Summer 8-13-2020

An Innovative Approach to Teacher Retention

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An Innovative Approach to Teacher Retention

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A Dissertation

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Doctorate in Educational Leadership

Department of Education

Lynn University

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AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHER RETENTION

Approval of Dissertation in Practice

ABSTRACT

Among the many challenges educational leaders are facing, teacher attrition is most paramount. Not only are teachers with less than five years of experience leaving the field at alarming rates, but the number of teachers with twenty or more years of experience has also decreased by 10% since 2000. Teachers who leave the field often site a lack of support as their primary source of frustration. While school districts across the nation have made efforts to address teacher attrition, induction programs are often managed at the district level and completed solely out of compliance.

After reviewing the literature on teacher retention, attrition, and induction programs, the researchers developed a NewTeacherRetention.com. Unlike most new teacher programs, the website offers support at the school level. Components include Professional Development, Teacher Resources, and Exceptional Education. Most importantly, the website's goal is to offer specific support to new teachers.

Educators were recruited and asked to peruse the various components of the NewTeacherRetention.com. After reviewing the website, participants were then asked to evaluate its effectiveness by completing a brief survey, comprised of demographic, Likert Scale, and open-ended questions. Participants responded favorably (agree or strongly agree) to 88.9% of the Likert Scale questions. The survey results lead the researchers to conclude a resource such as NewTeacherRetention.com can be utilized by a school or school district to help lower teacher attrition.

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ACKOWLEDGEMENTS

Thank you for your support, academically, professionally, and personally. Dr. Lesh, thank you for your patience; your ability to make the most complex processes seem simple and achievable. You are always accessible and ready to offer support.

Lastly, to my friend, colleague, and dissertation partner, Marc Dixon. I am here today because you invited me to take this journey with you. I could not ask for a better partner or a better friend. I am so thankful to you for always having my back.

From Marc: Dr. Kathy Weigel: Doesn't it seem as if 1994 was just a few years ago? You have been such an inspiration to me throughout the years. No words on this page can express what you mean to me! Now, I am wondering what you can get me to do next!

Thank you to my family: Mary D., Sandy, Myles, Alyssa, and Aunt Sandy, for all the love and encouragement to complete this program. You are the best!
Special thanks to Dr. David Youngman, Sandra Robinson, Kia Allen, Susan and James Rodriguez, Ann McKessey, Mr. Q, Jaunice Brown, and the rest of the past and present Atlantic administrative team for your ongoing support.

Lots of love to my wonderful friends: Justin, Shari, Brian, Fabian, Camille, Chris, Lenny, Jeff, and Les for keeping me entertained throughout this process.

Dr. Timothy Gadson: Thank you for "kidnapping" me from Lantana, encouraging me to enter administration, and, more importantly, being a great friend.

Ruthe, what can I say? We went to a pool party and ended up with doctorate degrees! Working on a dissertation is not supposed to be fun, but you made this process a stress-free undertaking. Thank you for being a great partner and a fantastic friend.

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CHAPTER I:

INTRODUCTION

Finding and retaining quality teachers has become a daunting challenge for school districts across the nation. According to the the United States Census (Passy, 2018), the amount of students chosing education as their major has shrunk from 22% in 1975 to less than 10% in 2015. During that same period, the number of teachers that have decided to leave the profession for other careers has increased (Mulvahill , 2019; Owens, 2015). The most alarming portion of the statistics focuses on teachers that are new to the profession.

One of the primary reasons for the current teacher shortage stems from poor working conditions where teachers feel isolated from their colleagues because they are in the classroom. However, the profession requires collaboration. Teaching is driven by connectedness that comes through shared, purposeful teamwork and collaboration (Podolsky, Kini, Bishop, Darling-Hammond, 2016). Over time, this attrition appears to have impacted the most experienced teachers, as seen below in Table 1:

Table 1

Public School Teachers Based on Teaching Experience (Percentages)

Experience	1999-2000	2015-2016
Less than 3 years	11	10
3-9 years	28	28
10-20 years	29	39
More than 20 years	32	22

Source: National Center for Education Statisitics (2018)

Although early retirement could be a contributing factor to the decreasing number of teachers with twenty plus years experience, the fact that a large percentage of new teachers are not making it past their fifth year must also have an impact on longevity. This attrition not only impacts the teaching profession as a whole, but it also prevents students from receiving high-level instruction from experienced educators. This research aims to accomplish the following goal:

- Gather and synthesize research-based practices that will not only help school leaders retain teachers but will also help them grow professionally

Background

When examining the reasons teachers leave the field, competitive salaries are often a topic of discussion. On average, teacher compensation averages 20% less than fellow college graduates (Podolsky et al., 2016). Recent salary trends indicate that this gap is increasing. After adjusting for inflation, Allegretto and Mishel (2018) estimate teacher's yearly salaries have decreased by nearly $1500 over the past twenty years. These statistics demonstrate one of the primary reasons why it is so challenging to recruit and retain teachers.

Despite the aforementioned salary discrepancies, salary is not the primary reason teachers choose to leave the profession. Using several research studies, (Mulvahill, 2018), cited the top five reasons why teachers leave the profession as follows:

- Challenging work conditions- high demands, large classes, excessive paperwork
- Not enough support, not enough respect- from administration, students, or parents
- Testing and data collection-teaching to the test and data collection
- No longer about children's best interests- only test scores matter

- Family takes priority-not enough time for family

Likewise, Lambert (2018) lists burn out, unrealistic expectations, and constant, yet unproductive changes as reasons teachers leave the profession. There is no support in meeting these demands, yet teachers fear scrutiny and criticism if they are unable to manage these demands. As districts focus on testing results, teachers have less freedom to be creative.

School districts across the United States spend a combined $2.2 billion each year due to teacher turnover (Phillips, 2015). Education leaders must repeatedly spend invaluable resources, recruiting, inducting, and training new staff. Many school districts do acknowledge the cost factor to hire teachers and have implemented new teacher programs; however, they are managed at the district level, thus giving schools little or no flexiblity to make adjustments to the plan that may be more fitting to the teacher and school center. Thus leading to school and teacher participation being done for the sole purpose of compliance and not based on the needs of the teacher.

Contributing factors to the high cost to districts are that many school districts choose to pay new teachers higher salaries that are comparable to or surpass the salaries of veteran teachers. Weak hiring practices contribute to new teachers leaving the field. Research indicates that level of support provided to newly hired teachers contributes to the teacher's success within the first few years of hire (Podolsky et al., 2016). Without the support needed to meet the high demands of the job throughout the school year, new teachers struggle to adjust to their new role and eventually leave the profession within five years.

Significance

Although there is an immense amount of research on why teachers leave the field, there is a lack of studies focusing on solutions. Research shows that the cost associated with hiring new teachers is monumental. It is estimated that nationally, school districts spend between $2.2 billion and $4.9 billion in replacing teachers, and this cost does not include retirements (Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, & Meisels, 2007).

A sense of belonging and community are indicators of effective schools. If the turnover rate is a constant issue, school leaders can not build a school-wide positive culture. The constant change in staff disrupts the regular, coherent, comprehensive, and unified curriculum (Ingersoll, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

Unlike other careers, teachers spend much of their day isolated from other teachers or supportive adults. This isolation is especially difficult for new teachers as they learn their craft (Guarino, Watterson, 2002). The nature of the job calls for new teachers to perform at the same level of veteran teachers from the first day on the job. They are expected to manage student behaviors, deliver instruction and collect data to determine student progress, with the same skills as their veteran colleagues (Baur, 2019).

Teaching in isolation is a long-standing tradition in education (Guarino, Watterson 2002). However, teacher duties, requirements, and student population have changed drastically — the desegregation of student data, school accountability, and large numbers of English learners all present significant challenges. Also, teachers are now required to master technology and use it as a learning tool within their classroom, as well as monitor students to ensure appropriate use.

School administrators must provide support as well as instructional feedback to the teachers they serve. However, the majority of school leaders have an exorbitant amount of scheduled duties and must somehow manage unexpected situations as well. As a result, the task of supporting new teachers efficiently often suffers.

Schools and districts have recognized the need to support new teachers and that it requires assistance from other school personnel; this way, over the past several years, teacher induction programs have increased by forty percent (Goldrick, 2016). However, many of the induction programs are limited to specific elements of education. For example, some are designed to target classroom management, but there is no focus on academics or the social-cultural elements that ease the adjustment to a new career or position (Ingersoll, 2011).

Though there has been a surge in the number of schools that provide induction programs, there are a significant number of schools that do not provide such school-level support. The cost of implementing such services can be rather high, and many school districts often lack the financial flexibility to add it to their budget. On average, and induction program can cost a school center $6,000 to $17,872 per year, per teacher; depending on the location, more urban areas can expect to pay the higher rates (New Teacher Center at the University of California, Santa Cruz, 2017).

Providing mentors to support new teachers in various parts of the job is a crucial component to a new teacher having a good year (Alexander & Alexander, 2019). Setting instructional goals, formulating lesson plans, and receiving guidance on classroom management are strategies that will lead to a successful start (Callahan, 2016). In addition

to the technical aspects of the job, a mentor's emotional support is just as vital to a new

teacher's success (Marzano, 2020).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research is to answer the research questions, which may help

contribute to solving the teacher attrition problem. The researcher's goal is to provide a

tool that will serve as a guide an administrator can use to best support new teachers. The

initial focus will be a large urban school district in the Southeastern region of the United

States. Building capacity and increasing the potential for career longevity are the desired

effects. In doing so, new teachers will have the opportunity to learn the culture that is

specific to their school, as well as make decisions regarding their professional growth.

Research Questions

When researching teacher attrition, the overarching theme for why teachers leave

the profession is a lack of support from administration. School administration plays a

vital role in teacher retention. Studies indicate teachers are more likely to remain in a

school if they receive clear expectations, regular feedback, given opportunities for

growth, and feel included in the school culture; this is especially true for high needs

schools (Learning Policy Institute, 2017).

Administrators report that one of the most challenging aspects of their job is

finding the resources and retaining teachers so that they can effectively impact student

achievement. This task is especially challenging when considering the budget constraints

most school districts must endure. These challenges lead to the two questions that are the

focus of this research:

1. How can school centers, particularly those classified as Title I, offer support for new teachers that embraces the school's culture, while meeting the teacher's needs?

2. How can school personnel provide support for new teachers with minimal or no impact on the budget?

Assumptions, Limitations

The primary assumption in this study is that administrators and support leaders will share similar views on how to support new teachers. Without similar shared experiences in a leadership role, a support leader's perspective may vastly differ to those of a school administrator. These differences may present a difference in how they value new teacher induction programs and support plans.

It is expected to experience limitations in any study. In this study, some limitations are the number of participants from varying groups may not be equal. Though the researchers will seek to select an equal number of participants from elementary and secondary levels, as well as public, private, and charter schools, participants are volunteering to participate in the study.

Another limitation to the study is that not all support leaders may have the level of administrative or pre administrative experience to speak to the level of support that is required to understand the role of leadership in the study. For example, though a person may hold the position of department instructional leader for their subject area, their role may not extend beyond making copies when a teacher is absent. Wherein someone else in the same role at another school might provide non-evaluative instructional feedback to their peers.

A final limitation is participants completing the survey. The goal is to create a product that is easily navigated and does not require more than 20 minutes to complete. The researchers will notify participants before starting the survey that their response is anonymous. However, despite full disclosure and minimum use of time, participants may decide that they do not want to complete the study, thus limiting the number of responders for the study.

Definition of Terms

The following are definitions of terms that will be employed in this study:

- Administrator-refers to a school principal or assistant principal. Though there are typically other members on a leadership team at a school center, the principal has the authority to make day to day decisions regarding personnel as well as other matters. The principal may assign an assistant principal to act on his behalf, as needed.

- Title I-refers to Federal funds that a school can qualify to receive, based on73% or more of the students that attend the school come from income household and qualify to receive free or reduced cost lunch.

- Support leader-are members of the leadership team that assume various roles, as assigned by the principal or principal's designee. Support leaders may be instructional specialists, teachers on special assignment, department or grade level leaders, team leaders, or veteran teachers with strong instructional practices. These are members of the leadership team who cannot provide evaluative feedback or corrective actions to teachers and staff.

- New teacher-a new teacher is either a person that has zero to three years of teaching experience or a person who has teaching experience, but it is their first year of teaching at a particular school center (U.S. Department of Education).

- Induction-refers to the formalized process of acclimating new teachers to the culture and climate of a school center. The process is multifaceted and supports the participants to become adjusted to the school center and in hopes of becoming independent. Depending on the experience of the teacher, the induction process should take one to three years, with the support decreasing each year.

- Mentor-refers to the person who is providing support to the new teachers. In this study, mentors are those individuals who are designated by a principal or assistant principal.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 of this dissertation will be the literature review. In order to gain a broader understanding of the topic, this section will start with the background, history, and impact of teacher attrition. The literature review will conclude with a review of methods designed to improve teacher attrition.

Methodology will be covered in Chapter III of this study. A description of the research, population, instrumentation, and procedures covers the early portions of the section. The ladder portion of the document includes data analyzation as well as details on confidentiality and anonymity.

As the goal of this research is to produce a product administrators and new teachers will use in order to decrease teacher attrition, the final two chapters will include findings and an executive summary.

CHAPTER II:

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of this chapter is to review the available literature on new teacher retention and attrition. In order to understand the reasons why teachers with less than five years choose to either leave or stay in the profession, the following topics will be covered in this chapter:

- Research questions

- Statement of the Problem

- History of teacher attrition

- Impact of teacher attrition

- Programs designed to improve teacher attrition

Research Questions

The concerns related to teacher attrition have been dominant in the field of education for many years. This study will address the following questions:

1. How can school centers, particularly those classified as Title I, offer support for new teachers that embraces the school's culture, while meeting the teacher's needs?

2. How can districts and school centers provide support for new teachers with minimal or no impact on the budget?

This study will designate Title I schools as follows:

- Schools with most of the student population come from low socioeconomic families

- Schools in which the student body primarily consists of minority students

- • Schools that have a history of low student achievement

Title I schools encounter teacher attrition more often than top-performing schools.

