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Supportive Leadership: The Principal's Role in Beginning Teacher Retention

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SUPPORTIVE LEADERSHIP: THE PRINCIPAL'S ROLE IN BEGINNING TEACHER
RETENTION

A dissertation submitted to
the Graduate College of
Marshall University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education
in
Educational Leadership

by

Kelli LeAnn Epling

Approved by

Dr. Tom Hisiro, Committee Chairperson

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Marshall University
December 2016

SIGNATURE PAGE


I hereby affirm that the following project meets the high academic standards for original scholarship and creative work established by my discipline, college, and the Graduate College of Marshall University. With my signature, I approve the manuscript for publication.

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Committee Chairperson

11/16/2016

Date

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DEDICATION

Dedicating this to you is a mere whisper of my gratitude.

To my boys, Chance and Jake, that sacrificed so much in order for me to earn this degree. Thank you for your love, support, and understanding. Being your mother is my greatest joy, accomplishment, and gift from God.

To my mother, Vicki Dodd, and my Granny, Mildred Ferrell, who have loved, supported, and encouraged me in both my educational and personal endeavors. Thank you for helping with the boys and loving me unconditionally.

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ABSTRACT

School districts in West Virginia and across the nation have been experiencing a mass exodus of teachers over the last two decades, creating a widespread shortage of certified educators in the classroom. In the United States approximately a half-million teachers leave their schools every year, and only 16% of those exits can be attributed to retirement. The rest is due to movement between schools and to teachers leaving the profession. While a great deal of research has been completed in order to ascertain why teachers are leaving the profession most focuses on the individual teacher's perspective – and that perspective suggests that the decision to remain, leave, or resign from the teaching profession is often linked to the administrative support of new teacher experiences. This study aims to determine high school principals' perceptions regarding the supports that are necessary to retain beginning teachers and to determine the extent to which those perceptions are congruent with what the extant research identifies, as new teachers' support needs. This non-experimental, descriptive study was conducted electronically and featured both qualitative and quantitative elements. Using the Delphi research technique, Round One generated the top three principal supports in each of the areas of instruction, school culture, and professional growth, and gained demographic information. Round Two asked participants to rank-order the primary supports identified in Round One and provide additional comments. The expert panel consisted of 16 high school principals whose schools are clustered in a specific Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in West Virginia.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

School districts in West Virginia and across the nation have been experiencing a mass exodus of teachers over the last two decades, which has created a shortage of qualified educators in the classroom. According to Boyd, Grossman, Ing, Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2011) approximately a half-million teachers in the United States leave their schools every year, and only 16% of those exits can be attributed to retirement. The rest is due to movement between schools and to teachers leaving the profession. A great deal of research has been completed in order to ascertain why teachers are leaving the profession; the reasons teachers decide to remain, leave, or resign from the teaching profession are often linked to the administrative support they experience (Allensworth, Ponisciak, & Mazzeo, 2009; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Boyd et al, 2011; Brown & Wynn, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Grissom, 2011; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll, 2001, 2003, 2004; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Johnson 2006; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Miller, 2010; Morrison, 2012; Rice, 2014; Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2002, 2005; Whittaker, 2009; Wong, 2004; Wong & Wong, 2013). It is essential that educational leaders reflect on both the quality and quantity of their interactions with staff in order to create a supportive school culture in which teachers wish to remain.

In an investigation into teacher and administrator retention, Lochmiller, Adachi, Chestnut, and Johnson (2016) found about a fifth of beginning teachers left West Virginia public schools after their first year of teaching, and one-third left by the end of the fourth year. Research clearly articulates that teacher turnover has a negative effect on student achievement (Angelle, 2006; Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Boyd et al., 2008; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll, 2002,

2004, Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Johnson, 2006; Reeves, 2010; Hanushek et al., 2002, 2005). A vicious cycle of yearly turnover is felt most in our disadvantaged schools, where our neediest students often receive instruction from new or uncertified educators (Allensworth et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Grissom, 2011; Ingersoll, 2002, 2004; Johnson, 2006 Prather-Jones, 2011; Thornton, Perreault, & Jennings, 2008). Teachers serving high concentrations of low-income students often work with few resources, poor working conditions, and the added stress of engaging with students and families who have a wide range of social, emotional, and economic needs (Allensworth et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Grissom, 2011; Johnson, 2006). Therefore, educational leaders within difficult-to-staff schools must place greater emphasis on improving working conditions and building relationships with teachers to increase retention rates.

The principalship continues to require school administrators to navigate varied pressures associated with this demanding and challenging job. Recruiting and mentoring new hires are enormous, time-consuming tasks that become additional burdens for principals each year. Gaining an understanding of methods administrators use to conceptualize, negotiate, and enact the role of building principal, as it relates to teacher retention, is essential as policy makers strive to minimize the crisis of teacher attrition.

Many researchers state that the most important role of the principal is creating supportive working conditions that foster success for all (Boyd et al., 2011; Brown & Wynn, 2009; Carlson, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Morrison, 2012; Watkins, 2005). According to Clement (2016), the implementation of improved hiring, sustained induction practices, supportive supervision, positive workplaces, and leadership opportunities will improve teacher retention. As a result,

teachers will have the opportunity to flourish both professionally and personally within the school walls (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

The literature review revealed that there is not a set or agreed upon definition of the principal's role or a method that one can follow in order to be an effective principal for all schools, at all times and in all contexts (Hickey, 2006). Behaviors that have been consistently proven as effective, however, can contribute to improved teacher job satisfaction and retention.

Teacher turnover is almost evenly split between attrition, those who leave teaching altogether; and migration, those who move to teaching jobs in other schools (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Ingersoll (2003) found that school staffing problems are due to the revolving door of teachers leaving their jobs for reasons other than retirement. His study found that almost half of all teachers who depart cite either job dissatisfaction, the desire to pursue another job, or to improve career opportunities outside of the profession as their reasons for leaving. The teachers in his study, who cited job dissatisfaction, linked their choice of leaving to low salaries, lack of support from the administration, student discipline problems, poor student motivation, and/or a lack of teacher influence in decision-making. Ingersoll explained that recruiting more teachers would not solve the problem if 40% to 50% of teachers then leave within five years. His solution addresses the organizational problems that cause teacher attrition such as low pay, isolated job conditions, little professional autonomy, and the faint sense of a career ladder. He also concludes that improving supports will contribute to lower rates of turnover, in turn, diminishing school staffing problems and ultimately aiding performance of schools.

Statement of the Problem

West Virginia schools and districts across the nation are experiencing high rates of teacher attrition, leading to devastating effects on student achievement and school culture over a

sustained period. A recent study by Lochmiller et al. (2016) found that “about 32% of beginning teachers employed in the West Virginia public school system in 2008/09 left the system by 2012/13, compared with 9 percent of teachers overall” (p. 16). Researchers cite retention instead of recruitment as the answer to this critical problem (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

There is consensus among researchers that a key factor in teacher retention is the behaviors of principals and their relationships with teachers (Allensworth et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Morrison, 2012; Prather-Jones, 2011; Richards, 2005; Watkins, 2005). Research is still lacking, however, in identifying those particular retention behaviors principals view as most successful. This study will help to clarify the roles and responsibilities of principals as a primary factor in teacher retention.

Purpose of the Study

The loss of teacher talent continues to plague West Virginia school districts. The staggering rate of classroom teachers transferring and exiting the profession causes school leaders to desperately seek applicants to fill positions. In their efforts to staff impending vacancies, states are relaxing certification standards and encouraging non-education majors to apply in order to increase the pool of candidates. Often times quality instruction is sacrificed, as uncertified teachers are the only applicants willing to fill the void. In essence, by retaining effective teachers, districts will not be forced to hire uncertified teachers.

This study was designed to investigate principals’ perceptions of how supportive behaviors can influence teacher retention in 16 high schools that are grouped into a Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in West Virginia. This study is significant because the reasons that teachers cite most for leaving are planned, monitored, and often implemented by a school’s principal (Carlson, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll

& Smith, 2003; Prather-Jones, 2011; Morrison, 2012; Richards, 2005; Watkins, 2005).

Therefore, it is essential to understand how principals view their roles in reducing beginning teacher attrition. Principals can use this information in an effort to nurture a working environment that increases the likelihood of retaining educators. In summary, educational research around this topic has largely reported teachers' perspectives, yet limited research has been published regarding principals' viewpoints.

Research Questions

The overarching question for this study is this: what behaviors, supports, and strategies do high school principals use to encourage beginning teachers to stay in their schools and in the teaching profession? In order to answer this question, the following perspectives were asked of expert panelists.

1. Which principal supports in the area of instruction are most important in retaining beginning teachers?
2. Which principal supports in the area of school culture are most important in retaining beginning teachers?
3. Which principal supports in the area of professional growth are most important in retaining beginning teachers?

Definition of Terms

Administrative support: the extent to which principals make teachers' work easier and help them improve their teaching (Boyd et al., 2011).

Attrition: the result of teachers leaving the profession (Ingersoll, 2002).

Induction: a structured system that allows beginning teachers to have access to support and guidance during their first year(s) of teaching (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004).

Low-performing schools: schools where student performance is below grade level as determined by state assessments.

Mentoring: What a mentor does to provide guidance, support, and feedback to a new teacher. It is typically a one-on-one relationship that is rarely monitored or assessed (Wong & Wong, 2013).

Mobility: the result of teachers changing schools.

Principal: the building level administrator who supervises professional and service personnel in a school. This term does not include assistant principals.

Retention: the result of keeping teachers in the school, district, or in the profession.

Revolving door: the hiring and rehiring of teachers in schools that experience difficulty in retaining teachers; hiring someone to take the place of someone who left with the process being repeated (Prout, 2009).

Turnover: teachers leaving their school site (as opposed to attrition, which means teachers leave the teaching profession (Ingersoll, 2002).

Working conditions: the favorable or unfavorable conditions in which teachers work; the conditions may influence teacher performance positively or negatively which, in turn, may influence students' learning conditions (Leithwood & McAdie, 2007).

Significance of the Study

This study seeks to increase the knowledge base of practicing principals and influence the preparation and continuing professional development provided to them, thus contributing to their ability to foster and sustain supportive relationships, a positive school culture, and improved beginning teacher retention. Providing educational leaders practical methods to address the critical issue of teacher retention is vital because teachers are the number one predictor of student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2003; MetLife, 2013; Whitaker, 2003).

Many districts focus their resources on the recruitment of new teachers, yet data suggest that after five years, between 40% and 50% of these teachers leave the profession (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Therefore, a focused retention plan will surely prove to be more effective in building a strong, qualified teaching staff. The culture of the school is encumbered by constant job turnover, as teachers leave and new staff members must continually be acclimated. Since there appears to be a lack of research in this area, this study has the potential to add to the body of knowledge as it relates to the role of principals in teacher retention in high schools. The data obtained from this research will be helpful to all districts in a general sense.

This is the first study focusing on principals' perceptions of supportive behaviors relating to beginning teacher attrition ever attempted in West Virginia; therefore, the resultant data enhance the knowledge base on retention efforts. The findings from this study can also facilitate and support future research. Additional audiences that can gain insight from this study include institutions that prepare prospective principals and those agencies that provide professional development.

Method

This was a non-experimental descriptive two-stage study conducted electronically with both qualitative and quantitative elements. Round One used a Delphi research technique to generate the top three principal supports in each of the areas of instruction, school culture, and professional growth, and then requested demographic information.

Round Two asked the participants to rank order the primary supports in each area identified in Round One, and also asked them to comment in order to validate the perceptions of their colleagues who participated.

Limitations

Similar to any other investigation, there were several limitations to this study method; however, steps were taken to minimize the effects of these limitations. The researcher received guidance and supervision from experienced researchers throughout the study. Their feedback allowed the researcher to improve the study's surveys and design in order to minimize limitations.

Linstone and Turoff (2002) identified common reasons for the failure of a Delphi study. The reasons that could have limited this study included:

1. Imposing monitor views and preconceptions of a problem upon the respondent group by over specifying the structure of the Delphi and not allowing for the contribution of other perspectives related to the problem
2. Poor techniques of summarizing and presenting the group response and ensuring common interpretations of the evaluation scales utilized in the exercise
3. Ignoring and not exploring disagreements, so that discouraged dissenters drop out and an artificial consensus is reached (p. 6).

Imposing pre-conceived ideas were controlled by using the research questions as the organizing framework for the study. Poor summarizing and ignoring dissent were controlled by having a panel of experts review the researcher's summaries and feedback. Another concern of the Delphi method is the selection of the participants (Linstone & Turoff, 2002; Skulmoski,

Hartman, & Krahn, 2007; Somerville, 2007). There was no bias on the part of the researcher in selecting the panel of participants, as it is an intact group. Since the Delphi method was first used in the 1950s, much has been learned that has improved its rigor (e.g. computer-based surveying tools and real-time reporting) and in turn ensured the quality of the data (Somerville, 2007).

The findings were limited to the perceptions of 16 high school principals, that are grouped into a RESA in West Virginia, who responded to the survey. While the researcher's academic experience and employment as an assistant principal can constitute a source of empathy and provide an experiential background to be effective in eliciting and understanding respondents' perceptions; it can also be viewed as a limitation in that it is a potential source of bias.

The study was limited by the validity of the survey instrument, which was field tested with a representative population of administrators, but was still in its initial use nonetheless. Assumptions were made that participants would respond to the survey items truthfully, which is encouraged through the confidentiality of the method, although it is acknowledged that individual biases of respondents may have affected the objectivity of their responses to the questionnaire. The items on the survey instrument were based on congruence with the reviewed literature; yet, there may be other factors and issues of importance to teacher attrition that were not included.

A final limitation was the constraint of time. Not only was the two-round Delphi very demanding, it also took from July 1, 2016, until August 23, 2016, for most participants to complete both rounds; therefore, this meant that it was difficult to sustain interest during this summer time frame due to summer vacations and conferences.

