature base regarding the specific factors within the variables of position fit and job satisfaction that impact teacher retention. Furthermore, the results of this study add to the body of knowledge of teacher retention regarding the best predictor for teacher retention. The findings can be presented at local, state and national conferences to share with others who are interested in this topic. The findings can also be submitted to professional refereed journals for publication. Additionally, the researcher has shared all results with the university's College of Education to assist with the ongoing training of pre-service teachers in various teacher education programs. Moreover, this information can be utilized by faculty with ongoing collaborations with local school districts in the continued growth and quality development of novice secondary in-service teachers.

POSITION FIT, JOB SATISFACTION AND RETENTION

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationships among perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention rates in beginning secondary teachers in Texas within the context of teacher preparation pathway: university-based teacher preparation versus alternative certification program. The study answered the following research questions:

1. Does a significant relationship exist between pathway of teacher preparation and perceptions of position fit among beginning secondary teachers?
2. Does a significant relationship exist between the perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction among beginning secondary teachers?
3. Is there a significant relationship between job satisfaction and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers?
4. Is there a significant relationship between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers?
5. Which independent variable (teacher preparation pathway, teacher perception of position fit, or job satisfaction) is the best predictor for teacher retention?

Data Analysis

This was a quantitative, non-experimental study in which data from the Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (SSTQ) was analyzed. The survey responses were entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 19.0 for analysis. Statistical tests

for possible relationships among teacher preparation pathway, perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention were conducted. The researcher also sought to determine which independent variable (teacher preparation pathway, teacher perception of position fit, or job satisfaction) is the best predictor for the dependent variable (teacher retention). Descriptive statistics (mean, median, variance, and standard deviation) were calculated for each subscale of the survey. This analysis generated a description of the sample population as related to each subscale on the survey. To provide a profile of the entire sample, descriptive statistics also were calculated. Reliability scores also were calculated for the survey. Since there were no opportunities to do a test-retest design for this study, Cronbach's Alpha is the most logical to use as an estimate of reliability. Cronbach's alpha is the most common measure of scale reliability (Field, 2009). For the purposes of this study, the values of Cronbach's Alpha was .932 for the construct of 'Perception of Position Fit' and .890 for the construct of 'Job Satisfaction'. The scores indicated the instrument was highly reliable for the purposes of this study.

To examine if a significant relationship exists between teacher preparation pathway and perceptions of position fit among the beginning secondary teachers, a bivariate correlation or Pearson r was performed (Research Question 1). The researcher observed the relationship between the teacher preparation pathway classifications (Traditional, University Post-bac, University ACP, Private ACP, School District ACP, Service Center ACP, and no formal teacher preparation) and the perceptions of position fit scores (in teaching assignment and at campus). A bivariate correlation also was conducted to determine if a significant relationship exists between the perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction among the teachers (Research Question 2). For this

analysis, the researcher observed the relationship between the perceptions of position fit scores (in teaching assignment and at campus) and the job satisfaction scores (with teaching and with campus). The bivariate method is used to measure the correlation between two variables (Field, 2009). The researcher chose to use the Pearson r command to compute correlations. This command assumes the two variables are approximately distributed normally (Lomax, 2007). The bivariate correlations also measured the strength of the relationships between teacher preparation pathway and perceptions of position fit and between the perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction. The correlations also indicated the significance of the associations.

A point-biserial correlation (r_{pb}) was conducted to determine if a significant relationship exists between job satisfaction and teacher retention among the beginning secondary teachers (Research Question 3). The researcher observed the relationship between the job satisfaction scores and teacher retention during the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years.

A point-biserial correlation (r_{pb}) also was conducted to examine if a relationship exists between the perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among the teachers (Research Question 4). The researcher observed the relationship between the perceptions of position fit scores and teacher retention during the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 school years. The point-biserial method was deemed appropriate to address these questions because it is a procedure used when one of the two variables is a discrete dichotomy (Field, 2009). In the case of this study, job satisfaction and perceptions of position fit are continuous variables and teacher retention is a dichotomous variable. Therefore, to examine if a significant relationship exists, point-biserial correlations were utilized. The

researcher chose to use the Spearman rho (r_s) correlation coefficient to compute these correlations. The Spearman rho (r_s) correlation coefficient is utilized for nonlinear data and for other types of data measured on categorical scales (Creswell, 2012). The point-biserial correlations also measured the strength of the relationships between perceptions of position fit and retention and between job satisfaction and retention. The correlations also indicated the significance of the associations.

Multiple regression analyses were conducted as an exploratory measure to explain the variance accounted for in each independent variable and to measure significant differences between teacher preparations pathway, teacher perception of position fit and job satisfaction (Research Question 5). The researcher compared the means of the three independent variables to determine how they related to the dependent variable, teacher retention. The multiple regression approach is utilized to learn more about the relationship between several independent or predictor variables and a dependent variable (Field, 2009). Therefore, the multiple regression method was used to determine the role that teacher preparation pathway, teacher perception of position fit and job satisfaction played in predicting the dependent variable, teacher retention.

Description of Sample

In the Spring of 2010, 267 first-year and second-year teachers certified to teach in grades 6-12 public schools completed the *Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire* (SSTQ). The setting for this research was middle schools and high schools in 13 school districts in Texas, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Classification of 13 School Districts and Teachers from each District

School District	District Classification	N
District 1	Suburban	17
District 2	Urban	33
District 3	Urban	29
District 4	Suburban	19
District 5	Suburban	6
District 6	Central City	26
District 7	Urban	12
District 8	Urban/Rural	18
District 9	Suburban	25
District 10	Suburban	36
District 11	Urban	36
District 12	Independent Town	5
District 13	Central City	5

Note: N = 267 teachers.

A majority of the respondents were female and primarily White, Non-Hispanic, with 33% minority. A majority of the respondents were in their twenties (N=163) with more than 46.4% (N = 124) of the sample between the ages of 25-30. Most participants had a Bachelor's degree (N = 206) as their highest level of education completed, while over 20% (N = 59) of the sample had a master's, doctoral or professional degrees. About an equal number of the sample population were first-year and second-year teachers. Almost two-thirds of the respondents were high school teachers and represent the major subject areas of math, science, English Language Arts and history or social studies. However, one-third of the sample population represented teachers who specialized in

other fields such as the fine arts, foreign languages, technology, and physical education.

See Table 2 for demographic information of the sample population.

Table 2

Demographics of Sample Population

	N	%
Gender		
Female	168	62.9
Male	99	37.1
Ethnicity		
White, Non-Hispanic	179	67.0
Black or African American	31	11.6
Hispanic or Latino	47	17.6
Asian or Pacific Islander	2	0.7
Other	4	1.5
Age		
Under 25	50	18.7
25 – 30	124	46.4
Over 30	93	34.8
Highest Degree Completed		
Bachelor's Degree	206	77.2
Master's Degree	54	20.2
Doctoral Degree - (<i>PhD, EdD, PsyD</i>)	4	1.5
Professional Degree - (<i>MD, DDS, LLB, JD</i>)	1	0.4
Years of Experience		
1 st Year Teacher	129	48.3
2 nd Year Teacher	138	51.7
School Campus Setting		
Middle School (MS)	95	35.6
High School (HS)	172	64.4
Specialization Area		
Generalist (MS)	6	2.2
English Language Arts	44	16.5
Math	53	19.9
Science	37	13.9
History/Social Studies	22	8.2
Special Education	33	12.4
Technology	17	6.3
Foreign Language/Arts	36	13.4
Physical Education	9	3.4

Note: N = 267 teachers.

Teacher Preparation Pathway

In this study, 40.4 % (N = 108) of the study sample represented teachers who attended a university-based teacher preparation program (traditional, university post-bac, or university ACP); whereas, 59.6% (N = 159) of the sample represented teachers who attended alternative certification programs (ACPs) such as, private, school district, service center alternative certification programs, or other ACPs. Therefore, the majority of the teachers in the study were alternatively prepared. Table 3 illustrates the teacher preparation pathway of the sample population.

Table 3

Classification of Teacher Preparation Pathway

Teacher Preparation Pathway	N	%
Traditional	72	27.0
University Post-Baccalaureate	26	9.7
University ACP	10	3.7
Private ACP	115	43.1
School District ACP	23	8.6
Service Center ACP	13	4.9
No Formal Teacher Prep	1	0.4
Other	7	2.6

Note: N = 267 teachers.

All data within the sample was utilized to maximize the response rate within each item. Therefore, the sample size varied between items within the survey.

Perceptions of Position Fit

The beginning secondary teachers' perceptions of how well their position fit (teaching assignment and campus) their content knowledge, skills, expertise and professional dispositions and the position they ultimately obtained was measured by 11 items in the 'Hiring Process' section of the *Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire*

(*SSTQ*). This part of the survey contained two larger questions: 1) How closely would you say that your current teaching assignment matches the following? and 2) How closely would you say that your campus matches the following? The five sub-questions in the first question focused on perceptions of position fit in the teaching assignment and the six sub-questions in the second question focused on perceptions of position fit at the school campus. Scores were obtained using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (very good fit) to 1 (very poor fit). Mean scores for each subscale were calculated. A higher score indicated a higher perception of position fit. All of the teachers perceived their teaching assignments to be a good fit or match with their subject matter knowledge, expertise, skills and talents. Table 4 depicts the mean scores of perceptions of position fit among the novice secondary teachers with their teaching assignments.

