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Individual Differences in Perceptions Impacting Teacher Retention in a Large Urban Public School District

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Individual Differences in Perceptions Impacting Teacher Retention in a Large Urban Public School District

By

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Abstract

Student achievement and school quality both suffer when there is high a rate of high teacher turnover (Adnot, Dee, Katz, & Wyckoff, 2016; Borman & Dowling, 2008) and retaining high-quality teachers has become a major challenge (TNTP, 2012). A quantitative, non-experimental research study was conducted through an electronic exit survey (Cronbach's alpha =.811) to attempt to better understand factors which may have led K-12 classroom teachers across to leave a large urban public school district during a five-year period. Of those who participated (n=252), 79.3% cited more than one reason for departure. The top three reasons cited for leaving were: inadequate salary (55.2%), stress on the job (46.0%), and dissatisfaction with supervisor (34.5%), though no factors were found to be statistically significant. Data from this study reveal the importance of an in-depth exit survey allowing departing classroom teachers to cite more than one factor for leaving, and, the level of impact that each factor had on their decision so that the data may be monitored by school district leaders to address areas of concern if statistically significant patterns are found which may lead to a higher teacher retention rate, substantial budgetary savings and increased student achievement.

Acknowledgements

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Dedication

To my sons: Jack, Kyle, and Luke. Always remember that no dream is too big.

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CHAPTER I

Individual Differences in Perceptions Impacting Teacher Retention in a Large Urban Public School District

Background

When classroom teachers depart the field of education student achievement and school quality both suffer (Adnot et al., 2016). It is critical to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of policy in order to better understand why teachers leave the profession and determine how school districts can most effectively retain the best teachers, a goal which has become a challenge for school districts across the nation in recent years (TNTP, 2012).

This should be an important goal for educational leaders in Florida, which was recently rated at an overall grade of "C" for student achievement and a grade of "D+" for school finance in an evaluation of all 50 states by *Education Week* (Lloyd & Harwin, 2016). As a result of stakeholder and policymaker demands, there are serious demands placed on classroom teachers. These demands (and the impact of such demands) on teachers should be regularly evaluated to determine whether any are statistically more likely to cause classroom teachers to stay or leave the profession and/or the school/district in which they are currently working.

Current research regarding teacher retention shows information that can be particularly concerning for educational leaders, including:

- Over 450,000 teachers choose to leave the profession every year (Carlson, 2012).
- First-year teachers have chosen to leave the profession at a rate of 13.1% which is 34% higher than it was from 1988–2008 (Ingersoll et al., 2012).
- Within the nation's 50 largest districts, 10,000 of the most outstanding teachers leave the district or the profession entirely each year (TNTP, 2012).
- Within the first 5 years of employment, 17% of classroom teachers choose to leave the

classroom (Raue & Gray, 2015).

- There are now more beginning teachers in the system than there ever have been in the modern era of education (Lavigne, 2014).
- Enrollment for pre-service education students is down at the University of Central Florida (Lagrone & Apthorp, 2017), the largest university by the number of undergraduate students in the United States in 2016 (Friedman, 2016).
- The cost of teacher turnover is equal to 30% of salary (Borman & Dowling, 2008) which translates to an average of $17,160.00 USD per teacher (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015), a cost analysis supported by Barnes, Crowe, & Schaefer (2006) who found the cost of teacher turnover to be $17,872.00 USD per unit in Chicago Public Schools.

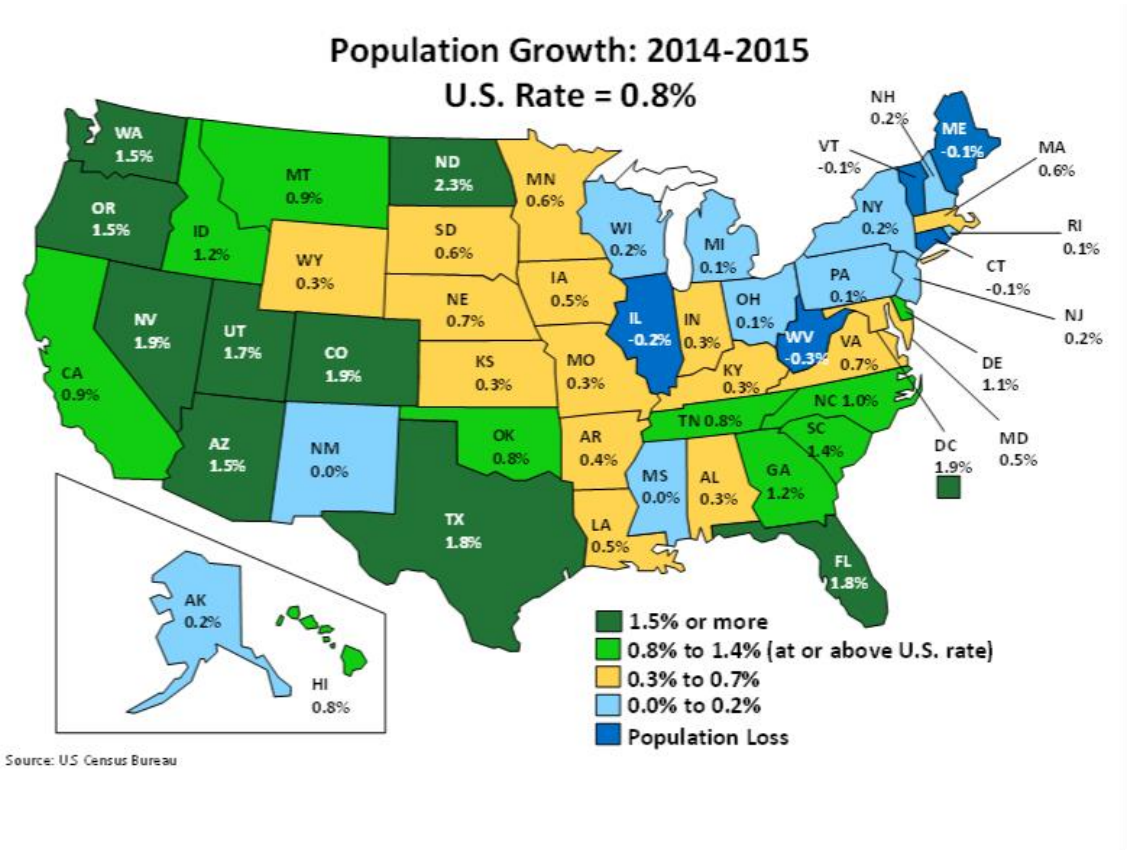
With this information available, it stands to reason that more research could and should be done to help educational leaders better understand what policies or factors most affect classroom teachers in the very personal choice to remain as a classroom teacher within their school/district, or, to seek employment in a different field. The goal of this study is to implement an exit survey in an attempt to better understand the perceptions of classroom teachers who chose to leave classroom teaching in a large urban public school district in the southeastern United States within the 5 year period of: 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17 for reasons other than retirement (n=1865).

The decision to focus on only one school district for a research study is supported by the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate (CPED) model (Hochbein, 2015) which aims to have doctoral candidates identify authentic issues within the field on education as a means of improving the quality of education for all students.

Although a revised survey within the district which was studied was released during the Institutional Review Board review phase of this research study, the survey for this study was developed specifically because the previous version of the exit survey (Appendix F) had a very limited scope as it only allowed exiting employees to choose one reason why they left the district. In addition to only allowing one reason for leaving, the previous exit survey did not allow those completing the survey to rate the impact of factors that may have contributed to the decision to leave the profession, potentially leaving extremely valuable data on the table.

Only three states had a higher net population gain than Florida in 2016 and all of the states with a higher net gain were in the mid-west (Brinkmann, 2016). Figure 1: Population Growth 2014-2015 outlines this trend of growth (Zions Bank, 2016). When looking specifically at southern Florida, the tri-county area including Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach County is currently, "the eighth-most populated in the nation" (Rabin, 2016). With such a high rate of population growth, the current teacher shortage (McGlade, 2016) is of even greater concern and relevancy since more teachers are going to be needed to meet the needs of the expanding populations as student enrollment in schools grow.

Figure 1: United States Population Growth 2014-2015 (Zions Bank, 2016)



The results of this study could be applicable to educational leaders in large, urban public school districts in the United States who may be facing a similar challenge of a growing population and a shrinking teacher workforce.

Significance of the Study

This study was centered on reviewing the perceptions of educators and potentially informing educational leaders to shape policies or make decisions based upon what former educators have reported as factors which led them to leave the district which was studied. If educational leaders have a clearer understanding of the conditions which most profoundly affect educators and their individual decisions to leave, the data might shine a light on where improvement is needed and thus lead to increased retention if those areas are addressed by

educational leaders. With over 450,000 teachers leaving the field of education each year (Carlson, 2012) there is certainly room for improvement.

What makes this study unique is that this study was not focused on just one factor but a variety of factors identified through research previously conducted on teacher turnover (Borman & Dowling, 2008; TNTP, 2012) and factors that affect it (Carlson, 2012; Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012; Goldhaber, Gross, & Player, 2011). Data revealed through this study could impact both high-performing and low-performing schools alike as research supports the notion that regardless of the performance level, attention should be given to schools with a high turnover rate (Deangelis & Presley, 2011). Interestingly, Ingersoll et al., (2016) found that the attrition level was much lower in low-performing schools where teachers had high levels of autonomy, something more typically found in high-performing schools.

As this study is written, the most in-depth study on teacher retention is a meta-analysis published by Borman & Dowling (2008). Borman & Dowling's research is cited throughout this dissertation because their landmark study combined 34 separate studies and 64 different factors potentially leading to teacher attrition.

Less than 10% of less effective teachers remain at the high-performing school site by their fifth year (West & Chingos, 2009). A personalized exit survey which is focused on determining individual differences in perceptions may lead to the ability to detect of patterns which exist in different types of schools. Armed with the appropriate information, educational leaders could control for and analyze the perceptions of teachers with the highest levels of student achievement and/or by school building site.

It is the goal of the researcher to help inform educational leaders of the reasons why teachers chose to leave the school district which was studied. As an example, overall

compensation may have a substantial impact on teachers as they determine whether or not to stay in the school district and/or the profession. One reason why is that owning a home in southern Florida can be a substantial financial challenge for educators in an urban area where the median home price is higher than the national average ($365,000.00USD) and a teacher's average salary ($49,243.00USD) is lower than the national average leading to only 25.5% of listings being within reach of the average teacher (Ostrowski, 2017). If, after statistical analysis, the data revealed this to be a statistically significant factor, educational leaders might focus on shifting budgetary allocations to increase teacher salaries, or, lobby policymakers at the state level to do so. In addition, even if the results do not detect a statistically significant pattern, this does not mean that it could not happen in the future as the economic landscape changes. The most important piece is that having a personalized exit survey would allow educational leaders to keep a pulse on the factors leading classroom teachers to leave the district on a year-to-year basis and use data to drive their decisions.

As a factor, overall compensation has even found support at the highest levels, where local superintendents are often supportive of providing higher salaries for teachers (Barreto, 2017) since it would likely lead to a more sustainable workforce. Having clear exit survey data could allow district administrators to better understand not just whether this is a factor actually leading teachers to choose to leave, but, at what level it impacts that decision. When there are concise data to show what areas need to be improved to retain teachers (ex. overall compensation), a greater focus can be put towards working to improve the specifically cited working conditions that lead to attrition.

Rationale for the Study

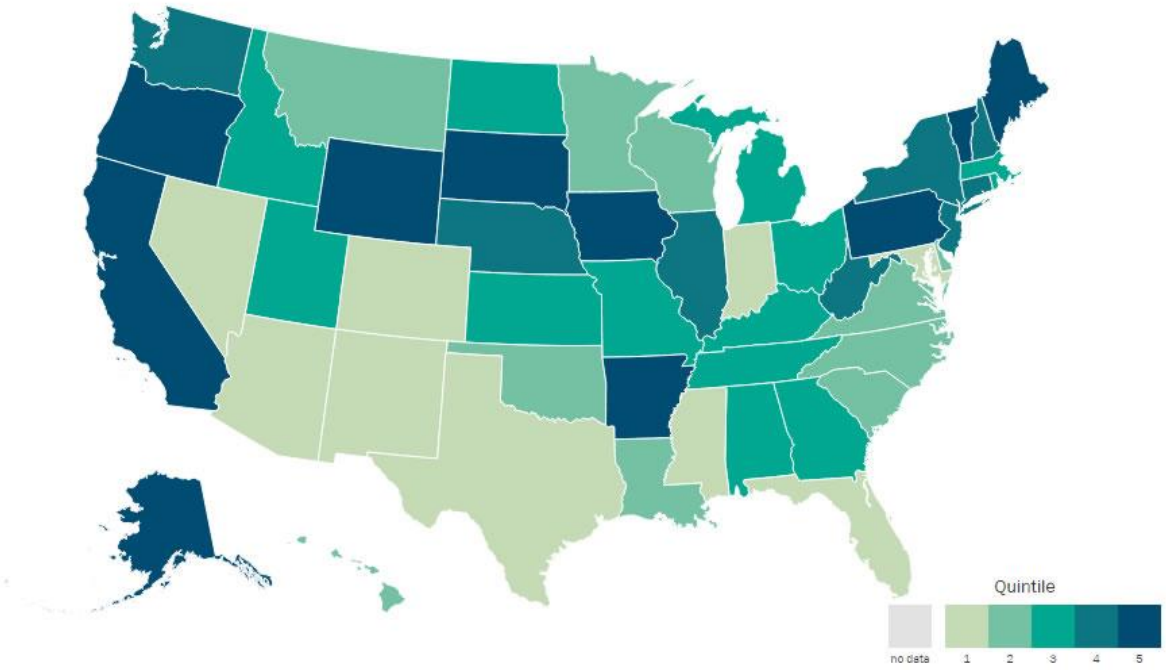
This study was specifically designed to obtain personalized perceptions from former classroom teachers within the large urban public school district which was studied with the explicit goal of better understanding individual perceptions of research-based factors which potentially impacted their decision to leave the school district being studied and/or the profession. As previously outlined, the choice to complete this study in a single district is a supported by the CPED model (Hochbein, 2015) since the goal is to contribute knowledge to the field of education as a means of addressing a problem (in this case, teacher retention). In addition, it will allow the researcher to determine whether or not the electronic survey instrument (ESI) has validity and reliability before it might be recommended for implementation in other schools/districts.

As the research by Borman & Dowling (2008, p.367) outlines, the profession of classroom teaching does not have a generally "healthy" turnover rate. According to recent research, 17% of teachers leave within the first 5 years (Raue & Gray, 2015). This concerning statistic may be able to be reduced if educational leaders better understand the perceptions of why individual classroom teachers have chosen to leave either their school site and/or school district. Implementing an exit survey that allows for the departing classroom teacher to outline factors leading to their departure, and, the level of impact of those factors could uncover valuable trends which could then be addressed with policy changes to try and stem the number of departures (Schaefer, Downey, & Clandinin, 2014).

The impending teacher shortage is so severe (McGlade, 2016), that some districts in southern Florida are making changes and developing partnerships (ex. local colleges) to increase the number of teachers in the district by training college students in their senior year, teachers'

aides, other employees without a specific background in education, and retirees to try and fill vacancies (Hackett, 2017). As shown in Figure 2: Teaching Attractiveness Rating by State, according to the Learning Policy Institute (2016), Florida ranked in the lowest quintile of states for how attractive it is for teachers, scoring particularly low on factors such as: classroom autonomy, testing-related job insecurity, percentage of inexperienced teachers, percentage of uncertified teachers, and a high percentage of teachers planning to leave teaching.

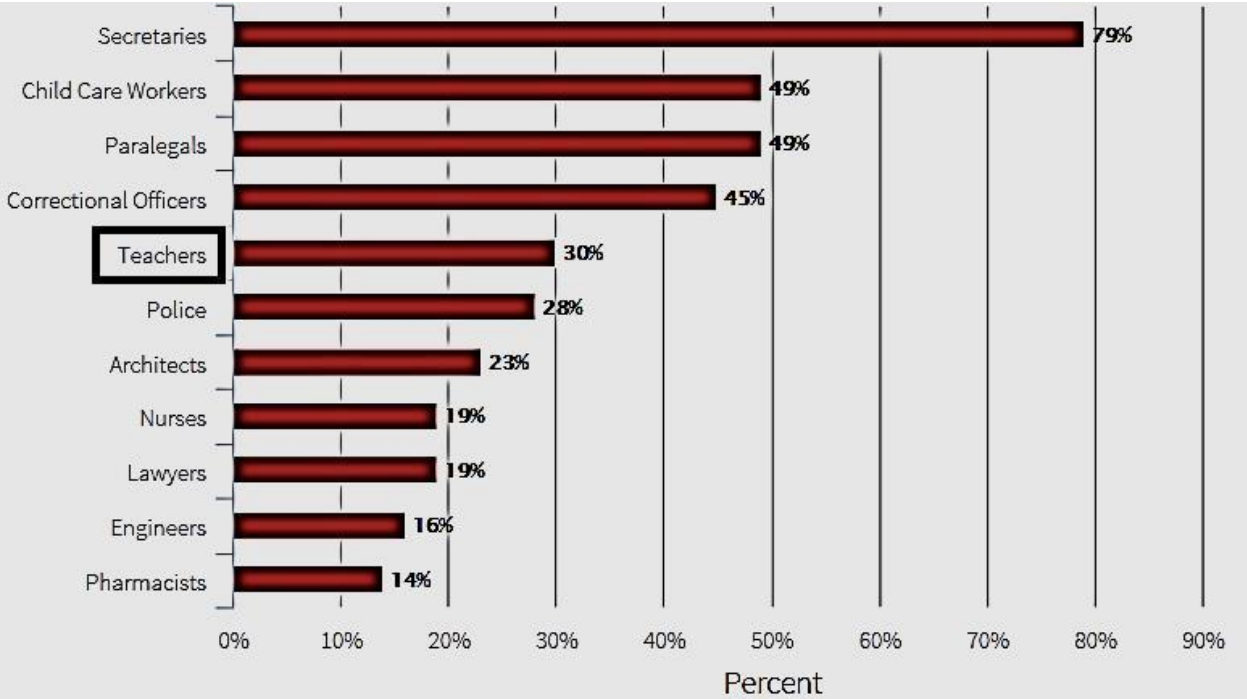
Figure 2: Teaching Attractiveness Rating by State (Learning Policy Institute, 2016)



Regardless of the reason why teachers chose to leave the school site/district, the profession, or not to enter the career of classroom teaching at all, school districts in southern Florida face an immense challenge and gotten creative to try and ensure that students have access to the bests educator possible at the start of each school year during a severe teacher shortage (Hackett, 2017).

As outlined in Figure 3 Employee Turnover by Occupation (Kan, 2014), the attrition of teachers to other careers which also require a 4-year college degree is higher than that of: police officers, architects, nurses, lawyers, engineers, and pharmacists. While it is lower than: secretaries, child care workers, and correctional officers. Overall, an attrition rate of 30% (Kan, 2014) is less than ideal for careers requiring similar levels of academic training.

Figure 3: Employee Turnover by Occupation (Kan, 2014)



Regularly reviewing personalized data from those who choose to leave classroom teaching at their current school site and/or district could lead educational leaders to a better understanding of the factors which influenced their decision to leave and thus could lead to discussions which bring forth creative solutions (Hackett, 2017) to retain better-qualified teachers and save precious and limited funding (TNTP, 2012). Research has indicated that more effective educators are more likely to remain both at their original school site and within the profession (Goldhaber et al., 2011). As outlined by TNTP (2012), the most effective teachers are

the hardest and most expensive ones to replace. This makes extensive, personalized exit data from those who are leaving the district and/or school site even more valuable for review.

