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An Exploratory Study Of The Impact Of The Organization On The Retention Of High School Teachers

Donna M. Hargens
Seton Hall University

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AN EXPLORATORY STUDY OF THE IMPACT OF THE ORGANIZATION
ON THE RETENTION OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS

BY

DONNA M. HARGENS

Dissertation Committee

Mary Ruzicka, Ph.D., Mentor

James Caulfield, Ed.D.

Francis Clemente, Ed.D.

Anthony Habit, Ed.D.

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for The Degree of
Doctor of Education
Seton Hall University

2005

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DEDICATION

"But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength;
they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run,
and not be weary; and they shall walk and not faint."

Isaiah 40:31

This work is dedicated to my family. First, I dedicate this to the Hargens' "team": Jeremy, Josh, and Jenna. Thank you for all of your understanding, love, and support.

I dedicate this also to my parents, Delores and Jerome Knipple. Thank you for your gifts of faith and love. Congratulations on celebrating your 50th wedding anniversary. 2005 will always be a very special year!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	iii
DEDICATION.....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vii
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
The Facts About the Teacher Shortage.....	2
Summary of the Problem.....	6
The Purpose of the Study.....	7
Main Research Question.....	7
Subsidiary Questions.....	7
Significance of Study.....	8
Limitations of the Study.....	9
Definition of Terms.....	10
Summary.....	10
II. REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE.....	12
Turnover at the Organizational Level.....	15
Limitations of Existing Research on Teacher Turnover.....	16
What the National Data Suggests.....	17
States Efforts to Explain Turnover.....	18
Pay Matters.....	20
Working Conditions.....	20
Participation in Decision Making/Empowerment.....	21
Time.....	22
Discipline.....	25
Collegial Interaction.....	26
Administrative Support.....	29
Summary.....	33
III. METHODOLOGY.....	35
Subjects.....	35
Setting.....	36
Delimitation of the Study.....	36
Research Procedure.....	36
Data Collection.....	36
Data Analysis.....	40

IV. FINDINGS.....	43
Overview.....	43
Presentation of Data.....	44
Characteristics of the Subjects.....	44
Administrative Support.....	47
Time.....	51
Collegial Interaction.....	53
Participation in Decision Making.....	57
School Climate/Discipline.....	59
Decision to Stay, Move, or Leave.....	62
Likelihood of Retiring as a Teacher.....	65
Opportunities for Advancement in Teaching.....	65
Certification.....	67
Salary.....	67
Work Distribution/Type of Students.....	69
V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	72
Discussion of Key Findings.....	75
Administrative Support.....	75
Mentor Support.....	77
Time.....	80
Collegial Interaction.....	81
Participation in Decision Making.....	82
School Climate/Discipline.....	83
Main Research Question Addressed.....	85
Subsidiary Questions Addressed.....	86
Implications for Practice.....	87
Recommendations for Future Study.....	88
Summary.....	89
References.....	92
Appendices.....	99
Appendix A: Interview Introduction and Questions.....	99
Appendix B: Data Codes.....	102
Appendix C: Conceptual Map of the Organizational Factors.....	107
Appendix D: Matrices.....	109
Appendix E: Overview of Findings.....	117
Appendix F: Raw Data.....	119

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table 1</u> : Characteristics of the Participants.....	46
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When examining the number of teachers that are needed each fall, school systems can focus on recruiting and hiring new teachers to fill those vacancies, or they can examine why teachers left in the spring. There is evidence in the literature that teacher vacancies are not due to a shortage of prepared candidates, or to a failure of recruitment efforts. There is evidence that the vacancies are due to teachers leaving, and that the challenge ahead is to discover ways to retain the teachers that are currently teaching. Creating supportive environments that help to retain teachers will, as supply and demand theory requires, decrease the quantity of new teachers demanded (Ingersoll, 2001). Changes in the world are outside of an administrator's control, but conditions at the school level, which are controllable, may be driving new teachers from the profession.

Teachers are exposed to risk conditions. The changing expectations of a global economy, an increasingly diverse student population, and a highly critical public are challenging educators' well being (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). Teachers bear the burdens of society's higher expectations for schools (Johnson & Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). Federal and state legislation now requires that all students, including high school students, achieve at high levels (Breaking Ranks II, 2004). There has, however, been no national study on the lack of progress in public high schools. Confronted with these external and internal pressures, the school environment

often does not support teacher resiliency or teachers' "ability to adapt and to bounce back" and to stay in teaching (Bernhauser & Cunningham, 2001, p.3).

Teacher turnover is costly. For example, Texas conservatively estimates the annual statewide cost of teacher turnover to be \$329 million (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003). There is the hidden cost of the lost public investment of tuition and tax support for preparing new teachers. There are also the squandered resources that go in each year to retrain new teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Turnover, in addition, results in the "disruption of the coherence, continuity, and community that are central to strong schools." (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003, p. 13) Students without consistent quality teaching may be paying the highest price in achieving less academically (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003).

The encouraging news is that many of the working conditions in school can be altered administratively. Schools are not mere victims of this turnover trend. The management and organization of schools play a significant role in school staffing problems, but can also play a significant role in the solution (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

The Facts About the Teacher Shortage

Teaching has become a revolving door through which a third of all teachers (approximately a million teachers) flow in and out, and where ninety percent of new hires are replacements (Ingersoll, 2001; National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003). Darling-Hammond (2003) found that teachers are leaving in the first few years of teaching, with one-third of new teachers leaving the profession within five years. Ingersoll (2001) found that 29 percent of all beginning teachers have left teaching

altogether after just three years, and after five years 39 percent have left teaching. When the career paths of 50 new teachers were studied in Massachusetts over four years, Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found that 24 of the 50 new teachers left the schools they started at. With a third to a half of new teachers leaving within five years, and the loss of 73 percent of teachers with three or less years of experience in a system like the Wake County Public School System of NC (Wake Education Partnership, 2003), Halford (1998) accurately describes teaching as a profession that is eating its young.

In Stage 1 of Ingersoll's (2001) analysis of the data from the National Center for Education Statistics, Ingersoll described the overall magnitude of annual teacher turnover and its role in the shortage of teachers. Since older teachers outnumber younger ones, many analysts have in the past incorrectly concluded that retirement is the most significant factor in attrition, shortages and staffing problems (Ingersoll, 2001). There are, however, more newly qualified teachers than retiring teachers. Over the next 10 years, 700,000 teachers are projected to retire, which accounts for only about 28 percent of future hiring needs. The number of teachers leaving for other reasons is three times larger than the number retiring (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003). Retirement is the least prominent reason for turnover. Nationally, teachers are leaving due to job dissatisfaction and to seek other careers (Ingersoll, 2001).

Based on that false assumption of an insufficient supply, school districts and states have put their energies into recruiting and increasing the supply, only to find that a dent is not being made in the shortage. Based on the false assumption of an insufficient supply of teachers, there has not been sufficient research yet done on retention. Focusing on recruiting, when 40-50 percent of the recruited teachers leave in a few years, is like

pouring water into a bucket with holes in the bottom (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). The emerging focus in the literature is on how to patch the holes in the organization to keep teachers. If the trend of losing teachers continues, in North Carolina, for example, the schools will need to hire over 10,000 teachers a year and will need to hire between 70,000 and 80,000 teachers by 2010 (Governor Easley's Teacher Working Condition Initiative, March 2003).

New teachers, however, also face challenges from within the school. New teachers are expected on the first day to do the same job at the same level of competence as experienced teachers (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003; Renard, 2003). Common sense tells us that new teachers take more time to perform routine teaching activities (Renard, 2003). Beginning teachers have learning needs – to learn relevant approaches, to craft an identity, to learn to think and decide on their feet, and to learn to collect and to use achievement results to alter their practice. It is a large learning agenda with emotions running high (Feiman-Nemser, 2003). A school can often feel to teachers like “individual classrooms connected by a common parking lot” (Little, 1999, p. 256 as cited in Feiman-Nemser, 2003, p.28). New teachers feel isolated and often find themselves overwhelmed with work both at school and at home, making teaching seem impossible and unrewarding (Renard, 2003).

What protections for teachers exist in this at-risk environment? “Resiliency is not just about developing individual capabilities. It is also about developing resiliency-supportive environments.” (Milstein & Henry, 2000, p. 18) The six external building blocks or protective factors that exist in environments that support teacher resiliency are: (a) prosocial bonding which includes connections with supportive people and activities;

(b) clear and consistent boundaries; (c) life skills; (d) caring and support; (e) high expectations; and (f) meaningful participation (Milstein & Henry, 2000). Clemente (2001) concluded in her study that the research on resiliency has practical application since the protective factors that are described in the literature regarding resiliency can be manipulated in the environment.

The school organization is impacted by any teacher turnover -- by a teacher leaving the profession, or by a teacher leaving an individual school. There are costs associated with this alarming turnover -- the cost of replacing teachers and the lost of the return on the investment of hiring that teacher, but more importantly the cost to students and their achievement. The dreams of our young people, that are dependent on consistent quality teaching, are at stake (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996).

There is some debate about the accuracy of the teacher attrition rates (Keller, 2003). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future used Dr. Ingersoll's analysis (2001) of teacher turnover based on the federal government's 1990-1991 Schools and Staffing surveys to declare that there is a teacher retention crisis. Although researchers disagree about how unique this problem is to teaching and if there is a crisis, they do agree that there is a teachers leaving in large numbers is a problem, and that the data supports that once through the first years, teachers generally stay (Ingersoll, 2001; Keller, 2003; Wayne, 2000). Turnover differences between individual schools may vary from 5 percent to 40 percent. Wayne (2000) and Ingersoll (2001) agree, therefore, that the most important question is how much turnover there is in a particular school organization (as cited in Keller, 2003).

Teaching represents four percent of the entire civilian workforce. There are twice as many K-12 teachers as registered nurses and five times as many as attorneys or professors. The turnover rate in teaching is the highest (Ingersoll, 2001). It is estimated that two million new public school teachers will be needed to balance increasing student enrollments (Olson, 2000). Add to that the need for more teachers due to the revolving door of attrition, and the general public must be concerned about the retention and nurturing of quality teachers (Bobek, 2002).

Summary of the Problem

The school organization is impacted and changed by any turnover -- by a teacher moving or migrating to another school, or by a teacher leaving teaching altogether. Since schools may be able to be organized to influence a teacher's decision to stay in teaching, schools are not mere victims of the trend of teacher turnover. Staff changes disrupt the sense of community that has been built. When a teacher leaves a school, they leave with valuable knowledge. Staff changes affect the continuity of instruction. It takes time for teachers to become part of a new school, to build relationships, and to learn about its initiatives. For an individual school, it matters little whether a teacher leaves teaching altogether or transfers out, since the school loses that teacher's knowledge of the students, curriculum, and the community (Johnson & the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). It takes time for administrators to recruit, hire, and orient replacement teachers. Is the time and energy now spent on recruiting and rehiring, not better spent in examining the organizational factors that affected the decisions of the teachers to leave, and in working to alter them administratively.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study, using a qualitative analysis, is to explore the organizational factors that may have contributed to a third year high school teacher's decision to stay in teaching, to move to another school, or to leave teaching. This study is designed to promote the understanding of the phenomenon of teacher turnover on the high school level. What organizationally are the high schools in which teachers choose to stay like? What organizationally are the high schools from which teachers leave like? Can those organizational factors be altered?

Main Research Question

This study will investigate the working conditions or organizational sources in high schools that foster the retention of third year high school teachers. The researcher will attempt to identify the working conditions that contribute most to the decision or intent to remain in teaching, and the conditions that contribute to a teacher's decision to move to another school or to leave teaching altogether.

The study will answer the following question:

What organizational factors do third year high school teachers describe that help to explain their decision to stay in the same school, to move to another school, or to leave teaching?

Subsidiary Questions

- a.) How do third year high school teachers describe their decision to stay in teaching?
- b.) How do third year high school teachers describe their decision to move to another school?

c.) How do third year high school teachers describe their decision to leave teaching?

Significance of Study

This study may help us to understand what organizational factors impact the decision of third year high school teachers about teaching. The shift in the proportion of veteran to novice teachers has created a need for research regarding what this new generation of teachers expects from their schools, and what will be needed organizationally to sustain and support them (Johnson & the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). This study will provide administrators with a description of the working conditions and practices on the high school level that contribute most to teacher retention, and those conditions that undermine the teachers' desire to remain in teaching. This study may help educators understand why some third year high school teachers remain as a teacher in the same school, while others move or migrate to another school, and why others leave teaching altogether.

This study holds the promise of providing high school principals with information about the working conditions that, if present in their school, might impact teacher retention. It holds the promise of providing principals with a window to the world and perceptions of a third year teacher that might contribute to developing strategies to improve the working conditions for teachers. If research indicates that certain organizational factors do contribute to the decision to leave, then principals may need to focus on ways to alter those conditions in order to retain teachers. The time spent in these efforts, saves the time and cost of rehiring. This knowledge and altered practice may contribute to the ultimate goal of reducing teacher turnover in high schools, and its negative impact on the school community and on student achievement. It may lead to

policy changes or closer monitoring of policies that are designed to protect and improve the working conditions of the beginning teacher.

This study may also contribute to the emerging research that looks at the significance of the school organization as a major factor in turnover. The in depth accounts of individual teachers may guide the way for further research, as policy makers and practitioners assess competing strategies for recruitment and support of the new generation of teachers (Johnson & the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). It will also add to the body of research on retention and attrition of high school teachers, and specifically to knowledge about the relative influence of certain factors (Peck, 2002). This study may provide additional useful information that may assist in reversing the debilitating trend of teacher turnover, and will help states like North Carolina whose goal is to reduce teacher turnover by 50 percent by 2006 (Governor Easley's Teacher Working Condition Initiative, 2003).

Limitations of the Study

1. This study will not attempt to quantify the amount of negative impact from teacher turnover on the school community and on school performance.
2. Some turnover is good for an organization and some turnover may be attributable to the federal standards for being a highly qualified teacher, but attrition is considered to be under the limits of this study undesirable for the organization.
3. Salary does matter, but this study will not focus on making conclusions on conditions like salary that are outside of the local school's control. This in no way should diminish or replace the importance of the need to improve salaries for teachers.

4. The sampling procedure decreases the generalizability of findings. This study will not be generalizable to all third year high school teachers. This study focuses on third year high school teachers in one school system.

5. Interviewees are not equally articulate and perceptive.

6. A qualitative methodology depends heavily on the skill of the researcher, who may have biases.

7. The decision to limit the sample size decreases the ability to generalize from the findings, but it increases the depth of knowledge about each third year teacher's decision to stay, move, or leave.

Definition of Terms

Working Conditions – the character and the conditions of the organization in which employees work (Ingersoll, 2001)

Stayer – a 3rd year high school teacher who decided to stay at the same high school for the 2004-2005 school year.

Mover – a 3rd year high school teacher who decided to move or transfer to another high school for the 2004-2005 school year.

Leaver – a 3rd year high school teacher who decided to leave teaching altogether at the end of the 2003-2004 school year, and is no longer in teaching in 2004-2005.

Resiliency – “the ability to adapt and then bounce back when faced with conditions that created disequilibria or adversity” (Bernshausen & Cunningham, 2001, p. 3).

Summary

Johnson (2004) found that some schools are organized to include the supports that make success for new teachers not only possible, but also likely. When a teacher leaves a

school for any reason, the continuity and community of that school organization is affected. When a teacher leaves, they leave they take with them the knowledge of the students, peers, and curriculum. The current period of turnover in the teaching force presents a challenge to make all schools places where teachers find the conditions and support they need to continue in teaching (Johnson & the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). Johnson (2004) described the need to create the conditions that will support and retain teachers as the greatest opportunity and responsibility of principals and experienced teachers. Recruitment will not solve the teacher shortage, unless the organizational reasons for low retention are addressed (Ingersoll, 2001).

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

In general, the literature on teacher retention can be categorized in three ways. The literature on teacher retention has evolved from exploring associations between retention and the personal characteristics of the teacher, to looking at the relationship between retention and the characteristics of the school, and more recently to studying the link between retention and the satisfaction with working conditions within that school. In the first group of studies the personal characteristics of the teacher (i.e. academic ability, professional qualifications) were studied in relationship to retention (Theobald, 1990). Researchers then studied the relationship between retention and the characteristics of the schools (Abel & Seawell, 1999; Rees & Mont, 1996; Shann, 1998). The third group of studies that have emerged most recently, looked at the relationship between teacher retention and satisfaction with the organizational factors or working conditions in a school. The findings of studies that seek to find relationships between teacher retention and personal characteristics or school characteristics will not be included in this review. These findings digress from the primary focus of this study, which is on the effects of organizational factors on teacher retention that are controllable. The findings of previous studies may have implications for recruitment and hiring efforts, rather than for retention efforts.

A fear of a national teacher shortage in the 1980's led to the establishment of panels and to the development of many reports that dealt with the issues of a teacher shortage and of teacher turnover. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) pointed out that policymakers and practitioners responded to the discussion of a teacher shortage by rapidly devising strategies to alleviate the shortage, but without a clear understanding of teachers' concerns that can be obtained through research.

A positive consequence of the fear of a teacher shortage has been the collection and production of better data, and of research regarding turnover and its relationship to organizational factors. Although much has been written about the issue of the teacher shortage and teacher retention, this literature review will focus primarily on the findings from studies that are described in peer-reviewed or refereed journals. References to reports and presentations are included only to provide the context of the problem. When referring to findings reported in presentations or reports that have not been peer-reviewed or refereed, the reader will be cautioned about the value of the conclusions. The value of those reports is that they suggest areas for empirical research.

For example, research needs to be done to explore the relationship between turnover and student achievement, in order to quantify the total and true cost of teacher turnover to students. Dolton and Newson (2003) studying 316 primary schools in London, concluded that if teacher turnover increased by 10%, that English scores would decline by 2%, and Math scores would decline by 2.5%. Dolton and Newson (2003), furthermore, found that schools with low academic attainment had significantly more difficulty in retaining teachers. Since high levels of teacher turnover had detrimental effects on student progress, Dolton and Newson (2003) found there to be a vicious cycle for disadvantaged

schools. Since these findings appeared in a nonrefereed source, the results should be treated with caution.

Feiman-Nemser (2003) and Darling-Hammond (2003) both reported that teacher effectiveness increases only after the initial years of experience. Piphon (1998) described an initiative that directly ties academic gains to the teacher. The Sanders model, used in the TN Value-Added Assessment System, for example, purports to estimate the effect of an individual teacher on student academic gains. This type of model could quantify the effect on student achievement when an experienced teacher leaves, and a new teacher replaces that teacher. Research studies need to be conducted to arrive at any conclusive findings.

A review of the literature indicates that the following organizational factors have been shown to impact teachers' decisions to remain or to leave: Time, Participation in Decision-making, School Climate/Discipline, Administrative Support, and Collegial Interaction.

The environmental protective factors that are described by Milstein and Henry (2000) conceptually support the five organizational factors that emerged in the literature that impact teachers' decisions about teaching. The understanding of resiliency in adults, in general, however, is inadequate and is limited by a lack of research (Bobek, 2002). Bobek's (2002) premise that there is a relationship between the resilience of a teacher, the resiliency of the school environment, and the longevity of a teacher's career is not supported by research that involves beginning teachers, and, therefore, should be viewed with caution. Bobek's premise is based on a study of young adults who demonstrated resiliency, not on teachers.

In the early 80's the data about teacher turnover was not there. The most dramatic change that has occurred over ten years in exploring the issue of teacher retention is the quality of the data and the research. In the 80's policymakers' biggest concern was the fear of a teacher shortage.

The Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and its supplement, the Teacher Follow Up Survey (TFS), which was conducted by the U.S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) starting in the late 1980's. This large, comprehensive data source included both migration and attrition data, as well as the reasons teachers themselves gave for their departures, and also included characteristics and conditions of schools (Ingersoll, 2001). The SASS (Schools and Staffing Survey) data available in the 90's led to concerns over teacher quality, and to concerns about the role of working conditions as a key component in losing new teachers. A limitation of this national data, however, is that it does not allow researchers to distinguish between unwanted attrition, attrition that is beneficial to the organization, and attrition (i.e. for personal reasons) that can't be affected through changing working conditions (Keller, 2003).

Turnover at the Organizational Level

Ingersoll's (2001) analysis turned the attention of researchers and school districts to an examination of the school organization when analyzing teacher turnover. A criticism of the empirical studies that preceded Ingersoll's work had been that those studies explained turnover as a function of the characteristics of individual teachers. Researchers in the past have also measured turnover without distinguishing the negative effects of teacher migration – leaving one school to teach in another. Employee migration and

attrition affect the organization similarly. Leaving is impacted by organizational conditions, and leaving in turn impacts organizational performance (Ingersoll, 2001). Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found that teachers who migrate do so deliberately looking for schools with working conditions that make good teaching possible.

Limitations of Existing Research on Teacher Turnover

The body of research regarding teacher turnover consists of inconsistencies. This may be due to the use of different constructs or definitions, the range of instrumentation employed, and the differences in the samples. High schools teachers, for example, in the NCES data are grades 10-12. Nationally high schools are configured as grades 9-12 or grades 10-12. Some samples include both experienced and inexperienced teachers. Some samples include different levels of teachers. These studies do not take into account the differences between teachers on different levels and the differences in the organizational structures of schools. Inman and Marlow (2004), for example, studied teachers with 1-3 years of experience, and teachers with 4-9 years of experience and considered them all to be inexperienced. Induction, synonymous with mentoring in one study, may refer to planned activities in another. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) point out that many of the studies collect data from those who have participated in a particular program being assessed, rather than collecting similar outcome data from both participants and nonparticipants. Other factors are often difficult to control for. Purely quantitative data is a limitation. Correlation studies do not demonstrate causality. Qualitative data, on the other hand, can offer explanations and detail, but not generalizability. Many of the studies focus on particular programs, schools, and districts making generalizations difficult. As Billingsley (2004) similarly found in her critical analysis of the research

literature on special education attrition, that it is difficult to answer important questions definitively with the range of definitions, samples, measures, and analysis strategies. Each study, however, has value in adding to the knowledge base and in informing future research.

What the National Data Suggests

The U.S. Census Bureau collects the SASS (Schools and Staffing Survey) data for the National Center for Educational Statistics using a random sample of schools sorted by state, level, and public/private status. There have been four SASS cycles: 1987-1988, 1990-1991, 1993-1994, and 1999-2000. The unusually large sample includes 53,000 teachers, 11,000 schools, and all 50 states. After 12 months, the same schools were contacted and those teachers who left were given a second questionnaire (Teacher Follow-up Survey).

In a statistical analysis report, the National Center for Educational Statistics (1997) stated that the primary reasons for attrition (outside of pregnancy and retirement) were: management and discipline problems, poor student motivation, inadequate administrative support and recognition, and poor salary. That same analysis (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1997) found the following workplace conditions as significant in explaining satisfaction: administrative support, parental involvement, and teacher control over classroom procedures. The analysis found that satisfaction around workplace conditions, rather than school characteristics, teacher background characteristics, most clearly distinguished the most satisfied and least satisfied teachers. Compensation was found to be only moderately related to satisfaction. Administrative support and

leadership, good student behavior, positive school atmosphere and teacher autonomy were found to be associated with satisfaction.

Shen (1997) used the 90-91 (SASS) and 91-92 (TFS), sorting his sample by stayers, movers, and leavers. Shen (1997) looked at personal characteristics, school characteristics, and teacher perceptions. He found that stayers saw more advantages to teaching than disadvantages, had more influence, and more administrative support.

Using data from the 87-88 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), Choy, Bobbit, Henke, Medrich, Horn and Lieberman (1993) uncovered the following factors related to dissatisfaction and turnover: school safety, teacher autonomy, isolation of the classroom, and class size. Good behavior and teacher autonomy were found to be sources of satisfaction.

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2003) used Ingersoll's analysis of the SASS/TFS data, the largest and most comprehensive database available on aspects of elementary and secondary schools. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2003) reported that the reasons for turnover have been consistent over the four SASS cycles. Specific recommendations for altering practice, however, have, as yet, not been linked to the data or the findings.

States Efforts to Explain Turnover

The report of the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, *No Dream Denied*, (2003) acknowledged the efforts of two states (North Carolina and Tennessee) for examining teachers' satisfaction with working conditions in their own states. The North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards Commission, through research and focus groups, developed 30 working conditions standards for schools in five

broad categories. After the standards were validated, the survey was piloted in 60 schools. The survey was then given to every public school educator in the state in May 2002. The 42,000 voluntary responses from nearly 1,500 schools (45% total) showed that teachers were least satisfied with time and most satisfied with leadership (Governor Easley's Teacher Working Condition Initiative, 2003). The survey was expanded, without the new survey being tested for reliability and validity, and was administered online in March/April, 2004, but had a low response rate. The survey was given to all teachers, not to those who left. Questions regarding the reliability and validity of the survey instrument, and the method used to collect the data, should result in treating the findings with great caution.

In contrast, the subjects of the TN study were the teachers who left the TN public schools with 10 or fewer years of experience. Teachers in TN were leaving at the rate of 42% within the first five years. In the 2002 report, *Teacher Attrition in Tennessee*, the only administrative mutable variable that was found in the top three reasons for leaving was lack of support from the administration, which included mentoring (as cited in *National Commission on Teaching & America's Future*, 2003). The TN study, however, did not specifically define administrative support. Further study would need to be done to explore what is meant by administrative support for that finding to be useful.

The efforts of these two states, nonetheless, are a beginning attempt to capture local variations in regard to the dissatisfaction with working conditions in order to provide practical guidance to policy makers and administrators. Local recommendations are hard glean from the study of national quantitative data.

Pay Matters

One of the limitations of this study is that it does not deal with factors that impact teachers' decisions about teaching that are outside of a local administrator's control (i.e. salary). The issue of salary is prevalent, however, in any discussion and in many of the studies that also examined the relationship between organizational factors and turnover. To simply ignore the issue of salary might cause a reader to incorrectly conclude that salary doesn't matter. Other researchers do not ignore it. The literature supports that salary does matter, but that it does not exclusively matter. For example, Darling-Hammond (2003) found that salaries, working conditions, preparation, and mentoring support in the early years are the four major factors that influenced teachers who left teaching. The National Commission On Teaching & America's Future (2003) described that teachers left because of poor conditions, lack of respect, and low salary structures. Teachers with higher salaries were less likely to depart (Ingersoll, 2001; Rees & Mont, 1996; Shen, 1997). Ingersoll (2001), however, concluded that increasing the salary of teachers, although the data he analyzed supported that salary was an important factor, was not the only avenue to plug the holes of teacher turnover. Ingersoll concluded that there is potential in altering the working conditions that new teachers identified as factors in their decision to leave teaching: lack of administrative support, poor student discipline and student motivation, and lack of participation in making decisions (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

Working Conditions

The emerging findings that attrition is due to dissatisfaction with working conditions are important because that means that the dissatisfaction is due to factors that may be

altered by policy changes and local school practices. Although in the past the roots of the teacher shortage have been placed outside of the school, new data suggest that the roots of the teacher shortage largely reside in the working conditions within schools and districts (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Schools, currently organized to perpetuate private practice and a sink or swim mentality, are not adequate environments to support the needs of new teachers (Johnson & the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). The context of teaching has changed, but the organizations within which teachers teach have not kept up. Prospective teachers now have access to occupations outside of teaching with higher pay and status, more comfortable work settings, training, and opportunities for rapid advancement. There is, in addition, no longer the general expectation or the desire among workers to stay in the same career for the long term (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Johnson & the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004).

Participation in Decision Making/Empowerment

Research supports that empowerment can increase job satisfaction and can keep teachers in the classroom (Holloway, 2003). Shen (1997) for example reported on his analysis of the 90-91 data from the Schools and Staffing Survey and the 91-92 Teacher Followup Survey data for 4,761 public school teachers. Shen (1997) found that empowering teachers and giving them more influence over policies are associated with teacher retention. Ingersoll (2001) also analyzed a sample of 6,733 elementary and secondary teachers from the 90-91 SASS and 91-92 (TFS) data. Ingersoll found that 41% of the teachers left because of dissatisfaction, with those who migrated citing a lack of participation in decision making as a major factor. Ingersoll (2001) found that schools

with higher levels of decision-making influence and autonomy had lower levels of turnover. Shann (1998), studying teachers in 4 urban middle schools, found that teachers were uniformly dissatisfied with their level of participation in decision making, ranking it fourth in their concerns. A qualitative study by Williams (2001) supported the importance of participation in decision making as a factor for teachers. Williams interviewed exemplary teachers who stayed in teaching. Those exemplary teachers reported that they wanted to be involved in decision making and to be a part of solutions because it mentally challenged them.

Milstein and Henry (2000) describe providing opportunities for meaningful participation to be a building block of a resilient environment. New teachers who see themselves as lifelong learners, and who are willing to venture into areas that challenge their thinking, develop resilience (Bobek, 2002). Being a mentor, for example, was found to be an excellent avenue for experienced teachers to be involved in meaningful participation (Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Moir & Bloom, 2003; Williams, 2003)

Time

Teachers need time, and the time that a particular teacher needs is often dependent upon other organizational factors like teaching assignments. Teachers improve skills by trial and error and by reflection on failures and successes. It takes time to learn to handle the major concerns of classroom management, student motivation, differentiation of instruction, assessment, and learning to deal effectively with parents. It takes time to collaborate, to reflect, and to grow (Gismondi Haser & Nasser, National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003; Renard, 2003).

The report of Governor Easley's Teacher Working Condition Initiative (2003) concluded that lack of time is what NC teachers were most dissatisfied with. Again, because of questions of reliability and validity of the survey itself, these findings should be treated with caution, and should be used to inform empirical studies that consider the relationship of time spent to teacher retention.

Studies demonstrated that there is often a pecking order in schools where experienced teachers want new teachers to have the tough assignments to pay their dues. Making new teachers loads manageable by not giving them the same responsibilities as veteran teachers, and by not giving new teachers the most difficult classes was found to be essential in supporting new teachers. (Bernhausen & Cunningham, 2001; Chapman & Green, 1986; Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Halford, 1998; National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 1996; Peck, 2002; Renard, 2003).

Rees and Mont (1996) studied full time high school teachers hired in 1979 to investigate whether teaching load affects the likelihood that a teacher will leave his or her district. Mont and Rees concluded that the characteristics of a teacher's class load (i.e. class size and student quality) were important correlates of job turnover. They found student quality to be significantly linked to the probability of separation. A negative coefficient meant that higher levels of student quality lessened the probability of a teacher leaving. They stated that their study was the first study that investigated class load as an important correlate of teacher attrition, and recommended that any future study or policy recommendation should incorporate class load into their analysis.

Chapman and Greene's (1986) study of students who graduated with teaching certificates from the University of MI, reported that giving new teachers the least

desirable assignments may have long-term impacts on their career development.

Ingersoll's (2001) analysis found that those teachers who left teaching were dissatisfied with the lack of motivation of the students they were assigned.

McCann and Johannesen (2004) qualitative study of eleven novice high school English teachers found that those unlikely to persevere in teaching talked about a workload that was unreasonable, unmanageable, and hopeless. Some of the teachers reported 12-14 hours a workday, making teaching their sole enterprise. Similarly, Certo and Fox (2002), investigating teacher attrition in seven Virginia school divisions, found lack of planning time and hectic and stressful schedules as one of the top reasons that teachers leave.

Johnson and Birkeland (2003) interviewed a diverse group of 50 new teachers in MA. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found that those who left teaching had inappropriate teaching assignments and loads. Billingsley's (1993; 2004) critical analyses of the research literature on special education teacher turnover similarly supported the finding that balanced and appropriate assignments as a factor that supported teaching and reduced turnover.

Johnson and Birkeland (2003), in addition, described the current increased pressure to educate all students, even in the most difficult classes, to higher standards as a factor that made teaching assignments an even more critical factor for new teachers. Kauffman, Johnson, Kardos, Liu, and Peske (2002) interviewed 50 first and second year teachers in MA. This qualitative study concluded that new teachers spent an inordinate amount of time developing their own content and materials faced with the pressure of the state-mandated assessment system. The objective of this study was to consider if these

experiences influence if teachers will stay in teaching. There needs to be a follow up longitudinal study to determine if their experiences in their first two years impact if they will remain in teaching.

Milstein and Henry (2000) described a lack of time as a barrier to providing teachers with the caring and support that needs to exist in an environment that supports resiliency. New teachers are overwhelmed if the assignment is too challenging, but discouraged if the assignment offers no opportunity for growth. Brock and Grady (1998) who examined the differences between principals and teachers perceptions regarding first year teachers problems, found that teachers cited problems with discipline, mainstreamed students, and keeping up with the workload.

Discipline

The literature indicated that student discipline was a major factor in teachers' decisions to leave. Abel and Seawell (1999) studied 98 high school teachers to determine if the sources of stress for teachers differed in urban and rural settings. Abel and Seawell (1999) found that the stress from pupil misbehavior (i.e. pupils who continuously misbehave and are impolite) and time pressures was significantly greater than the stress from other working conditions for both rural and urban teachers.

Factors that were associated with job satisfaction were appropriate student behavior, along with administrative support, and feelings of control (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1997). The context of an orderly school helped new teachers maintain order and a sense of control, and made teaching easier (Johnson & the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers, 2004). Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) found that teachers complained about administrators who

didn't follow through on discipline. Johnson and Birkeland's (2003) longitudinal study of 50 new teachers found that teachers needed to work in a clearly designed environment that facilitated a focus on learning. Even 15 of the stayers in their study reported a concern about the lack of discipline, resulting in the recommendation for a support structure for discipline.

Ingersoll (2001) found that in schools that provided more support from administrators and with lower levels of student discipline problems, turnover rates were distinctly lower. Ingersoll (2001) found that a common source of dissatisfaction for those who left teaching and for those who migrated were student discipline problems.

Tough times for even the exemplary teachers that Williams (2001) interviewed were connected to difficult students and disciplinary issues. McCann and Johannesen (2004) found that the negative experiences of the novice English high school teachers they studied, with one class or even one student tainted the overall experience of that teacher.

Building a resilient environment through establishing clear and consistent boundaries helps new teachers feel secure (Milstein & Henry, 2000). In a resilient environment, teachers must, however, also have wide latitude to set boundaries within their own settings, and must have a voice outside of their setting (Milstein & Henry, 2000). Students, teachers, and principals need the same environmental factors to be successful— structure, consistency, support, and the freedom to take risks (Sargent, 2003).

Collegial Interaction

When describing the results of her qualitative study of 50 new teachers, Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) reported that the stories of the teachers echoed the stories of teachers of the past - that teaching is isolating work. The

leavers described colleagues who failed to support them. The movers moved to find collegial interaction, and even 15 of the stayers described their colleagues as unhelpful. Teachers in the study described the structure of the schools they taught in as flat and segmented. This traditional structure reinforced the value of privacy of the retiring generation of solo performers. Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) found that the experiences of the new teachers in her study ranged from working with colleagues who shared instructional and procedural strategies to being left alone to learn how to cope. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) described school environments as being veteran-oriented, novice-oriented, or integrated professional cultures in which teachers of all experience levels worked together. Factors found to stem turnover and support good teaching in a 2003 study were collegial sharing and encouragement (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003).

Kauffman et. al. (2002) found, through interviewing 50 new teachers, that only a small number of the schools worked in had a setting that encouraged regular discussion with teachers of all levels of experience. In other schools good fortune or individual initiative were the determinants of whether the new teachers received assistance.

McCann and Johannesen (2004) found, through interviewing 11 novice high school English teachers that novice teachers naturally gravitate toward teachers that they can respect and trust, and that any kind of personal connection can help the new teacher thrive. Inman and Marlow (2004) surveyed teachers, using the Professional Attitudes Survey, from five randomly selected schools in GA. 40% of the surveys were returned from teachers with less than ten years of experience. Inman and Marlow concluded that teachers could benefit, according to their self-reported attitudes, when given the

opportunity to work with teacher education mentors and colleagues with similar ideas about working cooperatively.

Ingersoll's (2001) analysis of the 1999-2000 SASS data, found that having common planning time with other teachers or participating in regularly scheduled collaboration reduced the risk of leaving by 43%. This data cannot be compared with other SASS cycles since the previous questionnaires did not ask comparable questions. All of the TFS (Teacher Followup Survey) data is still not available, which limits how conclusive this finding is.

The exemplary teachers in Williams' (2001) study described that there must be a balance between the need for autonomy and creative expression, and connectedness, and expressed concerns about forced collegiality (Williams, 2003).

Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) found that the traditional structure of schools would not satisfy the new and different generation of teachers who brought with themselves different options and expectations. The literature consistently supported and affirmed the need for teachers to work together, rather than separately, and for organizational structures that support collaboration. It was found that teachers needed positive, supportive connections with students, parents, colleagues, a mentor, and the principal, and other meaningful relationships (Bobek, 2002; Hope, 1999; Milstein & Henry, 2000; National Center for Education Statistics, 1997; Williams, 2003).

Research showed that the work of qualified teachers must be organized around collaboration and strong learning communities (Williams, 2003; Ingersoll, 2001).

Darling-Hammond and Wichterle Ort (2002) in a seven-year study found that successfully reinvented high schools had strong teachers who were supported by

collaboration in planning and problem solving. A strength of this study is that is longitudinal and that it uses a triangulated methodology of quantitative data, including student outcomes, and qualitative interviews, observations, and document reviews.

Bernhausen and Cunningham (2001) and Johnson and Birkeland (2003) argued that education programs for new teachers should help provide supportive collegial environments for those new teachers, and that schools should have integrated professional cultures. Milstein and Henry (2000) theorized that the organization structure of schools, working in isolation and performance evaluations based on individual efforts create, barriers for collaboration.