An assumption could be made that the participants in the study are representative of the larger population of West Virginia secondary principals. This assumption, and therefore the external validity, was limited by the number of participants. Despite these limitations to the generalizability of the study, it was assumed that the ideas generated by the panel are of significance.

Summary

This chapter introduced the problem of teacher retention and established that supportive principals play a major role in beginning teacher retention. Chapter Two reviews teacher attrition, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the role of the principal, instructional supports, school culture, professional growth, and provides a summary. Chapter Three describes the research method and procedures used to explore this critical issue. Chapter Four presents the data results and analysis of the Delphi study. Chapter Five summarizes the study and presents the implications based on the data presented in Chapter Four. This chapter also provides a means for the researcher to interpret and explain the findings and to make suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

According to Morrison (2012), teachers are leaving faster than they can be replaced and shortages will remain until retention efforts are addressed. While there are numerous factors influencing teacher turnover, this review focuses on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, the changing role of the principal, and three areas of support that include instructional, school culture, and professional growth. Supportive behaviors prevalent in the literature are discussed. Principals should focus on them in order to create caring conditions, which will increase teacher retention.

Smith and Ingersoll (2004) used the term the revolving door to describe the constant movement of teachers in and out of America's schools, and considered it to be one of the fundamental causes of inadequate school performance. According to *The MetLife Survey of the American Teacher: An Examination of School Leadership* (2013), 57% of secondary principals say maintaining an adequate supply of effective teachers is very challenging. As a large population of the teaching force is nearing retirement age, attracting, supporting, and retaining beginning teachers becomes more critical to ensure a stable workforce. Darling-Hammond (2003) emphasized that keeping a good teacher should be one of the most important agenda items of any school leader because well-prepared and capable teachers have the largest effect on student learning. She suggests that school and district leaders should change policy and practice in order to improve working conditions, which she believes will increase teacher retention.

Dr. Richard Ingersoll has been a leading contributor to the study of teacher retention for over a decade; many researchers (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Hedrick, 2005; Morrison, 2012) have built their studies using his findings. In his report, *The Wrong Solution to the Teacher Shortage*, for the National Commission on Teaching and America's

Future (NCTAF), he stated that the United States suffers from a teacher turnover crisis, not a teacher shortage (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). Ingersoll (2004) cites several reasons for high rates of attrition including inadequate support from school administrators, too many intrusions upon instructional time, student discipline problems, and limited teacher input into school decision-making. High accountability standards placed on today's public schools demand continuity of staff and programs. Without this continuity, educators are unable to create and implement plans that will meet the ever-changing needs of students. A certain percentage of teacher turnover is normal, and in some cases beneficial, but maintaining the majority of a school's faculty is imperative to increased student achievement over time (Ingersoll, 2003).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Abraham Maslow's *Hierarchy of Needs Theory* is recognized and accepted as a foundational piece of the human motivation theory, and offers an approach to understanding the issues of human needs and job satisfaction. Application of Maslow's theory to job satisfaction of novice teachers would suggest that unfulfilled needs are responsible for attrition. In his study of individuals and motivational factors, Maslow (1954) proposed a set of five needs related to one another placed in an hierarchical order, which include physiological, safety, love, esteem, and self-actualization.

- **Physiological:** These are the most basic, obvious, and powerful. Among physiological needs are food, shelter, oxygen, sleep, and sex.
- **Safety:** This includes the need for a stable, predictable environment, consistency, justice, and order.
- **Affiliation/Belongingness:** Love or affiliation, can be regarded as being deeply understood and deeply accepted. Implied is that the individual longs for affectionate

bonds with others that include association with others, belonging to groups, and for giving and receiving affection.

- Esteem: These are of two kinds, self-esteem (which encapsulates needs such as the longing for freedom, adequacy, independence, confidence, achievement, and mastery), and respect from others which involves appreciation, recognition, acceptance, prestige, and status.
- Self-actualization or Self-Fulfillment: Here the emphasis is on the need for growth, development, and the use of one's potential that is, maximum self-development, and creativity for self-expression.

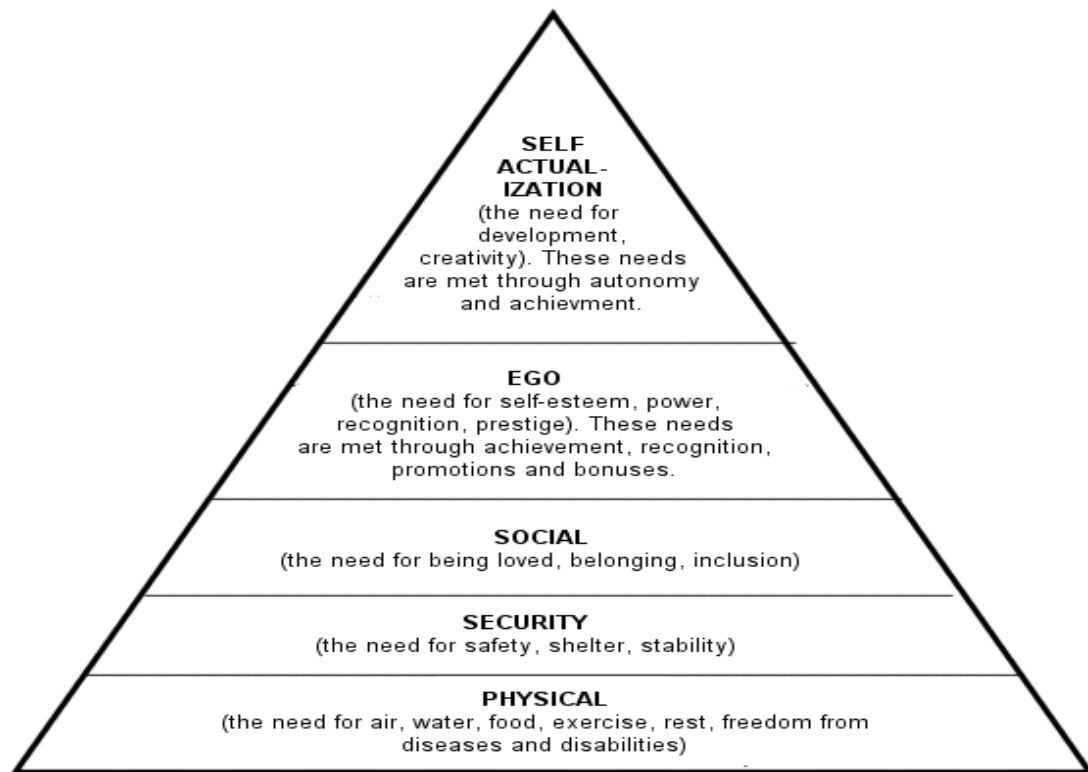


Figure 1. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Source: Bradley, 2014.

Maslow, in developing his Hierarchy of Needs, inferred that basic needs must be met prior to moving to the next level of needs attainment. One dimension of this hierarchy is the concept of prepotency. According to this concept, the particular need that is most prevalent at a given time

occupies and dominates an individual's consciousness, evoking a response for fulfillment. Needs at the lower level are known as deficiency needs and are never completely satisfied. When need deprivation occurs in these lower levels, they take on prepotency. Maslow avowed, "If all the needs are unsatisfied, and the organism is then dominated by the physiological needs, all other needs may become simply nonexistent or be pushed into the background" (1954, p. 37).

Maslow's ideas form a simple basis for the negotiating that occurs between an administrator and teachers as each seeks to fulfill needs. In 2002, Gary suggested that the school culture must provide teachers with the opportunity to satisfy motivational needs, and it is the responsibility of the principal to provide opportunities and to assist teachers in satisfying these needs. Frataccia and Hennington (1982), utilizing Maslow's theory as the foundation for their study, concluded that dissatisfied teachers who left were discontented with the level of recognition, advancement, and achievement; hence indicating that some of their needs were not being met. They suggested that teacher attrition is due to efforts to avoid unpleasantness in their current working environment, as well as an inability to satisfy personal psychological needs. The work by Gary (2002) and Frataccia and Hennington's study (1982) concluded that teacher retention can be strengthened through more effective uses of motivation.

Vojtek and Vojtek (2009) established that teachers are motivated by the fundamental human need to be connected, belong, loved, recognized, and appreciated by others. Leithwood and McAdie (2007) asserted that to increase teacher satisfaction and contribute to internal satisfaction, teachers should be provided time to work in teams, prepare for classroom instruction, collaborate with colleagues, participate in team decision making, and have access to ongoing professional development. Relationships with colleagues and administrators often make the difference between a teacher's decision to stay, transfer, or leave the profession.

Maslow argued that for a majority of individuals, the first three levels (physiological, safety and security, belongingness) are usually satisfied and do not tend to motivate. Fourth and fifth level needs (esteem, self-actualization) are rarely satisfied and therefore continually motivate. This theory highlights the responsibility of principals to provide a workplace environment that encourages and enables teachers to fulfill their own potentials (self-actualization). Darling-Hammond (2003) also supported the premise that teachers are motivated to perform at higher levels and are more willing to stay with an organization if they are experiencing a high quality work life. Gary (2002) concluded that teacher retention is driven by a sense that teachers are content in their positions and their needs are being met. Clearly, teachers need effective support systems that will provide them with the tools they need emotionally, psychologically, and physically to not only survive, but to thrive in their positions.

Role of the Principal

The job of the principal has become increasingly complex over the past few decades, and while new responsibilities have been added, the principal's managerial responsibilities have not been deleted or diminished. The philosophy of being an effective principal has transformed from one who mandates and oversees a group of people to one who collaborates with and motivates a group of people (Hickey, 2006). The constant increase of new tasks, duties, and responsibilities has created an overload for many principals and the continuous departure of teachers makes every aspect of the job more challenging.

According to The MetLife Survey (2013) three-quarters (75%) of principals agree that the job of the principal has become too complex, a view shared by principals regardless of demographic characteristics such as school level, school location, or the proportion of low-income or minority students. At one time, a principal's main roles were primarily managing

staff members, disciplining students, and maintaining the school building. “Today’s principal must keep the school operating smoothly on a daily basis and ensure that forward movement is made toward aligning school goals, improving teaching and learning practices, and ultimately increasing student achievement and performance” (Hickey, 2006, p. 44). The difficulty of the changing role is magnified by the educational reforms that have made school leaders publicly accountable for student performance on state-mandated tests. Therefore, the principal of today must take a strong role in instructional leadership and student achievement while still finding time to manage staff, discipline students, and maintain a safe, aesthetically pleasing facility.

Educators today face a multitude of challenges as they strive to provide a quality education for all students. With the increased accountability on school districts, often in the form of high-stakes testing and mandated curricular standards, retaining qualified teachers is more difficult. Literature clearly shows that a lack of administrative support is one of the primary reasons teachers leave the profession (Allensworth et al., 2009; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Boyd et al, 2011; Brown & Wynn, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Grissom, 2011; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll, 2001, 2003, 2004; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Johnson 2006; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Miller, 2010; Morrison, 2012; Rice, 2014; Hanushek et al., 2002; Whittaker, 2009; Wong, 2004; Wong & Wong, 2013). According to Brown and Wynn (2007), principals with a proven track record of retaining teachers are accessible, establish trust, know their teachers, and are proactive. Kafka concluded, “The history of the school principal demonstrates that specific pressures might be new, but the call for principals to accomplish great things with little support and to be all things to all people, has certainly not” (2009, p. 328).

Exacerbating the attrition crisis is the negative effect it has on a school's budget, and this is just one more area to which a principal is responsible. Ingersoll (2004) describes teacher attrition as a bucket with holes in the bottom that is constantly losing water, and states that pouring more water into the bucket is useless if the holes are not first repaired. Therefore, he concludes that money spent on recruitment strategies is wasteful if teachers do not remain in their teaching assignments. Continual induction and training efforts for the same positions are a waste of valuable resources and undermine the school's effort to increase student achievement. By retaining effective teachers, schools experience a positive return on their costly investment. Greenlee and Brown (2009), citing research from the Alliance for Excellent Education, indicate that the estimated total for school districts nationwide to recruit, hire, and retrain replacement teachers to fill vacated positions is approximately \$7.34 billion.

According to Whitaker (2003), there are only two ways to significantly improve a school; hire better teachers or improve the teachers you have. Simon and Newman (2004) stated in their book, *Making Time to Lead*, that staff selection is one of the most important tasks of a principal. Whitaker (2003) encourages principals to hire dynamic people and work hard to keep them that way. He believes that if a principal hires highly talented people, they will thrive wherever they are placed and will make the school better. For that reason, hiring teachers with adequate training that fit into a school's unique culture is key factor to improved teacher retention (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Morrison, 2012; Whitaker, 2003).

Instructional Supports

Teaching is becoming more complex and demanding; therefore, new teachers especially struggle with the challenges and require specialized assistance and support throughout their first years. Characterized as the profession that eats its young, education is recognized for some of the highest turnover rates of any profession (Minarik, Thornton, & Perreault, 2003). This may be due to the unrealistic expectations placed upon them. Beginning teachers are expected to walk into a classroom and perform while being held to the same accountability standards of teachers with years of experience. Some struggle to perform even at a minimal level and feel as though they have been abandoned; hence, a system of support must be in place from day one, so novice teachers feel a sense of security (Watkins, 2005). As novice teachers are held accountable for the same tasks as their more experienced counterparts, many do not have the skills or knowledge to be effective. Ingersoll and Smith (2003) recognized that “the turnover problem, although high for the entire teaching occupation, affects beginning teachers more than others,” and the profession “has always lost many of its newly trained members early in their careers (2003, p. 31). As a result, the process of continually replacing beginning teachers, who leave before they can master the ability to create an effective learning environment for their students, consumes valuable time and resources of school leaders.

Prather-Jones (2011) concluded that retention is strongly influenced by teachers’ perceptions regarding the support they receive from their administrators; teachers are more likely to leave or want to leave teaching when they feel that they do not receive adequate support from these leaders (p. 2).