Cost of attrition

Education Week assigned Florida a grade of "D+" for 2016-2017 funding levels (Morales, 2017). The low level of funding at the state level often leaves school districts with limited funding and therefore tough choices to make when it comes to allocating funds. With such tight budgets, it is hard to find a line item that does not face growing scrutiny. The high cost of teacher turnover leading to greater strain on budgets deserves a closer look (Barnes et al., 2006; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Brill & McCartney, 2008). Yet, increased teacher retention would help prevent the loss of funding that accompanies the necessary training to develop new classroom teachers into highly effective educators.

According to Borman & Dowling (2008), attrition costs school districts 30% of the salary of the employee who left. According to the most recent data available from the U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), the average teacher salary is $57,200.00 USD and, therefore, the cost of turnover is, on average, a staggering $17,160.00 USD per unit. There are many areas in which these funds could be otherwise allotted with the added benefit that increased retention could lead to increased student achievement (Adnot et al., 2016).

Theoretical Framework

This research is grounded in the theory of supply and demand which is based on the notion that within a given market the desired equilibrium is found when the supply of a given product/commodity is matched with the demand for that particular product/commodity in what is known as a "supply relationship" (Hayes, n.d.). When there is too great a supply then the price of the given product/commodity becomes lower. Conversely, when the supply is not large

enough to meet demand, the price of the given product/commodity increases.

The aforementioned teacher shortage occurring in southern Florida (McGlade, 2016) means that the supply relationship is not meeting the necessary level of demand thus leading to actions such as increased teacher recruitment and the procurement of new partnerships in an attempt to increase the local supply of qualified teachers (Hackett, 2017). Previous research has also explored the theory of supply and demand as it relates to the availability of teachers (Grissom, Viano, & Selin, 2016).

Most telling, recent research notes, "within this framework, employee turnover can be understood as resulting from factors that influence either labor demand or labor supply" (Grissom et al., 2016, p.242). This study is directly aligned with this research with the goal of first identifying potential factors leading to teacher attrition through research, using those factors to develop a stronger exit survey, and then implementing that survey in an attempt to better understand the potential impact that the identified factors had on those teachers who chose to leave the school district which was studied and bring about a restoration of the ideal equilibrium of supply and demand.

Research Design

An electronic survey instrument (ESI) was developed to be sent to prospective participants due to limited cost outlay and a higher convenience level for the potential participant. As such, this study assumes that prospective participants are effective users of computers and email. Since teachers are required to monitor email communication from a variety of stakeholders on a daily basis, it is likely that most, if not all, potential participants would have the proficiency level needed to complete the ESI.

Survey research outlines a limited difference in response rates when comparing electronic and paper survey methodologies (Hohwu et al., 2013). Other options for survey delivery (ex. by phone, in person interviews, or by physical mail) were found to be either too costly or time intensive to work within the parameters of this research study. Through the ESI model, prospective participants could read the informed consent letter, determine their willingness to participate, and fully complete the ESI without taking an abundance of time.

Research Questions and Assumptions

At its core, this study has three primary research questions:

Q1. To what degree, if any, do research-based factors (listed below) impact teachers who chose to leave?

- High-performance culture
- Support from administration
- High-stakes testing
- Overall compensation
- Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-based Pay
- Professional collaboration
- Professional Development
- Administrative support with student discipline
- Student demographics
- Student behavior
- Teacher turnover
- New teacher induction program
- Job-related stress

Q2. Of the factors studied in Q1, which factor(s) have the greatest influence on teachers who chose to leave?

Q3. Of the factor(s) noted to have the greatest influence in Q2, at what level do factors such as age, gender, or race/ethnicity demonstrate a connection with the findings?

These three questions require some assumptions, namely that there are identifiable and potentially statistically significant factors which have an impact on the decisions of former classroom teachers to leave the district being studied (or the profession entirely), and, of those significant factors, some will rank higher in importance than others. It is assumed, then, that when analyzed these data could provide incredibly valuable information to educational leaders looking to focus on improving areas which often lead to turnover.

This study could reveal misconceptions in popular beliefs as to which factors may have a greater impact than others. For example, one must consider that classroom teacher compensation is one of the most widely covered topics related to education in the news each year locally in southern Florida (Hyman, 2017; Isger, 2016; Marra, 2016; Solomon, 2016). Certainly, it is within the best interest of classroom teachers to seek the most lucrative contract each year, but, this commonly covered factor impacting classroom teachers could lead to other factors being under-reported or entirely ignored.

Limitations of the study

This study took place in one large, urban public school district in southern Florida. While this limitation could be considered a threat to external validity, the single-district dissertation is supported by research (Hochbein, 2015). Generalizable results from data analysis may be limited to other large, urban public school districts in the same geographical area.

Although the research-based factors to be contained within the ESI were carefully reviewed before being included, there may be other factors not included that led to classroom teachers deciding to leave the district being studied and/or the profession (Borman & Dowling, 2008). No one particular factor can tell the whole story on the variety of factors which may have an impact on a particular teacher's decision to leave the profession.

Prospective participants needed to be able to effectively use a computer and email in order to complete the survey. Current research shows a very minor difference in survey response rates conducted on paper compared to online (Hohwu et al., 2013). As the utilization of email as a classroom teacher is one of the many requirements of the position, it is likely the pool of potential participants primarily includes those who have the skills needed to navigate and complete the ESI and therefore this limitation should have a minor impact, if any, on the results.

The potential for a former employee to have changed his/her personal email address since it was first obtained by the district could limit participation. Due to the size of the sample (n=1865), it will not be possible for the researcher to contact each potential participant whose emailed invitation to participate is identified as undeliverable. As an additional limitation, as a former employee, potential participants may not note value in participation, especially if the former employee left on negative terms.

Every effort has been made to make the ESI as simple to complete as possible; however, the survey must be fully completed in one sitting. Due to a wide variety of reasons, potential participants may choose not to participate due to heavy demands on their time which could lead to a low response rate. Participants may choose to begin and not finish the survey. If this is the case, the results from their responses will not be utilized in statistical calculations.

It is possible that former educators also receive many emails each day on their personal email address and therefore the invitation to participate could have been ignored and/or lost in the shuffle of a busy email inbox. This could lead to a lower response rate and, to mitigate this, a 14-day timeframe was established for the collection of data with three email reminders sent to each potential participant at the 5, 10, and 13-day mark.

Delimitations of the study

Previous research on teacher retention helped create a foundation for the framework of this research study (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Deangelis & Presley, 2011; Goldhaber et al., 2011; Raue & Gray, 2015; Schaefer et al., 2014). Though teacher retention can be broad in terms of scope, the researcher has set boundaries, noted here as delimitations, for relevant sub-topics which will not be studied within this particular research.

One major relevant sub-topic which could not be included in this study was the question of whether or not the district is taking the most appropriate steps to recruit the most talented potential educators available. The pool of applicants for teaching positions could have a direct impact on the number of teachers who choose to remain in the profession if many are not from the local area due to potential variables including a longing to return home, economic factors, or family-based factors. While this topic is deserving of study, it could not be measured within this research study.

Although it has been noted that, “the attrition of the weakest teachers from the teaching profession improves the overall quality of the system’s teachers” (Goldhaber et al., 2011, p.66), this study will not attempt to define why certain schools are more successful at removing teachers who are less effective than others.

Finally, there are factors currently being identified as reasons contributing to the shortage of teachers in Florida, specifically the potential connection of the now more-challenging Florida Teacher Certification Exams and the drop in student enrollment in collegiate programs leading to teacher certification (Lagrone & Apthorp, 2017).

Definition of Terms

- Attrition: the rate at which classroom teachers choose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.
- Elementary school: a public school which primarily serves students in grades Pre-K-5.
- Electronic survey instrument (ESI): the electronic exit survey created for this study which was sent to prospective participants to collect data.
- High-stakes testing: standardized tests which require set procedures for all students taking that particular test (ex. SAT, ACT, AICE, Advanced Placement, end-of-course exams, etc.).
- High school: a public school which primarily serves students in grades 9-12.
- Middle school: a public school which primarily serves students in grades 6-8.
- Research-based factor: a factor, supported by previous research, which may have an impact on an individual classroom teacher's decision to leave the profession.
- Retention: the rate at which classroom teachers choose to stay within the profession of classroom teaching.
- School administrative leadership: the school-based administration including the principal, assistant principal(s), dean(s), teachers on special assignment, etc.
- Value Added Model / Merit-Based Pay: a system in which a portion of classroom teacher compensation is tied, in part, to the performance of students on a standardized exam.

Organization of the Remainder of the Study

Chapter II, the review of related literature, outlines the research leading to the factors included on the ESI. In Chapter III, the methodology of the study defines how this study was conducted so that, if desired, it could be replicated by future researchers. In Chapter IV, the results of the data collected are outlined and findings are reported. The study concludes with Chapter V, where conclusions from the data will be drawn and recommendations for future research related to classroom teacher retention are made.

CHAPTER II

Introduction

An electronic survey instrument (ESI) in the form of an exit survey was created for this study to collect data related to the perceptions of classroom teachers who left a large, urban public school district during a 5-year period (2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17) for reasons other than retirement to determine which research-based factors, if any, have an impact on the decision of each individual to leave their school site/district and/or the profession entirely. The purpose of this research study was to better understand the perceptions of classroom teachers related to each research-based factor in order to determine if any trends within the data could be detected. If so, policies/decisions related to any statistically significant factors could be closely examined by district-level administrators as a means of attempting to increasing teacher retention, realize budgetary savings, and help to improve student achievement.

Public school districts in southern Florida are experiencing a shortage of highly qualified teacher applicants (Hackett, 2017; McGlade, 2016) even with substantial population growth (Brinkmann, 2016; Rabin, 2016). In addition, the most recent meta-analysis of teacher attrition and retention Borman & Dowling (2008, p. 367) noted that the turnover rate among teachers was less than what one would consider a "healthy" level.

A comprehensive approach was taken when reviewing the most appropriate research-based factors to include within the ESI. Due to the time limitations that may affect potential participants, the number of factors has been limited to those which seem the most likely to have an impact based on previous research. This review of related research will include research for each factor included on the ESI as a means of justifying its presence within the survey.

Research-Based Factors to be Included on the ESI

In the initial exit survey for the district which was studied (Appendix F), teachers who were leaving the district being studied were asked to choose from one of the following reasons for departing. In the ESI for this study, this section will remain the same, though it now includes, "dissatisfaction with curriculum" as an option, and, those taking the survey will be permitted to choose all options that apply rather than only one. Some of these choices mirror the research-based factors for which former teachers will be asked to rate the level at which the factor impacted their decision to leave while others do not. If participants chose more than one reason from the list of reasons for leaving, it would demonstrate that teachers can have more than one particular reason for choosing to leave rather than only one, highlighting the need for a more in-depth exit survey. The choices are as follows:

- Dislike / unsuitable for assigned duties
- Dissatisfaction with supervisor
- Dissatisfaction with curriculum
- Family / personal reasons
- Inadequate benefits
- Inadequate salary
- Job-related stress
- Lack of opportunity for advancement
- Relocation
- Resignation after a leave of absence
- Resignation in lieu of involuntary termination
- Return to continuing education

High-performance school culture

Measuring the perceptions of those who have chosen to leave will provide insight into whether or not a high-performance culture is leading teachers to leave the district which was studied. According to previous research (Burkhauser, 2016; Johnson, Kraft, & Papay, 2011; Wynn, Carboni, & Patall, 2007), school culture/climate and the working conditions of teachers have shown to be of great importance which makes this factor worthy of inclusion in the ESI.

When educational researchers recently looked specifically at some of the different elements of school culture, it was noted that, "improvements in school leadership especially, as well as in academic expectations, teacher relationships, and school safety are all independently associated with corresponding reductions in teacher turnover" (Kraft, Marinell, & Yee, 2016, p.1411). All of these factors play a role in the greater concept of the school culture which district-level leaders help school-based administrators shape.

In a study of specific teacher perceptions, it was found that the perceptions of novice teachers did not vary significantly from their more experienced peers when considering the climate of the school (Pogodzinski, 2013). As a result of these previous findings, classroom teacher years of experience will not be a variable specifically considered when reviewing results of this factor. This particular finding is important to note because it confirms that school culture/climate, an intangible quality, is often perceived the same way at a given school site whether someone is new to the profession or not.

Research on teachers who have chosen to seek transfers to other schools indicated that the work environment/culture of the school (including collaboration and administrative guidance) played a big role in the decision to leave a current school site (Brill & McCartney, 2008). As a result, the culture of the school cannot be taken lightly by the lead school-site

administrator who must set the tone for expectations of the employees within the school. This idea is reinforced by research which shows that beginning teachers who chose to remain within the school site were noted as citing a positive school climate and strong administrative leadership as important to them (Wynn et al., 2007).

School administrative leadership

A factor to be included in the ESI is whether or not school administrative leadership made an impact on individual classroom teachers' decision to leave the district being studied and/or the profession. To support having this particular factor a deep body of research exhibits a connection between individual teacher retention decisions and school administrative leadership.

A recent study of schools in New York finds that, "teachers' perceptions of the school administration has by far the greatest influence on teacher retention decisions … [and] … the support of administrators emerges as a particularly important factor in retention decisions" (Boyd et al., 2010, p.303). The results of this study reinforce the concept that strong, positive leadership is extremely important and is a major driving factor in teacher retention decisions.

When teacher perceptions of the school working environment were studied, it was found that perceptions varied based upon the particular principal in place at a given school, regardless of other school and district factors, and the recommendation was made that, "districts struggling with teacher turnover should assess climate and use that information to advise and support principals" (Burkhauser, 2016, p.126).

It is essential to note that classroom teachers repeatedly cite that support is needed to effectively complete their job and find job satisfaction. A number of formal research studies find teachers chose to leave the profession due to a perceived lack of support from school administration (Brill & McCartney, 2008; Curtis, 2009; Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, & Labat, 2015).

Previous research shows that there is a very positive connection between strong leadership and teacher retention, especially among principals who are servant leaders, defined as those who are primarily dedicated to serving others (Shaw & Newton, 2014). This is particularly true at schools where teachers felt that, "the principals in their buildings were supportive, encouraging, had effective communication, and recognized accomplishments of teachers" (Carlson, 2012, p.52), a finding aligned with the seminal study on teacher retention research completed by Borman & Dowling (2008, p.390) when they noted that, "… studies that operationalized administrative support using a 5-point Likert-type scale reveal a reduction in the odds of attrition associated with more positive ratings of support."

High-stakes testing

As a means of attempting to determine whether or not students learn material and/or experienced academic achievement growth, high-stakes standardized testing is a regular occurrence in public and private schools nationwide. This testing model often results in teachers working hard to ensure that the students are adequately prepared to take rigorous tests and show proficiency, a factor that is not aligned with what teachers, when polled, specifically cited as a reason to get into the profession (Lavigne, 2014). In many instances, this leads to teachers guiding instruction and pacing based on the items to be tested (commonly referred to as "teaching to the test"). In addition, added pressure comes when teacher compensation is connected to student performance on said high-stakes examinations, a factor which is described in greater depth later in this chapter (Podgursky & Springer, 2006; Springer, 2009).

Some of the exponentially increased emphasis on testing came as a result of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) (U.S. Congress, 2002) which, had the noble goal of increasing student achievement, though, NCLB also led to a vast increase in the amount of pressure that classroom

teachers faced (Brill & McCartney, 2008) to ensure that, when tested, their students perform at or above grade level.

Previous studies which have looked specifically at the impact of high-stakes testing on teacher retention decisions find that the added pressure that comes along with this testing does contribute to the decision to leave the profession (Thibodeaux et al., 2015). In addition, the high-stakes evaluations go hand-in-hand with this type of testing could play a role in teachers deciding to leave (Lavigne, 2014).

It is reasonable to consider that high-stakes testing may continue to have an impact on teacher retention decisions. If so, this information will be valuable as policies are created and stakeholders and district leaders communicate with state leaders who develop policies related to high-stakes testing in future school years.

Overall compensation

There is no denying that classroom teachers, regardless of whether they work in a high-performance school or a Title I (high-poverty) school, work incredibly hard for what they earn which, in many cases, is substantially lower than what could be earned in the private sector for comparable work (Allegretto & Mishel, 2016). Teacher compensation is often a subject covered by the local news in southern Florida (Barreto, 2017; Hyman, 2017; Isger, 2016; Marra, 2016; Solomon, 2016).

Previous research shows there is a substantial difference between levels of compensation and classroom retention when it comes to base salary (Raue & Gray, 2015). Specifically, "97% of teachers who earned more than $40,000.00USD their first year returned the next year, compared with 87% who earned less than $40,000.00USD. By the fifth year, 89% of those earning $40,000.00 or more were still on the job, compared with 80% earning less than

$40,000.00USD" (Raue & Gray, 2015, p.3).

When teacher perceptions of compensation were studied by other researchers, it revealed that lower retention rates were related directly to low salary levels (Croft, Roberts, & Stenhouse, 2016; Curtis, 2009; Wynn et al., 2007), and, this pattern held true even when controlled for teachers with 0 to 5 years of experience or 6 to 30 years of experience (Borman & Dowling, 2008).

For some teachers, overall compensation has become a source of serious dissatisfaction. When interviewed, a science teacher in Charlotte, North Carolina made the following statement:

> *I am so tired of being lied to about how important I am and how valuable I am.... I am also sick and tired of politicians making my profession the center of attention and paying it lip-service by visiting a school, kneeling next to a child, shaking my hand and thanking me, telling the nightly news that I deserve a raise, and then proceeding to speak through the budget that I am not worth it. If you aren't going to do anything, and you know nothing will change, just leave me alone. I would rather be ignored than disrespected.* (Croft et al., 2016)

After looking specifically at retention rates related to compensation, other researchers state that, "the data seemed to indicate that schools in this study interested in increasing teacher retention rates should consider increasing salaries" (Hughes, 2012, p. 245). Since the starting salary of the district which was studied is already above the threshold of $40,000.00 which research suggests should lead to a higher retention rate (Raue & Gray, 2015), including this factor on the ESI will allow district officials to better understand whether or not former classroom teachers feel that the compensation they received was adequate. If this area shows by responses on the ESI as a major reason for departure, this information could be incredibly valuable when reviewing budgets for potential teacher salary increase allocations.