Administrative Support

In her reviews of the literature of special education teacher retention, Billingsley (1993; 2004) describes administrative support as an important and multidimensional concept, ranging from personal and emotional support to providing leadership and guidance. Peck (2002) and Brock and Grady (1998) similarly found administrative support as an important factor that can positively or negatively affect the working conditions of the new teacher. Hope (1999) found that teachers needed instructional and emotional support from the principal or they fell prey to negative influences. Chapman and Green (1986) found by analyzing the Survey of Graduates with Teaching Certificates at the University of Michigan, that although school administrators could positively influence current work conditions, previous experiences might constrain the effectiveness of current administrative interventions designed to retain teachers. Chapman and Green (1986) found that some respondents were predisposed to leaving because of historical factors. They concluded that the attention that administrators give

to the professional life of new teachers could have long-term impacts on the career development of those teachers. Inman and Marlow (2004), reported on the attitudes of teachers in five randomly selected schools in GA, and found that administrators should focus on continuing to provide all teachers, particularly beginning teachers, with positive experiences in support of their new ideas.

When studying the effects of induction activities on the likelihood that beginning teachers will leave their jobs, however, Ingersoll and Smith (2004) did not find regular supportive communication with the principal, administration, and department chair to be statistically significant. In contrast, when analyzing the 90-91 SASS and 91-92 TFS data, Ingersoll (2001) found that both those who left and those who moved due to dissatisfaction, cited lack of administrative support as a source of that dissatisfaction. Shen (1997) analyzed the same data, and found that the stayers perceived that administrators knew their problems better, and indicated the importance of supporting teachers' work from an administrative perspective. McCann and Johannesen (2004) interviewed 11 novice teachers to determine what influences beginning teachers to stay in the profession. The novices reported that mentors and supervisors should be proactive and listen and assist without judging.

The literature affirmed that teachers who had a positive relationship with the principal were more satisfied and were more likely to remain in teaching (Chapman & Green, 1986; Peck, 2002). Certo and Fox (2002) found that lack of administrative support was one of the top three reasons teachers leave the profession. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found active principals to be a factor that supported good teaching and reduced turnover. The leavers that they interviewed described principals who were

arbitrary, abusive, and neglectful. The 15 dissatisfied stayers described their principals as ineffective. Principals who used negative criticism, and conducted routine evaluations with minimal expectations inhibited the establishment of a resilient environment built on caring and support (Milstein & Henry, 2000).

Graduates of teacher preparation education programs felt significantly better prepared and they stayed longer (Darling-Hammond, 2003; National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003). Johnson and the Project on the New Generation of Teachers (2004) found that the most confident teachers had spent an entire year co-teaching with an experienced teacher. Johnson and the Project on the New Generation of Teachers (2004) found that unfair or impossible assignments drove novices from the profession. Induction activities provided new teachers with confidence and support and replaced the sink-or-swim mentality (Feiman-Nemser, 2003; Halford, 1998; Hope, 1999; Sargent, 2003). Teachers without induction support left at a 70% higher rate (Currin & Abrahams, 2000; National Center for Education Statistics, 1997). Ingersoll's (2001) analysis of the 1990-1991 SASS data demonstrated that effective support for new teachers was strongly and significantly related to lower turnover. In Brock and Grady's (1998) study, principals and first year teachers agreed about the need for more structured and comprehensive induction and mentor programs.

Access to a mentor promoted the personal and professional well-being, and the retention of the beginning teacher (Bobek, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Halford, 1998; Sargent, 2000). The novices interviewed by McCann and Johannesen (2004) reported that the quality of the mentor program makes all of the difference. Bernhausen and Cunningham (2001) argued that teachers needed mentor support, reasonable

assignments, targeted professional development, cohort meetings, and follow-up by university faculty. They did not, however, cite any empirical evidence to support the effectiveness of university faculty involvement.

Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found that, although most of the participants in their study had mentors, the pairings were often not appropriate. Often mentors taught different subjects, grades, even in different schools, and had different schedules and had personality conflicts with the new teacher. Ingersoll (2001) found that having a mentor in the same field reduced the risk of a teacher leaving by 30%. Ingersoll and Smith (2003) in their analysis of the 1999-2000 SASS data found that beginning teachers who were provided with mentors from the same subject field and who participated in collective induction activities, such as planning and collaboration, were less likely to move to other schools and less likely to leave the teaching profession. Inman and Marlow (2004) similarly concluded that mentoring programs provided personal encouragement and professional assistance, indicating that pairings should be appropriate and be personally compatible.

A good administrator, according to exemplary teachers, created the right blend of challenge and support (Williams, 2003). Teachers wanted to achieve and be successful, and to be recognized for those accomplishments (Bobek, 2002). Career paths that go from mentored induction to accomplished teaching were found to be needed to recognize teachers (National Commission on Teaching & America's Future, 2003; Shen, 1997). Frequent messages of minimal expectations and the fact that salary is based on years of service rather than the quality of one's performance inhibited fostering an environment of high expectations (Milstein & Henry 2000).

Summary

Darling-Hammond (2003), along with other researchers, reported that the real problem is not in the number of teachers available, but in keeping the teachers we prepare. Researchers like Ingersoll (2001) and Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) found that the conditions of schools affect turnover. Working conditions are on the top of the list of why teachers leave. Teachers move to find good working conditions. The greatest potential to reverse the debilitating trend of high turnover may lie in improving the working conditions. Outside factors and school-related factors affect educator resiliency and teachers' decisions to stay in teaching (Henderson & Milstein, 2003). Administrators can build into supervision elements that build resiliency in the environment (Clemente, 2001).

The ultimate goal must be to reduce teacher turnover and its potential negative impact on student achievement. Faculties are both the largest cost and the largest human capital resource of a school system. Understanding the factors that contribute to teacher satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) is essential to improving the information base needed to support a successful educational system (National Center for Education Statistics, 1997). Well-prepared, capable teachers have the largest impact on student learning. In high turnover schools, students are subjected to a parade of ineffective teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

Research-based findings can inform the decisions of policy makers and practitioners. Policy makers can mandate recruitment and induction programs, but only school leaders can support teachers (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). How many high school teachers

intend to leave their schools at the end of their third year and why? Can organizational factors be altered to influence teachers to stay?

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Subjects

The participants of this study were high school teachers who completed their third year of teaching in the same school system in 2003-2004. The participants for this qualitative study were randomly selected from the 118 high school teachers who completed their third year of teaching in this particular system in 2003-2004. The pool of participants did not include teachers from the three high schools in the area in which the researcher was a principal or is the Area Assistant Superintendent -- the Western Area. The criteria for selection were: 1. in a high school in their third year in an area other than the Western Area 2. in a classroom teaching position.

A stratified random sample was selected. The sample was divided into the following three strata: 1. the teachers who completed their third year of teaching in 2003-2004, and are teaching in the same school in 2004-2005 – the “stayers”; 2. the teachers who completed their third year of teaching in 2003-2004, and who moved or transferred to another school in 2004-2005 – the “movers”; and 3. the teachers who completed their third year of teaching in 2003-2004, and who left teaching – the “leavers”. For each stratum, the names of the teachers from each group were put into a container, and the researcher pulled out five names. The ten participants who voluntarily agreed to participate formed the random sample of participants.

Setting

The teachers being interviewed in this study all completed their 3rd of teaching at the end of the 2003-2004 school year in the same school system. There are 136 schools in this county system, which are divided into six geographical areas. 18 of the 136 schools are high schools. This particular system ranks among the nation's fastest growing school systems. The system ranked in the top quartile of the 100 largest public school districts in 2002-2003.

The NC Excellent Schools Act, approved in 1997, was designed to support student achievement and to reduce teacher attrition. For new teachers it includes: three additional days of employment for orientation and preparation, an initial certification exam, career status (near the end of the fourth year of teaching) decided one year after continuing certification is awarded, mentors for all beginning teachers, guidelines for optimum teaching load, and observations at least three times annually by a qualified school administrator, and at least once annually by a teacher (North Carolina, 2004)

Delimitation of the Study

This study will confine itself to interviewing 3rd year high school teachers in the same system.

Research Procedure

Data Collection

The list of high school teachers who completed their third year of teaching in 2003-2004, and their contact information was obtained from the Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources. Permission to conduct this study was granted by the chair of the Research Evaluation Committee in the Office of Evaluation and Research.

Each of the participants was provided with a brief description of the study and its purpose, a request for voluntary participation, and the researcher's stated affiliation with Seton Hall University. A Letter of Solicitation was mailed home to each randomly selected participant. Attached to the Letter of Solicitation were an Informed Consent Form, and a list of questions to be used during the interview (Appendix A). Potential subjects were given an opportunity to consider their participation and to ask questions about the study. Subjects who willingly agreed to participate were asked to sign an informed consent form. Upon agreeing to participate, the participants were told, verbally and in writing on the written consent form, that they could withdraw at any time without a penalty.

After a participant returned a signed informed consent form, the researcher contacted the participant to set up an interview time. The interview took place at each teacher's school at a time that was convenient for the teacher. If the teacher preferred, the interview took place at a school near the teacher's work or home. For those who left teaching at the end of 2003-2004, the interview took place at the participant's place of work, or at a school near the participant's work or home that was convenient for the participant.

A list of questions, which was provided for each participant, acted as a guideline for the structured interview. The teachers were told that they would be asked to talk about their personal experiences and perceptions. "The purpose of interviewing, then, is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective" (Patton, 2002, p. 341).

The participants were assured that at no time would the identity of the interviewees be revealed in the study, and that all responses would be treated confidentially, and would

in no way be traceable to an individual respondent. Participants were told that the responses would be combined. An individual's name or school's name would not be attached to the responses. The researcher asked for signed permission for the interview to be recorded, so that everything could be remembered and studied, and in order that the raw data could include actual quotations. The raw data of interviews are the actual quotations, what is actually said by real people. (Patton, 2002) Verbatim note taking interferes with being attentive to the interviewee. (Patton, 2002) Quotations, which would be used to illustrate themes, would not be traceable to an individual respondent. That raw data is included in Appendix F. The researcher explained that the researcher would transcribe the audiotape of each interview so that the responses of the participants would remain confidential. The tape-recorded sessions and verbatim transcriptions would ensure the accuracy of the participants' views, and the validity of the information. The researcher would then combine and analyze the responses in order to discover any patterns in the responses.

The researcher specified that no more than fifteen subjects (three to five stayers, three to five movers, and three to five leavers) would be needed in the study. The researcher explained that the tapes would be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home for three years, and that the participants would remain anonymous. After that time, all of the data would be destroyed.

The researcher was a high school teacher, assistant principal for curriculum and instruction, and a high school principal for twelve years. The researcher has over 20 years of experience on the high school level. The researcher has personal experience with high school teachers, and the loss to a school community that occurs when a teacher

leaves, and the resulting energy that is expended in recruiting and hiring another teacher. The researcher is an Area Assistant Superintendent. One of the goals of the district, which is also included in the list of the superintendent's performance criteria, is to retain teachers.

A Letter of Solicitation was mailed to the home of each randomly selected participant by the researcher. An Informed Consent Form was included, and was signed and returned for the subject to be eligible to participate in the study. A list of the interview questions (Appendix A) was also mailed to the participants. The subjects, who returned a signed consent form, were contacted by the researcher to set up an interview time.

The introduction to the interview and a list of the interview questions (Appendix A) acted as a guideline for the structured interview. The researcher used a standardized open-ended interview format, with one final question ("Is there anything that you would like to add?") allowing the interviewee to add any additional comments, and to have the final word.

The content and face validity of the interview questions was affirmed by a "jury of experts". Standardized interviews ensure that the interviewee gets asked the same questions in the same way and in the same order. The use of a consistent procedure produces reliability. This interview method facilitated interviewing participants for a short, fixed time of approximately one half hour each. Advantages of the standardized open-ended interview method include: having the exact instrument available for inspection, focusing the interview to use time efficiently, and facilitating analysis by making responses easy to find and to compare. (Patton, 2002)

As recommended by Patton (2002), an immediate post interview review, in which details about the setting and any observations about the interview would be recorded by the researcher, was conducted. The interviewer went over the interview notes to make sure there were no areas of uncertainty. If there were areas that didn't make sense, the interviewer checked back with the interviewee (via telephone). The post-interview review is a critical time for reflection and elaboration, and establishes the context for making sense of the interview later. (Patton, 2002)

Data Analysis

Content analysis is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that identifies core meanings, patterns, and themes. (Patton, 2002) The first step for the researcher was to transcribe the interviews. The researcher then read through all the transcripts to get a general sense of the information, reflecting on the overall meaning. The researcher worked inductively looking for emergent patterns. Creswell (2003) suggests writing notes in the margins and recording general thoughts about the data. The researcher then made a list of all topics or organizational factors that surfaced in the review of the transcripts of the interviews that the interviewees used to help describe their decision to stay, move, or leave. The researcher then gave each organizational factor a code. The researcher then went back to the data, and wrote the code that represents a particular organizational factor next to the appropriate segment(s) of the text. The researcher then grouped or clustered the organizational factors into categories and gave each category of organizational factors a name/abbreviation. The researcher then assembled together the responses belonging to each category of organizational factors, and performed a preliminary analysis.

Matrices (Appendix D) were developed to present and compare the responses of the “stayers”, “movers”, and “leavers”, in order to discern if there were any patterns, and to determine if the responses of those interviewed fit into the categories representing the organizational factors that emerged in the literature (time, administrative support, collegial interaction, participation in decision-making, and school climate/discipline). The categories were developed to be able to organize the data in order to answer the research questions regarding the organizational factors that were present or lacking in the school environment that may have impacted the 3rd year teachers’ decision to stay, move, or leave. An environment that supports resiliency includes the following factors, which parallel those organizational factors: (a) prosocial bonding which includes connections with supportive people and activities; (b) clear and consistent boundaries; (c) life skills; (d) caring and support; (e) high expectations; and (f) meaningful participation (Milstein & Henry, 2000). The researcher also noted any new organizational factor that a teacher used to explain their decision.

The data, the organizational factor codes, and the codes for the categories of those organizational factors, were entered into the software (Muhr, 2004), a qualitative software program that allows for coding, networking, and data chunking. A conceptual diagram of the Atlas.ti data codes can be found in Appendix C. The raw data, the transcribed interviews can be found in Appendix F. Text from the individual data codes was merged to allow review of the textual evidence of each category or theme. The software program assisted the researcher in quantifying the number of similar responses among the subjects, and in observing the patterns that existed in the responses. The data was then summarized in narrative form, using the teachers’ own words to illustrate any

themes, in order to describe the organizational factors that may have impacted the teachers' decisions about teaching after completing their third year.

After completing the first analysis, the researcher set the data and the narrative aside. The researcher returned to it, and looked again at the themes, reviewing the transcripts again for additional support and evidence of those themes.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

Overview

This chapter presents the findings of the study designed to explore the organizational factors that impacted the decision of high school teachers, who completed their third year, to choose to stay in the same school, to move to a different school, or to leave teaching altogether. The results include an analysis of the participants' answers to structured interview questions. A brief description of the ten participants is also provided in order to put the findings in a context.

The presentation of the data is organized around the main research question and the three subsidiary questions. The interview questions and resulting presentation of the data revolve around five organizational factors that emerged in the literature about teacher retention: Administrative Support, Time, Collegial Interaction, Participation in Decision-Making, and Climate/Student Discipline. Also included is a presentation of the data regarding the participants' overall decision about teaching. Twenty-eight codes were developed to categorize the data into organized units. A list of those codes is in Appendix B. The first set of codes was derived from the structured interviewed questions that can be found in Appendix A. Subsequent codes were added when patterns emerged from the initial review and coding of the data, and from the development of a matrix for

each organizational factor. The text of the transcribed interviews, the raw data that formed the basis for this analysis can be found in Appendix F.

Presentation of Data

The raw data (Appendix F) was co-mingled across the participants with the Atlas.ti software in order to examine common themes among the responses. This study is about the feelings and perceptions of these teachers and what impacted their personal decision about teaching. The extensive use of quotations in the presentation of the data provides a richness that would have been lost in paraphrase. In order to see the similarities and differences and the patterns in the responses, a brief summary of what the researcher recorded during the interview, is entered into the individual cells of each matrix.

Characteristics of the Subjects

Ten teachers agreed to participate in the study. The participants who were invited to participate were randomly selected from 3 groups of teachers who completed their third year in 2003-2004: the teachers who are teaching in the same school in 2004-2005 – the “stayers”, the teachers who moved or transferred to another school -- the “movers”, and the teachers who left teaching after completing that third year -- the “leavers”. The study analyzes the responses of four “stayers”, three “movers”, and three “leavers”.

The participants consisted of seven females and three males. Four of the participants had spent all three of their years in teaching at the same school. Two of the participants were completing their second year of teaching at the same school in 2003-2004. Four of the participants had been at the school that they completed their third year of teaching at only during the 2003-2004 school year. Of the four teachers who completed traditional student teaching before beginning to teach, two were NC Teaching

Fellows. One participant attended NC Teach to obtain certification after beginning to teach. Five of the participants entered teaching as Lateral Entry candidates. Four of the participants were from states other than NC. Three of the ten participants were African-American; seven were Caucasian. The participants were spread among six different high schools. One of the participants obtained a Masters Degree in the process of seeking certification. Three of the participants were in the process of obtaining a Masters Degree. During the interview, four of the six remaining participants expressed a desire to seek a Masters Degree. Only one of the interviewees indicated being in the process of pursuing National Board Certification. The characteristics of the participants are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Characteristics of the Participants

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Stayers</u>	<u>Movers</u>	<u>Leavers</u>	<u>Total</u>
From Out-of-State	1	1	2	4
Male	1	0	2	3
Female	3	3	1	7
3 Years at Same School	3	1	0	4
2 Years at Same School	1	0	1	2
1 Year at Same School	0	2	2	4
Traditional/Student Teaching	2	1	1	4
NC Teaching Fellow	1	1	0	2
NC TEACH/Alternative Certification	0	0	1	1
Lateral Entry	2	2	1	5
African-American	2	1	0	3
Caucasian	2	2	3	7
Masters Degree	1	0	0	1
In process of obtaining Masters	1	2	0	3
Desire to pursue Masters	3	0	1	4
In process/National Board Certification	0	1	0	1

This presentation is organized to provide the data in a structured manner in order to answer the main research question: What organizational factors do third year high school teachers describe that may help to explain their decision to stay in the same school, move to another school, or to leave teaching? The presentation is structured to provide the data to also address the three subsidiary questions in order to determine how each group (“stayers”, “movers”, or “leavers”) uses each organizational factor (Administrative Support, Time, Collegial Interaction, Participation in Decision-Making, Climate/Student Discipline) to describe that particular factor’s influence on their decision to stay in teaching at the same school, to move to another school, or to leave teaching.

For each of the five organizational factors, a summary of the data will be given for the entire group and then a summary will be given for the respective subgroups. The presentation will then identify data regarding the factors that the interviewees described that fell outside of the five organizational factors that emerged in the literature. Finally, the presentation of data regarding their decision, made after completing their third year, will put their decision into the context of their overall decision and intent about teaching in the future. A one-page overview of the findings can be found in Appendix E.

Administrative Support

Participants were asked to describe the type of support that they received in their third year from their administration, the support in general they received within the school and district, and the support from their mentor. The participants were then asked to judge if the support is what was needed. A matrix (Appendix D) was developed to organize the data regarding administrative support. The codes that were used to organize the data regarding the theme or organizational factor of administrative support were:

Support/Administrative, Support/Mentor, and Support/What was needed? Because references to the main principal emerged, the data was then recoded add the following code: Principal.

In general, seven of the participants positively described the support that they received from their administration. Three of the participants specifically referred to the main principal. One participant described the principal as the one who would do something; another described the principal as someone who “listened, but didn’t follow through”, with a third participant referring to the principal by using an expletive. Except for one respondent who spoke specifically about an assistant principal who was “awesome” at communication, respondents did not refer to specific levels of administrators. The six positive responses ranged from receiving both personal and professional support from the administration, referring to the administration as a “blessing”, to getting help with questions and assisting with problems, and to simply having “faith in me”. One respondent who described the administrative support as “very little, if any”, positively described the support she received from her department. Only one of the respondents referred to an administration’s support in terms of instruction. One respondent made it a point to say that she would go the administration with “discipline problems” rather than “teaching problems”.

Two of the participants were clearly negative toward the administration. One interviewee indicated that “things were not personal” and that “the administration was stretched very thin.” One participant, feeling that the administration treated new teachers as if they were “disposable”, indicated that: “They <the administration> threw me to the wolves.”

Four “stayers”, one “mover”, and one “leaver” described the administrative support that they received positively. Two “movers” and two “leavers” indicated that lack of administrative support did impact their decision to leave that particular school: “I just didn’t get the support I needed from them.” (Mover), “...biggest thing...At the early onset of last year, where a parent called and complained because a student had misconstrued a statement, and my principal just looked at me and said, ‘You need to get the kids on your side.’ ...And right there just told me all that I need to know.” (Mover), “It was basically his <the principal’s> way or the highway last year. And so I took the first exit I could find.” (Leaver), and “It was very difficult, at best, to get much support from the administrators that were in place.”(Leaver)

Seven of the participants indicated that they did have a mentor. In three of the seven cases, the mentors, however, were not described by the teacher as having effectively provided support. In two of the cases, the teachers received support both from their mentor and from other teachers. The three teachers without mentors said that they received support from other teachers in their department.

All four “stayers” described effective mentor support. One “stayer” had the support of her mentor and the support of other department members: “As much as I had a mentor, I kind of could go to my whole department. I don’t think I went to her more than anybody else.” One “stayer” received support from a “neighbor teacher”.

Two of the “movers” had mentors who were not in their field, and described that as problematic. A “mover” described the help that she received from her mentor: “She <the mentor> wasn’t in my department. So really there wasn’t really a whole lot she could help me with, but if I had questions she could direct me to places I could go for that

help.” Another “mover” noted, “The support that my mentor offered was good, but she just wasn’t the right person to be a mentor for me. But I think that because I came in October, all of the mentors that were <in the same department> had already been paired up with one or two mentees.” That “mover” also described being referred to someone else by her mentor for help: “She <the mentor> had no idea of what my position was to be either, and when I’d ask her questions about what my job duties were, she would refer me back to the person I was working with. So she was helpful for school related duties and responsibilities, getting grades in and things like that, the attendance policy, but not helpful for what I needed the most help with.” One “mover” described having been assigned a mentor who only had less experience at the school than she did. The “mover” without a mentor seemed satisfied with the support that she had received from other teachers.

Two of the “leavers” had mentors in their third year. One “leaver” described the mentor as a “senior faculty member” who was just “going through the motions”, but referred to a mentor he had in his second year in another county as “awesome”, because “She had very specific techniques and that’s what I needed.” This “leaver” also noted that mentors and department chairs who taught different levels of students, may not be able to relate to what the new teachers are experiencing. The other “leaver” had a mentor who became more active only when certification became an issue, and described her mentor as “a teacher of about 30 years, and she knew the system, and she knew the school very well”.

When asked if they received the support that they needed, only four participants (three “stayers” and one “mover”) indicated that they had received the needed support. Two of the “leavers” said they needed support regarding certification/licensure issues.

One “stayer”, one “mover”, and one “leaver” had the common experience of beginning their teaching positions into the school year. All three described needing more support and information when they initially began their positions. One of those teachers noted: “I got next to nothing as far as support...as I was hired they gave me the keys to the room, and said, ‘Good Luck’, and that was about the degree of support that I got.” That teacher sought out help: “...the teacher that was beside me, helped me a good deal...I think she was in her second year of teaching.” He described his initial experience this way: “...at the time I spent as much time confused, as I spent knowing what I was doing.” Another teacher, starting in October, said:

“I didn’t understand my job description. I was paired up with another teacher who had the same job....she didn’t feel like she should have had to train me...I had no idea what a <content area> teacher did. As a lateral entry hire, I didn’t have any materials to read about the job description....I kind of taught myself and read on my own, and asked other teachers, and just kind of did a lot of research myself.”

The third teacher, who began at the semester, noted: “It was probably a few months before somebody had gotten back to me about mentoring, and so, I really can’t say that I received much support – at least, through a traditional mentor program.”

Time

The participants were asked about the responsibilities that were assigned to them beyond teaching. A matrix was developed (Appendix D) to organize the data regarding time. The codes that were used related to the interview questions: Time/Responsibilities,

(b)(7)(C) (b)(7)(D) described that she would return to coaching after completing her masters degree: "They tried to pin me with <coaching> again, but I started grad school last year full time at night, as I am doing now. I will go back to coaching next year actually. I coached my first two years."

When asked to quantify the amount of time per week that participants spend on activities related to teaching, responses ranged from two to three hours per week to thirty hours per week. Seven teachers (four “stayers”, one “mover”, and two “leavers”) generally spent five to ten hours per week beyond the school day on activities related to teaching. Three of the teachers (two “movers” and one “leaver”) spent fifteen to thirty hours. One “mover” significantly reduced the time spent beyond the school day when she moved to using a different instructional model. When referring to the ten hours he now spends on activities related to teaching, one “stayer” noted: “...that has gone down dramatically from before...I am streamlined...I would be willing to say I was spending 20-25 <hours> my first year, and I have gone down to 10 or so.” Only one “leaver”, spending an additional thirty hours a week on activities, noted the hours spent per week were a contributing factor to seeking a different position.

Activities done during the time (i.e. planning, preparing materials, grading) beyond the instructional day were similar across the three groups. One “stayer” indicated that she spent the majority of the time beyond the school day on “reflection” and asking herself “How can I improve?”

Collegial Interaction

The interview participants were asked to describe the contact that they had on a regular basis with other teachers both formally and informally. Teachers were specifically asked to describe how often they talked with other teachers, and in what situations. Participants were asked to describe what they talked about. They were also asked if they observed other teachers teach, and to describe how teachers in general worked together. The codes that were identified around the organizational factor of

collegial interaction were: Interaction/Who, Interaction/What, Interaction/Observation, and Interaction/Working Together. The code, Departmental Meetings, was added. A matrix (Appendix D) was developed to organize the data regarding collegial interaction.

For eight of the ten participants, interaction seemed to be centered at the departmental level. The remaining two participants interacted most often with other new teachers. Six of the participants indicated that they had lunch with teachers in their department.

In two cases participants described their physical location as a hindrance to interaction. In one case, the teacher was in a trailer. He stated, "I don't have a hallway where I can just stand and talk to another teacher. If I want to go talk to someone, I have to make a concerted effort to go do that.... to go and at least say hello, so that I can have interaction with another adult at some point during the day." Only one participant indicated that interaction was discouraged. In that case, the participant shared that new teachers shared a workroom. The teacher described the workroom:

"...the workroom was set up, and I know this was intentional, to not have interaction between teachers. The cubbies were set up like dividers in a college library, so when we got together to each lunch in the workroom, everybody had their cubby... We called it the bus... and it was all a bunch of new teachers in one wing..."

When asked what they talked about, six of the teachers responded that the interaction involved planning and collaboration. Four of the teachers said that they used the time to talk about students. Five of the teachers interacted in order to evaluate and compare the effectiveness of their efforts. Three teachers described the interaction as "venting".

The “stayers” generally used the time for planning, for evaluating their own effectiveness, and for personal support. In general, the “movers” interacted only about planning and students. Two of three “leavers” used the time for venting. For one of those two “leavers”, venting was the only interaction he described. The other “leaver”, who left only after failing the Praxis, described interactions that were more similar to the “stayers”. The remaining “leaver” described himself as a “loner” and his faculty as a “tight-knit group”, and was unable to give examples of any interactions.

The teachers interviewed did not generally observe other teachers teach. In only two cases did the teachers say that observing other teachers was a requirement. One teacher noted: “We were supposed to watch somebody teach I think every semester...but it was rare. I don’t think that it was heavily checked upon or recorded.” When referring to mandatory peer observations, another teacher said: “My first two years we had to do peer observations, and we had to do two a semester...which I think was wonderful.”

Six of the teachers described observing other teachers as they followed their normal routine of moving throughout the building. For example, one teacher noted: “It was really neat for me to walk into, let’s say, a history class, and look at how they get across their material, because it is such a different spectrum, but really, I mean, you still have to teach it the same way- still the same classroom management.” Another teacher had a similar experience: “I really enjoyed going in other teachers’ classes, because I would see which behavior techniques work.”

Three of the teachers said that they initiated contact with other teachers to observe them teaching. One participant selected “teachers that I thought were, you know,

exciting and were trying new things, and seemed to captivate the students, and you know, seem to have good student progress.”

Two of the participants felt that they were discouraged from classroom observations. When referring to her former department head, the teacher noted: “She had told others that she was uncomfortable with me observing her, and so, after that, I kind of felt discouraged to observe people.” (Leaver) One teacher, who shared his room with other teachers, said: “I spent a lot of time outside my room, because they somehow felt uncomfortable having another person there.” (Stayer) There was no discernable difference regarding observing other teachers between the “stayers”, “movers”, or “leavers”.

In general, the teachers described environments that provided the opportunity to work together, but also allowed teachers within the same school the choice not to work together. One “stayer” described it this way: “Our working together is independent. If we choose to work together, that is entirely up to us.” In fact, one “leaver” described personality conflicts and power trips resulting from teachers being forced to work together. The teachers described working together in departments or in pairs or groups, but not as a whole staff. One teacher described the working together as “clicky” or “clickish”: “I think we work together well be department, but, as a staff on a whole, I don’t think we do that well... You kind of stick to your department.” (Stayer)

Six of the participants specifically mentioned attending departmental meetings. Three of the participants described the meetings as being a one-way means of communication with a focus on providing information. A “leaver” noted: “ And then, of course, department meetings...just going over the latest changes in curriculum...got a

writing test coming up... We never really talked about pedagogy....<the needs of the students> were an incidental or accidental factor in the equation.” A “mover” described a similar purpose for departmental meetings: “We had department meetings, but we never discussed topic ideas or teaching strategies or anything like that.” Another “leaver” described department meetings: “It is usually not a planning session or a ‘get-to-know-each-other’ or anything like that. It is usually a ‘this-is-what-we-have-to-do’ – information about when we re going to have to move books, or to begin administering tests....It’s really not a ‘so-what-is-working-in-your-class’ kind of time.”

Participation in Decision Making

The participants were asked to describe how teachers, in general, and how they as individuals were involved in making decisions about important educational issues. A matrix (Appendix D) was developed to organize the data regarding decision-making. The interview data was coded regarding the organizational factor of Participation in Decision Making by using the following two codes: Decision making/All, and Decision making/ Individual. In only one case did a teacher describe feeling that the input of the staff impacted a decision about an important educational issue, indicating that the administration regularly presented ideas, and then surveyed the staff for feedback before making a decision. Although teachers participated in school improvement meetings, one noted: “You have this meeting, but who knows what happens after that.” Another teacher doubted the effect of school improvement, or that a recommendation of a committee had any bearing on the final decision. Two of the “movers” seemed unsure about how decisions were made.

The “leavers” believed, in general, that the administration made the decision. One “leaver” said: “I found that even if you were asked to discuss and come to a decision, the administration would choose for us even though they said we would have a say.”

Another “leaver” noted: “And when I got into the meeting, I discovered it was just more hoop-jumping. You know. How are we going to phrase our mission statement...? Clearly putting on a dog-and-pony show...”. He also noted: “People were intimidated into voting certain ways. You had to sign your name.” The third “leaver” believed that “decisions were made from the top and not much filtered down.” When asked about being involved in a discussion about an important educational issue, this “leaver” noted: “I wasn’t aware of an educational issue even if it arose. One could’ve blew over my head and I would have never known.”

When asked if they felt if they individually impacted a decision, one “mover” described being supported by a principal when asking to change to a new instructional model. A “stayer” felt that her input did make a difference in a decision about having early release days. Two teachers said that their decision making centered on what they did in their own classroom, with one referring to the classroom as “my own little world”. A “leaver” felt that he had been “overlooked and underutilized”, comparing his experience to a previous one in which “Every individual took full responsibility for what was going on.” In contrast, one “stayer”, who served as an elected member of the leadership, when describing her decision to stay noted: “...I am kind of starting to take ownership or feel like I am part of the community a little bit...”.

School Climate/Discipline

Participants were asked to describe the norms and expectations among teachers in their school for student behavior, and also to describe the disruptions and interruptions that prevented them from focusing on teaching. A matrix (Appendix D) was developed to organize the data and the findings regarding school climate/discipline. The codes that were used to organize the data regarding the organizational factor of School Climate/Discipline were: Discipline/Norms and Expectations, and Discipline/Disruptions. In order to organize the data around patterns that emerged in the preliminary analysis, two codes were added: Types of Students, and IEP Students.

Five of the teachers described that the teachers in their respective schools expected students to show “respect”. Three of the teachers described different or lower norms and expectations for certain types of students. One “stayer” noted, “If you can’t come in, and you can’t behave respectfully and are posing a security issue, you don’t deserve to be here. And I think it is absurd that there is stipulations for certain people.” A “mover” stated, “They <the teachers> were probably more lenient than most schools because of the demographics.” A “leaver” stated, “...the kid’s IEP says he doesn’t have a good attention span, so he is allowed to get up and walk around...How the <blank> do you expect me to teach?” In describing the different norms for different students one “leaver” summarized it this way: “No child (with a lawyer) will be left behind.” This “leaver” said: “A student doesn’t even have to make it to class on time. It is easier to say this was due to their ADHD.... Therefore, teachers must put up with chronic tardiness, which leads to classroom disruption. Oftentimes, these students feel that they exist beyond the rules of the school and they are right.” One “stayer” also noted that she thought that

consequences should be worse for students with disabilities. A “leaver” when contrasting his experience with the experience of his department chair suggested that expectations now were lower: “Well sure, maybe in 1975 he <the department chair> worked with some tough kids, but he could send them out of the classroom. I can’t. He could do what he wanted. He could tell them to sit down. I can’t. It’s in their IEP.”

In general, the “stayers” described consistent norms and expectations for behavior. One “stayer” noted an even higher, agreed-upon faculty expectation: “We want our students to be motivated.” Another “stayer” explained that the norm at his school was that the faculty would deal with behavior: “We’ve got fairly set policies about when we can and can’t let something leave our room.” That “stayer”, who taught some honors students, and who did not describe having to face many disruptions in his classroom, described “a class that was so unruly that I was having serious reservations about teaching.” Since a third of the class had IEP’s, the teacher noted: “I spent a great percentage of my time dealing with behavioral issues in the classroom that left me being almost unable to teach that class. And that class was just almost the end of me. They were simply not receptive to any attempts to teach.”

Two of the “movers” described a lack of consistency in the expectations regarding behavior. One “mover” described the expectations for behavior as “pretty low”, and that there was “no consistency.” Another “mover”, when referring to behavioral expectations, indicated that the teachers “were not on the same page”. One “mover” said that the teachers simply “expected students to follow the school rules.”

The “leavers”, in general, were not able to describe a common set of norms or expectations. One “leaver” referred to “administration inconsistencies”, and that nothing

was done because “it was not a big deal”, and “no one was getting hurt”. One “leaver” described the norm as merely “trying to get through the day”, and that administrators played “the role of mediator between the student and the teacher” in order to avoid a lawsuit. The final “leaver” expressed a concern about the “very high expectations” in his school in which the feeling was: “This person is not here to learn, so they need to go somewhere else.”

Two of the “leavers” described a disparity between the experience of teachers with students without any problems, and the teachers with problem students. In contrast to the “stayer” who accepted the expectation of his school that teachers should deal with problems first, two of the “leavers” felt that teachers were blamed if there were problems. One “leaver” noted: “I think they <the administration> thought that it was more of our fault for not being able to control the class.” Similarly another “leaver” said that, when a faculty vote turned down an In-School Suspension area, that, because inexperienced teachers voted for the area, there was “the feeling that inexperienced teachers needed more training.”

Participants were then asked about the disruptions or interruptions that took them away from focusing on educating students. In general, the “stayers” described few disruptions and discipline problems, with one “stayer” noting “Behavior is not an issue.” Only one of the “stayers” described having a difficult class, admitting, “that was almost the end of me.” The class contained 34-35 students, a third of which had Individualized Education Plans. The “movers” also generally described few disruptions. In contrast, the “leavers” described a myriad of behaviors that disrupted instruction ranging from sleeping and talking, to fights and personal and emotional problems.

Decision to Stay, Move, or Leave

Each group was asked specifically about their decision to stay, move, or leave. A matrix (Appendix D) was developed to organize the data regarding the decisions about teaching. The data regarding this organizational factor was preliminarily sorted by three codes: Decision to Stay, Decision to Move, and Decision to Leave. Patterns that emerged in the preliminary analysis resulted in adding the following codes: Likely to Retire, Advancement, Certification, Unfair Work Distribution, Salary, and Coaching.

The “stayers” were asked if they had any doubts about returning to the same school, and why they decided to stay at the same school and to continue teaching. Three of the four “stayers” said that they had “no doubts” about returning. The remaining “stayer” reported, after his experience with one very difficult class, that “time away <during the summer> removed any doubts”. Three of the four “stayers” said that being “comfortable” was a factor impacting their decision. The “leaver” who left only because of a failure to pass the test, also used the word “comfortable” to describe how she felt in her school, indicating that she would have stayed at the same school for at least another year if she had passed the test.