Researchers agree that one effective support for beginning teachers is clear communication from principals (Angelle, 2006; Boyd et al., 2011; Brown & Wynn, 2007;

Morrison, 2012; Simon & Newman, 2004). Morrison (2012) asserted that clear and effective communication from the principal includes responsiveness to questions, clear expectations, and the sharing of important information.

The ability to effectively communicate can mean the difference between an average principal and one who is very effective. Therefore, principals must communicate their vision and goals using clear language that people will understand, and hopefully embrace as their own (Simon & Newman, 2004, p. 27).

Principals are setting new teachers up for failure when they assign them to teach students with chronic behavior, attendance, and learning difficulties (Hope, 1999). According to Ingersoll (2001), student discipline is cited as a major reason for teacher dissatisfaction and turnover. Thus it is an area administrative support becomes imperative to teacher retention. Improving student behavior at school is clearly essential for increasing student engagement and achievement (Rice, 2014). Teachers who feel supported by their administration in student behavioral issues experience higher levels of job satisfaction and are more likely to stay in the same teaching position longer (Ingersoll, 2001).

Teachers surveyed by Prather-Jones (2011) indicated that discipline policies were a key component of administrative support, and that they looked to the principal “to enforce reasonable consequences for student misconduct, and to include them in the decision making behind these consequences” (p. 84). Ingersoll (2001) found that turnover rates are lesser in schools with lower instances of discipline problems. Effective teachers seek out innovative schools with dynamic principals; often these schools have effective discipline policies and procedures so that student discipline issues do not have the chance to escalate resulting in teacher dissatisfaction (Rice, 2014). Marzano, Waters, and McNulty state, “protecting teachers from issues and

influences that would detract from their instructional time and focus is the responsibility of school leadership and one that cannot be neglected” (2005, p. 48). The findings of Boyd et al. (2011) suggested that student behavior and schools’ responses to student behavior are persistent and prevalent issues for migrating teachers.

New teachers especially struggle with large class size as they are acclimated with every other part of the job (Johnson, 2006). In a 2002 study by Fox and Certo, teachers cited the number of students assigned to classrooms as a source of dissatisfaction. They also expressed that having so many students in one class made it difficult to coordinate learning activities that met the needs of all students (Fox & Certo, 2002). Beginning teachers face the uncertainty of their effectiveness and when they feel overwhelmed in meeting daily teaching requirements, many decide to leave their school or the profession. Identifying strategies that allow principals to provide supports, as well as develop methods that influence teachers to stay in their current teaching assignment, will have a positive effect on the state’s teacher shortage.

Principals extend support by providing teachers with resources needed to implement the curriculum and sustain good teaching. Boyd et al. (2011) concluded that teachers who perceive their schools to have sufficient resources and agreeable facilities feel better prepared to do their jobs and are more likely to stay. In most cases, the principal allocates the resources that can improve teacher-working conditions.

According to Johnson (2006):

Most teachers report having to spend their own money if they are to be successful, or even survive, in the classroom; new teachers whose salaries often barely allow them to meet their own living expenses, find having to make such purchases galling (p. 11).

Fullan (2001) stated, “Instructional improvement requires additional resources in the form of materials, equipment, space, time, and access to new ideas and expertise” (p. 86).

Reeves acknowledged that principals can make a large number of changes to improve the lives of teaching professionals, but they must give classroom teachers enough time to focus on fewer priorities and give teachers a voice in what those priorities are (2011). Most principals report having a great deal of control in hiring teachers and making decisions about teachers’ schedules (MetLife, 2013); yet, the average teaching load for a secondary school teacher in the United States is five classes a day, with two different subjects or preparations (Wong & Wong, 2013). Often, beginning teachers are assigned a teaching load with more classes meeting or preparations than that of experienced teachers (Ingersoll, 2003). Hope (1999) suggested beginning teachers should be assigned to positions in which they have the greatest likelihood of being successful. “Misassignment is inequitably experienced by new teachers, who often are expected to teach courses that are left over once experienced teachers have chosen their schedules” (Johnson, 2006, p. 5). Ingersoll (2002) concluded that teachers who are misassigned are likely to experience teaching as stressful, unrewarding work, and may choose to leave the profession.

Morrison (2012) suggested that many beginning teachers feel overwhelmed by extra work and duties outside of classroom teaching, leading to dissatisfaction with the job. Most school schedules demand that teachers devote the majority of their time to classroom instruction; hence, teachers find that they are left with little non-instructional time. During this limited time, they must prepare instructional materials, write lesson plans, assess student work, complete paperwork, and communicate with parents. Additionally, teachers are required to cover bus, hall, and lunch duties; attend extracurricular events; and serve on committees. Such schedules

do not allow adequate time for the continuous professional learning that is necessary for beginning teachers (Hirsch, 2005, p.16). Thus, it is not surprising that they leave the profession in search of jobs that provide a better sense of efficacy.

Johnson (2006) found the following:

Many teachers receive unfair or inappropriate assignments: an out-of-field class, many course preparations, large classes, or an excessive student load. Any of these can dampen teachers' enthusiasm and diminish their effectiveness and satisfaction. However, it is the newest teachers who typically experience these challenges in combination, and those who might have been highly effective in ordinary circumstances frequently find such trying work settings overwhelming. All too often, they leave their school or teaching in disappointment and disgust. (p. 6)

New teachers with training in the selection and use of instructional materials, in learning theory, and who had observed classes, practiced teaching, and received feedback, have been found significantly more likely to remain in the profession beyond their initial year (Berry & Hirsch, 2005; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Hirsch (2005) found that a collegial atmosphere and being led by a principal with a strong instructional emphasis mattered most in teachers' decisions about whether or not to stay in a teaching assignment. Improved relationships and collaborative professional interaction through mentoring, team teaching, coaching, and orientation programs will address many of a new teacher's needs. Regardless of how talented or well trained, certain factors such as a well-equipped school building, helpful assistance from colleagues, and curricular resources all mediate what any teacher can accomplish in the classroom. The level of organization and support a school provides is very important as new teachers decide whether teaching is the right career for them (Johnson, 2006).

School Culture

It is through school culture that a principal most influences teacher working conditions (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). Whitaker (2003) defined school culture as the collective beliefs and

values that influence policies and practices within a school, and found that many experts regard the school culture as the driving force behind everything else. Ingersoll (2001) indicated that the primary reasons teachers leave is lack of empowerment, poor administrative support, and dissatisfaction with the school culture. The principal is ultimately responsible for creating a positive school culture that encourages new teachers to reach their highest potential.

According to Boyd et al. (2011), schools that struggle to maintain a safe school environment have a more difficult time retaining teachers. In Angelle's (2006) study, three out of four new teachers from one school indicated they chose to stay because of a well-run, supportive, safe school climate. Boyd et al. (2011) define school safety as school conditions that affect the physical and psychological well-being of students and teachers. It is essential that the building leader provide a safe building, so that teachers feel safe and have a working environment that is conducive to teaching and learning (Whitaker, 2003).

A tremendous amount of the research on teacher turnover focuses on teachers that leave the profession (Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd et al, 2008; Boyd et al., 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 2003), yet a large number of the open positions that principals have to fill are due to teachers transferring into other schools or districts. Empirical evidence suggests schools that serve high numbers of low-income, low achieving and/or minority students have higher teacher attrition rates than wealthier, low-minority schools (Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd et al., 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Grissom, 2011; Ingersoll, 2003; Johnson, 2006). This is especially common in low-income schools because teachers often transfer into more affluent areas (Boyd et al., 2011; Thornton, Perreault, & Jennings, 2008). According to Horng, Klasik, & Loeb (2010), teachers are choosing to move out of high minority,

impoverished schools based on the tough working conditions rather than student characteristics within the school.

The findings of this study are especially important to rural and urban school principals who experience the highest rates of attrition and lowest student achievement. High poverty, low performing schools rarely close the achievement gap and one contributing factor is the “revolving door” of teachers in these schools. Research by Darling-Hammond (2000) consistently discovered that high quality teaching is the most powerful determinant of student learning, yet there is inequality in its access for students who need it the most. As effective teachers leave schools serving economically disadvantaged students, potential for academic gains leaves with them. In turn, students most dependent upon school for strong educational and life outcomes continue to experience the negative effects of teacher attrition (Rice, 2014).

Ingersoll and Strong (2011) found that teachers often feel overwhelmed with teaching responsibilities and isolated from their colleagues; being isolated is especially challenging for new teachers who rely on experienced teachers to guide them in daily decision-making. Clement (2016) recommended that orientation activities begin before the arrival of students, and suggested new teachers should be given time to work in their classrooms with a mentor. Starting the year off with an ally who is just down the hall will reduce feelings of isolation for novice teachers. According to Angelle (2006), beginning teachers who are successfully socialized into an effective culture will take on the goals and mission of the school and develop loyalty.

In a study titled “The Influence of School Administrators on Teacher Retention Decisions,” (Boyd et al., 2011) two groups of teachers were surveyed. The groups were made up of former teachers who had just left the profession and current teachers who had indicated they were considering leaving. The first question in the survey asked former teachers why they left,

and current teachers were asked what factors led them to consider leaving. For both sets of teachers, dissatisfaction with the job was by far the most significant factor, with over 30% of both groups citing it as the main factor. The next set of questions asked both groups what aspects of the job were particularly disappointing and influential in their decisions to leave. The two main factors cited were student behaviors, 15% of both groups cited this as the number one factor, while 40% of both groups identified dissatisfaction with the administration as the main factor. Therefore, over 55% of both groups cited student behaviors and dissatisfaction with the administration as their cause for leaving the profession (Boyd et al., 2011).

Boyd et al. (2011) analyzed multiple years of SASS, Schools and Staffing Survey and TFS, Teacher Follow-Up Survey, data finding a strong relationship between teacher perceptions of their school leadership and their career decisions. Data collected from the TFS showed that teachers cited school staffing actions, family or personal reasons, pursuit of another job, and dissatisfaction as the top reasons for their departure. Ingersoll and Smith (2003) then focused on the teachers who listed “dissatisfied” as they believe this factor can be minimized by making changes within the schools. As a result, they stated that “the management and organization of schools play a significant role in the genesis of school staffing problems but can also play a significant role in their solution” (p.33). Their recommendation was to improve teachers’ working conditions, which they believe will contribute to lower attrition.

During a time when expectations and standards are increasing for effective teaching and learning, teacher morale is yet another declining resource (MetLife, 2013). Teacher satisfaction has declined 23 percentage points since 2008, from 62% to 39% very satisfied, including five percentage points since last year, to the lowest level in 25 years (MetLife, 2013). In a 2011

study by Prather-Jones, teachers indicated that having an administrator verbally convey appreciation was an important component of feeling supported.

As teachers leave the field of education at alarming rates, it is essential that principals seek ways to increase teacher job satisfaction. Lingenfelter (2015) concluded that principals could have a tremendous influence on whether teachers choose to stay or leave the teaching profession. Job dissatisfaction is a common antecedent of teacher turnover; therefore, it is essential that principals strive to improve teacher working conditions (Boyd et al, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 2004). The MetLife Survey (2013) found a relationship between teacher job satisfaction and principal performance, indicating that teachers who formed satisfactory relationships with their principals were more satisfied than their peers. Satisfied employees tend to be more effective and have better working relationships. Identifying factors that increase teacher satisfaction will provide school leaders insight into how to improve teacher effectiveness and school culture. Whitaker (2003) states, “Our best staff members can succeed anywhere doing just about anything. If we do not take care of them, someone else will, and we will have squandered our most valuable resource” (p. 103).

The schools that retain their teachers at the highest rates are those with a strong sense of collaboration among teachers and the principal (Allensworth et al., 2009). Barth stated, “Among adult relationships in schools, that between teacher and principal is decisive. I have found no characteristic of a good school more pervasive than healthy teacher-principal relationships” (2006, p. 105). Fullan (2001) cites *Relationships: The New Bottom Line in Business* in his definition of genuine relationships. Relationships are not just a product of networking, but genuine relationships are based on authenticity and care. Like Maslow, he believes people want to be part of their organization and feel connected to the people with which they work. When

people become connected to something deeper, the desire to contribute to a larger purpose and to feel they are part of a great whole creates a web of connection. Teachers who feel connected to one another are more likely to develop staff loyalty and job satisfaction (Minarik et al., 2003).

The MetLife Survey (2013) found that when teachers were asked what would help them most in addressing the needs of diverse learners the majority of teachers consistently said other teachers. In 2009, nine in ten teachers agreed that other teachers contribute to their success in the classroom, including 51% who strongly agreed. Yet most teachers continued to report that their time to work with other teachers remained the same or had been reduced (MetLife, 2013).

Morrison (2012) claims that creating a collegial atmosphere is essential in retaining teachers, because teachers often cite noncompetitive collaboration as a major factor in their decision to stay (Brown & Wynn, 2007; Hirsh, 2005; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Collaboration with other teachers on issues of instruction reduced new teachers' likelihood of leaving by 43 percent (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Teachers must buy into the process and believe that the additional time and effort they invest to collaborate, solve problems, and build consensus will have a positive effect. They must trust that their voices are being heard (Hickey, 2006).

Professional Growth

“Ensuring that all new teachers receive intensive, on-the-job support is crucial if today’s incoming teachers are to meet the high expectations that the U.S. public now has of teachers and schools” (Johnson, Kardos, Kauffman, Liu, & Donaldson, 2004, p. 3). Therefore, first-year teachers need and should be provided assistance with long and short-term planning, transitioning between activities, navigating Individual Education Plans (IEP), and working with parents and guardians (Fox & Certo, 2002).