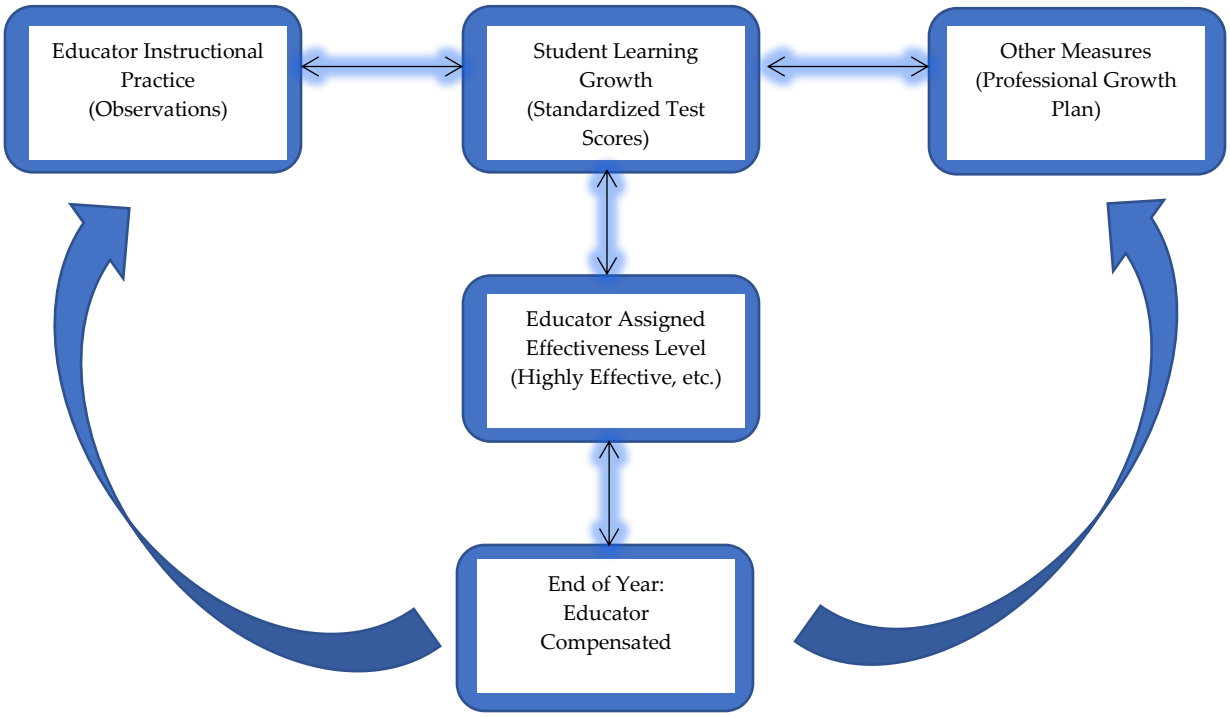
Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay

As a result of a desire for increased accountability on the part of classroom teachers and administrators, the development of merit-based pay compensation systems has been encouraged across the nation (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.) with grants specifically created as a way to encourage this specific research (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). As Borman & Dowling (2008) note, policy and initiatives can be used to address teacher turnover and this is one policy that may have an impact on individual classroom teacher perceptions and retention decisions which is worthy of study.

On July 1, 2011, the State of Florida formally implemented Senate Bill 736 which was called the "Student Success Act" (The Florida Senate, 2011). The purpose of this act is to hold educators and administrators accountable for the achievement of students for whom they serve. Based on this policy, the evaluation and compensation of teachers and administrators are tied, at least in part, to the achievement of students on formal standardized assessments.

As depicted in Figure 4: Sample Merit-Based Compensation Model, a merit-based compensation system is currently in place in the district which was studied which makes the topic relevant for inclusion on the ESI as it is valuable to understand whether or not this policy directly affects teacher retention decisions.

Figure 4: Sample Merit-Based Pay Compensation Model



Merit-based pay is controversial in many ways. For example, Michigan made it law for school districts to implement merit-based pay but, recently, several school districts have chosen to blatantly ignore this law (Gantert, 2015). In Ohio, a major strike was only avoided when teachers and district officials came to an agreement that led to the cancellation of the current contract which included merit-based pay (O'Donnell, 2016).

Recent research on teacher perceptions of merit-based pay vary. In one study, it was found that, "teachers in merit pay districts were less enthusiastic, did not think teaching was important, and were more likely to leave for better pay" (Gius, 2013, p. 4444), but, the same study also reported that teachers who worked in districts with merit-based pay found more job satisfaction when compared to their peers who did not. In another study, teachers cited concerns about the system itself, namely: factors that the teacher cannot control (attendance or students assigned to them), measurement problems (ensuring that the high-stakes standardized test results

are reliable and valid), target issues (narrowing curriculum to tested material only), morale issues, and sustainable budgeting (Ramirez, 2010).

When reviewing research which attempts to connect merit-based pay and teacher retention, it can become evident that it is harder for low-performing schools to retain teachers compared to high-performing schools, and, that schools under sanctions for low-performance had the hardest time of all with teacher retention (Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2016). In one study, merit-based pay led to an increase in the decision of low-performing teachers to voluntarily leave the profession and simultaneously found that the performance of teachers who stayed in the system improved, "by 0.27 of a teacher-level standard deviation," and, that the financial incentives led to an increase in performance for the teachers who were already high-performing (Dee & Wyckoff, 2015, p.267). These findings are supported by an additional study which determines that when teachers earned a financial bonus, they were more likely to decide to return to the classroom (Fulbeck, 2014).

Macro-level research by the National Center on Performance Initiatives (NCPI) analyzes several models including the District Awards for Teacher Excellence (DATE) program in Texas (Springer et al., 2012) and the Project on Incentives in Teaching (POINT) in Tennessee (Springer et al., 2010). In the POINT study conducted across three academic years, it was found that, in general, even when teachers were offered large financial bonuses student performance was not substantially greater than when there was no large bonus offered (Springer et al., 2010). While completing the DATE study, the NCPI researchers found that, "the probability of turnover surged among teachers who did not receive a DATE award, while it fell sharply among teachers who did receive such an award" (Springer et al., 2012, p.121).

Although this research study will not aim to determine whether or not merit-based pay is effective or not, it is notable that the body of research demonstrates this policy does have an effect on school districts and classroom teachers. As a result, this factor is worthy of inclusion on the ESI to determine if this compensation model is specifically affecting individual teacher retention decisions within the district which was studied.

Collaboration among teachers

Outstanding classroom teaching often requires an immense amount of time and effort which is needed for myriad assignments including creating lesson plans, developing assessments, and carefully considering the many different moving parts that come along with a classroom full of pupils (Vermette, 2008). Due to the very demanding nature of a teaching position, collaboration among teachers can make a major difference in the amount of time one might need to spend on a particular task (McClure, 2008). It can also increase the quality of work that is completed because collaboration can allow teachers to bring their different strengths and talents to the table which could ultimately lead to better learning materials for the students and also overall decrease the amount of work that a single teacher needs to do to plan a lesson, assessment, or unit (Berry & Daughtrey, 2009).

With the role that collaboration among teachers plays, it stands to reason that collaboration may have an impact on teacher retention decisions. The seminal meta-analysis conducted by Borman & Dowling (2008, p.390), reports that, "a greater reported prevalence of school-based teacher networks and opportunities for collaboration was related to lower attrition rates." These findings support those reported by Brill & McCartney (2008) who report that when teachers were looking to transfer schools, they often cited they were searching for a school that had an environment more conducive to collaboration with colleagues including getting support,

respect, and appropriate advice from administration.

Further research shows when a teacher serves in an environment that is positive, collaborative, and supportive, they are more likely to choose to stay in that particular school than those who report a more negative and less collaborative environment (Carlson, 2012). This trend includes teachers who are new to the profession where the school climate (to include collaboration) plays a role in retention decisions as well (Wynn et al., 2007).

Including this factor on the ESI will allow the district which was studied to better understand whether or not collaboration among teachers has an impact on teachers who chose to leave the district and/or the profession.

Availability of relevant professional development available for teachers

Data on teacher perceptions regarding the availability of relevant professional development is scarce, perhaps due to the wide scope and depth of professional development offered by differing school districts and states. Since many states require public school teachers to complete professional development to renew certification, professional development is often necessary. For educational leaders, ensuring the availability high-quality and relevant professional development offerings are available to classroom teachers is essential (TNTP, 2015). Researchers estimate that school districts spend approximately $18,000 per teacher, per year on professional development, and, that the 50 largest school districts (combined) in the United States spend over $8 billion annually on professional development (TNTP, 2015). In a global society that is rapidly evolving, it is essential for schools and districts to strive for continuous improvement to meet the changing needs of 21st-century students.

Many people rely on the internet to learn new information. It should come as no surprise that many school districts are shifting professional development to an online platform. In a

major study conducted on teacher perceptions of electronic professional development, researchers found that when professional development was easy to use, relevant/useful, and had a social aspect that teachers reported they were more likely to be willing to continue to use online professional development (Smith & Sivo, 2012). The findings of this study should be of substantial relevance to educational leaders as shifting to an online model could help offset the cost of bringing training personnel to different school sites.

A major report on professional development reports that between 65-67% of classroom teachers were satisfied with the professional development that had been presented to them, and only 40-44% of teachers felt that the professional development offered had been a good use of their time (TNTP, 2015). This underscores the room for improvement that teachers, when asked, have previously cited. Having relevant professional development available is essential for teacher growth.

Although professional development can help a teacher to improve his/her practice over time, there is no substitute for experience as research shows, "the difference in performance between an average first-year teacher and an average fifth-year teacher was more than nine times the difference between an average fifth-year teacher and an average twentieth-year teacher" (TNTP, 2015, p.14).

If a lack of relevant professional development is a factor that impacts teacher retention decisions then it is an area that needs to be reviewed and addressed. Including this factor on the ESI will allow the district which was studied to better understand how former teachers perceived what was available to them for professional development and may provide insight into areas of growth leading directly to increased retention.

Administrative support with student discipline

Teachers can and should expect to find support in the unfortunate event that a student misbehaves and causes a disruption to the learning environment that warrants attention and/or disciplinary action from school administration. If students are not held accountable for their actions, it stands to reason that the inappropriate behavior could continue and even possibly get worse. If the teacher is making a genuine attempt to hold students accountable for their actions by referring the student to school administration and the teacher does not feel supported, it could potentially lead to job dissatisfaction.

Two studies regarding administrative support with regard to student discipline report that: (1) 56% of teachers polled cited they strongly agreed the school administration was consistent with discipline and was there to support the teacher when they needed it (Carlson, 2012), and, (2) that teachers cited poor student behavior as having an impact on the level of job satisfaction (De Witt & Lessing, 2012).

Some teachers go so far as to say they are concerned with writing discipline referrals or contacting administration for fear of being blamed for not being able to properly manage their students (Amos, 2017; Duncan, 2012). Thus, teachers feel they are pressured not to report the misbehavior and therefore perceive they are treated poorly by both parties: the misbehaving student and the uncaring administration (Duncan, 2012). This leads to a cycle wherein the student can misbehave repeatedly and thus negatively impact the educational environment for the other students in the class.

The concerns of teachers can go even further than the pressure or concern to not report discipline for fear of retribution. Some teachers cite they often do not know the outcome of a disciplinary situation, or, if it was even handled at all (despite a clear directive in the handbook

that completed disciplinary records were due back to the reporting teacher within 24 hours) (Anderson, 2012).

While informal surveys of teachers show mixed reviews of disciplinary support for teachers from school administration (Amos, 2017), much of this perception could be potentially attributed to the relationships school administrators must build with teachers and with the community (Adams, 2016). Better understanding the perceptions of former teachers could help educational leaders in the district which was studied to better understand whether or not the level of student disciplinary support provided had an impact on teachers' decisions to leave the profession, and, if an issue exists, to review policies to determine how to better support teachers and more effectively protect the learning environment.

Student body demographics

Every student deserves to be valued and brings a unique personality and background to the table. Each school contains within its confines a different set of students and faculty who together share the educational setting. Some school sites are very diverse with students from many different backgrounds and cultures while other school sites may include a student population where many share a similar background and culture. Previous studies show that the composition of the student body within a school can lead to an impact on teacher retention decisions (Borman & Dowling, 2008).

Borman & Dowling (2008) found schools with a greater population of students with a low socio-economic status (SES) were more likely to have a higher rate of attrition (1.05 times greater) than those with a smaller population of low-SES students. In addition, the same study found that at schools where more than 20% of the student body was eligible for free lunch, the attrition rate was 1.73 times greater than those who had less than 20% of the student body

eligible for free lunch. The study also found that schools which were the most diverse where the majority of the population was, "African American, Latino, or African American and Latino" had an attrition rate up to three times greater than schools which predominantly had White students.

In a more recent study of teacher retention in New York City, White teachers were more likely to stay in a given location if the student body was predominantly White compared to a more diverse population and, conversely, that teachers who were Black or Hispanic were more likely to stay in schools which had a greater population of non-White students (Marinell et al., 2013). In addition, when more teacher turnover data were reviewed, it revealed that, "there also appears to be heterogeneity in mobility behavior across the performance distribution and evidence that teacher mobility is affected by student demographics and achievement levels" (Goldhaber et al., 2011, p.57).

Student body behavior

Teachers deserve to expect support with student behavioral issues from the school-based administration to ensure that the learning environment is protected. Specifically, teachers, administrators, and school staff may work very hard to create a high-performance culture, but, if the student body has a whole does not buy into that culture, it could lead to teacher frustration and thus burnout.

Student body behavior/discipline has been cited as a top-three factor which has led teachers to decide to leave the profession and seek employment elsewhere (Thibodeaux et al., 2015). This finding was mirrored in a study by Brill & McCartney (2008) which found that, "disruptive students" is the factor that teachers rated the second-highest when answering questions related to why they had left the profession.

In a case study of four completely different schools, even in the, “most functional” of the schools studied, teachers cited that students misbehaving was a source of serious frustration for teachers, and, that teacher turnover itself may, “influence, and be influenced by, teacher turnover” (Marinell et al., 2013). This alarming finding has a serious undertone, namely that by not addressing teacher turnover rates, schools and school districts may be perpetuating a cycle of misbehavior.

Reviewing data aligned with student body behavior coming from the perceptions of former teachers could give deeper insight into the culture of behavior which exists in the district. Results could allow district administrators to get a general sense of what behaviors are like at different levels while protecting the anonymity of school sites by only asking the participants to identify the level at which they taught and not what specific school site they were at.

Other teachers choosing to leave the classroom

One factor for which little previous research exists is on whether or not decisions made by peers/colleagues have an impact on the personal choices of others. Chiefly, in this case, whether or not teachers seeing others choose to leave the profession had an impact on those who may be debating whether or not to stay in the profession and then end up choosing to leave, at least in part, because they saw others choose to leave and find greater satisfaction in another career field.

Research shows that, even from the very beginning of their careers, mobility is on the minds of many classroom teachers. According to research by Raue & Gray (2015), by the second year of teaching, 16% of teachers chose to move to a new school site or school district and, of those, only 20% moved due contract non-renewal or involuntary transfer.

Interestingly, this trend appears across schools with varying levels of performance and not just high- or low-performing schools with researchers specifically citing that, “there also appears to be heterogeneity in mobility behavior across the performance distribution and evidence that teacher mobility is affected by student demographics and achievement levels” (Goldhaber et al., 2011, p.57). This research helps validate that the issue impacts more than just schools whose students are struggling.

When one considers the impact of the POINT study conducted in Tennessee where teachers were incentivized with the potential for large financial bonuses, research reveals that when teachers worked in schools which had lower performing students making the ability for one to earn the bonus more challenging, it created a reason to depart from those types of schools (Springer, Swain, & Rodriguez, 2016). As teachers choose to leave those schools, and, perhaps report higher job satisfaction and/or higher salary/benefits, it stands to reason that those who chose to stay might re-consider doing so.

This domino-type effect may be playing a role in the decision of classroom teachers to remain within the classroom in which they teach regardless of the academic setting or performance level of the school. Knowing whether or not those choosing to leave have done so, at least in part, because of the decisions of others might speak to the need for longevity-based incentives to help retain those who might be considering leaving the profession, potentially negatively affecting student achievement and certainly negatively affecting the budget of the district which was studied.

New teacher induction programs

While teacher attrition is not solely limited to new teachers, a factor which could relate to retaining those new to the profession is new teacher induction programs. As noted by Borman &

Dowling (2008, p.390), “the percentage of beginning teachers participating in a school mentoring program was also a statistically significant predictor of attrition …. greater participation in the programs [was] associated with a reduced likelihood of attrition.” As a result, specific attention could be paid to whether or not those who chose to leave felt that the induction program offered by the district which was studied impacted that decision on some level.

Research shows that when an induction program is poorly put together and loosely structured the program can have a serious negative impact on the incoming new teacher (Brill & McCartney, 2008). When surveyed, 69% of teachers cited they had been observed by their mentor three hours or less in the previous school year, and, 85% had observed their mentor three hours or less in the previous school year (Wynn et al., 2007).

When teachers are initially assigned mentors, 92% chose to continue into their second year and 86% chose to remain in the classroom five years later, as compared to 84% who returned for a second year after not being assigned a mentor and 71% still remaining after five years (Raue & Gray, 2015). This finding supports the mentoring aspect of the induction program currently in place in the district which is being studied, and, and its alignment with practices associated with higher retention rates.

When teachers at the elementary/middle school level, have a strong mentor, the beginning teacher is more likely to have greater success managing the work that has been assigned to them, and, the support from other staff members around them help lead them to be more likely to fulfill other requirements of the job successfully (Pogodzinski, 2013). This research speaks to the need for a positive climate within the school site to help the beginning teacher find success.

As there are myriad demands on beginning teachers, induction programs are designed specifically to help teachers gain the knowledge needed to find success in their first year and beyond. As an induction program can substantially change over time, this particular factor will only be limited to those who have three years of experience or less to keep the findings more relevant.

Overall workload/stress

Teachers, in general, are expected to prepare their students and help them achieve at rigorous academic levels. As a result of the pressure to help students succeed, many teachers have stated that they have found their position stressful (Collie et al., 2012; Richards, 2012; The Pennsylvania State University, 2016) and some of that stress can be due to an overwhelming workload (Brill & McCartney, 2008), sometimes leading to burnout/exhaustion (Arens & Morin, 2016) and even causing a physiological anti-stress hormone response in their students (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). Based on these findings, having a better understanding of whether those who have left the district which was studied due to a heavy overall workload/stress would provide insight into the working culture that exists for teachers within the district.

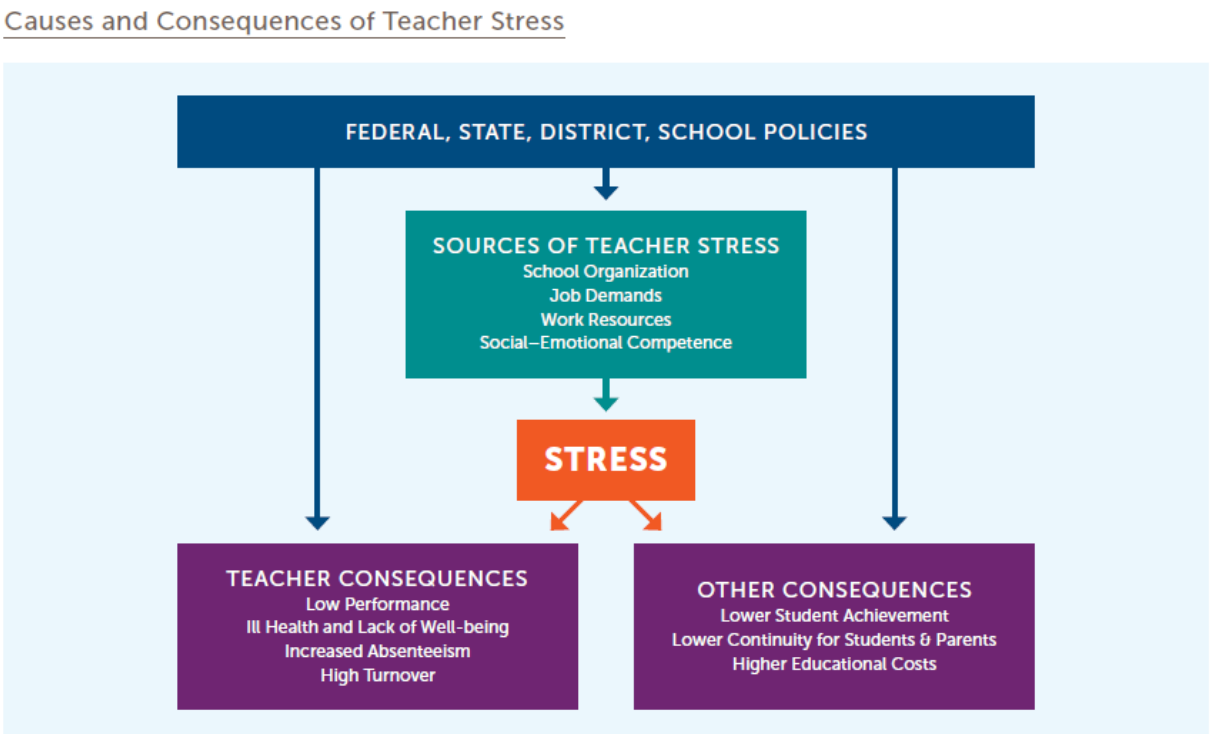
A national survey found that many teachers across the country cited they were stressed, with primary reasons including: little time to relax, feeling over-committed, teaching students who need additional attention without support, teaching students who are not motivated, and, the pressure associated with being held accountable for student success (Richards, 2012). This information provides insight into just a few areas that can lead teachers to feel stressed. This study could provide insight and a better understanding of whether or not this stress leads teachers to leave the district being studied and/or the profession of classroom teaching.