Table 4

Mean Scores of Perceptions of Position Fit with Teaching Assignment

Statement (HPQ13)	N	M	SD
a. Your subject matter knowledge and expertise	267	4.51	0.71
b. Your subject matter interests	267	4.45	0.81
c. Other skills and talents	267	4.06	0.96
d. The grade level you prefer to teach	267	4.17	0.93
e. The type of student population you would prefer to teach	267	3.94	1.05

Note: N = 267. Section contains five self-report items. HPQ= Hiring Process Question. HPQ 13 = Position Fit with teaching assignment items.

Additionally, all of the teachers perceived their school campus to be a moderate to good fit with their educational philosophy, views on student discipline, the amount of collaboration desired with colleagues and the amount of influence on school-wide decisions. However, these scores were not as high as those scores for the teachers' perceptions of their position fit with their teaching assignment. Table 5 presents the mean scores of the teachers' perceptions of position fit with their school campus.

Table 5

Mean Scores of Perceptions of Position Fit with School Campus

Statement (HPQ14)	N	M	SD
a. Your own educational philosophy	267	3.76	1.03
b. The amount of autonomy you'd like as a teacher	267	3.99	0.87
c. Your own views on student discipline	267	3.36	1.20
d. The amount of collaboration or teamwork you'd like with colleagues	267	3.68	1.14
e. The amount of input/influence you'd like on campus-wide decisions	267	3.43	1.04
f. The amount of input/influence you'd like on grade-level decisions	267	3.62	1.11

Note: N = 267. Section contains six self-report items. HPQ= Hiring Process Question. HPQ 14 = Position Fit with campus items.

Additionally, Table 6 shows that a large number of correlations between position fit questions HPQ 13 and HPQ 14 were significant. This is perhaps due to the large sample size. These data include those correlations that had some practical significance and accounted for 10% of the variance or .320 and above.

Table 6

Correlations of Position Fit

		HPQ 14a	HPQ 14b	HPQ 14c	HPQ 14d	HPQ 14e	HPQ 14f
HPQ 13a	Pearson Correlation	.307	.306	.220	.171	.172	.277
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.005	.005	.000
	N	267	267	267	267	267	267
HPQ 13b	Pearson Correlation	.336	.356	.222	.190	.235	.321
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.002	.000	.000
	N	267	267	267	267	267	267
HPQ 13c	Pearson Correlation	.322	.388	.241	.285	.260	.324
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	267	267	267	267	267	267
HPQ 13d	Pearson Correlation	.401	.339	.270	.269	.301	.326
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	267	267	267	267	267	267
HPQ 13e	Pearson Correlation	.460	.369	.420	.245	.380	.361
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	267	267	267	267	267	267

Note. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Correlations > .32 are in boldface. HPQ= Hiring Process Question. HPQ 13 = Position Fit with teaching assignment items; HPQ 14 = Position Fit with campus items.

Research Question 1: Does a significant relationship exist between teacher preparation pathway and perceptions of position fit among beginning secondary teachers?

To determine the relationship between teacher preparation pathway and perceptions of position fit, bivariate correlations of the scores were analyzed. When conducting a correlation analysis, a positive value for the correlation implies a positive association between two or more variables. Conversely, a negative value for the correlation suggests an inverse or negative association between two or more variables. A perfect correlation results in $r = 1$.

To answer Research Question 1, Pearson correlations were calculated to assess whether a significant relationship exists between the constructs of teacher preparation pathway and perceptions of position fit among the beginning secondary teachers. The

Pearson product-moment correlation test revealed only one statistically significant correlation. This finding was between the teachers' perception of their position fit at the campus and their views on student discipline ($p = .022$). Although the finding was statistically significant, the effect size was small. No other any significant correlations between the factors were found, at the $p < .05$ level. The correlations among the factors ranged from $r = -.141$ to $r = -.003$. For this study, the results suggest that teacher preparation pathway is not correlated with the beginning teachers' perceptions of position fit. This finding was not expected and may be attributed to the unequal number of traditionally prepared teachers versus those that were alternatively certified. However, it shows that the type of pre-service teacher preparation does not impact the perceptions of position fit of the participants in this study. Table 7 and Table 8 summarize the correlations.

Table 7

Correlations of Teacher Preparation Pathway and Perceptions of Position Fit (Overall)

		TchrPreP	PFTOTAL
TchrPreP	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	259	
PFTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	-.069	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.272	
	N	259	259

Note. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). TchrPreP = Teacher Preparation Pathway. PFTOTAL = Total of Position Fit in Teaching Assignment and Position Fit at Campus.

Table 8

Correlations of Teacher Preparation Pathway and Perceptions of Position Fit (Individual)

		TchrPreP
PFTA – Your subject matter knowledge and expertise	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.103 .094 267
PFTA – Your subject matter interests	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.011 .858 267
PFTA – Other skills and talents that you have	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.088 .152 267
PFTA – The grade level that you would prefer to teach	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.003 .962 267
PFTA – The type of student population you would prefer to teach	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.086 .163 267
PFC – Your own educational philosophy	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.060 .329 267
PFC – The amount of autonomy you would like to have as a teacher	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.118 .055 267
PFC – Your own views on student discipline	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.141* .022 267
PFC – The amount of collaboration or teamwork you would like with colleagues	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.084 .171 267
PFC – The amount of input or influence you would like to have on campus-wide decisions	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.057 .358 267
PFC – The amount of input or influence you would like to have on grade-level decisions	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	-.046 .459 267

Note. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). PFTA = Position Fit in Teaching Assignment; PFC = Position Fit at Campus. TchrPreP = Teacher Preparation Pathway.

Job Satisfaction

The beginning secondary teachers' level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction with teaching and at their school campus was measured by two items in the 'General Information' section of the *SSTQ*. The two items were scored utilizing a 7-Point Likert scale ranging from 7 (very satisfied) to 1 (very dissatisfied): 1) So far, how satisfied are you with teaching? and 2) So far, how satisfied are you with your school as a place to teach? To obtain a score for each subscale, the average score was calculated. A higher score indicated a higher level of job satisfaction. A lower score indicated a higher level of dissatisfaction. The teachers' satisfaction scores ranged from somewhat satisfied to satisfy with teaching and with their school campus as a place to teach. Teachers were more satisfied with their teaching assignment as opposed to their school campus. Table 9 depicts the mean scores of job satisfaction among the novice secondary teachers with teaching and at their school campus.

Table 9

Mean Scores of Job Satisfaction

Statement (GIQ)	N	M	SD
1. So far, how satisfied are you with teaching?	265	5.96	1.34
2. So far, how satisfied are you with your school as a place to teach?	267	5.57	1.62

Note: N = 267. Section contains two self-report items. GIQ = General Information Question.

Additionally, Table 10 shows that job satisfaction questions GIQ 11 and GIQ 12 are highly correlated. There was a significant relationship between the teachers' job

satisfaction with their teaching assignment and their job satisfaction at their school campus, $r = .63, p < .01$.

Table 10

Correlations of Job Satisfaction

		Job Satisfaction with teaching	Job Satisfaction with campus
GIQ 11	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
	N	265	
GIQ 12	Pearson Correlation	.629**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	265	267

Note. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). GIQ 11 = Job Satisfaction with teaching; GIQ 12 = Job Satisfaction with campus.

Research Question 2: Does a significant relationship exist between the perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction among beginning secondary teachers? To examine if a significant relationship exists between perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction, a Pearson correlation was conducted. For this study, the results reveal that position fit is significantly correlated with job satisfaction with teaching, $r = .51, p < .01$. Additionally, the results indicate there was a significant relationship between position fit and job satisfaction at the school campus, $r = .65, p < .01$. Table 11 illustrates these findings.

Table 11

Correlations of Position Fit (TOTAL) and Job Satisfaction

		Job Satisfaction with teaching GIQ 11	Job Satisfaction with campus GIQ 12
PFTOTAL	Pearson Correlation	.509**	.645**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000
	N	265	267

Note. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). PFTOTAL = Total of Position Fit in Teaching Assignment and Position Fit at Campus.

Furthermore, across the dataset, job satisfaction and position fit are moderately correlated and there is a moderate effect size, $.5 < .8$. These resulting correlation coefficients are presented in Table 12.