Every child in the U. S. deserves a competent teacher in the classroom, and according to research conducted through the MetLife Survey (2013), effective teachers account for 33% of student achievement gains. Therefore, it is imperative that school leaders ensure that beginning teachers have continued opportunities to develop skills to meet the diverse needs of learners. Wong (2004) recognized that a structured, sustained, intensive, and comprehensive professional development program that allows teachers to collaborate with colleagues is what keeps effective teachers teaching. Professional development has long had a poor reputation because it is often disconnected from classroom practice; however, if the professional development focuses on instruction and the needs of students, teachers are more likely to welcome than resist the assistance (Johnson, 2006). According to Hirsch (2005), professional development should provide new teachers with the knowledge and skills to work with all students and enhance their capacity for analyzing and interpreting student data. Morrison (2012) concluded that principals must differentiate support based on the diverse needs of teachers. New teachers cannot be treated like their more experienced colleagues, as they have a greater need for supportive administrative behaviors (Brown & Wynn, 2007; Greenlee & Brown, 2009).

“A comprehensive induction plan is one of the most effective methods for retaining quality teachers and while mentoring is often equated with induction, it is actually only one piece of a comprehensive induction program (Hirsch, 2005, p. 30). A great deal of literature suggests that a mentor’s primary role is assisting the novice teacher during his/her first year in the classroom. However, more recent studies have shown the mentor as a coach that supports the beginning teacher in all areas for several years. Clement (2016) recommended “once hired, new teachers need to participate in an induction program that shelters them from the demands of the job. An induction program that has three parts, orientation, mentoring, and ongoing professional

development just for new hires, provides the umbrella that shelters new educators” (p. 18). For beginning teachers to be truly supported the following components need to be included in the induction program: effective mentors, time for mentors and mentees to meet, professional development to address common challenges, peer observations opportunities, individualized feedback, and time for professional collaboration. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) found that new teachers receiving no induction support had a 41% rate of turnover at the end of their first year; yet, only one percent of beginning teachers nationally are receiving comprehensive induction. Johnson et al., (2004) suggested that the induction elements producing the strongest effects include having a mentor from the same field, scheduled collaboration with other teachers, and regular communication with one’s principal.

According to Ingersoll (2012), the ultimate goal of mentoring and induction programs are to retain and improve performance for beginning teachers while improving the performance of student growth and achievement. “Most districts do mentoring for one year, but the key is the continuation of mentoring support over the first five years. The use of trained mentors to observe and provide non-evaluative feedback to new teachers is valuable” (Clement, 2016, p. 18). When the number of support measures increase, attrition rates for beginning teachers decline, they perform better at various aspects of teaching, and, most significantly, their students have higher scores or greater gains on academic achievement tests (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Schools are losing some great instructors due to a system that is clearly not doing enough to retain talent and cultivate potential in beginning teachers.

Wong (2003) concluded:

To keep good teachers, educators need to realize that people crave connection. New teachers want more than a job. They want to experience success. They want to contribute to a group. They want to make a difference. The best induction programs provide connection because they are structured within learning

communities where new and veteran teachers interact and treat each other with respect and are valued for their respective contributions. Teachers remain in teaching when they belong to professional learning communities that have, at their heart, high-quality interpersonal relationships founded on trust and respect. Thus, collegial interchange, not isolation, must become the norm for teachers (p. 50).

In their study, *What are the Effects of Mentoring and Induction on Beginning Teacher Turnover*, Ingersoll and Smith (2004) examined the crisis creating staffing problems which they concluded is not a shortage of teachers, but is chronic and relatively high annual teacher turnover, particularly with beginning teachers. They analyzed how policymakers continue to respond to this crisis by trying to increase the supply of teachers, yet they consistently discovered underlying problems within the field of education that perpetuate the continual exodus of teachers. They used the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) and the related Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFS) data from the National Center for Education Statistics to determine that after just five years, between 40 % and 50% of all beginning teachers had left the profession; consequently, creating a strong case that recruiting new teachers will not fix the staffing problems plaguing our schools.

Carlson (2004) suggested principals demonstrate support for the evaluation process by providing feedback about teachers' work performance. "Principals must visit classrooms frequently to see teachers in action and be willing to provide teachers with feedback that will enrich their teaching and learning practices. Honest, clear, and meaningful suggestions and expectations provide teachers with the greatest opportunity for improvement" (Carlson, 2004, p. 15). Principals' informal observations play a significant role in beginning teacher support. (Angelle, 2006; Brown & Wynn, 2007). Angelle (2006) interviewed new teachers and found that principals' frequent visits to beginning teachers' classrooms and more informal feedback,

whether positive or negative, reduced their isolation and fears, whereas the formal principal observations and evaluation processes created frustration and anxiety.

Research shows that principal support is a significant factor in retention of new teachers, but the support needed varies from person to person (Carlson, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Prather-Jones, 2011; Morrison, 2012; Richards, 2005; Watkins, 2005). Unfortunately, highly effective teachers do not come out of college ready-made, but require guidance, time to learn the content, and a support system that does not leave them feeling isolated. Mastering the art of teaching is a process that is different for every educator based on his or her unique needs and capabilities. Regardless of the level of preparation or natural ability, all novice teachers can benefit from a caring administrator that provides guidance and support.

Principals must effectively manage school resources that include human capital, teachers and staff, as well as equipment, materials, supplies, and funding. An additional resource is time and opportunity to develop educators' skills and abilities, which requires a focused plan. Principals should help new teachers create goals for personal and professional growth because many are unable to recognize their own inadequacies. Clement (2016) acknowledged that while many beginning teachers are just trying to survive, others are actively seeking an avenue to make a difference; therefore, they may need to become leaders (e.g., club sponsors, coaches, presenters) to find fulfillment in teaching. "It is important to not overload new teachers with extra work, but leadership opportunities provide a sense of growth and fulfillment that may make the difference in retaining them" (Clement, 2016, p.19).

Summary

This chapter presented a survey of research related to teacher attrition, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory, the role of the principal, instructional supports, school culture, professional growth, and a summary. Chapter Three describes the research method and procedures used to explore this critical issue. Chapter Four presents the data results and analysis of the Delphi study. Chapter Five summarizes the study and presents the implications based on the data presented in Chapter Four. This chapter also provides a means for the researcher to interpret and explain the findings and to make suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD

Empirical evidence suggests certain leadership practices contribute to the retention of teachers (Allensworth et al., 2009; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Boyd et al, 2011; Brown & Wynn, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Grissom, 2011; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll, 2001, 2003, 2004; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Johnson 2006; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Miller, 2010; Morrison, 2012; Rice, 2014; Hanushek et al., 2002; Whittaker, 2009; Wong, 2004; Wong & Wong, 2013). This study was designed to investigate principals' perceptions of how their behaviors can influence beginning teacher retention in 16 high schools that are grouped into a Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in West Virginia. Research has shown that key factors in teacher retention are the behaviors of principals and their relationships with teachers (Allensworth et al., 2009; Borman & Dowling, 2008; Boyd et al, 2011; Brown &Wynn, 2007; Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Grissom, 2011; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll, 2001, 2003, 2004; Ingersoll & Kralik, 2004; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Johnson 2006; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005; Miller, 2010; Morrison, 2012; Rice, 2014; Hanushek et al., 2002).

Research clearly articulates that teacher turnover has a negative effect on student achievement (Angelle, 2006; Allensworth et al., 2009; Boyd et al., 2008; Darling-Hammond, 2000, 2003; Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2008; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll, 2002, 2004, Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Johnson, 2006; Reeves, 2010; Hanushek et al., 2002, 2005). A vicious cycle of yearly turnover is felt most in our disadvantaged schools ensuring our neediest students often receive instruction from new or uncertified educators (Allensworth et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Grissom, 2011; Ingersoll, 2002, 2004; Johnson, 2006 Prather-Jones, 2011; Thornton, Perreault, & Jennings,

2008). Teacher attrition continues to plague schools striving to foster continuity in their teaching staff. Relating secondary principals' supportive behaviors to beginning teacher retention in West Virginia has not been examined through educational research, thus an explicit understanding of supportive practices that improve teacher retention in this geographic area is paramount to improved student achievement.

Research Questions

The overarching question for this study is this: what behaviors, supports, and strategies do high school principals use to encourage beginning teachers to stay in their schools and in the teaching profession? In order to answer this question, the following perspectives were asked of study participants.

1. Which principal supports in the area of instruction are most important in retaining beginning teachers?
2. Which principal supports in the area of school culture are most important in retaining beginning teachers?
3. Which principal supports in the area of professional growth are most important in retaining beginning teachers?

Research Design

The Delphi technique was used to examine principals' perceptions of how their behaviors can influence beginning teacher retention.

Somerville (2007) claimed:

With the Delphi method, participants are able to present and rationalize their opinions about the topic being researched. Also they have the opportunity to consider the opinions of others, reconsider their own opinions, and assess the relative importance of each opinion presented (p. 9).

This study consisted of two rounds, with the Round Two survey instrument being constructed based on Round One participant responses. Each questionnaire was distributed and returned electronically. The Delphi process ended when the research questions were answered or sufficient information was exchanged. (Skulmoski, Hartman, & Krahn, 2007). The Likert-type scale responses were used primarily for the quantitative portion of the study, while sections for comments were provided for a limited qualitative analysis.

Skulmoski et al. (2007) consider the Delphi method to consist of four key features, which were taken from the work of Rowe and Wright (1999).

1. Anonymity of Delphi participants allows the participants to freely express their opinions without undue social pressures to conform from others in the group. Decisions are evaluated on their merit, rather than who has proposed the idea.
2. Iteration allows the participants to refine their views in light of the progress of the group's work from round to round.
3. Controlled feedback informs the participants of the other participants' perspectives, and provides the opportunity for Delphi participants to clarify or change their views.
4. Statistical aggregation of group response allows for quantitative analysis and interpretation of data (p. 3).

Sample

Skulmoski et al. (2007) emphasized that selecting the research participants is a critical component of Delphi research. They identified four “expertise” requirements in *The Delphi Method for Graduate Research*:

1. Knowledge and experience with the issues under investigation
2. Capacity and willingness to participate
3. Sufficient time to participate in the Delphi
4. Effective communication skills

It is imperative that participants meet all four requirements because it is their expert opinions that form the output upon which the Delphi is based. The number of participants recommended by Skulmoski et al. (2007) is 10 to 15 people if a homogenous group (e.g., professors from the same discipline) is used. Somerville (2007) cited the work of Hogarth (1978) and Mitchell (1991) when he claimed that 6 to 12 participants were optimum. The population for this study included current high school principals in 16 high schools that are grouped into a Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in West Virginia. Therefore, there is no question that the participants are homogenous. Of the sixteen principals, fourteen agreed to participate.

Instrumentation

Skulmoski et al. (2007, p.1) defined the Delphi method as “an iterative process to collect and distill the anonymous judgments of experts using a series of data collection and analysis techniques interspersed with feedback.” They add that it works especially well when the goal of the study is to improve the understanding of problems or solutions. It is characterized as a flexible, effective, and efficient research method that can be used to answer research questions

and advance a body of knowledge (Skulmoski et al., 2007). This method was selected because the researcher wanted to collect the judgments of experts in a collaborative style.

Data to create a series of declarative series for Round One were gathered from the review of literature. The scales ranged from 1 for “not important” to 6 “for very important.” A neutral point was not provided in order to force the principals to respond directionally to each item on the scale. The survey instruments were administered electronically using SurveyMonkey, a web-based survey tool. The major benefits of online data collection for participants are rapid yet anonymous participation, and the general convenience of being able to respond at one’s own preferred time and location.

Great care was taken, both in the design of the survey instruments and in the collection and analysis of the results. It was also important to maintain the anonymity of respondents to the greatest extent possible. The categorical groupings of the descriptors were reviewed by the members of the dissertation committee to assure content validity. The format and directions were reviewed by the doctoral committee of the researcher, and after each round of the Delphi, the researcher’s conclusions were validated by the dissertation committee as well.

The demographic section used forced choice categorical questions that included the following four items: the panelists’ sex, years as an administrator and as a teacher, and the number of teachers each hired for the 2016/17 school year. The survey instrument was comprised of three categories of support: instructional, school culture, and professional growth. Within each section, statements were developed to solicit the information necessary to identify the supports principals perceived as important in order to increase beginning teacher retention.

Procedures

The panel of experts was first invited to participate in the study by email. The e-mail explained the project, the survey, the need for involvement, their rights as participants, and clearly detailed how to access and complete the survey. The Anonymous Informed Consent form (Appendix B) and the Office of Research Integrity Approval letter (Appendix A) were attached to the email. The URL for the survey was also included.

The experts participated in a non-experimental descriptive two-stage study conducted electronically with both qualitative and quantitative elements. After each stage was completed, panelists were provided with controlled feedback and were afforded an opportunity to provide comments in order to concur or to dissent with the group. Following Round One, the researcher summarized, clarified, and restated the comments. The resulting synthesis was reviewed by a panel of researchers to reduce the chance of researcher bias. In both rounds, participants were encouraged to comment.

Round One used the Delphi research technique with an identified group of experts, (i.e., those principals from 16 high schools in a Regional Education Service Agency in West Virginia). In this round, respondents indicated the extent to which they agreed with the accuracy of a series of declarative statements that had been identified in the research to improve beginning teacher retention. A six-point Likert-type scale was used to measure the respondents' perception of the importance of each statement. The last four questions gathered demographic information.

All data were collected and downloaded from SurveyMonkey. The resultant data were uploaded in SPSS 23 J and coded. A correlation test was performed to analyze significance and as a check for possible collinearity between independent variables. The survey data proved too

inconclusive to be included in the study. The demographic or contextual variables did not appear to significantly influence principals' responses to survey questions.

The Round Two survey asked the participants to rank order the primary supports in each area identified in Round One, and asked principals to comment in order to validate the perceptions of their colleagues who participated in the Delphi study. Both surveys were conducted electronically using the web-based SurveyMonkey survey tool. Each round of the survey lasted several weeks and participants who did not respond were sent a follow-up email to encourage participation. The final report of the study was shared with the panel of experts.