The “movers” were asked about what prompted them to move to a different school, and if they were more satisfied at their new school. One “mover” moved to a school where she had “more permanency and security”. Another “mover”, having been blocked from moving after her second year, was promised more support by the administration: “They asked me if I would give them one more year, and see if there were changes, because they were making changes to kind of support me.” This “mover” admitted: “I came back my third year not wanting to be there.” In the end, the “mover” felt that the

“changes and support weren’t enough” to alter her decision to “move” to a different school. She faulted the administration for a failure to intervene when she and a colleague didn’t agree: “The two of us didn’t always see eye-to-eye, and we had very little administrative support with forcing us to get along, or having someone intervene...”. She also reported “They <the administration> changed my classroom at the beginning of the school year last year, without letting me know.” The other “mover” left in order to shorten her travel, for more support, and for the opportunity to teach. Referring to the “biggest thing” that impacted her decision to move, she described an incident where a student misconstrued a statement she made, and, after a parent complained, the principal told her: “You need to get the kids on your side.”

All three “movers” described being more satisfied at their new schools. When asked if she was more satisfied at the new school, one “mover” stated: “Yes, I am because I enjoy the administration here. I like the way they enforce their rules here...I am comfortable here.” Another “mover” reported: “Yes. I am very satisfied here. I touch base with my administrators every day. They are very open and accepting to new plans. They follow through.... They give me feedback...” The third “mover” put it this way: “Yes. Much more support administratively, department-wide – not as many students at one time, and I have been given opportunities to teach things that I haven’t before.”

The “leavers” were asked when and why they decided to leave teaching altogether, and if anything would have kept them in teaching. Asking them to compare what they are doing now to teaching, the “leavers” were asked if they would return to teaching some day. A “leaver” who decided to leave when she didn’t pass the test, said that with

positive test results she would have stayed for one more year, and then would have “transferred to a different school system that I thought fit me better.” That “leaver, now having “overcome the test” after leaving, said: “I just miss being in the classroom. I miss helping the students and lesson planning, and ...having other people around you in your same kind of academic world.” This “leaver” noted: “There are a few schools I have heard really good things about that I have kind of dealt with, and I am looking into those schools.” Another “leaver” knew in November that he would leave teaching stating: “Probably there isn’t anything that would have kept me in teaching, because I had seen three different years the same problems over and over-two different administrations-two different communities, and the same problems.” Citing the principal as a primary reason for his “exit”, he reported: “It was basically his <the principal’s> way or the highway last year. And so I took the first exist I could find.” He described his chance of returning to teaching the same as “an ice cube’s chance in hell”. His new job has less stress, forty hours of work rather than eighty, and lacks the risk of being sued because people in his new work environment want to be there. Citing apathy, litigation, and testing requirements, this “leaver” described the state of education: “Stacking deck chairs aboard the Titanic – that is teaching in public schools for you.” The third “leaver” decided, after his position was eliminated, not to pursue another teaching position. That was in April or mid-May. He noted: “I got disgusted with the system regarding licensure.... getting through the lateral entry that I was completing.” He felt that the administration looked at him differently because he was lateral entry, and he tired of constantly being told that he was not qualified to teach.

Likelihood of Retiring as a Teacher

Out of the ten participants, only two teachers said that they intended to retire as a teacher. One “stayer”, who is also a Teaching Fellow, said, “I’m in it for the long haul.” One “mover” rated her chances (on a scale of one to five) a five, stating, “The things that I like outweighs what I don’t like. It is a passion.”

Three of the four “stayers”, however, indicated that they were interested in pursuing administration. One “mover” also indicated that she would probably pursue administration after two or three more years of teaching. One “stayer” indicated that there was a fifty percent chance that he would retire as a teacher, noting, “I will probably stay with it <teaching> barring a job offer that pays me twice what I make. That’s about what it would take for me to leave teaching.” The job that he is referring to is outside of education. One of the “leavers” indicated that she would probably return now that she has passed the test. She expressed no interest in anything beyond the classroom. The “leaver”, who described his chances of returning as “an ice cube’s chance in hell”, is currently in a position with the potential of moving into management. The other “leaver”, if he returns, would like to teach on a different level or in a different setting.

Opportunities for Advancement in Teaching

Six of the teachers indicated that there was not an opportunity as a teacher to move ahead, or to experience different things. A “leaver” noted: “It was just kind of constant frustration to know that the only way that I was going to improve my lot or my pay is just time.... Nothing was merit-based.” He described the opportunities that his new job offered him: “...probably within six months I’ll be managing somewhere and making forty-five to fifty grand and all those headaches are behind me.” A “mover” noted, “I’m

not stopping where I am. I would enjoy just retiring in the educational field.” Another “mover” noted, “My guess is probably two or three years, and then I am interested in administration.... I don’t see myself staying in my position for more than two or three years.” A “stayer” described her feelings after three years of teaching in this way: “I just feel like - Lately, I have been feeling like I am stuck here in teaching. You don’t really have the ability to advance into higher positions unless you have your masters.... I guess try it on the college level, and see what it is like there. If I don’t like it there, I can come back.” Another “stayer” said, “Would I love to go teach at the college level? Yes. Have I thought about administration? Yes.” That “stayer” described her problem with staying in teaching and the problem she has with teachers who do less than she does this way: “My biggest problem with teaching, I guess, and because I do like my job, and I do put a lot of time and effort into it. I can’t stand that I get paid or rewarded on the number of years you have been here ... Say would I go back to school to higher myself? Yes, in a heartbeat.” She added, “If I stay in the teaching profession, I wouldn’t just stay as a teacher, because I’m not happy with that unless I am moving up....”. She was concerned that teachers “look at your job as a pass/fail job”. When asked about returning to teaching, a “leaver” noted: “I enjoy the teaching itself, but I don’t think that I would necessarily be content for that length of time in one position.” He also indicated that he likes “enjoying the experience of things”, and that “when I went into teaching at the high school level, I’d done so with the intent of furthering my education.”

Certification

Issues and concerns regarding obtaining certification emerged in the interviews. All three “leavers” had certification issues. One “leaver” stated she believed that there should be alternatives for those coming from other states:

“I feel that a lot people that I have known going to school, with keeping in contact with after college, that a lot of people have been discouraged from this test and other testing requirements within their state. I just feel just feel that something needs to be changed in order to keep teachers there to encourage them to stay. I know that in the school system we always consider multiple intelligences and different learning strategies, and we are really big on that – helping our students learn. I think it is the same for teachers. You know teachers perform better in different areas.”

Another “leaver” said: “My status was changed three times in my last year. I went from an ILT 3 to an ILT 1 to an ILT 2 – all in the course of one year. It was just a mess.

Nobody knew what the ---- was going on.” Another “leaver”, frustrated that according to him “things were waived for people who graduated in NC”, noted: “I had questions about licensure. I just really had a difficult time getting answers to those questions.”

He referred to concerns with licensure as his biggest frustration: “I got disgusted with the system regarding licensure and so forth – getting through the lateral entry that I was completing.” A “stayer” who received his license after completing a masters degree, described having to put in a lot of effort to get his pay changed.

Salary

None of the interview questions asked about salary, since salary is not an organizational factor that schools control. Five of the ten participants, however, brought the issue of salary into the interview. Salary, albeit an important factor, did not appear to

be a major factor influencing their decision-making. Two of the participants made less in other jobs than they do in teaching. A leaver noted, "I make a little less money than I did before, but I knew that. But I already am going to management training next week, so within six months I could be making more money than I was." One "mover" stated that she prefers teaching to the other profession that she is trained for: "I found out that I really have a passion for teaching – not that it pays as much money as I make in <the other profession>, but I enjoy it. I mean really I enjoy what I'm teaching."

All four of the "stayers" mentioned salary. Three of the "stayers" and two "movers" supplement their income with other jobs. One "stayer" noted, "I think a lot of people complain about we don't get paid, which I agree -that would be great to be paid more. Don't get me wrong, but it's not that bad. I mean, granted I do a lot of extra things I get paid for. I live just fine." Another "stayer" indicated, "That is why I have two jobs...But I like it here. So the pay is not fantastic, but you know, I am making do with what I have.... That is why I am interested in getting, but I wanted to get my masters anyway, to find a better paying job with the state or with the education field." A "stayer" who admitted that "I actually got a raise to become a teacher, from what I did before.", described why he can teach: "I am fortunate in my life that my wife has a job that can afford me the opportunity to teach. Her position is such that she makes two times what I make here, and I can do something that I enjoy doing, and it is not a drain on our resources." He noted that, "I will probably stay with it <teaching> barring a job offer that pays me twice what I make. That's about what it would take for me to leave teaching." A "stayer" commented that she has classmates who left teaching because of the salary, and that one of her classmates was able to make twice the money selling cars,

but said, “When I got into it, I knew that I wasn’t going to make a lot of money. So. I just like doing it <teaching>.” Two of the “stayers” supplement their income by coaching in the summer.

A “mover” who works in another field on breaks and on some Saturdays said: “I have two careers and they work hand in hand for me.”

Work Distribution/Type of Students

Beyond the five organizational factors, there seemed to be a pattern in the responses that revolved around the issue of an equitable distribution of work, including an equitable distribution of the students with the most challenges. Four of the ten participants (two “leavers” and two “stayers”) described a disparity between the amounts of work that teachers did. One “leaver” said, “I feel that people that were more, either new or neutral, (by neutral, I mean people who wouldn’t really complain and just wanted to get the things done) I feel that they would be the ones that would get stuck with the work. So I felt that it was kind of unfairly divided.” Another “leaver” said, “There was clearly a double standard between new teachers and teachers who had been around for a while. New teachers were disposable. That was the clear implication. Old teachers could get away with a lot more, or should I say doing a lot less.” He lamented that the older teachers “got the easy course loads. They got the sweet deals, the sweet rooms, all the benefits, or perceivably all the benefits.” He contrasted that with the life of new teachers: “Of course, you realize, I was around mostly the new teachers who got the crappy classes, and so we were just in survival mode.... while my esteemed department head had three classes of ninth grade honors kids.” This “leaver” indicated that his mentor did not have the same experience that he had on a daily basis: “My mentor, who was another

senior faculty member...had easy courses too...". The new teacher made the following suggestion, "So he <the department chair> really doesn't have the same experiences that I do, and if he did, he would put up – he would put his money where his mouth is, and he would take on some of those courses." (Leaver) This "leaver" described a different worlds coexisting: "We are teaching in two different schools here. There's one for new teachers. There is one for experienced, favored teachers." He said, "Over fifty percent of my students were labeled as exceptional...believe it or not, this is a common problem, especially for new teachers because veteran teachers get the good classes."

A "stayer" noted the disparity also:

"As a teacher of freshmen and sophomores, those are the children that end up being in the most trouble, and winding up with all the referrals and discipline and the IEPs and all the plans for their success...As a younger, newer teacher, I get the non-honors kids.... It's that you don't get to teach the kids that you have the most experience with. I think a lot of teachers were honors kids...They're prepared to teach AP, but not a class of thirty five kids of which seven of them are repeating...It's kind of a disconnect from reality when you leave the school that you are learning how to be a teacher, to where you are going to be a teacher, because the reality of teaching is different from what the perception is of the field even when you do student teaching. You don't do student teaching. The people at our school that receive student teachers are experienced teachers who have eleventh to twelfth grade students who can pretty much teach themselves...They are just not prepared to deal with the lower level or standard level kid, because that's what they will be teaching."

Another "leaver" described being given a class that had an "overflow of courses" that included "all of those who were in failure the first semester." He commented: "So I ended up with some interesting individuals.", but he noted, in contrast, "There were a lot of teachers who just didn't have any students that seemed to have any problems."

Although this "stayer" did not have disruptive students, she noted a disparity between what she was asked to do and what others did: "I think my one negativity...that

you could walk in here and do the most minimal job that you wanted to.... I get aggravated when I'm the one asked to do this when I 'm thinking I do all this other garbage, and so many are doing nothing. You know, and they are never asked because they don't do anything.You know that this is not consistent, and that probably is my biggest frustration.”

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the conclusions based on the qualitative analysis of the interview data. This chapter also provides recommendations for future study and implications for practice. The main research question and the three subsidiary questions, along with the organizational factors addressed by the questions, will help to frame the discussion and analysis in Chapter V. Because of the nature of qualitative data, this study adds rich detail to what have been in the past largely quantitative findings. This study, rather than using a large sample to study the problem in general, focuses on the study of a small sample of high school teachers, all at the same point in their careers, and who have completed their third year in the same district. As indicated in Chapter 1, this study could provide educators with an enhanced view of the world and perceptions of a third year high school teacher that may lead to the development of strategies that alter the organizational factors that impact high school teachers' decisions. Each teacher's description of their experiences and perceptions, adds depth to the understanding and the to the knowledge base about the organizational factors in our high school that help to support and retain new teachers.

Preceding research turned the attention of researchers and policymakers from a shortage of teachers to a shortage of teachers that is created primarily by turnover. Research regarding teacher turnover began to focus on the organization rather than on the

individual teacher. Ingersoll's (2001) study, in particular, was a turning point in the research on teacher retention. Ingersoll's work turned the attention of researchers, school districts, and policymakers to the school organization in their attempts to analyze and understand turnover. Wayne (2000) and Ingersoll (2001) agree that the important question is to ask why teachers left an individual school organization.

In some ways, the results of the study that were presented in Chapter IV are not surprising, and affirm the work of researchers in the past who explored the influence of similar organizational factors. In some ways, the results of the study that were presented in Chapter IV are very surprising. When beginning this study, in order to reverse the debilitating trend of teacher turnover, it appeared that the critical question was the question stated in the report from the National Commission on Teaching & America's Future (2003): "How many high school teachers intend to leave their schools at the end of their third year, and why?" At the end of the study, it is as critical to ask how long teachers, who are deciding now to stay in teaching after their third year, intend to stay. It was surprising to find that only two of the ten teachers intend to retire as a teacher, and that none of the "stayers" intend to do so. This finding runs contrary to the literature that indicates that teachers, who make it through their first years, will stay in teaching. This may point to a difference between what new teachers say they intend to do, and what they really do, but it deserves further exploration.

Also, when examining the experiences of these teachers, it is surprising to note, that although the ten teachers represent a subset of the teaching population with the same number of years of experience, there are many differences among them. Half of the teachers that were studied entered teaching as lateral entry candidates with no teaching

experience. Teaching in the same school for the entire three years was the exception rather than the rule for these teachers. Starting the school year at the beginning of the year was not always the norm. Participants, throughout the first three years, may have experienced a variety of organizational factors in different schools, consequently making each teacher's decision somewhat unique. This supports the work of Chapman and Greene (1986) who found that past experiences of teachers might have constrained the effectiveness of current administrative interventions.

A limitation of this study is that any attrition is considered to be undesirable. There may be, as Keller (2003) would argue, good attrition, or attrition that benefits the school. This study does not try to discern a school's desire to retain a particular participant in the study. A teacher's description of the organizational factors that the teacher experienced may reflect a school's desire to retain or not to retain a particular teacher. This study does not argue that teachers who stay until retirement are the best for the students or for the new teachers.

Why do teachers, who have completed their third year of teaching, decide to "stay", "move", or "leave"? The question sounds deceptively simple. The answer, however, is a complex one since the answer depends on interrelated organizational factors and unique experiences. Billingsley (2004) concluded that focusing on one or two aspects will be insufficient, and that solving the problem of teacher retention will take a holistic approach. Similarly, Minarik, Thorton, and Perreault (2003) argued that the loss of a teacher has synergistic effects and the solution will require systems thinking. They argued that the loss or retention of a single teacher reaches far beyond one classroom. The difficulty in attempting to totally separate the factors in order to analyze them, may

point to a concurrent difficulty of any attempts to work on, and to improve those factors in isolation. Cochran-Smith (2004), upon reviewing five studies, also concluded that teacher retention is a multi-dimensional problem that will require both macro- and micro-level analyses and policy initiatives.

Discussion of Key Findings

Certain patterns and themes emerged from the data. The following discussion will address each of the organizational factors under consideration.

Administrative Support

Administrative support does seem to matter. Administrative support seemed to positively impact the decision of the “stayers” and the “leaver” who would have stayed if she had received positive tests results. The “movers” found better administrative support in their new schools. Two “movers” and two “leavers”, noting the lack of administrative support, gave very specific examples of how administrative actions directly impacted their decision to leave that particular school. What teachers seemed to go to administrators for was assistance with procedural issues or student issues. Teachers seemed to get instructional and curricular support from other teachers - not from the administration.

This study supports the findings of Billingsley (1993; 2004) who described administrative support as a multidimensional concept ranging from personal and emotional support to guidance and leadership. The teachers in this study described relatively simple things as administrative support -- really listening, following through, being available to answer any questions or to clarify a policy, and addressing any specific need. For one teacher it meant staying away, which demonstrated that the administration

had faith in him. For another it meant staying close, using the administration for personal support, and to vent to. In terms of discipline, a lack of administrative support translated into making the teacher feel like the problem. Teachers also seemed to fault the administration, not the actual teachers who weren't doing more, for allowing some teachers to do just the minimum. The new teachers tended to gravitate toward the administrator, sometimes the principal, who was the most supportive, and who could address their issue quickly.

The findings in this study are consistent with Peck's (2002) and Brock & Grady's (1998) findings. Administrators were either a negative or a positive. Of those that left teaching in this study, the teachers were able to point to specific interactions with an administrator that impacted that decision. Those interactions, a matter of routine to the administrators, were extremely significant to these new teachers. All of the "stayers", and the "leaver" who would have stayed having past the test, described themselves as being "comfortable" in their schools, and although several factors may have led them to have that comfort level, the administration seemed to play a part in that feeling of comfort.

Administrative support also seemed to involve providing the appropriate balance of students in their teaching schedule. The "stayers" all had the opportunity to teach some higher-level or older students. Those who "stayed" appeared to have what Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found to be an important factor to support teaching and reduce turnover – balanced and appropriate assignments. This finding of this study, the importance of an appropriate assignment, was affirmed by the findings of other studies (Chapman & Greene, 1986; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Kauffman, et. al., 2002; McCann &

Johannesen, 2004; Peck, 2002) which described the existence of a pecking order in schools where experienced teachers expect new teachers to have the tough assignments in order to pay their dues. The “stayers” and “movers” in this study (the two groups that are still teaching), in general, did not deal with disruptive students. Some teachers in this study, however, described different expectations for some students and different workloads for some teachers. Henderson and Milstein (2003) argued that an increasingly diverse student population (with both learning and behavioral needs) is challenging educators’ well being. This study found that the challenge of dealing with difficult students fell primarily, in some cases, on the new teachers. Comments, in particular from “leavers”, indicated that challenges were not always distributed equitably. This is consistent with the findings of Johnson and Birkeland (2003) who found that some professional cultures are veteran-oriented. The other teachers in one school, for example, were aware that the new teacher had been given all of the failures grouped together in one class. It appeared to known and accepted that the environment in the experienced teachers’ classes improved at the expense of the new teacher. This finding supports the finding of Rees and Mont (1996) who found that class load (which included student quality) did correlate with turnover.

Mentor Support

Mentor support does seem to matter. Findings in this study regarding mentor support the findings of researchers that include Linda Darling-Hammond (2003). All of the “stayers” had effective mentor support. This also affirms the importance of the mandate of providing a mentor for each new teacher that is outlined in the NC’s Excellence School Act.

Teachers, in general, filled the void left from ineffective mentoring, or a lack of mentor support with support from other teachers, usually in their department. Teachers seemed to go to other teachers who taught in the same content area for pedagogical and curricular support. The teachers seemed to be able to judge who and what would be helpful, differentiating the “generic ILT crap”, as one “leaver” termed it, from helpful specific suggestions. Simply assigning a mentor to a new teacher did not always produce the best results. The teachers in this study seemed to value a mentor from the same content area, who was geographically accessible, and who had a similar schedule both in terms of time and mix of students. One teacher expressed dismay at having a mentor with less experience at the school than she had. The findings of this study support the findings of Johnson and Birkeland (2003) who found that, although almost every new teacher had a mentor assigned to them, the pairings were often not appropriate. Johnson and Birkeland (2003) recommended, that rather than focus on one-on-one mentoring that it would be better for schools to focus on creating an integrated professional culture in which teachers of all experience levels engage in collaborative efforts.

When there was a good fit between the mentor and the new teacher, the relationship transcended the requirements of the mentor assignment both in terms of time and depth, with one teacher still communicating with his mentor from another county. When there was not a good match between the mentor and the new teacher, it appeared to be, as one “leaver” described it, mere “lip-service” and “going through the motions”. The findings of Inman and Marlow (2004) and McCann and Johannsen (2004) support the finding of this study – the need for a quality and appropriate mentor.

Mentors seemed to especially have a positive impact for those who started at the traditional start of the school year. Those who started teaching after the year began seemed to get little, if any, support from a mentor. One teacher described not being able to have a mentor in her area because those mentors were already mentoring three or four teachers in that area. The participants' need to have a mentor in the same field supports the findings of Ingersoll (2001) who found that having a mentor in the same field reduced the risk of a teacher leaving by 30%.

Only four of the participants had spent all three years at the same school. Participants, throughout their first three years, may have experienced working with more than one mentor. Dealing with certification issues, for example, appeared to be a huge burden for lateral entry teachers. That burden of having to be concerned about certification fell on half of the participants in this study. There did not to be support at the school level for getting questions answered. The lateral entry teachers described being referred to the state for answers to questions. One "leaver" described being treated or viewed differently by the administration and his colleagues because he was lateral entry.

Departments still seem to be a high school's attempt to make a huge, complex environment seem small and personal. Departments, however, also make the environment seem fragmented or segmented which supports the findings of Johnson and the Project on the New Generation of Teachers (2004). Teachers seemed to have an opportunity to eat lunch together with other department members. Departmental meetings, however, seemed to provide a means of one-way communication of administrative items. The fact that one departmental leader felt uncomfortable with a

new teacher observing her, may indicate that the role of the department chair is still the traditional role of manager and not leader.

Support seemed to flow from the mere organizational structure of being together during a set time, or from interacting within the school day. Without support from the administration for a planned structure, teachers can, as Hope (1999) found, fall prey to negative influences as was the case in the workroom full of new teachers who were described as “malcontents”. Some of the new teachers met with other new teachers regularly just to vent.

Time

Studies have shown that time does matter, but the interviewees from this study did not seem to be burdened by a lack of time. New teachers did not appear in their comments to be burdened by extra responsibilities. In fact, two of the participants stayed in teaching because of their coaching responsibility. The time per week spent on activities related to teaching generally fell between five and ten hours per week. As evidenced by their comments, teachers did not seem to be burdened by the amount of hours spent outside the regular day. This study did not support the findings of Governor Easley’s Teacher Working Condition Initiative (2003), in which lack of time was the factor overall that teachers in NC are most dissatisfied about. The experience of the teachers interviewed does, however, support the finding of Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) that common planning and sharing saves time, and may be one reason that the teachers in this study, in general, were only working an additional five to ten hours a week. The finding of this study does not support McCann and Johannesen’s (2004) study in which teachers described their workloads as unreasonable,

unmanageable, and hopeless. This finding, likewise, does not support the finding of Certo and Fox (2002) who cited lack of planning time and a hectic schedule as one of the top three reasons that teachers leave.

Collegial Interaction

Eight of the ten interviewees revealed that collegial interaction seemed to be centered at the departmental level. For the participants in the study, observation of colleagues was not a common practice. The teachers who moved about the building, as a part of their daily routine, seemed to benefit from even small opportunities to see other teachers teach. The finding of this study is consistent with Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers' (2004) description of schools as a flat and segmented structure that reinforces the retiring generation's values of privacy and of being solo performers. One teacher found her department chair to be uncomfortable about being observed. Another teacher who found the teachers, who used his room to be uncomfortable when he stayed in the room, caused him to spend a lot of time out of his room. The finding of this study is also consistent with the study conducted by Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) in which teachers' experiences ranged from those who worked closely with colleagues sharing instructional and procedural strategies, to those being left alone to learn how to cope. One teacher found himself to be a "loner" in his new school, which wasn't his experience in a previous school. It is interesting to note that the teachers in this study described seeing the range of degrees of collaboration and sharing to little or no interaction within their own particular school.

Working together, in general, appeared to be a choice rather than an expectation. This finding is similar to Kauffman and associate's (2002) study, which reported that very few schools encourage discussion with teachers. By and large the traditional structure, the one that Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) found would not satisfy the new generation of teachers, was the type of structure that the ten teachers interviewed in this study worked in. Although the literature (Ingersoll, 2001; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003; Williams, 2003) clearly supports the organization of work to provide for collaboration and the sustenance of strong learning communities, that type of organizational structure was not the rule, but rather than the exception with teachers in this study. The organized structure in place, departments and department meetings, were again more vehicles for administrative issues, rather than for a discussion of pedagogical issues, or for collaborative planning. It seemed hopeful that some teachers described working in teams of teachers who taught similar courses in order to collaborate and to plan. In general the teachers interviewed for this study found a connection, which supports the findings of McCann and Johannsen (2004) and Inman and Marlow (2004) who both found that teachers valued and sought out a connection. One teacher expressed a concern about forced collegiality, which supports a similar finding of Williams (2001).

-----Participation in Decision Making-----

New teachers in this study, in general, were ambivalent about their role in decision-making. Uniquely a "stayer", who had been elected to the leadership team, described an emerging sense of ownership from being part of the decision making process. A "leaver", on the other hand, who felt that he was a part of the decision making at a

previous school, felt that he was being “underutilized” by not being involved in decision making during his third year of teaching at his new school. Ingersoll (2001) found that schools with higher levels of decision-making influence and autonomy have lower levels of turnover, but Ingersoll’s findings did not just report on the perceptions of new teachers. Similarly Shann (1998), who surveyed faculties and not just new teachers, found teachers to be dissatisfied with their influence and their participation in decision making. Previous research supports that teachers want to be involved in real problem solving, and that challenging teachers mentally increases satisfaction and retention. (Ingersoll, 2001; Williams, 2001). The interviewees for this study revealed that the involvement in school improvement did not seem to be mentally challenging, or seem to make a difference in practice. Some reported being involved in developing recommendations in committees that were not implemented. Although participation in decision making did not appear to be an immediate concern for the new teachers, new teachers did not describe environments in which teachers, in general, were actively involved in the decision making process. Their experience, therefore, did not include seeing participation in decision making as a part of the teaching role.

School Climate/Discipline

Previous studies conducted by Ingersoll (2001), NCES (1997), and Choy, et.al. (1993) indicated that student discipline was a major factor in teacher’s decision to leave. It has been a finding that has been consistent over time. Studies by Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) and National Center for Education Statistics (1997) referred to issues surrounding the factor of discipline as teachers looking for a sense of control. The teachers in this study (primarily the “stayers”) who did not

experience discipline issues in their classroom seemed to feel that there was a consistent set of norms and expectations in their schools. If there were behavior problems in the school, they were outside of their classroom. Other teachers described the existence of a double standard for different types of students, and a double standard for new and experienced teachers. One “stayer”, who seemed satisfied with his experience, had doubts of returning because of one class of students who were “simply not receptive to any attempts to teach.” This may be an indication of how delicate this time is for new teachers, and how dealing with even small numbers of disruptive students affects their experience. This finding is consistent with McCann and Johannesen (2004) who found that a negative experience with one class or even one student affected the overall experience of that teacher. The teachers who faced disruptions and interruptions seemed to deal with personal and emotional problems outside of the realm of their experience.

The impact of facing a more challenging student load surfaced in three of the organizational factors: Climate/Student Discipline, Administrative Support, and Time. This supports the contention that supports a systems thinking perspective, in that you can't understand teacher retention by isolating components (Minarik, et. al., 2003).

When faced with difficult students, there is an increased need for administrative support that does not place the blame on the inexperienced teacher, and for more time, which is required for calling parents, writing referrals and documenting incidents, and attending meetings. So the choice for new teachers in this study became spending the time referring disruptive students and calling parents, or a resignation or acceptance of certain behaviors. One “leaver” described his tendency to begin to overlook disciplinary issues as his “picking his battles.”

Main Research Question Addressed

The main research question asked how teachers, in general, use organizational factors to describe their decision about teaching after their third year. The pattern that emerged from a review of the interview data was that opportunities for advancement and for different experiences within teaching do matter to the teachers in this study. Renard (2003) correctly points out that new teachers already are expected to do the same job as experienced teachers. The routine does not usually change over time. Only two teachers intended to continue to do the same job and to retire as a teacher. Even those two teachers did not indicate that they were willing to stand still, and not move forward. By the end of her fourth year, one of the “movers” who intends to retire as a teacher will have earned a Masters Degree and National Board certification. Although she says she is in it “for the long haul”, there is nothing in the current structure of teaching for her to accomplish next.

Time did not seem to be a problematic factor. Responsibilities were similar across the groups, and the amount of time spent, in general, seemed similar. Lack of participation in decision making, which seemed to be a common experience, was not described, except in one case, as a factor that contributed to their teaching decision. Collegial interaction seemed to be centered at the department level, and seemed to take on different configurations. Working together, in general, seemed to be more of a choice, than a requirement. Teachers seemed satisfied to have a bond with a person, persons, or a group. This finding supports the finding of McCann and Johannsen (2004) who found that teachers sought out a personal connection for support.

Subsidiary Questions Addressed

The subsidiary questions asked, in particular, how the “stayers”, the “movers”, and the “leavers” described their decision about teaching. The “stayers”, in general, positively described the support they received from the administration, and described ways in which they interacted with their colleagues. The “stayers” described themselves as feeling “comfortable”. The “stayers”, in general, did not experience disruptions in their classrooms, and described a common set of norms and expectations for behavior. The “stayers”, however, readily admitted that it was not their intent to retire as teachers.

One “mover” moved due to her position being assigned to a new school. She described that move as one that gave her a sense of “permanency and security”. The other two “movers” were able to cite very specific administrative actions that impacted their decision to move. The findings in this study regarding the “movers”, affirm the findings of Johnson and Birkeland (2003) who found that teachers who move or migrate to another school are looking for better working conditions.

Just as the “stayers” did not have doubts about deciding to stay in their schools, two of the “leavers” equally expressed no doubts. The “leavers” cited three factors – administrative support, collegial interaction and climate/discipline issues. One of the “leavers” cited the need to spend an extra 30 hours of time as a factor that impacted his decision to leave. This affirms the findings of Certo and Fox (2002) that lack of administrative support was one the top reasons that teachers left. Two of the leavers, seemed frustrated by their lack of influence. They had both come from smaller setting where they had more influence. The “leaver”, who described himself as a “loner”, cited the lack of participation in decision making as an important factor. The other “leaver”

would have been a “stayer” if she had passed the Praxis test. All three leavers moved to jobs that paid less than teaching, which runs contrary to the perception that teachers leave for a better salary.

Implications for Practice

Given the findings in this study, certain inferences can be made that have implications for educational policy and planning in education.

1. Expecting that new teachers enter teaching to retire in teaching may be unrealistic. Retention strategies might need to focus on getting teachers to stay longer.
2. Principals should give new teachers a schedule that is balanced. New teachers should be able to teach higher-level students, advanced courses, and older students, while learning to deal with disruptive students.
3. Since this study revealed that, in general, new teachers do not have a common experience for the first three years, schools may need to be prepared to offer different forms of support regardless of the time of year that the teacher begins their position.
4. Principals must structure in the work schedule and environment the opportunity for meaningful collaboration and sharing among teachers.
5. This study supports that mentors are an effective means of support. The challenge is to develop strategies to have a sufficient supply of mentors (master teacher coaching) ready so that appropriate matches can be made with new teachers, or to create what Johnson and Birkeland (2003) refers to as integrated professional cultures that structurally support the collaboration of teachers of all experience levels.
6. Principals must provide endless support for new teachers who are dealing with discipline problems, including behavioral coaching strategies.

7. Policymakers and school systems should explore ways to provide avenues for advancement within the teaching profession with the expectation that teachers want to grow and improve throughout their teaching career.

Recommendations for Future Study

1. There is a need to explore the relationship between teacher turnover and student achievement.
2. The teacher arguably is the most important factor in student achievement. There is a need for studies on how the effectiveness of a teacher differs over time. This may have an implication for how long it is important to provide teachers with incentives to stay.
3. There is a need to study the differences in teacher retention rates and student achievement between schools that do and do not equitably distribute challenging students among faculty members.
4. There is a need to explore different initiatives for offering teachers opportunities for advancement while remaining in teaching. What are the qualities of administration that cause teachers to consider moving to it?
5. There is the need to replicate this type of qualitative study on the elementary and middle school levels. Are the organizational factors that influence teachers similar, or are they unique to a level?
6. Research needs to be done to explore the retention rate of teachers who are coaches to those who do not coach.
7. More research needs to be done about determining if teachers who stay through their initial years do, in fact, stay until retirement.

8. Research needs to be done to explore, not only the retention rate, but also the effectiveness of lateral entry teachers.
9. There is a need for more studies on teacher retention with the focus on the individual school. How are the environments in schools that have a high turnover rate different from schools that have a low turnover rate?
10. There is a need to explore the transfer patterns among schools to determine what kind of schools teachers are attracted to.
11. There is a need for research to explore the relationship between the resiliency of the environment, the resiliency of the teacher, and the longevity of the teacher.
12. There is a need to study high school redesign as it relates to teacher satisfaction and teacher performance.
13. There is a need to replicate this study with a larger sample.

Summary

This study has affirmed the significance of the school organization as a major factor in turnover. The in depth and personal accounts of these ten teachers adds depth to the turnover statistics. Since this study does indicate that the organizational factors of administrative support, climate/discipline, and opportunities for advancement within the profession do contribute to teachers' decisions to "stay", "move" or "leave", it makes sense for principals, experienced teachers, and school systems to put their focus on ways to alter these conditions to retain teachers, rather than focusing primarily on the competing strategy of recruiting more teachers.

Salary was not a focus of this study, because it is not administratively mutable, but according to these teachers salary isn't necessarily what is impacting their decision about

teaching. In fact, the “leavers” reported that they all currently make less in their new jobs. Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) accurately refers to working together to support and retain teachers as the greatest opportunity and responsibility of principals and teachers. Policy makers, for example, can’t make a teacher feel comfortable at a particular school.

Cochran-Smith (2004) found that teachers still entered teaching for idealistic reasons, loving children and learning and wanted to make a difference, but that these reasons were not enough to sustain teachers in today’s labor market and in the face of complex and multiple demands. She found that teachers needed conditions that supported success: opportunities to work together in professional learning communities, differentiated leadership and advancement prospects during the course of their career, and good pay.

The results of this study may contribute to new ways of framing this problem, as educators and policymakers begin to consider that new teachers may not want the same routine for a thirty-year career, or to retire as teachers. The new teachers in this study did not describe the teachers who are staying until retirement as role models they wish to emulate. The report by the National Association of Secondary School Principals, *Breaking Ranks II* (2004), describes public high schools as being at a crossroads, and challenges practitioners and policymakers to transform high schools. This study affirms that the organizational conditions of high schools need to be transformed to meet the needs of both the students and the teachers.

Johnson and the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (2004) describe the shift in the proportion of veteran teachers to novice teachers. A traditional degree with a

student teaching experience is not the norm for those entering the profession. Teachers are not separate parts of the school organization that when replaced do not somehow affect the whole school community. The new teacher does not start with the knowledge and experience in that school that the teacher who is leaving had. Linda Darling-Hammond (2003) contends that students and their achievement suffer most from the “parade of ineffective teachers”. While working to retain teachers, educators may need to begin focusing on ways to maintain the consistency and coherency of a school community and of instruction expecting and anticipating that teachers will move to different opportunities. In an environment of collaboration and sharing, when a teacher leaves some of what that teacher knew could be left behind. The teachers in this study indicated that working together was a choice, rather than the necessity it appears that it may have to be.

Examining how these ten teachers described their decision to “stay”, “move”, or “leave”, and examining their perceptions on an individual and personal level, may cause educators and policymakers to realize that the solution may be to provide individualized responses to their needs. It is suggested that no single policy or program will meet the needs of this diverse population of teachers; and, therefore, several policies and programs will be needed to improve teacher retention.

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Appendix A: Interview Introduction and Questions

	<p style="text-align: center;">INTRODUCTION</p> <p>The purpose of this study is explore the feelings and perceptions of 3rd year high school teachers in regard to their decision to stay in teaching at the same school, transfer to another school, or to leave teaching. A system goal is to reduce the amount of turnover. Having completed your third year of teaching last year, you are in a unique position to describe your experience as a 3rd year high school teacher, and your thoughts and your decision about teaching. That is what the interview is about – your thoughts and experiences.</p> <p>The answers from the 15 people that I will interview will be combined in the findings. Nothing you say will ever be identified with you personally. As we go through the interview, if you have any questions about why I am asking something, please feel free to ask. If there is anything that you don't want to answer, just say so. The purpose of this interview is to get your insights into the life of a 3rd year high school teacher, and how that experience affects your decision about teaching.</p> <p>Do you have any questions before we begin?</p>	
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	INTERVIEW QUESTION	Organizational Factor
All	Describe the type of support you receive (received) from your principal?	Administrative Support
All	Can you describe the type of support you have received as a new teacher, either within the school or in the district? Did you have a mentor? Is the support that you received what you needed?	Administrative Support
All	I understand that your assignment is (was) to teach _____. Beyond that, what other responsibilities do (did) you have?	Time
All	How much time beyond the regular school day do you spend per week on teaching? Describe the types of things you do (did) doing that time.	Time
All	I am interested in the contact you have (had) on a regular basis with other teachers, both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talk (talked) with other teachers, in what kinds of situations and what you talk (talked) about? Do (did) you watch other teachers teach?	Collegial Interaction
All	How would you describe the way that teachers work (worked) together in your school?	Collegial Interaction
All	Describe how you and other teachers in your school are (were) involved in making decisions about important educational issues. What decisions have you been involved in making?	Participation in Decision-Making
All	Describe any disruptions or interruptions that take (took) you away from focus on educating students.	Climate/Student Discipline
All	Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior.	Climate/Student Discipline
Stayers	Did you have any doubts that you would be back at the same school this year? Why did you decide to stay at this school? Why did you decide to continue teaching?	Decision (to stay)
Movers	What prompted you to move to a different school this year? Are you more satisfied at your new school? Why or why not?	Decision (to move)
Leavers	Could you tell me why and how you decided not to teach this year? When did you decide not to return? Would anything have kept you in teaching longer? How do you like what you are doing now? How does it compare with teaching? Will you return to teaching some day?	Decision (to leave)
All	Is there anything you would like to add?	General

Appendix B: Data Codes

Data Codes

Category: Administrative Support

Code: Support/Administrative

Interview Question- Describe the type of support you receive (received) from your administrators.