Table 12

Correlations of Perceptions of Position Fit and Job Satisfaction

		Job Satisfaction with teaching GIQ 11	Job Satisfaction with campus GIQ 12
PFTA – Your subject matter knowledge and expertise	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.228 .000 265	.171 .005 267
PFTA – Your subject matter interests	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.337 .000 265	.277 .000 267
PFTA – Other skills and talents that you have	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.290 .000 265	.268 .000 267
PFTA – The grade level that you would prefer to teach	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.394 .000 265	.341 .000 267
PFTA – The type of student population you would prefer to teach	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.453 .000 265	.471 .000 267
PFC – Your own educational philosophy	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.396 .000 265	.599 .000 267
PFC – The amount of autonomy you would like to have as a teacher	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.353 .000 265	.434 .000 267
PFC – Your own views on student discipline	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.332 .000 265	.536 .000 267
PFC – The amount of collaboration or teamwork you would like with colleagues	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.283 .000 265	.493 .000 267
PFC – The amount of input or influence you would like to have on campus-wide decisions	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.342 .000 265	.513 .000 267
PFC – The amount of input or influence you would like to have on grade-level decisions	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.317 .000 265	.485 .000 267

Note. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Correlations > .32 are in boldface. PFTA = Position Fit in Teaching Assignment; PFC = Position Fit at Campus.

Teacher Retention

The novice teachers' attrition and retention data were extracted from the SBEC database, with the assistance of a CREATE liaison. Teacher retention data for the study population was tracked over a three-year time period to determine which teachers from

the 2009 – 2010 school year were still teaching and/or had left the profession by the 2011 – 2012 school year. These data allowed the researcher to capture 3-year and 4-year retention rates for the study population. Therefore, the 2009 – 2010 cohort was comprised of 1st year and 2nd year teachers. Additionally, the 2010 – 2011 cohort consisted of the same teachers in their 2nd year and/or 3rd year of teaching. Finally, the 2011 – 2012 cohort was comprised of the study population in their 3rd year and/or 4th year of teaching. For this study, the teacher retention rates were relatively high, being 95.5 % during the 2010 – 2011 school year (2-year and 3-year retention rate) and 84.6% during the 2011 – 2012 school year (3-year and 4- year retention rate). This represents a loss of forty-one teachers over the course of the three years, which is about 15% of the entire study population. This finding was not expected and potential causes will be discussed in Chapter 5. Another interesting finding was found when comparing the retention rate of those teachers who sought the university-based teacher preparation route as opposed to those who desired the alternative certification route. The retention rates were relatively stable for each group over the three years. Additionally, only 4.1% of the university-based teachers left the profession as opposed to 11.2% of alternatively certified teachers. This finding is similar to national trends when comparing the rate at which traditionally certified teachers leave the profession versus alternatively certified teachers. However, the findings also showed that teacher preparation route did not impact teacher retention for the participants in this study. The teacher retention results are depicted in Table 13.

Table 13

Teacher Retention Rates

Teacher Preparation Pathway	2009 – 2010 School Year		2010 – 2011 School Year		2011 – 2012 School Year	
	1 st Yr and 2 nd Yr Teachers		2 nd Yr and 3 rd Yr Teachers		3 rd Yr and 4 th Yr Teachers	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>University-Based Programs</i>	108	40.4	102	40.0	97	42.9
Traditional	72	27.0	66	25.8	65	28.8
University Post-Bac	26	9.7	26	10.2	23	10.3
University ACP	10	3.7	10	3.9	9	4.0
<i>Alternative Certification Programs</i>	159	59.6	153	60.0	129	57.1
Private ACP	115	43.1	112	43.9	98	43.4
School District ACP	23	8.6	23	9.0	17	7.5
Service Center ACP	13	4.9	12	4.7	10	4.4
No Formal Teacher Prep	1	0.4	1	0.4	1	0.4
Other ACP	7	2.6	5	2.0	3	1.3
TOTAL	267	100.0	255	95.5	226	84.6

Note. N = 267. Loss of teachers is represented in boldface.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant relationship between job satisfaction and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers? To examine if a significant

relationship exists between the constructs of job satisfaction and teacher retention, correlations between the two were analyzed. The construct of job satisfaction, an independent variable, was quantified from questions on the survey. However, the construct “retention” is a dependent variable. In addition, job satisfaction is a continuous variable and teacher retention is a dichotomous variable. Therefore, a point-biserial correlation was performed. For this study, the findings suggest that job satisfaction and teacher retention were statistically significant in the 2011-2012 school year, but not

during the 2010-2011 school year. During the 2010 – 2011 school year, the point-biserial correlation coefficient was $r_{pb} = .013$, $p > .05$. However, in the 2011 – 2012 school year, the point-biserial correlation coefficient was $r_{pb} = .132$, which has a two-tailed significance value of .032. Table 14 illustrates the results of the correlations.

Table 14

Correlations of Job Satisfaction and Teacher Retention

		Teacher Retention 2010-2011	Teacher Retention 2011-2012
JOBSATTOTAL	Correlation Coefficient	.013	.132*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.837	.032
	N	264	264

Note. *Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). JobSatTotal = Total of Job Satisfaction in Teaching Assignment and Job Satisfaction at Campus.

Research Question 4: Is there a significant relationship between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers? A point-biserial correlation also was performed to examine if a significant relationship exists between the constructs of perceptions of position fit, an independent variable, and retention, a dependent variable. Similar to the findings in research question three, perceptions of position fit and retention were statistically significant in the 2011-2012 school year, but not during the 2010-2011 school year. During the 2010 – 2011 school year, the point-biserial correlation coefficient was $r_{pb} = .020$. However, in the 2011 – 2012 school year, the point-biserial correlation coefficient was $r_{pb} = .175$, which has a two-tailed significance value of .004. Table 15 presents the results of the correlations.

Table 15

Correlations of Perceptions of Position Fit and Teacher Retention

		Teacher Retention 2010-2011	Teacher Retention 2011-2012
PFTOTAL	Correlation Coefficient	.020	.175**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.740	.004
	N	266	266

Note. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). PFTOTAL = Total of Position Fit in Teaching Assignment and Position Fit at Campus.

Research Question 5: Which independent variable in the conceptual framework is the best predictor for teacher retention? As an exploratory measure to explain the variance accounted for in each variable, a multiple regression was performed. A regression was used to compare the variables to determine which independent variable of teacher preparation pathway, teacher perception of position fit and job satisfaction was the best predictor for the dependent variable, teacher retention.

Correlation and multiple regression analyses were conducted and the findings indicated that during the 2010 – 2011 school year, none of the three independent variables (teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction) were significant or explained the dependent variable, teacher retention. The multiple regression model with all three predictors produced $R^2 = .004$, $F(3, 252) = .377$, $p > .05$. In this study, $R = .067$, which tells that the independent variables had little to no effect on teacher retention. In addition, .4 % of the variation in teacher retention is accounted for through the combined linear effects of the predictor variables. Additionally, as can be seen in Table 15, teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction did not have significant regression weights, indicating these variables did not contribute to the multiple regression

model. Therefore, the model is not statistically significant. Also, this indicates that teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction did not meet the necessary criteria to significantly impact teacher retention. Table 16 summarizes the descriptive statistics and analysis results.

Table 16

*Summary statistics, correlations and results from the regression analysis,
2010 – 2011 School Year*

Variable	Mean	SD	Correlation with Tchr Ret 2010-2011
Tchr Ret 2010-2011	.04	.185	
PFTOTAL	3.897	.662	.292
TchrPreP	1.59	.494	.191
JobSatTOTAL	5.746	1.333	.332

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.067 ^a	.004	-.007	.185

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.039	3	.013	.377	.770 ^a
	Residual	8.645	252	.034		
	Total	8.684	255			

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	Sig.
1 (Constant)	.111	.081		.173
PFTOTAL	-.010	.023	-.036	.658
TchrPreP	-.021	.024	-.057	.367
JobSatTOTAL	.000	.011	-.003	.974

Note. R Squared = .004 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007). $p = .05$. Tchr Ret 2010-2011 = Teacher Retention during the 2010-2011 school year. TchrPreP = Teacher Preparation Pathway. PFTOTAL = Total of Position Fit in Teaching Assignment and Position Fit at Campus. JobSatTOTAL = Total of Job Satisfaction in Teaching Assignment and Job Satisfaction at Campus. For Model Summary – a. Predictors: (Constant), JobSatTOTAL, TchrPreP, PFTOTAL. For ANOVA – a. Predictors: (Constant), JobSatTOTAL, TchrPreP, PFTOTAL; b. Dependent Variable: Tchr Ret 2010-2011. For Coefficients – a. Dependent Variable: Tchr Ret 2010-2011.

The correlation and multiple regression analyses conducted for the 2011 – 2012 school year indicated that the three independent variables (teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction) were statistically significant and contributing predictors for the dependent variable, teacher retention. The multiple regression model with all three predictors produced $R^2 = .059$, $F(3, 252) = 5.259$, $p < .05$. However, the data revealed that $R = .243$, which shows that the independent variables have a small effect of on teacher retention, but they are significant. In addition, 4.8 % of the variation in teacher retention is accounted for through the combined linear effects of the predictor variables. Moreover, the position fit and job satisfaction variables were highly correlated ($p < .001$). Additionally, as can be seen in Table 17, teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction also have significant regression weights, indicating these variables did contribute to the multiple regression model. Therefore, the model is statistically significant. This indicates that teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction met the necessary criteria to significantly impact teacher retention. Furthermore, in this study, position fit showed to be the best contributor or predictor for teacher retention during the 2011 – 2012 school year. Table 17 displays the descriptive statistics and analysis results.