Studies show that teachers from schools with the demographics mentioned above are

more likely to leave the field than teachers who are at more affluent schools. Figure 1

below describes……
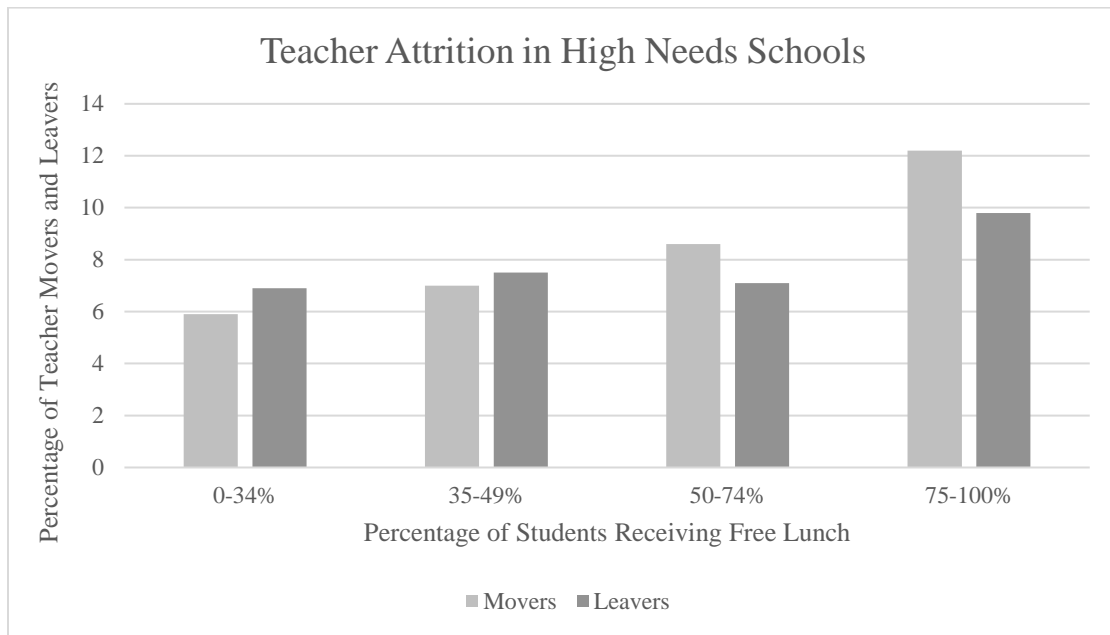
Figure 1. Teacher attrition in high need schools (Goldring, Taie, Riddles, 2014).

According to Kirby (2017), teacher turnover in Title I schools is 50% higher than

non-Title I educational centers. The same researcher finds that the turnover rate for math

and science teachers in Title I schools is even higher, at 70%.

The results from a study conducted in New York City tracked the pattern of

teacher attrition in the city's K-12 schools for five years and found that though the

attrition rate was high throughout the NYC, it was higher in low performing schools.

With this information, policymakers have concluded that if teacher attrition is improved, student performance will also improve (Boyd, Grossman, & Lankford, 2008).

It is without a doubt that the students are the ones most impacted by teacher attrition. Still, there are other impacting factors to consider. The constant pattern of novice teachers with less experience, year after year, does not allow for academic growth. Rather than being able to move forward while building capacity in a teacher, school centers must start over again with each novice teacher, more than likely repeating the same information.

Such patterns create instability within a school, making it difficult for reform efforts to be implemented appropriately. The constant introduction of new teachers stagnates the flow of improving instructional practices.

Statement of the Problem

Over the past several years, numerous studies (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; NYU Steinhardt, 2017; Garcia &Weiss, 2019) have been conducted to assess teacher attrition among educators who have been in the profession five years or less. Many of these studies have focused on the percentage of teachers that leave, as well as the reasons why they are choosing to leave.

According to a study conducted by the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2007), almost 25% of new teachers quit within the first year, while 66% leave within the first five years. In terms of the number of teachers, Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) estimate that 260,000 teachers leave the field each year. Schools with a large percentage of socioeconomically disadvantaged students often

experience the most turnover. These actions create a cycle of teacher attrition that negatively impacts high-poverty and low performing students.

Likewise, Barnes (2007) deduced larger urban districts are the most heavily impacted by teacher turnover. Schools that perform poorly on state assessments, as well as ones labeled high poverty, often lack the resources to recruit and retain talented educators. District leaders are faced with the challenge of replacing and training teachers year after year.

In 2017, uncertified and unqualified teachers filled approximately 100,000 teaching positions across the United States. Low performing schools, especially in the areas of math, science, and special education, are usually the most impacted. The current shortage of teachers and the high turnover rate has impacted the majority of states across the nation (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

It has been reported that, on average, school districts spend $2.2 billion each year due to teacher turnover (Ingersoll, 2015). Despite the knowledge of the cost factor to hire teachers, it appears that there has been very little attention given to developing programs that may reduce the high rate in which teachers leave the field.

Mediocre teacher pay is a valid concern for school districts trying to retain qualified teachers. This gap is particularly glaring in comparison to other career fields that require the same level of education. According to a study conducted by NPR, there is no state in which teachers make more than other college graduates, including teachers with master's degrees (Guerrera, 2017).

The teacher shortage dilemma in the United States has been the subject of numerous studies in the last decade. The number one reason teachers leave the profession

is not because of the low pay. Moreover, the most cited reason for leaving the profession is that new teachers feel there is a lack of support in a job that is highly demanding and requires high yields.

The American Federation of Teachers (2017) surveyed 5000 teachers on working conditions and the reasons they would consider leaving the profession. They found that two-thirds of the teachers surveyed reported that they felt a high level of stress due to extreme demands to perform duties, with little or no support. Teachers reported that they felt like their opinions mattered very little, yet the expectations to meet the demands set forth by the school and the district was paramount (Mulvahill, 2018).

Common complaints among new teachers are they feel pressured to increase student test scores and monitor student data; however, they are not given autonomy in planning lessons or instructing their students. New teachers receive a plethora of directions on what to do, but there is no support in bringing the plans and instruction to fruition.

For many new teachers, the classroom can be isolating. Being new at a job is typically a daunting experience for anyone, but for teachers, it can be overwhelming. They are usually given the keys to their classroom, and they must then spend the next six or so hours of their day, interacting and managing young humans they have never met while imparting crucial information that the youngsters will need to demonstrate mastery of within the next seven to nine months.

In addition to academic demands, new teachers must deal with visitations from administrators, which are often evaluative, rather than supportive. The opportunity to ask

questions and receive an immediate response is non-existent, so a teacher must figure things out as they go.

Though new teachers receive professional development throughout the school year, many report that the professional development that they receive is often broad and vague and does not relate to their needs. Experienced teachers are often the targets of the majority of professional development, leaving new teachers with unanswered questions and missing pieces.

School districts provide new teacher programs for teachers across the country; however, the programs are often completed for compliance but not necessarily done with fidelity. The programs are managed by district personnel, which can lead to a disconnect by the time the information trickles down to the teacher.

New teacher programs may be required, but school centers must ensure that the new teachers are getting hands-on support that reflects the goals and culture of the school center.

The History of Teacher Attrition

Research shows that teacher attrition has been a long-standing issue. Studies conducted in the 1970s and 1980s reported that 25% of people who held teaching certificates never entered the field or left after five or fewer years. The data from these studies also showed that teacher attrition was even higher in Title I schools and special education programs (Croesmun, Hampton, & Herrman, 2006).

In the late 1980s, teacher attrition began to decline. By 1990, it was at its lowest, at 5.1 percent. Studies show that during this time, the gap between teacher's wages and

other college graduates was substantially small. As the salary gap has grown, teacher turnover has increased as well.

Over the years, the gap in teacher salary compared to their peers who work in careers that have similar educational requirements has broadened substantially. Though the national average for teacher's salaries has increased by 15.3% over the past ten years, when averaging in inflation, the increase is only 3% (National Education Association, 2018).

In 1994, the gap between teacher pay and that of other professionals with similar skills and education was 2%, in 2017, the gap between the two is a reported 19%. Though many argue that teachers get summers off with pay, the reality is that they only receive pay for their contracted duty days. Many teachers spend their summers working other jobs and participating in professional development training (National Education Association, 2018).

Though the wages for teachers is substantially lower than others with college degrees, this is not the chief complaint for teachers and the main reason why so many chose to leave, after spending five years or less in the career. Teacher's top reasons for leaving the profession are lack of support and the high expectations that in a limited amount of time.

Toward the end of the 1990s, the blueprint for education began to change when President Clinton challenged those in charge of the countries educational system to ensure that only the best and brightest be selected to teach America's children. Districts across the country began to raise the standards for teachers to become certified. The curriculum standards and level of rigor for students also began to change.

It was during this era that educators began to see a rise in cost for teacher certification exams and the demand for extensive professional development, increased educational courses, and specified certifications for specific subject areas take effect. Under President G.W. Bush, "No Child Left Behind" (NCLB), took effect and the shift in education became more pronounced. The goal was to raise educational standards for all students and to hold educators accountable for every child making educational gains. However, many teachers did not view this as progress. Teachers began to feel as though they were being forced to teach to a test, and their autonomy in the classroom no longer existed (Greatschools.org, 2016).

When President Obama took office, his administration did an over-hall of the NCLB, which gave birth to the "Race To The Top" educational policy. Common Core Standards became a buzz word and a source of frustration for both educators and parents alike (Sanchez & Turner, 2017).

In the past decade, curriculum standards have changed completely. The demands to increase rigor in the classroom, close the learning gap among minorities, and increase student achievement have proven to be a daunting task for many teachers.

In addition to managing student conduct and grading hundreds of papers, teachers now find themselves disaggregating data, meeting excessively, all while trying to increase student achievement, which will be determined by a year-end, state-mandated test.

The Impact of Teacher Attrition

In reviewing many of the published studies, the most commonly cited reason for teachers leaving the field was that they felt there was a lack of support for new teachers

within the profession. The consensus was unmanageable class sizes, insufficient resources, pointless meetings, unreasonable demands, and a lack of support from administration (Mulvahill, 2018).

Kraft and Blazar (2018) address the top five reasons that teachers leave the profession. The article provides evidence, based on the combination of several highly recognized studies. According to a 2017 survey conducted by the American Federation of Teachers, the number one complaint of teachers was challenging work conditions. The consensus was unmanageable class sizes, insufficient resources, pointless meetings, unreasonable demands, and a lack of support from administration.

A report published by Penn State University, claims that among many professions, teachers rate the lowest in feeling as though their opinions are valued in the workplace. Many teachers feel micromanaged and bombarded with unrealistic expectations.

Another complaint that teachers voiced was that they felt immense pressure to increase test scores. According to the National Education Association, 72% of teachers reported that they felt pressured by school and district personnel to increase student scores on standardized tests. Data collection had also become a requirement that led to the frustration of many teachers.

Due to the high emphasis on test scores, many teachers felt as though the student's best interest no longer mattered. Rather than making instruction student-centered, teachers must place test preparation as the top priority. In turn, the administration expects to observe test preparation activities upon visiting the classroom.

Finally, teachers are reporting that the demands of the job are so overwhelming that the required duties extend beyond the duty hours. Many teachers report having to complete work at home, which takes away from the time that they must spend with their family. They also report feeling too tired to be fully present for family activities or helping their own children with their schoolwork.

A study conducted in 2015 by the National Center for Education Statistics reported that 8% of the 3.6 million teachers left the profession at the end of the school year, and another 8% transferred to other schools (National Education Association, 2018).

A more significant finding is that the top 25% of teachers and the bottom 25% of teachers are the ones who are leaving the field. The middle 50% are more likely to remain in the profession. The state with the highest reported exiting of teachers in Florida. The article implores policymakers to investigate the cause of the high turnover among teachers (Kraft et al., 2016).

Data shows that the high turnover of teachers in education impacts schools differently. Those most adversely impacted are schools that serve a majority of African American students, lower-performing schools, a high number of students who receive free or reduced lunch, and special needs students.

The author reports that the quality of peer teachers impact teacher turnover. Using data from the state of Florida, 25% of teachers are less likely to leave the field if high-quality peer support is also in the top quartile (Feng, 2017).

For many high-risk schools, the budget is thin, and the cost factors for resources are high; therefore, adding an extra cost can prove to be burdensome and possibly

unattainable. Though school districts and school administrators are aware of the impact of new teachers leaving, they feel as though they are unable to solve the problem due to the costs associated with mentoring programs.

However, teacher attrition proves to be very costly; continuous recruitment for the same positions wastes valuable and scarce resources. Excessive funds spent on novice teacher programs are better-served building capacity in returning teachers and improving student achievement.

Some studies have found that the reason turnover rates are higher at high-risk schools is because many of the novice teachers who were rated more effective in their annual evaluations, transfer to schools that are considered high performing schools. For high-risk schools to compete with their higher-performing counterparts, they must increase teacher support (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) conducted a five-year study to determine the impact of teacher turnover and to recommend solutions. To do so, five school districts, all with vastly different demographics, were selected to represent the varying types of districts across the country.

At the end of this five-year study, the researchers reported that the cost of teacher turnover had substantial implications for all districts. For more rural schools, the average cost of teacher turnover was $9,000, and for more urban schools, the cost was a staggering $86 million. Within the same study, the researchers found that if districts made an upfront investment of $6,000 per teacher, in high-quality teacher retention programs, they could save millions of dollars each year in the long run (Barnes).

Although the latest teacher shortage has impacted the majority of states across the nation, teacher attrition is not a problem in all states. Studies show that in several Northern states, primarily New England, teacher attrition is minimal. The studies also report that those states boast a high-quality induction program.

When comparing the United States teacher attrition to other developed countries with similar social and economic status, the findings also reflect that many of these countries do not share the same concern for teacher retention that exists in the United States.

A 2017 study estimated 100,000 uncertified, unqualified educators occupy teacher's positions across the United States. Low performing schools, math, science, and special education are the areas that are most impacted (Carver-Thomas, 2017). An estimated 260,000 teachers leave the field each year, nationwide, with a small number of them leaving due to retirement. This number does not include teacher transfers to other schools.

While it is expected and necessary at times to experience turnover, when compared to other comparable educational systems globally such as Singapore and Canada, the turnover in and demand for new teachers far exceeds their average teacher turnover. For many of these countries, there is a surplus of teachers seeking employment (Carver-Thomas, 2017).

The most recent data reflects that teacher turnover is highest in the southern states and lowest in the northeast states. States such as Maine, New York, and Boston pay teachers substantially higher, enact policies that support smaller classes and make education a top priority.

Programs Designed to Improve Teacher Attrition

In recent years, mentoring and support programs for new teachers have gained popularity. Though school districts can purchase mentoring programs or contract outside agencies, some districts have designed and implemented their own program. However, the programs are designed and managed at the district level, leaving little room for schools to adjust meet the needs of their school or teacher (South Region Education Board, 2018).

For example, a large urban district in the south east, that has designed and implemented their own program, manages the program from the district level (personal communication, February 18, 2020). With this program, school centers are required to assign a teacher to mentor each new teacher. The building principal, assistant principal and the professional development lead on campus are all listed as members of the new teacher mentoring program. However, looking at the design their roles are limited and much of their duties are designated for record keeping.