Code: Support/Mentor

Interview Question – Can you describe the type of support you have received as a new teacher, both within the school and in the district? Did you have a mentor?

Code: Support/What was needed?

Interview Question - Is the support that you received what you needed?

Category: Time

Code: Time/Responsibilities

Interview Question - I understand that your assignment is (was) to teach ____.

Beyond that, what other responsibilities did you have?

Code: Time/Hours per Week

Interview Question – How much time beyond the regular school day do you spend per week on preparing for classes or on activities related to your job as teacher?

Code: Time/Activities

Interview Question - Describe the types of things you do (did) during that time.

Category: Collegial Interaction

Code: Interaction/Talk/Who

Interview Question – I am interested in the contact you have (had) on a regular basis with other teachers, both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talk (talked) with other teachers, in what kinds of situations....?

Code: Interaction/Talk/What

Interview Question - Can you tell mewhat you talked about?

Code: Interaction/Observation

Interview Question – Do (did) you watch other teachers teach?

Code: Interaction/Working Together

Interview Question – How would you describe the way that teachers work (worked) together in your school?

Category: Participation in Decision-Making

Code: Decision making/All

Interview Question - Describe how teachers in your school are (were) involved in making decisions about important educational issues.

Code: Decision making/Individual

Interview Question – What decisions have **you** been involved in making?

Category: Climate/Student Discipline

Code: Discipline/Norms and Expectations

Interview Question – Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior.

Code: Discipline/ Disruptions and Interruptions

Interview Question – Describe any disruptions or interruptions that take (took) you away from focusing on educating students.

Category: Decisions of Stayers, Movers, and Leavers

Code: Decision to Stay

Interview Question – Did you have any doubts that you would be back at the same school this year? Why did you decide to stay at this school? Why did you decide to continue teaching?

Code: Decision to Move

Interview Question – What prompted you to move to a different school this year? Are you more satisfied at your new school? Why or why not?

Code: Decision to Leave

Interview Question – Could you tell why and how you decided not to teach this year? When did you decide not to return? Would anything have kept you in teaching longer? How do you like what you are doing now? How does it compare with teaching? How likely is it that you will return to teaching some day?

Codes that Emerged from the Preliminary Analysis

Code: Likely to retire

Code: Other Jobs

Code: Advancement

Code: Salary

Code: Coaching

Code: Unfair Work Distribution

Code: Types of Students

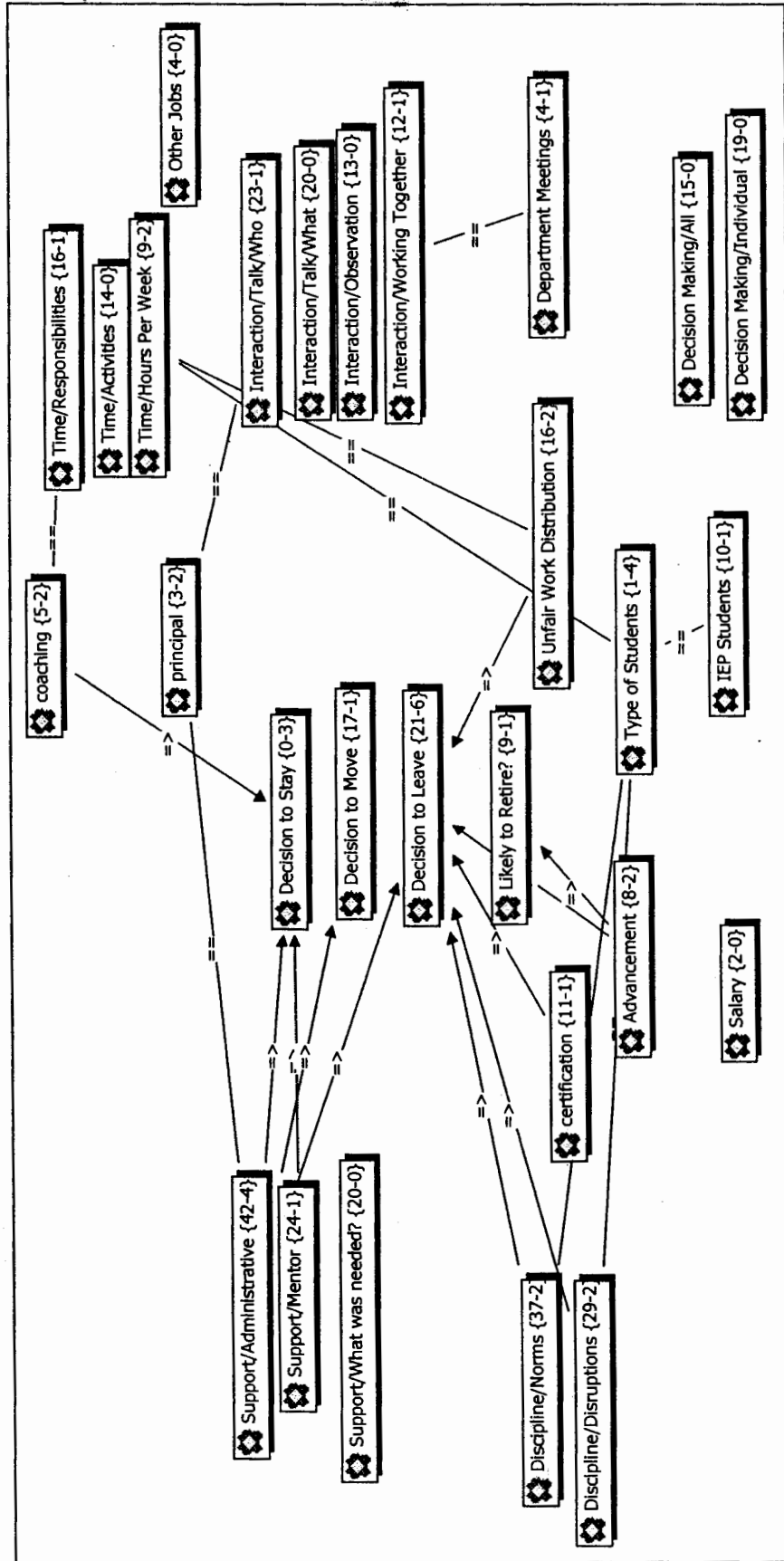
Code: IEP Students

Code: Certification

Code: Principal

Code: Department Meetings

Appendix C: Conceptual Map of the Organizational Factors



Appendix D: Matrices

Administrative Support Matrix

	Support/ Administrative	Support/ Mentor	Support/ What was needed?
Stayer #1	"Always there." General questions.	Yes. Organization-type things.	"a lot of the organization type things of what to do" "to see it from another teacher's perspective."
Stayer #2	"Great support."	Yes. My whole department.	"I'm an independent, fast-paced worker."
Stayer #3	"had faith in me"	No. Helped by a neighbor teacher.	Needed support at midyear "I spent as much time confused as knowing"
Stayer #4	Professional and personal support	Yes. (in training) Other mentors. Experienced teachers.	"I think it <the ILT program> was more than enough support."
Mover #1	Questions about anything.	Yes. Not in department. Not experienced.	Mentor from own department Financial assistance for education and conferences.
Mover #2	Listened, but didn't follow through.	Mentor – out-of-field and not close. Paired with a teacher with the same job.	"Some sort of training on what you do as a teacher in this specific area. I really had no idea."
Mover #3	Very little, if any.	Support from other teachers in dept.	Yes.
Leaver #1	Assisting with problems, and listening.	Yes. 30 years experience. Active role with certification (year 3)	"I think so." "got support from human resources." " more help with certification..."
Leaver #2	"They threw me to the wolves."	Yes, but "Going through the motions."	ILT meetings – "Why are they wasting my time?" needed specifics
Leaver #3	"difficult at best." "not very personal." " administration was stretched very thin."	Still have contact with mentor from other county. Only support from other teachers.	Needed answers to questions about licensure. "It really fell short."

Time Matrix

	Time/ Responsibilities	Time/ Hours Per Week	Time/Activities
Stayer #1	Lunch Duty Hall Monitoring Club (1)	5 hrs/week	Grade papers. Plan. Note: also part-time job, paid game duty
Stayer #2	Lunch Duty Coach (2)	1-2 hours/week 6 hours on Sunday 7-8 hrs/week total	Correcting papers. Lesson plans. Study guides.
Stayer #3	Lunch Duty Coach Attend events.	10 hours/week (down from 20-25)	Aligning plans with curriculum. Supplementing.
Stayer #4	No duties. Coach (2) Clubs (2) Leadership team.	5 hours/week	Reflection "How can I improve?"
Mover #1	Lunch Duty Student organization School improvement Substitute	3-4 hours/day including weekends. 21-28 hrs/week total	Lesson Plans Research. Grading papers. Preparing.
Mover #2	Lunch Duty Coach Club Volunteer/Paid (2)	3-6 hours/day then less with new model 15-30 hrs/week total	Note: also program coordinator and night-school teacher.
Mover #3	Lunch Duty Homeroom	2-3 hours/week	Grading quizzes and tests. Preparing lessons. Making quizzes/tests.
Leaver #1	Covered classes Morning Duty (1 day/week) Lunch Duty Coach	5-7 hours/week	Creating units/plans. Photocopying. Collaborating. Sanitizing classroom. Gathering supplies and materials.
Leaver #2	Accreditation Committee	30 hours/week	Reading. Grading. Planning.
Leaver #3	Lunch Duty Special events. "It was not very much responsibility."	10-12 hours/week	"thought processes" Planning. Not physically pulling things together.

Collegial Interaction Matrix

	Interaction/ Teacher Talk	Interaction/ Observe Classes	Interaction/ Way Teachers Work Together
Stayer #1	Before school. To neighbors. Lunch with department	No. Moved in and out of other classes.	Try to stick together. Plan together.
Stayer #2	All the time. Every day after school. Lunch with department	1 st two years. Moved in and out other classes.	Positive interactions, but I know a lot of teachers who don't work together.
Stayer #3	In trailer. Had to make effort to talk to neighbor. Department meeting. Lunch (personal support)	No. Only when other teacher was teaching in my room.	"Our working together is independent. If we choose to work together, that is entirely up to us."
Stayer #4	All the time. Lunchtime meetings. Grade level meetings.	First year – Yes. I contacted teachers.	We work well as a department, but not as a staff. – Clicky
Mover #1	3 teacher department Planned together if teaching same thing. Department chair-not in same content	No.	Couldn't say. Departments were spread out.
Mover #2	A lot of contact about students.	Only through the regular routine of watching students.	Others were very friendly and welcoming, or would not welcome me.
Mover #3	Lunch with teachers in department. Would seek out other teachers before school or during planning.	No. (First two years I initiated.)	Not really working together. You had to seek out help.
Leaver #1	Dept. Head was main contact 5 new teachers met to "vent" after school.	Yes, required, but not checked. Observed teacher who I co-taught units with. When moving in and out of classrooms.	Would work together enough to get things done. Teachers were forced into groups. Personality conflicts. Power trips.
Leaver #2	Interaction was discouraged. New teachers were in one workroom.	Yes. I initiated it.	No working together. Collaboration –to construct on our own time.
Leaver #3	On a regular basis. Lunch with the department. "Didn't share too many situations...it was a tight knit group."	"Not in any great detail." "...walking through the halls, or hear a few minutes here or there..."	"Things were highly individual at least with my experience." Other experiences were more of a team approach or a holistic approach to things.

Decision Making Matrix

	Participation in Decision Making/ General	Participation in Decision Making/ Individual
Stayer #1	School Improvement (overall goals and beliefs)	
Stayer #2	School Improvement (give ideas, philosophy) "You have this meeting, but who knows that happens after that."	
Stayer #3	No. We don't have any input." (Not sure how much effect school improvement has.) Not sure the recommendation of a committee has a bearing on the decision.	"What I do in my classroom...my own little world."
Stayer #4	Administration presents ideas and asks for feedback. Issue bin. Surveys.	"I felt like I was part of giving input <for early release days>".
Mover #1	School Improvement. Team Meetings.	"I just can't think of any."
Mover #2	"I don't know. The policy was just kind of handed to us."	Was supported when recommending a new teaching model
Mover #3	"I'm not sure on that." "I wasn't very involved."	"Just on what I teach day by day."
Leaver #1	"Asked...but administration would choose for us."	"Asked...but administration would choose." Nothing came of a committee proposal.
Leaver #2	Not representative. Intimidation used when voting.	
Leaver #3	"I was never a part of anything in my third year...I wasn't aware of an educational issue even it arose. One could've blew over my head and I would have never known." "Decisions were made from the top and not much filtered down."	"I was pretty much a loner last year." "I wasn't part of any committees." "a real waste" "overlooked and underutilized" Referring to a previous school – "Every individual too full responsibility for what was going on."

School Climate/Discipline Matrix

	Discipline/ Norms and Expectations	Discipline/ Interruptions and Disruptions
Stayer #1	Respect. Self-disciplined. "like they would act around their parents"	Testing. Not many discipline problems (teach juniors).. Phone rings occasionally.
Stayer #2	Behave respectfully. Consequences could be worse. "Absurd that there are stipulations <for learning disabilities>"	"I really have good kids." Attendance. I am now structured.
Stayer #3	"We expect the teachers to handle the individual student issues to a fairly large degree." Fairly set policies.	"That class <with 34-35 kids with 1/3 IEP's> was just almost the end of me."
Stayer #4	"We want our students to be motivated." "...certain students have kind of gotten by with doing nothing, and so now we're targeting that behavior."	Fire Drill No major disruptions. Behavior is not an issue.
Mover #1	Expected students to follow the school rules. Respect themselves and others. Come prepared.	Fire Drill. Announcements. Someone at door.
Mover #2	"A lot of the teachers were not on the same page with that." "They were probably more lenient than most schools just because of demographics." "Some of the teachers were more pickier than others" Expected them to be respectful, complete work, stay awake.	Interruptions all day when students were sent out of class. Last six months helped others to reduce their disruptions.
Mover #3	Pretty low. No consistency.	A few discipline problems. Talking. Lunch split.
Leaver #1	Expect students to act respectfully, to listen, to pay attention, to complete assignments. "administration inconsistencies"	Nothing was done, because "it was not a big deal." "No one was getting hurt." "more our fault for not being able to control the class" Lateness, food, talking, sleeping, fights, high students, medical issues, emotional problems, fire drills, bomb scares
Leaver #2	"Trying to get through the day." A disparity between teachers and mentors with less preps and better kids. It's just my expectations are high." Received a list of things that could get us fired. "scare tactics" "If you don't call parents, you could be sued." "No wonder teachers are reluctant to "write up" or discipline students...adds a tremendous amount of work..." "No child (with a lawyer) will be left behind." Administrators play role of mediator between student and teacher.	Students with IEPs, sleeping, lateness, cell phones, and talking. (The feeling that inexperienced teachers need more training.) Calling parents. ILT meetings.
Leaver #3	"extremely high <expectations>" "things were very stifled" "It was more that they either tow the line, or I'm not dealing with them." "...this person is not here to learn, so they need to go somewhere else." "There were a lot of teachers who didn't have any students ... problems."	"I had a fight." The biggest interruption – "If I was teaching a class, and then another teacher from my department would come in." Students' personal issues

Decision to Stay, Move, or Leave

	Certainty of Decision	How Likely to Retire as a Teacher?	Certification Issues/ Preparation	Advancement	Work Distribution	Salary
Stayer #1	No doubts. Comfortable.	Probably not as a teacher – maybe as an administrator.	Student Teaching. No.	“Lately I’ve been feeling like I’m stuck.” Wants Masters in Higher Ed. Admin.		Works a part-time job
Stayer #2	No doubts.	No. Interested in administration.	Lateral Entry. No.	“I’m not happy unless I am moving up.” This is a “pass/fail job”. “I came here to get my Masters”	“so many are doing nothing”	Does other things
Stayer #3	Time away removed doubts. Consistency. Comfortable. Relationships.	50% chance (Would leave for a doubled salary.)	Lateral Entry. Yes. Difficulty getting pay changed.		Frustration with paperwork. New teachers teach students most unlike their own experience.	Would only leave for a job that paid 2X as much
Stayer #4	No doubts. Taking ownership. Comfortable. Teaching Fellow	Not Likely. Interested in administration.	Student Teaching. Teaching Fellow. No.	I want to have another option. In grad school for school administration.		“I knew that I wasn’t going to make a lot of money.” Some classmates left for that.
Mover #1	Moved to a position with more permanency and security.	Yes. On a scale of 1 to 5 – a 5!	Lateral Entry. No.	“You know I am not stopping where I am.”		Pays less than other career
Mover #2	Blocked for a transfer in after year 2. Changes and support weren’t enough.	Not likely. Will teach for 2-3 more years. Administration or another teaching job.	Lateral Entry. No.	“another 2 or 3 years and then I am interested in administration”		

Mover #3	Shortened travel. More support. Opportunity to teach certain things. Biggest thing was an incident where I was told "You need to get the kids on your side."	Yes. "I'm in it for the long haul."	Student Teaching. Teaching Fellow. No.	Working on National Boards and a Masters.		
Leaver #1	With positive test results, would have stayed for one more year, and then request a transfer. Comfortable.	Maybe. Likely will return.	Student Teaching. Yes. Testing requirement. Alternatives to tests		Those "new or neutral" would get "stuck with the work" "unfairly divided"	Will return to teaching.
Leaver #2	Knew in November.	No. "an ice cube's chance in hell."	NC Teach Yes. Question about ILT status	"the only way to improve my lot or my pay is just time."	"a clear double standard between new teachers and teachers who had been around for a while." "easy course loads."	Makes less in new job, but it has management opportunities.
Leaver #3	Knew in March position would not continue. Decided in April or mid May not to pursue another position.	"If I were to go back teaching, I'd love to try teaching at a higher level...they wish to be there..." "I don't think that I would necessarily be content for that length of time in one position."	Lateral Entry. Yes. "I got disgusted with the system regarding licensure."	"The way that I felt administration looked at me being a lateral entry teacher."	There were a lot of teachers ... who didn't have any students that seemed to have any problems."	

Appendix E: Overview of Findings

<u>Administrative Support</u>	<u>Mentor</u>	<u>Needed Support?</u>
6 positive	4 effective	4 – Yes.
4 lack of support (2 negative school year)	3 not effective	3 – No (started after the
	3 no mentor	1 – No (out-of-field mentor)
		1 – No (certification issues)
		1 - No

Time/Responsibilities – all similar

Time/Hours per week (range 2-3 to 30 hours per week)

- 7 (5-10 hours per week)
(1 due to a reduction or hour due to a new instructional model)
- 3 (15-30 hours per week)

Time/Activities – all similar (1 noted reflection)

Collegial Interaction/Who

- 8 centered at the departmental level (6 had lunch with department)
- 2 interacted most often with new teachers (1 indicated interaction was discouraged)

Collegial Interaction/What*

- 6 – planning and collaboration
- 4 – to talk about students
- 5 – to evaluate and compare efforts
- 3 – venting

*The totals exceed 10 due to the fact that some teachers gave a multiple answers.

Collegial Interaction/Observation* (generally did not observe others teach)

- 2 – observation was a requirement
- 6 – informally in normal routine
- 3 – initiated observations
- 2 – discouraged from observation

Collegial Interaction/Work Together (provided the opportunity but not required)

- 6 – department meetings for information

Participation in Decision Making/All

- 1 Yes
- 2 Unsure
- 7 No

Participation in Decision Making/Individual

- 1 Yes (changed instructional models)
- 1 Yes
- 2 in own classroom
- 3 No
- 3 Unsure

School Climate/Norms and Expectations

- 5 Yes
- 5 No

School Climate/ Discipline and Disruptions

- 7 Few to none
- 3 Many

Decision To Stay (3 no doubts, 1 doubts went away with time off)

Decision To Move (all 3 more satisfied at new schools)

Decision To Leave (1 would have stayed if she passed the test, 2 no doubts)

Likelihood of Retiring as a Teacher (2/10)

Opportunities for Advancement in Teaching (6/10 indicated that there was no opportunity in teaching)

Certification Issues (3)

Salary (5/10 mentioned it, but not as a major factor influencing their decision making.)

Work Distribution/Types of Students (4/10 describe a disparity among the workloads of teachers)

Appendix F: Raw Data

Intro

First question - Describe the type of support you receive or have received from your administrators.

Um type of support-I guess kind of support- I mean I guess they are always there available any time we have problems questions concerns.

Support/Administrative

Can you give me an example?

I guess anything about - teaching problems I wouldn't go to them -discipline problems that I would have in the classroom or just general procedures around the school and what to do and what not to do.

Support/Administrative

Can you describe the type of support you received as a new teacher both within the school and in the district. And that includes did you have a mentor?

I did have a mentor. Actually I had two - one I had my first year retired, and then I got another one the second year. O.K. and then the year that I was there, we were going through the transition trying to figure out if we should do a portfolio or not. So going through that transition we always had our ILT meetings regardless, so we could always discuss any concerns we had in there, and other teachers would come in and present information to us to help us out with organization skills and classroom management.

Support/Mentor

Support/Mentor

Is the support that you received what you needed or what would you have needed that would have been different?

It <the support> was. It <the support> was needed. A lot of the organization type things of what to do - maybe to see it from another teacher's perspective of how they work things in their class, and maybe how we as new teachers could adjust what we do to make it flow a little bit easier. That helped out a lot.

Support/What was needed?

I understand that your assignment is to teach ----- . Beyond that what other responsibilities do you have or did you have last year?

Laughs. As far as other things beside teaching? Right in the school? Lunch duty is one thing. Monitoring the halls between classes. Pause I think that is about it.

Time/Responsibilities

Any clubs or sports?

Time/Responsibilities

Date: 02/05/05

P 7: Stayer#1.rtf

Page: 2/8

Uh not last year, but I am doing a club this year.

How much time beyond the regular school day do you spend per week on preparing for classes or on activities related to your job as teacher? and describe the types of things you do in your time. So it is how much time beyond the regular school day. In a week.

Let's see with my part time job, I get home about 6-6:30. Laughs Um usually no more than an hour a day -so about 5 hours a week

Other Jobs
Time/Hours Per Week

And what kinds of things do you do in those 5 hours a week?

Uh probably grade some papers. Just thinking about other activities I could do as far as labs. Something to get them out of their seat besides what we are already doing-a different way to approach what I have done before. Easy on the block I can think about what I did last semester, and how that did or didn't work, and I can try it again - a different way with a new group of kids that I have this semester.

Time/Activities

And you said that you have a part time job. How many hours do you spend on that a week?

Laughs um I usually work between 10 and 15 hours a week. And then I work this year at the ball games so - Usually I go- I leave here and go to my part time job, and then come back here if we have a game. Like tonight, I will I'll be back

Other Jobs

Do one of the paid things at the basketball game? Like the clock or something?

I take up money at the door. So I do that.

Is the part time job related to education?

No, it is outside education.

I'm interested in the contact you have on a regular basis with other teachers both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talk with other teachers and in what kind of situations and what you talk about?

Um. There is water there if you need it. Um Let's see. Well

Interaction/Talk/Who

when do I talk to teachers? Usually before school. Um I usually talk just to my neighbors, because they are right there - unless I am passing through. At lunch my department eats lunch together so we talk. And then- usually before school after school-usually don't not unless we have a gathering after school for something special, or Thursday we have open house. We usually get together and go out to eat dinner before open house. We will do something like that, but not usually. I don't talk to them out of school.

Interaction/Talk/Who
 Interaction/Talk/What
 Interaction/Talk/Who

Can you tell me like when you are talking with people during those times what are you talking about?

Um usually school-related stuff. Sometimes, if like on Thursday, we try not to talk about school-related stuff. Just what is going on in peoples' families - what is going on with ourselves. Usually, when we are in school, we talk about school stuff, but out of school we try to stray away from that.

Interaction/Talk/What Int

So what kinds of things in school would you be talking about? Um that are school related?

Let's see. Uh usually most of our conversations are talking about students - how they performed in other classes, and how they are doing in a class. Like if I have a student in -----, I want to find out from the ----- teacher who taught that person how did they do in class. What did they do for you. um -usually just things that are going on in the school - what we like and dislike about it - pretty much like a vent session I guess pretty much. Laughs.

Interaction/Talk/What

Do you watch other teachers teach?

I haven't, and I really would like to do that, but most of the time I'm too busy doing the other stuff that I don't have time to watch anybody else. Usually when I am walking during my planning, I'll walk in and out - like next door to the teacher next door to me. She also teaches [REDACTED]. So I'll walk in next door, and see what she is doing - what she has going on, but I haven't watched a whole class.

Interaction/Observation
 Interaction/Observation

How would you describe the way that teacher's work together in your school?

Date: 02/05/05

P 7: Stayer#1.rtf

Page: 4/8

Um I believe we all try to work together - try to stick together, and work things out. - whatever we have to do, do it the best we can.

Interaction/Working Together

So do you do things like plan together? When you work together what kinds of things do you work on? If you saw teachers working together what would they be doing?

Um Well, we do plan together. I think there are 2 or 3 teachers, depending on the sections of [REDACTED], who work together and plan for that. With [REDACTED] we do that also.

Interaction/Talk/What
Interaction/Talk/Who

Lunch duty - If one position is better for another person, we will work together and switch for lunch duty - our positions that we have.

Interaction/Working Together

Discipline students - If I am having a discipline problem in my class, I will say: You can send them to my class, and I'll watch them for you so. Try to help each other out.

Interaction/Working Together

Describe how teachers in your school are involved in making decisions about important educational issues. And what decisions can you think of that you have been involved in making?

Important educational decisions - I think the biggest thing this year is the school improvement plan that we have been working on. I know we had a half a day that we spent time working on that.

Decision Making/All

So what kinds of things are in the school improvement plan that you think are important? That it was important for to be work that half a day on and be involved in?

Um I guess just the overall goals of what we want to achieve here and statewide.

Decision Making/All

The kind of values and beliefs that we have, and what we expect out of our students, parents, and the community.

Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior.

Um What do I? - Well respect for one. - Respect for themselves, their classmates, and also me.

Discipline/Norms

um Let's see. I guess for them to be pretty much, I guess,

self-disciplined. Talking about how high school students, so they shouldn't be just up running around doing stuff, even though I do have some that do that. Laughs. um I guess just the overall good kid - I wouldn't expect them to act any different than they would act around their parents.

So do you feel that like that's everybody expects kind of the same thing here - all the teachers do this?

Yes.

Discipline/Norms

Describe the disruptions or interruptions that take away from your focusing on educating students.

Disruptions or interruptions.

Laughs. That I can help or? Laughs. Well, of course, all the testing that the kids have.

I think the biggest thing is the testing because of.

Field trips aren't really not. It doesn't impact the majority. I teach mostly juniors, so if the juniors have to take the PSAT, my whole day is shot, except for my 4th period class which I get to teach. So they are going to be ahead of them one hour so.

Pretty much it is that <testing>, and I don't teach [redacted] this year, most of those would have to do the competency testing and, but I think we have already had that, but I think it is just testing.

Discipline/Disruptions

Discipline/Disruptions

Discipline/Disruptions

So what about in terms of discipline disruptions or interruptions?

I really don't have that many problems with discipline.

The phone may ring on occasion, because I have all [redacted] this year. The phone may ring on occasion. I know exactly who it is for, but not too many interruptions with discipline.

Discipline/Disruptions

Discipline/Disruptions

So are you teaching 3 sections of [redacted] this semester?

Yes

And what grade levels are typically in there?

Um. We've been pushing more mostly juniors and seniors I have some sophomores, but the majority are juniors and seniors.

Date: 02/05/05

P 7: Stayer#1.rtf

Page: 6/8

So how many students do you have? In those 3 sections?

Just I would say, let's see, 25, 20 that's 45 - probably about 60 65 in all

Do you think there are less interruptions or disruptions because of their age?

I think so. And it is a whole lot easier to teach [REDACTED] to the older kids instead of the freshmen which I think [REDACTED] used to be. A whole lot easier. Easier to get through than teaching it to freshman.

And you have been all three years at [REDACTED]?

This is your 4th year at [REDACTED] [REDACTED]?

Hm hm

So [REDACTED] is your experience?

Yes.

Did you have any doubts that you would be back at the same school this year?

No. Not this year.

Why did you think you decided to stay at this school?

You could have requested a transfer.

Yeh

But why do you stay here?

I guess just because I'm comfortable here. I know everyone here. You know convenience. Although [REDACTED] is closer to where I am now, but they just opened.

But I guess just the climate here. I like the people here.

You know I am comfortable here.

Decision to Stay

Why do you (so you decided to stay at this school) but some people at this point in their career decide to leave teaching Why did you decide after your third year that I am going to stay in teaching.

Right now I am going through the process of apply for graduate school. So, I don't know what I want to do right now. I guess I am just comfortable where I am. I know I want to go back and get my Masters. I don't know if I will stay in teaching. I may leave and come back.

Advancement
Likely to Retire?

So what would you like to get your Masters in?
Higher Ed Administration

Advancement

The people that maybe started when you started - that decided to leave - colleagues that you have that decided to leave, what do you think causes them to leave teaching? What makes you different than them? They leave and why are you staying?

Hm Laughs Um I don't know. I guess just because I am a very lay back person. I don't stress too much on anything. Maybe it was too much stress for them. Maybe the workload was too much. Maybe the pay. That is why I have two jobs. Maybe they wanted to find better paying job. But I like it here, so the pay is not fantastic, but you know I am making do with what I have. So, and plus I just bought a house. That is why I am interested in getting, but I wanted to get my Masters anyway, to find a better paying job with the state or with the education field.

Decision to Stay
Salary

Is there anything that you would like to add? Anything that you want to tell me about your experiences as a teacher that you would like to add?

Um It has been a good experience. I can say that, when I went to school it is not what I wanted to when I first went, so I'm glad that I did choose.

What did you want to do when you first went?

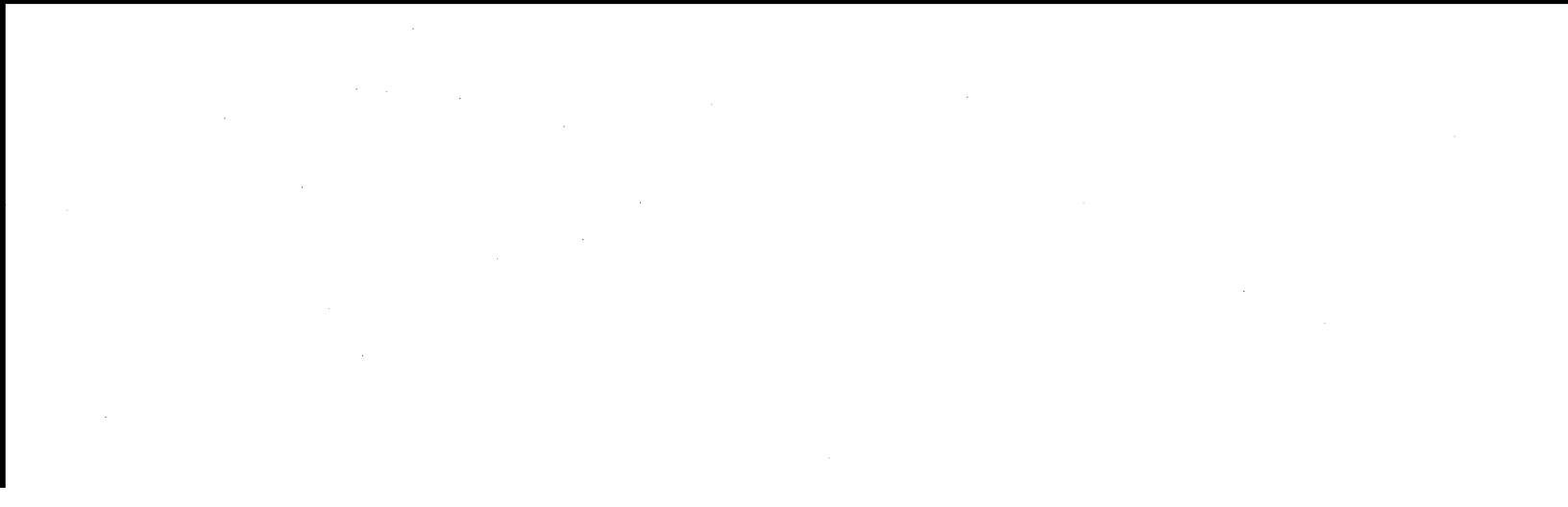
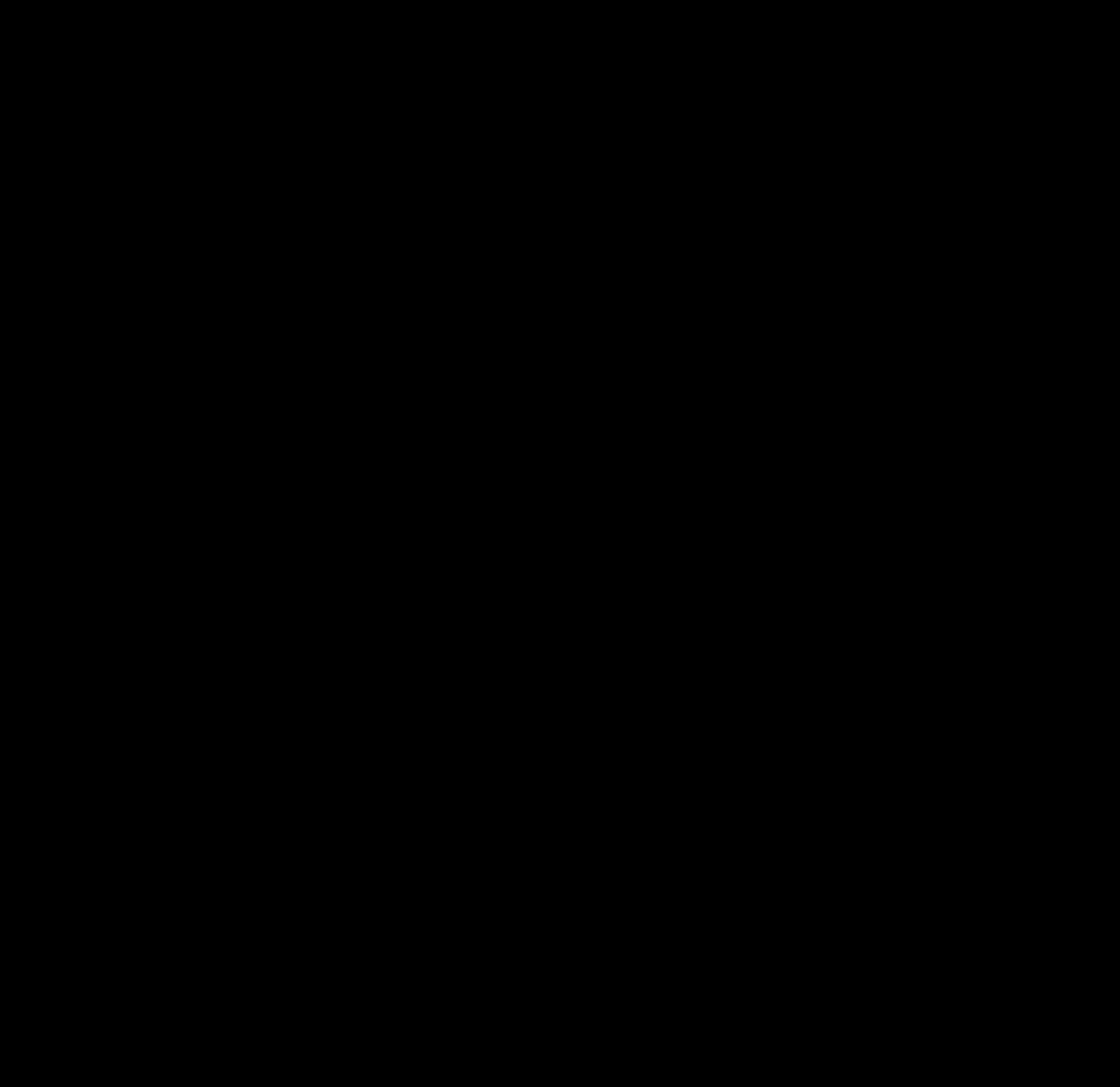
My major was [redacted]. So, and the [redacted] classes, [redacted] the first time I took it I didn't do too well. So is it really for me - do I really want to stay in school that long so. I was like, so I already have my [redacted] classes, so I always liked [redacted] in high school so I was like - I could teach. There was nothing too hard about that.

At what point at [redacted] did you decide to switch?

I think it was my sophomore year, probably going into my junior year

Were you able to graduate in 4 years?

I went to two sessions of summer school. That was just to



done, before I have to ask somebody. Good or bad.]

I understand that your assignment is to teach [REDACTED] Beyond that what other responsibilities do you have or did you have last year?

Uh. I coach [REDACTED], varsity [REDACTED] I coach jv [REDACTED]]  coaching

Um I help with the senior class organization such as [REDACTED]

Then we have lunch duty things like that.

How much time beyond the regular school day do you spend per week on preparing for classes or activities related to your job as a teacher?