Table 17

*Summary statistics, correlations and results from the regression analysis,
2011 – 2012 School Year*

Variable	Mean	SD	Correlation with Tchr Ret 2011-2012
Tchr Ret 2011-2012	.14	.348	
PFTOTAL	3.897	.662	.000
TchrPreP	1.59	.494	.037
JobSatTOTAL	5.746	1.333	.001

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.243 ^a	.059	.048	.340

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.823	3	.608	5.259	.002 ^a
	Residual	29.115	252	.116		
	Total	30.937	255			

Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	Sig.
1 (Constant)	.455	.149		.002
PFTOTAL	-.109	.032	-.208	.001
TchrPreP	.074	.043	.105	.088
JobSatTOTAL	-.026	.021	-.100	.213

Note. R Squared = .004 (Adjusted R Squared = -.007). $p = .05$. Tchr Ret 2011-2012 = Teacher Retention during the 2011-2012 school year. TchrPreP = Teacher Preparation Pathway. PFTOTAL = Total of Position Fit in Teaching Assignment and Position Fit at Campus. JobSatTOTAL = Total of Job Satisfaction in Teaching Assignment and Job Satisfaction at Campus. For Model Summary – a. Predictors: (Constant), JobSatTOTAL, TchrPreP, PFTOTAL. For ANOVA – a. Predictors: (Constant), JobSatTOTAL, TchrPreP, PFTOTAL; b. Dependent Variable: Tchr Ret 2011-2012. For Coefficients – a. Dependent Variable: Tchr Ret 2011-2012.

Summary

In this chapter, quantitative data were analyzed and presented in an effort to answer the five research questions. Quantitative measures included various correlation analyses of one survey instrument, the Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire, using SPSS. Bivariate correlations were performed for Research Questions 1 and 2, point-

biserial correlations were performed for Research Questions 3 and 4, and multiple regression analyses were performed for Research Question 5. It was found that no correlation exists between the beginning secondary teachers' preparation pathway and their perceptions of position fit (Research Question 1). A significant relationship was found between the beginning secondary teachers' perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction (Research Question 2). In addition, for this study it was found that no correlation existed between job satisfaction and teacher retention during the 2010 – 2011 school year. However, significant correlations were found between job satisfaction and teacher retention during the 2011 – 2012 school year (Research Question 3). Findings for the next research question mirrored those found in Research Question 3. No correlations were found to exist between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among the beginning secondary teachers during the 2010 – 2011 school year. However, significant correlations were found to exist between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention during the 2011 – 2012 school year (Research Question 4). Finally, in this study, findings from the multiple regression analyses determined that during the 2010 – 2011 school year, the three independent variables of teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction were not statistically significant and were not contributing predictors for the dependent variable, teacher retention. However, during the 2011 – 2012 school year, all three of the independent variables were found to be statistically significant and were good predictors for teacher retention. Moreover, position fit showed to be the best predictor for teacher retention during this particular school year (Research Question 5).

Chapter 5 presents a summary, conclusions, and implications of the findings. In addition, recommendations for future research are offered.

Chapter V

Discussion

This chapter presents a summary of the study and significant conclusions drawn from the data presented in Chapter 4. Further discussion regarding the interpretations of data, implications for action and recommendations for future research are also covered in this chapter.

Summary of Research Need

Recruiting and retaining qualified and competent teachers has a significant impact on teacher quality. All students need highly-qualified, experienced teachers in their classrooms. But the need is extremely great in America's middle and high schools. Researchers and educators are in agreement that the single most important factor in determining student performance is the quality of his or her teachers (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). Retaining secondary teachers once they enter the teaching profession helps to keep classrooms filled with quality teachers. The turnover problem, although high for the entire teaching occupation, affects beginning teachers more than others. Nearly 30% of novice teachers leave the profession within five years of entering teaching (Darling-Hammond, 1999). Ingersoll and Smith (2003) reported that 40-50% of new teachers leave within the first five years of entry into teaching. This is especially true for novice middle school and high school teachers. In middle schools specifically, teacher shortages tend to be even more pronounced than at various other certification levels (Thornton, 2004). The same holds true for beginning high school teachers. Furthermore, higher rates of teacher turnover are associated with poorer student outcomes (Fuller, Young, & Baker, 2007).

Teacher shortages, especially in high demand areas such as mathematics, science, and special education, have become a major concern not only nationally, but also regionally (Cochran-Smith, 2004). According to the TBEC (2012), Texas lags in recruiting and retaining secondary math and science teachers, followed by bilingual teachers. Too many teachers, both veterans and novices, are leaving the profession (Ingersoll, 2001). Several research studies have identified a variety of reasons and factors that impact teacher retention. These include teachers' preparation experiences and pathways into teaching (Boyd et al., 2009), the relationship between traditional and alternative certification programs and public school teachers' preparedness to teach, experiences during the first year of teaching, and job satisfaction (Cohen, 2005), job dissatisfaction (Rhodes et al., 2004; Ingersoll, 2001), position match or fit (Liu & Johnson, 2006), general working conditions in school (Brunetti, 2001), and salary and benefits (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2002; Flowers, 2004; Voke, 2003). The critical problems of first-year teachers leaving the profession are also documented in the literature (Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005). However, although limited, some studies have also identified reasons that influence retention specifically among beginning secondary teachers. These include lack of administrative support, collegiality, and classroom management (Bang, Kern, Luft, & Roehrig, 2007); job satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Weiqi, 2007); and the hiring process, teacher selection and position fit (Liu, 2005; O'Donovan, 2012). Retaining quality teachers must be a concern for all those involved in the education process. Therefore, understanding the relationships among the factors that may impact beginning secondary teachers' retention is critical.

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teacher preparation pathway and perceptions of position fit among beginning secondary teachers. This study also analyzed the relationship between perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction among the new teachers. Additionally, this study examined if a relationship existed between job satisfaction and teacher retention and between the teachers' perceptions of position fit and retention. Finally, this study identified which independent variable of teacher preparation pathway, teacher perception of position fit and job satisfaction was the best predictor for the dependent variable, teacher retention.

Research Questions

1. *Does a significant relationship exist between pathway of teacher preparation and perceptions of position fit among beginning secondary teachers?*
2. *Does a significant relationship exist between the perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction among beginning secondary teachers?*
3. *Is there a significant relationship between job satisfaction and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers?*
4. *Is there a significant relationship between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers?*
5. *Which independent variable (teacher preparation pathway, teacher perception of position fit, or job satisfaction) is the best predictor for teacher retention?*

Review of the Methodology

In regard to Research Question 1, a bivariate correlation was performed, but no statistically significant result was found when examining the relationship between teacher preparation pathway and perceptions of position fit among the beginning secondary teachers. For Research Question 2, a bivariate correlation also was performed and revealed a statistically significant relationship between the beginning teachers' perceptions of position fit and their job satisfaction. A point-biserial correlation was performed for Research Question 3. No correlations were found between job satisfaction and teacher retention during the 2010 – 2011 school year. However, significant correlations were found between job satisfaction and teacher retention during the 2011 – 2012 school year. For Research Question 4, a point-biserial correlation also was performed. No correlations were found to exist between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among the beginning secondary teachers during the 2010 – 2011 school year. However, significant correlations were found to exist between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention during the 2011 – 2012 school year. In regard to Research Question 5, findings from the multiple regression analyses determined that during the 2010 – 2011 school year, the three independent variables of teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction were not statistically significant and were not contributing predictors for the dependent variable, teacher retention. However, during the 2011 – 2012 school year, all three of the independent variables were found to be statistically significant and were good predictors for teacher retention. Moreover, position fit showed to be the best predictor for teacher retention during 2011-2012 school year.

Discussion of Results

Research Question 1: Does a significant relationship exist between pathway of teacher preparation and perceptions of position fit among beginning secondary teachers?

No significant difference was found when examining the relationship between teacher preparation pathway and perceptions of position fit among beginning secondary teachers. Teacher preparation route does not show to be a predictor of beginning teachers' perceptions of their position fit at their campus nor with their teaching assignment. The researcher hypothesized there would be a difference in the perceptions of position fit among beginning teachers who were trained through university-based pathways versus beginning teachers who were trained via an alternative-certification route because the training within each type of program is so varied. However, in this study the data revealed that a relationship does not exist between the type of teacher preparation route and the teachers' perceptions of position fit. These findings were not expected. The quality of the teacher preparation routes seemed comparable, since there was no difference found in the beginning teachers' perceptions of their position fit in regards to their teacher preparation route. Nevertheless, the only statistically significant finding was between the teachers' perception of their position fit at the campus and their views on student discipline ($p = .022$). This could be due to the fact that a majority of teachers in this study indicated student discipline to be a major factor in their dissatisfaction with teaching at a particular campus.