Permissions

Before making contact with the principals to request their participation in the study, the researcher completed the approval process as required by Marshall University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). Each county board office was contacted by the researcher prior to gaining IRB approval to ascertain if there were any additional permissions required by the individual districts. One district required an application process in order to complete research. The researcher completed the application process and received approval prior to contacting participants.

Summary

Chapter Three was organized in the following manner: introduction, research questions, research design, sample, instrumentation, procedures, permissions, and a summary of the chapter. A copy of the survey instruments as well as other pertinent documents are included in the Appendix section.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Chapter 4 presents the data results and analysis of the Delphi study, which was designed to identify and explore in a systematic way principals' perceptions of supportive behaviors they perceive contribute most to the retention of beginning teachers. The data were collected through responses obtained from two survey instruments. This chapter is organized by the purpose statement, research questions, population and response rate of the sample, data analysis used to carry out this study, pilot testing, Round One, Round Two, and the conclusion.

Purpose Statement

The loss of teacher talent continues to plague West Virginia school districts. The staggering rate of beginning teachers transferring and exiting the profession causes school leaders to desperately seek applicants to fill vacant positions. In their efforts to staff impending vacancies states are relaxing certification standards to encourage non-education majors in order to increase the pool of candidates. Often quality instruction is sacrificed, as uncertified teachers are the only applicants to fill the void. In essence, by retaining effective teachers, districts will not be forced to hire far too many uncertified teachers.

This study is significant because the reasons that teachers cite most for leaving are planned, monitored, and often implemented by a school's principal (Carlson, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Prather-Jones, 2011; Morrison, 2012; Richards, 2005; Watkins, 2005). Therefore, it is essential to understand how principals view this staffing burden and how they view their roles in reducing beginning teacher attrition. Principals can use this information in an effort to nurture a working environment that increases the likelihood of retaining educators. In summary, educational research around this

topic has largely reported teachers' perspectives, and limited research has focused on principals' perceptions.

Research Questions

The overarching question for this study is this: what behaviors, supports, and strategies do high school principals use to encourage beginning teachers to stay in their schools and in the teaching profession? To answer the questions below, a Delphi research design was employed to provide expert answers to this study's fundamental questions.

1. Which principal supports in the area of instruction are most important in retaining beginning teachers?
2. Which principal supports in the area of school culture are most important in retaining beginning teachers?
3. Which principal supports in the area of professional growth are most important in retaining beginning teachers?

Population of the Panelists and Response Rate

The principals of 16 high schools, which are grouped into a Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in West Virginia, formed the panel of experts who would provide detailed insight into the research questions. Participants were recruited through e-mail and telephone communications. Sixteen individuals were invited to participate in the study. Of those petitioned, 14 agreed to participate. There was no time limit imposed when taking the survey, so the respondents were not pressed to complete the survey without contemplation of their responses.

The response rate was slow as many of the panelists were on summer vacation and did not return to work until August 1, 2016. Each panelist was asked to rate each of the leadership

actions generated from the literature on a Likert-type scale to assess the group's aggregate rating of importance. The survey was developed on the SurveyMonkey platform and the link to the survey was shared with each participant through an email communication on July 12, 2016. The survey was left open for collection for 23 days, and 14 of the 16 (87.5%) consenting expert panelists agreed to participate.

Although only 13 of the 16 consenting participants (n=13) followed through on returning a completed survey in Round One, the contributions of those thirteen participants were robust, and the return rate of the surveys was 81 percent. While it is not uncommon for Delphi studies to have such low numbers, a greater number of participants may have provided greater insight into the problem, more varied responses, and a clearer picture of potential solutions. The study was further limited by concerns of internal validity: participant attrition and instrumentation. Regarding participant attrition, three participants dropped out: two during the recruitment phase and one during Round One. Eight of the principals who completed Round One also responded to the Round Two survey.

Data Analysis Procedures

The Delphi model was employed to answer the research questions. The study instrument consisted of 39 researcher-created questions and was administered in two rounds over a two-month period. The surveys were tested to ensure survey quality, validity, and reliability.

Results were analyzed according to frequency counts in the form of percentages, as percentages clearly revealed majority agreement or disagreement. The First Round instrument was composed of 27 statements drawn from the literature and divided into three areas of support, opportunities to comment, and demographic questions. These areas were used to organize the ideas gathered from the literature, and also to help participants organize their thoughts about the

content and clarify their ideas and avoid repetition of concepts. The goal of Round One was for participants to answer basic demographic information, consent to participate, and provide responses to Likert-type questions in order to identify the top three supports in each area. Seven items on the questionnaire measured supportive behaviors in the area of instruction. Eleven items on the questionnaire measured supportive behaviors in the area of school climate. Nine items on the questionnaire measured supportive behaviors in the area of professional growth. An opportunity for open-ended responses was offered at the end of each section. The demographic section was comprised of four questions seeking information about each panelist.

The resultant data from Round One were collected, downloaded from SurveyMonkey, coded, and then uploaded in SPSS. A correlation test was performed to analyze significance and as a check for possible collinearity between independent variables. The survey data proved too inconclusive to be included in the study. Demographic or contextual variables appeared not to influence principals' responses to survey questions.

The Round Two survey asked participants to rank order three primary supports in each area identified in Round One, and also asked them to comment in order to validate the perceptions of their colleagues who participated in the Delphi study. Both surveys were conducted electronically using the web-based SurveyMonkey survey tool.

Pilot Testing

The surveys for Round One and Two were tested by eight educators and four professors of Educational Leadership. Pilot participants were asked to assess for both content clarity and practical function of the online questionnaire process. All of their recommendations and feedback were considered carefully and then revisions were made.

Round One

Accompanying each survey question is a table providing a visual representation of resultant data. All data are presented in the following order: by round, then question, followed by a figure. This method of presentation is employed to provide a logical and systematic dissemination of the data.

Survey Question 1 asked the participants for their consent to participate. Fourteen principals agreed to participate in Round One of this Delphi study. However, one of the participants skipped questions two through 35, so only the responses of 13 participants will be included in the results.

Instructional Supports

Over 84% of the expert panelist responded that the principal clearly communicating and monitoring expectations for teaching and learning is a very important support. This was the only behavior listed under instructional supports that received a consensus of over 75% by the panel. The next highest scoring support was the principal provides sufficient resources and supplies to meet the needs and expectations of beginning teachers, of which 69.23% of the panelists found to be very important. The lowest scoring support was the principal does not assign beginning teachers the most challenging students, only 7.69% of the panelists felt this was a very important support.

Assigning Subjects and Levels Consistent with Certification

Johnson stated, “Misassignment is inequitably experienced by new teachers, who often are expected to teach courses that are left over once experienced teachers have chosen their schedules” (Johnson, 2006, p. 5). Ingersoll (2002) concluded that teachers who are misassigned are likely to experience teaching as stressful, unrewarding work, and may choose to leave the

profession. The panelists did not find consensus that assigning subjects and grade levels based on certification was a very important support. Ratings for this support ranged from moderately important to very important; yet, only 38.46% of panelists rated this support as very important. One participant stated, “Beginning teachers are a great resource owing to their enthusiasm and willingness to tackle difficult subjects. Our role is to gate keep so that they are immersed, but not overwhelmed.”

Table 1 Assigns Subject Areas and Grade Levels Based on Certification

	Panelists’ Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	7.69%	1
Somewhat Important	15.38%	2
Important	38.46%	5
Very Important	38.46%	5

Limiting Numbers of Subjects Taught

Hope (1999) suggested beginning teachers should be assigned to positions in which they have the greatest likelihood of being successful. Nevertheless, beginning teachers are often assigned a teaching load with more classes meeting or preparations than that of experienced teachers (Ingersoll, 2003). The experts' responses ranged from moderately important to very important. Nonetheless, it did not receive consensus with a rating of very important when only 61.53% of the panelists considered it to be either important or very important.

Table 2 Assigns No More Than Two Different Academic Subjects

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	15.38%	2
Somewhat Important	23.08%	3
Important	46.15%	6
Very Important	15.38%	2

Limiting the Number of Challenging Students

Principals are setting new teachers up for failure when they assign them to teach students with chronic behavior, attendance, and learning difficulties (Hope, 1999). Beginning teachers face the uncertainty of their effectiveness and when they feel overwhelmed in meeting daily teaching requirements, many decide to leave their school or even the profession. The table below shows that principals not assigning beginning teachers the most challenging students did not receive consensus as being a very important support, since only one participant ranked it as very important. Over half of the participants merely felt this support was somewhat important.

Table 3 Does Not Assign Beginning Teachers the Most Challenging Students

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	15.38%	2
Moderately Important	15.38%	2
Somewhat Important	53.85%	7
Important	7.69%	1
Very Important	7.69%	1

Provides Sufficient Resources and Supplies

Boyd et al. (2011) concluded that teachers who perceive their schools to have sufficient resources and agreeable facilities feel better prepared to do their jobs and are more likely to stay. The following table shows the majority (69.23%) of panelists ranked this support as very important, but it did not receive 75% to gain consensus.

Table 4 Provides Sufficient Resources to Meet the Needs of Beginning Teachers

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	7.69%	1
Important	23.08%	3
Very Important	69.23%	9

Provides all Teachers Equal Resources and Spaces

Most teachers report having to spend their own money if they are to be successful, or even survive, in the classroom; new teachers whose salaries often barely allow them to meet their own living expenses, find having to make such purchases galling (Johnson, 2006, p. 11).

To improve instruction additional resources in the form of materials, equipment, space, time, and access to new ideas and expertise must be provided (Fullan, 2001). The majority of the panelists felt that providing beginning teachers with equal resources and teaching spaces compared to veteran teachers was important, yet only 38.46% of panelists felt it was a very important support.

Table 5 Provides All Teachers Equal Resources and Teaching Spaces

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	15.38%	2
Important	46.15%	6
Very Important	38.46%	5

Protects Teachers' Time

Morrison (2012) suggested that many beginning teachers feel overwhelmed by extra work and duties outside of actual classroom teaching leading to dissatisfaction with the job. Most school schedules demand that teachers devote the majority of their time to classroom instruction. Teachers find that they are left with little non-instructional time, and in that time they must prepare instructional materials, write lesson plans, assess student work, complete paperwork, and communicate with parents. Additionally, teachers are required to cover bus, hall, and lunch duties; attend extracurricular events; and serve on committees. As the figure below shows, less than one-fourth of the panelists considered protecting teachers' time by limiting other duties as a very important support.

Table 6 Protects Teachers' Time by Limiting Other Duties

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	7.69%	1
Moderately Important	15.38%	2
Somewhat Important	15.38%	2
Important	38.46%	5
Very Important	23.08%	3

Clearly Communicates and Monitors Expectations

Principals play a critical role in setting, communicating, and monitoring high expectations for all staff members. Beginning teachers are usually unaware of those expectations as each school often has a unique set of norms and expectations based on the needs of students. Therefore, it is imperative that principals clearly communicate these expectations at the start of the school year. Panelists found the principal clearly communicating and monitoring expectations to be very important with 84.62% agreeing. The rest of the respondents (15.38%) ranked it as important. When the participants were asked if there were any additional comments they would like to make, one respondent wrote, “A principal should constantly give feedback to new teachers and encourage them.”

Table 7 Clearly Communicate and Monitor Expectations

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	15.38%	2
Very Important	84.62%	11

School Climate Supports

For Research Question 2, which principal supports in the area of school culture are most important in retaining beginning teachers, the panelists found consensus that most of the supporting behaviors identified in the literature were important. A majority at 76.93% found that facilitating a campus orientation to welcome beginning teachers and highlight available resources, procedures, and policies was very important. Almost all panelists at a rate of 92.31% rated clearly communicating the school vision and goals to all beginning teachers as a very important support.

The panelists equally rated creating opportunities for beginning teachers to collaborate with other teachers and maintaining an open-door policy so beginning teachers can ask questions and seek advice when necessary. Communicating the vision and goals to beginning teachers was considered a very important support by 12 of the 13 participants. The panelists additionally found consensus that maintaining regular communication with beginning teachers to build relationships, articulating and enforcing disciplinary policies in order to reduce negative effects on teaching and learning, and communicating with teachers frequently about school events were very important supports that will increase beginning teacher retention.

The lowest rated support was assisting beginning teachers with required school, district, and state paperwork requirements. The panelists rated this support as less than important 30.76% of the time. Consensus was not found that modeling and promoting collaborative working behaviors or encouraging beginning teachers to take part in the decision-making process that results in school change as supportive behaviors that are very important in retaining beginning teachers.

When the number of support measures increase, attrition rates for beginning teachers decline, they perform better at various aspects of teaching, and, most significantly, their students have higher scores or greater gains on academic achievement tests (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Facilitates a Campus Orientation

Clement (2016) recommended that orientation activities begin before the arrival of students, and suggested new teachers should be given time to work in their classrooms with a mentor. According to Angelle (2006), beginning teachers who are successfully socialized into an effective culture will take on the goals and mission of the school and develop loyalty. Over 76% of the panel experts found consensus that principals facilitating a campus orientation is a very important support for beginning teachers.

Table 8 Facilitates a Campus Orientation

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	7.69%	1
Important	15.38%	2
Very Important	76.92%	10

Communicates the School Vision and Goals

“The ability to effectively communicate can mean the difference between an average principal and one who is very effective. Principals must communicate their vision and goals using clear language that people will understand and hopefully embrace as their own” (Simon & Newman, 2004, p. 27). The panelists found consensus with a rate of 92.31% that communicating the vision and goals to beginning teachers is a very important support.

Table 9 Communicates the School Vision and Goals

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	7.69%	1
Very Important	92.31%	12

Creates Opportunities for Collaboration

Morrison (2012) claims that creating a collegial atmosphere is essential in retaining teachers because teachers often cite noncompetitive collaboration as a major factor in their decision to stay (Brown & Wynn, 2007; Hirsh, 2005; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found that collaboration with other teachers on issues of instruction reduced new teachers' likelihood of leaving by 43 percent. The panelists found consensus with a rate of 92.31% that creating opportunities for beginning teachers to collaborate with other teachers is a very important support. When panelists were asked what best practices they would recommend in order to retain beginning teachers. One panelist responded, "Encourage participation in PLCs and staff development."