I get here at 6:45 in the morning, and I usually get home at 9:30 at night. That's because of after school activities.

Time/Hours Per Week

So if you had to flesh that out and say how many how much of your day how much extra time is spent on the teaching part?

I do a lot of work on the weekends, and just because, during the week I am here late, I don't bring a lot home with me during the week, but I do spend at least 6 hours on Sunday. I like to. If I have stuff to bring home and correct or such, maybe an hour here or there during the week.

Time/Hours Per Week

And you said correcting papers. What other things would you be doing that time?

Making lesson plans and study guides. I spend a lot less time than I did my first two years teaching.

Time/Activities

I'm interested in the contact you have on a regular basis with other teacher both formal and informal. Can you tell how often you talk with other teachers?

All the time. Laughs.

Interaction/Talk/Who

How do you make that contact with other teachers?

(Laughs) I go in and talk to them, but, um, but as far as schoolwide planning of classes that I am teaching, I collaborate with other teachers that are teaching that. On a daily basis pretty much every day after school. I eat lunch with my whole department. We obviously collaborate during that - whether it be a five minute conversation or an hour meeting after school depending on what is coming up.

Interaction/Talk/What

Interaction/Talk/Who

Interaction/Talk/What

Interaction/Talk/Who

And what kinds of -what do you talk about - I mean can you give me examples?

We plan together. We usually try to keep on the same track down to giving out the same tests giving out. Collaborating on, hey I tried this lab or and another teacher tried another

Interaction/Talk/What

lab. We maybe would say this one worked and this one didn't work, comparing what would be more beneficial the next time we go over it.

Do you watch other teachers teach or did you last year?

Um I did my first two years. I have people who teach in my classroom during my planning period, so I consistently see that on a daily basis. Um. My first two years we were we had to do peer observations, and we had to do two a semester. So two days, which I think was wonderful. We don't do that here. It was really neat for me to walk into. let's say a history class, and look at how they get across their material, because it is such a different spectrum, but really, I mean, you still have to teach it the same way - still the same classroom management. I also teach [REDACTED]. I am the only one here, so I collaborate with all teachers in the county that teach that, and meet with them at least once a month or through e-mail at least once a week. So that is helpful.

Interaction/Observation I

Interaction/Observation

Interaction/Observation

Interaction/Talk/What

Interaction/Talk/Who

How would you describe the way teachers work together in your school?

I think, in my interactions, it is positive. I don't think that is with everybody. I don't mean that people get along negatively. I know a lot of people who don't work with other people. I am a people person. I walk in. I need to be talking, so I think that might be something different.

Interaction/Working Together

The people that don't work with other people, what would be the downside of that? Are they fine the way they are?

I think, personally, everybody does what is best for them, but I know myself I think my ideas are great. Nothing works 100% all of the time. I mean that is realistic. So if I can walk in, and say, 'How did you do this?', it is obviously going to be better than mine, because I had a problem with it, or I know there is always stuff you can do better so.

Interaction/Talk/What

Describe how teachers in your school are involved in making decisions about important educational issues?

And what decisions have you been involved in making?

Um I mean I think we all have the staff development as far as our school improvement. I I know, I mean, things go on at the school that everybody has their own opinion needs to be fixed.

Decision Making/All

So I think everybody says, 'Hey I think we need to fix this'. Um. I think they are good about giving your opinion or giving your idea -how you think you can help or what maybe you have a fix for it. Um Whether those are all implemented, probably not, um, but that is not realistic either. I think a lot with school improvement, we sit and have meetings like 'What is your philosophy?', 'What can be better?', and obviously I'm not 100% involved in that, but great that it doesn't just stop there so I think that is kind of a

Decision Making/All

Decision Making/All

You have this meeting, but who knows what happens after that with the whole plan, but

Describe the norms and expectations for teachers for student behavior. What do people normally expect?

For kids to come in and behave respectfully and act their age, like young adults. Some don't. Do I think consequences should be worse? Yes. Yes.

Discipline/Norms

Laughs

That is the expectation, but when you have kids you see in the hall constantly, who just wander the halls, you know repeat offense after repeat offense, and they're back. You know and I know there are extenuating circumstances. You just can't do anything about it, but

Discipline/Disruptions
IEP Students

You said stronger consequences?

Yeh. I mean my philosophy is, maybe you have learning disabilities, or whatever. I mean, if you can't come in and you can't behave respectfully and are posing a security issue, you don't deserve to be here, and I think it is absurd that there is stipulations for certain people.

Discipline/Norms
IEP Students

Describe any disruptions or interruptions that take or took place last year away from focusing on education. In your class that took you away from focusing on education?

I have really good kids. Um I - Here is an example. Last year I taught [redacted] class -repeat failures who had been in for god multiple times. They have taken the exam more than I have been teaching. um Absenteeism. Some of them had children of their own, or they worked late at night so that first period class they weren't there consistently. So that is a problem. Attendance-wise that was a big problem with that class.

Discipline/Disruptions Disc

Behavior-wise, my first year teaching, I had a lot bad behavior, but I wasn't as structured. I didn't know problems before they arose, so I had to deal with them as they came up. I think now it is a lot easier. I know them before they are going to happen. My first year, I mean, behavior problems as stupid as it is - going to the bathroom every 2 seconds just, and kids will try to get away with whatever they think they can. So, I mean, like I had little problems like that my first two years.

Discipline/Disruptions

So this year you teach [redacted]? That would be juniors seniors?

Discipline/Disruptions
Unfair Work Distribution

Yeh I mean that class, obviously, I don't have any problems. You are either there to learn or you're not, but I do teach 9th and 10th graders in [redacted] and [redacted] academic wise I mean.

So you don't have major problems with the 9th or 10th graders either?

Discipline/Norms

I think it is all how you approach kids these days.

And you learned that over 3 years?

Yeh. I mean the kids in 9th and 10th grade will get away with whatever they think they can get away with, unless, and it took me two years to realize that.

Discipline/Norms

Did you have any doubts that you would be back at [redacted] this year?

Well, I guess, not doubts. If I was going to stay in teaching, I would definitely not look for another job. Absolutely not. I sometimes question, maybe, I'll go back to school. Well, yes all the time.

Advancement
Decision to Stay

What would you go back to school for?

I have a degree in [redacted] and in [redacted]. I want

Advancement

to get my Masters in [REDACTED]. Um. Would I love to go teach at the college level? Yes. Have I thought about administration? Yes. My biggest problem with teaching, I guess, and because I do like my job, and I do put a lot of time and effort into it. I can't stand that I get paid or rewarded on the number of years you have been here or something, and like it or not, people are sitting down there who in different positions who I know will leave here at [REDACTED], or whatever, every single day don't do an ounce of extra anything, or if asked to do something say no. You know, and we are all getting, whether you want to call it rewarded or paid, or whatever, it may be at the same scale. Say would I go back to school to higher myself? Yes, in a heartbeat.

- ⊗ Advancement
- ⊗ Unfair Work Distribution

Now you had the option to put in for a transfer - didn't you at the end of your third year? Why didn't you put in for a transfer? Why did you stay at this school? You could have put in for a transfer.

I think we have great support administration-wise - number one - couldn't and I honestly compare it with where I used to teach. I mean staff development days we are allowed to do what we want get what we need done. uh Teaching [REDACTED] too, for my second year. My first year - conferences - Do you need to go to this? I was able to go. You know, if I needed professional development, that I was able to go easily without question. um I love coaching here. I would never. I am really attached to them. I coach all summer in different clubs, and such, so that's one reason so it really would never cross my mind to transfer to a different school. Realistically I love my job. I have friends, who are in sales, who are complaining: 'Oh, I have to go to work'. I never feel that. Like I don't mind. At 3 o'clock I am out on the [REDACTED] field, you know in the gym, and that makes me happy, and I love that, but I am also [REDACTED] years old you know. So I guess my thing is just, and I don't mean monetary, but to some extent yeh that would be one of my reasons to go back to school. Unfortunately. Realistically. Yes.

- ⊗ Support/Administrative
- ⊗ coaching
- ⊗ Decision to Stay
- ⊗ Decision to Stay
- ⊗ Advancement

In all likelihood do you think you will retire as a teacher?

God I don't know. I don't think I will retire as a teacher.

- ⊗ Likely to Retire?

Date: 02/05/05

P 8: Stayer#2.rtf

Page: 7/8

Do I think I would retire as administration? Yes. If I stay in the teaching profession, I wouldn't just stay as a teacher, because I'm not happy with that unless I am moving up or doing something.

Advancement

Is there anything you would like to add?

No

Not really. I think a lot of people complain, and like I said, I would go back to school money-wise, but I think a lot of people complain about uh, we don't get paid which I agree that would be great to be paid more. Don't get me wrong, but its not that bad. I mean, granted I do a lot of extra things I get paid for, I live just fine. Laughs I think my one negativity - that really you could walk in here and do the most minimal job that you wanted to, or you could walk in and take advantage of different things and you know and do it, but it in the long run unless you get your own self-satisfaction out of that you know really it doesn't matter. So I think that is - I know myself I get aggravated when I'm the one asked to do this when I'm thinking I do all this other garbage, and so much are doing nothing. You know and they are never asked because they don't do anything. So I think that played into my frustration a lot of times. Oh will you do this? Will you do this? You know that that is not consistent, and that probably is my biggest frustration.

Other Jobs
Salary

Unfair Work Distribution

Do you think it is unusual for somebody in their 4th year to be teaching [REDACTED]?

Not really. I love it. Like that is the class that I love teaching, and I get excited about. You know I definitely do. So I mean that is my goal. I had a minor in college. That is the field that interests me the most, so I don't want to give it away. I don't want a new nov to come and take it. Laughs

Decision to Stay
Type of Students
Unfair Work Distribution

I was wondering if one of the older, or more experienced teachers, sometimes they grab ahold of that and you can never get it away.

Like [REDACTED]. Yeh I think a lot with [REDACTED] it just started in 97 and the technology with it that is on the AP exam is stuff that I am just learning in college that is just coming out. I think that is different than your basic [REDACTED]

Date: 02/05/05

P 9: Stayer#3.rtf

Page: 1/16

Intro

Describe the type of support you received from your administrators (and, of course, I'm thinking of your third year and then how you decided)

Particularly look at my third year, I received the standard reviews from my administrators - the three observations from them. As far as support during my third year, I had pretty much been, I don't want to call it released, but here is not a great deal of, I don't want to say interaction because that is not quite the term that I have, I believe that they have faith that I am doing my job well, and that I am, I guess, not in need of constant supervision, and that there is a degree of trust at this point that we have built up. That I know what I am doing, and that there's a faith that I'm doing my job well.

 Support/Administrative


 Support/Administrative

Can you describe the type of support you received as a new teacher both within the school and within the district, and Did you have a mentor?

Um when I was originally hired here, as a midyear teacher, I got next to nothing as far as support. That's one of the things that I really considered to be a weakness or fallacy, in that, as I was hired they gave me the keys to the room, and said, 'Good luck', and that was about the degree of support that I got. I was observed one time by my department chair for thirty minutes, and I think I was observed for about the same amount of time by one of the members of the administration too. And aside from that, I don't recall that - I know that at that point, for my first half year here, I did not have a mentor, and I didn't really have any support system, other than the people that I would seek out, and the teacher that was beside me, helped me a good deal, because she was the teacher, not even the same courses, but she knew - I think she was in her second year of teaching. So, she was familiar with the process, and she and I became friends, and worked together on helping me to not mess up so badly that I wasn't going to be back. Um, I sort of bonded with a group of people that I had lunch with, that helped me through, figuring out what I needed to do, what to do. I was teaching 4 preps, and I pretty much had

 Support/Mentor

 Interaction/Talk/What

 Interaction/Talk/Who

 Interaction/Talk/Who

to make up the lesson plans as I went along, because there were none that were left for me. It was just a good luck kind of thing. My first formal year of teaching, which would be I guess Year 1 or Year 0, whichever its designation is, I was assigned a mentor. I was given the standard number of observations by my administrator, which was, I think three by the administrator. My department chair came once to observe me. I think that my mentor came once or twice. Our schedules weren't very - We had the same planning period, and we had the same lunch period, but she was a teacher of Senior [REDACTED], and I was a teacher of Freshmen classes, and for some reason, we didn't get together to have her observe my class more than once or twice. But as such, we had lunch together and we talked a lot, but we didn't go along precisely according to the rubrics that were set by the county. It was a more informal system than a, according-to-directed activities. So in that respect it was sort of different from what I guess we probably should have been doing. At the time, we didn't - together we didn't have the time we needed to spend together, but again it wasn't like I was a brand new first year teacher that was 23 years old, and had never been in a job before. I think I was 31 years old, and I had had a job for a period of time, and it wasn't like I was completely alien to the [REDACTED] community. I knew what was going on, where I was, and what I was doing already because I had spent four and a half months the previous year as a teacher. So again, that is sort of a uniqueness, in that I didn't need to be shown where the copy room was. I didn't need to be introduced to a guidance department or whatever, because I had already done that in many cases by myself the previous period of time.

- Support/Mentor
- Support/Administrative
- Support/Mentor

(And did that mentor then continue in year two - in your official year two? Did she continue as your mentor, or was that more Year 1?)

Year 1, I seem to remember, that we checked some box that said that I didn't need mentor services, and that my second year I - We didn't have any meetings. We didn't have any particular interactions. She - I continue to have lunch with her to this day, and I know that if I have a problem that I can contact her and discuss whatever I need with her. We

- Support/Mentor

Date: 02/05/05

P 9: Stayer#3.rtf

Page: 3/16

actually talk about things every day at lunch, but there was no formal - you are assigned to this person to be your mentor - anymore.

Is the support that you received what you needed or can you describe the type of support that you would have needed, now thinking back on it.

Thinking back, I went through the ILT program like I was supposed to, and that was beneficial. I would have benefited much more so from it had I been a part of it my first half year that I was here. I would have really, I think, been much better off had I not been sort of just released to do as I wanted at that point. If there had been some sort of program or activity or organization to provide with support at that time - something like having a mentor - to be able to ask those questions. The amount of mentoring I got was - I spent a day with the teacher that I was going to replace, and he pretty much walked me around and showed me where the school was, and that was my orientation to teaching here. I didn't particularly receive an orientation from the school other than on my planning period. I would walk around and find wherever I needed to find, and that was essentially it. So the midyear hire was very difficult for that first mid-year, but it was beneficial for my first official year, because it made that easier, but at the time I spent as much time confused as I spent knowing what I was doing.

Support/What was needed?

Support/What was needed?

I understand that your assignment last year and this year is to teach [REDACTED]. Beyond that what other responsibilities do you have?

Laughs Yeh I am head [REDACTED] coach. I have around - I have been the [REDACTED] coach now here for -this is my fourth year. (So official Year 1, official Year 2?)

My first year was my first year as the head coach here.

Yeh. I've got about 90 kids on the team, including [REDACTED]. I do not have an assistant coach. I do have a coach that assists me with [REDACTED]

(So beyond the head [REDACTED] coach, which is huge I realize, do you have any other responsibilities that you are required?)

None that are assigned - I mean I have like lunch duty, and, um, I'm trying to think of what else I need have to do - As

coaching
Time/Responsibilities

Time/Responsibilities

Date: 02/05/05

P 9: Stayer#3.rtf

Page: 4/16

far as assigned duties, no I have none. I have helped with a couple of the other groups and organizations. I helped with prom a couple of years ago. I have done some more things, but that is primarily because the people that I am friends with are responsible for them, and I try to help them out. It's not as if I've been assigned to do any of these things. I try very hard to go to as many of the events at school as I can, just because I want to be part of the community kind of thing, but

(Now I'm curious, you're an official first year teacher, did you have to sign anything that said I am volunteering to do this. They are not requiring me to do this?)

I didn't.

(or was the head [REDACTED] coaching - was it part of do you want this job you've got to have the head [REDACTED] coach job too?)

That was not said, but that is my understanding. My impression is that the position that I received as a teacher was not related directly to whether or not I would be the [REDACTED] coach, but I think that, had I not been able to fill the position that they needed to be filled with the swim [REDACTED], that I do not feel that I would have gotten the position.

(Another candidate might have edged you out?)

Yeh. They told me without much reservation that there were many applicants for the position, but that I had unique qualifications for something like that that made me an ideal candidate for the position. So, I mean, I recognized that the coaching was not necessarily a requirement, but that it wasn't an option. You understand what I am saying?

coaching
Time/Responsibilities

coaching
Time/Responsibilities

How much time beyond the regular school day, do you spend per week on preparing for classes or activities relating to your job as teacher?

As teacher, independent of anything else that I do?

(Independent of [REDACTED] coach.)

I would say that I most likely - Is this considering now or last year?

(Last year)

Last year I most likely would say that I spent 10 hours a week outside of school, and that had gone down dramatically from before. I mean, I am streamlined and

Time/Hours Per Week

Date: 02/05/05

P 9: Stayer#3.rtf

Page: 5/16

much more - to a much greater degree than I was my first two years here. I've even - I would be willing to say I was spending 20-25 my first year, and I have gone down to 10 or so.

Now describe the types of things you did, or you do, during that time.

Last semester we had - not last semester, last year - we had new curriculum for [REDACTED] - for [REDACTED] and for [REDACTED], and I was basically just trying to make sure that what I had taught previously would also be in line with what the current curriculum would hold. Mainly what I do outside of school is to try to supplement the material that the book has, and try to come up with things that are interesting, or more in depth knowledge than the more cursory stuff that the book has. So I would say that a lot of what I would do was sort of be research-based - sort of investigational stuff that I was trying to do to become more comfortable with the courses I was teaching, but also to have a more of a depth of knowledge so I could either make class more interesting, or then not be in a position to not know the answer when the kids would ask the questions. **(Now I heard you say, that when you had the mentor, that you taught 9th graders. What did you teach last year?)**

Last year we had a conglomeration of kids. Since we're changing the curriculum from [REDACTED] - from [REDACTED] from 9th grade to 10th - and [REDACTED] from 10th to 9th, we taught mixed 9th and 10th grade classes - all [REDACTED] last semester. Last year, all I taught - I had three sections of [REDACTED], and three sections of [REDACTED], in the two spring and fall blocks.

(So you really had one preparation?)

I had one prep for each term. Yes. I had honors, I mean, so that kind of makes it a bit different.



(So you had some honors and some regular?)

Yes.

(And then you said, at one time, though you had 4 preps.)

My first year that I was here, when I was a midyear hire, I had [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and [REDACTED]

 Time/Activities

 Type of Students
 Unfair Work Distribution

██████.

I'm interested in the contact you had on a regular basis with other teachers both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talked with other teachers, in what kind of situations, and what you talked about?

The thing that also makes this interesting is that I teach out of a trailer. I don't have a hallway where I can just stand and talk to another teacher. If I want to go talk to someone, I have to make a concerted effort to go do that. The teacher who is beside me also teaches the same courses that I do, and I try on a daily basis to go and at least say hello, so that I can have interaction with another adult at some point during the day. We have collaboratively planned some stuff together. She's a very long-term teacher. She's been a teacher I guess for about 14 years, but was at the middle school, and was not teaching high school material. I had been here for a couple of years teaching high school, and was teaching to the content area that I was most comfortable with. She was moving to a different course into a content area that she wasn't as familiar with. So between the two of us we have kind of made the material more easy for both of us because she knows how to teach and I know what the stuff is, so we wound up combining to come up with a lot of ideas. We brainstorm a good bit from time to time. I usually will spend on a weekly basis, I would say, an hour total with her just talking about stuff and school - about the material we are teaching - kind of comparing notes as far as where we are in the school year, and what we have experienced with lessons that we have either done or not done. I usually am a bit ahead of her, and we talk about what things I did that worked, and what things didn't work so when she does it she can adjust what she does.

Interaction/Talk/Who

Interaction/Talk/What

Interaction/Talk/What

(But you sought her out? I mean, it just happened that your trailers were together?)

Yes. It was just coincidental. Right. It wasn't as if we were assigned to each other or anything along those lines. We - I have just kind of adopted that as what we do - what I try to.

(What about department meetings? Are there any regular department meetings?)

We have department meetings. I guess they're once a month - once every other month, at least - and those meetings are usually held - We hold them at lunch. - And we end up with everybody in the department there. It is usually not a planning session or a get-to-know-each-other or anything like that. It is usually just a this-is-what-we-have-to-do - information about when we are going to have to move books, or to begin administering tests, or to let us know about opportunities for further time. It is not really a so-what's-working-in-your-class kind of time.

- ☒ Department Meetings
- ☒ Interaction/Talk/What
- ☒ Interaction/Talk/Who

(So all the [REDACTED] teachers have lunch at the same time?) Right (But you all don't eat lunch except that one time when you, or) I'm trying to think. When I have lunch, I eat with several people from the English department and Social Studies Department. Um Of the people that I have lunch with, I think that there are three of us that are [REDACTED] teachers, that I would say that I have lunch with at least four times a week. And, we will talk, to some degree, about school, but not as much about so-what-are-you-teaching? today and how-is-that-going? It is more of a personal support, rather than a professional support kind of environment. I am trying to think. I've built up some friendships with some other good people in the [REDACTED] department, but those are primarily just um - There have been some times that my room has not been my room for the entire time. I have shared my room every year except for this with another teacher, or have had to travel. This is the first year that I have not had to travel, since I've been here. My third year, which was last year, I had my room two periods of the day. There was another teacher that was in there two periods of the day, and I was in another [REDACTED] [REDACTED] teacher's room for my third period. He left and we really never really talked that much, because he didn't want to be in the room when I was teaching. So I never really got to know him that well, and the other teachers that were in my room, we decided that there were times that I could stay and didn't want to stay, and I spent a lot of time outside of my room, because they somehow felt uncomfortable having another person there.

- ☒ Interaction/Talk/What
- ☒ Interaction/Talk/Who

- ☒ Interaction/Observation
- ☒ Interaction/Talk/What
- ☒ Interaction/Talk/Who

(Actually that goes into the next question.)

Did you watch other teachers teach? (only on those

prearranged times when it was ok - where they felt comfortable?)

Sometimes I did. I have never gone to another teacher's room other than when they were teaching in my room. I have not seen, other than those situations, teaching.

(Like a whole lesson from beginning to end?)

Aside from lessons that were in my classroom, no.

Interaction/Observation

How would you describe the way that teachers worked together in your school?

If you had to give some descriptive words about it?

I would say that our working together is independent. If we choose to work together, that's entirely up to us. There is no real mandate that we share any information with each other. We are not obligated to talk about things that work, or don't work. We don't do any particular lesson sharing. What we do - where we really will support each other and help - is when one of us gets sick or has something to go on, the others will print everything that they know about whatever area it is, and just give it to them. My wife had a baby last year, and the people that I had lunch one - one of them taught the same courses I taught - and gave me every bit of material that she had for an almost three-week period because she didn't know when I was not going to be there. So I had a ready supply of plans that I could pull from - either from mine or from hers - or both if I needed it. Oh it was really nice. It was a really helpful thing, and I knew that the teacher who was beside me would have me covered as well in the event that I had a shortage. I could call her and she would send over a file of information about whatever it was that I was teaching, and we do the same thing for each other. If one of us is out, or has to miss, or there is something that happens, if there is a death - one of the teachers had her parent die this fall - and we were able to resolve that, because we taught the same things or similar things and we were able to take care of that, but we don't really get together and talk about what we teach or how we teach it.

Interaction/Working Together

Interaction/Talk/What

Interaction/Talk/Who


Interaction/Working Together

(So most times if I were to go from [redacted] class to [redacted] class, it wouldn't be very similar?)

There would be no similarity whatsoever.

(But yet on a day that you, like when you were out, or you may have need the plans, I would have seen a similarity there because of the sharing?)

Perhaps. You would have most likely seen the same materials, but I don't teach the same way that my partner does - not my - my coworkers do. We do things - we all do things so differently that we can't really. Even if both of us were sitting in the same room with the same materials, we would both do it differently.


 Interaction/Working Together

Describe how teachers in your school were/ are involved in making decisions about important educational issues.

I don't know what we mean by important educational issues, but I'm trying to think of anything that we maybe have done, PAUSE I guess I don't really quite understand that one.

(I would think educational issues meaning how things are done around here, or even policies. Are you ever asked for your opinion?)

No. We don't have any input. The schedules for everything are given to us. The school policies that we have, for things like, I guess not the calendar, but anything that we do is presented to us as you can vote on this. Here are your decisions.

 Decision Making/All

So decisions you would have personally involved in making would more relate to what you do in your classroom?

Yes. What I do in my classroom is, I guess, I - sort of my own little world, but outside of that school policy - We don't have any input into that that I am aware of.

One of the people that I have lunch with is the chairman of the school improvement team, and will often ask him about things, but aside from that, I don't see that we as individual, independent teachers, have a great deal of input into how things are done.

(So do you think the school improvement team has input?)

I'm not sure how much effect that would really have on our policies here.

(But they are certainly in the know?)

They know what is going on, and they can tell us what we

 Decision Making/Individual

 Decision Making/All

are going to be told - or what we are going to be doing. One of the other groups that I am a part of - I had forgotten - I am also on the [redacted] committee at school, and the reality behind that is that we've got -- but I am not 100% sure that, even as a member of that committee, that what we say really will have any bearing on the policy is set for [redacted]. We have often sent our recommendations and they are not enacted.

- Decision Making/All
- Decision Making/Individual
- Time/Responsibilities

(So is the [redacted] committee a school improvement committee? Or is it a separate committee?)

It is separate from the school improvement. We have a separate [redacted] committee which is comprised of one member from each department, and the media folks, and somebody from administration, and the two [redacted] folks, and I had forgotten that. I have been on that since I started here. We have one meeting every month or so, or, at least, every other month we get together.

Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior.

We expect the teachers to handle the individual student issues to a fairly large degree. Every year we begin the year by focusing on the standard dress code violation issues, and showing up on time, and tardiness and all that sort of stuff. We are expected to deal with them on our level usually until it gets to a point that they have the student has declined our help several times, before we would then refer that out. We've got fairly set policies about when we can and can't let something leave our room, and get to the administration.

- Discipline/Norms
- Discipline/Norms
- Discipline/Norms
- Support/Administrative

Describe any disruptions or interruptions that took you away from focusing on educating students.

In my first year?
(last year?)

I had a class that was so unruly that I was having serious reservations about teaching. It was the computer's fault because they randomly assigned me a very bad mix of kids that were overwhelmingly male, and I think I had 34 or 5 students in the class, and of them more than a third of them had IEP's, or were BEH. And I spent a great percentage of

- Discipline/Disruptions
- Type of Students
- Unfair Work Distribution

Date: 02/05/05

P 9: Stayer#3.rtf

Page: 11/16

my time dealing with behavioral issues in the classroom that left me being almost unable to teach that class. And that class was just almost the end of me. They were just simply not receptive to any attempts to teach.

Did you have any doubts that you would be back at the same school this year?

A few --but nothing that, after I had some time away from school, that I wanted to leave. The class that I had, that was such a challenge to me last year, I was questioning if I was going to come back because they angered me so much, and I had received no help after asking for it for at least 2/3 of the semester. It actually took a parent complaining about the class to get anything done in my classroom, but once that was taken above me, and above the administrators that I was speaking to, concerning my problem, and the principal got involved, I got some of the kids removed from the class that were being as disruptive as they could be, and the class became much more manageable, and it made my life a lot of easier, so, as the year ended, I was much happier.

Decision to Stay
Support/Administrative

(So this class was in the second term?)

Second term - 4th period - end of the day - right after lunch - 35 kids - I think there were 28 of them were boys, and it was just almost impossible to deal with.

Type of Students

(Now you could have requested a transfer, but why did you decide to stay at this school?)

The [redacted] team. I've built some really good relationships with the kids on my team, and I would not leave them. I think it is really important for consistency as well, because I've become accustomed to being here. I like the kids that I teach, and have taught, and I have tried to build a relationship with the kids both on my team and at the school on a more broad basis than just a teacher who lives in [redacted]. I go to as many sporting events and as many things as I can. I tell the kids that I do that, and I know, I would be willing to say, half the students here, and to me that is as much importance to me than anything else.

coaching
Decision to Stay
Type of Students

(Now you said for a while that you did other kind of

work)

I was in charge of [REDACTED]

(So why do you continue teaching when you know there's other things out there?)

I really like being around kids. My previous job. What I did was I was in charge of, I guess, essentially being the bad guy. I had to do training on how to stop people from stealing from you. I then had to make sure that the employees weren't trying to take advantage of us, and, when they would, I would have to conduct the investigations and then fire them, and I was to the point that I was doing that very regularly to the point that I was letting people go 2 and 3 a month, and my job was then to have them taken by the police out. And what I was finding was that-- not happy with myself because I was always the bad guy. I was willing to accept that position, as the manager of that department and the store or if somebody got caught shoplifting, I would be the one to take them to the police, or I would be the one that would be the prosecuting witness or whatever. So I got to the point where I was more interested in having a more positive relationship with kids rather than being the that's-the-guy-that's-going-to-chase-you if you steal from the store. I preferred to be the one that was that's-the-guy-that-can-help-you if you've got a problem with your life, your girlfriend, your car, whatever, because I felt that I was far too one-dimensional and far too tied to what I was doing, that I couldn't get out of that mode of - I couldn't be the friend of the employee because I then would be in a position three days later - their register is \$150 short, and they've got a new coat on - I have to figure out why, or whether there was any relationship between that. So it sort of was, in some ways the same, because at school I have to be the friend of the student, but I also have to be the bad guy too, but I can be the good guy too on a much easier basis, and there is no problem with that. I like to be a more positive person in the lives of the people that I interact with. I think that I can do that more effectively through teaching.

Decision to Stay

Decision to Stay

Decision to Stay

How likely is it that you will retire as a teacher?

Retire as a teacher? I don't know. I am fortunate in my life


Salary


Date: 02/05/05

P 9: Stayer#3.rtf

Page: 13/16

that my wife has a job that can afford me the opportunity to teach. Her position is such that she makes two times what I make here, and I can do something that I enjoy doing and it is not a drain upon our family resources. I actually got a raise to become a teacher, from what I did before. So it is kind of a sad state, that that's the way it is, but, as a teacher, I'm also allowed or enabled to do some of the things that I do enjoy doing. Working with the [REDACTED] team is something that I really enjoy and being a teacher also frees me up to work in my summers to coach the summer. My summers are filled with [REDACTED] as well. I coach a [REDACTED] team in the summer. I have 260 kids that [REDACTED] with me in the summer, and I do [REDACTED] lessons the whole summer long. So I am able to augment my income by having the two months off in the summer as a teacher. I make myself more - I guess it's just more palatable to be in that position.

 Salary

 Other Jobs

(So when you think of the [REDACTED] coaching part of what you do - at school - not in the summer, but at school. It runs from what month to what month?)

The formal season is from Nov. 1st to Feb. 15th. I spend probably - I start my practices - weight training and running - usually the middle of September. So Sept 15th is when I start having practice after school for about an hour every day, Monday through Thursday, and I do that from September 15th to Nov. 1st. From Nov. 1st until Feb. 15th I have morning practice and then I have afternoon weights, and then after Feb. 15th I am happy to be done with [REDACTED] for a while, but my summer [REDACTED] team starts up usually mid April. So I then start going from here to there to do that.

(So if you had to sort of average, which probably isn't a good way to do it, the amount of hours you spend per week on [REDACTED] coaching during the regular season?)

Regular season, I would say, 12-14 hours a week and a regular basis. Now we get busier obviously with big [REDACTED] at the end of the season. I'm the director of the state high school [REDACTED] meet this year. For some reason, they think that I can do that, but that is going to take a lot more of my time --not next week, but the week to follow. I'll be busy all week with that because I have to do all the entries and

 Time/Responsibilities

Date: 02/05/05



P 9: Stayer#3.rtf

Page: 14/16

all the stuff - copying and all that sort of stuff - So I'll be very busy then. But because we have a good [REDACTED] team, it means that I am busier here at the end of the season a lot more than say another team that may have 7 kids on the team. I have a lot of kids, and a lot of kids that will be competing on a state level, so that means that I end up being just as busy at the end of the season as I do at the beginning. It kind of creates an odd situation in that respect, but, as far as retiring as a teacher, I would say probably about 50%.




(50% chance?)

Yeh. I am just shocked sometimes when my wife's company has an opening for a trainer that makes 2-3 times what I make, and the difference is they teach adults. Instead of teaching 17 year olds, they are teaching 24 year olds, and that just shocked me, and if, I were to be offered the job at her company doing that, I would probably take it, because it would be foolish for me not to. - At least, as far as my family would be concerned, but I like what I do, and I will probably stay with it barring a job offer that pays me twice what I make. That's about what it would take for me to leave teaching.

 Likely to Retire?
 Salary

Is there anything that you would like to add?


The thing that has been the hardest for me in teaching is all the paperwork and stuff that then comes down on me as a teacher - that I have to do. As a teacher of freshmen and sophomores, those are the children that end up being in the most trouble, and winding up with all the referrals and discipline and the IEP's and all the plans for their success, and all these things that have to be done because they are new to high school. As a younger, newer teacher, I get the non-honors kids. I get the kids that are younger - that don't know how to act in a high school environment, and that's one of the things that I see as sort of a challenge to be a younger, earlier teacher the first couple of years. It's that you don't get to teach the kids that you have the most experience with. I think a lot of teachers were honors kids. I was an honors kid when I was going through school. I never was in a class that wasn't an AP level or honors level class, and then through college the style of teaching was the same in my high school for my honors and AP classes as it

 IEP Students
 Type of Students
 Unfair Work Distribution



that I should be a doctor or a lawyer or an airline pilot or something, but I always thought that teaching was a profession that was something, that was something that was underappreciated, but that could be more rewarding than anything else. I have found that what I have done has been very rewarding, even though I have had days where I wanted to quit, lose my mind, and never come back. Then I will have a kid to scream at me in the hall, and say 'Hey, how are you doing? I missed you. I missed your class.' - whatever - and that makes me feel better. Um. Why I am still here is because I think that I have built relationships with the kids that have a common ground with me as a person outside of what I would be in school. The kids that are like I was when I was in school, and try to be both a positive role model type person and the friend to some of those students, and it's that sort of relationship that has made me stay. If I was not involved with the [redacted] team, I'm not sure that I would be here, because in doing what I do, I've built that bond of friendship, relationship, coach and student relationship that I don't want to break. I drive almost an hour to get here every day now. We moved away from this area. I live in south of [redacted]. I am going to drive by two high schools to get here because of the relationship that I have with the kids.

 coaching




Frustrating...so much trouble with human resources...turn in your stuff to human resources and go find your own job...set of filing cabinets that held your application...4 months without getting paid at [redacted] until it was bumped to an Assistant Superintendent.

 Support/Administrative



We don't have sharing opportunities. The workdays are planned. We don't have the time...couldn't take a day off to watch a teacher teach.

 Interaction/Talk/What
 Interaction/Working Together

When I got my masters, I got my license and diploma...pay didn't change. In business human resources does it all...

 Advancement
 certification
 Support/Administrative

The student teacher...reflecting for you.

 Interaction/Talk/What
 Interaction/Talk/Who

Intro

Describe the type of support you received from your administrators.

Um Um Instructional support, um, you know during observations, post-conferences, um. They always give some type of feedback on, you know, what I could do to improve, or what I'm doing good at. You know. They also help in the reflection process, and, um, technological support. My room - something as simple as a white board. I used my chalkboard all the time, and it was just extremely dusty, and, you know, the kids always joke about it, and so one of the administrators said: 'Why don't you just order a white board?' You know. I just never thought about it. So, things like that, you know - just helping to improve the look of the classroom, and, you know, it makes a difference, and just personal support. Some of the administrators I have a close relationship with, and so those days when you just need to vent, I feel like I can do that with no fear of being persecuted because I have done that.

Support/Administrative

Support/Administrative

Support/Administrative

Can you describe the type of support you received as a new teacher, both within the school and in the district, and Did you have a mentor?

Um, within the school, I participated in the ILT program. So I had a mentor. It was interesting, because the first year I was here my mentor teacher was training so she had to do all of her assignments to be a mentor, and was kind of her guinea pig, so --I got to do all of the required, um, assignments, and I think I got observed like 50 times because of that, and, um, just other teachers, who were mentor teachers or experienced, they always give some type of feedback that's helpful. And then within the district, I know there were some meetings that I had to go, but I don't remember what they were about. So, I am not going to say that that was really helpful, but I guess they were there, you know, in an effort. With a school district so large, sometimes I guess it is hard to make things like that meaningful.

Support/Mentor

Support/What was needed?

Date: 02/05/05

P10: Stayer#4.rtf

Page: 2/8

Is the support that you received what you needed? Or do you have a suggestion for what you would have needed?

My situation was kind of different, because when I was in [REDACTED] <out of state> as a first year teacher, I got all the mentor, um, you know. I guess I did the ILT program twice. And so, when I came here, you know, it was kind of like I was going through all of that all over again. I think it was more than enough support, but then again I had also had it before so, --- As a first year teacher, I'm not sure if, you know, I wouldn't be able to say if the ILT program is enough, because I had kind of gotten a double dose of it.

Support/What was needed?

I understand that your assignment was to teach [REDACTED]. Beyond that, what other responsibilities do you have? I know [REDACTED]. Has that been all three years?

No. This is my first year doing [REDACTED], but I've been doing the [REDACTED] team and [REDACTED] team all three years, and, um, I am on the school leadership team, and co-sponsor of [REDACTED], and I've done the [REDACTED]. Let's see what else. I don't know. I've done a few clubs throughout the three years.

Time/Responsibilities

When you said school leadership, were you elected?

Yes.

So you were elected.

Yes.

Any duties - any assigned duties during the week?