Alternative certification programs are now the largest source of new teachers in the state of Texas (Texas Business & Education Coalition, 2012). This seems to mirror

the sample population in this study. In this study, 40.4% of the study sample represented teachers who attended a university-based teacher preparation program (traditional, university post-bac, and university ACP); whereas, 59.6% of the sample represented alternatively prepared teachers (private, school district and service center alternative certification programs). Only 27% ($N = 72$) of teachers in this study completed a traditional university-based certification program. This exemplifies the fact that more teachers are seeking teaching certification via the alternative certification route.

The beginning secondary teachers' perceptions of how well their teaching assignment and campus fit (position fit) their content knowledge, skills, expertise and professional dispositions was measured and the scores were obtained using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 5 (very good fit) to 1 (very poor fit). As noted in Chapter 4, the mean scores for perceptions of position fit with teaching assignment indicate the teachers perceived their teaching assignments to be a good fit or match with their subject matter knowledge ($M = 4.51$), subject matter interests ($M = 4.45$), skills and talents ($M = 4.06$), grade level you prefer to teach ($M = 4.17$) and type of student population you would prefer to teach ($M = 3.94$). Additionally, the mean scores indicated the teachers perceived their school campus to be a moderate to good fit with their educational philosophy ($M = 3.76$), amount of autonomy you'd like as a teacher ($M = 3.99$), your own views on student discipline ($M = 3.36$), the amount of collaboration desired with colleagues ($M = 3.68$), the amount of influence you'd like on campus-wide decisions ($M = 3.43$) and amount of influence you'd like on school-wide decisions ($M = 3.62$). It is interesting to note that the factors with the lowest scores are the teachers' perception as to whether the campus is a good fit with the teachers' own views on student discipline and

the amount of influence the teacher would like to have on campus-wide decisions. Additionally, it is interesting to note that the position fit at campus scores were not as high as the scores for the teachers' perceptions of their position fit with their teaching assignment. This implies that the teachers perceived their teaching assignment to be a better fit for them than their school campus. In order to retain novice teachers at a particular school campus, it is important to understand what factors and conditions in their working environment may influence and impact the level of comfort a new teacher may experience in the new teaching position. Understanding these campus-level factors may improve the teachers' perceptions about their teaching position at their school campus and may decrease the teachers' decision to migrate to another school campus or leave the teaching profession entirely.

Due to limited research conducted on the relationship between teacher preparation pathway and perceptions of position fit among beginning secondary teachers, the researcher was unable to report how these particular findings relate to previous research findings. However, what is important to note is that these findings are in line with Tai, Liu and Fan's (2007) study in which they reported that teacher certification has evolved from the familiar college and university-based teacher education programs to a multitude of different forms and formats. For example, some of the participants in this study have been certified via private, school district and service center ACPs. Additionally, the findings were similar to Liu's (2005) study in which new teachers were surveyed about their hiring process and their perception of position fit. Liu found that new teachers who reported that the hiring process gave them a comprehensive and accurate preview of their school also reported higher levels of fit with their schools. However, these findings

refute the Darling-Hammond et al. (2002) study in which beginning teachers were surveyed regarding their views on their preparation for teaching, beliefs and practice, and plans to remain in teaching. In their study, teachers prepared in university-based teacher education programs felt significantly better prepared than those prepared through alternative programs or without preparation. However, in this study, the findings indicate no significant differences were found between teachers certified via university-based programs and ACPs.

It is also important to note that the findings in this study may be attributed to the fact that the districts in this study utilized similar hiring practices and interviewing techniques during the selection process for their teachers. All teachers, regardless of their certification route, were required to submit similar hiring documents and artifacts (resumes, portfolios, lessons, and so forth) during the hiring process. Additionally, a majority of the teachers reported having information-rich interviews, in which they were provided enough information from the employer and ample opportunity to determine if the position was a match between their skills and those demanded by the job and the campus culture. In this study, despite the uneven proportions of teachers certified via university-based teacher preparation routes versus those who were certified via the various ACP routes, all teachers experienced similar hiring processes in which they were provided with a comprehensive preview of their position and campus expectations.

Research Question 2: Does a significant relationship exist between the perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction among beginning secondary teachers?

The researcher hypothesized a significant relationship would exist between perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction among the beginning secondary teachers

based on the preliminary data which depicted high mean scores for both the position fit and job satisfaction variables. The teachers' satisfaction scores ranged from somewhat satisfied to satisfied with teaching and with their school campus as a place to teach ($M = 5.57$). Teachers were a bit more satisfied with their teaching assignment ($M = 5.96$) as opposed to their school campus. As stated in the findings for Research Question 1, the beginning secondary teachers' perceptions of position fit with their teaching assignment was a bit higher than the mean scores for position fit at campus. The average mean score for perceptions of position fit with teaching assignment was $M = 4.23$, compared to an average mean score of $M = 3.64$, for perceptions of position fit at campus. This implies that teachers may be happier with what they're doing as opposed to where they are teaching. These findings are consistent with those of Liu and Johnson (2006), in which they randomly sampled 486 first-year and second-year teachers in California, Florida, Massachusetts, and Michigan about the fit between new teachers and their jobs and between new teachers and their schools. Their findings showed that overall, new teachers in the pooled group of four states reported a good fit with their job ($M = 4.04$) and just a moderate to good fit with their school ($M = 3.50$). Additionally, the results of this study reveal that position fit is significantly correlated with job satisfaction with teaching, $r = .51, p < .01$. Likewise, the results indicate there was a significant relationship between position fit and job satisfaction at the school campus, $r = .65, p < .01$.

The reader will note that the most significant correlations dealt with the following survey items: your subject matter interests, the grade level that you would prefer to teach, the type of student population you would prefer to teach, your own educational

philosophy, the amount of autonomy you would like to have as a teacher, your own views on student discipline and the amount of input or influence you would like to have on campus-wide decisions. Interestingly, in this study, the factors that greatly influenced job satisfaction with teaching was the type of student the teacher would prefer to teach ($r = .453$) and the teachers' own educational philosophy ($r = .396$). In addition, the factors that had the greatest impact on the beginning teachers' job satisfaction at their campus was the teachers own educational philosophy ($r = .599$), the teachers' own views on student discipline ($r = .536$), and the amount of input or influence the teacher would like to have on campus-wide decisions ($r = .513$). These findings are consistent with the literature in substantiating some of the factors that may influence job satisfaction.

Perceptions of position fit with campus and job satisfaction are highly correlated and supports the literature which states that the more collaboration teachers have with colleagues, the more decisions beginning teachers are allowed to make at the grade-level and campus-wide level, the more satisfied they are in their position and at their campus. These findings support Ingersoll's (2003) study utilizing the Schools and Staffing Survey, in which he found that of those teachers dissatisfied with teaching, 24% cited student discipline problems. Also, the findings support the Wayman et al. (2003) study, in which the researchers documented that beginning teachers rank their work-related concerns similarly, regardless of their preparation route, traditional or alternative, to teaching. This too echoed previous research by Luekens et al. (2004), in which they found that public school teachers moved to a new school because of a desire for a better teaching assignment (40%), dissatisfaction with support from administrators (38%), and dissatisfaction with working conditions. Moreover, these results are consistent with a

study conducted by Weiss (1999), who examined data on first-year teachers in a Schools and Staffing Survey and found that teachers expressed an intention to remain in the profession when they perceived strong support from administrators and colleagues together with control over disciplinary problems.

Research Question 3: Is there a significant relationship between job satisfaction and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers?

The researcher hypothesized a significant relationship would exist between job satisfaction and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers. No correlations were found during the 2010 – 2011 school year; however, job satisfaction and teacher retention were statistically significant during the 2011-2012 school year. Additionally, no practical significance existed as there was very little variability in the study population. Hence, very few people left their teaching positions. Correlations depend on variability, and there is not enough variability to say that job satisfaction has any effect on teacher retention. This finding supports a study conducted by Boyd (2011) in which the relationship between job satisfaction and intention to remain in teaching was examined among 89 beginning teachers. No significant differences in job satisfaction and intention to leave in beginning teachers relative to teacher preparation (traditional versus alternative methods) were found.