The program also requires new teachers to complete online yearlong courses, as well as attend after hours sessions to successfully complete the program. This can be a daunting task for a new teacher, if they are already feeling overwhelmed by their day to day duties. This program does take into consideration new teacher's experience.

There are four different levels to the program; level one is for those with less than a year of experience, the next level is for those in their second year of teaching or new to the district with less than five years of experience, the third level is for any teacher participating in the program for three years and the final level is for the teachers with five

or more years of experience and are new to the district (personal communication, February 18, 2020).

Aurora Public Schools (APS) has a similarly designed new teacher induction to the large urban district in the south east. In 2014, Aurora Public Schools created and implemented a supplementary mentoring program, in which retired master teachers were hired to provide additional mentoring support to selected new elementary teachers (DeCesare & McLelland, 2017).

APS launched their program as a three-year study in a controlled group to determine if additional mentoring support by master teachers would increase the overall retention of new teachers. The mentors met quarterly with district level leaders to discuss professional development, next steps and develop action plans for the teachers. The mentors would then meet with the selected teachers two times during the summer and then have one-hour sessions each week that were tailored to the needs of the teacher. There were cohort meetings once a month and quarterly meetings with the principal, mentee and mentor (DeCesare & McLelland, 2017).

The results of the study indicated the additional support had no significant impact to teacher retention during the first year. However, the research showed that there was a significant correlation between the hours of mentoring provided and teacher retention. The teachers with higher hours of support were more likely to remain in the profession than those with fewer or no additional mentoring (DeCesare & McLelland, 2017).

It is reasonable to acknowledge that every teacher hired will not remain in the profession. However, it is important that school centers foster induction practices that are intentional in providing continuous and consistent support for new teachers. Plans should

be tailored to the needs of the teacher and provide support that is inclusive of the school's culture and educational practices.

In order to increase student achievement, there must be consistency within the school centers. Consistency will improve if teachers feel as though their contribution to the school center is valued and respected.

When new teachers report to their new school centers, they may receive limited introductory information, such as the general day to day routine, meeting schedules, and student schedules. Instead of receiving adequate support, teachers are often given the keys to their classrooms and left to sink or swim on their own. Professional development meetings and department meetings are not adjusted for new teachers, as they are expected to learn and process new information at the same rate as seasoned teachers.

An article on the website teach4theheart.org stressed the importance of teacher retention, using information gathered from surveys completed by new teachers the following recommendations were made for school administrators to consider that will help new teachers transition more efficiently in their role, which lessens the feelings of frustration and minimizes burnout (Karmadis, n.d.).

1. Assign all new teachers a mentor: the mentor should be willing to support the new teacher not just academically but by showing the ropes, giving them an intimate tour of the school, remind them of meetings, and providing encouragement and motivation.

2. Communicate school policies and clear expectations: new teachers should be given a welcome packet upon reporting to the campus. They should be given information on things such as how to handle discipline, request a sub, lunch

procedures, use of the media center, and dress code policy for staff. With proper support, teachers will avoid confusion and frustration.

3. Fill teachers in on school traditions: if there are rituals that are a part of the school culture, be sure to share them with new staff members, so they do not feel left out. Sharing information on department celebrations and holiday traditions before they happen helps the new hires feel as though they are a part of the team.

4. Make the first visit a supportive one: The building administrator should enter the teacher's class with the sole intent of providing support and encouragement. Rather than entering with a laptop or clipboard, enter with a small token, such as school memorabilia or classroom supplies.

5. Speak to new hires professionally: take special care in fostering a collaborative environment. Administrators should ensure that interactions are edifying and encourage teachers to feel comfortable in asking questions.

6. Setup new teacher training: just before school starts or for those who are hired after school starts, schedule training and share with the new hires, things such as the bell schedule, lunch procedures, lesson planning procedures, department meetings, use of technology, common planning, and progressive discipline. Doing so provides them the opportunity to prepare themselves more appropriately for their duties.

7. Making meetings regular and purposeful: starting and ending meetings on time, as well as ensuring that meetings are purposeful, shows new hires that their time is valued, and therefore, they are valued as well.

8. Give new hires a jump on their classrooms: the earlier new hires can get in their classroom increases their chances for a smoother start. Allow teachers who start after the school year to get into their classroom and become familiar with it before meeting their students. Give them their rosters and student portfolios with special education information, standardized scores, and other pertinent information that will allow them to organize their room.

The recommendations given are simplistic but are often the things that new teachers state as their reason for leaving the field. In a study conducted by Alliance for Excellent Education, where novice teachers who were receiving no support, when they were provided mentors and given shared planning with peers, they were half as likely to quit (NYU Steinhardt, 2017).

In analyzing the numerous studies that have focused on how to minimize teacher attrition, the researchers recommend districts and school centers provide teachers with high quality, high retention pathways, such as mentoring programs, citing that well-prepared teachers are more likely to stay the course.

According to a more recent study conducted by Learning Policy Institute, teachers who feel supported at their school centers are not only more likely to stay the course, but they also become teacher mentors themselves (Podolsky et al., 2016). The report went on to recommend that school principals also receive mentoring to guide them in supporting new teachers.

New teachers are more likely to succeed if schools design and employ strategic induction programs. Recruting.com (2019) outlines the following approaches devised to increase teacher retention:

- Ensure collaboration is a top priority. School administrators should match new teachers with their peers through grade level, department, and support groups. Collaboration may also extend beyond the school center by utilizing online resources.

- Support teachers both in and out of the classroom. One-on-one meetings, friendly classroom visits, and shared decision making let the teacher know their input is vital to the school's success.

- Utilize quality induction and mentoring programs. Whether these programs are online or in person, they should provide teachers opportunities to improve their academic or classroom management.

- Improved working conditions are paramount to teacher stability. Ensuring school safety, appropriating team-building activities, and promoting a positive school culture all contribute to teachers feeling positive about their workspace.

Student enrollment in teacher education programs has dropped to historically low levels (George Washington University, 2019). School districts must employ sound strategies designed to foster growth and improve teacher self-efficacy. In addition to the strategies mentioned earlier by recruiting.com, George Washington University also recommends developing community partnerships. These alliances can impact the available resources available to teachers, while also providing opportunities for field trips, guest speakers, and mentorships.

In addition to improved teacher salaries, Podolsky et al. (2016) stress the importance of extended support in the following categories:

- Principal training: If principals receive extensive professional development in new teacher preparation, new teachers are more likely to succeed

- Teacher surveys: Education leaders can access new teacher preparation programs by seeking the perspective of veteran teachers

- Collaboration opportunities: Teachers gain an improved sense of purpose when they are permitted to share in decisions

Conclusion

Although the roots of teacher attrition can be traced to the 1970s, it is a growing issue for educational leaders, particularly those in high needs schools. Various studies estimate the percentage of teachers leaving the field at over 50% after five years of employment. Besides impacting school district's human resources budget, this teacher turnover mostly effects student achievement, as they are often left with novice educators or substitute instructors in vacant positions.

 Numerous publications have suggested a strong correlation between teacher retention and prescribed induction programs. Mentoring is mentioned as the most vital component to any new teacher plan in various publications. Additionally, collaboration should be a central element not only between teachers, but also between teachers and administration.

It is important that school administration remember that there is a considerable learning curve for new teachers. It will take time for them to create their own path and find balance, as the navigate through their new role as educators. Providing clear, intentional support to new teachers accelerates their development of the skills that are

needed to provide quality instruction and increase student achievement (McPherson, 2017).

As with any career, it takes time and experience to become skilled. Quality training and support helps to develop those skills. In the field of education, those acquired skills impact the students who are the recipient of the teacher's instruction. There is significant correlation to quality instruction and student achievement. One study that followed mentored and unmentored teachers showed 18% attrition among unmentored teachers and 5% for mentored teachers (Solis, 2004).

School personnel must look at teacher retention holistically; it is not just about hiring and replacing teachers, but student growth and achievement is a crucial component. Providing school-based mentoring goes beyond curriculum, it should also include the school culture and climate. Teachers should also be knowledgeable in their student population in order to meet the needs of their student (McPherson, 2017).

CHAPTER III:

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to investigate the most prevalent factors that contribute to teacher attrition in an urban school district in the southeastern United States. The resulting research findings will be used to design a website that offers detailed support to teachers as well as administrators.

Since the 1990s, several reports (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017; Derringer, 2017; Kirby, 2017) indicated a decline in the number of people seeking to become teachers. During that same period, there has been an increase in teachers leaving the profession for other career paths. According to Heim (2016), there is a teacher shortage due to teachers leaving the profession after spending five years or less, which is the most significant contributing factor.

Both education and political leaders frequently advocate for increases in teacher pay. On average, teacher pay is 20% less than other college graduates (Heim, 2016). It is not unusual to hear that teachers are underpaid, and that is the reason why it is so challenging to recruit and retain teachers. However, the studies outlined below indicate that salary is not the main reason that teachers choose to leave the profession. Using several research studies, (Mulvahill, 2018), cited the top five reasons why teachers leave the profession as follows:

- Challenging work conditions- high demands, large classes, excessive paperwork
- Not enough support, not enough respect- from administration, students, or parents
- Testing and data collection-teaching to the test and data collection
- No longer about children's best interests- only test scores matter

- Family takes priority-not enough time for family

The aforementioned work conditions create an opportunity to seek a solution that can be offered to support teachers by providing them with opportunities to learn and grow in an environment that is nurturing and supportive. This plan must also encompass the goals and requirements that must be at the school center level, as well as at the district level.

Research Questions

The concerns related to teacher attrition have been dominant in the field of education for many years. This study will address the following questions:

1. How can high-risk school centers offer support for new teachers that embraces the school's culture, while meeting the teacher's needs?

2. How can school personnel provide support for new teachers with minimal or no impact on the budget?

Description of Research

According to Yin (2003), "the distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena" because "the case study method allows investigators to retain the holistic and meaningful characteristics of real-life events." (Kohlbacher, 2005). This study will investigate the real-life phenomena of the outcome of a support plan that will be structured around the documented reasons that teachers have stated for leaving the profession.

Using the reasons cited earlier as to why teachers leave the profession, a blueprint will be developed that will provide teachers with the opportunity to become familiar with the curriculum, instructional tools, their classroom, school campus, and staff before

meeting their students. Once the teacher has had the opportunity to equip themselves with the tools to start their careers, they will devise a personal plan that will allow them to customize the support that they will need throughout the year. The plan will be adjustable to allow for flexibility in what the teacher may need at any given time during the school year.

Population

The sample size is at its core a tradeoff: A large sample will create more accuracy in the inferences made, but recruiting more participants is time-consuming and costly (Creswell, 2018). Considering the nature of this study, it is the goal of the researchers to have an adequate sample size without creating hardship for the researchers or participants. The goal for this study is at least 100 participants from numerous Title I school centers across an urban southeastern school district in the United States. Principals, assistant principals, administrator designees, and teachers will be asked to volunteer. The sample will be curated through a convenient and snowball sampling (Creswell, 2018)

In order to select participants for this study, an email (Appendix A) will be sent to school staff at various Title I schools. The request will detail the purpose of the study as well as the procedures for completing the survey. Additionally, a flyer (Appendix B) will be posted on the researchers' Facebook accounts soliciting volunteers for the survey. As with Appendix A, the purpose of the survey and the procedures will be listed.

All participants will be asked to agree to an informed consent (Appendix C). According to Lynn University's Institutional Review Board (2019): "No person should serve as the subject of research unless he or she, or an authorized or legal representative,

has given voluntary consent after being fully informed of the nature, risks, and benefits of the study and their rights as participants." Additionally, participants will also receive a confidentiality agreement (Appendix D), assuring that the surveys are untraceable and outlining when the data will be destroyed. The participants will be directed to the survey (Appendix E) after agreeing to informed consent.

Instrumentation

The definition of a case study is an in-depth analysis of a case that is often bound by time and activity. Researchers collect detailed information using a variety of data collection methods over a sustained period (Creswell, 2018). A lack of support is one of the major causes cited for reasons why teachers leave the field (Mulvahill, 2018). In reviewing the other reasons given, one can assume that providing adequate support will positively impact the four other reasons presented in the study. The goal is to create a program that can adequately provide school administrators with the tools to support new educators. The problem must be scrutinized through various lenses.

In order to create an effective instrument that supports new teachers, a website will be created that offers assistance in the following areas:

- Support guides for teachers, administrators, and administrator designees
- Professional development recommendations in the areas of curriculum, data, testing, and school culture/climate
- Calendar guides offering a suggested timeline for supervision meetings as well as one-on-one meetings
- Resources offering research proven best practices for new teacher success

Initially, survey participants will be asked three demographic questions in order to ascertain their position and experience. Participants will then click a link that takes them to the website for browsing purposes. The ensuing eleven questions will be Likert Scale questions in the following format: 1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Neutral; 4-Agree; 5-Strongly Agree.

Two open-ended questions will conclude the fifteen-question survey. The first question will ask participants if there are additional components they feel should be added to the website. The final question will ask participants to share their opinion on the most important tool a new teacher needs to succeed in the classroom.

Procedures

The focus of this study is to determine if the designed product provides adequate support to teachers who have been at a particular school or in the profession for zero to three years. Listed below are the steps that will followed from the beginning to end:

1. Email (Appendix A) will consist of an introduction to the researchers, as well as the purpose and intent of the study. This will be sent a random sampling of teachers, administrative designees, assistant principals, and principals in an urban southeastern school district in the United States

2. Flyer (Appendix B) will consist of an introduction to the researchers, as well as the purpose and intent of the study. It will be posted on social media website in hopes of soliciting random educators who would like to take the survey.

3. Participants who agree will click the link for the survey.

4. The first page of the survey will contain the Informed Consent agreement (Appendix C). Participants will be required to click the 'Agree' button in order to

continue. They will also be reminded that they are free to exit the survey at any time by simply closing the web browser they are using.

5. Once the 'Agree" button has been clicked, the Confidentiality Agreement (Appendix D) will appear on the screen. The participant will be asked to click 'Continue to Survey' after they have read it.

6. The first three questions are demographic questions asked to determine the participant's position and work experience.

7. After completing the three demographic questions (Appendix E), participants will be asked to click the link for the website. They may then examine the various components in an effort to determine their helpfulness to a new teacher. Participants will be asked to return to the survey after they have reviewed the website.

8. Likert Scale questions (Appendix E) will compromise the next eleven questions. Participants will be asked to rate various aspects of the website based on the ensuing: 1-Strongly Disagree; 2-Disagree; 3-Neutral; 4-Agree; 5-Strongly Agree.