For school leadership?

No for - just regular duties like lunch duty and hall duty?

No. We don't have those.

We meaning teachers?

The teachers here. Yeh. We. I guess that is odd, but we really don't have any extra duties, and the administrators - they do lunch duty and bus duty and hallway.

You know. We stay in the hallways in between classes, but that is about it. So, you know, we really have time to focus on teaching.

Time/Responsibilities

How much time beyond the regular school day do you

Date: 02/05/05

P10: Stayer#4.rtf

Page: 3/8

spend per week on preparing for classes or on activities related to your job as teacher. So time per week?

Um. On the average I stay here until about 6 o'clock doing different duty - well you know, coaching and club activities and so, during that time, you know, I'm having these light bulb ideas, and, you know, I'll say, 'O.K. well during my planning period then I need to work on that.' So, or if I'm here in my classroom in the afternoon, I'll work on it. So, I don't know. Let's see. Extra time? Does that include planning?

No, beyond your regular day.

Um. I'll say I guess about maybe an hour a day.

Is that an hour - so 5 hours a week? Or does that include the weekends?

Well yeh. Including weekends. Gosh Yeh. I keep at 5 hours a day.

O.K. Five hours a week?

Yeh. Five hours a week.

Time/Activities
Time/Hours Per Week
Time/Responsibilities

Time/Hours Per Week

Describe the types of things you did during that time.

You described planning and your light bulb ideas, and things like that, but what other kinds things do you do during that time that you spend on?

I do a lot of reflection - thinking about what I do, or what I have done in the past, and how I can improve that. Or, you know, my mom's a teacher too, and she is a 'vet' so sometimes I'll run an idea past her and see what she thinks about it, and you know, talk to other teachers. Most of my friends are teachers, so I kind of steal ideas from them.

Does your mom teach in NC? In Wake County?

In ██████ County.

Time/Activities
Interaction/Talk/Who

I'm interested in the contact you had or have on a regular basis with other teachers, both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talk with other teachers, in what kind of situations, and what you talk about?




All the time. Laughs. At work. My mom's a teacher. Most of my close friends are teachers, and so, we talk about everything. - changes in education, and reform, and management, and, you know, 'Why am I doing this?' 'O.K. I love this.' 'O.K. why am I doing this again?' and,

Interaction/Talk/What
Interaction/Talk/Who

you know everything.

So do you have any department meetings or team meetings?

Yeh. We have department meetings once a month, and then we meet as a faculty once a month. Um, within our department, grade-levels meet together. Um, and that's basically on the as-needed basis, so. And then we have our lunchtime meetings.

 Department Meetings
 Interaction/Talk/What
 Interaction/Talk/Who

So do all the [REDACTED] teachers have lunch at the same time, or is that just?

We used to, but one of our lunches this semester was overcrowded, and so they changed it so we are split in half now, but, you know.

So do you primarily eat with a variety of people, or just with [REDACTED] people?

Mainly with [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] because that is what is in my building mainly.

How would you describe the way. Oh, Do you watch other teachers teach?

I have. I haven't this year, but, um, my first year here I did.

And was that required or did you?

I just did it.

So you just contacted somebody and?


Well, teachers that I thought were, you know, exciting and were trying new things, and seemed to captivate the students, and, you know, seem to have good student progress. I just kind of watch what they do, and talk to them, and get some ideas.

 Interaction/Observation

 Interaction/Observation

How would you describe the way that the teachers work together in your school? worked together last year, and work together generally in your school?

Um. I think we work together well by department, but, as a staff on a whole, I don't think we do that well. Because, you know, even being here for three whole years, I still don't know all of the staff members, and there are some people who have been here every year that I have been here, and I don't know who they are, so.. I know their face, but not their name, so. I guess it is kind of clicky, clickish, you

 Interaction/Working Together

know. You kind of stick to your department.

Describe how teachers in your school are involved in making decisions about important educational issues.

Um, the administrators, if they have a new idea or something new that they want the staff to try, they'll present it, and they usually ask for our feedback. We can e-mail them, um. In our staff meetings we have an issue bin, so if we have questions, or if we want to discuss something further, we can just stick a post-it on the issue bin. They do pretty good about addressing the questions that we have, and they do surveys where they ask for our input, and then, I guess it is sort of a majority- rules-type thing. We have some input into decision making. And then, like, with the school leadership team, um, they put out surveys amongst the staff members so that is another way that we have input.

Decision Making/All
Decision Making/Individual

What decisions have you personally been involved in making?

Um. As far as the entire staff is concerned?

Hm Hm.

Let's see. Last year they asked us how did we feel about, um, [REDACTED] - like for staff development. And so, you know, I filled out that survey, and I think that I chose what mainly most of the staff chose, and so I felt like that was a part - me giving input.

So did you end up with [REDACTED]?

Yeh. We did.

So people wanted to have [REDACTED]?

Hm. Hm. And then we had a few people that complained about it, but they reminded us well last year when we did the survey, most of the people said - And that kind of stopped all the criticism. 'Oh. Yeh. We did vote on that.' And there has been more, but that's the first one that comes to mind right now.

Decision Making/Individual

Decision Making/All

Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior.

Um. We have, I mean, we really want our students to be motivated and, I say that because we just had this policy come out about how we can encourage, or how we can target non-motivated students - like students that sleep in

Discipline/Norms

class. We just try to have all of the students engaged in learning, and you know, we are trying to improve test scores and, I mean, we don't to focus mainly on that, but it is something we have to deal with. We don't accept sleeping in class and things like that. We are trying to call parents, and contact guardians, and just keep the students motivated as much as possible. So, I think sometimes it has been kind of swept under the rug where certain students have kind of gotten by with doing nothing, and so now we're kind of targeting that behavior.

So when you say, the policy - Did the staff agree on a policy?

Well, yeh. That's another one that we, um. What they did was to give us their ideas on how we can deal with the students, and then, I guess, for about 2 or 3 weeks they asked for feedback and emails, or if you had a suggestion, stick it in the administrators boxes, and then they came to us in the staff meeting with all of the suggestions that they had, and, kind of revised the policy, and then as a staff, you know, they said 'Well, this is the final draft. Anyone have any more input? No. O.K. Well this is it then.'

Decision Making/All
Decision Making/Individual

And that was last?

That was actually the beginning of this school year.

So there is a real emphasis on keeping everybody motivated and on-task.

Describe any disruptions or interruptions that took you away from focusing on educating students.

The students?

Any disruptions or interruptions? What took away your focus from your job as educating students?

As far as the students are concerned, I would say none really. Um. There are fire drills - or, you know, little things like happen from time to time, and you kind of have to get back on task. No real major disruptions.

Discipline/Disruptions

What about behavior?

Not a problem. We have some behavior issues in the school, but

(they don't interrupt your class?)

No.

Did you have any doubts that you would be back at the same school this year? And why did you decide to stay at this school? Did you have any doubts?

No. Not this year. Why did I decide to stay? Um. I am a teaching fellow, and we have the four-year requirement, and, I just. I didn't want to switch schools. I would just rather stay at the same school. You know. For that time. And I don't know if I'll want to try something different in years to come, but right now I am comfortable at this school. You know I am kind of starting to take ownership or feel like I am part of the community a little bit so. And its just. I don't know. I'm in grad school too, and it just convenient. It is close to NC State and just a number of reasons why I chose to stay here.

Decision to Stay

Advancement

What are you in grad school for?
School administration.

So one of my other questions is: How likely is it that you will retire as a teacher?

Not likely. Because, I won't say that. I love education, so I won't say that I will never go back into the classroom again, but right now I am ready to try something different. You know. Or even if I don't go right into administration, at least I'll have that training. If I do choose to stay in the classroom, at least I'll have something else that I could do if I wanted to.

Decision to Stay
Likely to Retire?

During your first years, a lot of people decide not to teach. Why did you continue teaching? Was it the - you're a teaching fellow so you have that requirement?

Yeh. Well I could pay it back. And a lot of teaching fellows that graduated with me have not stayed in education. So, I guess, I don't know. I just like teaching You know. I grew up around teachers, and it is just something that I have always wanted to do, so I don't feel like I'm going to work. Like, I really have fun teaching, and so, you know, I wouldn't leave because of money or anything like that. That is why some of my classmates left, and, one in particular, he is a car salesman, and he started part-time when he was teaching here in Wake County, and he was like 'Man, I made more money as a part-time car

Decision to Stay

Salary

Date: 02/05/05

P10: Stayer#4.rtf

Page: 8/8

salesman', but when I got into it, I knew that I wasn't going to make a lot of money. So, I just like doing it.]

Is there anything that you would like to add?

Hm. No. Not really.

Introduction

Describe the type (and this is in regards to last year - so this isn't even in regards to this school) of support you received from your administrators in your third year (that would be last year).

We had faculty meetings. Um. We had classes that we had to attend. Um. And if I had any questions about anything or needed anything, I could always go to them for support, and they would be able to help me with that, or guide me in the right direction.

Support/Administrative

Support/Administrative

Can you describe the type of support you received as a new teacher both within the school and in the district. Did you have a mentor?

Yes. I had a mentor.

And what kind of support did you receive from your mentor?

Um She helped me with writing the growth plan,Uh, and to be there to answer any questions, but I didn't She wasn't in my department, so really there wasn't really a whole lot she could help me with, but if I had questions she could help direct me to places I could go for that help.

Support/Mentor

So you're a [redacted] teacher, and your mentor was in what department?

[redacted] I think.

Is the support that you received from your mentor or from the school what you needed - or what would you think would have needed? What more could you have needed?

I think if I had someone from my department - someone who had been a mentor for a while, instead of my being there first. Uh. I guess mentee, than that would have been a better experience.

Support/What was needed?

So you were the person's first mentee?

Yes

So it wasn't really an experienced mentor?

No it wasn't.

Do you know how long that person had been at the school?

It was her second year, but she had transferred from another county.

Support/Mentor

And you teach [redacted]? So this is the block? So what do you teach?

I teach - well I've taught all the courses - but here at [redacted] HS I teach [redacted] and [redacted].

And at [redacted] last year what did you teach?

I taught [redacted], [redacted], and [redacted].

I understand that your assignment was to teach [redacted]. Beyond that what other responsibilities did you have?

Um Um. Well, I helped with the student organization which was [redacted]. And also we had duties, uh, lunch duty. uh We had to fill in and substitute when a teacher was out, so I had to do quite a bit of that during my planning period.

Time/Responsibilities

Did you coach any sports?

Not last year. This year I do. The ---- Team.

coaching

Were you on any school improvement last year?

Yes. It was the same this year.

Time/Responsibilities

So that was a requirement that you be on some school improvement committee?

Yes. Yes. And this year too.

Time/Responsibilities

Last year, how much time beyond the regular school day did you spend per week preparing for your classes or on activities related to your job as teacher?

Outside of school?

Shoot. Probably about 3 - 4 hours a day. Some days longer than that. Laughs

Time/Hours Per Week

Describe the types of things that you did?

My lesson plans, research for the classes, maybe grading papers, um just a number of things preparing.

Time/Activities

So how about weekends? Is that 3-4 hours ad day on

weekends?

Hm Hm Pretty much you know. Some weeks I might not of had to plan that whole time, but pretty much, because I was coming to a new county and teaching three different courses. Now this year is better, but last year I had 3 preps, so I had to make sure that I was prepared for each class.

Time/Activities

I'm interested in the contact you had on a regular basis last year with other teachers both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talked with other teachers, in what kinds of situations, and what did you talk about?

Well I stayed very busy last year, so it wasn't a whole lot of interaction but a lot of times when I was with another teacher, it was a teacher in my department. We might have been teaching the same thing, and some things we planned together. For instance, the [redacted] teacher last year who wanted to make sure that we were teaching some of the same labs - you know since we were teaching the same course. we might have planned to teach a the same lab instead of having to - so make different things. So we find time after school to meet to discuss the labs we came up with and then we would decide on what labs we were going to use in our classes.

Interaction/Talk/Who

Interaction/Talk/What

Interaction/Talk/What

[redacted] teachers would there have been last year?

Last year there were three.

So you worked with those three teachers?

How about the teachers that were non [redacted] - the other [redacted] teachers?

We had meetings every month and the department head was not a [redacted] teacher and, but when I needed things I would go to her and talk to her, and she was not in our department. Now as far as other teachers - the librarian, I would go in there and talk to them about different resources that I could use but as far as social it was mostly I'm trying to prepare for my classes.

Interaction/Talk/Who

Department Meetings

So the department head - What did the department head teach?

She taught [redacted]

Date: 02/05/05

P 4: Mover#1.rtf

Page: 4/9

Did you watch other teachers teach?

I didn't have an opportunity to do that.

Interaction/Observation

Now how were you prepared for teaching? Did you get a 4 year degree and then did you do student teaching?

You said you started in ██████ County.

What I did was I started out with a degree in ██████ ██████, and then I didn't think I wanted to teach, so I didn't go through and get my teacher certification. So I came out for a while and I went back to school for ██████, and became certified in ██████. O.K. and then once I worked as a ██████ for several years, I decided that I didn't want to give up my education degree and I wanted to see what it is like to teach. My mother had taught for about 40 years, and then I decided well maybe I might want to teach, because in ██████ I was doing a lot of teaching. You know. I was doing - I was certified in a lot of um employees as far as ██████ assistants and I had to teach different classes to keep their skill levels up, so then I said well I want to continue to be in ██████ but I want to use my ██████ degree, so then I decided to go back and pick up some refresher courses and some education courses I needed before going to get my certification. So it was five courses I needed and I went on and did that, and I went to the test to be certified, and then I went in lateral entry because I didn't do my student teaching. O.K. So once I did that and took the test and went in as lateral entry, they said I needed to find a position somewhere. And so I said as long as its at least - not more than an hour away - then I would go and so ██████ County was the closest place that was hiring at the time because I started after the school year had started, and I was living in ██████ County at the time.

Decision to Leave

certification

So what month would you have started in?

It was September. And then going there, they didn't have a ██████ teacher, so but the curriculum guide was there, so I just went by the curriculum guide, and I used my creativity and I just prepared my lessons and taught the classes.

Interaction/Talk/Who

Was there another ██████

teacher in [redacted] County that you worked with?

What I did um It was a another [redacted]
[redacted] teacher at another high school in [redacted] County, so
after school I would go over and talk to her about her
classes and lesson plans so I can make sure that I was on
track.

Interaction/Talk/What
Interaction/Talk/Who

So basically you figured it out. You worked hard and figured it out.

Yes mam. Laughs.

So you didn't watch other teachers teach because of all of that.

How would you describe the ways that teachers worked together in your school last year?

You said the three of you that were [redacted]
[redacted] teachers may have planned together,
but if you had to describe in general how teachers
worked together?

That's not a question that I had. I think they worked
together pretty good as far as I could see. You know, but I
really couldn't. Because the departments were a little more
spread out over there at [redacted] compared to over here.
Here you see all the [redacted] teachers, but I don't see all the
[redacted] teachers, so I can't really say how they work
together. I can only say my department.

Interaction/Working Together

Describe how teachers in your school last year were involved in making decisions about important educational issues.

Well yes because we had the school improvement team
meetings. We had diversity classes, and in those different
meetings and classes we talked about decision making, and
uh I think right there.

Decision Making/All

Can you think of a decision that you were involved in making? A decision that you had some input into that the school then did? What did teachers want that they got?

Date: 02/05/05

P 4: Mover#1.rtf

Page: 6/9

Laughs. If I think about it a little longer, I might could come back. I'm sure there were, but I just can't think of any.

 Decision Making/Individual

Not even a full year because I started in September.

So you started at [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] County in September
And I started at [REDACTED] in September.

So you weren't even there for the beginning meetings? (Shakes head no). So then again you had to figure it out, because you missed that orientation. I did, and I had to uh when I went to [REDACTED], um, they had one teacher that came and left, and then they had so many substitutes, so going into those classes and having three preps. I had to put a lot of hours in and work hard to make sure that I was on top of things for my students, or it would have been a problem.

 Time/Activities

You know I spent a lot of time working to make sure I was prepared for my classes.

And then you said during your planning sometimes you had to sub for other classes?

Right. Well that's year 2 so.

Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior.

What did people expect students to do? How did they expect students to behave?

Well they expected students to follow the school rules you know, and then teachers had their classroom rules and they expected students to follow those.

 Discipline/Norms

So if you had to just summarize what the rules would expect from students? Like I mean what kind of could you give me an example of a couple of rules that the school had and the classrooms had? Like we always expect students to?

Um. As far as classroom rules or school rule?

Respect themselves and others. You know respect their teachers. Respect any visitors. You know not to fight - to keep their hands and feet to themselves. Just general rules

 Discipline/Norms

that students would have

What about learning?

.Then we have classroom rules - as far as learning - you want to make sure that they come prepared. You know. When you say prepared, what I do, I have in my classroom all of my rules spelled out in front of the room on the board or on the wall, so they will know what my classroom rules are. In the beginning we go over those rules and are tested on those rules you know. So we have little quizzes on those rules, and one is to come to class prepared. In coming to class prepared you must have your binder, your paper, and your pencil or pen to write with. O.K. and then also in relations to grooming, I might have a rule to say no grooming during class. Please do your grooming before or after class, as long as its outside the classroom or it might be no talking while the teacher is talking, or it might be no talking while your fellow student is talking. You know. Just show respect for yourself and others you know or um I mean. I have a long list of rules along with um the school rules will be followed. You know. So please refer to your student handbook because all rules will be followed, and also we go over the consequences. I have my own consequences with the discipline I have in my class, and when it goes over beyond that then the school has their discipline policies.

]

Discipline/Norms

And when you referred a student beyond your class, do you feel like you got support?

Yes. Yes.

Support/Administrative

Describe any disruptions or interruptions that took you away from focusing on educating students. What things got in your way of educating students?

Like a fire drill? Maybe a fire drill or an announcement that had to I can't think of anything else right now, but a fire drill or an announcement would be two things.

Discipline/Disruptions

People every come to your door?

Oh Yeh, and someone may come to my door to get a student or to bring a message to me. I had that happen.

Discipline/Disruptions

What prompted you to move to a different school this year?

Um well, they opened this new school and they cut out one of the positions for the [redacted] - other than that I would still be at [redacted].

Decision to Move

So you were the last person to get hired at [redacted], so that had to reduce it because your students reduced, and then they had an opening here?

So really you didn't request a transfer as much as you were moved to where the position was. If you would have had the opportunity to stay, would you have stayed?

Yes.

Are you more satisfied (now that you have the contrast between the two schools) at this school? Why or why not?

Yeh. I am because I enjoy the administration here. I like the way they enforce their rules here. Um It is just that I have several in ---and I am comfortable here. Even though it is comfortable there, but I have made my home, so to speak, here, and I have gotten used to the kids even though some of them I had at [redacted], but I've gotten used to the children here, and um I have gotten used to the administration here, and I just feel more comfortable here.

Decision to Move

Now how likely is it that you will retire as a teacher?

Um On a scale of 1 to 5 I would say 5. (5 meaning very strong possibility that you will retire as a teacher)

Likely to Retire?

Tell me about the difference between [redacted] and [redacted]. It sounds like you have a choice.

Yes I do, and I do both.

(Oh, you do both?)

Yes. O.K. and I do both because I really - I found out that I really have a passion for teaching - not that it pays me as much money as I make in [redacted], but um I enjoy it. I mean really, I enjoy what I'm teaching. I love [redacted]. I love working with children, and um then I like being able - and some things I don't like- but those things I like uh kind of outweighs the things that I don't like. So now it is just a passion that I have. So I enjoy it. So therefore I plan to retire as a teacher, or in the educational field. You know, because I'm not just stopping

Likely to Retire?
Salary

Likely to Retire?

Advancement

where I am. I would enjoy just retiring in the educational field. Um but also in comparison to [REDACTED], I always have [REDACTED] too. See when we are out during the holidays, and long breaks, then I am doing [REDACTED]. Right now I am assigned with a [REDACTED] company, because I enjoy working with elderly people also - on the other hand. I have two careers and they both work hand in hand for me.

Other Jobs

So you spend this amount of time teaching. How many hours per week do you spend on [REDACTED] <the other job/career>?

It is just during the times when we are out of school. Summers, Christmas, spring break - if I am not vacationing, and part of that time would be spent [REDACTED] and then um maybe once a month outside of those times, I may spend a Saturday working as a [REDACTED].

Other Jobs

There is always a need. So you make it fit your teaching schedule?

Yes mam.

So you are primarily a teacher, who does [REDACTED]

Yes

O.K. Is there anything you would like to add?

No You can't think of anything.

Final Thoughts

This job gave me permanency and more security.
 To assist them (new teachers) financially in getting more education.
 To attend summer conferences paid.
 Support and have an interest in personal goals.

Decision to Move
 Support/What was needed?

Intro

Describe the type (this is in regard to last year) of support you received from administrators.

Um Last year's support was good. The years before that before last year were not as good as they were last year. Um In my position I need a lot of support from administration. I am working very closely with them with the discipline students and behavior plans, interventions. Any time I really needed to see an administrator they were available. Um a lot of times the administrators didn't understand the behavior plans I had in place, so they would override them, and I didn't feel supported in that area. Um. Almost any time I needed some special - anything special - any kind of circumstances - if I needed to leave school, or if I had an emergency, or if I needed to make a phone call that was always supported. They were available, but didn't follow through with their promises. A schedule change that was promised by the end of the day, would take 3 weeks after I reminded the principal 3 or 4 times. um The school principal would welcome me to sit in his office and tell anything on your mind, but would offer no solutions or no suggestions on where to turn to or how to resolve your problem. It was just basically listening to it. So there were a lot of things that I really enjoyed about working with the administration, but I felt I could have a lot more support.

- Support/Administrative
- Support/Administrative
- Support/Administrative
- Support/Administrative
- Support/Administrative
- principal
- Support/What was needed?

Can you describe the type of support you received as a new teacher both within the school and in the district and did you have a mentor?

O.K. Um I started in October, so I didn't start the traditional school year at the same time that everybody else did. I didn't understand my job description. I was paired up with another teacher who had the same job I did, and, um, she was reluctant to have me as her - I think that she didn't feel like she should have had to train me at the position that I was doing. Um I had no idea what a [redacted] teacher did or a [redacted] teacher um As a lateral entry hire, I didn't have any materials to read about the job description - didn't know what to do. My principals basically just said work with this other teacher, and she will tell you everything you need to do, and I went to work a lot

- Support/Mentor
- Support/Administrative

of days that first year of teaching saying I don't want to go to work this morning. - I don't know what I am supposed to do today. Today is going to go bad, and I had a lot of really challenging behavior students, and I knew through psychology how I should relate to them, but I wasn't sure where --I wasn't sure what to do in a lot of situations and circumstances. Um I didn't take my first [redacted] class until January, so I went from October through December not knowing very much about [redacted]. Um I didn't read part of the question. The school district had very little support for lateral entry teachers at that point in time. They did have a workshop at the end of my second year of teaching, but by that time I knew everything that I needed to. I kind of taught myself and read on my own, and asked other teachers and just kind of did a lot of research myself. Um

So you said that you were paired up with that other teacher, but - so you never had a mentor?

I had a mentor who taught [redacted], who was on the opposite side of campus than I did. She had no idea of what my position was to be either, and when I'd ask her questions about what my job duties were, she would refer me back to the person I was working with. So, she was helpful for school related duties and responsibilities, getting grades in and things like that, the attendance policy, but not helpful for what I needed the most help with.

Support/Mentor

Is the support that you received what you needed or what kind of support would you have needed now that you think back on it?

I would probably need more training maybe visit a classroom for a week or watch videos - some sort of training on what you do as a teacher in this specific area. I really had no idea. I just knew what some of the friends that I had that were teachers, they told me about what teaching was. There were just so many questions that I had. And I felt that I was bothering people by asking them over and over again. Just - I really had no education training. Um The support that my mentor offered was good, but she just wasn't the right person to be a mentor for me, but I think that because I came in October all of the mentors that were

Support/What was needed?

Interaction/Talk/What

Support/What was needed?

Support/Mentor

mentors had already been paired up with one or two mentees.

I understand that your assignment was

Yes to teach

Beyond that what other responsibilities did you have?

Um I had to do lunch duty, and I think that was it. I didn't have a lot of responsibilities that first year. They recommended that I didn't, just so I could get used to.

Time/Responsibilities

So even through your third year, is that all you had?

My second year I took on duties as an assistant as a varsity coach for . I was a leader for one of the clubs. Um. I'm trying to think of what else. The third year I was there I, um, was the go-to person for services at my school. um I coached again. I did night school. I did services.

Time/Responsibilities coach

Other Jobs coaching

When you say you did night school, what does that mean?

I was the teacher for the night school. um We had night school 4 days a week - from 2:45 to 8:45-, and at that time you needed teachers and a special ed teachers at all times, and I worked one night a week for that period of time 2:45 to 8:45 as the teacher.

(For one day a week?)

Hm. Hm.

(For your whole third year? For the whole third year?)

O.K. 2:45 to ?)

8:45

(So that is right after the school day? That you went into this night school thing?)

I didn't have to do. That was something that I volunteered for and coaching was something that I volunteered for.

Other Jobs

How much time beyond the regular school day did you spend per week on preparing for classes or on activities related to your job as teacher? So time per week?

Um IEP's had to be written and meetings had to held after school. Probably I would say between 3 and 6 hours after school.

(That's every day?)

Time/Hours Per Week

Date: 02/05/05

P 5: Mover#2.rtf

Page: 4/11

Yeh. I didn't really get. No not every day - per week. Um Because of the job that I had as a [REDACTED] teacher, any time that a kid can get sent out of class or have a crisis or need assistance they would constantly come to my room and a lot of days I didn't have a planning period. So if I did need to take something during planning, then I would have to do it after school. Um I taught [REDACTED] which was and it was the same class every day, but different students. So I didn't have to spend a lot of time on lessons plans. I could do the same lesson plan three times a day. The last part of the school - the last 6 months that I was at high school we tried a different model which was that I was a full inclusion teacher, and was rotating around the school kind of like the position that I hold now, and I did get more time during the day then to write IEP's and call parents and.

 Time/Hours Per Week

 Time/Hours Per Week

So when you say you taught [REDACTED] three times a day - so your schedule was [REDACTED] or it was ?

They were full-inclusion and [REDACTED] students would come to my [REDACTED] class. And last year they started the block, so we only had 4 classes a day, and I was scheduled for 3 [REDACTED] and a planning period, and a lot of times during my planning period I would go to classes to check up on the students - things that that and I was literally not having a planning period, and that's when I convinced my administrator that we should try this other model.

 Decision Making/Individual

So when the [REDACTED] students knew that they were coming to you - the [REDACTED] students that were normally --- it wasn't like they were sent out of a regular classroom for a reason and then they were in your [REDACTED]?

I would have [REDACTED], but I would also get some of those kids that were sent out of class for a reason you know whatever reason.

So it caught both things?

I am interested in the contact that you had with other teachers both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talked with other teachers and in what kinds of situations and what you talked about? So that would be last year at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] - your third year?

Date: 02/05/05

P 5: Mover#2.rtf

Page: 5/11

I had a lot of contact with other teachers. Um Because my students were full inclusion with an exception of [REDACTED] class, I would email them regularly. uh Send out um progress reports every two week to see if they were turning in assignment, doing their homework, misbehaving, or if they were skipping class. I, when I took on the responsibility of being the crisis person, I had a walkie talkie. I would check to make sure my students arrived to each class, and at that point in time teachers talked to me if they had a minute about what was going on in their class. - What the student needed to work on. -What strengths or weaknesses that student was having in that class um just passing through the hallway. I guess I would run into teachers, and we'd exchange tests, or uh they would give me an update on how the student was doing good or bad. Um

Interaction/Talk/Who

Interaction/Talk/What

So your interaction with other teachers really revolved around the students and what they needed - what the students needed - what they needed from you and to touch base with the progress of the students? Or It didn't really have to do with teaching? So you didn't talk to - Did you talk to teachers about teaching?

No. Um some of the other [REDACTED] would share their [REDACTED] tips, but do you know what [REDACTED] is? O.K. There's not really a whole lot of teaching that went on in [REDACTED]. It was a study skills lesson, and it was reteaching their homework. Every once in a while I didn't understand an Algebra II problem, or I wasn't sure about what they should be doing on their project, then I would talk to them about how I could reteach whatever they had taught, but

So obviously you watched other teachers teach if you were in their classrooms because you were dealing with a student? So did you was that helpful Did you ever watch other teachers teach?

Hm. Hm. I um really enjoyed going in other teachers' classes, because I would see which behavior techniques works, which didn't a lot of times. The students would tell

Interaction/Observation

Interaction/Observation

Date: 02/05/05

P 5: Mover#2.rtf

Page: 6/11

me they were having problems in class, and I'd just go in and see kind of how the teacher was interacting with the students in the classes. So I still do spend a lot of time in the classrooms watching strategies.

**(but that is because of the nature of your role?)
(that you get that opportunity?)**
Right.

How would you describe how teachers work together in your school last year?

Um a lot of the teachers would welcome - teachers worked with me probably different than they did with other teachers. um The core teachers would share their information and talk about planning and try to be on the same page. That way if there were any kids transferring in and out - if every teacher taught Earth Science - they would get together and plan - same way with Algebra and with World History. um For the most part, with me and with other [REDACTED] teachers, <the teachers> were either very friendly and very welcoming to deal with you, or didn't <feel> your role played any important part at all in the student, and they would not welcome me into their classes. <They> would not want to work with me on getting the students extended time. um There were more teachers that were willing to work with me than not.

 Interaction/Working Together

So when the teachers (like the content) that all taught Algebra worked to plan whatever? So you were involved or they would just share what they had so you could support the students who were in that subject area?

Right I didn't go to their planning meetings. They would put something in my box saying this is what is going on for the next week or the next month.

(You knew that would work for any Algebra class or any Algebra teacher because they were doing it together?)

Hm Hm

Describe how teachers in your school were involved in making decisions about important educational issues.

Date: 02/05/05

P 5: Mover#2.rtf

Page: 7/11

What decisions had you been involved in making?

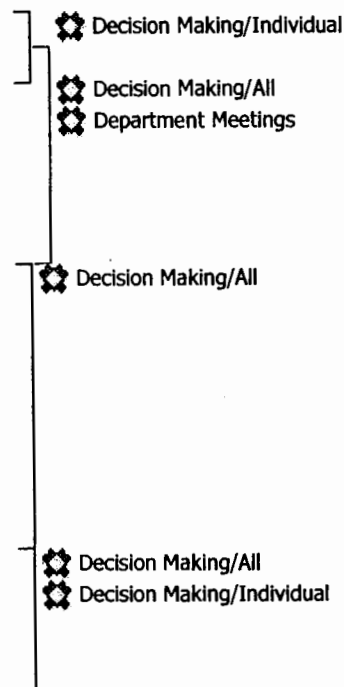
Um I don't know. I had very little to do with academics, because that's really not my role. Um I know that there were - that the teachers meet as teams, as departments. They um talk about the curriculum, see if they need to where they need to place their emphasis on, plan their lessons around that um. I was not really involved in making any of the academic issues.

(or any policy decisions or any kind of decisions about the school?)

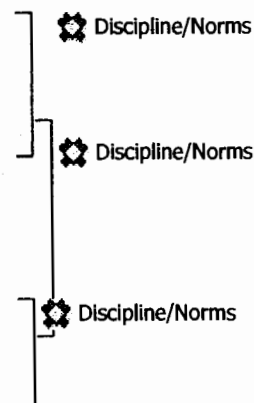
Um no we weren't involved in that. We had a new principal my second year of school, and the policy was just kind of handed to us. I don't remember there being a survey of how we would want certain policies or rules to go. Um I just know there were a lot of changes that next year, and we just kind of had to accept them.

(Now how about school improvement. Were you involved in anything with school improvement?)

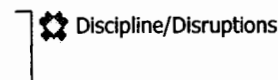
Um They involved - They invited the entire staff to school improvement, but I didn't go.

**Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior. If you had to describe student behavior and what was there a common set of the way it worked there?**

A lot of teachers were not on the same page with that. The norm that I would say generally, um and they were probably more lenient than most schools just because of the demographics at [REDACTED]. Um They expected students to be on time. They expected them to be respectful. They um. They expected them to complete their work. They expected them to stay awake in class. They expected them to walk through the hallway without causing major disruption. Stay in the assigned areas that they needed to stay in. um Some of the teachers were more pickier than others, but that's everywhere I think

**Describe any disruptions or interruptions that took you away from focusing on educating students.**

Well I had interruptions all day when the students come into the [REDACTED] room, and they were sent out of class. Um They could be sent out of class for anything - for coming in



late, for not spitting out their gum, or putting their head down on the desk, for arguing with the teacher, for tapping their pencil, for anything. - So I had to deal with a lot of disruptions. The last part of my job, the last 6 months of my job, I helped cut down on those disruptions for other teachers too because I had the walkie talkie. I could walk to the classrooms if there are problems. I could give the students a pep talk, or take them out of class, and have them finish their assignment with me. So there was a plan in place for the students who had a difficult time with disruptions.

✳ Discipline/Disruptions

(And you had said that actually that would be an instance of an idea - that that was your idea or your model. Did you think of that yourself or did some other school do it? How did you come to say this is the model we should use in this school?)

It's the middle school model and um our department chair contacted a [redacted] specialist who came out to talk to actually the other [redacted] teacher who I was working with and, um she was having a lot of discipline problems with the students, and I sat in on their meeting, and I really enjoyed talking to this person and she said 'Why don't you guys try this model? No other high schools are doing it.' She explained the model to me. We talked to the principal about it. We decided that we should try it, because I thought I'm inside this classroom all day. I can't do anything to help them out there. I can't cut down on their problems. I can't walk them to class. I can't get them settled. I can't get them a pencil. You know. I want to be out there with them. I think that is where they need somebody. So my principal agreed with it, and it was going to be me doing it for half the day, and me having a [redacted] for half the day, and the other teacher doing it for half the day and she having a [redacted]. Um The other teacher who was not willing to make the changes, so I was the person who was out all day.

✳ Decision Making/Individual
 ✳ Discipline/Norms
 ✳ Support/Administrative

What prompted you to move to a different school this year?

Um When I was in my second year at [redacted], they hired a [redacted] teacher who had a very hot temper, and, in my

✳ Decision to Move ✳ Support

Date: 02/05/05

P 5: Mover#2.rtf

Page: 9/11

opinion, did more harm than good to the students. The two of us didn't always see eye to eye, and we had very little administrative support with forcing us to get along, or having someone intervene. And that was a very stressful part of my job, because I had to work with that person every day. um I asked for a transfer after my second year. I submitted for one, and I interviewed. I was told that I was blocked for a transfer and that - so basically I came back my third year not wanting to be there. um They asked me if I would give them one more year and see if there were changes, because they were making changes to kind of support me. The new principal that we got was very [REDACTED] friendly - was a principal at an alternative school, and he asked me if I would just give him a chance, and I said, 'Well I don't have another job, so I'll come back and work for you for another year' Um The teacher that had been hired that second year was let go because she didn't pass the praxis. They hired another teacher, um and she was just incompetent to do the job, and escalated problems and most of the students that were suspended because of a confrontation with her. She was just a very bad mix for some of the students there. Some of the students got along with her well, but most of them didn't.

(So is that the person with the temper? Or is that person enter ?)

Both of them had tempers. Um yeh, but that was the person that refused to, um, go along with the new model, and refused to participate in anything that had to do with this new model. - And basically she had all the [REDACTED] students for [REDACTED], and they were students that I used to work with. And a lot of them didn't want to go to her. A lot of them had problems when they did go to her. One of them quit school because of her. - <that> is what he told me. You can't blame one person for him quitting school, but that's - He's 14 years old and he quit school, because he didn't want to go into her class. Um Administration was more supportive with scheduling, and if I needed to hand pick some teachers. - They let me do that this past year, but it still wasn't enough. They changed my classroom at the beginning of the school year last year, without letting me know. I came to the high school at least 6 times over the summer time to look through folders and make sure that my

Decision to Move
Support/Administrative

Interaction/Talk/Who

Support/Administrative

Decision Making/Individual

students had a schedule, and you know if they needed [redacted] they were put in [redacted], and if they needed to be away from certain teachers - to keep them away from certain teachers and um I was on - My classroom was located on the hallway where the administrators were, and that was the only classroom in the hallway, and they changed my location. Nobody told me this but I feel like it was, because I left because they didn't want my students down that hallway. I just didn't get the support I needed from them with a lot of the things that happened at the beginning of the school year. Um I had a table fall on my leg, and I asked them to file a Workers' Comp claim, and they didn't, and I went to the doctor and I was stuck with the bill. I didn't fight it because it was just one time that I had to pay.

Support/Administrative

(So when does the new principal enter? In your second year?)

In my second year.

(So year 1 you had one principal and year 2 and 3 you had a different principal.)

Are you more satisfied at your new school? Why or why not?