Other previous studies found that studying teacher perceptions of climate and stress can lead to a wealth of understanding that can lead to corrective action on the part of the school climate, learning environment, but also to help better understand what motivates teachers (Collie et al., 2012). This could be crucial information for those who are leading schools or districts and information that, was not being collected via the previously used exit survey within the district which was studied (Appendix F) when teachers chose to leave the profession during the timeframe associated with this research study.

In addition to the factors previously listed which can contribute to teacher stress, one cannot ignore the growing class sizes (Baker, 2016) as a factor which outlines how teachers are often held accountable for large groups of students and that, as a result, it becomes markedly harder to help meet the needs of each individual student.

In a major study developed by The Pennsylvania State University (2016), 46% of teachers surveyed cited that they found high levels of stress in their occupation, negatively affecting their sleep patterns, ability to teach to the best of their ability each day, and, even their overall quality of life outside of school. The study also found that there are four primary sources of stress for classroom teachers, as depicted in Figure 5 below: school organization, job demands, work resources, and social-emotional competence (The Pennsylvania State University, 2016). While this study will be limited in its scope and will not be able to determine the specific source of stress for teachers, it will allow for a better understanding of whether or not the teachers who have chosen to leave the district which was studied felt a level of stress that led them to leave the district being studied and/or the profession of classroom teaching.

Figure 5: Causes and Consequences of Teacher Stress (The Pennsylvania State University, 2016)



Research indicates that stress not only affects teachers but can also lead to a decline in academic performance. In a large study, it was reported that teacher stress had, "direct negative relations between teachers' emotional exhaustion and the class average of students' school grades, standardized achievement test scores, school satisfaction, and perceptions of teacher support" (Arens & Morin, 2016, p.800). This information is critical because it demonstrates the link of the stress teachers have cited feeling and the revelation that it can be directly associated with lower levels of student achievement.

In a study from the field of medicine, elementary/middle school teachers with high levels of stress had a formal impact on the physiological well-being of their students, ostensibly finding that the hormone cortisol was higher in students when their teacher was occupationally stressed (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016). In the same study, "teachers who experience higher levels of burnout report to be more stressed, less effective in teaching and classroom management, less

connected to their students, and less satisfied with their work" (Oberle & Schonert-Reichl, 2016, p. 30).

While this study will be limited to determining the level at which overall workload and occupational stress impacted the decisions of former teachers to leave the profession, research clearly shows a connection between classroom teaching and rates of high occupational stress. If this factor shows statistical significance, it will be a signal to district-level and school site administration that attention should be paid to finding ways to reduce the stress levels found by classroom teachers with a goal of helping them find greater job satisfaction and thus be potentially more likely to remain in the profession, thus having a positive impact on student achievement.

Summary of Findings

The findings outlined in this section show there are many different factors which could potentially affect a teacher's very personal decision to leave the district being studied and/or the profession of classroom teaching. As the exit survey for the district which was studied existed at the start of this research study (Appendix F), there has historically been potentially valuable data not obtained or studied with regard to factors which could have led to the decision of former teachers to leave, and, at the level these factors impacted that decision. If a high enough response rate can be obtained, potentially valuable data could shine a light on areas in which the district being studied can improve/review practices potentially leading to a higher rate of teacher retention, realized budgetary savings, improved employee morale and, most importantly, increased student achievement.

CHAPTER III

Introduction

An alarming 17% of classroom teachers leave the classroom during the first five years (Raue & Gray, 2015). When that figure is combined with research indicating that the cost of teacher turnover is equal to 30% of salary (Borman & Dowling, 2008) that 30% translates to, on average, a staggering $17,160.00 USD per teacher (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015). Based upon a need to hire and retain the best teachers, this research study is focused on better understanding the perceptions of classroom teachers who have chosen to leave a large, urban public school district and/or the teaching profession entirely as a means of reducing turnover in the district which was studied. This study could be especially helpful in a time when student performance is highly scrutinized and where funding levels for 2016-2017 were given a grade of "D+" by *Education Week* (Morales, 2017).

This quantitative research study was completed in an attempt to obtain unbiased results regarding factors that may have led teachers to choose to leave the district being studied and/or the profession of classroom teaching. The main component of this research study was an informed consent form (Appendix A) and an exit survey (Appendix B) which included questions on a Likert scale based on research-based factors which could have potentially been a factor for those classroom teachers who left which was studied as cited in the literature review. This topic was chosen as the result of an identified information gap in the former exit survey for the district which was studied (Appendix F) which only permitted departing teachers to choose one reason for leaving, and, did not determine the level of impact of any additional factors which may have also had an impact on their choice to leave.

The specific goal of this research was to allow district administrators to review data collected from teachers who have chosen to leave which could lead to changes and, as a result, help to improve the classroom teacher retention rate, directly lead to cost savings (Borman & Dowling, 2008), and have a direct impact on achievement (Kraft et al., 2016).

As outlined in the review of the literature, the questions included in the electronic survey instrument (ESI) were needed to gain data to answer the three research questions of this study:
Q1. To what degree, if any, do research-based factors (listed below) impact teachers who chose to leave?

- High-performance culture
- Support from administration
- High-stakes testing
- Overall compensation
- Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-based Pay
- Professional collaboration
- Professional Development
- Support with student discipline
- Student demographics
- Student behavior
- Teacher turnover
- New teacher induction program
- Job-related stress

Q2. Of the factors studied in Q1, which factor(s) have the greatest influence on teachers who chose to leave?

Q3. Of the factor(s) noted to have the greatest influence in Q2, at what level do factors such as age, gender, or race/ethnicity demonstrate a connection with the findings?

This could substantially add to the literature base on the topic of classroom teacher retention and attrition if the results are statistically significant. Previous research has shown that teacher attrition may be the result of problems at an individual school site that may need to be addressed (Deangelis & Presley, 2011) and this study may reveal previously unknown work culture issues within the district which was studied. Finally, many studies have been conducted on low-performing school sites or districts (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2005; Shuls & Maranto, 2014) while this study is focused on a more broad spectrum of former teachers from all school sites at the district which was studied.

Methods

As a quantitative design (Denzin, 2012; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016), this study included an ESI (Appendix B) to better understand the perceptions of classroom teachers who have chosen to leave within the five year window of 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17 with the goal of reducing turnover in the district which was studied. The ESI contains two parts, the first part in which former educators will choose from a variety of factors which may have impacted their decision to leave and select all that are applicable, and the second part which includes several research-based factors which former teachers will be asked to rank how each factor affected their decision to leave on a 5-point Likert scale. This survey could allow district administrators to review data, findings, and recommendations to better understand which factors most affected those classroom teachers who chose to leave during the specified time period. If the factors which cause teachers to leave are statistically significant policies or decisions related to those areas could be targeted for evaluation.

A 14-day window was established as the timeframe for participants to complete the ESI (Appendix B). Email participation requests were sent to the participants who have not submitted the survey after 5, 10, and 13 days. At the end of the 14th day the ESI was closed and data analysis began.

To help better understand data collected for the first research question (outlined as Q1. below) the researcher implemented a One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) with a Bonferroni Post-Hoc to determine if there was a statistical difference between the perceptions of classroom teachers who left the district being studied by level taught (elementary, middle, and high school). In addition, a Frequency Table was implemented to make the data for the check-all-that-apply section more easily understandable.

Q1. To what degree, if any, do research-based factors (listed below) impact teachers who chose to leave?

- High-performance culture
- Support from administration
- High-stakes testing
- Overall compensation
- Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-based Pay
- Professional collaboration
- Professional Development
- Support with student discipline
- Student demographics
- Student behavior
- Teacher turnover

- New teacher induction program
- Job-related stress,

To help clarify the data collected for the second research question, *Q2. Of the factors studied in Q1, which factor(s) have the greatest influence on teachers who chose to leave?*, the researcher implemented a Binomial Test in order to separate out answers with a cut score to determine if a statistical difference could be identified between those who ranked factors with general agreement or general disagreement.

In an attempt to detect trends in the data for the third research question, *Q3. Of the factor(s) noted to have the greatest influence in Q2, at what level do factors such as age, gender, or race/ethnicity demonstrate a connection with the findings?*, the researcher needed to implement different statistical analyses depending on the various variable criteria. As previously outlined, statistical analyses would only be performed on subgroups which had 10 or more participant responses. As a result, those with 10 or more responses with two variables (ex. male/female) required an Independent Samples T-Test and Group Statistics while those with three or more (ex. age) required a One-Way ANOVA and a Bonferroni Post-Hoc analysis.

The quality of the data obtained as a result this study is essential to consider when determining whether the results of statistical analyses are applicable to the district which was studied as well as the greater body of teacher attrition and retention research (Creswell, 2013; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016; Yin, 2016). A Cronbach's alpha coefficient was utilized to determine whether or not the data set was found to be reliable (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016) since its primary function is to determine how closely related a set of items are within a group (ex. what factors most affected those who chose to leave the district being studied and/or the profession of classroom teaching). Data analyzed as a part of this study and findings are determined are

included in Chapter IV and recommendations for future research are made in Chapter V.

Research Design

In an attempt to limit researcher bias, this study was created with the null hypothesis model. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the data to determine whether or not statistically significant factors with a confidence interval of $p < .05$ are evident.

Operational Statement of Research Hypotheses

As there are three research questions, three null hypotheses are required: (1) it is expected that the majority of participants will score each research-based factor at three or less (moderate disagreement/low-level agreement), (2) it is expected that none of the research-based factors will have a greater influence than another, and (3) it is expected that factors such as age, gender, or race/ethnicity will not impact the factors which have the greatest influence (if any) on the decision to leave made by classroom teachers who left the school district and/or profession.

Variables

Independent variables:

- Confirmed status as a classroom teacher and completion of employment during at least one the following school years: 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17.
- Gender
- Age, in years, at the end of employment
- Ethnicity
- Race

Dependent variables:

- High-performance school culture
- School administrative leadership

- High-stakes testing
- Overall compensation
- Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay
- Collaboration among teachers
- Availability of relevant professional development available for teachers
- Administrative support with student discipline
- Student body demographics
- Student body behavior
- Other teachers choosing to leave the classroom or choosing to stay in the classroom
- New teacher induction programs (Ex. Educator Support Program)
- Overall workload

Pilot Study

The researcher conducted a pilot study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016) to field test this research study. Former classroom teachers (n=2) participated in a pilot study to help review the questions and determine if any adjustments were needed. The pilot study allowed the researcher to test all systems and check to ensure that the ESI could be easily completed and understood by the participants.

Population Sample

The purpose of this study was to attempt to better understand the perceptions of classroom teachers who have chosen to depart from the district which was studied with the goal of increasing teacher retention. Purposive sampling was utilized since participants in the study have been selected to participate as a direct result of former employment status as a classroom teacher in the district which was studied during the 5-year time period previously specified

(Creswell, 2013; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016; Yin, 2016).

Using a purposive sample can be considered a limitation (Creswell, 2013; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016), although in this case it was the most appropriate way to obtain information related to teacher retention in the district which was studied because those who have left are the only ones who can provide perceptions to why specifically they chose to leave this district in particular.

The total number of participants (n=1865) was determined based upon employment records held by the human resources department which oversees the school district which was studied. The participants who elected to participate in the study were not be compensated in any way for participation nor did they face any kind of retribution for non-participation.

All former classroom teachers who qualified and had a valid email address had an equal chance to participate or not participate in this research study as indicated on the informed consent form (Appendix A) which was the first page that potential participants saw if they chose to click the link within the email invitation to participate to reach the ESI (Appendix B).

Instrumentation

The researcher developed a new exit survey (an affective test to determine perceptions, values, and attitudes) (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006) specifically for this research study as it contains unique variables specific to teacher retention and attrition. This instrument is in keeping with the quantitative design (Creswell, 2013; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016) and included closed-ended questions based on a Likert scale. The instrument was hosted at (http://www.surveymonkey.com). The link to the survey was shared with potential participants via an email invitation (Appendix C).

All responses were automatically sent to the host server and, after the 14-day window elapsed, was exported to SPSS for data analysis (Denzin, 2012) to determine whether the null hypotheses were to be supported or rejected.

Procedure

- Relevant literature was reviewed to determine gaps in research.
- Specific hypotheses were generated.
- The most appropriate population was chosen as the sample.
- An instrument was developed specifically to address the gaps in research and obtain data which could assist the researcher with supporting or not supporting hypotheses.
- An informed consent form was developed to ensure that participants are aware of any risks or benefits associated with participating in the research study.
- All required Institutional Review Board permission(s) were obtained before any data were collected.
- Essential contact information for potential participants (ex. email addresses for former employees) was obtained.
- A pilot study was performed to determine if there were any unclear items in the instrument and any required adjustments were made.
- An appropriate window of time (14 days) was determined for participants to complete the instrument.
- The invitation to complete the survey was sent to all participants for completion.
- The researcher only used a password-protected computer to protect the anonymity of all participants.
- After the window to participate was closed, all data were exported to SPSS for analysis.

- All data were reviewed to determine whether the data obtained supported or did not support the hypotheses.
- Appropriate statistical tests were applied to determine the reliability and validity of the instrument.
- The researcher reported findings and determine opportunities for further research.
- Per the informed consent form, all data are scheduled to be destroyed no later than one year after the completion of the study.

Data Collection & Ethical Considerations

As the primary means of data-acquisition, participants completed an ESI (Appendix B) to determine perceptions related to factors surrounding their decision to leave the district being studied and/or the profession of classroom teaching. After the data were acquired through the ESI hosted at (http://www.surverymonkey.com), they were exported to SPSS for analysis (Denzin, 2012). Those who chose to participate were informed of a Likert scale with the answer choices as listed below:

1 – I do not agree at all.

2 – I somewhat disagree.

3 - I agree.

4 – I strongly agree.

5 – I very strongly agree.

To protect the anonymity of the participants, the data were only presented groups (ex. all former teachers combined, former teachers by specific age range, former teachers by gender, and former teachers by race/ethnicity), and were only presented when the number of participants in a group was greater than ten (n=10) and never as an individual. The implementation of this

method has been chosen to help protect the identity of the participants and limit risk associated with participation in the study.

Risks and Benefits

For this study, the researcher created an informed consent form (Appendix A) which potential participants saw before getting to the ESI and required a digital signature from participants before they could proceed. Through the informed consent form, participants were made aware of any potential risks and benefits associated with participating and were advised that they will not be penalized in any way for not providing an answer to every question/item (the first question is required to confirm the participant's eligibility to participate).

After the informed consent form was finished and digitally signed (if the participant chose to move forward), he or she was brought to the next webpage which contained the ESI questions (Appendix B). As previously stated, responses were only presented when there were more than ten (n=10) participants for any given subset of the population to protect anonymity and limit risk.

Data Processing & Analysis

To address the first hypothesis, the researcher implemented a One-Way ANOVA which is used to test for differences among two or more independent groups. If the One-Way ANOVA showed statistical significance with a confidence interval of $p < .05$, a Bonferroni Post-Hoc was to be implemented as a means of finding patterns in data that could not otherwise be identified. In addition, a Frequency Table was implemented to help make the data set more easily understandable.

To address the second hypothesis, the researcher implemented a Binomial Test to determine if individual perceptions had low agreement (identified as responses of 3 or lower on

the Likert scale) or high agreement (responses of 4 or higher on the Likert scale). If the responses showed a statistically significant pattern of strong agreement then it would lead to knowledge of which specific factor(s) were most strongly associated with the decision to leave.

In order to effectively accept or reject the third null hypothesis, the researcher implemented an Independent Samples T-Test and Group Statistics for factors with two independent variables (ex. male/female) and a One-Way ANOVA with Bonferroni Post-Hoc for factors with 3 or more independent variables (ex. age).

Quality of Data

The researcher made every effort to ensure the data obtained from this study were as valid and reliable as possible to increase the likelihood that findings could be consistently applied in other, similar settings (Creswell, 2013; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016; Yin, 2016). As a result, the instrument was tested for internal construct and content validity with a Cronbach's alpha (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). If the instrument is found to be reliable via the Cronbach's alpha, and, the statistically significant information related to specific factors are obtained then this study will have met its goal.

Methodological Assumptions

As this study is rooted in a quantitative design, the researcher has made certain methodological assumptions. Quantitative data requires the use of deductive reasoning since researchers attempt to deduce answers through the statistical analysis of a variety of data (Creswell, 2013; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). As the numbers will be telling the story, this study is considered to be presented through the lens of positivism (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). With the use of various forms of statistical analysis, there will inevitably be the chance of making a Type I or Type II error (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). This can make it harder for researchers to make solid

decisions as only utilizing quantitative data can make it harder for researchers to see the fuzzy area that may lie in between, or, not be identified through specific closed-ended questions.

It is assumed that the methodological assumptions as listed herein provide unbiased, valuable information which could be used by the district being studied to help improve teacher retention rates, assist with saving valuable financial resources, and improve student achievement.

Delimitations

Teacher retention and attrition have been widely studied (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Deangelis & Presley, 2011; Goldhaber et al., 2011; Raue & Gray, 2015; Schaefer et al., 2014). As the preceding literature review has shown, there are many different factors that may lead to teacher attrition and retention. This study has been developed in an attempt to determine if any of the identified factors have had an impact on the decision of classroom teachers to leave the classroom in a large, urban public school district in Florida. As a result of the specific sample and the broad nature of the topic of teacher retention and attrition, this study has several delimitations.

This study will not attempt to determine or define best practices about recruitment methods which may have an effect on teacher hiring and thus teacher retention or attrition. Also, this study will not be able to determine or define why there is a shortage in those choosing to enter the teaching profession (Lagrone & Apthorp, 2017) as there are likely economic, personal, and other factors too broad to cover in one study.

Limitations

Perhaps the most impactful limitation is external validity as a result of the study taking place in one large, urban public school district in Florida, though this model is not uncommon for a CPED dissertation (Hochbein, 2015). Although it would be preferable to study teacher

perceptions in several school districts, the timetable required for this study was not permissive of such an endeavor.

It is the hope of the researcher that data obtained and analyzed through this research study could potentially be generalizable to other, similar performing large, urban school districts within the United States.

Since this study relied on data and participation from former employees, the response rate from those individuals could have been low since former employees may not see the value or feel any personal responsibility to participate in the study. The reason(s) which caused former employees to depart the school may have also impacted the responses (ex. if a participant had a contract that was non-renewed then he or she may have chosen to participate but provided only negative responses).

The ESI was controlled to allow a participant to choose which question(s) he or she was comfortable answering (although the first question was required to determine whether or not a participant is eligible for the study). Based on the structure and format of the ESI, needed to be completed all at one time. This is considered a limitation because the ability to complete the entire instrument in one sitting may require more time than a participant has available and could, therefore, lead to non-participation.

Finally, the ESI was chosen specifically due to the practicality and the cost savings, a decision supported by survey research (Hohwu et al., 2013). The choice to implement an electronic survey itself is a limitation because there may be potential participants who were uncomfortable with digital formatting and therefore chose not to participate, leaving valuable perceptions unreported. Also, the email(s) requesting participation may have been simply ignored in the inbox of participants due to the potentially high volume of emails received daily.