9. The final two open-ended questions (Appendix E) will be presented with the intention of obtaining the participant's opinions on an aspect that can be added as well as what they deem the most significant tool a new teacher requires in order to experience success in the classroom.

Data Collection and Recording

When collecting and documenting data in a qualitative case study, research theorists have differing opinions on how data should be collected. According to Stakes (1995), a characteristic of a qualitative case researcher is being able to know what leads

to significantly understanding, recognizing good sources of data, consciously and unconsciously testing out the veracity of their eyes and robustness of their interpretation.

The information from each survey question will be gathered by the host website. The demographic and Likert scale questions will be downloaded into Excel spreadsheets for analytic purposes. The open-ended questions will be downloaded and coded into themes.

Data Processing and Analysis

As a research suggestion, it is essential to look at qualitative analysis as a process that requires sequential steps to be followed, from the specific to the general, and involving multiple levels of analysis (Creswell, 2018). The researchers will use the outline of the recommended steps to analyze the data.

Step 1: Organizing the data- For this research, the data will be collected and categorized by school demographics, to include but not limited to grade levels, Title I, and location within the district. The data will also be organized by employee position, years of service as an educator, and at the specific school center. The researchers will also reserve the right to reorganize and restructure the data until no new evidence or questions evolve.

Step 2: Read and look at all data- After organizing the data, the next step will be to read the data to understand what the participants are saying. At this stage of analyzing the data, the researchers need to search for underlying themes based on the participants' responses. This allows the researchers to validate their responses if the questions allow for credible conclusions (Creswell, 2018).

Within this study, the researchers will view the answers to each question to ensure that participants understood the questions as they were posed and that the questions provided the participants the opportunity to answer based on their personal experiences, without being boxed into a specific answer. The researchers will also loosely look for themes within the responses to delineate the participants' views of the product at a glance.

Step 3: Coding the data- Yin (2002) defines analysis as examining, categorizing, tabulating, testing, or recombining evidence to address the initial proposition of a study. The question generated by the researchers is what would a support plan look like if it were structured around the most common reasons teachers gave for leaving the profession? Using this framework, the researchers must code the responses of the participants to determine if the proposed plan hits the mark. The research will use the unitization process, which is defined by Merriam (2002) as the segments or units are answers given to fit the researcher's questions.

The researchers will chunk and categorize the responses provided by the participants. Each category or theme will be labeled with a code that allows the researchers to identify the general category without violating the participant's confidentiality. For example, those who have identified themselves as being a teacher will be provided a specific identifying code.

Step 4: Generate a description and theme- Description involves a detailed rendering of information about people, places, or events in a setting (Creswell, 2018). Themes play a significant role in the research.

The researchers will analyze the data to determine the overarching perception that participants gained from the study. The researchers will also look for patterns and themes

among the subgroups that were unitized for coding purposes. An important theme to consider when viewing the data is patterns of disparities among the groups.

In this study, the question to consider is what type of product or service could provide teachers with the support that they desire to remain in the field. The researchers must view the data without bias to determine if both teachers and administrators find value in the product. The researchers must also willingly investigate whether the product benefits specific schools based on demographics and school needs. Additionally, can the product be all-encompassing for everyone regardless of the varying, complex needs that may be presented? At this phase in the research, the researchers will seek to identify concrete findings regarding the product and service that's being evaluated.

Step 5: Representing the description and themes- The researchers needs to present a clear, unbiased depiction of the findings of the study. After careful analyzation of the data, the researchers will organize the findings and present them in a narrative that clearly outlines the events that took place, which led to the themes found in the data.

The researchers will reveal any common and expected findings, as well as any findings that one might consider unexpected or unusual. The researchers will consider the original hypothesis and share the findings that connect with it, as well as those findings that may reveal conflicts. It is crucial to the integrity of the study that every angle that has been explored is shared and represented appropriately.

Delimitations

According to Feing (2017), it is a myth that the best and brightest teachers are leaving the profession. The fact is that those who are leaving were never considered great or even good teachers. However, the purpose of this study is not to evaluate the teaching

ability of those who choose to leave the profession. Based on the overwhelming amount of research that is available, it is clear that school districts need to implement on-campus support in order to minimize teacher turnover.

Though it could be hypothesized that high teacher turnover impacts student achievement, this study will not address it. Determining the impact would require extensive research over a more extended period than what is available for this study.

Limitations

In conducting this study, there are several limiting factors to consider; according to the report in National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, districts do not have a clear way of keeping records regarding the financial impact and cost factors associated with hiring and retaining new teachers (Barns, 2007). Therefore, determining the cost factor of hiring and replacing teachers compared to the cost factor of implementing the retention program may not be readily accessible.

Another factor to consider is whether school personnel will respond to requests to participate in the study. Given the overall demands of daily duties, there may not be a willingness to take the time out to participate in the study.

Consideration must also be given to the possibility that some participants may feel compelled to respond to inquiries based on what answers they think the researchers are seeking rather than explicitly sharing their genuine feelings regarding the study.

Finally, there is a standing risk that participants, whether it be a school center or individual teachers, will choose not to stay with the study until it is completed. Depending on the timeframe in which an individual or school center opts out of the study, it could determine the effectiveness and validity of the findings.

Risks and Benefits

In protecting the rights and welfare of participants in research, it is especially important to protect them from avoidable harm. The Instructional Review Board must take into account the purpose of the research and the setting in which the research will take place. This study will not knowingly recruit or use any subject that would be considered a vulnerable citizen. All subjects will freely participate in the study and will have the ability to leave the study at any point if they so desire.

Though the researchers will make it clear that all subjects participating in the study must do so of their own free will, some subjects may feel unconscious pressure to participate because they were referred to the study by a supervisor. Subjects may also feel compelled to respond to questions in a specific manner to hide their true feelings, with the result being skewed data. However, while participating in the study, school center personnel may be able to find new and innovative ways to implement programs and activities that will increase new teacher retention. Teachers may also learn new strategies that will allow them to connect with resources or personnel that will provide coping skills during the difficult seasons.

There are no foreseen risks by participating in this study. However, participants may exit at any time if she/he feels uncomfortable. Likewise, there are no prearranged benefits from participating in this study. However, participants may enjoy knowing they are assisting to create a product to help new teachers.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

When collecting data, the researchers must provide explicit information to participants on how they will be protected within the study. It is essential to state in clear

terms whether the participants can expect ~~or~~ anonymity. Lynn University's Institutional Review Board (2019), provides definitions for both confidentiality and anonymity. The university also concisely outlines the difference between the two practices: Anonymity is defined as either the project does not collect identifying information from the individual subjects, or the project cannot link individual responses with participants' identities. A study should not collect identifying information of research participants unless it is essential to study protocols.

The researchers will review responses on a computer that is passcode protected and only used by the researchers. All sites and email addresses will also be passcode protected. All printed, scripted, downloaded, or recorded information will be kept by the researchers in a fireproof safe that requires both key and passcode to gain access. The key and the passcode are only accessible to the researchers.

At the end of the study, data will be maintained for two years. Electronic data will be stored on a portable drive and kept with the remaining printed information in the same fireproof safe that will be used during the research process. It will remain key and passcode protected, and only the researchers will have access to the information. After two years, all data will be destroyed and disposed of in a manner that recovery is not possible.

Conclusion

The fact that districts across the country are spending millions of dollars each year to recruit and hire teachers (Phillips, 2015), because the rate of teacher attrition continues to be high, speaks to the fact that the problem is deeply rooted and needs to be scrutinized internally at the school centers rather than externally at the district level.

The underlying theme for reasons teachers do not stay is not feeling supported. Not only is support desired, but it is also needed in order for new teachers to be successful (Derringer, 2017). In most professions, very few beginners are at the top of their game. It is a struggle for the average person to craft their trade; the classroom can be very isolating. Though teachers may meet to share their struggles and successes when they are in the classroom, they do not have that support, and for many, whenever another adult is in the room, the teacher is being critiqued.

As stated before, the costs associated with teacher turnover can be substantial. Assuming the implementation of this program is effective, the need to fund numerous job fairs will decline, as well as the need to fill the same positions each year.

More importantly, we must view this situation from a human perspective. Teachers are not feeling nurtured. As educators, we know that in order for our students to learn, the teacher has to cultivate an environment that demonstrates respect and acknowledges the student's efforts. Such care should be given to our teachers, differentiating professional development and support based on the needs of the teacher-learner rather than giving them a "one program fits all" and expecting everyone to fit the mold.

CHAPTER IV:

FINDINGS

This qualitative case study aimed to develop a support website based on the most current issues contributing to new teacher attrition. Select educators were asked to browse the website and then complete a 15-question survey designed to determine the effectiveness of the NewTeacherRentention.com. This chapter will present data and provide analysis as to how the information may impact the product going forward.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this case study:

1. How can school centers, particularly those classified as Title I, offer support for new teachers that embraces the school's culture, while meeting the teacher's needs?

2. How can districts and school centers provide support for new teachers with minimal or no impact on the budget?

NewTeacherRetention.com

After reviewing historical and current literature, the researchers of this study designed NewTeacherRetention.com to address these critical areas of opportunity:

- Professional Development (curriculum, school culture and climate, data, and testing)

- Exceptional Education

- Safety

- Teacher/Mentor Interaction Framework

- Resources (forms, supplies, instructional tools, and links)

Educators were contacted via email and social media and asked to browse and evaluate the website titled NewTeacherRetention.com. Google Forms supplied the platform for the ensuing survey.

Demographic Questions

Three demographic questions opened the survey, each aimed at gaining a perspective on the various challenges participants have experienced in school centers:

1. What is your current position (most recent if you are retired)?

2. How many years have you spent as an educator?

3. Do you have any experience working in Title I schools?

Current Position. A total of 96 individuals participated in the Google Forms survey. Teachers represented the highest percentage of survey participants at 36%. Assistant principals compromised 19.8% of survey respondents, while 4.2% were principals. The Support label, which included positions such as deans and coaches, totaled 11.5%. 29% of respondents selected the category titled Other. Figure 2 illustrates each participant's current or most recent position.
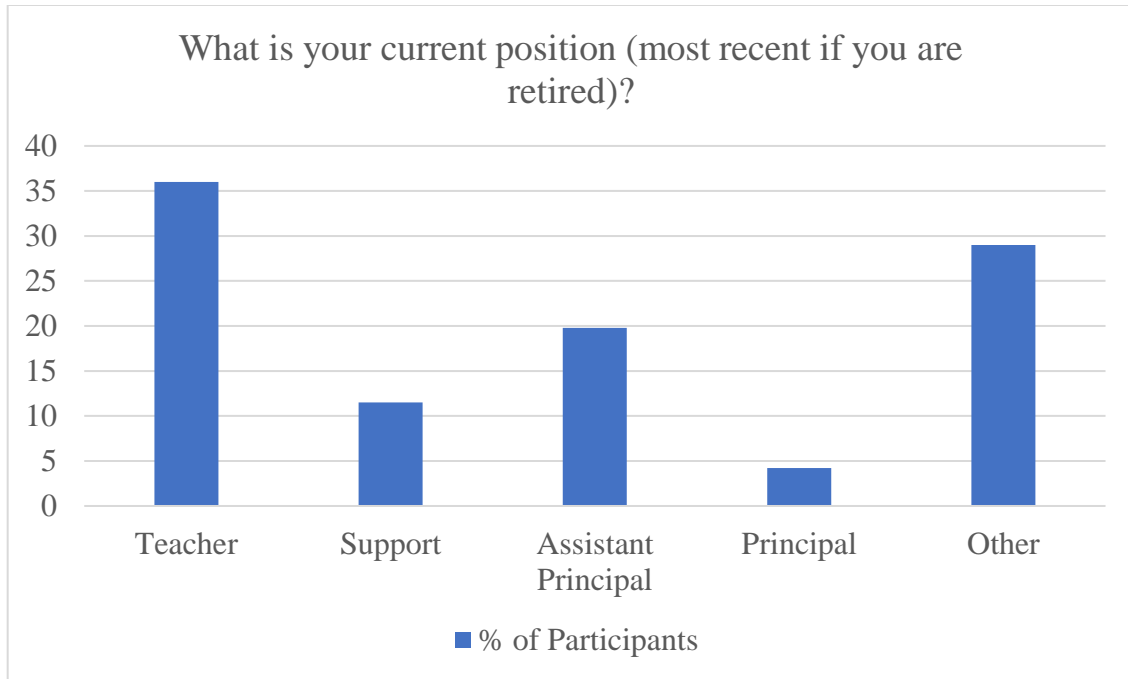
Figure 2. Current Position.

Participants who selected the category titled "Other" chose a variety of positions, as noted below:

- 50% District Level Administrators: Associate Superintendent, Director, Manager, Specialists

- 14% School Counselor

- 11% Administrative Assistants

- 7% Private Sector: Coordinator Preparatory School, Director

- 7% ESE Coordinator

- 3.5% ESOL Coordinator

- 3.5% Media Specialist

Analysis. The wide range of participants is most beneficial in determining the potential impact NewTeacherRetention.com can have on schools. While the researcher's goal was to solicit opinions from teachers, input from school center administrators was

just as vital in forging a collaborative working relationship. District-level administrators

completed approximately 15% of the survey. Their input is vital, considering they often

are the decision-makers behind the majority of New Teacher Induction programs.