Table 10 Creates Opportunities to Collaborate with Other Teachers

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	7.69%	1
Very Important	92.31%	12

Maintains an Open-Door Policy

The schools that retain their teachers at high rates are those with a strong sense of collaboration among teachers and the principal (Allensworth et al., 2009). Barth stated, “Among adult relationships in schools, that between teacher and principal is decisive. I have found no characteristic of a good school more pervasive than healthy teacher-principal relationships” (2006, p. 105). Respondents found consensus with a rate of 92.31% that principals maintaining an open-door policy so beginning teachers can ask questions or seek advice is a very important support. When panelists were asked what best practices they would recommend in order to retain beginning teachers a variety of responses were elicited. One panelist responded, “New teachers need constant communication and feedback, and the principal needs to be accessible to them.”

Table 11 Maintains an Open-Door Policy

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	7.69%	1
Very Important	92.31%	12

Maintains Regular Communications to Build Relationships

According to Brown and Wynn (2007), principals with a proven track record of retaining teachers are accessible, establish trust, know their teachers, and are proactive. Educational leaders must place greater emphasis on improving working conditions and building relationships with teachers to increase retention rates. The panelists found consensus with a rate 76.92% that the principal maintains regular communication to build relationships creating opportunities for beginning teachers to collaborate with other teachers is a very important support.

Table 12 Maintains Regular Communication to Build Relationships

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	23.08%	3
Very Important	76.92%	10

Ensure Beginning Teachers Are Aware of Expectations

Beginning teachers need and should be provided assistance handling student behaviors, navigating Individual Education Plans (IEP), and working with parents and guardians (Fox & Certo, 2002). The panelists found consensus with 84.62% responding that principals ensuring that beginning teachers are aware of expectations for communication with students and families is a very important support.

Table 13 Ensures Awareness of Expectations for Communication

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	15.38%	2
Very Important	84.62%	11

Assists Beginning Teachers with Paperwork

Some novice teachers struggle to perform even at a minimal level and feel as though they have been abandoned; hence, a system of support must be in place from day one, so they feel a sense of security (Watkins, 2005). These beginner teachers are held accountable for the same tasks as their more experienced counterparts, but many do not have the skills or knowledge to be effective. The expert panelists did not find consensus on how important it is for principals to assist beginning teachers with required paperwork.

Table 14 Assists with Required Paperwork

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	7.69%	1
Moderately Important	7.69%	1
Somewhat Important	15.38%	2
Important	15.38%	2
Very Important	53.85%	7

Models and Promotes Collaborative Working Behaviors

Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found that collaboration with other teachers on issues of instruction reduced new teachers' likelihood of leaving by 43 percent. Teachers must buy into the group effort and believe that the additional time and effort they invest to collaborate, solve problems, and build consensus will have a positive effect. Consensus was not found on the principal models and promotes collaborative working behaviors as a very important support for beginning teachers. However, over 92% of the respondents rated this support as important or very important.

Table 15 Models and Promotes Collaborative Working Behaviors

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	7.69%	1
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	23.08%	3
Very Important	69.23%	9

Frequently Communicates About School Events

The literature clearly acknowledged that one effective support for beginning teachers is clear communication from principals (Angelle, 2006; Boyd et al., 2011; Brown & Wynn, 2007; Morrison, 2012; Simon & Newman, 2004). Morrison (2012) asserted that clear and effective communication from the principal includes responsiveness to questions, clear expectations, and the sharing of important information. Over 84% of the panelists agreed that the principal frequently communicating about all school events is a very important support for beginning teachers.

Table 16 Frequently Communicates About All School Events

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	7.69%	1
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	7.69%	1
Very Important	84.62%	11

Enforces Disciplinary Policies

According to Rice (2014), effective teachers seek out innovative schools with dynamic principals; often these schools have effective discipline policies and procedures so that student discipline issues do not have the chance to escalate resulting in teacher dissatisfaction. Marzano, Waters, and McNulty state, “protecting teachers from issues and influences that would detract from their instructional time and focus is the responsibility of school leadership and one that cannot be neglected” (2005, p. 48). The expert panelists reached consensus with 75% of them responding that the principal enforcing disciplinary policies to reduce negative effects on teaching and learning is a very important support for beginning teachers.

Table 17 Enforces Disciplinary Policies to Reduce Negative Effects

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	25.00%	4
Very Important	75.00%	9

Encourages Participation in Decision Making

Over half of the panelists (53.85%) felt that encouraging beginning teachers to participate in the decision-making process was a very important support. However, one respondent commented, “Teachers should always be a part of decision making. Sometimes that leads to change. Sometimes that means staying the course. Depends on results. In a successful school, the new teacher needs only to assimilate into the positive culture.”

Table 18 Encourages Beginning Teachers to Participate in Decision-Making

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	15.38%	2
Important	30.77%	4
Very Important	53.85%	7

Professional Growth Supports

Three supports received consensus as being very important for Research Question 3 that sought to determine which principal supports in the area of professional growth are most important in retaining beginning teachers. The principal thoroughly explains expectations and procedures for the evaluation system to beginning teachers at the beginning of the school year, visits beginning teachers' classrooms regularly to provide individual feedback outside of the formal evaluation process, and matches beginning teachers with a suitable school-based mentor were all rated as very important by 84.62% of the panelists. The lowest rated principal support was scheduling peer observation for all beginning teachers with 38.46% of the expert panelists rating this support with a less than important rating.

Matches Beginning Teacher with Mentor

“Most districts do mentoring for one year, but the key is the continuation of mentoring support over the first five years. The use of trained mentors to observe and provide non-evaluative feedback to new teachers is valuable” (Clement, 2016, p. 18). Over 84% of panelists responded that the principal matching beginning teachers with a suitable school-based mentor is very important in regards to retention. When panelists were asked what best practices they would recommend in order to retain beginning teachers. The following response from one panelist aligns with the literature: “Mentoring from in-house teachers, a collaboration period, and team building time throughout the year to meet new with teachers.”

Table 19 Matches Beginning Teachers with School-Based Mentor

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	15.38%	2
Very Important	84.62%	11

Time for Mentor and Beginning Teacher to Meet

Teachers find that they are left with little non-instructional time, and in that time they must prepare instructional materials, write lesson plans, assess student work, complete paperwork, and communicate with parents. Additionally, teachers are required to cover bus, hall, and lunch duties; attend extracurricular events; and serve on committees. Such schedules do not allow adequate time for the continuous professional learning that is necessary for beginning teachers (Hirsch, 2005, p.16). Over half of those surveyed reported that that the principal creating a plan for the mentor and beginning teacher to meet during the school day was not a very important support for beginning teachers.

Table 20 Creates a Plan for the Mentor and Beginning Teacher to Meet

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	7.69%	1
Somewhat Important	7.69%	1
Important	46.15%	6
Very Important	38.46%	5

Provides Professional Development

According to Hirsch (2005), professional development should provide new teachers with the knowledge and skills to work with all students and enhance their capacity for analyzing and interpreting student data. Morrison (2012) concluded that principals must differentiate support based on the diverse needs of teachers. New teachers cannot be treated like their more experienced colleagues, as they have a greater need for supportive administrative behaviors (Brown & Wynn, 2007; Greenlee & Brown, 2009). Over half of the panelists felt that the principal providing professional development opportunities for the beginning teacher's unique needs was a very important support, yet consensus was not found with only 53.85%.

Table 21 Provides Professional Development Opportunities

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	7.69%	1
Somewhat Important	15.38%	2
Important	23.08%	3
Very Important	53.85%	7

Visits Beginning Teachers' Classrooms

“Principals must visit classrooms frequently to see teachers in action and be willing to provide teachers with feedback that will enrich their teaching and learning practices” (Carlson, 2004, p. 15). Angelle (2006) found that principals’ frequent visits to beginning teachers’ classrooms and more informal feedback, whether positive or negative, reduced their isolation and fears. Of the 13 participants that responded to this question, 11 reported that the principal visiting beginning teachers’ classrooms regularly to provide individual feedback was a very important support. Consensus was found with 84.62% agreeing on this question. When panelists were asked what best practices they would recommend in order to retain beginning teachers, one panelist responded, “Provide continuous contact and support to create affect.”

Table 22 Visits Beginning Teachers' Classrooms Regularly

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	7.69%	1
Important	7.69%	1
Very Important	84.62%	11

Schedules Peer Observations

Johnson et al. (2004) suggested that the induction elements producing the strongest effects include having a mentor from the same field. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) found that new teachers receiving no induction support had a 41% rate of turnover at the end of their first year (Hirsch, 2005). A variety of perspectives were expressed to this support. One Panelists ranked it as slightly important (7.69%), while almost one-third (30.77%) of the panelists felt that the principal scheduling peer observations for all beginning teachers was very important. When panelists were asked what best practices they would recommend in order to retain beginning teachers, one panelist responded, “Observation of strong veteran teachers.”

Table 23 Schedules Peer Observations for All Beginning Teachers

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	7.69%	1
Moderately Important	7.69%	1
Somewhat Important	23.08%	3
Important	30.77%	4
Very Important	30.77%	4

Reviews Lesson Plans and Provides Feedback

Carlson (2004) suggested principals demonstrate support by providing feedback. “Honest, clear, and meaningful suggestion and expectations provide a teacher with the greatest opportunity for improvement” (Carlson, 2004, p. 15). The majority of the panelists (69.23%) felt that reviewing lessons and providing feedback to beginning teachers was a very important support.

Table 24 Reviews Lesson Plans and Provides Feedback

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	7.69%	1
Somewhat Important	15.38%	2
Important	7.69%	1
Very Important	69.23%	9

Explains Evaluation System

The principal explains the evaluation system to beginning teachers at the beginning of the school year received a range of responses. One panelist felt that it was somewhat important while another felt that it was important, but the majority (84.62%) responded that it is a very important support for beginning teachers.

Table 25 Explains Evaluation System to Beginning Teachers

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	7.69%	1
Important	7.69%	1
Very Important	84.62%	11

Corrective Feedback

Hirsch (2005) found being led by a principal with a strong instructional emphasis mattered most in teachers' decisions about whether or not to stay in a teaching assignment. All participants responded that providing beginning teachers with corrective but positive feedback when necessary is an important or very important support. When panelists were asked what best practices they would recommend in order to retain beginning teachers, one panelist responded, "Provide feedback on instructional practices."

Table 26 Gives Corrective but Positive Feedback When Necessary

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	0%	0
Important	30.77%	5
Very Important	69.23%	8

Assists in Setting Goals

Principals should help new teachers create goals for personal growth. Clement (2016) acknowledged that while many beginning teachers are just trying to survive, others are actively seeking an avenue to make a difference. Only half of the respondents considered the principal assisting beginning teachers in setting goals for learning and development as a very important support. One panelist stated, “I answered based on the average new teacher. The degree to which these things are important depend on the quality of the candidate.”

Table 27 Assists in Setting Goals for Learning and Development

	Panelists' Responses	Frequency (n=13)
Not Important	0%	0
Slightly Important	0%	0
Moderately Important	0%	0
Somewhat Important	7.69%	1
Important	38.46%	5
Very Important	53.85%	7

Demographic Findings

Years as an Administrator

Over half of the panelists have served as an administrator for 6 to 10 years; which has provided them time to gain a better understanding of how to be an effective administrator. Researchers agree that one of the most important ways that principals can be effective is by increasing the effectiveness of their teachers.

Table 28 Years Serving as an Administrator

	Panelists Responses	# of Respondents
0-5 Years	7.69%	1
6-10 Years	53.85%	7
11-15 Years	23.08%	3
16-10 Years	7.69%	1
21-25 Years	7.69%	1
26 or More Years	0%	0
		(n=13)

Years as a Classroom Teacher

The majority of the panelists (84.62%) were teachers for at least 6 years. This time as a classroom teacher allows the principal to have first-hand knowledge of many of the struggles that beginning teachers face.

Table 29 Years Serving as a Classroom Teacher

	Panelists Responses	# of Respondents
0-5 Years	15.38%	2
6-10 Years	38.46%	5
11-15 Years	23.08%	3
16-10 Years	15.38%	2
21-25 Years	0%	0
26 or More Years	7.69%	1
		(n=13)

Sex of Panelists

The majority of the panelists were men, yet there were no correlations in the data found based on sex. One of the panelists declined to reveal his/her sex.

Table 30 Sex of the Panelists

	Panelists Responses	# of Respondents
Female	25.00%	3
Male	75.00%	9
		(n=12)

Teachers Hired for the 2016-17 School Year

One unanticipated finding was that the principals in the study hired so few teachers. None of the panelists reported having to hire more than ten teachers. This could be due to the timing of the survey as this number could have changed greatly by the first day of school.

Table 31 Number of Teachers Hired for the 2016-17 School Year

Number of Teachers Hired	Respondents Percentage	# of Respondents
0-5	53.85%	7
6-10	46.15%	6
11-15	0%	0
16-10	0%	0
21-25	0%	0
26 or More	0%	0

(n=13)

Round Two

Once Round One was closed, analysis was completed in order to prepare the Round Two instrument. The survey instrument for Round Two was field-tested for quality, validity, and reliability. Respondents indicated the survey was clear, quick to complete, and had only a few grammatical errors. Study subjects were contacted directly by email and provided with a link to access the instrument survey for Round Two. One reminder email was sent after the survey had been open for nine days, and the survey was closed after 14 days.

Using the Delphi method to obtain expert opinion, the resultant data in the form of participant responses yielded a frequency used in determining consensus. Consensus was achieved when a question received 75% percent agreement or higher from the panel of experts. Panelist consensus provided an answer to the survey item, which in turn provided an answer to the research question.