Conceptual Hypotheses

This quantitative research study was developed specifically to answer a question: why does substantial classroom teacher turnover occur each year in the district which was studied? A review of the literature revealed factors related to why classroom teachers choose to leave the classroom and an ESI was developed to collect data. As there is limited research of a similar nature with such a large number of research-based factors the researcher has implemented a null hypothesis model.

The researcher implemented an ESI and data were collected via closed-ended questions on a 5-point Likert scale which were analyzed to determine the results outlined in Chapter IV and recommendations made in Chapter V. For the first hypothesis, the researcher does not expect any of the factors to be found as statistically important or unimportant. For the second and third hypotheses, the researcher expects to find that the participants will score each research-based factor at a three or less (moderate disagreement/low-level agreement).

Summary

This research study was developed specifically to help shed light on an identified problem within the district which was studied which is populated by students who need access to expert instructors. The cost of teacher attrition has been widely documented (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Raue & Gray, 2015; U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015), as has the impact of teacher attrition on student achievement (Adnot et al., 2016; Kraft et al., 2016).

Upon review of the different approaches a researcher might take to learn about the perception of former classroom teachers, the researcher identified a quantitative study as the most appropriate means to give a greater voice to classroom teachers who left the district which

was studied (Creswell, 2013; Denzin, 2012; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016) with the goal of making recommendations leading to lower teacher turnover and increased student achievement and budgetary savings.

CHAPTER IV

Summary of Analyses

The purpose for this research study was to attempt to detect statistically significant trends in data collected through a revised exit survey from potential participants (n=1865) who were formerly classroom teachers in a large, urban public school district in the southeastern United States. Through the data collected and analyzed in the study, it was the goal of the researcher to inform educational leaders within the district which was studied so that specific areas of policy connected with statistically significant findings could be reviewed with the goal of increasing teacher retention which could potentially lead to substantial budgetary savings and increased student achievement.

After the necessary Institutional Review Board (IRB) permissions were obtained, (Appendix D and Appendix E), a public records request was submitted to the obtain the personal email addresses of teachers who left teaching during the 5-year time period of: 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17. The researcher was then sent a list of potential participants who had left the district which was studied during that time period.

The electronic survey instrument (ESI) was open for 14 days with potential participants sent participation request email reminders after 5, 10, and 13 days as outlined Chapter III. As the researcher prepared the initial message to be sent to potential participants (Appendix C), it was noted that the SurveyMonkey system had automatically identified email addresses of potential participants which were invalid (n=85) and could not accept incoming emails and, thus, those potential participants would not have the opportunity to participate. This was previously outlined as a limitation in Chapter III and could have impacted the final ESI return rate and, as a result, finite conclusions cannot be made regarding the views of all potential participants.

At the conclusion of the two-week participation window, the primary researcher found that 13.5% of potential participants (n=252) had completed the Informed Consent Form (Appendix A) and answered at least one question. Participants were permitted to skip questions they were not comfortable with (with the exception of the first question which served as a qualifier), and therefore the number of responses to each question are at times varied in the data sets analyzed with descriptive statistics.

Non-scholarly websites suggest that a return rate between 10-15% is acceptable while scholarly articles and professional texts on survey research suggest that it is more important to consider the method of survey implementation and how reminders are sent to limit nonresponse bias and obtain the highest return rate possible (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2014; Schonlau, Fricker, & Elliott, 2002). The researcher took note of best practices such as: thoughtful initial invitations sent to potential participants (Appendix C), a short survey (the ESI was completed, on average, in 4 minutes and 15 seconds by participants), and follow-up reminders sent at various times (Dillman et al., 2014).

Before descriptive statistics were applied to the data sets relating to each of the research questions, the researcher first looked at content and construct validity as well as the reliability of the ESI. An extensive literature review of factors that have led teachers to leave classroom teaching in other studies as noted in Chapter II and the review of the exit survey formerly used by the school district which was studied (Appendix E) and, as a result, this study can be considered to have high content and construct validity.

In order to determine whether or not the ESI was reliable, a Cronbach's alpha coefficient was implemented on the data set (Table 1). According to research, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient identifies a statistical range between 0 and 1, and, anything higher than 0.7 is

considered acceptable (George & Mallery, 2003). When the analysis was completed, the ESI earned a rating of "good" (Cronbach's alpha=.811), indicating that it was statistically reliable.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics for Electronic Survey Instrument

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.811	.815	13

Although this research study has high internal content and construct validity, "good" reliability, and a high response rate (13.5%), the external validity of the study must be noted as low as a result of a small sample size stemming from only one large urban public school district in the southeastern United States. The results of the statistical analyses cannot be broadly accepted, though they may be applicable in other, similarly sized urban public school districts in the southeastern United States.

Various descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data collected through the electronic survey instrument (ESI) as a means of attempting to detect trends in the data across all three research questions.

To facilitate the data analysis with regard to the first research question, *To what degree, if any, do research-based factors (listed below) impact teachers who chose to leave?*, a One-Way ANOVA (Table 2) was implemented with a Bonferroni Post-Hoc (Table 3) to determine whether there were differences between groups in perceptions among classroom teachers who left the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Additionally, a Frequency Table (Table 4 – Table 15) was used for each identified factor to help better understand the data set obtained through the check-all-that-apply section of the ESI.

In an attempt to detect trends within the data set for the second research question, *Of the factors studied in Q1, which factor(s) have the greatest influence on teachers who chose to*

leave?, a Binomial Test (Table 16) was implemented to determine if a statistical difference could be detected between the expected and the observed using two categories: (1) those who scored each element at three or higher (strong agreement), and (2) those who rated each element at two or lower (moderate disagreement/low-level agreement).

Various descriptive statistics were performed on the data set in an attempt to detect trends within the data for the third research question, *Of the factor(s) noted to have the greatest influence in Q2, at what level do factors such as age, gender, or race/ethnicity demonstrate a connection with the findings?* As outlined in Chapter III, only subgroups with more than 10 participants were analyzed to protect participant confidentiality. When analyzing the factors with two independent variables (male/female, Black or African American/White, Hispanic/Non-Hispanic), an Independent Samples T-Test and Group Statistics (Table 17 – Table 22) were conducted in an attempt to discover any trends within the data. For factors with three or more independent variables (the various age groups of participants who left the district being studied) a One-Way ANOVA (Table 23) and a Bonferroni Post-Hoc (Table 24) were implemented.

Summary of Results

Two statistical analyses were conducted to attempt to find trends in the data related to the first research question: *To what degree, if any, do research-based factors (listed below) impact teachers who chose to leave*? A One-way ANOVA was used to test for differences among two or more independent groups (in this case, the participants were divided into three groups: elementary, middle, and high school). The One-way ANOVA (Table 2) revealed that there was a statistically significant degree of difference for two identified factors between the groups: (1) high-performance culture ($p<.01$), and (2) emphasis on high-stakes testing ($p<.02$).

Table 2: One-Way ANOVA for Research Question #1

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Between Groups	15.697	2	7.848	6.249	.002
	Within Groups	295.127	235	1.256		
	Total	310.824	237			
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Between Groups	10.579	2	5.290	2.324	.100
	Within Groups	534.833	235	2.276		
	Total	545.412	237			
I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	Between Groups	17.160	2	8.580	4.119	.017
	Within Groups	485.395	233	2.083		
	Total	502.555	235			
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Between Groups	2.741	2	1.370	.618	.540
	Within Groups	519.192	234	2.219		
	Total	521.932	236			
I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Between Groups	7.547	2	3.774	1.768	.173
	Within Groups	488.724	229	2.134		
	Total	496.272	231			
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Between Groups	1.718	2	.859	.555	.575
	Within Groups	362.113	234	1.547		
	Total	363.831	236			
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that	Between Groups	.211	2	.105	.070	.933
	Within Groups	349.960	232	1.508		

there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Total	350.170	234			
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Between Groups Within Groups Total	11.643 541.183 552.826	2 233 235	5.822 2.323	2.506	.084
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	Between Groups Within Groups Total	.096 107.077 107.173	2 234 236	.048 .458	.104	.901
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	Between Groups Within Groups Total	7.535 348.448 355.983	2 232 234	3.768 1.502	2.509	.084
I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Between Groups Within Groups Total	.178 126.043 126.220	2 233 235	.089 .541	.164	.849
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Between Groups Within Groups Total	.118 276.084 276.202	2 175 177	.059 1.578	.038	.963
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Between Groups Within Groups Total	8.289 491.559 499.848	2 234 236	4.145 2.101	1.973	.141

As the One-Way ANOVA showed statistical significance at the $p<.05$ level for two factors, a Bonferroni Post-Hoc (Table 3) was accepted and revealed that there were two factors

which were identified as statistically different between groups: high-performance culture ($p<.01$) and high-stakes testing ($p<.02$).

Table 3: Bonferroni Post-Hoc for Research Question #1

Dependent Variable	(I) What level were you teaching upon the conclusion of your employment?	(J) What level were you teaching upon the conclusion of your employment?	Std. Error	Sig.
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.18704	.303
		High (9-12)	.16695	.002
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.18704	.303
		High (9-12)	.19427	.448
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.16695	.002
		Middle (6-8)	.19427	.448
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.25179	.096
		High (9-12)	.22475	1.000
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.25179	.096
		High (9-12)	.26153	.546
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.22475	1.000
		Middle (6-8)	.26153	.546
I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.24273	.217
		High (9-12)	.21552	.018
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.24273	.217
		High (9-12)	.25156	1.000
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.21552	.018
		Middle (6-8)	.25156	1.000
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.25006	.811
		High (9-12)	.22191	1.000
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.25006	.811
		High (9-12)	.25961	1.000
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.22191	1.000
		Middle (6-8)	.25961	1.000

I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.24568	1.000
		High (9-12)	.22118	.218
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.24568	1.000
		High (9-12)	.25722	.547
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.22118	.218
		Middle (6-8)	.25722	.547
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.20883	.966
		High (9-12)	.18533	1.000
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.20883	.966
		High (9-12)	.21681	1.000
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.18533	1.000
		Middle (6-8)	.21681	1.000
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.20655	1.000
		High (9-12)	.18401	1.000
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.20655	1.000
		High (9-12)	.21459	1.000
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.18401	1.000
		Middle (6-8)	.21459	1.000
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.25630	1.000
		High (9-12)	.22757	.255
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.25630	1.000
		High (9-12)	.26562	.120
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.22757	.255
		Middle (6-8)	.26562	.120
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.11356	1.000
		High (9-12)	.10078	1.000
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.11356	1.000
		High (9-12)	.11790	1.000
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.10078	1.000
		Middle (6-8)	.11790	1.000
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.20822	.107
		High (9-12)	.18258	1.000

poorly in my school.	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.20822	.107
		High (9-12)	.21600	.172
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.18258	1.000
		Middle (6-8)	.21600	.172
I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.12369	1.000
		High (9-12)	.10982	1.000
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.12369	1.000
		High (9-12)	.12819	1.000
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.10982	1.000
		Middle (6-8)	.12819	1.000
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.24905	1.000
		High (9-12)	.21467	1.000
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.24905	1.000
		High (9-12)	.24701	1.000
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.21467	1.000
		Middle (6-8)	.24701	1.000
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	Middle (6-8)	.24331	.600
		High (9-12)	.21593	.175
	Middle (6-8)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.24331	.600
		High (9-12)	.25261	1.000
	High (9-12)	Elementary (Pre-K-5)	.21593	.175
		Middle (6-8)	.25261	1.000

The exit survey employed by the district which was studied at the time of the completion of this research study (Appendix F) only permitted those who were leaving the district to choose one reason for leaving, and, did not allow for different degrees of perceptions to be recorded. For this research study, participants had the opportunity to see this same section, but, they were able to choose more than one factor leading to their departure in a check-all-that-apply format. In this study 79.3% of participants (n=200) selected more than one reason for leaving, meaning that potentially valuable data could be obtained by the district which was studied in the future if

they permitted those who choose to leave to cite more than one reason for departure.

Formal survey research outline that check-all-that-apply questions can lead to, “primacy effects when the question is asking about past experiences, behaviors, or attitudes … [potentially] leading to satisficing and burden avoidance” (Safir, 2008) and therefore descriptive statistics were not utilized, but, a Frequency Table was created for each factor to show the percentage of former teachers who cited each one as a reason for departing. The data in Table 4 – Table 15 denote this information and, upon analysis, reveal that the top three most frequently cited reasons for departure were: inadequate salary (Table 9), stress on the job (Table 15), and dissatisfaction with supervisor (Table 5).

Table 4: Frequency Table - Dislike / Unsuitable for Assigned Duties

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dislike / unsuitable for assigned duties	33	13.1	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	219	86.9		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 5: Frequency Table – Dissatisfaction with Supervisor

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dissatisfaction with supervisor	87	34.5	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	165	65.5		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 6: Frequency Table – Dissatisfaction with Curriculum

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dissatisfaction with curriculum	80	31.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	172	68.3		

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Dissatisfaction with curriculum	80	31.7	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	172	68.3		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 7: Frequency Table – Family / Personal Reasons

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Family / personal reasons	72	28.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	180	71.4		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 8: Frequency Table – Inadequate Benefits

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Inadequate benefits	36	14.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	216	85.7		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 9: Frequency Table – Inadequate Salary

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Inadequate salary	139	55.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	113	44.8		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 10: Frequency Table – Lack of Opportunity for Advancement

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Lack of opportunity for advancement	60	23.8	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	192	76.2		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 11: Frequency Table – Relocation

Valid	Relocation	76	30.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	176	69.8		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 12: Frequency Table – Resignation After a Leave of Absence

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Resignation after a leave of absence	14	5.6	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	238	94.4		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 13: Frequency Table – Resignation in Lieu of Involuntary Termination

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Resignation in lieu of involuntary termination	3	1.2	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	249	98.8		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 14: Frequency Table – Return to Continuing Education

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Return to continuing education	16	6.3	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	236	93.7		
	Total	252	100.0		

Table 15: Frequency Table – Stress on the Job

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Stress on job	116	46.0	100.0	100.0
Missing	System	136	54.0		
	Total	252	100.0		

In an attempt to detect trends in the data for the second research question, *Of the factors studied in Q1, which factor(s) have the greatest influence on teachers who chose to leave*?, the researcher implemented a Binomial Test (Table 16). Based on the null hypothesis, it was expected that the majority would score each factor at 3 or less (moderate disagreement/low-level agreement). If greater than the cut score, then it was noted that the respondents believed that the factor had a substantial impact on with regards to their decision to leave the district that was studied. The number of responses for each factor may differ as a result of participants having the choice to skip questions if they so desired.

When analyzed, the data did not reveal any factors which showed a statistically significant importance ($p<.05$) on teachers' decision to leave the district which was studied.

Further analysis revealed that there were several factors which were statistically not important ($p<.05$) in teachers' decisions to leave the district which was studied. These factors were, in rank order: connecting with student body (98%), other teachers leaving (98%), high performance culture (90%), poor student behavior (88%), the induction process (86%), professional collaboration (85%), professional development (85%), school administrative leadership (68%), support with discipline concerns (66%), VAM/merit-based pay (62%), and workload/stress (62%).

In a final analysis of the data, there were two factors which did not have statistical importance or unimportance ($p>.05$) in teachers' decision to leave the district which was studied.

These two factors were: high-stakes testing and overall compensation.

Table 16: Binomial Test for Research Question #2

		Category	N	Observed Prop.	Test Prop.	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Group 1	<= 3	215	.90	.50	.000[a]
	Group 2	> 3	23	.10		
	Total		238	1.00		
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Group 1	<= 3	163	.68	.50	.000[a]
	Group 2	> 3	75	.32		
	Total		238	1.00		
I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	Group 1	<= 3	127	.54	.50	.268[a]
	Group 2	> 3	109	.46		
	Total		236	1.00		
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Group 1	<= 3	124	.52	.50	.516[a]
	Group 2	> 3	113	.48		
	Total		237	1.00		
I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Group 1	<= 3	143	.62	.50	.000[a]
	Group 2	> 3	89	.38		
	Total		232	1.00		
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Group 1	<= 3	202	.85	.50	.000[a]
	Group 2	> 3	35	.15		
	Total		237	1.00		
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that	Group 1	<= 3	200	.85	.50	.000[a]
	Group 2	> 3	35	.15		

there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Total		235	1.00		
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Group 1 Group 2 Total	<= 3 > 3	155 81 236	.66 .34 1.00	.50	.000[a]
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	Group 1 Group 2 Total	<= 3 > 3	232 5 237	.98 .02 1.00	.50	.000[a]
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	Group 1 Group 2 Total	<= 3 > 3	206 29 235	.88 .12 1.00	.50	.000[a]
I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Group 1 Group 2 Total	<= 3 > 3	231 5 236	.98 .02 1.00	.50	.000[a]
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Group 1 Group 2 Total	<= 3 > 3	153 25 178	.86 .14 1.00	.50	.000[a]
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Group 1 Group 2 Total	<= 3 > 3	146 91 237	.62 .38 1.00	.50	.000[a]

a. Based on Z Approximation.

In order to determine if trends could be detected in the data related to the third research question, *Of the factor(s) noted to have the greatest influence in Q2, at what level do factors such as age, gender, or race/ethnicity demonstrate a connection with the findings?*, the researcher implemented an Independent Samples T-Test for the participant subcategories with two independent variables (gender, race, and ethnicity) with more than 10 participants to protect the participants' confidentiality. For the participant subcategory with more than two independent variables (age) with more than 10 participants, a One-Way ANOVA with a Bonferroni Post-Hoc was implemented.

Male / Female Comparison

Data from an Independent Samples T-Test include reporting group statistics (including the mean and standard deviation for both groups tested). This information can be found in Table 17.

Table 17: Group Statistics for Male to Female Comparison for Research Question #3

	With which gender do you most closely identify?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Male	48	1.4792	.92229	.13312
	Female	187	1.8449	1.19250	.08720
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Male	48	2.8750	1.61936	.23374
	Female	187	2.6310	1.48023	.10825
I chose to leave teaching	Male	48	3.0417	1.39845	.20185

because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	Female	185	3.1946	1.47625	.10854
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Male	48	3.7292	1.49808	.21623
	Female	186	3.2581	1.46972	.10776
I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Male	47	3.0851	1.51557	.22107
	Female	182	2.9176	1.44468	.10709
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Male	48	2.0833	1.35007	.19487
	Female	186	2.2097	1.20095	.08806
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Male	48	2.2083	1.32019	.19055
	Female	184	2.1033	1.18515	.08737
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Male	48	2.7083	1.55684	.22471
	Female	185	2.6703	1.51601	.11146
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	Male	48	1.3750	.81541	.11769
	Female	186	1.2366	.62208	.04561
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	Male	48	2.2083	1.21967	.17604
	Female	184	1.9185	1.20059	.08851

I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Male	48	1.3333	.59549	.08595
	Female	185	1.3351	.77045	.05664
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Male	42	1.7143	1.25496	.19364
	Female	133	1.9173	1.25556	.10887
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Male	48	2.4375	1.39766	.20174
	Female	186	3.1774	1.43158	.10497

Data revealed that there was one area in which males and females had statistically different perceptions, and this was related to the factor of a high-performance culture (Table 18). Under the null hypothesis model, it is assumed that the variances between the two groups (in this case, male and female) are approximately equal. In this instance, the distribution of scores for males is not similar in shape to the distribution of scores for females based on Levene's Test for Equality of Variances ($p<0.04$) leading the researcher to reject the null hypothesis and assume that the variances have statistically significant difference and that the mean score between males and females is significantly different and the 2-tailed significance was analyzed as a result. This showed a statistically significant difference ($p<.03$) meaning that females were statistically more likely to place a higher agreement score on the high-performance culture factor than males and leading to a rejection of the null hypothesis for this factor.

Two factors were identified as statistically nearly identical between the two participant groups of male and female (Table 18): overall compensation ($p=.05$) and overall workload and/or

stress level (p.<.01).