Years in Education. Along with identifying their current position, the survey

also asked participants to indicate their years in education. 78.1% of respondents have 11

or more years of experience. The categories 4-10 years and 0-3 years compromise 16.7%

and 5.2% respectfully. Figure 3 illustrates each participant's years of experience.
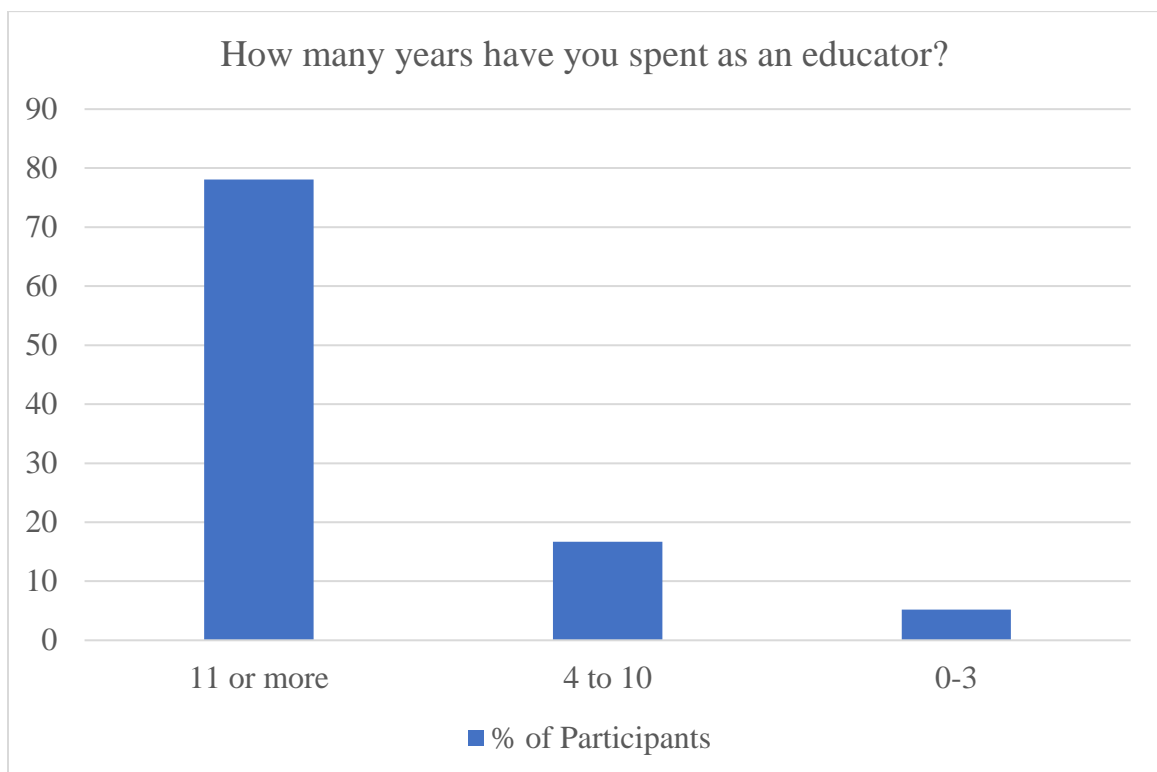
Figure 3. Years in Education.

Analysis. An overwhelming number of participants (95%) had four or more years

of experience. These veterans have great insight, vast stories, and copious tips to share.

Their input is essential in developing a teacher retention program. However, the

researchers would have preferred more feedback from participants with less experience

since they are currently in the role and may offer different perspectives.

Title I Schools. The final demographic question asked respondents if they had any experience in Title I schools. 94% of participants answered yes, while 6% indicated they had not worked in these high-needs schools. Figure 4 illustrates Title I experience.
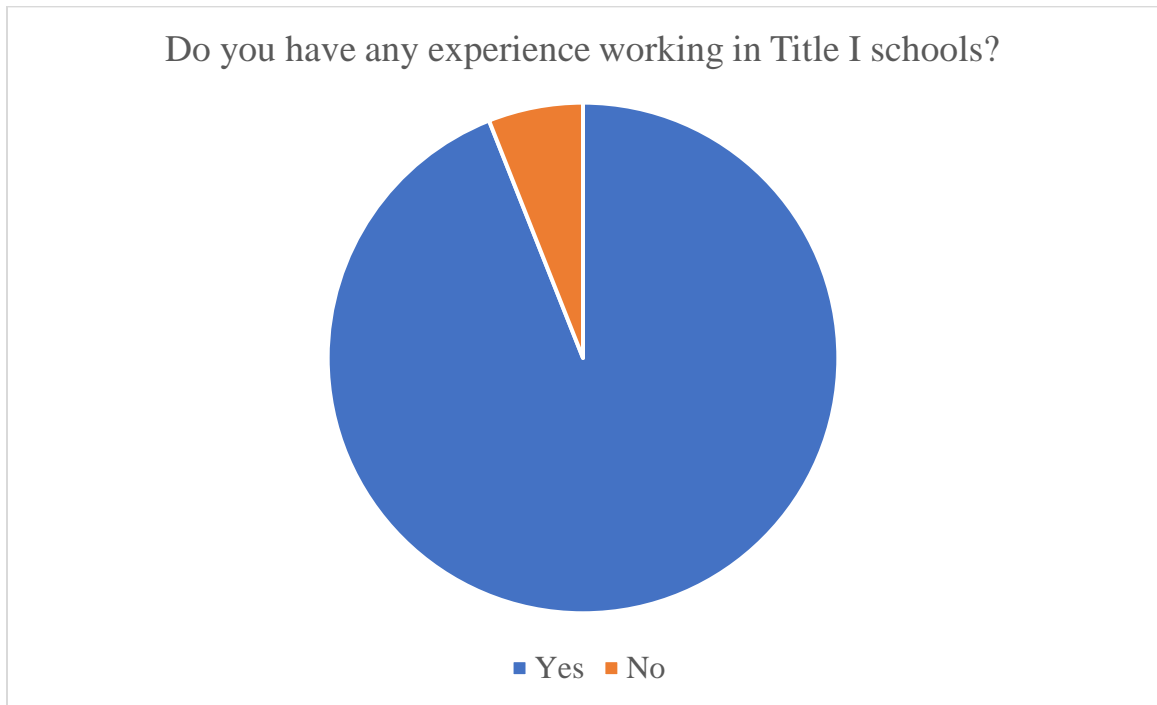
Figure 4. Title I Experience.

Analysis. As previously mentioned, teacher turnover in Title I schools is 50% higher than non-Title I schools (Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond, 2017). One of the goals of this study is to develop a practical tool for Title I schools. The fact that most participants have worked in these schools is beneficial for data collection.

Website Evaluation Questions

After the three demographic questions, the link to NewTeacherRetention.com appeared, allowing participants to browse the website. After returning to the survey, the ensuing ten questions allowed users to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the

website's various components. These questions were Likert Scale in design, ranging from Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree.

Member Role Description Effectiveness. The first question asked participants to evaluate the effectiveness of The Village component of the website. This section outlines each member's role in supporting new teachers. Nearly 90% of participants selected strongly agree or agree on this question. Figure 5 represents a visual summary of the responses to this question.

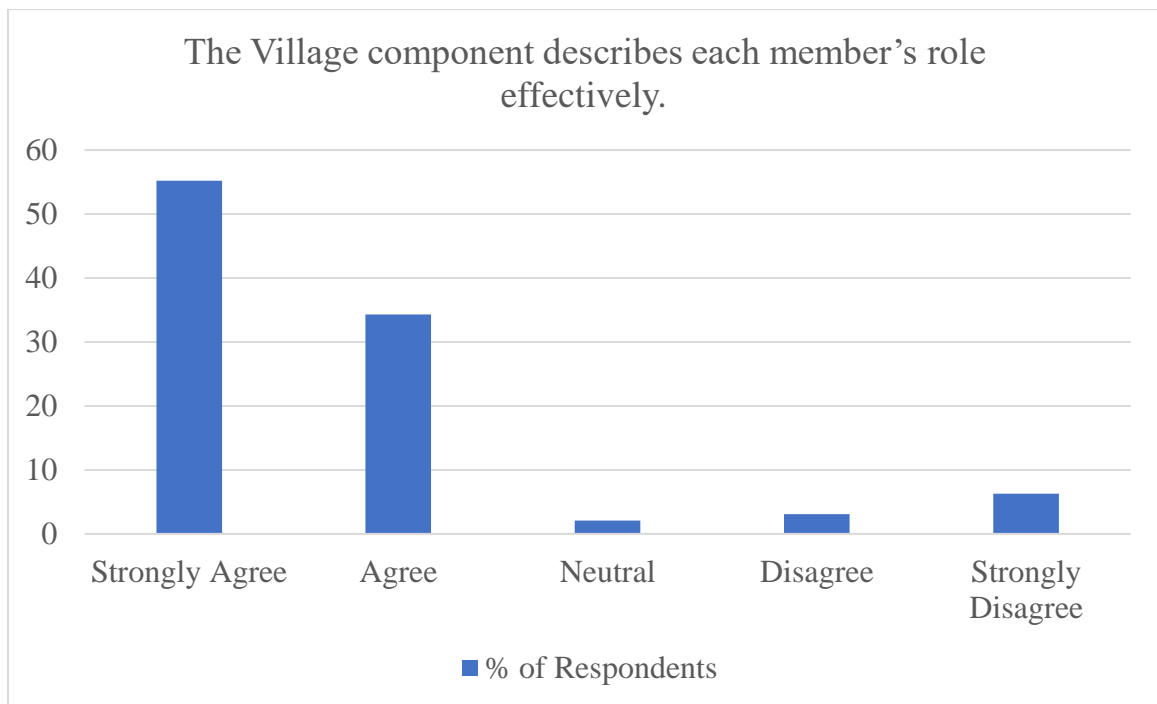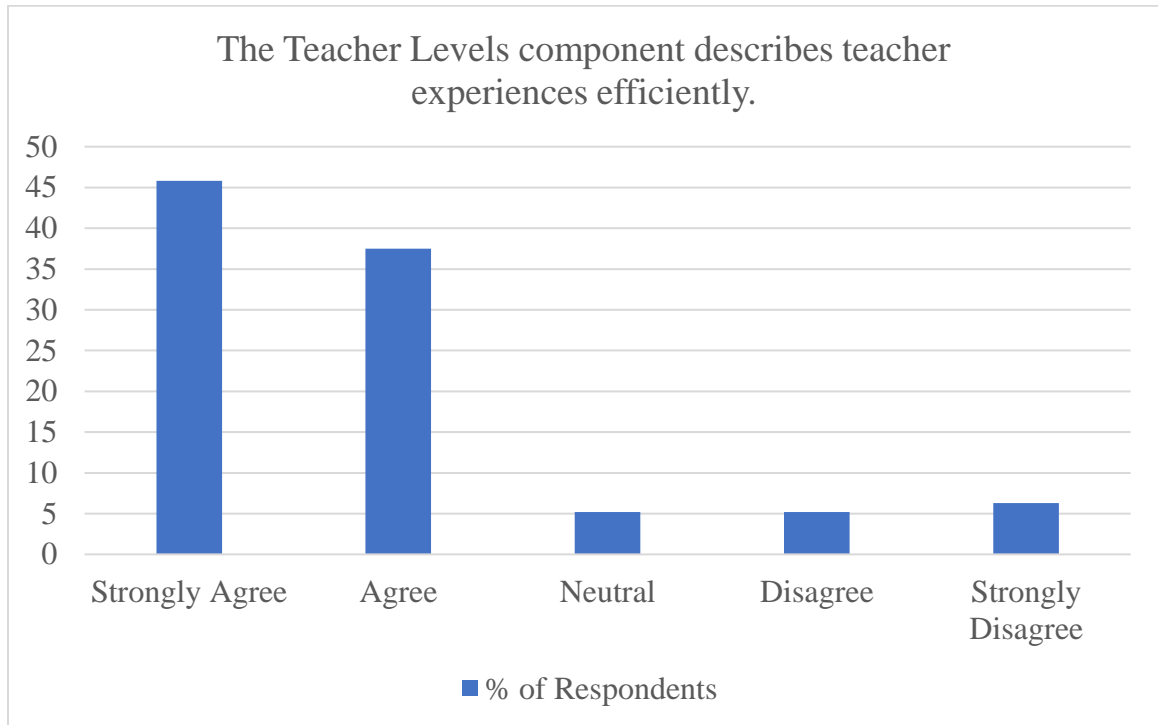*Figure 5.* Member Role Description Effectiveness.

Analysis. Although 86 of 96 participants answered this question favorably, the researchers will look for input in the open-ended questions regarding member role description effectiveness.

Teacher Levels Effectiveness. The ensuing question asked participants to assess the Teacher Level component of the website. In addition to classifying beginning, new,

and veteran teachers, this section outlines the specific support plan and data tracking

system. 83% of participants selected either strongly agree or agree. Figure 6 represents a

visual summary of the responses to this question.

Figure 6. Teacher Levels Description Efficiency

  Analysis. As previously mentioned, 83% of the participants indicated the

information in this portion of NewTeacherRetention.com was explained competently.

However, of the 12 Likert Scale questions, this question had the lowest total agree count.

While 100% of the principals selected a positive response, only 79% of teachers agreed.

The researchers will look for possible reasons in the open-ended questions regarding

member role description effectiveness.

  Mentor Meetings Usefulness. The next question asked participants to evaluate

the Mentoring Meetings section of the website. This section of the website provides a

framework for which topics should be covered by mentors and their mentees.

Respondents were asked if they believed this component would be useful for new teachers and mentors. Nearly 90% of participants selected either strongly agree or agree. Figure 7 summarizes the responses to this question.
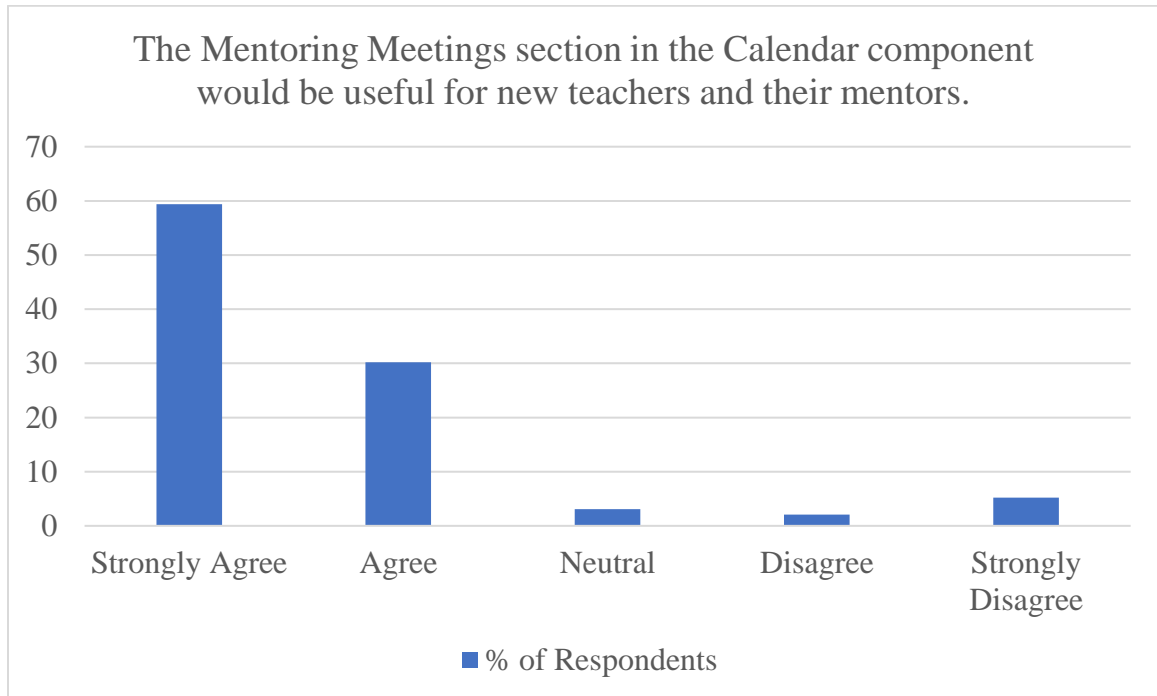
Figure 7. Mentor Meetings Usefulness.