Preliminary results from the job satisfaction scores implied that the teacher retention rates of the sample population would be relatively higher than expected. This proved to be true for this study. In this study, the teacher retention rates were relatively high, being 95.5 % (255 of 267) during the 2010 – 2011 school year (2-year and 3-year retention rate) and 84.6% (235 of 267) during the 2011 – 2012 school year (3-year and 4-year

retention rate). During the 2010 – 2011 school year, six teachers trained via the university-based route and six teachers prepared via the alternative certification route left teaching. During the 2011 – 2012 school year, 11 teachers trained via the university-based route left teaching and 30 teachers trained via ACPs left the field of teaching. Therefore, in this study, almost three times as many ACP trained teachers left the teaching field compared to those teachers who were certified via university-based means. This result is congruent with the Boyd et al. (2006) findings that teachers trained via ACPs are more likely to leave the profession than teachers trained from more traditional routes. This represents an overall loss of forty-one teachers over the course of the three years, which is about 15% of the entire study population. However, overall only 4.1% of the university-based teachers left the profession as opposed to the 11.2% of alternatively certified teachers in the study that left the teaching profession. This finding was not expected and may be attributed to the larger number of respondents who were alternatively certified. The researcher expected a larger percentage of beginning teachers in the study to leave the teaching profession. Moreover, the findings show that teacher preparation route does not impact teacher retention for the participants in this study.

In this study, the findings are not consistent with the national trend in which approximately 15% of new teachers leave the profession within the first year, 30% within 3 years, and up to 50% leave within 5 years (Ingersoll, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). However, the greater proportion of teachers left in their third or fourth year of teaching, and this fact is consistent with national statistics. The high retention levels found in this study can be possibly attributed to the recession and economic hardships being experienced throughout the country. During the time the study participants were initially

surveyed, the United States had been experiencing a devastating recession. Although the recession officially ended in June 2009, school districts from all over the country were grappling with state budget proposals that included massive spending cuts and teacher layoffs. According to the McKinley (2011) the state of Texas, in particular, was faced with over \$4 billion in cuts to public schools, one of the largest cuts to public education since World War II. Therefore, due to the instability of the economy, possibly people are afraid of losing their jobs and are staying in their positions longer. Consequently, those teachers who would normally retire are now waiting longer to retire. So, those teachers with jobs are holding on to their positions whether they are completely satisfied with their positions or not. Hence, the high retention rates found in this study could possibly be impacted by the current economic climate in the U.S., and particularly in Texas.

Finally, as stated earlier in this chapter, the beginning secondary teachers have reported a variety of work-related and environmental factors that have impacted their job satisfaction with their teaching assignment and at their campus. Of the teachers who left during the study, 92% reported being satisfied to very satisfy with teaching as opposed to only 75% who were satisfied with teaching at their campus. During the 2010 – 2011 school year, teachers in districts 3 and 12 experienced the largest attrition rates. District 3 is classified as an urban district and District 12 is classified as an independent town. Not surprisingly, these teachers reported dissatisfaction with teaching at their school campus. During the 2011 – 2012 school year, districts 2, 11, 12 and 7, respectively experienced the greatest attrition. Districts 2, 7 and 11 are all classified as urban districts. Interestingly, all of the teachers who left from districts 2 and 7 were alternatively certified teachers. Furthermore, the majority of teachers who left from districts 2 and 12

were satisfied with their teaching assignment, but dissatisfied with teaching at their campuses. These results support the Gandara et al. (2005) findings in which teachers indicated that they were unprepared for the challenges they face in urban schools.

These findings are supported by Sands (2011) in which a group of teachers were surveyed to examine their job satisfaction and critical factors that influence teacher retention. It was found that although the teachers derived joy from close relationships with the students, a large fraction of the teachers were disappointed in the environmental factors of their jobs. Additionally, this supports a study conducted by Weiss (1999), who examined data on first-year teachers in a Schools and Staffing Survey. It was found that teachers expressed an intention to remain in the profession when they perceived strong support from administrators and colleagues together with control over disciplinary problems. Similarly, Ingersoll (2003) found that teachers in schools with more administrative support and fewer student discipline problems were less likely to leave teaching or move to other districts. Additionally, these findings are consistent with Cohen's (2005) study in which both traditionally and alternatively certified teachers consistently ranked their first year experiences low, indicating a lack of support and communication at their school campuses.

Research Question 4: Is there a significant relationship between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers?

The researcher hypothesized that a significant relationship would exist between perceptions of position fit and teacher retention among the beginning secondary teachers. Similar to the findings in research question three, perceptions of position fit and retention were statistically significant in the 2011-2012 school year, however, not during the 2010-

2011 school year. In this study, the findings for this research question echoes the findings from above in Research Question 3.

Research Question 5: Which independent variable (teacher preparation pathway, teacher perception of position fit, or job satisfaction) is the best predictor for teacher retention?

The researcher hypothesized that the independent variables of position fit and job satisfaction would be the best predictors for teacher retention, based on the previous findings in Research Questions 3 and 4. During the 2010 – 2011 school year, the regression model was not significant; neither of the independent variables (teacher preparation pathway, position fit and job satisfaction) showed statistical significance nor were they predictors of teacher retention. In addition, the strength of the relationship among the independent variables on the dependent variable was very weak ($R = .067$). These findings also are consistent with results from Research Questions 3 and 4.

However, during the 2011 – 2012 school year, the model was significant; all three independent variables were statistically significant and predicted teacher retention. Additionally, the results indicated that position fit and job satisfaction were slightly better predictors of retention than teacher preparation pathway. Moreover, position fit showed to be the best predictor for teacher retention during this particular school year. These findings also are consistent with results from Research Questions 3 and 4.

Earlier findings in this study have already suggested that position fit and job satisfaction are highly correlated and that a significant relationship exists between the two variables. This further supports the findings that position and job satisfaction are the best predictors for teacher retention.

There were other variables collected during the study although they were not a part of this particular study. The researcher found some interesting factors that would be beneficial for future research. For example, only 41% of the study sample (N = 110) chose teaching as their first career or job after college (first-career entrants). Whereas, over 50% of the study population (N = 140) switched to teaching from another field of work (mid-career entrants). Others reported switching to teaching from full-time child-raising (N = 4) or from another permanent job within the field of education (N = 13). In addition, 54% of the sample (N = 145) of beginning secondary teachers reported to most likely remain a classroom teacher for the rest of their career. However, 38% of the study sample (N = 98) stated that they would most likely leave classroom teaching at some point, but plan to stay in the field of education for the rest of their career. Only 9% (N = 24) of the participants conveyed that they will most likely leave classroom teaching at some point and work in another job or field outside of education for the rest of their career. Given these data, the career orientation of the study sample depicts that over half of the participants show a deeper commitment to teaching, as opposed to 47% of the new teachers (N = 122) who already foresee themselves leaving the teaching profession.

Additionally, a majority of the beginning secondary teachers (79%, N = 210) reported high levels of job satisfaction with their teaching assignment. Eleven percent was somewhat satisfied with their teaching assignment and 2% reported high levels of dissatisfaction with their teaching assignment. On the other hand, 69 % (N = 183) reported high levels of job satisfaction at their campus, 14% were somewhat satisfied and 7% were dissatisfied teaching at their campus.

Finally, the novice secondary teachers reported that each of the following factors played a large to critical role in their decision to enter teaching: wanted meaningful work (88.7%), wanted to work with students (85.1%), dissatisfied with previous career (20%), wanted to contribute to society (73.9%), interested in pedagogy-teaching (63.9%), interested in sharing love of subject matter (81.4%), saw pay as attractive (16.2%), and found the daily and yearly schedule attractive (50%). These additional findings can support and dictate future research agendas on teacher retention.

Interpretations and Implications

Based on the results of this study, interpretations and implications can be made about the target population in this study. The findings are beneficial in that it adds to the growing literature on the retention of secondary beginning teachers and factors that influence their retention. This study highlights how important the hiring process is for teacher candidates and school districts in terms of perceptions as to whether a position or school campus is a good fit or match for both the teacher and employer. As the literature supports, if a teacher experiences a comprehensive hiring process, in which a clear and accurate picture of the teaching assignment and school campus is provided, the more likely that teacher will be to make a better decision in selecting a position and campus that matches their professional knowledge, skills and dispositions and the more likely that teacher will remain as a teacher at that campus. Additionally, it was found that the type of pre-service teacher preparation does not impact the perceptions of position fit of the participants. Therefore, it is deemed critical to focus more attention on the actual hiring process to ensure that all teacher candidates secure a position and at a campus that is conducive to both teacher and school. This further implies the importance and

significance that school systems, districts administrators, school principals and teacher candidates should place on the hiring process as being a critical element in determining whether a particular teaching assignment and campus is a good fit for both the employer and teacher. Placing more emphasis, time and effort on the hiring process could prove to be a more cost-effective measure for districts and schools, since the average cost of teacher turnover is about \$8,000 per teacher (Texas Center for Educational Research, 2000). Additionally, it is important that during the hiring process teachers should make sure that the culture and teaching philosophy of the prospective school campus fits their own educational and teaching philosophy.

Based on the findings, administrators of university-based teacher preparation programs and alternative certification programs may want to evaluate the criteria and methods currently being utilized to prepare and select teacher candidates. Additionally, these entities may want to foster greater collaborations with school districts in outlining strategies to retain quality teachers who complete their certification programs.