Instructional Support

The First Research Question in this study sought to determine which principal supports in the area of instruction are most important in retaining beginning teachers. Consensus was found in the area of instructional support with 87.50% of panelists ranking a principal clearly communicates and monitors expectations for teaching and learning as the most important support.

Table 32 Top Three Instructional Supports

Instructional Support	Ranked 1	Ranked 2	Ranked 3
The principal clearly communicates and monitors expectations for teaching and learning.	87.50% (7)	12.50% (1)	0% (0)
The principal provides sufficient resources and supplies to meet the needs and expectations of beginning teachers.	0% (0)	62.50% (5)	37.50% (3)
The principal provides beginning teachers resources and teaching spaces equal to those of veteran teachers.	12.50% (1)	25.00% (2)	62.50% (5)

*Number of respondents are in parentheses

School Climate

The Second Research Question sought to determine which principal supports in the area of school culture are most important in retaining beginning teachers. Consensus was not found in the area of school climate supports. The principal clearly communicates the school vision and goals to all beginning teachers, and the principal maintains an open-door policy so beginning teachers can ask questions and seek advice when necessary tied for being the most important, each receiving 37.50% of the vote.

Table 33 Top Three School Climate Supports

School Climate Supports	Ranked 1	Ranked 2	Ranked 3
The principal clearly communicates the school vision and goals to all beginning teachers.	37.50% (3)	37.50% (3)	25.00% (2)
The principal maintains an open-door policy so beginning teachers can ask questions and seek advice when needed.	37.50% (3)	37.50% (3)	25.00% (2)
The principal creates opportunities for beginning teachers to collaborate with other teachers.	25.00% (2)	25.00% (2)	50.00% (4)

*Number of respondents are in parentheses

Professional Growth

The Third Research Question sought to determine which principal supports in the area of professional growth are most important in retaining beginning teachers. Consensus was found in the area of professional growth with 75.00% of panelists ranking the principal visits beginning teachers' classrooms regularly to provide individual feedback outside of the formal evaluation process as the most important support.

Table 34 Top Three Professional Growth Supports

Professional Growth Supports	Ranked 1	Ranked 2	Ranked 3
The principal thoroughly explains expectations and procedures for the evaluation system to beginning teachers at the beginning of the school year.	0% (0)	37.50% (3)	62.50% (5)
The principal visits beginning teachers' classrooms regularly to provide individual feedback outside of the formal evaluation system.	75.00% (6)	12.50% (1)	12.50% (1)
The principal matches beginning teachers with a suitable school-based mentor.	25.00% (2)	50.00% (4)	25.00% (2)

*Number of respondents are in parentheses

Conclusion

In Round One, the identified expert principals reached consensus by ranking 12 of the 27 statements, describing the supportive principal behaviors that increase beginning teacher retention as very important. One in the area of instructional supports, 8 in the area of school climate, and three in the area of professional growth found consensus. When the panelists were asked if there were any additional comments you would like to make, one panelists commented “In a perfect world, all of these things will be done.” The data presented in this chapter will be examined more closely and more thoroughly interpreted in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the current study and present the implications based on the data presented in Chapter Four. This chapter will also provide a means for the researcher to interpret and explain the findings and to make suggestions for future research. This chapter is organized by the problem statement, research questions, limitations, discussion and related literature, implications for action, recommendations for future research, and a summary.

Problem Statement

West Virginia schools and districts across the nation are experiencing high rates of teacher attrition leading to devastating effects on student achievement and school culture. A recent study by Lochmiller et al. (2016) found that “about 32% of beginning teachers employed in the West Virginia public school system in 2008/09 left the system by 2012/13, compared with 9 percent of teachers overall” (p. 16). Researchers cite retention instead of recruitment as the answer to this critical problem (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003).

There is consensus among researchers that key factors in teacher retention are the behaviors of principals and their relationships with teachers (Allensworth et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2003; Greenlee & Brown, 2009; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Morrison, 2012; Prather-Jones, 2011; Richards, 2005; Watkins, 2005). Research is still lacking, however, in identifying those particular retention behaviors principals view as most successful.

Research Questions

The results presented in Chapter Four provided answers to the following research questions:

1. Which principal supports in the area of instruction are most important in retaining beginning teachers?

2. Which principal supports in the area of school culture are most important in retaining beginning teachers?
3. Which principal supports in the area of professional growth are most important in retaining beginning teachers?

Limitations

Similar to any other investigation, there were several limitations to this study method; however, steps were taken to minimize their effects. The researcher received guidance and supervision from experienced researchers throughout the study. Their feedback allowed the researcher to improve the study's design and surveys in order to minimize potential limitations.

Linstone and Turoff (2002) identified common reasons for the failure of a Delphi study. The reasons that could have limited this study included:

1. Imposing monitor views and preconceptions of a problem upon the respondent group by over specifying the structure of the Delphi and not allowing for the contribution of other perspectives related to the problem
2. Poor techniques of summarizing and presenting the group response and ensuring common interpretations of the evaluation scales utilized in the exercise
3. Ignoring and not exploring disagreements, so that discouraged dissenters drop out and an artificial consensus is reached (Linstone & Turoff, 2002, p. 6).

Imposing pre-conceived ideas was controlled by using the research questions as the organizing framework for the study. Poor summarizing and ignoring dissent were controlled by having a panel of experts review the researcher's summaries and feedback. Another concern of the Delphi method is the selection of the participants (Linstone & Turoff, 2002; Skulmoski, Hartman, & Krahn, 2007; Somerville, 2007). There was no bias on the part of the researcher in selecting the panel of participants as it was an intact group.

While the researcher's academic experience and employment in the field of secondary administration can constitute a source of empathy and provide an experiential background to be

effective in eliciting and understanding respondents' perceptions; it can also be viewed as a limitation in that it is a potential source of bias.

An assumption could be made that the participants in the study are representative of the larger population of West Virginia secondary principals. However, with a small sample size, caution must be applied, as the findings may not be reflective of other West Virginia high school principals. Despite these limitations to the generalizability of the study, it was assumed that the ideas generated by the panel are of significance. While this study focused on one RESA, its results have ramifications for the entire state with regard to beginning teacher attrition.

The study was limited by the validity of the survey instrument, which was field tested with a representative population of administrators, but was still in its initial use nonetheless. Assumptions were made that participants would respond to the survey items truthfully, which was encouraged through the confidentiality of the method, although it is acknowledged that individual biases of respondents may have affected the objectivity of their responses to the questionnaire. The items on the survey instrument were based on congruence with the reviewed literature; yet, there may be other factors and issues of importance to teacher attrition that were not included.

A final limitation was the constraint of time. Not only was the two-round Delphi very demanding, it also took from July 1, 2016 until August 23, 2016 for most participants to complete both rounds; therefore, it was difficult to sustain interest during this time frame due to summer vacations and conferences.

Providing educational leaders practical methods to address the critical issue of teacher retention is vital since teachers are the number one predictor of student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2003; MetLife, 2013; Whitaker, 2003). Additional audiences that can gain insight

from this study include professional organizations and agencies such as the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), the American Association of School Administrators (AASA), and college and university school administrator preparation programs. Hopefully, the findings discussed here will provide a basis for future research that will have a positive effect on educational practices and student achievement in West Virginia and across the nation.

Discussion and Related Literature

Most of the research on beginning teacher attrition utilizes data gathered directly from teachers. This study's main goal was to determine high school principals' perceptions regarding the supports that are necessary to retain beginning teachers and to determine the extent to which those perceptions are congruent with what the extant research identifies as new teachers' support needs. The study consisted of two rounds of inquiry. Round One revealed a set of nine best practices that each generated strong consensus from the panel. Round Two revealed the panelists perceived the most important supports in the area of school climate. The most obvious finding to emerge from this study was that the perspective of principals in regards to supportive behaviors contrasts greatly with the majority of literature in the areas of instructional support and professional growth. School culture supports received significantly higher ratings than instructional or professional growth supports. The significant rating differences for the areas of support was surprising and cannot be explained by the researcher. Correlation tests in SPSS 23 J revealed that no significant difference existed between responses and demographic information.

At the heart of this study was the desire to increase the knowledge base of practicing principals and influence the preparation and continuing professional development provided to them thus contributing to their ability to foster and sustain supportive relationships, positive school cultures, and improved beginning teacher retention. Providing educational leaders

practical methods to address the critical issue of teacher attrition is vital because teachers are the number one predictor of student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2003; MetLife, 2013; Whitaker, 2003).

Research Question 1: Instructional Supports

New teachers with training in the selection and use of instructional materials, in learning theory, and who had observed classes, practiced teaching, and received feedback, have been found significantly more likely to remain in the profession beyond their initial year (Berry & Hirsch, 2005; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Regardless of how talented or well trained, certain factors such as a well-equipped school building, helpful assistance from colleagues, and curricular resources all mediate what any teacher can accomplish in the classroom. The level of organization and support a school provides is very important as new teachers decide whether teaching is the right career for them (Johnson, 2006). The following support was the only one that received consensus as being very important for Research Question 1, which sought to determine which principal supports in the area of instructional support are most important in retaining beginning teachers:

- The principal clearly communicates and monitors expectations for teaching and learning.

This finding is consistent with the research literature, as it is well documented that clear communication from principals is an effective support for beginning teachers (Angelle, 2006; Boyd et al., 2011; Brown & Wynn, 2007; Morrison, 2012; Simon & Newman, 2004). Morrison (2012) asserted that clear and effective communication from the principal includes responsiveness to questions, clear expectations, and the sharing of important information.

The ability to effectively communicate can mean the difference between an average principal and one who is very effective. Therefore, principals must communicate their

vision and goals using clear language that people will understand, and hopefully embrace as their own (Simon & Newman, 2004, p. 27).

Characterized as the profession that eats its young, education is recognized for some of the highest turnover rates of any profession (Minarik et al., 2003). Beginning teachers are expected to walk into a classroom and perform while being held to the same accountability standards of teachers with years of experience. Some struggle to perform even at a minimal level and feel as though they have been abandoned; hence, a system of support must be in place from day one so novice teachers feel a sense of security (Watkins, 2005). In contrast to the literature, the following supports were not considered to be very important by the panelists:

- The principal assigns beginning teachers to subject areas and grade levels for which they are certified.
- The principal does not assign beginning teachers more than two different academic subjects to teach.
- The principal does not assign beginning teachers the most challenging students.
- The principal provides sufficient resources and supplies to meet the needs and expectations of beginning teachers.
- The principal provides beginning teachers resources and teaching spaces equal to those of veteran teachers.
- The principal protects beginning teachers' time by limiting meetings, extra duties, and responsibilities.

The lowest scoring support was the principal does not assign beginning teachers the most challenging students, as only one of the panelists felt this was a very important support. This was extremely unanticipated as research suggests that challenging students and their behaviors are a major concern for beginning teachers and is one of the leading causes of teacher attrition.

One explanation for this could be that many high school principals perceive teachers to be responsible for all students regardless of behaviors and classroom discipline issues.

In most cases, the principal allocates the resources that can improve teacher working conditions.

According to Johnson (2006), most teachers report having to spend their own money if they are to be successful, or even survive, in the classroom; new teachers whose salaries often barely allow them to meet their own living expenses, find having to make such purchases galling (p. 11).

Based on this research, it is surprising that principals did not perceive providing resources to novice teachers as a very important support. Reeves acknowledged that principals can make a large number of changes to improve the lives of teaching professionals, but they must give classroom teachers enough time to focus on fewer priorities and give teachers a voice in what those priorities are (2011). Most principals report having a great deal of control in hiring teachers and making decisions about teachers' schedules (MetLife, 2013); yet, the average teaching load for a secondary school teacher in the United States is five classes a day, with two different subjects or preparations (Wong & Wong, 2013). Often, beginning teachers are assigned a teaching load with more classes meeting or preparations than that of experienced teachers (Ingersoll, 2003). Few panelists agreed with Hope (1999), who suggested beginning teachers should be assigned to positions in which they have the greatest likelihood of being successful. Less than 40% rated the principal assigns beginning teachers to subject areas and grade levels for which they are certified and does not assign beginning teachers more than two different academic subjects to teach as very important supports. "Misassignment is inequitably experienced by new teachers, who often are expected to teach courses that are left over once experienced teachers have chosen their schedules" (Johnson, 2006, p. 5). Ingersoll (2002)

concluded that teachers who are misassigned are likely to experience teaching as stressful, unrewarding work, and may choose to leave the profession.

Less than one-fourth of panelists felt that principals protecting beginning teachers' time by limiting meetings, extra duties, and responsibilities was a very important support. This is supported by the literature because most school schedules demand that teachers devote the majority of their time to classroom instruction; hence, teachers find that they are left with little non-instructional time. During this limited time, they must prepare instructional materials, write lesson plans, assess student work, complete paperwork, and communicate with parents. Such schedules do not allow adequate time for the continuous professional learning that is necessary for beginning teachers (Hirsch, 2005, p.16). Thus, it is not surprising that they leave the profession in search of jobs that provide a better sense of efficacy.

In Round Two, the panelists found consensus in the area of instructional support by ranking "the principal communicates and monitors expectations for teaching and learning," as the most important support.

Research Question 2: School Culture

It is through school culture that a principal most influences teacher working conditions (Greenlee & Brown, 2009). Whitaker (2003) defined school culture as the collective beliefs and values that influence policies and practices within a school, and found that many experts regard the school culture as the driving force behind everything else. It is crucial that educational leaders reflect on both the quality and quantity of their interactions with staff in order to create a supportive school culture in which teachers wish to remain. Another important implication that can be taken from the current study is the need for educational leaders within difficult-to-staff

schools to place an even greater emphasis on improving working conditions and building relationships with beginning teachers in order to increase retention rates.