   Analysis. Although 86 out of 96 participants answered this question favorably, the researchers will look for input in the open-ended questions regarding the usefulness of the Mentor Meetings component.

   Supervision Meetings Usefulness. An additional question concerning the Calendar section asked respondents to rate the Supervision Meetings section. This section outlines how evaluating administrators and their new teachers should collaborate on needs and meeting dates. Once again, strongly agree or agree totaled 90% of the selections. Figure 8 represents a visual summary of the responses to this question.

The Supervision Meetings section of the Calendar component would be useful for new teachers and their mentors.
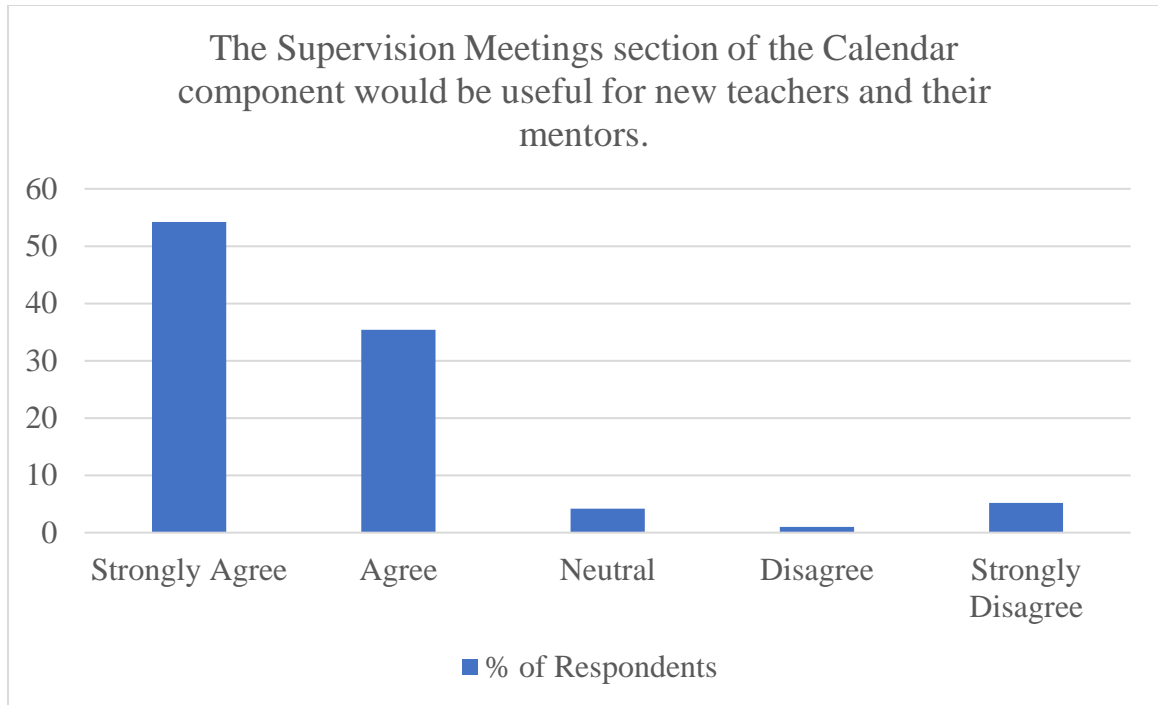
Figure 8. Supervision Meetings Usefulness.

Analysis. Although 86 out of 96 participants answered this question favorably, the researchers will look for input in the open-ended questions regarding the usefulness of the Supervision Meetings component.

Curriculum Section Usefulness. Participants were next asked to appraise the Curriculum section of the Professional Development component. This section provides resources such as curriculum map instructions, a lesson plan template, and a learning styles inventory. Over 90% of respondents selected strongly agree and agree. Figure 8 illustrates the responses to this question.

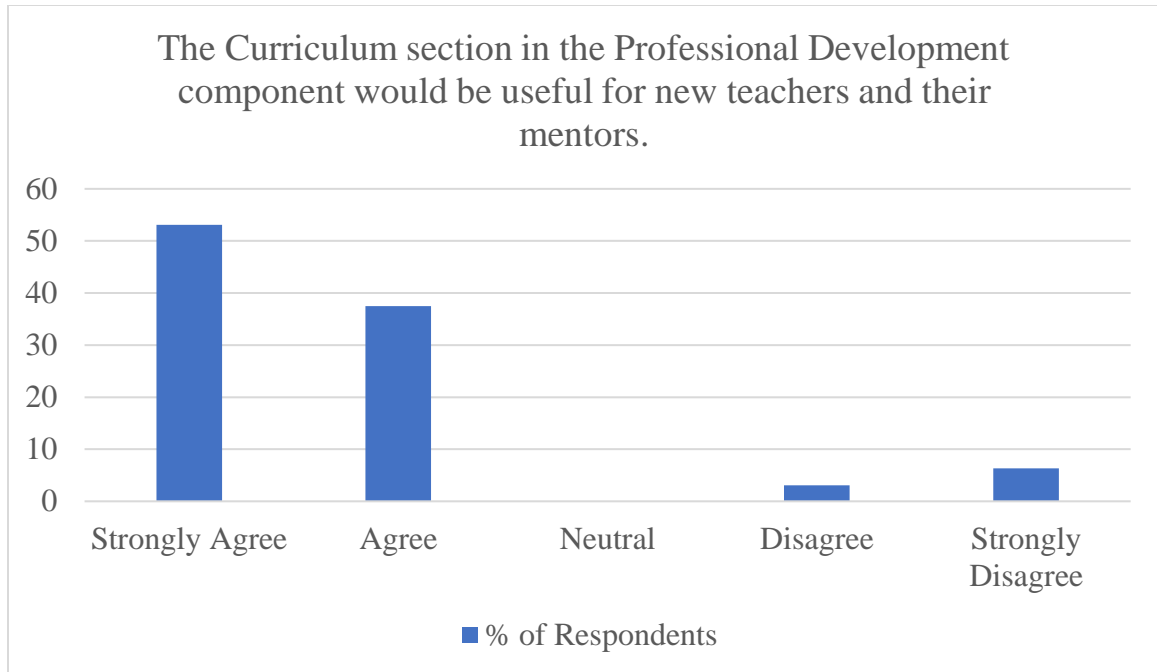The Curriculum section in the Professional Development component would be useful for new teachers and their mentors.

Figure 9. Curriculum Section Usefulness.

Analysis. Although 87 out of 96 participants answered this question favorably, the researchers will look for input in the open-ended questions regarding the usefulness of the Professional Development-Curriculum component.

School Culture/Climate Usefulness. The next question asked participants to evaluate the School Culture/Climate section of the Professional Development component. This section provides tips on parental involvement and school-wide programs, as well as printable resources. 87.5% of participants selected either strongly agree or agree. Figure 10 summarizes the responses to this question.
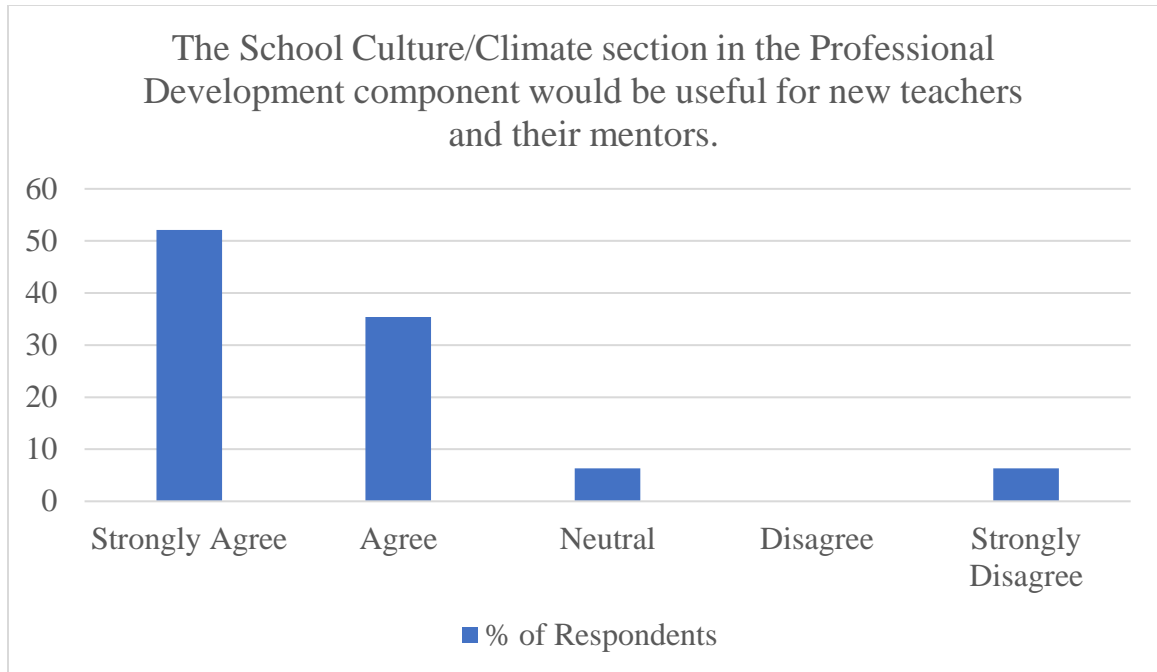
Figure 10. School Culture/Climate Usefulness.

Analysis. Of the six candidates who chose strongly disagree for the school culture/climate question, five had 11 or more years of experience. Additionally, the majority of strongly disagrees and neutrals (42%) came from teacher candidates. The researchers will look to improve this section by reviewing the research and soliciting teachers' opinions with 11 or more years of experience.

Data Section Usefulness. An additional question concerning the Professional Development section asked respondents to rate the Data section. This section provides tips for both school and district assessments, as well as training and resource guides. Strongly agree or agree combined for 90% of the selections. Figure 11 represents a visual summary of the responses to this question.

The Data section in the Professional Development component would be useful for new teachers and their mentors.

Figure 11. Data Section Usefulness.

Analysis. The six less favorable (disagree and strong disagree) came from two assistant principals, a librarian, an ESE coordinator, and administrative assistant, and a teacher. 100% of the principals surveyed agreed that the data section would be beneficial to new teachers. Nevertheless, the researchers will look for input in the open-ended questions regarding the usefulness of the Professional Development-Data component.

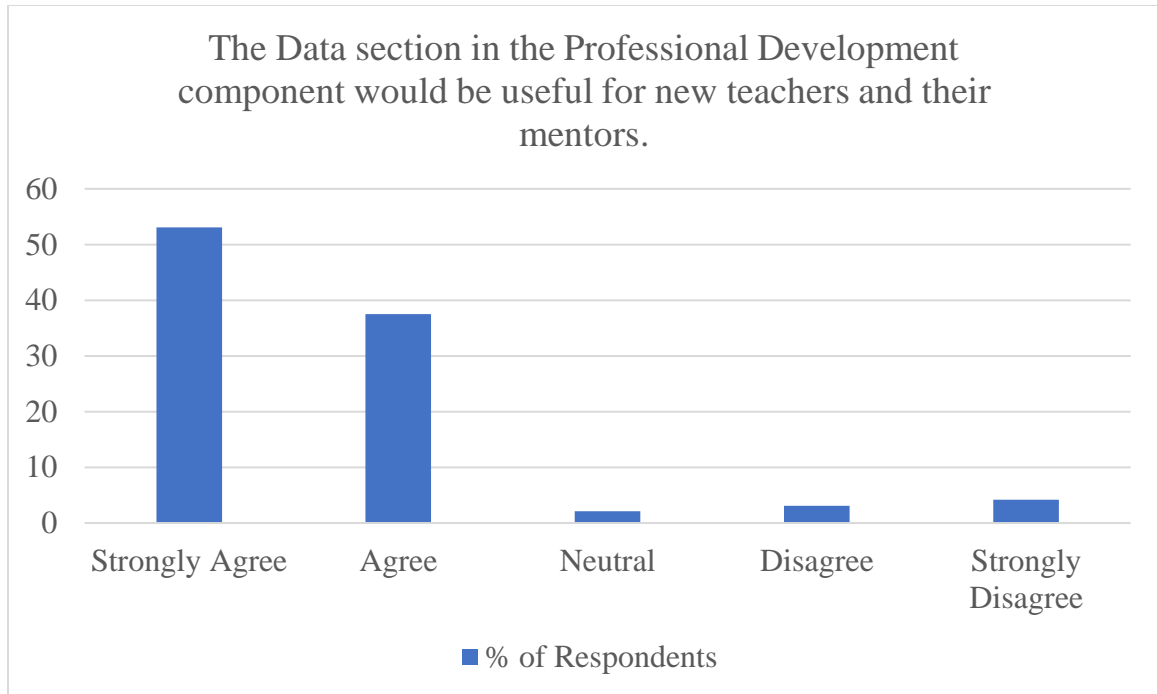**Resources Usefulness**. The next question asked participants to evaluate the Resources component of NewTeacherRetention.com. This section provides directions on instructional tools, acquiring classroom supplies, printable forms, and links to useful websites. 92% of participants selected either strongly agree or agree. Figure 12 summarizes the responses to this question.

Figure 12. Resources Usefulness

Analysis. Although 88 out of 96 participants answered this question favorably, the researchers will look for input in the open-ended questions regarding the resources component's usefulness.