Table 18: Independent Samples T-Test for Male to Female Comparison for Research Question #3

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Equal variances assumed	4.461	.036	-1.977	233	.049
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.298	91.724	.024
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Equal variances assumed	1.281	.259	.999	233	.319
	Equal variances not assumed			.947	68.526	.347
I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	Equal variances assumed	1.796	.182	-.646	231	.519
	Equal variances not assumed			-.667	76.474	.507
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Equal variances assumed	.135	.714	1.972	232	.050
	Equal variances not assumed			1.950	72.118	.055
I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Equal variances assumed	1.421	.235	.702	227	.484
	Equal variances not assumed			.682	69.153	.498

I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Equal variances assumed	.294	.588	-.633	232	.527
	Equal variances not assumed			-.591	67.441	.557
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Equal variances assumed	1.066	.303	.534	230	.594
	Equal variances not assumed			.501	68.066	.618
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Equal variances assumed	.105	.746	.154	231	.878
	Equal variances not assumed			.152	71.861	.880
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	Equal variances assumed	4.164	.042	1.284	232	.200
	Equal variances not assumed			1.097	61.825	.277
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	Equal variances assumed	.351	.554	1.485	230	.139
	Equal variances not assumed			1.471	72.573	.146
I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Equal variances assumed	.258	.612	-.015	231	.988
	Equal variances not assumed			-.018	92.247	.986

I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Equal variances assumed	.404	.526	-.914	173	.362
	Equal variances not assumed			-.914	68.879	.364
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Equal variances assumed	.097	.756	-3.208	232	.002
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.254	74.508	.002

Black or African American / White Comparison

Data from an Independent Samples T-Test include reporting group statistics (including the mean and standard deviation for both groups tested). This information can be found in Table 19.

Table 19: Group Statistics for Black or African American / White Comparison for Research Question #3

	With which race do you most closely identify?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Black or African American	24	1.5833	1.01795	.20779
	White	197	1.7970	1.17343	.08360
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Black or African American	24	2.6250	1.40844	.28750
	White	197	2.6193	1.49906	.10680
I chose to leave teaching because there was too	Black or African American	24	2.7917	1.47381	.30084

much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	White	196	3.1939	1.46170	.10441
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Black or African American	24	3.2917	1.30148	.26566
	White	196	3.3469	1.49599	.10686
I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Black or African American	24	3.1250	1.29590	.26452
	White	191	2.9267	1.48142	.10719
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Black or African American	24	2.2083	1.10253	.22505
	White	196	2.1071	1.20841	.08632
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Black or African American	24	2.0417	.99909	.20394
	White	194	2.1031	1.21719	.08739
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Black or African American	24	2.5000	1.58800	.32415
	White	195	2.6513	1.49963	.10739
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to	Black or African American	24	1.1667	.48154	.09829

effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	White	196	1.2857	.70165	.05012
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	Black or African American	23	1.6087	.94094	.19620
	White	195	2.0103	1.23100	.08815
I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Black or African American	24	1.5000	.83406	.17025
	White	195	1.3077	.70907	.05078
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Black or African American	19	2.1053	1.14962	.26374
	White	145	1.8138	1.23596	.10264
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Black or African American	24	2.5417	1.31807	.26905
	White	196	3.0408	1.47052	.10504

A review of the data contained in Table 20 reveals that there was no statistically significant difference when comparing responses between Black or African American participants and those of White participants. As a result, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected for any factor in this comparison of subgroups.

Table 20: Independent Samples T-Test for Black or African American to White Comparison for Research Question #3

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Equal variances assumed	.878	.350	-.853	219	.394
	Equal variances not assumed			-.954	30.954	.348
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Equal variances assumed	1.212	.272	.018	219	.986
	Equal variances not assumed			.019	29.720	.985
I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	Equal variances assumed	.021	.884	-1.271	218	.205
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.263	28.825	.217
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Equal variances assumed	2.693	.102	-.173	218	.863
	Equal variances not assumed			-.193	30.949	.848
I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Equal variances assumed	.695	.405	.626	213	.532
	Equal variances not assumed			.695	31.072	.492
I chose to leave teaching because I was	Equal variances assumed	.352	.554	.391	218	.696

not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Equal variances not assumed			.420	30.187	.678
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Equal variances assumed	1.752	.187	-.237	216	.813
	Equal variances not assumed			-.277	32.093	.784
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Equal variances assumed	.074	.785	-.463	217	.644
	Equal variances not assumed			-.443	28.286	.661
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	Equal variances assumed	2.409	.122	-.807	218	.420
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.079	36.224	.288
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	Equal variances assumed	1.784	.183	-1.512	216	.132
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.867	31.633	.071
I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Equal variances assumed	2.664	.104	1.229	217	.220
	Equal variances not assumed			1.082	27.248	.289
I chose to leave teaching because I did	Equal variances assumed	.562	.455	.974	162	.332

not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Equal variances not assumed			1.030	23.797	.313
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Equal variances assumed	1.200	.275	-1.586	218	.114
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.728	30.462	.094

Hispanic or Latino / Not Hispanic or Latino Comparison

Data from an Independent Samples T-Test include reporting group statistics (including the mean and standard deviation for both groups tested). This information can be found in Table 21.

Table 21: Group Statistics for Ethnicity Comparison for Research Question #3

	What is your ethnic origin?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Hispanic or Latino	20	1.9500	1.05006	.23480
	Not Hispanic or Latino	207	1.7536	1.17092	.08138
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Hispanic or Latino	20	2.8000	1.67332	.37417
	Not Hispanic or Latino	207	2.6522	1.48937	.10352
I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	Hispanic or Latino	20	2.9000	1.51831	.33950
	Not Hispanic or Latino	206	3.1650	1.44558	.10072

I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Hispanic or Latino	20	2.9500	1.66938	.37329
	Not Hispanic or Latino	206	3.4078	1.47458	.10274
I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Hispanic or Latino	20	2.5000	1.43270	.32036
	Not Hispanic or Latino	201	2.9801	1.44555	.10196
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Hispanic or Latino	20	2.1500	1.34849	.30153
	Not Hispanic or Latino	206	2.1796	1.23437	.08600
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Hispanic or Latino	20	2.2000	1.39925	.31288
	Not Hispanic or Latino	204	2.0931	1.18120	.08270
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Hispanic or Latino	20	2.2500	1.44641	.32343
	Not Hispanic or Latino	205	2.6976	1.52310	.10638
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	Hispanic or Latino	20	1.2500	.71635	.16018
	Not Hispanic or Latino	206	1.2573	.66024	.04600
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	Hispanic or Latino	20	1.6000	.99472	.22243
	Not Hispanic or Latino	204	1.9853	1.20948	.08468
I chose to leave teaching	Hispanic or Latino	19	1.4211	1.07061	.24561

because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Not Hispanic or Latino	206	1.3155	.68606	.04780
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Hispanic or Latino	19	1.8947	1.41007	.32349
	Not Hispanic or Latino	150	1.8400	1.22107	.09970
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Hispanic or Latino	20	2.9500	1.50350	.33619
	Not Hispanic or Latino	206	3.0388	1.46452	.10204

A review of the data contained in Table 22 reveals that there was no statistically significant difference when comparing responses between Hispanic or Latino participants and those of Non-Hispanic or Latino participants. As a result, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected for any factor in this comparison of subgroups.

Table 22: Independent Samples T-Test for Ethnicity Comparison for Research Question #3

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Equal variances assumed	.140	.709	.722	225	.471
	Equal variances not assumed			.790	23.808	.437
I chose to leave teaching because I did	Equal variances assumed	1.075	.301	.419	225	.675

not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Equal variances not assumed			.381	22.008	.707
I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	Equal variances assumed	.025	.875	-.779	224	.437
	Equal variances not assumed			-.748	22.475	.462
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Equal variances assumed	.802	.372	-1.310	224	.192
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.182	21.976	.250
I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Equal variances assumed	.024	.877	-1.418	219	.158
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.428	23.022	.167
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Equal variances assumed	.138	.710	-.102	224	.919
	Equal variances not assumed			-.094	22.203	.926
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Equal variances assumed	.337	.562	.380	222	.705
	Equal variances not assumed			.330	21.738	.744
I chose to leave teaching because I did	Equal variances assumed	.734	.392	-1.260	223	.209

not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Equal variances not assumed			-1.315	23.308	.201
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	Equal variances assumed	.000	.998	-.047	224	.963
	Equal variances not assumed			-.044	22.249	.966
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	Equal variances assumed	2.651	.105	-1.379	222	.169
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.619	24.858	.118
I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Equal variances assumed	3.203	.075	.607	223	.544
	Equal variances not assumed			.422	19.387	.678
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Equal variances assumed	.592	.443	.181	167	.857
	Equal variances not assumed			.162	21.558	.873
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Equal variances assumed	.287	.593	-.258	224	.796
	Equal variances not assumed			-.253	22.644	.803

Age-Based Comparison

A One-Way ANOVA was used to test for differences among two or more independent groups (in this case, the participants were divided into four subgroups, each with a minimum number of participants (n=10): 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, and 51-60). The One-Way ANOVA (Table 23) revealed a statistically significant degree of difference for four identified factors between the groups: (1) high-stakes testing ($p<.04$), (2) overall compensation ($p<.02$), (3) Value-Added Model (VAM) / merit-based pay ($p<.02$), and (4) the employee induction process ($p<.01$).

Table 23: One-Way ANOVA for Age Comparison for Research Question #3

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	Between Groups	2.893	4	.723	.544	.704
	Within Groups	307.289	231	1.330		
	Total	310.182	235			
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	Between Groups	7.058	4	1.765	.767	.548
	Within Groups	531.361	231	2.300		
	Total	538.419	235			
I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	Between Groups	22.234	4	5.558	2.673	.033
	Within Groups	476.228	229	2.080		
	Total	498.462	233			
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	Between Groups	26.233	4	6.558	3.094	.017
	Within Groups	487.452	230	2.119		
	Total	513.685	234			
I chose to leave teaching	Between Groups	26.174	4	6.544	3.186	.014

because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	Within Groups	462.091	225	2.054		
	Total	488.265	229			
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	Between Groups	1.856	4	.464	.303	.876
	Within Groups	352.638	230	1.533		
	Total	354.494	234			
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	Between Groups	2.605	4	.651	.439	.780
	Within Groups	338.031	228	1.483		
	Total	340.635	232			
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	Between Groups	6.156	4	1.539	.657	.622
	Within Groups	536.070	229	2.341		
	Total	542.226	233			
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	Between Groups	2.760	4	.690	1.573	.182
	Within Groups	100.882	230	.439		
	Total	103.643	234			
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	Between Groups	2.642	4	.661	.449	.773
	Within Groups	335.289	228	1.471		
	Total	337.931	232			
I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	Between Groups	2.030	4	.508	.938	.443
	Within Groups	123.970	229	.541		
	Total	126.000	233			
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel	Between Groups	24.866	4	6.216	4.254	.003
	Within Groups	249.861	171	1.461		

supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	Total	274.727	175			
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	Between Groups	7.029	4	1.757	.827	.509
	Within Groups	488.903	230	2.126		
	Total	495.932	234			

Since the One-Way ANOVA showed statistical significance between groups, a Bonferroni Post-Hoc was accepted with a confidence interval of ($p<.05$) as outlined in Table 24. When the data from the Bonferroni Post-Hoc were analyzed, it revealed that the only statistically significant difference in perceptions between groups based on age was under the factor of the induction process when comparing participants aged 51-60 and 31-40 ($p<.04$).

Table 24: Bonferroni Post-Hoc for Age Comparison for Research Question #3

Dependent Variable	(I) What was your age range, in years, at the conclusion of your employment?	(J) What was your age range, in years, at the conclusion of your employment?	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval Lower Bound	95% Confidence Interval Upper Bound
I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	20-30	31-40	.15000	.18736	1.000	-.3810	.6810
		41-50	.23333	.21492	1.000	-.3758	.8425
		51-60	.21250	.24124	1.000	-.4712	.8962
		61-70	.47143	.45460	1.000	-.8170	1.7599
	31-40	20-30	-.15000	.18736	1.000	-.6810	.3810
		41-50	.08333	.21917	1.000	-.5379	.7045
		51-60	.06250	.24504	1.000	-.6320	.7570
		61-70	.32143	.45663	1.000	-.9728	1.6156

	41-50	20-30	-.23333	.21492	1.000	-.8425	.3758
		31-40	-.08333	.21917	1.000	-.7045	.5379
		51-60	-.02083	.26671	1.000	-.7767	.7351
		61-70	.23810	.46861	1.000	-1.0901	1.5663
	51-60	20-30	-.21250	.24124	1.000	-.8962	.4712
		31-40	-.06250	.24504	1.000	-.7570	.6320
		41-50	.02083	.26671	1.000	-.7351	.7767
		61-70	.25893	.48126	1.000	-1.1051	1.6229
	61-70	20-30	-.47143	.45460	1.000	-1.7599	.8170
		31-40	-.32143	.45663	1.000	-1.6156	.9728
		41-50	-.23810	.46861	1.000	-1.5663	1.0901
		51-60	-.25893	.48126	1.000	-1.6229	1.1051
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	20-30	31-40	.11389	.24638	1.000	-.5844	.8122
		41-50	-.20833	.28261	1.000	-1.0093	.5927
		51-60	.35000	.31723	1.000	-.5491	1.2491
		61-70	-.27500	.59780	1.000	-1.9693	1.4193
	31-40	20-30	-.11389	.24638	1.000	-.8122	.5844
		41-50	-.32222	.28821	1.000	-1.1391	.4946
		51-60	.23611	.32223	1.000	-.6772	1.1494
		61-70	-.38889	.60046	1.000	-2.0908	1.3130
	41-50	20-30	.20833	.28261	1.000	-.5927	1.0093
		31-40	.32222	.28821	1.000	-.4946	1.1391
		51-60	.55833	.35071	1.000	-.4357	1.5523
		61-70	-.06667	.61622	1.000	-1.8132	1.6799
	51-60	20-30	-.35000	.31723	1.000	-1.2491	.5491
		31-40	-.23611	.32223	1.000	-1.1494	.6772
		41-50	-.55833	.35071	1.000	-1.5523	.4357
		61-70	-.62500	.63284	1.000	-2.4186	1.1686
	61-70	20-30	.27500	.59780	1.000	-1.4193	1.9693
		31-40	.38889	.60046	1.000	-1.3130	2.0908
		41-50	.06667	.61622	1.000	-1.6799	1.8132

		51-60	.62500	.63284	1.000	-1.1686	2.4186
I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	20-30	31-40	-.17083	.23426	1.000	-.8348	.4932
		41-50	.42386	.27066	1.000	-.3433	1.1911
		51-60	.67460	.30509	.280	-.1902	1.5394
		61-70	.57321	.56840	1.000	-1.0379	2.1843
	31-40	20-30	.17083	.23426	1.000	-.4932	.8348
		41-50	.59470	.27595	.322	-.1875	1.3769
		51-60	.84543	.30979	.068	-.0327	1.7235
		61-70	.74405	.57094	1.000	-.8743	2.3624
	41-50	20-30	-.42386	.27066	1.000	-1.1911	.3433
		31-40	-.59470	.27595	.322	-1.3769	.1875
		51-60	.25073	.33815	1.000	-.7078	1.2092
		61-70	.14935	.58681	1.000	-1.5140	1.8127
	51-60	20-30	-.67460	.30509	.280	-1.5394	.1902
		31-40	-.84543	.30979	.068	-1.7235	.0327
		41-50	-.25073	.33815	1.000	-1.2092	.7078
		61-70	-.10138	.60346	1.000	-1.8119	1.6091
	61-70	20-30	-.57321	.56840	1.000	-2.1843	1.0379
		31-40	-.74405	.57094	1.000	-2.3624	.8743
		41-50	-.14935	.58681	1.000	-1.8127	1.5140
		51-60	.10138	.60346	1.000	-1.6091	1.8119
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	20-30	31-40	-.26667	.23649	1.000	-.9370	.4036
		41-50	.24444	.27127	1.000	-.5244	1.0133
		51-60	.27097	.30799	1.000	-.6020	1.1439
		61-70	1.54286	.57381	.077	-.0835	3.1692
	31-40	20-30	.26667	.23649	1.000	-.4036	.9370
		41-50	.51111	.27664	.660	-.2730	1.2952
		51-60	.53763	.31273	.869	-.3488	1.4240
		61-70	1.80952*	.57637	.019	.1759	3.4432
	41-50	20-30	-.24444	.27127	1.000	-1.0133	.5244

		31-40	-.51111	.27664	.660	-1.2952	.2730
		51-60	.02652	.33980	1.000	-.9366	.9896
		61-70	1.29841	.59149	.292	-.3781	2.9749
	51-60	20-30	-.27097	.30799	1.000	-1.1439	.6020
		31-40	-.53763	.31273	.869	-1.4240	.3488
		41-50	-.02652	.33980	1.000	-.9896	.9366
		61-70	1.27189	.60921	.379	-.4548	2.9986
	61-70	20-30	-1.54286	.57381	.077	-3.1692	.0835
		31-40	-1.80952*	.57637	.019	-3.4432	-.1759
		41-50	-1.29841	.59149	.292	-2.9749	.3781
		51-60	-1.27189	.60921	.379	-2.9986	.4548
I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	20-30	31-40	-.47529	.23494	.443	-1.1413	.1908
		41-50	.11688	.27083	1.000	-.6509	.8847
		51-60	-.08918	.30843	1.000	-.9636	.7852
		61-70	1.27273	.56574	.254	-.3311	2.8766
	31-40	20-30	.47529	.23494	.443	-.1908	1.1413
		41-50	.59217	.27423	.319	-.1853	1.3696
		51-60	.38611	.31142	1.000	-.4968	1.2690
		61-70	1.74802*	.56738	.023	.1395	3.3565
	41-50	20-30	-.11688	.27083	1.000	-.8847	.6509
		31-40	-.59217	.27423	.319	-1.3696	.1853
		51-60	-.20606	.33931	1.000	-1.1680	.7559

		61-70	1.15584	.58315	.487	-.4974	2.8091
	51-60	20-30	.08918	.30843	1.000	-.7852	.9636
		31-40	-.38611	.31142	1.000	-1.2690	.4968
		41-50	.20606	.33931	1.000	-.7559	1.1680
		61-70	1.36190	.60154	.245	-.3434	3.0673
	61-70	20-30	-1.27273	.56574	.254	-2.8766	.3311
		31-40	-1.74802*	.56738	.023	-3.3565	-.1395
		41-50	-1.15584	.58315	.487	-2.8091	.4974
		51-60	-1.36190	.60154	.245	-3.0673	.3434
I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	20-30	31-40	-.11528	.20115	1.000	-.6854	.4548
		41-50	-.01528	.23073	1.000	-.6693	.6387
		51-60	.09798	.26196	1.000	-.6445	.8405
		61-70	.30536	.48805	1.000	-1.0780	1.6887
	31-40	20-30	.11528	.20115	1.000	-.4548	.6854
		41-50	.10000	.23530	1.000	-.5669	.7669
		51-60	.21326	.26599	1.000	-.5407	.9672
		61-70	.42063	.49023	1.000	-.9689	1.8101
	41-50	20-30	.01528	.23073	1.000	-.6387	.6693
		31-40	-.10000	.23530	1.000	-.7669	.5669
		51-60	.11326	.28901	1.000	-.7059	.9324
		61-70	.32063	.50309	1.000	-1.1053	1.7466
	51-60	20-30	-.09798	.26196	1.000	-.8405	.6445
		31-40	-.21326	.26599	1.000	-.9672	.5407
		41-50	-.11326	.28901	1.000	-.9324	.7059