Yes. I am very satisfied here. I touch base with my administrators every day. They are very open and accepting to new plans. They follow through, um They let me know that. They give me feedback on the jobs that I am doing. - Even if they feel like I could have been stronger in an area, they will tell me 'I really like what you did - another thing to look at is doing this too'. I didn't get feedback in my other school. It was just 'Sure you do a great job here.' I wouldn't hear it very often. So I really had no idea if I was doing a good job or not. Students in middle school are different. So it's hard to compare them to high school. I think they are easier to work with. There are things that I miss about the high school students, but um the teachers here are very welcome and open to me coming into their classroom. If there is a student who is having a problem, they will come to me and ask me for what should be done. They don't just kick them out of class. Um. They will let me know right away as they see a problem in their class. It won't - At [redacted] they would maybe go weeks if there

Decision to Move

Support/Administrative

Discipline/Norms

was a problem in class until they just can't handle it any more, and then the kid will get suspended over something that maybe could have been prevented when it first started. Um They seem to really care about - the teachers really seem to care about the students here and, um, each other. I had really good relationships with the teachers that I worked with, and there were a lot of new teachers, so they were all my age or young, and I still have friendships with a lot of them, and that was one thing that kind of kept me happy at [REDACTED] because the support from other staff members. They were all going through the same thing that I was going through, so but the support from the staff members wasn't enough to make me happy, and I sound like I am contradicting myself a little bit here so if you have questions

- Interaction/Talk/Who
- Decision to Move
- Interaction/Talk/Who

(What you are saying is that the new teachers that that was a good thing that the new teachers kind of stuck together and helped each other, but that wasn't enough to overcome other things - the other factors that would have impacted your decision to request a transfer.)

Are you going to How likely is that you will retire as a teacher?

Not likely at all.

- Likely to Retire?

What would be the likelihood of how long you would stay in teaching?

Um my guess is probably another 2 or 3 years um and then I am interested in administration. I am interested in behavior so if there is a behavior specialist position um My position is stressful. I also have considered going back to school for a different position in teaching in math or science position, but I don't see myself staying in my position for more than 2 or 3 more years

- Advancement
- Likely to Retire?

Is there anything that you would like to add?

No

Date: 02/05/05

P 6: Mover#3.rtf

Page: 1/5

Introduction

This is in regards to last year. Describe the type of support you received from your administrators.

Very little if any.

] ✖ Support/Administrative

Can you describe the type of support you received as a new teacher both within the school and within the district. Did you have a mentor?

I did my first two years. I did not have a mentor last year.

] ✖ Support/Mentor

Did you have a buddy teacher?

No.

Is the support that you received what you needed last year?

Yes.

O.K. if the administrators - if you got very little if any?

I got support from other teachers. My colleagues in my department

] ✖ Support/What was needed?

] ✖ Interaction/Talk/Who
✖ Support/Mentor

Describe that support.

If I had any questions on curriculum they were very open. They shared ideas, suggestions with me - things like that.

] ✖ Interaction/Talk/What

I understand that your assignment was to teach [REDACTED]. Beyond that what other responsibilities did you have?

I had lunch duties. I think that's it. We had lunch duty.

We had [REDACTED] - it was called - actually it was called [REDACTED] classes. It was like a homeroom that we met with once a week or twice a week actually for 15 minutes each.

] ✖ Time/Responsibilities

Now did you have to do preparation for that?

No. We were given the materials to cover and to do in that class.

But that was a different group of students than the students that were in your math classes?

Right.

So how many additional students would that be?

Oh. I want to say 15 to 17.

So how many total students did you have last year in your regular classes?

100 almost 160

Date: 02/05/05

P 6: Mover#3.rtf

Page: 2/5

How does that contrast with how many you have this year?

First semester I had about I think about 85. This semester I have about 92 93.

So you had no clubs or sports?

No. They tried to pin with [REDACTED] again, but I started grad school last year full time at night as I am doing now. I will go back to coaching next year actually. I coached my first two years.

coaching

What are you going to grad school for?

[REDACTED] education.

O.K. so a masters in [REDACTED]?

Hm hm. I finish in May.

How much time beyond the regular school day (this would be last year) did you spend per week on preparing for classes or on activities related to your job as teacher?

Easily 2 to 3.

Per week?

Per week.

Time/Hours Per Week

And describe the types of things you did during that time.

Grading quizzes, tests, preparing lessons, making quizzes and tests.

Time/Activities

I'm interested in the contact you had on a regular basis with other teachers both formal and informal. Can you tell me often you talked with other teachers and in what kind of situations and what you talked about?

We - I ate lunch with several ---- teachers last year so we would talk at lunch about certain students or certain ideas or topics that students had trouble with and a lot of times in the morning. I moved every period. Before first some days, or during my planning, I would try to seek out another ----teacher if I needed to.

Interaction/Talk/Who Inte

Did you ever watch other teachers teach?

No not last year I didn't.

Interaction/Observation

How about the first two years?

Date: 02/05/05

P 6: Mover#3.rtf

Page: 3/5

Uh I do believe I sat and watched a few of my other ---- teachers teach. I sat in on two classes maybe.

Interaction/Observation

Did somebody initiate that or did you initiate that?

No. I think I initiated that because it was on topics I hadn't taught in a while, and I just wanted to see how they approached it.

Interaction/Observation

How would you describe the way that teachers worked together in your school last year?

Not really working together. You had to seek out help. If I wanted the help we didn't have a designated meeting time, um, or anything like that. You had to seek out and ask someone for help.

Interaction/Working Together

So when you say we didn't have a designated meeting time - Was that for a full faculty or for department meetings?

We had department meetings, but we never discussed topic ideas or teaching strategies or anything like that. I mean like here we have team meetings - like you are on an [redacted] team - [redacted] team, and you meet every now and then to discuss what you are teaching, how you are teaching it and that kind of thing. That we did not have last year.

Interaction/Talk/What
Interaction/Talk/Who
Interaction/Talk/What
Interaction/Talk/Who

Describe how teachers were involved in making decisions about important educational issues.

Uh honestly I'm not real sure on that. I wasn't very involved, but I don't know if there were certain teachers that were. I do remember the department chairs having to be at certain meetings and things were based on their vote, but

Decision Making/All

So in the department meetings did they ask you about things so that they represented all the [redacted] teachers?

No.

So they didn't ask for your input and then give it at the meeting?

No.

Decision Making/All
Decision Making/Individual
Department Meetings

So what decisions have you been involved in making or were you involved in making last year?

Just on what I teach day by day. Laughs.

But no schoolwide decisions or policies?

No.

Decision Making/Individual

Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior. This is last year.

Pretty low. Um. There was no consistency for tardies, or if kids misbehaved, you really didn't have anywhere to send them. And if you did happen to write up a student, depending upon what principal they were assigned to, it was very inconsistent.

Discipline/Norms

Describe any disruptions or interruptions that took you away from focusing on educating students.

A few discipline problems here and there. I didn't have a whole lot last year. I had -Talking was the biggest issue I faced.

Discipline/Disruptions

Do you think that was due to the nature of what you taught?

I think it may have been, but I also think - The class that I always had the most trouble with was my third period and it was split by lunch - like we would go over the homework, and start the lesson. They would start copying the notes, and then they'd go to lunch, and then come back and then finish copying the notes, and we would go over the lesson. So the lunch in the middle just completely threw them.

Discipline/Disruptions

And then the other class I had the most trouble with was a 4th period class - the last class of the day. We were in a room that was upstairs that was always hot, and I had several friends in there so they just talked.

Discipline/Disruptions

What prompted you to move to a different school this year?

One of the good things was we bought a house and it was too far to travel to [redacted], and the biggest thing was I had an incident at the beginning. At the early onset of last year where a parent called and complained because a student had misconstrued a statement, and my principal

Decision to Move

Decision to Move
Discipline/Norms
Support/Administrative

Date: 02/05/05

P 6: Mover#3.rtf

Page: 5/5

just looked at me and said: 'You need to get the kids on your side.' And it was just like I was not there to teach the kids. I was there to get them on my side. And that right there told just told me all that I need to know.

Are you more satisfied at your new school? Why or why not?

Yes. Much more support administratively, department wide, - not as many students at one time, and I have been given opportunities to teach things that I haven't before.


 Decision to Move

 Advancement

And you said you've gone back to grad school for a masters degree in [REDACTED] - How likely is it that you will retire as a teacher on the high school level? Is that your plan?

Yes. That is my plan. I am a teaching fellow. This is my fourth year. I am done with that, and I am working on my National Boards this year as well. I am in it for the long haul.

 Advancement

 Likely to Retire?

National Boards and a you'll have your masters degree completed in May.

Yep.

Wow you are busy.

Yeh. Very busy. Laughs.

 Advancement

Is there anything you would like to add?

I don't think so. I think that pretty much covers everything.

Date: 02/05/05

P 1: Leaver#1.rtf

Page: 1/9

Introduction

Describe the type of support you received from your administration.

Mostly it was assisting with problematic students, and listening to any complaints, or issues that I had, and that was mostly with the principal.

] ✖ Support/Administrative

So you would go directly to the principal - not to an assistant principal?

Um. I found that it was best - that he <the principal> was the one who actually did something. So rather than, and I learned this through experience, that if I went to a couple people beforehand they wouldn't get anything done. So, and he <the principal> had an open door policy. So he was the one I usually visited if I had a problem, or if I needed anything.

] ✖ principal

] ✖ Support/Administrative

Can you describe the type of support you received as a new teacher both within the school and in the district? And that includes did you have a mentor?

O.K. um pretty much the type of support I received was um through administration helping me, pushing me toward certification, and um helping me if I had any questions and um trying to think of what else.

]] ✖ certification ✖ Support/Admi

Did you have a mentor?

I did have a mentor, and um she was a teacher of about 30 years, and she knew the system, and she knew the school very well. She would help me if I had any questions, and um with ILT forms and IGP, and just getting things um situated. um She actually played a bigger role last year than she did before that. When I was in [REDACTED], I did have a mentor for my first year, but she didn't really play an active role. She was just there if I had any questions.

] ✖ Support/Mentor

] ✖ Support/Mentor

Why do you think the second year you were at [REDACTED], the mentor played a bigger role?

Well I think, um, the first year that I was there I wanted to feel things out by myself and just kind of do my own thing, and, um, as time got closer and the reason I left was for certification issues, and she <the mentor> really was there

] ✖ Support/Mentor

if I had a question on the test and giving me materials to study for. She did that, and I think before then I had thought I could do everything on my own without any support, and I realized that I was wrong with that.

Is the support that you received what you needed?

Um I think so. I think. um I also got support from human resources. [redacted] I thought was excellent. um She helped me with any questions that I had ,and, um, and any information I needed. I did feel a lot of times that, um, with support, with whatever I needed, I had to ask the right person. Even if I went to a couple of different people, they would always give me a different response. So there was always one person after talking to a few that would help me, and even human resources, with certification, I found that things were different depending upon who you asked. So, but I think overall I could have used more help with, um, with certification, preparing and studying. I took a course that aided me in studying, but I didn't really feel that that was The material was outdated, and the professor that taught it, I don't think he really specialized. It was more just generalized. You need to sleep. You need to eat. You need to get your eyes checked. Just regular things. I think I needed someone more that knew the system, knew the test, knew what to expect from it. A lot of the teachers I was friendly with, they were all grandfathered in, so they were not really sure what I would be dealing with. So if they had some sort of, um, something to help the newer teachers study and I know that my college didn't have any type of course to aid you on this. uh It was a lot more challenging than I had anticipated, and that was pretty much my downfall - that test. But uh it was funny. Once I actually left teaching, I took it again on my own, and I passed. I just think that the pressure was not there, and I was able to just kind of focus my time and my efforts on that.

Support/What was needed?

Support/What was needed?

Support/What was needed?

certification

Support/What was needed?

Support/What was needed?

Was the course that you took offered through [redacted] County or outside of [redacted] County?

It was through [redacted] County, but, uh, every time I asked about it, um, for the years that I have been here taking that test, no one really knew when it was until my last year. I really had to push people to find out for me <about the

Support/What was needed?

course offered in the county>, and they were able to help me locate where it was and when it was.

I understand that your assignment was to teach [REDACTED]. Beyond that what other responsibilities did you have?

Well uh I covered classes due to lack of or hiring of substitute teachers, um and that was they had a policy that they had put into use. I think my last year there, last semester, where um you kind of were on a rotating schedule. So when you had about two or three weeks when you had to be on call, and if you if somebody called in from your department and or even another department, and if you were there or available, they would pull you during your planning period. So,um, I would do that. um I would also have morning duty one day a week, cafeteria -12 days of each semester during lunch. um I would have to attend monthly staff meetings, department meetings, and curriculum and instruction committee. I also was responsible for coaching [REDACTED] my first year at [REDACTED], and just helping students out after school with homework projects, writing assignments. I'd also assist the department head with whatever she needed, whether it be cleaning out the bookroom, updating whatever we needed for our department, assisting her in whatever way I could.

Time/Responsibilities

Time/Responsibilities

Time/Responsibilities

coaching

Time/Responsibilities

Time/Responsibilities

How much time beyond the regular school day did you spend per week preparing for classes or in activities related to your job as teacher?

Um I'd probably find myself spending 5 to 7 hours a week, and that would be with creating units and lesson plans, photocopying anything that I needed, collaborating with other teachers that I co taught units with, helping out the department head as I said earlier, cleaning and sanitizing my classroom, gathering books and supplies.

Time/Hours Per Week

Time/Activities

Did everybody was everybody expected to help the department head or was that something you did?

Um that is something I did, and she was - She had taught for a while. She was new when I was new there, and after the second year, I was there she took over as department head, and I just took it upon myself to help her. She was somebody that I had became friends with, and I just thought

that I'd help her in any way I could, because I knew that she was really stressful for her and she had a lot to do.

I'm interested in the kind of contact you had on a regular basis with other teachers both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talked with other teachers and in what kinds of situations and what did you talk about?

Um my department head was my main contact. um She was one of my good friends, and um, and just somebody on a professional level that I could talk to. Um We had similar schedules, and we'd swap ideas on lesson plans, um, and also evaluate the effectiveness of lesson plans and units as the day would pass -what went well, what we would change. um We'd also discuss any problematic students we'd have, and faults that we found within the school - as in not enough classrooms and too many students in our class, um not enough teacher support from administration and anything else that would come up. Those are the main things that we talked about. Um Otherwise, I would communicate with members of my department and who were hired when I was. um [REDACTED] had about 12 teachers, and when I was hired they hired five new people. Kind of all of us were there at the same time, and we were all in the same department, and we became pretty close. We would all after school every day kind of just meet and see how every one was doing. um The communication I found was mostly venting. Kind of, oh I had a rough day, this is what went wrong, or anything that people would be dissatisfied with in the school system. um Other than that I would just help them learn any new computer programs because we had we'd get a few different systems for recording grades and I was pretty good at learning something and helping somebody else learn it as well. I'd help people, specifically people in my department, learning the new computer program um setting up any new equipment they needed and um that was it for my informal situations. Um formally with my mentor, my administrator, and my principal we would discuss any IEP's for students, and for counselors that also with special education teachers. And also, for myself, any time after an observation I was expected to meet with whoever had observed me to

- Interaction/Talk/Who
- Interaction/Talk/What
- Interaction/Talk/What
Interaction/Talk/What
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- Interaction/Talk/What
- Interaction/Talk/What
- Interaction/Talk/What
- Interaction/Talk/What

formally sit down and just go over the observation.

Did you ever watch other teachers teach?

Yes um we were supposed to watch somebody teach I think every semester. You are supposed to have at least one observation each semester, but it was rare. I don't think that it was something heavily checked upon or recorded. The first year that I was at [redacted], I watched our old department head one time, and she had told others that she was uncomfortable with me observing her, and so after that I kind of felt that I was discouraged to observe people. I did watch my mentor a few times when I had gone into her class to either borrow a material or something. She'd invite me to sit down. She had been teaching so long she didn't feel threatened by me, so she was a good resource to watch, and I co taught a unit with a Science teacher, and I'd watch him, and he knew what he was doing. He was really good. He was another good source. Mostly my mentor and the science teacher were great.

- ✿ Interaction/Observation
- ✿ Interaction/Observation
- ✿ Interaction/Observation
- ✿ Interaction/Observation

How would you describe the way the teachers worked together in your school?

Um I feel that the teachers would work together enough to get things done, but a lot of times I feel that they were forced into groups to work with others, and I think that a lot of people had personality conflicts and power trips within their groups, and I think that because of this, I feel that people that were more, either new or neutral (by neutral, I mean people who wouldn't really complain and just wanted to get the things done) I feel that they would be the ones that would get stuck with the work. So I felt that it was kind of unfairly divided.

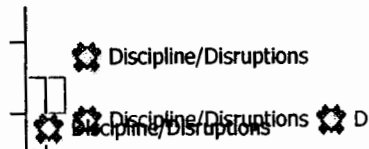
- ✿ Interaction/Working Together
- ✿ Interaction/Working Together
- ✿ Unfair Work Distribution

Describe how teachers in your school were involved in making decisions about important educational issues and what decisions were you involved in making?

O.K. um teachers would be asked pretty much in our department meetings to make choices or told about things in staff meetings. Those were our primary ways to find out um about different things that were going on, and what we could do to impact them. um I found that even if you were asked to discuss and come to a decision, the administration

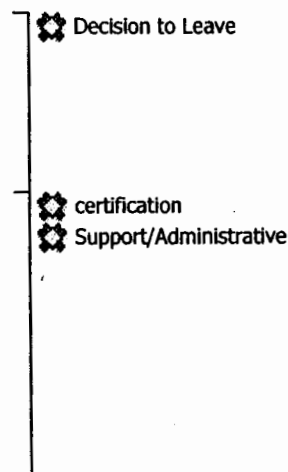
- ✿ Decision Making/All
- ✿ Decision Making/All

instructions for students because they weren't listening, also being observed by administration. I'd have to stop and fill them in on what I was doing, and fire drills, bomb scares, and student emotional problems that would distract them from class.



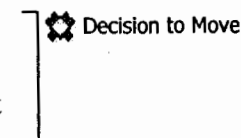
Can you tell me how and when you decided not to teach this year? When did you know you wouldn't be back this year?

I found out that I wouldn't be back after I passed my - after I got my testing results, and that was several days before the start of the year. Um Because I had taken my test, I believe in May or June, and the results didn't come until the end of June -right before um teacher workdays. So I told the school that I was expecting the results back, and that was pretty much it. I got it. I called the school and I told them, and they said, 'Let's see if we can call up human resources, and if there is any way we can help you out.' So that went for about a couple days, and I was in contact with [redacted] in human resources. It turned out that there really wasn't anything that they could do. So they just - I pretty much let myself go. They did say that I could come back and retake the test. However, if I did not pass, I would have to leave as soon as I got my test results, and I didn't want that pressure, and I didn't want to take the chance of starting the year and then having to leave the students like that. I just didn't think it was right. So I just thought it would be better on my own to take the test and then come back if I wanted to do that or try something else.



Now what do you think. How could this have played out differently? What would have had to have happened to play this out differently? What would have prevented this?

Well number one, if I passed the test that would have made the biggest change, because I don't think I would have gone anywhere unless I put in a transfer to a different school, but I would have probably stayed at least another year there just because I was comfortable, and I knew how the school worked, and I was comfortable with the students. I probably would have stayed there at least for another year, and then maybe transferred to a different school system that



Date: 02/05/05

P 1: Leaver#1.rtf

Page: 8/9

I thought fit me better.

Now what how do you like what you are doing now?

I really don't like what I am doing now. I was unemployed for a good part of the time after I left school. I had a part time job, but I have been looking pretty much since July and I had just received a job. I have been working there two weeks. um I am working at [REDACTED] in the library in reserves, and I don't like it because I am pretty much on the computer all day and putting data -really isolated. It is not what I had thought it would be, and I had worked in a library before and loved it, but I just miss being in the classroom. I miss helping the students and lesson planning and just the kind of having other people around in your same kind of academic world. I miss that.

 Decision to Leave

And I think you described how does it compare with teaching - the difference between being isolated vs.

Yeh you're not. The only similarity I can think of is that I still deal with teachers and faculty. They will come in, but instead of me being a faculty, at this point I'm more staff and kind of assisting them in just materials and helping them put things on reserve. It's more of, I'm outside now. I don't like that.

How likely is that you will return to teaching some day?

I think it is likely. I am actually looking into it, now that I have passed my test. I am just seeing what is available in the county - kind of. There are a few schools I have heard really good things about that I have kind of dealt with, and I am looking into those schools. I think, if they have what I am looking for teaching grade-wise and schedule-wise, I think that would be something I would definitely return to. I've overcome my test.

 Decision to Move

Is there anything you would like to add? - that you want me to know?

Sure. Um The only other thing is basically about certification. I just I feel that a lot of people that I have known going to school, with keeping in contact with in college, that a lot of people have been discouraged from this test and other testing requirements within their state. I

 certification

Date: 02/05/05

P 1: Leaver#1.rtf

Page: 9/9

just feel that something needs to be changed in order to keep teachers there to encourage them to stay. I know that in the school system we always consider multiple intelligences and different learning strategies, and we are really big on that - helping our students learn. I think it is the same for teachers. You know teachers perform better in different areas. I know, for me, that is definitely the case. I have a very hard time with the multiple choice test, and the testing anxiety, and I think once I overcame that, I was fine. But it took me a long time, and I know that a lot of my other friends got discouraged for the same reason. I think they need to have some alternative.

 certification**So you took the test in like May?**

I have taken the test about seven times - the different parts of it.

So then you took it again in fall and passed it after the school year began?

I took it on - November 20th was the last time I took it after I had been out of school for a while, and I realized that I wanted to go back. I took it. I just studied. I had a study partner. Really focused on that. It was the writing aspect of the test too. You have to combine your scores with the multiple-choice version. And I did really well on it, and was able to combine the scores and pass.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I think that is pretty much it.

Introduction

Describe the type of support you received from your administrators?

Um, well there supposed to get a mentor for each new teacher. My first-year experience was that the mentor was sort of an afterthought. It was more lip service than anything. The second year I had an excellent mentor, um, who was the department head. She did a great job of sort of giving me ideas and tips on management and lesson planning. And then third year, I had a mentor. It was back to the same kind of thing as the first one - just kind of - We were going through the motions quite clearly, and it seemed that this mentor program, or ILT program, as they called it added way more work than it helped. It was a pain in the [redacted], and, because I taught my first year in [redacted], by my third year I was still considered an ILT 2 -- and the DPI really kind of -- It was very unclear on my status, and my status was changed 3 times in my last year. I went from an ILT 3 to an ILT 1 to an ILT 2. - all in the course of one year. It was just a mess. Nobody knew what the [redacted] was going on. I was very discouraged. And I had to attend meetings where people who had less experience teaching were training me.

- ✿ Support/Mentor
- ✿ Support/Mentor
- ✿ Support/Mentor
- ✿ certification
- ✿ Support/Mentor

Meetings at the school level or central office level?

School level. I don't recall any ILT meetings at the county level. If there were - There might have been one, but I don't - It certainly didn't make an impact (Laughs.)one way or the other.

So,OK, in terms of other administrative support (we kind of went on to the second question about the ILT) in terms of the administrators what kind of support did they give you?

Well they threw me to the wolves. Laughs. New guy. There was clearly a double standard between new teachers and teachers who had been, uh, around for a while. New teachers were disposable. That was the clear implication. Old teachers could get away with a lot more, or should I say doing a lot less. Um. It is more appropriate and it was just kind of constant

- ✿ Support/Administrative
- ✿ Unfair Work Distribution
- ✿ Support/Administrative
- ✿ Unfair Work Distribution
- ✿ Advancement

Date: 02/05/05

P 2: Leaver#2.rtf

Page: 2/16

frustration to know that the only way that I was going to improve my lot or my pay is just time. There was no merit based. Nothing was merit-based. If it had been, the school would have been full of new teachers, because they were, dare I say, some of the best ones there, and the old ones were sort of (had some of them were great) some of them were just there, and had written it off, and were putting in their time until their 30. And that was, you know, obvious too.

Laughs. And I thought it would be different when I got to [REDACTED], but it was the same.

My first year, I had a class of 32 - I had a 13 year old girl in it. I had a 20-year-old male - a felon (laughs) or a felon-to-be. Um. It was crazy-so crazy, um, and quite literally, quote unquote, my principal told me at the end of the first semester, we threw you to the wolves, and that is a direct quote, and that administrator ended up [REDACTED] last year.

⚙️ Type of Students
⚙️ Unfair Work Distribution

And actually the second question goes with the same one - the type of support you received as a new teacher both within the school and the district (but you don't recall district support)?

We had some meetings. Um. I do remember more in [REDACTED] County, and maybe that's because it was ILT 1. I was clearly an ILT 1 when I was in [REDACTED] County, and the meeting - There was a meeting at the beginning of the year for ILT 1's, and then maybe one or two I'm recalling after school or during the workday, and the meetings were, you know, the official mumbo-jumbo-sort-of. Everybody there thought it was a waste of time. They had grading or lesson planning that they needed to be doing. The overwhelming sentiment among the new teachers was, 'Why are they wasting my time with this crap? This is not what I need to help me at all'.

⚙️ Support/Mentor ⚙️ Support

In the same line, what would you have needed? What kind of support would you have needed if you pick what

you needed?

I think that the biggest challenge is between time and classroom management. In classroom management, when I did have a really good mentor in my second year, she observed more of my teaching, gave me more suggestions for classroom management. And it was about what I needed - not what a generic ILT 1 or 2 needed. So I think more the mentor program is a good idea, but the mentors - 2 out of 3 of my mentors were there to collect their check. And they observed me only as they needed to, as they were required to by state, and their feedback to me on their observations was very bland - cut and paste stuff from the computer. It was pretty clear. And when I approached them with problems, I generally got the 'Yeh. Yeh. That's a problem for all of us', and no feedback. This is unlike my second mentor who was awesome. She had very specific techniques and that's what I needed.

- ✿ Support/What was needed?
- ✿ Support/Mentor
- ✿ Support/Mentor
- ✿ Support/What was needed?

I understand that your assignment was to teach [REDACTED]. Beyond that what other responsibilities did you have last year?

Last year, let's see. I had to participate in, uh, what was it called - [REDACTED] Committee for the, what the heck was it called? In [REDACTED] County it was called SAC or some sort of body from outside that accredits the school, and in [REDACTED] County it was something different. It might have been the same. It boiled down to the same amount of hoop jumping. And so I had a choice of different committees that I could go on. [REDACTED] sounded like kind of a cool thing and something we could do to bring the community in to the school. And when I got into the meeting, I discovered (laughs) it was just more hoop-jumping. uh You know. How are we going to phrase this our mission statement, so on and so forth? Clearly putting on a dog-and-pony show for whoever the accreditation folks were. And trying to think if I had anything else. [REDACTED] County was good I didn't have too many superfluous requirements. [REDACTED] county I had to work. I had to collect money for football games on occasion. I had to do a bunch of ridiculous crap um per semester. In [REDACTED] County I didn't have to that, because I guess the athletic booster program is a little bit more active.

- ✿ Time/Responsibilities
- ✿ Decision Making/All
- ✿ Decision Making/Individual

They got parents to do that. And then, of course, department meetings which you know just going over the latest changes in curriculum-that sort of thing. We got a writing test coming up for the 10th graders. Here's your sample prompts. This is, uh, what we need to do to be at such-and-such a level. We never really talked about pedagogy. (laughs) We talked about how to jump through the hoops, and the accreditation scoring, and the ABC's. What have you - how -how to meet those needs, not the needs of the students were never really brought. They were an incidental or accidental factor in the whole equation.

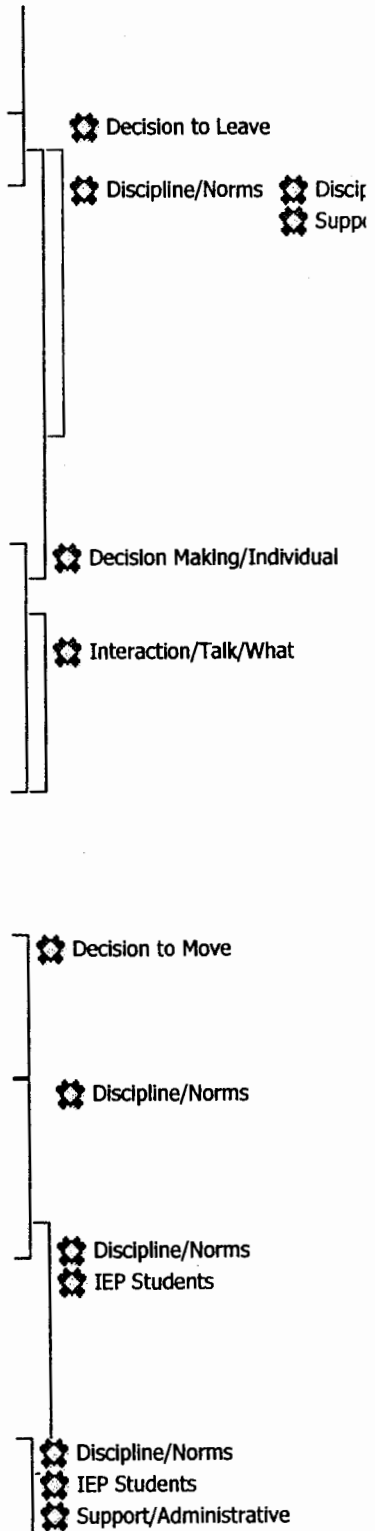
- ☒ Department Meetings
- ☒ Support/What was needed?

How much time beyond the regular school did you spend per week on preparing for classes or on activities related to your job as teacher?

Um probably about, in addition to the classroom work, let's see 30 hours. About 4 extra hours, at least, a day including weekends. Especially with <subject area>, um, and as you probably know in ██████ County there are for ██████ a ██████ portfolio that you have to collect on each student or at least new teachers have to, (laughs) because there were plenty of older teachers who did not do that. Of course they were never really checked up upon, but the new teachers were checked up upon rigorously. And there are 17 required ██████ I believe for the 10th grade, and that was a real hindrance to my teaching, because my philosophy was that not many people are good writers. Most people can be good rewriters and so I allowed my students to rewrite um so that you know you've got now 34 instead of 17 ██████ assignments times a hundred students. That is a ██████ of grading, and not to mention, you know. I've got to read the books again that I am teaching. I've got to come up with some sort of circus act to keep them occupied 90 minutes every day. And in my last year, the administrator at ██████ did not have a place you could send disruptive students. ISS is what, I guess, I've heard it called the most, or chill-out room or whatever. And when I and a couple of other teachers just made that recommendation that we should have a ISS or some place that I can send or teachers, in general, can send disruptive students, um, he said that that is an excuse for teachers not to teach, and that we should take a vote on it as a staff. And he required that

- ☒ Time/Hours Per Week
- ☒ Unfair Work Distribution
- ☒ Time/Activities
- ☒ Support/Administrative
- ☒ Decision Making/All
- ☒ Decision Making/Individual

everybody sign their ballot. Um after the. So a lot of people were intimidated into not voting for it, and that was so painfully obvious. um I was quite upset with him at that point, but honestly, at that point, I knew in November I wasn't coming back. Uh I knew he was a [redacted] Um.. So I, uh, I signed it and I said, 'Yeh, we need an ISS teacher, because the only option I had was to call the resource officer to remove a child from the classroom and that is even more disruptive 9 times out of 10'. You've got a cop coming to your room. Forget about it. The next 90 minutes are going to be crazy, so, but that was the only option we were given and after the votes were in it was discovered that a very small proportion of the teachers thought ISS was necessary. Surprise. Surprise. And surprisingly those teachers are inexperienced teachers, so maybe they just need more training. [redacted] So by expressing what was genuinely a need, I felt isolated, punished, singled-out. And other teachers, all they did was bitch. They never stood up for what they were saying to me in the break room/lunch room/what-have-you. uh But they bitched like they had a right, and they didn't have a right because they never did anything about it. So, um, you know they knew early on that I was leaving, and they <the other teachers> come by to see me here all the time and nothing has changed. I said, 'Why do you expect it to change? You guys never stand up for yourselves.' I mean the bathrooms there are smokier than ------. The kids come late as [redacted] to class, and its just a mockery of a school (laughs), and I thought [redacted] County was going to be better. It was the same. So I said, maybe it is not [redacted] County. Maybe its not [redacted] county. It's just my expectations are high, and NC is not prepared to live up to those expectations. I don't know if it is different in [redacted] any more, but it certainly was different when I was in school. -um Of course, there wasn't IDEA and ADA in their way. I'll give you an article that I wrote at the end of this that describes my feelings about some of those things. - How you know the kid's IEP says he doesn't have a very good attention span, so he is allowed to get up and walk around the classroom during your lectures. How the [redacted] do you expect me to teach? You can get up, and then I was accused of being a racist because one kid had an IEP where



Date: 02/05/05

P 2: Leaver#2.rtf

Page: 6/16

he was allowed to get up and he happened to be white, and so I had to, sort of you know, gently try to get him back in his seat. Well when another student did that who happened to be African American, I said please stay in your seat I was a racist and uh the administration, you know, and that student ended up being a total disruption the rest of the time. Administration did absolutely nothing - zero. The child was back in my room every day. The child called me an [REDACTED] racist and this that in front of the class I had to call the resource officer because I had no place to send him. uh The child refused to leave the classroom There was a scene with the resource officer who thankfully was also African American, and was able to convince the child to leave and, uh, the next day the child was back in my class unpunished - no consequences.

I'm interested in the contact you had on a regular basis with other teachers both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talked with other teachers (you described a little bit of interaction) in what kind of situations and what you talked about.

In [REDACTED] County, I was a roaming teacher the whole time. I did not have a homeroom or a classroom. I taught in 3 different rooms - you know, a different room each period. So we had a teacher work area and it was a departmental work area. So I had a lot of contact with my fellow teachers in [REDACTED] County - usually during plan time. You know, you had an hour and a half plan time. Of course, in [REDACTED] County you had 20 minutes that you had to watch the lunch room so there were other requirements like that but lot contact with them. It was a pretty good environment. Sure there was some grouching and bitching, but there was also a lot of exchange of ideas on how to deal with specific students that we shared in common, or maybe that somebody had last year. Um People who knew their parents who - 'Well you need to talk with so and so.' It was very helpful. [REDACTED] County that was strongly discouraged. In fact, the, quote unquote, workroom was set up, and I know this was intentional, to not have interaction between teachers. The cubbies were set up with dividers like at a college library, so when we go together to eat lunch in the workroom everybody had their

Interaction/Talk/Who

Interaction/Talk/What

Interaction/Talk/Who

Date: 02/05/05

P 2: Leaver#2.rtf

Page: 7/16

cubby. And, we are humans, so we kind of went like this. We called it the bus, because it looked like a bus the way we were sitting, and it was all a bunch of new teachers in this one wing -something the principal later said he'd never do, because he needs to have those veteran teachers he's cutting breaks to to keep things sweet and light. Well he had a group of malcontents all in one area and

(the malcontents being the new teachers?)

Yeh and um the young teachers too. So he said, in retrospect, that was a mistake, and I was like, no, in retrospect, that's about the only thing that you did right, because we got to see what the real division in here was, and now you are going to cover it up, and give the guy who you have been with for 10 years. You know it was a new school, but he brought a lot of people from his old school to teach there, and they got the easy course loads. They got the sweet deals -the sweet rooms, all the benefits or perceivably all the benefits. So he is going to mix those up this year, and definitely break up the bus.(laughs)

Interaction/Talk/What

Unfair Work Distribution

Unfair Work Distribution

Did you ever watch other teachers teach?

Um I did, but it was really - I did it during my own time. During my plan time in my first year I observed teachers fairly regularly, but, who-the-█ was going to watch my class? I could only do it during my plan time, and nobody else could deal with my classes. They were so bad. (laughs) Um so you know, yeh, I did, but it was all because I did.

Interaction/Observation

Can you describe the way (you described it a little bit) the way that teachers work together in your school last year?

Last year very little contact. um Basically there was no working together. um I I any sort of collaboration that we were able to get, or able to whatever construct, was on our own time, and despite not because of administrative obstacles. This uninviting work rooms uh that were clearly designed to, you know. He <the principal> felt that teachers together are a bad thing because they █. Well they only █ when you give them a reason to, and and when you put them together and they have a positive environment then that's a good thing, but to him it was just a problem. It was like, um, I'm trying to think of a political

Interaction/Working Together

Interaction/Talk/Who

Interaction/Working Together

principal

Date: 02/05/05

P 2: Leaver#2.rtf

Page: 8/16

analogy - a voting group that you don't want to get together. You don't want them to form a PAC (laughs), a political action committee, because then they can exercise their influence. He looked at us as the enemy, and from day one we got a list of things that we could -that would get us fired. Now what the [REDACTED] message does that send? This is how I get fired. That's a really negative way to start out the school year. And (laughs) I should have know then, but (So it was a written list? - a written list of things you can do to get fired)

Yep Cause I was actually absent for the first two or three teacher work days of the school year, because I already had some vacation plans, and so I missed it. So when I came back, I had this pack of sheets I was looking at. I said I could not believe it I asked one of my fellow teachers. I said, 'Is this for real?' You know, and he said, oh yeh. Isn't that nice and positive? [REDACTED], a real sweetheart. Actually I ended up really liking her, but I just thought that was a bad way to go.

 Support/Administrative

Describe how the teachers in the school were involved in making decisions about important educational issues. And what decisions were you involved in making?

None. I mean I told you about the vote. It's like the one that is going to take place in Iraq - a total sham (laughs) - not representative. People were intimidated into voting certain ways. You had to sign your name. I could not believe that. I was amazed. It was basically his way or the highway last year. And so I took the first exit I could find.

 Decision Making/All

 Decision to Leave

Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior.