In this study, a strong relationship was found to exist between the beginning secondary teachers' perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction levels. The findings of this study will add to the limited research on the construct of position fit and its ultimate relationship to job satisfaction and teacher retention. As the literature supports, the more a teacher perceives their position to fit their knowledge, skills, beliefs and dispositions, the more satisfied they are in their position and hence, the longer they will stay in teaching (Liu, 2005). Additionally, based on the findings of this study, of the three independent variables, position fit was the best indicator of teacher retention. Therefore, it is deemed critical to understand what specific perceptions of position fit in their

teaching assignment and at their campus can positively impact job satisfaction and ultimately retention.

Over half of the teachers (54%) in this study reported that they are likely to remain a classroom teacher for the remainder of their career. If principals and school administrators want to increase teacher retention among beginning teachers at their school campus, it is imperative that principals listen to the needs and concerns voiced by their novice teachers. School principals should implement a way to communicate regularly with new teachers to listen to their concerns about their teaching assignments and teaching at their campus. For example, principals could host monthly meetings with the new teachers as a platform to discuss any issues that may arise early on in the new teachers' career at their campus. School principals and administrators should address and assist in troubleshooting any concerns immediately related to the schools working environment. Principals should also support teachers better when matters involve disciplinary procedures and actions with students. Finally, school principals should involve new teachers in all campus-wide decisions so that they have input into the workings of the school environment and their voices are heard. If concerns and issues are addressed early on in the beginning teachers' career, then teachers may be more satisfied with their positions and feel that they have the support of the principal and administrative leaders at their campus. This could possibly increase the levels of satisfaction among new teachers. These efforts also could assist in maintaining high levels of job satisfaction in their teaching assignment and teaching at their school campus.

Moreover, the data imply that job satisfaction is highly correlated with teacher retention. The literature reveals a positive relationship between high levels of job

satisfaction and high levels of retention (Cohen, 2005). In fact, in this study job satisfaction at the campus level is a more significant indicator of teacher retention than job satisfaction with teaching assignment. Therefore, it is essential that districts, school campuses and principals continuously evaluate the job satisfaction levels of their teachers for job satisfaction levels can be a direct indicator of a teachers' intent to remain in teaching or at a particular campus. Implications for school administrators and principals are that a community of support of colleagues is needed for beginning teachers to foster a sense of community among the new teachers. In addition to the recommendations provided above, school principals also should provide more autonomy to teachers and provide teachers with more collegial support so that they will feel valued and less isolated at their campus. This will in turn enhance the novice teachers' job satisfaction.

Furthermore, these efforts could possibly lead to lower levels of teacher attrition.

Committees and procedures need to be in place in order to support our new teachers to foster this sense of community, collaboration and networking with colleagues and school administrators. Johnson et al. (2005) assert that teachers' decision to stay in their current school, transfer to another, or leave teaching for a different career is influenced by the quality of their work with fellow teachers and administrators. Therefore, positive school communities can positively influence the retention of beginning secondary teachers.

Limitations

Limitations of the study do exist as they do with practically all social science research. First, convenience sampling, by nature, has inherent limitations. With this technique, the sample used may not accurately represent the target population (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Although this study attempted to describe a specific group (first-year

and second-year secondary teachers) by using purposive sampling procedures, it is not guaranteed that the group completing the survey is representative of all first-year and second-year secondary teachers. Second, this study relied on archival data from a survey instrument, SSTQ. Therefore, the responses consisted of self-reported data. Two weaknesses in causal-comparative research are lack of randomization and inability to manipulate an independent variable (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Third, as with any survey that contains self-reporting behaviors, social desirability may be present. The participants in the study could respond to certain items based on the way they perceived the researcher, colleagues, principal or school administrator would want them to respond. Fourth, only secondary teachers' data were utilized for the purposes of this study, which means the relationships among the variables of position fit, job satisfaction and retention are only observed and understood from one perspective – the beginning secondary teacher. This could produce skewed results that also lead to incorrect conclusions. Finally, while this study indicates a relationship between some variables, it is important to note teacher retention also may be affected by variables other than beginning secondary teachers' perceptions of position fit and job satisfaction.

Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the results of this study, recommendations for future research can be offered. Researchers should continue collecting data on the factors that impact and influence the retention of secondary beginning teachers. By utilizing archival datasets, comparisons can be made among secondary teachers (middle school teachers and high school teachers) to gain additional insight into the relationships that impact retention of this population of teachers. An essential addition to this research should be to include a

qualitative part, such as an interview or focus group component. Future researchers should consider interviewing novice secondary teachers (individual or group) to gain more insight into why they remain in the teaching profession or why they decide to leave the teaching profession.

Since the retention rates of the beginning secondary teachers in this study were very high, future research into the hiring process of the school districts representative of the study should be conducted to see what processes and procedures were utilized to hire these teachers. Other school districts could possibly replicate these procedures in an effort to better retain teachers in their districts.

Researchers should also consider continuing this study by tracking the five-year retention rate of this study population during the 2012 – 2013 school year to see if the retention levels remain as high as they are currently and how closely the findings match national statistics. In addition, this study was conducted during a time when the U.S. was recovering from one of the world's greatest recessions. The findings in this study will add to the body of literature in regards to retention levels after economic turmoil. Therefore, researchers should also consider replicating this study during a time when the economy is more stable than it is currently, to compare the results to see if the retention levels are consistent with findings from this study.

Moreover, studies that aim to examine teacher retention of STEM teachers (math and science) should be conducted. Over one-third of the study sample represented math, science and technology teachers. Since there is a critical shortage of secondary math and science teachers nationally, future research should analyze the teacher preparation routes,

perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and retention rates specifically of these teachers.

Future studies also could focus on investigating the specific program requirements of the various alternative certification programs (private, school district, service center ACPs) to see how they differ and compare to university-based programs. It will be important for the researcher to accurately define the various ACP programs and for study participants to accurately classify their program as either ACP or university-based. Inaccurate classifications could possibly skew the data. This will add to the limited body of literature on ACPs. Moreover, this will provide a better understanding of the similarities and differences between program requirements for both types of teacher preparation pathways.

In addition, this study contains data that represents teachers from various district classifications (e.g., suburban, urban, rural). Therefore, future studies should explore the perceptions of position fit among beginning secondary teachers by comparing the teachers in these different district classifications. Additionally, future studies should seek to better understand the retention of teachers in urban districts. Teaching in an urban setting is an emerging topic of interest in education. Over 40% of the study population represents secondary beginning teachers teaching in an urban school district. In addition, there is a critical shortage of math and science secondary teachers, especially in urban settings. A focused research agenda on this topic will add to the body of literature on teacher retention in urban settings.

Studies should also be conducted that delve deeper into the factors that influence the beginning secondary teachers' perceptions of their position's fit and their job satisfaction.

Furthermore, the factors that influence beginning teachers' perceptions of their position fit, specifically at their school campus should be further examined. If a teacher enjoys their position or job, but are not comfortable or satisfied teaching at a particular campus, this could potentially affect that teacher's retention at that school. Researchers should examine these varying perceptions of position fit and how it relates to job satisfaction and ultimately teacher retention. Better understanding these factors is critical to maintaining a highly qualified teacher workforce.

Finally, future researchers should consider analyzing other variables that could possibly affect teacher retention among beginning secondary teachers, for example, school environment, students' academic achievement, and teacher gains. In this study, position fit was the best predictor for teacher retention and a significant relationship existed between teachers' perceptions of their position fit and job satisfaction. However, other factors may be better predictors of teacher retention as well. Interviews and focus groups would be good means to collecting this type of information.

Summary

The retention of novice teachers has been an interest of educational researchers for some time. However, fewer studies have been conducted focusing on beginning secondary teachers. Being able to identify factors that influence a beginning teacher's decision to remain in or leave the teaching profession allows for early prevention and intervention of the increasingly high attrition rates at both the middle school and high school levels. School systems will continue to lose a significant number of beginning teachers if they fail to recognize and understand why these teachers are leaving the profession.

This study will be of interest to colleges and universities with pre-service teacher preparation programs. It also will be of interest to school principals and administrators in their attempts to attract and retain quality secondary school teachers and create campus cultures that will promote the success of beginning secondary teachers, such as establishing effective mentoring and induction programs for our new teachers. Finally, this study should be of interest to education policymakers, state legislators, state boards of education and state departments of education to offer greater support to our beginning secondary teachers, such as providing more funding to districts and schools for the initiatives mentioned above. These measures would provide help and assistance to secondary schools in recruiting and retaining highly qualified beginning teachers.

The research presented in this study is another small step in expanding the knowledge of teacher retention. Previous research has not identified the relationships among perceptions of position fit, job satisfaction and teacher retention in the context of teacher preparation pathway in beginning secondary teachers. The researcher would hope this study sparks an interest in other researchers and encourages them to take interest in how these relationships develop and how teacher retention is affected. This study suggests a teacher's perception of how closely a teaching position and campus fit (position fit) their professional knowledge, skills and dispositions is the best predictor of teacher retention. There is limited research on the influence position fit has on teacher retention; however, this area of research is slowly emerging. The findings of this study indicate future research in the areas of position fit, job satisfaction and teacher retention of novice secondary teachers will be beneficial in sustaining a highly qualified teacher workforce.