		61-70	.20737	.51816	1.000	-1.2613	1.6760
	61-70	20-30	-.30536	.48805	1.000	-1.6887	1.0780
		31-40	-.42063	.49023	1.000	-1.8101	.9689
		41-50	-.32063	.50309	1.000	-1.7466	1.1053
		51-60	-.20737	.51816	1.000	-1.6760	1.2613
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	20-30	31-40	-.11285	.19912	1.000	-.6773	.4516
		41-50	.05992	.22741	1.000	-.5847	.7045
		51-60	.22336	.25806	1.000	-.5081	.9548
		61-70	-.01627	.48017	1.000	-1.3774	1.3448
	31-40	20-30	.11285	.19912	1.000	-.4516	.6773
		41-50	.17277	.23201	1.000	-.4849	.8304
		51-60	.33621	.26212	1.000	-.4068	1.0792
		61-70	.09658	.48237	1.000	-1.2708	1.4639
	41-50	20-30	-.05992	.22741	1.000	-.7045	.5847
		31-40	-.17277	.23201	1.000	-.8304	.4849
		51-60	.16344	.28420	1.000	-.6422	.9690
		61-70	-.07619	.49472	1.000	-1.4785	1.3261
	51-60	20-30	-.22336	.25806	1.000	-.9548	.5081
		31-40	-.33621	.26212	1.000	-1.0792	.4068
		41-50	-.16344	.28420	1.000	-.9690	.6422
		61-70	-.23963	.50953	1.000	-1.6840	1.2047
	61-70	20-30	.01627	.48017	1.000	-1.3448	1.3774
		31-40	-.09658	.48237	1.000	-1.4639	1.2708
		41-50	.07619	.49472	1.000	-1.3261	1.4785
		51-60	.23963	.50953	1.000	-1.2047	1.6840
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student	20-30	31-40	.30833	.24854	1.000	-.3962	1.0128
		41-50	.05000	.28510	1.000	-.7581	.8581
		51-60	.41667	.32755	1.000	-.5118	1.3451
		61-70	.13571	.60306	1.000	-1.5736	1.8451
	31-40	20-30	-.30833	.24854	1.000	-1.0128	.3962
		41-50	-.25833	.29075	1.000	-1.0824	.5658
		51-60	.10833	.33248	1.000	-.8341	1.0507

discipline concerns.		61-70	-.17262	.60575	1.000	-1.8896	1.5444
	41-50	20-30	-.05000	.28510	1.000	-.8581	.7581
		31-40	.25833	.29075	1.000	-.5658	1.0824
		51-60	.36667	.36063	1.000	-.6555	1.3889
		61-70	.08571	.62164	1.000	-1.6763	1.8477
	51-60	20-30	-.41667	.32755	1.000	-1.3451	.5118
		31-40	-.10833	.33248	1.000	-1.0507	.8341
		41-50	-.36667	.36063	1.000	-1.3889	.6555
		61-70	-.28095	.64222	1.000	-2.1013	1.5394
	61-70	20-30	-.13571	.60306	1.000	-1.8451	1.5736
		31-40	.17262	.60575	1.000	-1.5444	1.8896
		41-50	-.08571	.62164	1.000	-1.8477	1.6763
		51-60	.28095	.64222	1.000	-1.5394	2.1013
I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	20-30	31-40	.18472	.10759	.873	-.1202	.4897
		41-50	.09306	.12341	1.000	-.2567	.4428
		51-60	.07944	.14011	1.000	-.3177	.4766
		61-70	-.37679	.26104	1.000	-1.1167	.3631
	31-40	20-30	-.18472	.10759	.873	-.4897	.1202
		41-50	-.09167	.12585	1.000	-.4484	.2650
		51-60	-.10529	.14227	1.000	-.5085	.2980
		61-70	-.56151	.26221	.333	-1.3047	.1817
	41-50	20-30	-.09306	.12341	1.000	-.4428	.2567
		31-40	.09167	.12585	1.000	-.2650	.4484
		51-60	-.01362	.15458	1.000	-.4518	.4245
		61-70	-.46984	.26909	.821	-1.2325	.2928
	51-60	20-30	-.07944	.14011	1.000	-.4766	.3177
		31-40	.10529	.14227	1.000	-.2980	.5085
		41-50	.01362	.15458	1.000	-.4245	.4518
		61-70	-.45622	.27714	1.000	-1.2417	.3293
	61-70	20-30	.37679	.26104	1.000	-.3631	1.1167
		31-40	.56151	.26221	.333	-.1817	1.3047
		41-50	.46984	.26909	.821	-.2928	1.2325

		51-60	.45622	.27714	1.000	-.3293	1.2417
I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	20-30	31-40	.05475	.19772	1.000	-.5057	.6152
		41-50	.14583	.22597	1.000	-.4947	.7864
		51-60	-.18750	.25962	1.000	-.9234	.5484
		61-70	.29821	.47798	1.000	-1.0567	1.6531
	31-40	20-30	-.05475	.19772	1.000	-.6152	.5057
		41-50	.09108	.23107	1.000	-.5639	.7461
		51-60	-.24225	.26407	1.000	-.9908	.5063
		61-70	.24346	.48041	1.000	-1.1183	1.6052
	41-50	20-30	-.14583	.22597	1.000	-.7864	.4947
		31-40	-.09108	.23107	1.000	-.7461	.5639
		51-60	-.33333	.28583	1.000	-1.1435	.4769
		61-70	.15238	.49271	1.000	-1.2443	1.5490
	51-60	20-30	.18750	.25962	1.000	-.5484	.9234
		31-40	.24225	.26407	1.000	-.5063	.9908
		41-50	.33333	.28583	1.000	-.4769	1.1435
		61-70	.48571	.50902	1.000	-.9572	1.9286
	61-70	20-30	-.29821	.47798	1.000	-1.6531	1.0567
		31-40	-.24346	.48041	1.000	-1.6052	1.1183
		41-50	-.15238	.49271	1.000	-1.5490	1.2443
		51-60	-.48571	.50902	1.000	-1.9286	.9572
I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	20-30	31-40	.16526	.11988	1.000	-.1745	.5051
		41-50	.13193	.13741	1.000	-.2576	.5214
		51-60	.15272	.15593	1.000	-.2893	.5947
		61-70	.44304	.29015	1.000	-.3794	1.2655
	31-40	20-30	-.16526	.11988	1.000	-.5051	.1745
		41-50	-.03333	.13982	1.000	-.4296	.3630
		51-60	-.01254	.15806	1.000	-.4606	.4355
		61-70	.27778	.29130	1.000	-.5479	1.1035
	41-50	20-30	-.13193	.13741	1.000	-.5214	.2576
		31-40	.03333	.13982	1.000	-.3630	.4296
		51-60	.02079	.17174	1.000	-.4660	.5076

		61-70	.31111	.29894	1.000	-.5362	1.1585
	51-60	20-30	-.15272	.15593	1.000	-.5947	.2893
		31-40	.01254	.15806	1.000	-.4355	.4606
		41-50	-.02079	.17174	1.000	-.5076	.4660
		61-70	.29032	.30789	1.000	-.5824	1.1630
	61-70	20-30	-.44304	.29015	1.000	-1.2655	.3794
		31-40	-.27778	.29130	1.000	-1.1035	.5479
		41-50	-.31111	.29894	1.000	-1.1585	.5362
		51-60	-.29032	.30789	1.000	-1.1630	.5824
I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	20-30	31-40	.45819	.23290	.508	-.2042	1.1206
		41-50	.66736	.24894	.081	-.0406	1.3753
		51-60	.50167	.29327	.890	-.3324	1.3357
		61-70	-1.24615	.56099	.276	-2.8416	.3493
	31-40	20-30	-.45819	.23290	.508	-1.1206	.2042
		41-50	.20917	.26694	1.000	-.5500	.9683
		51-60	.04348	.30870	1.000	-.8344	.9214
		61-70	-1.70435*	.56921	.032	-3.3231	-.0856
	41-50	20-30	-.66736	.24894	.081	-1.3753	.0406
		31-40	-.20917	.26694	1.000	-.9683	.5500
		51-60	-.16569	.32097	1.000	-1.0785	.7471
		61-70	-1.91351*	.57596	.011	-3.5515	-.2755
	51-60	20-30	-.50167	.29327	.890	-1.3357	.3324
		31-40	-.04348	.30870	1.000	-.9214	.8344
		41-50	.16569	.32097	1.000	-.7471	1.0785
		61-70	-1.74783*	.59646	.038	-3.4441	-.0515

	61-70	20-30	1.24615	.56099	.276	-.3493	2.8416
		31-40	1.70435*	.56921	.032	.0856	3.3231
		41-50	1.91351*	.57596	.011	.2755	3.5515
		51-60	1.74783*	.59646	.038	.0515	3.4441
I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	20-30	31-40	-.05000	.23684	1.000	-.7213	.6213
		41-50	.11944	.27168	1.000	-.6506	.8895
		51-60	.17177	.30845	1.000	-.7025	1.0460
		61-70	.93214	.57466	1.000	-.6967	2.5609
	31-40	20-30	.05000	.23684	1.000	-.6213	.7213
		41-50	.16944	.27706	1.000	-.6158	.9547
		51-60	.22177	.31320	1.000	-.6659	1.1095
		61-70	.98214	.57723	.902	-.6539	2.6182
	41-50	20-30	-.11944	.27168	1.000	-.8895	.6506
		31-40	-.16944	.27706	1.000	-.9547	.6158
		51-60	.05233	.34030	1.000	-.9122	1.0169
		61-70	.81270	.59237	1.000	-.8663	2.4917
	51-60	20-30	-.17177	.30845	1.000	-1.0460	.7025
		31-40	-.22177	.31320	1.000	-1.1095	.6659
		41-50	-.05233	.34030	1.000	-1.0169	.9122
		61-70	.76037	.61011	1.000	-.9689	2.4897
	61-70	20-30	-.93214	.57466	1.000	-2.5609	.6967
		31-40	-.98214	.57723	.902	-2.6182	.6539
		41-50	-.81270	.59237	1.000	-2.4917	.8663
		51-60	-.76037	.61011	1.000	-2.4897	.9689

*. The mean difference is significant at the 0.05 level.

CHAPTER V

Introduction

As outlined in Chapter I, this single-district dissertation study (Hochbein, 2015) was created and implemented in an attempt to help educational leaders within a large, urban public school district in South Florida better understand why classroom teachers left the school district during a recent 5-year timeframe: 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17. Educational leaders in South Florida are facing an unprecedented shortage of teachers (McGlade, 2016) and have become increasingly creative with ideas to help try and attract potential teachers to the profession (Hackett, 2017) to fill vacancies. This is a particularly challenging problem as high rates of teacher turnover lead to an abundance of funds spent hiring new personnel and training them (Barnes et al., 2006; Borman & Dowling, 2008; U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015).

To ensure that this research study was grounded in relevant literature, an extensive literature review was conducted on the topic of factors related to teacher retention. This process was essential as the researcher needed to understand reasons that previous research identified as factors for classroom teachers leaving the profession in order to develop the most appropriate instrument possible. Through this comprehensive literature review, 13 factors were identified within other research studies as reasons that classroom teachers have previously cited for leaving a school site, school district, and/or the profession entirely. The factors identified to be included in the newly created exit survey for this study were: high-performance culture, support from school administrative leadership, high-stakes testing, overall compensation, Value Added Model (VAM) / merit-based pay, professional collaboration, professional development, support with student discipline from school administrators, student body demographics, student behavior,

others' decision to leave the district/profession, teacher induction protocols, and overall workload/stress.

This careful approach led the primary researcher to consider the most appropriate means for gathering the desired data which, ultimately, was deemed to be through an electronic exit survey (Dillman et al., 2014; Hohwu et al., 2013; Schonlau et al., 2002) with the foundation of the exit survey which was currently in place at the time this research study began at the district which was studied (Appendix F); however, there were two major changes: (1) on the initial section, potential participants were able to select more than one reason for their choice to leave the school district and/or the profession entirely, and, (2) potential participants were able to select the level at which the factors identified in Chapter II affected their decision to leave on a 5-point Likert scale.

After the necessary Institutional Review Board permissions were obtained (Appendix D and Appendix E) the researcher entered the data collection phase of the study. After the 14-day participation window was completed, the data were analyzed in an attempt to extrapolate trends which could inform educational leaders as to statistically significant reasons why the classroom teachers who chose to leave during the time period being studied chose to do so.

Statistically significant or otherwise relevant trends detected in the data obtained (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016) were reported in order to: (1) outline implications for practice for educational leaders within the district which was studied, as well as other large, urban public school districts in South Florida, and, (2) make recommendations for future research on the topic of teacher retention.

Summary of Findings

From the total pool of potential participants (n=1865), a total of 13.5% participated (n=252) in the electronic exit survey developed for this research study during the 14-day participation window (Appendix B). Careful thought went into the development of the survey itself and best practices for implementation, for example: (1) the survey itself was designed to be short and ultimately only took participants an average of a total of 4 minutes and 15 seconds to complete, and, (2) reminders were sent to each participant who had not completed the survey at the end of the participation window at various intervals (Hohwu et al., 2013; Jackson, 2017; Schonlau et al., 2002).

Before data related to the research questions were analyzed, the researcher ran the data set through a Cronbach's alpha coefficient analysis to determine if the instrument showed reliability. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient revealed that the instrument had above average ("good") reliability (George & Mallery, 2003) with a score of 0.811 as outlined in Table 1. This positive result allowed the researcher to delve deeper into the data set with the ability to draw conclusions with some degree of certainty if statistical significance at the 95% confidence could be found. The exit survey developed for this study was also considered to have high internal content and construct validity based upon the extensive literature review (Chapter 2) and the previous exit survey from the district which was studied (Appendix F) upon which it is founded.

This research study was based on three foundational research questions:

Q1. To what degree, if any, do research-based factors (listed below) impact teachers who chose to leave?

- High-performance culture
- Support from administration

- High-stakes testing
- Overall compensation
- Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-based Pay
- Professional collaboration
- Professional Development
- Administrative support with student discipline
- Student demographics
- Student behavior
- Teacher turnover
- New teacher induction program
- Job-related stress

Q2. Of the factors studied in Q1, which factor(s) have the greatest influence on teachers who chose to leave?

Q3. Of the factor(s) noted to have the greatest influence in Q2, at what level do factors such as age, gender, or race/ethnicity demonstrate a connection with the findings?

In order to attempt to detect trends in the data based on the first research question, *Q1. To what degree, if any, do research-based factors (listed below) impact teachers who chose to leave?*, the researcher identified a One-Way ANOVA (Table 2) with a Bonferroni Post-Hoc (Table 3) to test for differences between groups of teachers who chose to leave based on the level at which they taught (elementary, middle, or high school). The One-Way ANOVA (Table 2) detected a statistically significant degree of difference for two identified factors between the groups: (1) high-performance culture ($p<.01$), and (2) emphasis on high-stakes testing ($p<.02$) and this finding was supported by the Bonferroni Post-Hoc (Table 3). As a result, the researcher

must reject the null hypothesis for these two factors only when reviewing individual perceptions between the groups which were analyzed.

When given the opportunity to select more than one factor for their decision to leave the district which was studied and/or the profession in the new exit survey created for this research study versus only being able to choose one on the previous exit survey (Appendix F), 79.3% of participants (n=200) ultimately cited more than one factor. This finding demonstrates that future crucial perception data could likely be made to the district which was studied if they provided those who are leaving to select more than one reason leading to departure. In an additional attempt to detect trends in the data related to the first research question, the researcher implemented a Frequency Table (Table 4 – Table 15) to outline responses on the check-all-that-apply section of the exit survey. The data from the Frequency Tables revealed that the top three reasons selected by classroom teachers who left the district which was studied during the 5-year time period utilized for this study were: inadequate salary (Table 9), stress on the job (Table 15), and dissatisfaction with supervisor (Table 5).

With a focus on attempting to detect trends in the data with regard to the second research question, *Q2. Of the factors studied in Q1, which factor(s) have the greatest influence on teachers who chose to leave?,* a Binomial Test (Table 16) was implemented. In order to complete the Binomial Test, a cut score was needed and it was placed at the level of 3 or less on the Likert scale (moderate disagreement / low-level agreement). If the participants responded at a level of 4 or 5 on the Likert scale, then it was assumed that they had strong agreement with the factor they were responding to. As outlined in Chapter III, only subcategories where more than 10 participants responded were considered for formal statistical analysis to protect the confidentiality of those who participated in the study.

The Binomial Test (Table 16) not reveal any factors which were statistically significant (p.<.05) as a reason for departure based on the responses from the participants. Further analysis revealed that there were multiple factors which were statistically not important (p<.05) in the decisions of those who left: connecting with student body (98%), other teachers leaving (98%), high performance culture (90%), poor student behavior (88%), the induction process (86%), professional collaboration (85%), professional development (85%), school administrative leadership (68%), support with discipline concerns (66%), VAM/merit-based pay (62%), and workload/stress (62%). Final analysis revealed that there were two factors which were not statistically important or unimportant (p>.05) in teachers' decision to leave the district which was studied: high-stakes testing and overall compensation. As a result, the researcher must fail to reject the null hypothesis for this research question.

In an attempt to detect trends related to the third research question, *Q3. Of the factor(s) noted to have the greatest influence in Q2, at what level do factors such as age, gender, or race/ethnicity demonstrate a connection with the findings?,* the researcher had to implement various statistical analyses due to the variable nature of the independent variables. For the participant subcategories which included only two independent variables (gender, race, and ethnicity), an Independent Samples T-Test (Table 17 – Table 22) was utilized. For the participant subcategories with more than two independent variables (age), the most appropriate statistical analysis was deemed to be a One-Way ANOVA (Table 23) with a Bonferroni Post-Hoc (Table 24).

When the data comparing the perceptions of males and females were analyzed using Group Statistics (Table 17) and an Independent Samples T-Test (Table 18), it was found that females were statistically more likely (p<.03) to agree that they had chosen to depart the district

being studied as a result of the high-performance culture expectations and, therefore, the null hypothesis can only be rejected for this particular factor within this subgroup. As noted in Table 18, further analysis revealed that there was a statistical similarity in responses between males and females for two factors: overall compensation (p=.05) and overall workload and/or stress level (p.<.01), thus supporting the null hypothesis for these two factors.

When responses from other subgroups with two independent variables, namely Black or African American to White (Table 19 & Table 20), and Hispanic or Latino to Not Hispanic or Latino (Table 21 & Table 22), there were no statistically significant trends detected and therefore the researcher must fail to reject the null hypothesis for these subgroups.

In the final statistical analysis for the third research question, a One-Way ANOVA (Table 23) with a Bonferroni Post Hoc (Table 24) were implemented to attempt to detect trends in the data based on age as an independent variable. There were 4 specific independent variables based on age: 20-30, 31-40, 41-50, and 51-60 wherein more than 10 participants responded. The One-Way ANOVA detected a statistically significant degree of difference in responses between the groups for 4 factors: (1) high-stakes testing (p<.04), (2) overall compensation (p<.02), (3) Value-Added Model (VAM) / merit-based pay (p<.02), and (4) the employee induction process (p<.01). As a result, the researcher must reject the null hypothesis for those factors only.

Implications for Practice

All of the data collected and analyzed through this research study were designed with the goal of informing educational leaders at the district which was studied of factors which led classroom teachers to depart the district during the 5-year time period of: 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, and 2016-17. The basis of obtaining and analyzing this information was in an attempt to stem the high level of teacher turnover (Borman & Dowling, 2008; Ingersoll et al.,

2016; Raue & Gray, 2015) to help realize budgetary savings caused by teacher attrition ((Barnes et al., 2006; Borman & Dowling, 2008; U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015) and lead to an improvement in student achievement (Adnot et al., 2016).