Website Recommendation. The next question asked participants is they would recommend NewTeacherRetention.com to a college. Strongly agree or agree equaled 88.6% of the selections. Figure 13 represents a visual summary of the responses to this question.
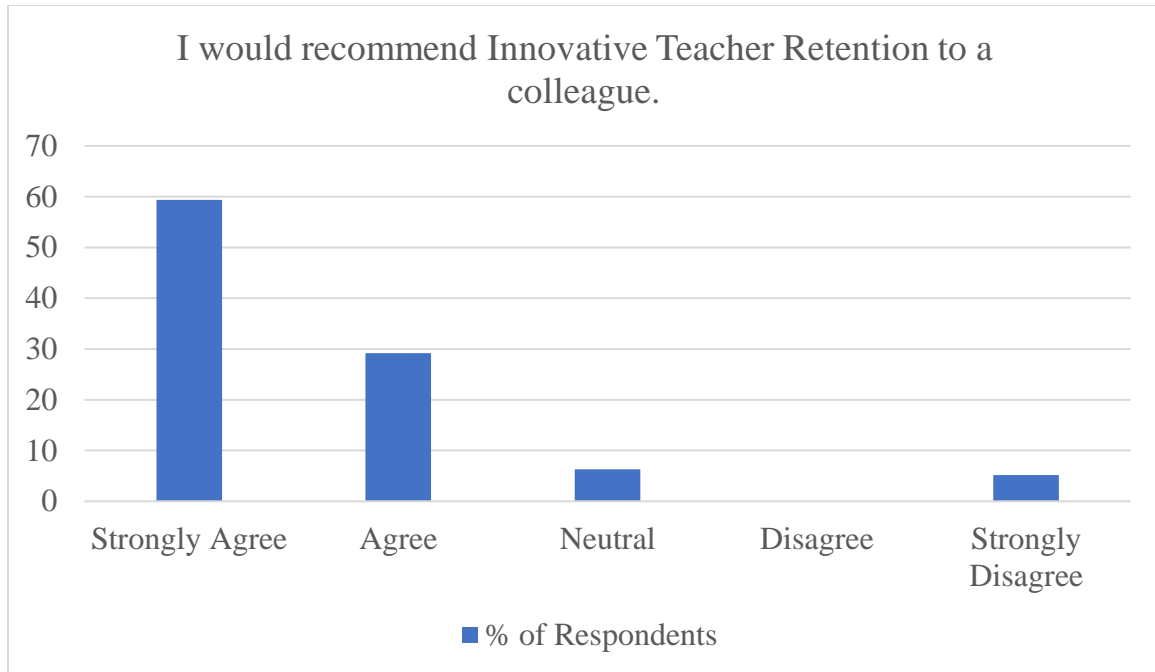
Figure 13. Website Recommendation.

 Analysis. Of the 12 Likert Scale questions, it is fair to state that this question was the most essential and therefore deserves extensive exploration. Unlike most of the previous questions, the favorable (strongly agree and agree) categories do not combine to cross the 90% threshold. The position subgroups break down as follows:

- Principals: 100% favorable

- Assistant Principals: 89% favorable

- Teachers: 88% favorable

- Support Staff: 91% favorable

- Other: 86% favorable

The years of experience subgroups data is as follows:

- 11 or more: 89% favorable

- 4-10: 94% favorable

- 0-3: 60% favorable

While the principals and support staff combine for a 93% favorable rate, the support staff

responded less favorably. Educators with the most experience advocated (88%)

recommending the site, as opposed to those with fewer years in the field (60%). The

researchers will explore the open-ended questions for a possible explanation.

Website Navigation. The final Likert scale question asked participants if

NewTeacherRetention.com was easy to navigate. Nearly 91% of participants selected

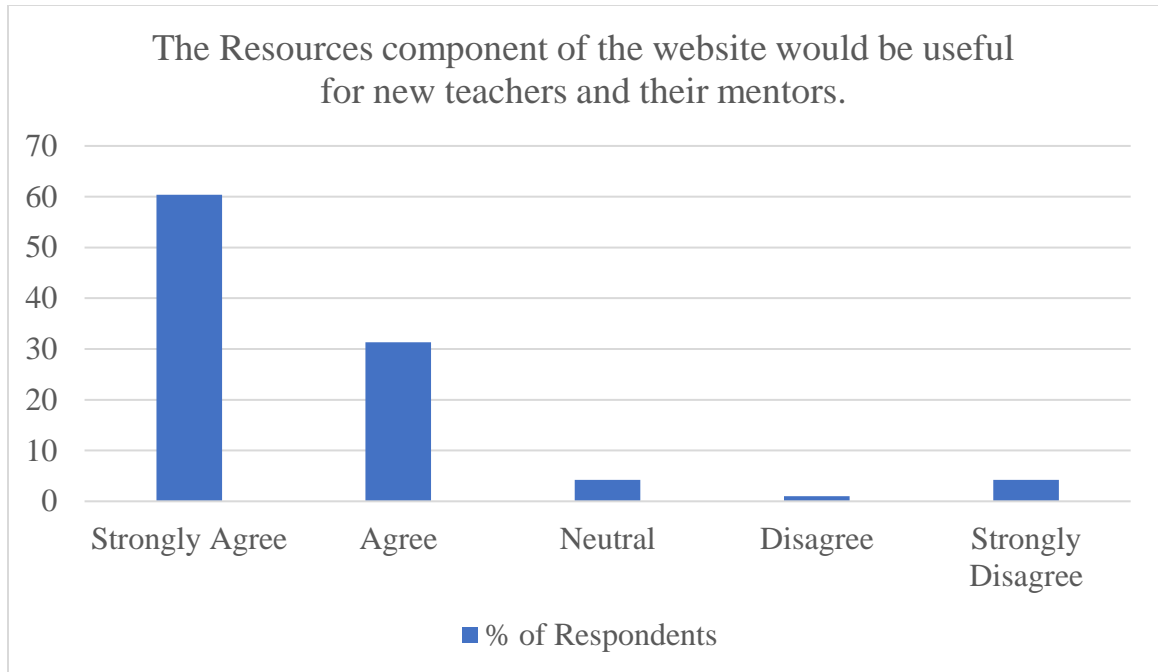either strongly agree or agree. Figure 14 summarizes the responses to this question.
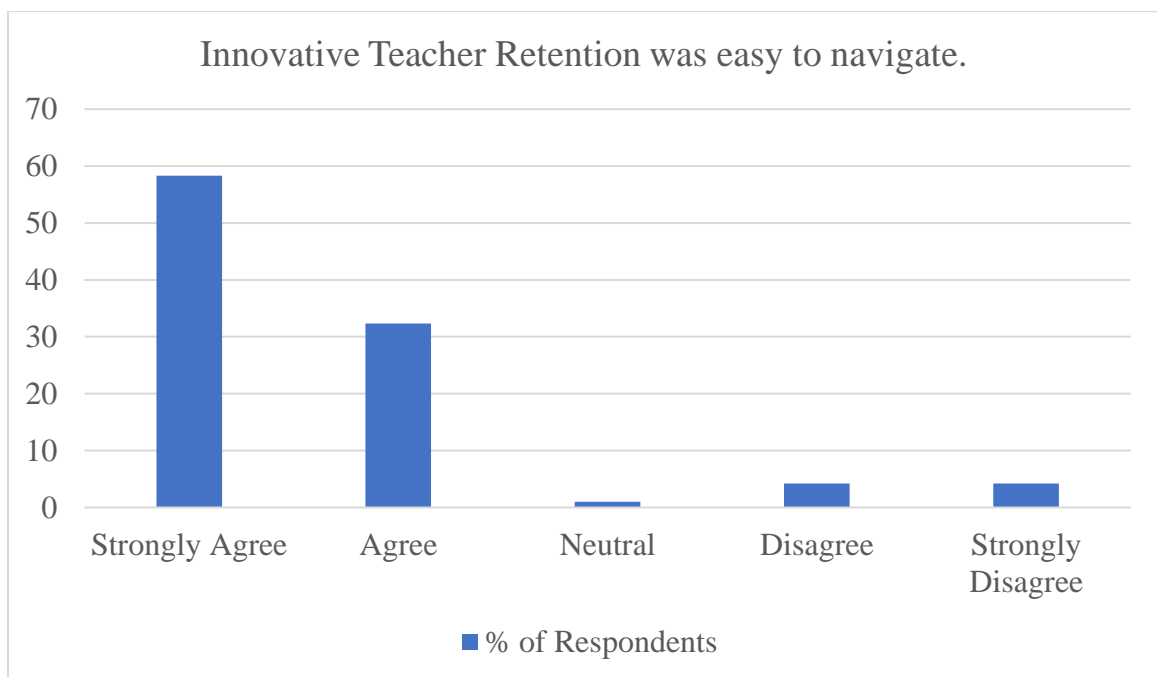
Figure 14. Website Navigation.

Analysis. Although 87 out of 96 participants answered this question favorably, the

researchers will look for input in the open-ended questions regarding website navigation.

Open-Ended Questions

The final two survey questions allowed survey participants to share their thoughts

and recommendations on improving NewTeacherRetention.com, and their perceptions on

how to best support new teachers. The open-ended questions were as follows:

1. What other support components could be added to this website in order to help improve teacher retention.

2. In your experience, what is the most important tool a new teacher needs to succeed?

As previously mentioned in the Methodology chapter of this study, the open-ended questions were coded using suggestions from Creswell (2018) as noted below:

- Downloaded data from Google Forms into a spreadsheet

- Reviewed data repeatedly, looking for common themes

- Coded data by looking for keywords or ideas

- Categorized responses into themes based on coding

Improving NewTeacherRetention.com For the question '*What other support components could be added to this website in order to help improve teacher retention?*' 20 of the 96 (20.8%) participants who answered either entered N/A or an answer indicating the website did not require any additional components. Answers from this group included: "I think each area was covered very well," "None, everything was on point and much needed," and "The site is excellent and extremely informative." The remaining responses were divided into four themes: Data/Technology, Resources, Support, and Structure. Figure 15 represents a visual summary of these responses.

What other support components could be added to this website in order to help improve teacher retention?	
Resources (33.3% of responses)	**Support** (29.2% of responses)
• Teacher retention articles • COVID-19 resources • I think that it needs more resources in the areas where the calendar/meeting information. • Adding a go to checklist for new educators and a surviving your first 90 days would be beneficial	• Parent communication and support • Support resources on procedures for classroom management • Something about guidance • Recognition program for the new teachers • Teacher Feedback-where teachers can state what was beneficial for them
Structure (10.4% of responses)	**Data/Technology** (6.3% of responses)
• I think you could add a little bit more to the SAFETY section • I understand from the description that the website was for new teachers and the village but I think that it should be focused towards the new teacher and allow admin/schools/designee the areas to personalize the specific areas.	• In the data piece should there be a planned overview of triangulation and different data sources ex. adult data, parental data. Maybe even progress monitoring • I think you all should add more professional development that focus on technology tools

Figure 15. Examples of responses to how to improve NewTeacherRetention.com

Resources. The majority of responses (33.3%) to the open-ended question on what resources would improve NewTeacherRetention.com fall into the Resources theme. This category includes suggestions that would add a new component to the website. One such addition several participants advocated for was of a blog/chat section. "The integration of a Blog section for new teachers to post their glows/grows, share ideas, and to collaborate with one another would be a great addition," said one respondent. According to Dekmezian (2015), blogging benefits include expressing ideas, sharing knowledge, and building professional networks. Since the researchers initially considered a blog section during the website's planning, the incorporation of this component will only be a matter of logistics.

Three participants suggested the addition of a Multicultural section. Understanding multiculturalism allows teachers the opportunity to provide equal education to their students (Alismail, 2016). Additionally, minority and immigration numbers continue to increase throughout the United States (Cilluffo & Cohn, 2019), emphasizing the request for this component.

Support. The theme with the second-highest percentage of responses (29.2%) was Support. This category includes suggestions for specific programs that would aid new teachers. Classroom management was one such proposal, which was present in three responses. One participant stated: "New teachers need real strategies and peer support when handling challenging student behaviors." Teachers must balance the art of being in control while still being respectful, all while keeping instruction as the primary focus (Simmons, 2019). The researchers will consider adding classroom management tips to the Professional Development portion of NewTeacherRetention.com

Including information related to time management was submitted by three participants. One response simply stated: "Time management is very important," while another declared: "Include a section regarding time management tools for teachers." Educators need to create routines for lesson planning, an efficient system for grading, and schedule time for parent communication (Holland, Martinez & Valentine, 2019). Time management resources will be a welcome addition to the Link section of the website.

Structure. The theme titled Structure compromised 10.4% of responses. This category included suggestions for modifying existing components in NewTeacherRetention.com, such as the Safety component, which three respondents mentioned. One participant commented: "I think you could add a little bit more to the SAFETY section." The National Center on Safe Supportive Learning Environments (2020) found that school safety is a critical factor in student success. Possible additions to the Safety section include information on Bullying Prevention, detailed instructions on all emergency codes, and available staff training responsibilities.

Other observations on the website structure included a comment on the font: "The bulleted font is small compared to space on the web page." The same participant also suggested that the researchers change the top of the website to The Village, rather than New Teacher Retention. While the font proposal may have merit, the researchers feel the web site's intent should remain professionally titled.

Data/Technology. The final theme of the first open-ended question was titled Technology, which made up 6.3% of total responses. This section included all answers related to audio/visual and computer assistance. Three participants mentioned the benefits of adding a video component to NewTeacherRetention.com. "The professional

development should have links to videos about some of the top new teacher support

topics," said one participant. Videos allow teachers to share content knowledge, partake

in live coaching, and see their peers at work (Burns, 2019). The researchers will consider

adding a video section to the resource tab.

Most Important Tool for New Teachers. The second open-ended question '*In

your experience, what is the most important tool a new teacher needs to succeed?*' was

answered by 95 of the 96 participants. After removing the "N/A" comments, the

remaining responses were divided into three themes: Strong Relationships, More

Resources, and A Combination of Relationships and Resources. Total percentages and

examples of these themes are illustrated in Figure 16.

In your experience, what is the most important tool a new teacher needs to succeed?
Strong Relationships (65.3% of responses)
• Coaching & Mentorship (from a well-respected veteran teacher) • Mentor [especially Nationally Board-Certified teachers when on staff] • Continuous support from the administration and mentor as well as providing feedback on a timely manner • Teachers need mentors who they can speak openly to and get support and guidance. • In my experience the most important tool a new teacher needs great mentor teacher/buddy teacher. Someone who supports the students and school initiatives. Someone who is open to helping new people grow and not forcing them into a "this is how we've always done it" way
More Resources (17.9% of responses)
• They need an easy access to resources and answers to their questions on a continual basis. • Classroom management skills • Curriculum ideas and planning
A Combination of Relationships and Resources (16.8% of responses)
• A program such as this one and a resourceful mentor. • Classroom management as well as a nonjudgmental buddy teacher • Support and Resources

Figure 16. Examples of responses to the most important tool for new teachers

Strong Relationships. Providing new teachers with appropriate mentoring is essential to their success during this first year and beyond (Alexander & Alexander, 2019) (Marzano, 2020). Unsurprisingly to the researchers, the word "mentor" appeared in 37% of responses to this open-ended question. "Lots of support and a mentor who is consistently involved in their education journey," "Having a seasoned mentor definitely benefits new teachers as well as having the opportunity to teach in diverse settings to become well-rounded educators," and "A well trained and committed mentor that has the time available to support them" represent a sampling of the answers. The researchers will consider adding a Mentor tab to NewTeacherRetention.com, which will provide detailed strategies to facilitate the mentoring process.