POSITION FIT, JOB SATISFACTION AND RETENTION

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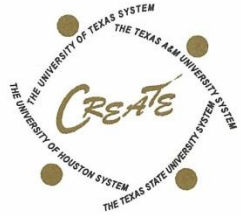
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Appendix A

Permission from CREATE to use the *Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (SSTQ)*



Center for **R**esearch, **E**valuation & **A**dvancement of **T**eacher **E**ducation

March 23, 2012

University of Houston
4800 Calhoun Road, Houston, Texas 77004
Division of Research: IRB

To Whom It May Concern:

This is to certify that Tonya Jeffery, a graduate student in the College of Education at The University of Houston, has permission to utilize CREATE data for her dissertation study entitled, *A Study of Relationships among Perceptions of Position Fit, Job ,Satisfaction and Retention in Texas Secondary Teachers*.

Ms. Jeffery's study is an important extension of a study completed by CREATE last year. If you should have questions or need further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Mona S. Wineburg, Ph.D.
Executive Director

Appendix B

Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire (SSTQ)

Introduction

Your school district has authorized your campus to participate in a study of teacher hiring practices in Texas sponsored by The Texas Public Schools Research Network. The purpose of this study is to describe the employment tools, procedures, and processes the district used when hiring, selecting and assigning you to your present classroom teaching duties.

As a recently employed teacher, you have unique information about how teachers in the district and at your campus are hired. Please share your professional insights with us by taking the time to complete a brief survey. By clicking the "next" button below, you agree to answer the questions in this survey. **All of your responses will remain completely confidential.** Data is collected by CREATE, an independent research organization, so that NO district personnel will see your responses. All responses will be aggregated, and no individually identifiable information will ever be reported.

Instructions for completing the survey:

- Please set aside 15-20 minutes to complete the survey.
- You must complete the survey in one sitting. If you exit the survey before completing it, you will not be able to re-enter the survey, and your answers will not be saved.
- When a question has been answered and the "next button" is selected, you will not be able to return to that question again. Using the back button on the web browser to return to a previous page will cause Survey Monkey to malfunction.
- Please provide responses to ALL questions, even if you have to make your best guess when you are not sure. If you choose "other" as a response to any of the questions, try to specify what you mean by "other" in the space provided.
- Once you've completed the survey, click the "Submit" button on the thank you page to exit the survey. You will be re-directed to the CREATE website.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this survey. Should you have questions, problems, or need additional information, please contact Sherri Lowrey by email at slowrey@createtx.org or by telephone at 936-273-7661.

General Information Q-3-4

*** 3. Please check ALL of the grade levels that are at your current campus.**

☐ K ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12

*** 4. Please check all of the grade levels that YOU currently teach:**

☐ K ☐ 1 ☐ 2 ☐ 3 ☐ 4 ☐ 5 ☐ 6 ☐ 7 ☐ 8 ☐ 9 ☐ 10 ☐ 11 ☐ 12

General Information Q 5-6

*** 5. What SUBJECTS or TYPES OF CLASSES do you currently teach? (Please check all subjects that apply).**

- ☐ General elementary (multi-subject)
- ☐ General middle school (multi-subject)
- ☐ Math
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ English/Language Arts
- ☐ Foreign Language
- ☐ Bilingual Education
- ☐ Special Education
- ☐ History/Social Studies
- ☐ Arts (music, drama, visual arts)
- ☐ Physical Education
- ☐ Other (please specify)

*** 6. Please mark the answer choice that you consider to be your PRIMARY teaching assignment. (Please choose only one answer).**

- ☐ General elementary (multi-subject)
- ☐ General middle school (multi-subject)
- ☐ Math
- ☐ Science
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ English/Language Arts
- ☐ Foreign Language
- ☐ Bilingual Education
- ☐ Special Education
- ☐ History/Social Studies
- ☐ Arts (music, drama, visual arts)
- ☐ Physical Education

General Information Q 9-10

*** 9. Which of the following choices best describes the life or career stage from which you entered teaching?**

- ☐ Teaching is my first career/job after college (not including short-term or temporary work).
- ☐ I switched to teaching from full-time child-raising.
- ☐ I switched to teaching from another field of work.
- ☐ I switched to teaching from another permanent job within the field of education.

*** 10. Which of the following best describes how you view your teaching job?**

- ☐ I most likely will remain a classroom teacher for the rest of my career.
- ☐ I most likely will leave classroom teaching at some point, but I plan to stay in the field of education for the rest of my career.
- ☐ I most likely will leave classroom teaching at some point, and I plan to work in another job(s) outside the field of education for the rest of my career.

General Information Q13



13. How big a role did each of the following factors play in your decision to enter teaching?

	No Role	Small Role	Moderate Role	Large Role	Critical role
(a) Wanted meaningful work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) Wanted to work with students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) Dissatisfied with previous career	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) Wanted to contribute to society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) Interested in pedagogy/teaching	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) Interested in sharing love of subject matter with students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(g) Saw pay as attractive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(h) Found the daily and yearly schedule attractive	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

General Information Q 7-8

~~7.~~ **If you taught last year, did your assignment change?**

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not applicable because this is my first year of full-time teaching

*** 8. Which of the following best describes the teacher preparation program you completed?**

- ☐ Traditional undergraduate teacher preparation program
- ☐ University post baccalaureate teacher preparation program
- ☐ University alternative certification program
- ☐ Private alternative certification program
- ☐ School district certification program
- ☐ Service center certification program
- ☐ No formal teacher preparation
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Hiring Process Q 13*** 13. How closely would you say that your current TEACHING ASSIGNMENT matches the following:**

	Very Poor Match	Poor Match	Moderate Match	Good Match	Very Good Match
(a) Your subject matter knowledge and expertise	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) Your subject matter interests	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) Other skills and talents that you have (e.g., coaching sports, organizing extracurricular activities, or advising students)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) The grade level(s) that you would prefer to teach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) The type of student population you would prefer to teach	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Hiring Process Q14*** 14. How closely would you say that YOUR CAMPUS matches the following:**

	Very Poor Match	Poor Match	Moderate Match	Good Match	Very Good Match
(a) Your own educational philosophy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(b) The amount of autonomy you would like to have as a teacher (i.e., over what and how much to teach)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(c) Your own views on student discipline	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(d) The amount of collaboration or teamwork you would like with colleagues	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(e) The amount of input (or influence) you would like to have on campus-wide decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
(f) The amount of input (or influence) you would like to have on department or grade-level decisions	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

General Information Q 11-12**11. So far, how satisfied are you with TEACHING?**

- ☐ Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ Dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat Dissatisfied
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Very Satisfied

**12. So far, how satisfied are you with YOUR SCHOOL AS A PLACE TO TEACH?**

- ☐ Very Dissatisfied
- ☐ Dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat Dissatisfied
- ☐ Neutral
- ☐ Somewhat Satisfied
- ☐ Satisfied
- ☐ Very Satisfied

III. Background Information Q1-5

The last section of the survey asks five demographic questions.

* **1. What is your age? (Please enter a whole number).**

* **2. Are you female or male?**

☐ Female

☐ Male

* **3. What is your race or ethnicity?**

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native

☐ Black or African American

☐ Asian or Pacific Islander

☐ Hispanic or Latino

☐ White

☐ Other (please specify)

* **4. What is the highest degree or level of schooling that you have completed:**

☐ Bachelor's degree (e.g., BA, AB, BS)

☐ Master's degree (e.g., MA, MS, MEd, EdM, MSW, MAT, MBA, MEng)

☐ Professional degree (e.g., MD, DDS, LLB, JD)

☐ Doctoral degree (e.g., PhD, EdD, PsyD)

* **5. How many years have you taught including this year? (Please enter a whole number).**

End**Thank you for completing the Selection Study Teacher Questionnaire.**

We realize you are a busy professional with many competing time demands. We appreciate your willingness to share your professional experience and insight with us.

The data gathered through the survey will help CREATE and The Texas Public Schools Research Network better understand the teacher selection process in your district. We want to reemphasize that all responses will remain confidential, and no individually identifying information will ever be reported. We will send a copy of the final report to all respondents.

Please click on the submit button and the answers you provided will be counted. You will exit the survey and automatically be directed to the CREATE website.

Appendix C

Human Subjects Approval

UNIVERSITY of **HOUSTON**
DIVISION OF RESEARCH

April 6, 2012

Ms. Tonya Jeffery
c/o Dr. John M. Ramsey
Curriculum and Instruction

Dear Ms. Tonya Jeffery,

Based upon your request for exempt status, an administrative review of your research proposal entitled "A Study of Relationships among Perceptions of Position Fit, Job Satisfaction and Retention in Texas Secondary Teachers" was conducted on March 28, 2012.

At that time, your request for exemption under **Category 4** 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 Alicia Vargas at (713) 743-9215.

Sincerely yours,



Kirstin M. 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 **March 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: 12355-EX