Based upon the level at which the instrument scored on the Cronbach's alpha coefficient (0.811), it is reasonable for educational leaders to accept findings obtained as a result of data gathered through this research study.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 1:

Based on findings related to the first research question, *Q1. To what degree, if any, do research-based factors (listed below) impact teachers who chose to leave?*, educational leaders may wish to note that two factors (high-performance culture and emphasis on high-stakes testing) can affect individual teacher perceptions based upon the level in which they teach (elementary, middle, and high school). As such, the district which was studied may wish to consider how these topics are covered by principals at the various levels to help ensure that classroom teachers feel more supported.

Additionally, the finding that 79.3% of participants (n=200) chose to identify more than one factor when given the opportunity to do so demonstrates that there were potentially valuable data not being collected in the previously implemented exit survey (Appendix F). Specifically, the most commonly chosen factors were: inadequate salary, stress on the job, and dissatisfaction with supervisor. As a result, educational leaders as the district level may want to consider ways in which salary considerations for classroom teachers may be improved, ways in which the level of stress classroom teachers are feeling can be reduced, and, a careful analysis of School Effectiveness Questionnaire data which outlines the sentiments of classroom teachers (and other support staff) of the level of effectiveness of the school-based administration to assist those who

have been identified as needing improvement.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 2:

While statistical analysis with regard to the second research question, *Q2. Of the factors studied in Q1, which factor(s) have the greatest influence on teachers who chose to leave?*, did not reveal any specific statistically significant factors which led those who participated to leave the district which was studied and/or the profession entirely, it is the factors which were identified as not statistically significant which stand out which drive the findings, namely: the vast majority of classroom teachers felt that they were able to connect with the student body, they did not leave because they saw others doing so, they were accepting of the high-performance culture, they generally felt that students behaved, they were supportive of the induction program which was in place, they found high levels of collaboration, noted that they had adequate access to professional development, had supportive school-based administrative leadership, were supported with discipline concerns, did not leave due to merit-based pay, and were stressed to the point where they needed to leave. These findings indicate that educational leaders at the school district which was studied were doing a lot of things right based on the perceptions of the former district teachers who participated.

Conclusions Related to Research Question 3:

When reviewing data for the third research question, *Q3. Of the factor(s) noted to have the greatest influence in Q2, at what level do factors such as age, gender, or race/ethnicity demonstrate a connection with the findings?*, it is of paramount importance to recognize that there were no factors which were identified as statistically significant for departure. As such, results from this question would have much greater applicability if it were found that, for example, overall compensation was found to be a statistically significant reason for those who

left, and, it was then found that men were more statistically likely to leave as a result of this than women. As a result, though females tended towards a higher level of agreement for leaving the district which was studied as a result of the high-performance culture, no changes are recommended to be made to the culture since overall it did not statistically lead to the departure of classroom teachers as a whole. The same premise applies to the findings which are based when comparing the factors between different age groups.

Recommendations for Future Research

If this study were to be replicated by other researchers in the future, there are several adjustments that the primary researcher would make to those completing the study.

The very verbiage of the question in the electronic exit survey beginning with, "I chose to leave teaching because" could be changed to, "I chose to leave the district being studied and/or the profession because …". Alternatively, a question could be implemented at the very beginning of the survey asking potential participants if they intend to continue teaching at all and, if the answer is yes, determine where they are headed next (ex. a different school district in the same state, a different state, a private/charter school, higher education, online, etc.). This could allow the school districts to detect trends as to whether or not they are losing an abundance of teachers to one specific other type of teaching or location. Based on this limitation, the results of the study cannot be steadfastly accepted as facts.

The online website in which the survey was hosted (SurveyMonkey) did lead to limitations. For example, it was not possible to attach anything in the messages inviting potential participants in the study. To help potential participants be at ease, it would have been ideal to attach the Institutional Review Board documents from both the district which was studied as well as the university which sponsored the study. In addition, school district or

university branding could only be added at an extra cost which was not feasible for the researcher to fund in this study. That additional branding might also have put potential participants at greater ease with regard to the authenticity of the study and have led to a higher rate of response.

Given the limited funding available for this particular research study, providing participants with a financial reward/incentive was not feasible. If such funding was available, it may potentially lead to greater participation from the pool of potential participants. It is possible that the short nature of the survey led to such a high response rate.

This research study carried a quantitative design in order to obtain the data necessary to attempt to detect trends in the data and inform educational leaders as to statistically significant factors which led classroom teachers to leave the district which was studied. It is unlikely that the data captured cover the depth of the personal stories of those who chose to participate and, a mixed-methods design may provide an even greater lens on the topic which was studied. Given the large number of potential participants (n=1865) such a design was not possible for this research study, but, it could be for future studies if there was a large enough research team to triangulate the data appropriately.

Conclusion

The topic of classroom teacher retention is one that has been widely studied, as reported in throughout this research study, with the landmark meta-analysis completed by Borman & Dowling (2008) serving as the anchor. While data compiled and analyzed through that research study is still relevant, it has been 10 years since it was first published and, since then, much has changed in both society and in the field of education across the world.

As previously indicated, South Florida is currently facing a shortage of classroom teachers (McGlade, 2016) and this has led to creative measures by local school districts (Hackett, 2017) to attempt to fill the vacancies that exist. These vacancies are incredibly costly (Barnes et al., 2006; Borman & Dowling, 2008; U.S. Department of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2015), and, finding a comparable educator in terms of effectiveness if the teacher who left was highly effective can be incredibly difficult to do (TNTP, 2012) and could potentially impact student achievement (Adnot et al., 2016).

Although this research study did not reveal statistically significant factors which led classroom teachers to leave, it did find many reasons why they did not leave the district which was studied. As such, this and other studies which revolve around data from those leaving can help determine both things that are being done *right* as well as those which could be improved, which is ultimately what was found in this research study. Such information can be just as valuable, and, if the exit survey is adjusted and data are continually analyzed then data might eventually shift to reveal factors which have led others to leave in the future.

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Appendix A

Informed Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study

Lynn University

Individual Differences in Perceptions Affecting Teacher Retention in a Large Urban Public School District

Dear Colleague:

I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your consideration to give your time and professional perceptions to this study. The purpose of this research is to identify why classroom teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching. This survey specifically takes into account research-based factors which may or may not have impacted your decision. Your participation and responses (and those of others) will be analyzed using various statistical analyses to determine if significant information showing relationships can be determined. If so, school site and school district officials will be provided with recommendations which may lead to greater classroom teacher retention, budgetary savings, and increased student achievement.

It is anticipated that there is little to no risk associated with participating in this research study. All responses provided will be kept completely private. Your identification as a participant will be coded with only a numerical value to ensure confidentiality and individual responses will not be presented in any way, rather, they will be presented as groups of former employees, and, only when the groups are larger than ten (n=10). All data obtained will be kept in a locked file and only the researcher will have access to the file(s). All records will be destroyed no later than three years after the conclusion of the study.

By electronically signing your name below, you understand that you will remain anonymous and all data provided will be interpreted by the researcher and incorporated into a formal research paper that will be submitted for publication. If you wish, a summary of the study will be sent to you upon the completion of the study. You understand that you reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time by informing the researcher of your intention to do so in writing. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may skip any questions that you do not want to answer, although the first question is required to determine if you are eligible to participate. If you decide not to take part or to skip some of the questions, it will not affect your current or future relationship with Lynn University and/or the district to be studied.

Should you require further clarification please do not hesitate to contact the principal researcher, Joshua Prieur, by telephone at [redacted] or by e-mail at [redacted] You may also contact Dr. Robert Reich, Chair of Lynn University IRB, at [redacted] or, Dr. Suzanne King, at [redacted]. If you choose to participate, please complete the following questions and submit responses no later than 14 days after your initial email invitation to participate.

After confirming that you wish to participate by electronically signing (by typing) your name in the box below, you will be invited to complete an electronic survey which contains closed-ended questions regarding your perceptions of classroom teaching and reasons why you may have chosen to leave the classroom. Again, thank you for your consideration to take the time to

complete the survey. Your time is valued and your assistance is sincerely appreciated.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above information, and have received answers to any questions I have asked. I consent to take part in the study.

This consent form will be kept by the researcher for at least three years beyond the end of the study.

Participant Electronic Signature _____

Appendix B

Electronic Survey Instrument: Former Educator Perceptions Survey

Section 1: Background Information

In this section, you will answer a series of questions regarding your personal and professional background. Please answer the questions to the best of your ability. Only the first question is required to determine your eligibility to participate in this study. If your answer to the first question is "no" then you are asked to exit the survey.

Required Were you employed as a classroom teacher in the district to be studied during at least one of the following school years: 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16, 2016-17?
Option 1- Yes
Option 2- No

With which gender do you most closely identify?
1- Male
2- Female
3- Other
4- Prefer not to disclose

What was your age range, in years, at the conclusion of your employment?
Option 1- 20-30
Option 2- 31-40
Option 3- 41-50
Option 4- 51-60
Option 6- 61-70
Option 7- 70 or older
Option 8- Prefer not to disclose

With which race do you most closely identify?
Option 1- American Indian or Alaskan Native
Option 2- Asian
Option 3- Black or African American
Option 4- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
Option 5- White
Option 6- Other
Option 7- Prefer not to disclose

What is your ethnic origin?
Option 1- Hispanic or Latino
Option 2- Not Hispanic or Latino
Option 3- Prefer not to disclose

What level were you teaching upon the conclusion of your employment?
Option 1- Elementary (Pre-K-5)
Option 2- Middle (6-8)
Option 3- High (9-12)
Option 4- Prefer not to disclose

Section 2: Factors Related to Retention

Part One:

From the choices below, please select any that had an impact on your decision to leave classroom teaching. You may make multiple selections.

Check All That Apply:

- Dislike / unsuitable for assigned duties
- Dissatisfaction with supervisor
- Dissatisfaction with curriculum
- Family / personal reasons
- Inadequate benefits
- Inadequate salary
- Lack of opportunity for advancement
- Relocation
- Resignation after a leave of absence
- Resignation in lieu of involuntary termination
- Return to continuing education
- Stress on job

Part Two:

In this section, you are asked to rank your perceptions of research-based factors that may have led to your decision to depart classroom teaching. Please carefully consider the impact that these factors had on your decision to leave classroom teaching as you rank your answer below.

Please use the following scale to answer the questions below:

1 – I do not agree at all.
2 – I somewhat disagree.
3 - I agree.
4 – I strongly agree.
5 – I very strongly agree.

1. I chose to leave teaching because I did not support the high-performance culture expected at my school.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported by school administrative leadership.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I chose to leave teaching because there was too much emphasis on high-stakes testing and test results.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with my overall compensation (includes salary and benefits).	1	2	3	4	5
5. I chose to leave teaching because I was dissatisfied with the concept and/or execution of the Value Added Model (VAM) / Merit-Based Pay.	1	2	3	4	5
6. I chose to leave teaching because I was not satisfied with the level of professional collaboration among teachers at my school site.	1	2	3	4	5
7. I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that there was relevant professional development available for my needs.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel that the school administrative leadership team supported me with student discipline concerns.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I chose to leave teaching because I was not able to effectively connect with the student body due to demographics.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I chose to leave teaching because the students behaved poorly in my school.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I chose to leave teaching because I noticed that a lot of other teachers chose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I chose to leave teaching because I did not feel supported in the induction process at the school in which I started. *Only for those with three years of experience or less.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I chose to leave teaching because I felt that the overall workload was too heavy and/or the stress level was too high.	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix C

Invitation to Participate in Research Study

First and Second Invitations to Participate:

Invitation to Participate in Research Study on Teacher Retention in a Large Urban Public School District

Dear Potential Participant:

You have been selected to participate in a study based on your status as a former classroom teacher who completed employment in 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 or 2016-17. The goal of this research study is to examine the impact of factors which may have led you to choose to leave the profession of classroom teaching.

Your perceptions are critical to better understanding areas in which the district you worked for can improve as a means of increasing teacher retention. Your role in this study, should you choose to participate, necessitates the completion of a short survey which can be entirely completed online.

If you are willing to participate, please click **this link** to be taken to the "Informed Consent" page which will cover additional essential details of the study and allow you to decide whether or not you wish to participate.

Thank you very much for your consideration. We are hopeful that you will choose to participate so that we can harness this crucial information as we determine the best ways to continue to develop your former district into the best possible educational setting for all stakeholders.

Sincerely,

Joshua J. Prieur, M.Ed., M.S.Ed.
Primary Researcher

Third Invitation to Participate:

Response Request: Invitation to Participate in Research Study on Teacher Retention in a Large Urban Public School District

Dear Potential Participant:

In the last 10 days, we contacted you to request your participation in a short survey to help better understand the reasons why you left classroom teaching in a large urban public school district in 2012-13, 2013-14, 2014-15, 2015-16 or 2016-17. The goal of this study is to increase teacher retention by better understanding factors which most often led classroom teachers to leave the district being studied.

We are reaching out to you again to request your participation because our ability to effectively analyze the data collected depends upon hearing from as many potential participants as possible. By providing your opinions, you will help us ensure that our analysis is as accurate as possible.

To complete the survey, please click the blue box below labeled “Informed Consent / Begin Survey”. All responses are completely confidential and your name will not be used in any way in the dissemination of results.

Thank you very much for considering our request to participate in this research study.

Sincerely,

Joshua J. Prieur, M.Ed., M.S.Ed.
Primary Researcher

Final Invitation to Participate:

Final Opportunity to Participate in Research Study on Teacher Retention in a Large Urban Public School District

Dear Potential Participant:

We are reaching out to you one last time to request your participation in a study on teacher retention in a large urban public school district.

The window to participate in this research study will close on Tuesday, April 3, 2018 at 7:45am EST. We value your opinion and are hopeful that you will consider completing the survey before the window to participate is closed.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We wish you all the best.

Sincerely,

Joshua J. Prieur, M.Ed., M.S.Ed.
Primary Researcher

Appendix E

School District IRB Approval

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF
PALM BEACH COUNTY, FLORIDA

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH & EVALUATION
3300 FOREST HILL BLVD., SUITE B-216
WEST PALM BEACH, FL 33406-5813
PHONE: 561-434-8469 FAX: 561-357-7608
WWW.PALMBEACHSCHOOLS.ORG/DRE/

PAUL HOUCHENS
DIRECTOR

MARK HOWARD
CHIEF, PERFORMANCE ACCOUNTABILITY

February 27, 2018

Mr. Joshua J. Prieur
[redacted]

Dear Mr. Prieur:

The Superintendent's Research Review Committee has approved your request to conduct research entitled, "Individual Differences in Perceptions Impacting Teacher Retention in a Large Urban Public School District" in the School District of Palm Beach County (the District). According to documentation submitted, the purpose of this study is to better understand why classroom teachers have left the profession in the past five years, and to determine if statistically significant data can help school district leaders raise the retention rate with in the PBCSD, potentially leading to budgetary savings and higher student achievement.

This research is approved and limited to the study, scope, and methods outlined in the proposal. The study will utilize an online questionnaire emailed to former teachers of the District.

As this study is conducted, please be governed by the following guidelines and policies as outlined in District's Policy 2.142:

- Section 4 – General Provisions, Item C – *No Right to Access*: There is no right to access district students, staff or data related thereto for research purposes. Researcher may only access schools, students, staff, and data relevant to the research as approved by the Department of Research and Evaluation.

- Section 7 – Document, Character, and Other Requirements, Item G – *Confidentiality/ Data Security Agreement*: To receive access to district-held student level data or staff level data, the researcher must sign a Confidentiality/Data Security Agreement or other agreement, as approved by the Office of General Counsel, that identifies requirements for the storage, use, maintenance, protection, dissemination, and destruction of data provided hereunder. The Confidentiality/Data Security Agreement must be signed by the Researcher for each research proposal approved by the Department of Research and Evaluation.

- Contact **NO** other than Department of Communications. District policy provides that no one has the right to access students, staff or data, and prohibits researchers from requesting data directly from schools or departments.

- Researcher must submit a Public Records Request in order to obtain information regarding teacher email addresses or employment records – http://www.palmbeachschools.org/publicrecords/.

- Research activities at schools must not occur during the testing window of the Florida Standards Assessments and End-of-Course Assessments – February 26 – May 11, 2018.

- Summarize findings for reports prepared from this study and do not associate responses with a specific school or individual. Information that identifies the District, schools, or individual responses will not be provided to anyone except as required by law.

- This research study must be concluded by January 31, 2019, when the IRB expires.

- If the study requires the use of additional resources or change in participants in the future, a written request must be submitted to this office. Please wait for an approval before proceeding.

Please submit one copy of the study results to the Department of Research and Evaluation no later than one month after completion of the research.

Thank you for your interest in our District.

[redacted]

Paul Houchens
Director

PH/RP:vl

Appendix F: School District Exit Survey

THE SCHOOL DISTRICT OF PALM BEACH COUNTY
COMPENSATION AND EMPLOYEE INFORMATION SERVICES
3300 Forest Hill Blvd., A-115, West Palm Beach, FL 33406
Fax (561) 434-7375 (PX 47375)

Employee Resignation/Termination

This form can be used in addition to a resignation letter. All employees who are resigning or terminating their employment with the District should complete the employee information, Section I and Section II. Teachers should also complete Section III. Section IV is completed by the principal or directors for employees who leave the District involuntarily.

EMPLOYEE ID #	FIRST NAME	MIDDLE NAME	LAST NAME	LAST DAY AT WORK

SCHOOL/DEPT #	SCHOOL/DEPT NAME	POSITION(S)

SECTION I - VOLUNTARY RESIGNATION

This section is completed by the employee who is voluntarily resigning from employment. This form can replace a resignation letter. Check one only.

- ☐ Lack of opportunity for advancement
- ☐ Dissatisfaction with supervisor
- ☐ Dislike / unsuitable for assigned duties
- ☐ Resignation in lieu of involuntary termination
- ☐ Resignation after a leave of absence
- ☐ Family / personal reasons
- ☐ Return to continuing education
- ☐ Other *(specify)*
- ☐ Relocation
- ☐ Inadequate benefits
- ☐ Inadequate salary
- ☐ Stress on job

SECTION II - METHOD OF PAYMENT FOR SICK LEAVE ACCRUAL

It is mandatory for employees who have 10 consecutive years with the District, except for the Police Benevolent Association (PBA), to have their sick time transferred to the BENCOR Special Pay Plan.

All employees not eligible for BENCOR must select one of the following:

- ☐ **Teachers only** - Keep sick leave, teacher may return to the District.
- ☐ Pay out maximum sick leave allowed per Florida Statute and District policy.
- ☐ Transfer sick leave to another Florida Retirement System (FRS) agency if accepted by that agency.
- ☐ Less than 6 years of FRS service; ineligible for pay

SECTION III - TEACHERS ONLY

This section is completed by teachers regarding future employment plans. Choose one only.

Accepted another teaching position
- ☐ at a nonpublic school within the District
- ☐ within another district in Florida
- ☐ outside the State of Florida

Accepted a position other than teaching or the field of education
- ☐ within the same county
- ☐ within another county in Florida
- ☐ outside the State of Florida

Accepted another position in the field of education
- ☐ at a nonpublic school within the District
- ☐ within another district in Florida
- ☐ outside the State of Florida

Other
- ☐ teacher has not accepted employment elsewhere
- ☐ teacher declines to disclose future plans

SECTION IV - INVOLUNTARY TERMINATION

This section is completed by the principal or director for employees who are **involuntarily terminated** from their position. The principal/ director chooses one reason only.

☐ Probationary position ended ☐ Interim position ended ☐ Failed to successfully pass District hiring requirements

SECTION V - REQUIRED SIGNATURES

SIGNATURE OF EMPLOYEE	DATE	SIGNATURE OF PRINCIPAL / DIRECTOR	DATE

PBSD 1176 (Rev. 6/29/2016) RECORDED COPY - Compensation and Employee Information Services COPY - Employee