Ten participants (10.5%) mentioned the importance of administrative support for new teachers. Examples include:

- "Besides the drive and passion a supportive Administration"

- "Support from colleagues and administrators"

- "Continuous support from the administration and mentor as well as providing feedback on a timely manner"

Studies have demonstrated that a lack of administrative backing may lead to early attrition amongst educators (Mulvahill, 2018). The researchers will continue to search for innovative ways to ensure an impactful administrative/new teacher relationship.

New teachers, paired with capable peers, are less likely to leave the teaching profession (Feng, 2017). The words 'peer' and 'buddy' appear in 9.5% of the responses. Examples are as follows:

- "The most important part is a great team of helpful peers and fair admin that is there to make them better not out to get you"

- "An extremely supportive mentor teacher. I was blessed to have an incredible mentor teacher and supportive team. Administrators must be very selective in pairing new teachers with their mentors. Just because a veteran teacher has received the necessary mentor training or peer teaching training does not mean they are equipped to mentor and support new teachers"

- "A teacher buddy who reminds them of deadlines and clarifies terminology specific to their new campus"

NewTeacherRetention.com was designed with the peer/new teacher relationship in mind. The Village, Teacher Levels, and Calendar sections were all devised to foster this relationship and ensure thorough support to new teachers.

More Resources. Though many of the responses in this category are vague (examples: "Resources" and "More resources"), classroom management was mentioned in half of the responses with this theme. Managing student behavior is one of the essential skills new teachers must master (Callahan, 2016). Examples of these answers include:

- "Classroom management strategies are the most important. Teachers that cannot manage off task behaviors are not going to stay in the field for a sustained period of time."

- "How to infuse emotional and social intelligence in their classroom... they must know what it is and how to model it before any lasting behavior management can be implemented and sustained..."

- "The most important tool is our voice. Our voices are used to motivate, manage classroom behavior, model students' voices, engagement etc."

Considering adding a classroom management component was suggested in both open-ended questions, the infusion of a section designed to help teachers manage student behavior will be a top priority for the researchers of NewTeacherRetention.com.

   A Combination of Relationships and Resources. 16 of the 95 (16.8%) participants' answers reflected aspects of both the relationship and resources categories. Select responses are bulleted below:

- "A program such as this one and a resourceful mentor."

- "Easily accessible information and tools with a 24/7 mentor/advocate."

- "Support, an Outlet when feeling overwhelmed (ties back to support) and the ability/understanding that it's ok to not know everything your first year. A "How-to-Guide and Who-to-Turn-to Guide" which is why love your mentoring section."

Conclusion

   The first research question asked how can school centers, particularly those classified as Title I, offer support for new teachers that embraces the school's culture, while meeting the teacher's needs? There were 960 responses to the Likert Scale questions designed to evaluate the effectiveness of NewTeacherRetention.com. The participants in this survey chose agree or strongly agree 853 times (88.9%). A fair deduction is a resource such as NewTeacherRetention.com can be utilized by a school or school district to help lower teacher attrition.

   The second research question asked how districts and school centers could provide support for new teachers with minimal or no impact on the budget. On average,

school districts spend 80% of their budget on salaries and benefits (Cavanagh, 2017).

NewTeacherRetention.com was designed with this fact in mind. The facilitation of a

support system such as this would not require additional employees. The website's goal is

to maximize the effectiveness of the various employees that are already present in most

school centers. NewTeacherRetention.com will help schools maximize available

resources, improve communication, and promote genuine teamwork with a nominal

effect on the budget.

CHAPTER V:

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

As the demographics and the economics of the United States continue to change, school districts face enormous challenges in acquiring talented educators. Specifically, hiring, training, and retaining quality educators. Recruiting highly qualified candidates is a challenge since many college students are not choosing education as a major. Since 1975, the number of students selecting education as a course of study has decreased by over 50% (Passy, 2018). These statistics make it imperative that education leaders ensure new hires receive as much support as necessary.

Adequate training is one of the main steps school districts should take in order to minimize turnover. Although school districts across the country have significantly increased the number of teacher induction programs (Goldrick, 2016), many of them are managed at the district level. Consequently, these systems lack the ability to provide specific support to new teachers.

Since 1999, the number of educators with over ten years of teaching experience has decreased from 39% to 29% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2018). The number of teachers that leave the field after five years is a topic of debate, ranging from 17% (Brown, 2015) to 50% (Carver-Thomas &Darling-Hammond, 2017). Howevr, teacher turnover in high-needs schools is well documented. According to Kirby (2017), teacher attrition at Title I schools is 50% higher than non-Title I schools.

Throughout the years, educators and noneducators have offered higher salaries as an incentive to attract and retain qualified teachers. However, multiple studies (Mulvahill,

2018; Lambert, 2018) indicate that low compensation is not the primary reason teachers leave the field. Both studies cite challenging work conditions and a lack of support as the focal points for teacher attrition.

The number of teachers leaving the field after five years has a significant impact on education in several ways. Phillips (2015) estimates that school districts spend a combined $2.2 billion each year due to teacher turnover. Financial implications aside, the most critical aspect of this attrition is the bearing it has on students. Research has shown that effective teaching is the primary indicator of improved student achievement (Habib, 2017).

After considering these facts and statistics, the researchers of this study devised two research questions:

1. How can school centers, particularly those classified as Title I, offer support for new teachers that embraces the school's culture, while meeting the teacher's needs?

2. How can districts and school centers provide support for new teachers with minimal or no impact on the budget?

Method Analysis

NewTeacherRetention.com is a website designed to provide specific support to new teachers. While many traditional induction programs are facilitated at the school district level, this construct is designed for utilization at the school level. Additionally, this website's purpose is to guide each faculty member who plays a role in supporting the novice educator. The components of NewTeacherRetention.com are as follows:

- The Village: Outlines how the plan works and defines each member's role as well as their responsibilities

- Teacher Levels: Describes how new educators are categorized and provides the framework for a specific support plan

- Calendar: Provides a list of recommended activities as well as guidance for supervision and mentor meetings

- Professional Development: Provides essential tools for new teachers including curriculum, school culture/climate, data, and testing

- Exceptional Education: specifies guidelines for servicing special needs students

- Safety: Summarizes steps to take in an emergency

- Resources: Offers vital information for new teachers such as forms, classroom supplies procedures, directions on accessing instructional tools, and links to education websites

After constructing NewTeacherRetention.com, 96 educators were asked to complete a 15-question survey on the effectiveness of the website. The survey included three demographic questions composed to determine the years of experience, position, and Title I background. Twelve Likert Scale questions asked specific questions on the usefulness or efficiency of various components of NewTeacherRetention.com. The final questions were open-ended queries designed to gather suggestions on improving the website.

Findings

The demographics for the 96 educators are as follows:

- Current Position: 36% teachers, 19.8% assistant principals, 11.5% support

  staff, 4.2% principals, 29% other (district administrators, counselors,

  media specialist, and ESE/ESOL coordinators)

- Years in Education: 78.1% 11 or more years, 16.7% 4-10 years, 5.2% 0-3

  years

- Title I Experience: 94% yes, 6% no

Participants were then asked to rate the usefulness or efficiency of select

components of NewTeacherRetention.com, as well as their opinion of recommending the

site. Responses to the Likert Scale questions are summarized as follows (percentages):

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Village Component	55.2	34.3	2.1	3.1	6.3
Teacher Levels	45.8	37.5	5.2	5.2	6.3
Mentor Meetings	59.4	30.2	3.1	2.1	5.2
Supervision Meetings	55.2	35.4	4.2	1.0	5.2
Curriculum	53.1	37.5	0	3.1	6.3
School Culture/Climate	52.1	35.4	6.3	0	6.3
Data	53.1	37.5	2.1	3.1	4.2
Resources	60.4	31.3	4.2	1.0	4.2
Website Navigation	58.3	32.3	1.0	4.2	4.2
Would recommend NewTeacherRetention.com	59.4	29.2	6.3	0	5.2

The final questions were open-ended, allowing participants to leave detailed

replies as to how they would improve NewTeacherRetention.com as well as the most

important aspect new teachers need to be successful. Participants answered the first open-ended question by advocating for the inclusion of multicultural education, classroom management, video, and blog sections. Additionally, several participants asked for an expansion of the Safety section and included more professional development information. The second opened-ended question saw an overwhelming (65.3%) of responses that stressed the importance of strong relationships, extensive mentoring, and robust administrative support.

Conclusions

The 96 participants asked to evaluate NewTeacherRetention.com have extensive experience in education and Title I schools. Teachers, support staff, school administration, district personnel groups were each represented. When asked to rate numerous components of this website, participants selected strongly agree or agree in 853 of 960 possible responses (88.9%). Only five individuals indicated they would not recommend the site to a colleague. The majority of participants stressed the importance of new teachers receiving strong support through teamwork and mentoring, two areas NewTeacherRetention.com is designed to promote.

Limitations

The researchers solicited participants via personal email, social media, and text messaging. While this method ensured a higher probability of completed surveys, it leaves the possibility of response bias. Participants may have felt they should answer each question favorably.

An additional concern for the researchers is the lack of input from new teachers. Out of the 96 candidates, only two fell into that subgroup. Since teachers with 0-3 years are essential to this study, their opinions hold considerable influence.

Recommendations

This executive summary will conclude by answering each research question:

- How can school centers, particularly those classified as Title I, offer support for new teachers that embraces the school's culture, while meeting the teacher's needs? NewTeacherRetention.com's purpose is to provide new teachers and their mentors with tools designed to provide specific support, which will alleviate teacher attrition.

- How can districts and school centers provide support for new teachers with minimal or no impact on the budget? The average school district appropriates 80% of their budget on personal costs. NewTeacherRetention.com does not require the addition of additional staff. Instead, the website maximizes the efficiency of each member of the new teacher's support team.

The above research demonstrates how NewTeacherRetention.com would benefit new teachers, support staff, and school administration. This study recommends that policymakers discuss the data in this study with their colleagues and consider utilizing this innovative approach to teacher retention.

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APPENDIX A: Email to Educators

An Innovative Approach to Teacher Retention

Dear Valued Educator,

We are conducting research designed to improve teacher retention. Because you are a valued member of the education family, your opinion regarding what schools need in order to help teachers remain in the field is most vital. If you choose to participate, the following process should take between 15-20 minutes:

- Three demographic questions

- Browsing of the website

- Twelve questions about the website

There are no risks involved in this research and you are free to exit at any time. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at the email addresses listed below.

To take the survey and evaluate our website click here: (website link)

Thank you in advance!

Ruthe Francis (rfrancis@email.lynn.edu)

Marc Dixon (mdixon2@email.lynn.edu)

APPENDIX B: Social Media Flyer

An Innovative Approach to Teacher Retention

WHO: Current or retired teachers or administrators

WHAT: 15-20 minute survey

WHERE: On your electronic device

WHEN: Within one to two weeks

We are conducting research designed to improve teacher retention. Because you are a valued educator, your opinion regarding what schools need in order to help teachers remain in the field is most vital. If you choose to participate, you will be asked to complete the following:

- Three demographic questions

- Browse our website

- Twelve questions about the website

There are no risks involved in this research and you are free to exit at any time. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at the email addresses listed below. To take the survey and evaluate our website click here: (website link)

Thank you in advance!

Ruthe Francis (rfrancis@email.lynn.edu)

Marc Dixon (mdixon2@email.lynn.edu)

APPENDIX C: Informed Consent

Purpose of the Research

The purpose of this research is to gather research in order to improve teacher retention.

Specific Procedures

Your participation in this study will assist in developing a website designed to help educators improve teacher retention. You will be asked to answer a 15 question survey.

Duration of Participation and Compensation

The total duration of your participation should be no longer than 20 minutes. There will be no compensation for participation.

Risks

This online survey is strictly voluntary and no penalty will be imposed for non-participation. There are minimal risks in participating in the survey. However, if you feel uncomfortable or anxious at any time, you may press the "X" button in the upper right-hand corner of the survey and exit out of the survey.

Benefits

There are no benefits for answering the survey questions, however, school staff may benefit from your input on teacher retention.

Confidentiality

This survey is strictly anonymous and there is no identifying information. No IP

addresses will be kept or known to the researchers. Your answers to questions will be

stored for two years on a password protected computer and after that time will be deleted.

This project's research records may be reviewed by the departments at Lynn University

responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

Contact Information

If you have any questions about the research project you may contact

Ruthe Francis (email: rfrancis@email.lynn.edu) or Marc Dixon (email:

mdixon2@email.lynn.edu). For any questions regarding your rights as a research

participant, you may call Dr. Patrick Cooper, Chair of the Lynn University Institutional

Review Board for Protection of Human Subjects (phone: (561) 237-7407, email:

pcooper@lynn.edu).

Documentation of Informed Consent

I have had an opportunity to read the consent form and have the research study explained.

I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the research project and my questions

have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the research study described above.

By clicking "Yes" I am consenting to participate in the study.

APPENDIX D: Confidentiality Agreement

This survey is strictly anonymous and there is no identifying information. No IP

addresses will be kept or known to the researchers. Your answers to questions will be

stored for two years on a password protected computer and after that time will be deleted.

This project's research records may be reviewed by the departments at Lynn University

responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact us at the email addresses listed

below.

Thank you again!

Ruthe Francis (rfrancis@email.lynn.edu)

Marc Dixon (mdixon2@email.lynn.edu)

APPENDIX E: Survey Questions

Demographic Questions

1. What is your current position (most recent if you are retired)?

- o   Teacher

- o   Support Staff (Coach, Dean, etc.)

- o   Assistant Principal

- o   Principal

- o   Other: _____

2. How many years have you spent as an educator?

3. Do you have any experience working in Title I schools?

Likert Scale Questions

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4. The Village component of the website describes each member's role effectively

5. The Teacher Levels component of the website describes teacher experiences efficiently

6. The One-on-One Meetings section in the Calendar component would be useful for new teachers and their mentors

7. The Supervision Meetings section in the Calendar component would be useful for new teachers and their mentors

8. The Curriculum section in the Professional Development component would be useful for new teachers and their mentors

9. The School Culture/Climate section in the Professional Development component

would be useful for new teachers and their mentors

10. The Data section in the Professional Development component would be useful for

new teachers and their mentors

11. The Resources component of the website would be useful for new teachers and their

mentors

12. I would recommend Innovative Teacher Retention to a colleague

13. Innovative Teacher Retention was easy to navigate

Open Ended Questions

14. What other support components could be added to this website in order to help

improve teacher retention?

15. In your experience, what is the most important tool a new teacher needs to succeed?