They were just trying to get through the day. (laughs)
There was, uh, a day without incidents that was a good day for most of them. Of course, you realize, I was around mostly the new teachers who got the crappy classes, and so we were just in survival mode. And um while my esteemed department head had 3 classes of 9th grade honors kids. Well there is no easier gig in the world than teaching 9th grade honors. First of all. they intimidated because they are 9th graders. Then they're honors kids so they are invested in the system somehow, um and so so when I approached

 Discipline/Norms

 Unfair Work Distribution

him about this I said, 'Well Gene I appreciate you are a great teacher, and I've seen some of your materials. You have some good stuff, but you really are out of touch, um, with what is going on in my classroom and in some of these other new.' 'Oh I used to teach kids like that. Well sure maybe 15 years ago. Well the kids like that are a lot different now. um The kids might not be different, but the way that administration can deal with them is totally different. um So you don't have any experience with it, and I, uh, I went to the principal about it. I said that it is really not good for morale when your senior teachers have obviously easier course loads. For one, he only had one prep. For two, it was 9th grade honors kids and I- I got the same line from [redacted] <the principal> -'Well, he has had plenty of experience working with difficult kids', and I said, 'That is not the same as working with them now in this environment.' It's like apples and oranges. Well sure, maybe in 1975 he worked with some tough kids, but he could send them out of the classroom. I can't. Uh He could do what he wanted He could tell them to sit down. I can't. It's in their IEP. So he really doesn't have the same experiences that I do, and if he did he would put up -he would put his money where his mouth is, and he would take on some of those courses.

Decision Making/Individual
Unfair Work Distribution

IEP Students

IEP Students

(Now [redacted] was your mentor, or just a colleague?)
The department head, [redacted]. My mentor, uh, who was another senior faculty member. I put it in quotes. It wasn't officially, but it was obvious. Uh she had easy courses too - journalism, um, and granted, I wouldn't want to have to put together a paper, but those kids were cupcakes. I ended up having some of them my last semester in my honors 10th grade course that I taught, and I was like, 'We are teaching in two different schools here'. We are in two totally different schools. There's one for new teachers. There is one for experienced, favored teachers.

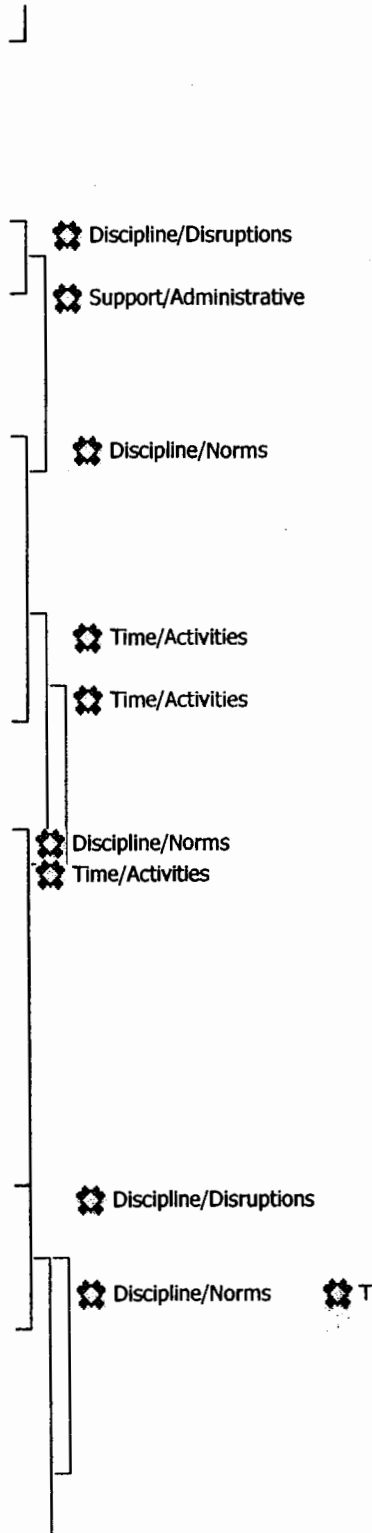
Unfair Work Distribution

Describe the disruptions or interruptions that took you away from focusing on educating students. You talked about he kid who walked around.

Well, the kids that walked around, uh, coming in late.

Discipline/Disruptions

There was no attendance policy as you know. There is no attendance policy in █████ County. If you miss 14 classes in █████ County you failed, unless you had some extenuating circumstances, and, at the point, you went in front of an attendance committee. If you wanted to fail a student for poor attendance in █████ County you had to defend yourself. Um So I had kids not coming, or kids coming 20 minutes late to class. Well, sure I wrote them up, but nothing ever happened. The worst thing that ever happened to a child who chronically came late - 15 minutes late every day for almost 40 days. I wrote him up. He was assigned lunch detentions which he never had to serve. Um There was no check. There was no way to go back and check to make sure they served their time in lunch detention, or whatever, so that guy had absolutely no reason to try and follow the rules. So him coming in late, students just talking while whatever activity is going on, or not focusing on the activity. There was nothing I could do short of calling parents which I did a ton of . God bless. Another thing that ate the time of a new teacher. Not only do I have these silly useless ILT meetings to go to, but as a result of having harder classes and more difficult students I had much more parent contact to make -daily weekly contacts. Of course, all that has to be documented. We haven't talked about teaching yet. You know we're just talking about surviving the day. And so new teachers are told, 'Well just call the parents'. That's the panacea that they give new teachers. If you don't call parents, you could be sued. Of course, the scare tactic I heard that from day 1 in █████ and █████ County. If you don't follow these guidelines you could be sued, which shocked me. How can you get blood from a turnip? You know, I mean, in any case I said wow, fear is how you are motivating teachers. That is great. (laughs) um So it was talking, it was getting up and walking around. It was coming in late. It was um kids sleeping, cell phones going off, and confiscating cell phones just opened a whole can of worms -of administrative 'You've got to call the parents. You've got to tell the principal.' Forget it. Just turn it off. And so, you just start to you pick your battles, which is smart in anything, but, you know, you've got to realize that some major battles you are just letting them go and its - and you



Date: 02/05/05

P 2: Leaver#2.rtf

Page: 11/16

are picking battles based on the assumption that you are going to lose the war, so let's just cut our casualty rate.

Could you tell (you said you decided in November that you wouldn't be teaching) would anything have kept you in teaching longer?

Um perhaps a more In all likelihood no. Probably there isn't anything that would have kept me in teaching, because I had seen in 3 different years the same problems over and over. 2 different administrations. uh 2 different communities, and the same problems. There were a couple of things that maybe would have made me more inclined to consider the options, but I had a good friend who was a very experienced teacher, [REDACTED], who has been in the [REDACTED] County Public school system for over 30 years, and she came back because she liked my principal, [REDACTED], and she was disgusted with what she saw, and she was she came into my classroom to observe to make sure I wasn't racist by my invitation. She was just prepping during the first semester so she would have her own class second semester, so during the first semester she was like an unofficial teacher assistant for hire. (laughs) Well I said I need you. I've got a really difficult class. Um she happened to be African American, too, so I said maybe that will help with some of the This I know. They were just creating problems as distractions, and I don't blame them. That is what kids do. I don't think kids have changed. I just think they are able to get away with a lot more, so they do, and so when [REDACTED] came into my class and observed me teaching, she just loved what I did. I had a lot of great ideas if I do say so myself, and, but I wasn't allowed to complete any of them because of these disruptive group of students, and then So she ended up testifying in a meeting, that I wasn't invited into to, that I was not a racist. Um (laughs) and I said, 'Well, no kidding.' You know this is obviously smoke that the kids are blowing to kind of distract everybody from the fact that they are not performing. And and she agreed wholeheartedly. She was disgusted. She started teaching her own courses second semester and she said, 'Sow many days left in the year? because I'm out.' And this is an experienced teacher. She was over 30 years of teaching -highly respected by various

Discipline/Norms

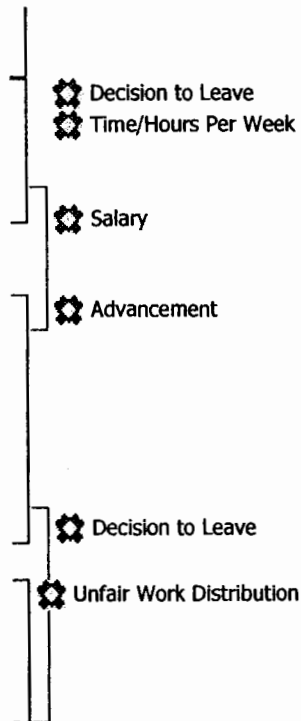
Decision Making/Individual
Discipline/Disruptions

Decision to Leave
Discipline/Disruptions

parts of the community, and she had had it. So, and she said I would leave too, and so she left.

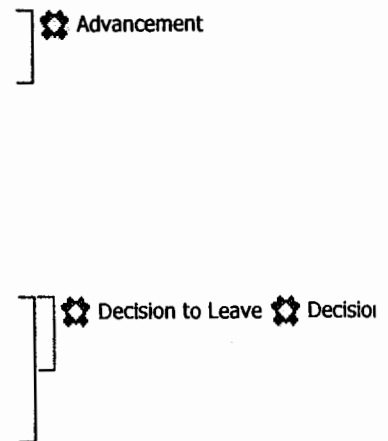
Now how do you like what you are doing now, and how does it compare with teaching?

Well it is a lot less stressful. I put in 40 hours. I don't have to put in 80. (laughs) Um I make a little less money than I did before, but I knew that. But I already I'm going to management training next week. so within 6 months I could be making more money than I was. Even though I took a small step back initially, I knew that if I stuck in teaching for 30 years the most I might ever make is 50 grand and not that this was a this was definitely not a huge factor. It is one of the factors, and um probably within 6 months I'll be managing somewhere and making 45 to 50 grand and all those headaches are behind me. Every job has its headaches, but I won't be sued because somebody got the wrong [REDACTED]. You know I won't be. People want to be here. My students did not want to be where they were, so that just makes the work environment less appealing when you are around people who don't want to be there.



So what you actually do here is, not only sell [REDACTED], but teach lessons.

I don't teach. um I don't do that. Thank God. (laughs) I needed a break from teaching, but I mostly do sales, scheduling, some of the managerial duties. [REDACTED] is my current manager, but he, you know, we share the managerial duties with the understanding that one day I will be the manager, and he probably will be the district manager at that point. This company is growing, so I feel there are a lot more opportunities here with less stress. Uh I see teachers, former students, former teachers all the time that come in here and they are going through the same crap. (laughs) It's just like I tell them they don't have to do it - at least the teachers. I don't talk to the kids. The kids will ask why I left, and I said, 'Well that's interesting. You need to ask yourself why you think I left. I don't want to get into it'. Because I was upset for a very long time, and I didn't do an exit interview. I didn't feel it would be productive. Um Because I don't think I could have controlled myself. So instead I wrote.



(You said you wrote an article. Will the article be

published?)

It has been but only on a friend's website - basically, politically, a website that is I don't know if it exists any more. I wrote it for me. He was starting a website for our group of friends to come and see what everybody else was up to, and so I had to write it. So I've got way too, I'm not sleeping at night, because I've got all of these issues, so I got it out. Stacking deck chairs aboard the Titanic -that is teaching in public schools for you.

- Decision to Leave
- Decision to Leave

How likely is it that you will return to teaching some day?

A ice cube's chance in hell, and not Dante's hell It's cold in the center. (laughs) You know the center of the inferno is ice. The Judeo Christian, more of your Baptist-hell-and-brimstone. (laughs)

- Decision to Leave
- Likely to Retire?

Is there anything you would like to add?

Just read the article.

Quotes from the article, "Stacking Deck Chairs Aboard the Titanic: One Public Educator's Adventures in Futility"

First, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), while well intended, are totally destructive in the hands of our litigious society. These laws open for door for mad litigation aimed at teachers, administrators, and school districts while making it nearly impossible to maintain a well-structured learning environment.

- Discipline/Norms
- IEP Stuc

In my research, I discovered many publications of professional literature aimed at school administration, and every last one of them had a major focus on avoiding litigation. This serves as testimony to the depth of the problems posed by ADA and IDEA. It certainly makes one think that the main goal of public school systems is to avoid costly lawsuits, rather than to educate children.

- Support/Administrative
- IEP Students

No wonder teachers are reluctant to "write up" or discipline students. Quite simply, it adds a tremendous amount of work to the teacher's already full plate.

- Discipline/Norms
- Time/Activities

Date: 02/05/05

P 2: Leaver#2.rtf

Page: 14/16

A student does not even have to make it to class on time. It is easier to say this was due to their ADHD, and because the student is so easily distracted in the hallways, they cannot get to class in just five minutes. Therefore, teachers must put up with chronic tardiness, which leads to classroom disruption. Oftentimes, these students feel that they exist beyond the rules of the school, and they're right.

Discipline/Norms
IEP Students

Is the student failing? A quick review of the child's IEP could reveal many modifications that either were not met or were not documented properly. Therefore, the parents can threaten the teacher or the district with a lawsuit, unless they give the student a passing grade.

Discipline/Norms
IEP Students

Ahh, see. No child (with a lawyer) will be left behind. That's right, over fifty percent of my students were labeled as "Exceptional"...Believe it or not this is a common problem, especially for new teachers because veteran teachers usually get the "good" classes. As one veteran teacher told me, "I've paid my dues. Now, it's your turn." And we wonder why we can't attract and retain quality teachers.

Discipline/Norms IEP Student
IEP Students
Unfair Work Distribution

When I asked how I could give 17 students preferential seating, my administration told me only that, if I didn't make it work, I could be sued. In fact, the "You could be sued" mantra was drilled into me by administrators and fellow teachers during my first year.

Discipline/Norms
Support/Administrative

You see, status as an "exceptional student" is purely confidential, and if I do anything to jeopardize this confidentiality, such as distributing a copy of class notes in front of other "mainstream" students, I could be sued! Furthermore, how could I hand out notes without making the other students demand a copy for themselves? Well, such a task is impossible, so, based on a recommendation from my officially appointed mentor, a more experienced teacher who is appointed by the school system to guide Initially Licensed Teachers (ILTs), I decided to make notes available to all students. To my dismay I found the "exceptional students" often left their copy of their notes on their desk without so much as looking at them. As for the

Support/Mentor

Date: 02/05/05

P 2: Leaver#2.rtf

Page: 15/16

“mainstream” students, I noticed that, provided with material in advance, their focus during demonstrations and lectures dwindle. Thus, they couldn’t make any sense out of the provided notes. Eventually, all test scores dropped.

The result of the modification trend in education is a “Cover-Your-Ass” mentality among school administrators. Rather than supporting their staff’s efforts through appropriate disciplinary action, administrators seek to play the role of mediator between student and teacher.

Unfortunately, administrators are more likely to take action against a teacher who has to refer many students for discipline than against a chronically disruptive student, probably because that student is usually “exceptional” while the teacher is labeled as “expendable” because he/she has no union for support.

Our brave captains, the teachers, can either accept unruly classes, like watching the mad struggle for survival aboard a sinking ship from behind his/her helm/desk, or drive them into the ground with menial tasks such as worksheets, which can have an ironically sedating effect of the most difficult students.

Is it any wonder why the best teachers are leaving while the worst are carving out comfortable niches? If things don’t change, rest assured the ship of public education will be captained by tenured power-trippers, self-styled martyrs, and the otherwise unemployable.

In conclusion, we may view public education as the boat that carries our democracy through the perilous waters of change. And now we have a breach in the hull. To extend this metaphor, if we allow public education to continue to sink in the icy waters of apathy, litigation, and testing requirements, our democracy will drown, and follow our public education system to the bottom of the history’s ocean. Meanwhile, our teachers are dutifully stacking the deck chairs in increasingly neat columns.

Discipline/Norms
Support/Administrative

Discipline/Norms
Support/Administrative

Discipline/Norms

Unfair Work Distribution
Decision to Leave

Decision to Leave
Discipline/Norms

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 1/14

Let's start with the first question. Describe the type of support you received from your administrators.

I would say that the - for describe the support I received from the administrators -- I think that I received a tremendous amount of support last year whenever I was working in the [REDACTED] school in [REDACTED] County. The administrators were very, I guess, very reachable - very easy to speak with, and able to find time with to speak with directly. I did not find that to be the case at all when I was working at the traditional high school my second semester. It was very difficult, at best, to get much support from the administrators that were in place. Uh. In There's - I don't know if it falls in later. Yeh There is a lot of things, in particular, whenever I was leaving, and so forth that where this came into play. Um I don't know if now would be the time to answer that or not.

Support/Administrative

Sure go ahead.

Well, basically I was told - I had started in January. I was told in March that, by the end of the term that my position in the department was to be eliminated, and therefore, I was on temporary contract anyway. Um. However, just going through and trying to get the letters of reference and so forth to continue on. I was asking for three and four months. I was waiting for letters to be received, and those dates kept passing, and when I finally received the letters, they didn't have my name. They had someone else's name. Laughs. Things were not very personal. Uh. It was very impersonal. And Uh I don't know. I think the administration was just stretched very thin, and, uh, understandably it was a large school.

Decision to Leave

Support/Administrative

Support/Administrative

Can you describe the type of support you received as a new teacher both within the school and in the district, and did you have a mentor in your experience?

Early on. My first two years I was working at a different county- in [REDACTED] County. Uh I did have a mentor. Tremendous amount of support. In fact I still contact with that individual now. Uh. Did not have a mentor the first half of my third year. Uh, and the second half, whenever I was back at the traditional high school, it was probably a few months before someone had gotten back to me about mentoring, and so, I really can't say that I received much

Support/Mentor

Support/Mentor

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 2/14

support at least through a traditional mentor program. However, there was some support offered through my department, but not in the traditional program. It was nonexistent.

Support/Mentor

O.K. So there was support you said through your department in the traditional program?

When I was back at the traditional high school, I'm sorry - my second half of last year. There was support offered through various teachers who worked within the [REDACTED] department, who were just - who shared planning times and so forth, but there was really no support from a mentor program that was set up. If I am making - If I am clear on that with you?

Support/Mentor

O.K. What kind of support (If the support wasn't what you needed) What would you have needed as somebody coming in at half year?

Hm. I guess. It was. A lot of the things were difficult because it was half year. What made it even more difficult, where I had trouble getting support is, just the fact that I was not from a traditional teaching background, and, although I had had experience, and this was my third year, there were still issues of paperwork, or coursework, and you know testing. -- I had questions about licensure. I just really had a really difficult time getting answers to those questions. There was not anyone who - There was no one person who had all the answers for me. I kept getting referred to the state organizations and so forth, where it would have been easier if there was someone there who could just give me the answers that I needed.

certification
Support/What was needed?

O.K. So really there wasn't someone with the answers within the school or even in the district?

No. It really fell short. It really fell short. I started out at the school. They referred me to the district, and the district referred me to the state. So. Uh. Just. Uh. It was not. It just wasn't good. Laughs.

O.K. So someone with the answers to help you through that would have been the support that you needed?

And I know that I --I don't think that there were a lot of, you know, teachers that were new to the district that were in my situation. I don't think that I particularly had a

certification
Support/What was needed?

situation that they would run into all the time. But definitely, someone who could have specialized in licensure would have been very helpful. That probably would have been the most helpful at that point, because um that was probably my biggest concern.

I understand that your assignment was to teach [REDACTED]. Beyond that, what other responsibilities did you have?

When I was - the second half of last year - Uh other than - Because I did come in so late, the majority of responsibilities were already delegated. So, I really didn't have much in the way of additional responsibilities. Um other than, you know, occasionally covering for teachers who would be out. Situations that would come up like that.

So did you have like lunch duty or hall duty?

Yes. Lunch duty was on a rotational basis, so I fit into that. Um and didn't really have - and that would have included any hall duty. So, outside of that - unless it was some type of - Once or twice there were special things that may have come up, where we had - they were doing hall sweeps for tardies, or if there was an assembly, I may have had some additional responsibility, but it was not very much responsibility at all particularly in comparison to where I had come from before.

Time/Responsibilities

Time/Responsibilities

Time/Responsibilities

Where you had come from before in [REDACTED] County, did you teach [REDACTED] or [REDACTED]?

Uh. I actually taught both. I taught some [REDACTED] courses, and, uh, taught the various [REDACTED] courses. Uh mainly up through and including [REDACTED], but we also had some students who were doing [REDACTED] and beyond that I would help out with. - And it was challenging because - my first year there - I actually - we also - my schedule was piggybacked. So, I'd half the classes taking [REDACTED], and half the classes taking [REDACTED]. -Trying to work it all out.

So what prompted the move from [REDACTED] County to [REDACTED] County and then [REDACTED] to [REDACTED]?

Uh. There were a few different issues. One was distance. It was a 45-mile commute one-way. So that certainly wore on me. Also, I was one of only seven faculty there who

Decision to Move

taught. At the most we were teaching 70 students. Um. So what we did was -we took on a comprehensive school grant, and just going through the process. And we went through and chose the [redacted] program and implemented that into our teaching. It is just that there is a tremendous amount of responsibility, and I guess you could say pressure that went along with all of that. And between that, and the longer and longer hours, the longer and longer commute, - uh it just - beginning my teaching career. It just got to be too much. Uh. So.

So from [redacted] to [redacted]? From the middle school to the high school?

The whole reason I guess you could say I was in [redacted] was actually I was given an offer to teach in [redacted] County, and I had put in my resignation, and after that time had passed, the offer was taken back. So I was stuck. Laughs. So I did decide to, uh, to try to find what was out there, and,uh, so I took the position in [redacted] County, and with intentions of staying there for a full year, uh, at minimum. However, I just didn't find the same type of connection with that age group that I did with the high school age children, and I pursued employment in [redacted] County again.

Decision to Move

Decision to Move

How much time beyond the regular school day did you spend per week on preparing for classes or on activities related to your job as teacher? so hours per week?

Hours per week. Wow. Uh. I would probably say - I would probably say about 10-12 hours probably, if I am just referring to being at home and working on things here. And I actually --more of that had to do with thought processes than actually physically pulling together materials and so forth. Those types of things I would do during my planning period.

Time/Hours Per Week

Time/Activities

O.K. So if you had to describe (and you started to) the types of things that you would be doing during that time. You said thought processes and pulling things together. What other kinds of things would you spend that time on?

As far as, what would I mean as far as the thought processes and so forth?

Right or other things beside thinking and planning?

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 5/14

Uh I'm sorry. Could you repeat that one more time?

What other things would you do during that time?

Obviously there was thought and planning. Was there grading papers or calling parents or?

O.K. The way that I did - the way that I had my grading scheme together, there wasn't a tremendous amount of time, uh, grading papers and so forth. There were things that I would check daily. Uh, the majority of the exams and so forth would be - at least a large portion of them would be - multiple choice. Um I used scantron and computer systems for all my grading. Um, and so e-mails back and forth with parents, and those types of contacts I probably spent probably about 20 minutes each day taking care of those types of things.

Time/Activities

The majority was the thought process and the planning.

After going through the [REDACTED] program, there was a lot of stuff I liked about trying to bring in real world experiences and trying to get kids to think about [REDACTED] a little bit differently. It would usually take more thought on my end than it would actually, um, physically pulling things together.

Time/Activities

I am interested in the contact you had on a regular basis with other teachers both formal and informal. Can you tell me how often you talked with other teachers, and in what kinds of situations and what you talked about?

Um. Let's see. I well - I talked - I definitely, uh, in either case, for my third year, talked to teachers on a regular basis. In both cases actually - at both schools - the department had lunch all at the same time and so forth, and so that seemed to be the largest gathering.

Interaction/Talk/Who

And situations? I tell you. I personally didn't share too many situations, particularly in my - and that was mainly in, uh, in my second semester. And I think, uh, big reasons for that - it was a very tight knit group, you know. Although, you know, decent size was about twenty teachers I am guessing. But you know, you are already half way through the year, and you are the only person who has just kind of walked through the door. Laughs. So, although I certainly was welcomed in, uh, I just didn't really take that opportunity to, I guess, you could say connect with a lot of those teachers that I had previously.

Interaction/Talk/What

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 6/14

[REDACTED]

Right. And I found that out through an administrator, and then no one really talked about it. Laughs. And that certainly brought on some uncomfortableness that there was this group of people that I really hadn't had a chance to connect with or didn't connect with, and then you find out that someone, somewhere, somehow, something is happening and you are getting pushed out the door. Um. - before, I guess, you even feel like you have a chance to prove yourself. Although the reasons for the elimination, you know, I was told had really nothing to do with me or my performance. In fact, I wasn't even observed ever. So I would have to go along with that line of thinking.

 Interaction/Talk/Who

 Support/Administrative

So they just reduced the position?

Yeh. That's -that's what I was told. It is complicated, because, I guess, that is what I was told, and, but from what I understand, they ended up bringing on somebody else. So I think I was just the right person for the right time. Um. I think that the individuals who I was - I basically took an overflow of courses um - The school had recently just switched over to the block schedule. So, all of those who were in failure the first semester, needed somewhere to go the second semester. So I ended up with some interesting individuals.
Laughs.

 Unfair Work Distribution

Did you watch other teachers teach?

Um. Not, let's see, I'd say -not particularly, not last year, not- not in any great detail. I maybe would you know be out walking though the halls, or hear a few moments here or there, but for the most part not last year.

 Interaction/Observation

But you did your other years?

I did. In fact I even took some first year to even - took some days to travel to another high school, uh, to watch and observe other teachers. One of the reasons I went to another school, uh, -because there was only myself and one other teacher shared the math duties.
So I just needed to go somewhere else. Laughs.

 Interaction/Observation

How would you describe the way that teachers worked together in your school?

Oh. Let's see. I'd say it seemed to be, well, a little complicated -complicated answer -complicated question. uh In my third year, if I am thinking about the traditional school, I think that things were highly individual at least with my experiences. The only thing that it was - making sure that keeping pace, and so forth, but as far as for the most -my experiences. There things were very individual. When I was at the middle school, it seemed to be more of a team approach - as far as the grade level. uh Before that, if I look at that when I was in ██████ County, it was a holistic approach to things. So out of the three different situations that was by far the best example of teachers working together.

- ☒ Interaction/Working Together
- ☒ Interaction/Working Together
- ☒ Interaction/Working Together

In the ██████ school in ██████ County?
Yes.

Describe how teachers in your school were involved in making decisions about important educational issues.

I tell you what. I don't even know if I am qualified to answer that, because I was never a part of anything in my third year. I was never a part of any real decision making that went on even to the point that I wasn't aware of an educational issue even it arose. One could of blew over my head, and I would have never known.

- ☒ Decision Making/Individual
- ☒ Decision Making/Individual

So you weren't involved in school improvement?

No. I mean - I really I wasn't on any committees. I was pretty much a loner last year. Laughs. Definitely not the case in other years, but its just a lot of it was circumstantial.

- ☒ Decision Making/Individual
- ☒ Interaction/Talk/Who

How about in the ██████ school? Were teachers involved in educational decisions?

Absolutely. Highly. Extremely. Um. Yeh. I don't know. Yeh. I mean, even as a first or second year teacher, I was highly involved in decision making - deciding what the reform program we would take part in. We all had certain roles. We took part in developing, um, new ways of collecting information for parent communication. I went

- ☒ Decision Making/All
- ☒ Decision Making/Individual

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 8/14

out and sought donations. I got 40 or so computers donated to the school. Yeh. All of the teachers working together setting up for different presentation for students. Um. Its just. Yeh. Entirely different. There wasn't - Yeh there was - Every individual there took full responsibility for what was going on - even as far as changing bell schedules or working on incentive programs for the students. Uh. Just. It was hitting the ground running. Entirely. Like I said, it couldn't be any more different than my last year.

Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior.

I'm sorry. I am going to back up for a second on the last question. I guess in a way, I guess, to me it felt like a real waste. Um. I just, last year, I just, the second year of last year, just felt like a real waste. I think that uh. I don't know - just overlooked and underutilized. Laughs. But O.K.

 Decision Making/Individual

Can you think of an attempt that you made maybe to get involved and how was that received? Or didn't you really have that opportunity?

I guess my first response was that I really didn't have the opportunity. You know kind of whenever you go into an established organization, which you had a group of individuals who for the most part a good portion of them had been teaching together for a number of years, there is some type of a hierarchy that is already established when you are coming in. You know, the wet-behind-the-ears. You know. I guess I am a little bit more of one to observe how this machine works, and try to work within it. I mean. I try my best to be a team individual. It just seemed like everything worked from the top there. It was more of a just -I think basically, decisions were made from the top and not much filtered down. I never got that impression in conversations or observations.

 Interaction/Working Together

Describe the norms and expectations among teachers for student behavior.

I think that the - the uh norms and expectations for student behavior when I was in the second half of last year in

 Discipline/Norms

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 9/14

particular was set extremely high . I guess, I don't mean to say - I don't mean to take away to say that, in other times that the expectations were not high. It is just that the, how I would see teachers responding to student behavior was much different and much - It was much less room for freedom. Um. Things were very stifled if I were to describe the norms among fellow teachers in my department.

 Decision Making/Individual

So are you saying that individual teachers didn't have much flexibility in how to deal with situations?

I I don't believe I no. I don't believe so. I mean it's - I guess, a lot of it has to do that I was coming from a different end of the spectrum. But just things that, uh, I don't know Laughs. I don't even know. I am trying to put into words. It is just.

Maybe - Could you give me an example of maybe some kind of behavior that you would have seen happen, and how it was dealt with vs. how it was dealt with in your other school?

I guess from looking at, if a student walks in and is upset, visibly angry and agitated. You say something to the student and you know just like 'Oh. Come on. Leave me alone man.' You know, and he has a seat. Um. Majority of the teachers there, for example if a student walks in and doesn't have a pencil. You know. It just seemed like it was at the point - That person needs to leave. That person needs to go somewhere, or this person is not here to learn, so they need to go somewhere else. I guess. I was looked at more of an inclusion standpoint. I would wait till things calmed down and got going, and I'd go over and talk to the student and find out what was wrong. And I - most of the time it was something personal or something outside of the classroom. Kids are carrying baggage around with them all the time. You know. You've got to give them a place to set down the bags, or you are not helping them at all. As a teacher I felt that I was there to teach the kid, not to exclude the ones that didn't want to learn. If I wanted to --then I'd have one student in each of my classes. I mean. If I was lucky. Uh. And I just don't think that that - I I, well, I know that that wasn't shared among other people whom I was working with. Um. It was more that they either tow the

 Discipline/Norms

 Discipline/Norms

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 10/14

line, or I'm not dealing with them, and I just completely - I just don't agree with that at all.

Now was there a place that students were sent? Was there an ISS?

Um. Well. Even if I look back. When I was in the middle school, there was an ISS that they were sent to. They uh. Actually, there was a tremendous amount of screaming and yelling in middle school. Laughs. Among the teachers. And that was something that really shocked me. Just walking down the hall, all I am hearing is teachers yelling and screaming and screaming and yelling. Whenever - I was at the traditional high school - second half of the year - I would say that the students were - some of them were sent to the office - some of them were given referrals and so forth. Um I am trying to recall. I don't think that that particular place had an ISS room that you could send them directly to. For the most part, it just seemed that students were grouped together, and you are looking at the second semester, you have either the repeaters or the ones who are moving on. So, it just seemed that there were - there were a lot of teachers who just who didn't have any students that seemed to have any problems. And then, you know, what happened too. I didn't start actually the first day of the second semester. It was actually. I started two weeks into the second semester, and so my colleagues in my department um What had happened was they had brought on a sub who they felt was up to the task, and who had background and so forth, and she refused, after the first or second day, to walk into the classroom any longer with these students. So, they Laughs. And she also wouldn't sub for me. Laughs. A different problem. And so the rest of the department took over my classes. The rest of the department was full aware of what I had going on. Uh And so I would always here from them, 'Oh I don't know how you deal with them.' 'Oh, geez, this one.' And they would name names, and 'I don't know how you deal with this child and, you know, and it's just'. You hear all of these horror stories. Hm. Hm.

So you had everybody that was failing somewhere kind of got put together in your class?

 Unfair Work Distribution

 Unfair Work Distribution

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 11/14

Yeh. I mean for the vast majority. I'd say maybe 10%, maybe I'm completely off on that, but it wasn't a high percentage of students who were taking it for the first time. In fact some of the kids in my first block Algebra last year, they were taking it the third time - fourth Yeh.

Describe any disruptions or interruptions that took you away from focusing on educating students.

Uh. Sometimes actually - some of the disruptions and interruptions - There was one. I did. I had a fight. I had a fight in class. I had two kids start swinging blows at each other - connecting. Um. I am trying to think last year. Um. Sometimes things like, if I was teaching a class, and then another teacher from my department would come in. Actually some of those were the biggest disruptions or interruptions that I would have, because it seemed that students became very comfortable around me, and very comfortable, I guess, of the environment that I created, and whenever another teacher would come in and say 'Well, why are you doing that? Or You know. Don't do that?' Or It just It just changed instantly so the students would recoil.

 Discipline/Disruptions

 Discipline/Disruptions

And did they come in just. I mean what was their purpose for coming in?

Oh you know. It could have been. We have a change. We need to meet for lunch today. It was never. It wasn't that they were called. It was usually just trying to get messages to me in short notice. But in previous years, I have been cussed out, up one side and down the other. I had student break windows, pull out metal pipes, hit me, -- all kinds of stuff.

But yeh I mean. A lot of the disruptions and interruptions had more to do with the students' personal issues, and in some ways you can say that, well it wasn't well necessarily a disruption, it was just something you had to deal with. Um and if, you know, if you helped them deal with it, then they were going to have a better day for everybody else.

 Discipline/Disruptions

Could you tell me -well you actually said in March somebody told you that the position wasn't - that there wasn't going to be a position. But obviously you chose not to pursue other positions. When did you decide that you wouldn't teach this year?

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 12/14

I probably made up my mind in - probably April or mid May. Um. And that was when. There's various reasons. Um. Some of them were financial. You know. I started looking at things, having a young child and having to put her in childcare and so forth - the cost of that - having an additional vehicle. So there were financial reasons. But actually, probably the biggest - I just got completely disgusted, um, with the system as far as - It really - It was a couple of things. I got disgusted with the system regarding licensure and so forth, um, getting through the lateral entry that I was completing. And uh just, I guess, I just got completely disgusted with the way that things were handled. Um. You know. ██████ County is where I wanted to work, and, um, I made no bones about that. And I had an offer, and had it taken away from me. I was hung out to dry once, and then I was hung out to dry twice, and so I just got completely disgusted with the whole situation. I just said 'Well what the heck. Is this really worth it?' And, uh, some of the things with licensure, I felt that I just began to get frustrated with you know being - feeling like - No. I'm sorry. You are not qualified to teach. You know. That just starts to get old.

Decision to Leave

certification
Decision to Leave

So as a lateral entry person, were you required to take courses? So how far along did you get on whatever path they were telling you?

Basically I had, let's see, I'd already had enough math credits through my other degree. So it basically -all education coursework. So I think that I had taken about 21 hours of education classes. Um. So I guess. I guess, what separates me from a fully licensed teacher would be the, I think, I did have one other math elective. So a three hour course in ██████ or something, Um, and then the pedagogy portion of the praxis. Those are what's left

So you were close?

Oh. Yeh. Yeh. Definitely close.

Would anything have kept you in teaching longer?

Hm. I think probably the biggest thing is probably the whole turn of events all through the third year. The changing jobs twice. The getting hung out to dry. The

Decision to Leave

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 13/14

whole lack of support from trying to find answers about the licensure, and how to continue things. Uh. The way that I felt administration looked at me being a lateral entry teacher. Um. And again not having that bond, or that part in the decision making process with my department. It was just a real combination of things. That's it initially.

How do you like what you are doing now, and how does it compare with teaching?

Laughs. Um Well right now, I am [REDACTED]. I do some tutoring and so forth in the evenings, and uh I actually really enjoy that. I certainly enjoy the tutoring. I enjoy - You get the really- the more one-on-one interaction with students, and also it is more. You know. You are able to schedule your own hours. So those are definite benefits. And then being a [REDACTED], I just, at this point, it has been a few months now, and I couldn't imagine, I guess, I couldn't imagine doing it any other way. I think I'm really actually enjoying it. Um. Enjoying the experiences, and am happy that I have this chance to make some memories. Of course, I get snubbed. But, I go to the [REDACTED], and I, it is a little strange being the only [REDACTED] there. So yeh in comparision yes. One woman will talk to you, but when they all show up, they all go in the other corner and they don't talk to you any more. So we have had to do our own thing. Laughs.

How likely is it that you will return to teaching some day?

I I really enjoy teaching. I do a tremendous amount. It's, I guess, as far as going back to teaching in a K-12 situation, I don't know how high that is right now. Through the years that I was teaching, things were waived for people who graduated in NC, tests were waived, classes were waived, and I guess that I am terribly frustrated with the system. I think, right now, my greatest chances - if I were to go back to teaching, um, I'd love to try teaching at a higher level. In some - if not at a higher level - then in a different setting, where some of the other distractions are removed. It would be refreshing. I'd never had this before. It would be refreshing to walk into a classroom, and everyone has paid to be there, and they wish to be there, and if they don't like

- certification
- Decision to Leave
- Likely to Retire?

Date: 02/05/05

P 3: Leaver#3.rtf

Page: 14/14

it, then they can leave. Just to try it. I'll tell you. Honestly the way my personality is, after a week, I'd probably be bored stiff, but you know. Even when I went into teaching at the high school level, I'd done so with the intent of furthering my education and, um, so I think it just lends itself.

So when you began teaching, your intent was not to retire as a teacher?

No. Certainly not in the traditional sense. No. Um. Never was. I guess it is just the type of person I am. Just like enjoying the experience of things. Um. I don't know. My mom was a teacher - lifelong. My father was an engineer. I have a little bit of both of them. I enjoy the teaching itself, but I don't think that I would necessarily be content for that length of time in one position.

Now is there anything that you would like to add?

I don't know that there is much that I can add. I hope that somehow these answers are helpful in some way, and maybe you will open up, I guess, open up some further discussion as to alternate hypotheses as to why teachers leave. Um. I know turnover is a huge problem, and even I've witnessed it in the schools I have worked at, and I am through it myself now, and it is just - I don't know how easy a nut it is to crack, and with the demand for teachers just ever increasing. Um. It is just a difficult problem.