The following supports received consensus as being very important for Research Question 2, which sought to determine which principal supports in the area of school culture are most important in retaining beginning teachers:

- The principal facilitates a campus orientation to welcome beginning teachers and highlight available resources, procedures, and policies.
- The principal clearly communicates the school vision and goals to all beginning teachers.
- The principal creates opportunities for beginning teachers to collaborate with other teachers.
- The principal maintains an open-door policy so beginning teachers can ask questions and seek advice when necessary.
- The principal maintains regular communication with beginning teachers to build relationships.
- The principal ensures that beginning teachers are aware of expectations for collaborating with students and families.
- The principal communicates with all teachers frequently about school events.
- The principal articulates and enforces disciplinary policies in order to reduce negative effects on teaching and learning.

Overall the supports in this area received the highest ratings. Although communicating the vision and goals of the school was not listed in the literature as a major concern of beginning teachers, the current educational reform in West Virginia may be the reason that almost all of the

principals perceive it as a very important support. Ensuring beginning teachers are aware of expectations for collaborating with students and families was favorably rated by the principals as a very important support. The principals also felt that communicating frequently with teachers about school events is a very important support.

The panelists equally rated creating opportunities for beginning teachers to collaborate with other teachers and maintaining an open-door policy so beginning teachers can ask questions and seek advice when necessary. The high rating on these two supports was not surprising as the literature identifies these two behaviors as being essential to the needs of beginning teachers.

The expert panelists agreed with Clement (2016) that orientation activities are very important to novice teachers. It was surprising that the panelists felt that it was very important for the principal to articulate and enforce disciplinary policies in order to reduce negative effects on teaching and learning, but did not find it very important to avoid assigning beginning teachers the most challenging students.

In 2002, Gary suggested that the school culture must provide teachers with the opportunity to satisfy motivational needs, and it is the responsibility of the principal to provide opportunities and to assist teachers in satisfying these needs. Frataccia and Hennington (1982), utilizing Maslow's theory as the foundation for their study, concluded that dissatisfied teachers who left were discontented with the level of recognition, advancement, and achievement; hence indicating that some of their basic needs were not being met. They suggested that teacher attrition is due to efforts to avoid unpleasantness in their current working environment, as well as an inability to satisfy personal psychological needs. The work by Gary (2002) and Frataccia and Hennington's study (1982) concluded that teacher retention can be strengthened through more effective uses of motivation.

In Round Two, in the area of school climate, panelists did not find consensus on the primary support. Two statements: the principal clearly communicates the school vision and goals to all beginning teachers, and the principal maintains an open-door policy so beginning teachers can ask questions and seek advice when necessary, tied as the most important support.

According to Angelle (2006), beginning teachers who are successfully socialized into an effective culture will take on the goals and mission of the school and develop loyalty. The following supports were not considered to be very important supports by the panelists:

- The principal models and promotes collaborative working behaviors.
- The principal encourages beginning teachers to take part in the decision-making process that results in school change.
- The principal assists beginning teachers with required school, district, and state paperwork requirements.

These perceptions are not supported by current research on teacher retention. Morrison (2012) claims that creating a collegial atmosphere is essential in retaining teachers, because teachers often cite noncompetitive collaboration as a major factor in their decision to stay (Brown & Wynn, 2007; Hirsh, 2005; Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Panelists did not feel that including beginning teachers in the decision-making process was very important, yet a study by Smith and Ingersoll (2004) found collaboration with other teachers on issues of instruction reduced new teachers' likelihood of leaving by 43 percent.

According to Hickey (2006), teachers must buy into the process and believe that the additional time and effort they invest to collaborate, solve problems, and build consensus will have a positive effect. They must trust that their voices are being heard.

Learning to teach well is slow, difficult work. Managing a classroom, choosing or creating curriculum, developing sound instructional strategies, accurately assessing student understanding, and adjusting to student needs are complex tasks, and new teachers need time and support to develop the necessary knowledge and skills (Johnson, Birkeland, Kardos, Kauffman, Liu, & Peske, p. 2, 2001).

Research Question 3: Professional Growth

Studies indicate that administrator support is among the top reasons that teachers change schools or leave the profession (Allensworth et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond, 2003). Through reflection and an increased understanding of supportive behaviors, principals can be more proactive in providing support that is purposeful and aligned to the needs of beginning teachers (Richards, 2005). The following supports received consensus as being very important for Research Question 3, which sought to determine which principal supports in the area of professional growth are most important in retaining beginning teachers:

- The principal thoroughly explains expectations and procedures for the evaluation process to beginning teachers at the beginning of the school year.
- The principal visits beginning teachers' classrooms regularly to provide individual feedback outside of the formal evaluation process.
- The principal matches beginning teachers with a suitable school-based mentor.

The panelists agreed with the literature that principals should clearly communicate expectations and explain the evaluation process in order for novice teachers to have a clear understanding. While the panelists in this study identified the need for principals to visit beginning teachers' classrooms and provide individual feedback and to match novice teachers with a school-based mentor as important supports, they also identified six supports in this area as

not very important. This was surprising to the researcher as professional development is vital to beginning teachers. The following supports in the area of professional growth were not considered by the panelists to be very important supports in regards to beginning teacher retention:

- The principal creates a plan to provide for the mentor teachers to meet with beginning teachers during the school day.
- The principal provides professional development opportunities for beginning teachers in the areas of classroom management, instructional strategies, technology, and topics upon request.
- The principal schedules peer observations for all beginning teachers.
- The principal reviews beginning teachers' lesson plans and provides instructional feedback.
- The principal gives corrective but positive feedback when necessary.
- The principal assists beginning teachers in setting reasonable goals for learning and development.

The literature shows that principals have a great deal of control over the schedule, yet the panelists did not feel that providing time within the school day to meet with a mentor was a very important support for beginning teachers. This is crucial as studies on novice teachers have shown that having time to collaborate with other teachers is essential to teacher satisfaction.

While the literature indicates that providing professional development to novice teachers in specific areas will increase retention, the panelists did not consider this a very important support. The lowest rated principal support in the area of professional growth was scheduling peer observation for all beginning teachers. This finding is inconsistent with the research

literature, since it is well documented that peer observations are beneficial to all teachers.

According to Richardson (2000), if the desired outcome is improving instruction, staff members who observe their peers will have a greater opportunity to improve their own teaching. Exposure to various teaching styles, strategies, and classroom management procedures can breathe new life into a faculty. These experiences will advance collegiality, collaboration, and instructional improvement. Peer observation fosters personal reflection, imitation or avoidance, and an enhanced cooperation between teachers.

Implications for Action

The findings of this study should contribute valuable information to the developing knowledge base of beginning teacher retention in West Virginia. Districts have many opportunities to increase or enhance the conditions for beginning teacher success. Therefore, the researcher agrees with experts in the field that as districts budget resources for recruiting and retention efforts, much of those resources should be directed to individual school sites where the potential to address many beginning teacher needs rest (Johnson et al., 2001). The following recommendations are offered for West Virginia school principals, administrators, leaders, and policy makers:

1. View the statewide average of 32% as a benchmark to evaluate beginning teacher attrition rates at their schools.
2. Discuss the findings in this study with district principals to open dialogue about the needs of beginning teachers.
3. Ensure beginning teachers are provided a school-based mentor and are not assigned the most challenging students.

4. The importance of role clarification and the communication of instructional leadership expectations also need to be addressed in order for principals and beginning teachers to gain a common understanding of the principal's role.
5. These findings illuminate the need for research-based professional development opportunities that will train principals in more supportive behaviors. This training could well increase the chances that new teachers will remain in the profession.

Recommendations for Future Research

The review of the related literature and the results of this study indicate that further research into beginning teacher attrition is warranted. This initial study, although limited in scope, shows promise and has laid groundwork for future research. Although many issues are outside the school leader's control to directly address, the entire school community must work together towards supporting new teachers, welcoming them to the school, and easing their transition into the profession. Based on study findings, the following recommendations for further research are as follows:

1. This Delphi study enabled the researcher to ascertain how high school principals in one RESA perceive supportive behaviors that will ultimately contribute to beginning teacher retention. Nevertheless, a broader study of secondary principals both statewide and nationwide could address this issue further and possibly reveal other attitudes that may help educational leaders in understanding ways to increase beginning teacher retention.
2. More studies need to be conducted which document the administrative supports desired by beginning teachers in West Virginia school districts. A study that specifically targets schools known for low beginning teacher attrition, could provide new insight into the effect of principals' behaviors on novice teachers' job satisfaction.

3. This study collected data from high school principals, and it may be beneficial to conduct a study on the perceptions of mentor teachers in regards to supportive behaviors that improve beginning teacher retention as they may hold alternative perspectives.
4. Conducting an evaluation study to assess why administrators are unable to provide more supports to beginning teachers is needed. One explanation may be that administrators are overburdened by bureaucratic tasks and providing needed supports to beginning teachers is not feasible due to time constraints.
5. This study could be replicated with the sample expanded to include beginning West Virginia teachers. This could produce valuable data used to compare principal and novice teacher perceptions as additional research is clearly and urgently needed in identifying innovative retention efforts that could ultimately reduce the number of quality educators leaving the classroom.
6. Studies should be completed on induction programs in West Virginia in order to find the most effective components and best practices that result in significant beginning teacher retention.
7. The participants did feel that it was an important support to not assign the most challenging students to beginning teachers; therefore, further investigation into the effect of supportive disciplinary policies and procedures on attrition rates of beginning teachers is justified. This research could provide schools and districts a vehicle to ascertain new ways to deal with novice teachers' student discipline related frustrations.

Up to 32% of new teachers leave West Virginia school districts within the first four years. To have such a high percent of new teachers leave is costly for students, teachers, schools, districts, and the state. Research should seek to understand the reasons that new

teachers decide to leave the state. By focusing solely on novice teachers both because of their high attrition rate, and because of the loss in potential years of service that occurs when they leave could significantly improve education. Ingersoll (2003) concluded that improving supports will contribute to lower rates of turnover, in turn, diminishing school staffing problems and ultimately aiding performance of schools. Research-based models that provide effective beginning teacher supports is the only way West Virginia schools will gain a stable, effective teacher workforce.

Summary

Based on the data presented in Chapter Four, the following conclusions were drawn about principals' perceptions. These findings indicate that high school principals and beginning teachers' perspectives on the most supportive administrative behaviors differ greatly. One reason principals may not be providing the supports beginning teachers need is because they are not aware of novice teachers' desired supports.

Little reason was uncovered to believe that the serious beginning teacher attrition crisis in West Virginia, if left unchecked, will improve as principal perceptions in several support areas do not align with current research. There may be, however, a narrower set of important supports that beginning teachers require in order to feel comfortable as teaching professionals. Finally, educational leaders and policy makers at all levels must keep the goal of reducing new teacher attrition at the forefront if West Virginia student achievement is to increase.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: OFFICE OF RESEARCH INTEGRITY APPROVAL LETTER



www.marshall.edu

Office of Research Integrity
Institutional Review Board
One John Marshall Drive
Huntington, WV 25755

FWA
00002704

IRB1
#00002205
IRB2
#00003206

July 8, 2016

Tom Hisiro, Ed.D.
Leadership Studies, MUGC

RE: IRBNet ID# 919272-1

At: Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral)

Dear Dr. Hisiro:

Protocol Title: [919272-1] Supportive Leadership: The Principal's Role in Beginning Teacher Retention

Expiration Date: July 8, 2017

Site Location: MUGC

Submission Type: New Project APPROVED

Review Type: Exempt Review

In accordance with 45CFR46.101(b)(2), the above study and informed consent were granted Exempted approval today by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/Behavioral) Designee for the period of 12 months. The approval will expire July 8, 2017. A continuing review request for this study must be submitted no later than 30 days prior to the expiration date.

This study is for student Kelli Epling.

If you have any questions, please contact the Marshall University Institutional Review Board #2 (Social/ Behavioral) Coordinator Bruce Day, ThD, CIP at 304-696-4303 or day50@marshall.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

APPENDIX B: ANONYMOUS SURVEY CONSENT

Anonymous Survey Consent



Marshall University IRB

Approved on:	7/8/16
Expires on:	7/8/17
Study number:	919272

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled Supportive Leadership: The Principal's Role in Beginning Teacher Retention designed to analyze principals' perceptions of how supportive behaviors can influence teacher retention in 16 high schools that are grouped into a Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in West Virginia. The study is being conducted by Doctor Tom Hisiro and Kelli Epling from Marshall University Graduate College and has been approved by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This research is being conducted as part of the dissertation requirements for Kelli Epling.

This survey is comprised of two rounds of survey questions and will take less than ten minutes each. Your replies will be anonymous, so do not type your name anywhere on the form. There are no known risks involved with this study. Participation is completely voluntary and there will be no penalty or loss of benefits if you choose to not participate in this research study or to withdraw. If you choose not to participate you can leave the survey site. You may choose not to answer any question by simply leaving it blank.

Once you complete the survey you can delete your browsing history for added security. Completing the online survey indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply. If you have any questions about the study you may contact Doctor Tom Hisiro at 304-746-2516, Kelli Epling at 304-421-5354.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Marshall University Office of Research Integrity at (304) 696-4303.

By completing this survey, you are also confirming that you are **18** years of age or older.

Please print this page for your records.

If you choose to participate in the study you will find the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/PVLVX2G>

APPENDIX C: ROUND ONE SURVEY

Supportive Leadership

Welcome to My Survey

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your feedback is important.

Marshall University IRB
Approved on:
7/8/16
Study number:
919272

Anonymous Survey Consent

You are invited to participate in a research project entitled Supportive Leadership: The Principals' Role in Beginning Teacher Retention designed to analyze principals' perceptions of how supportive behaviors can influence teacher retention in 16 high schools that are grouped into a Regional Education Service Agency (RESA) in West Virginia. The study is being conducted by Doctor Tom Hisiro and Kelli Epling from

Marshall University Graduate College and has been approved by the Marshall University Institutional Review Board (IRB). This research is being conducted as part of the dissertation requirements for Kelli Epling.

This survey is comprised of two rounds of survey questions and will take less than five minutes each. Your replies will be anonymous, so do not type your name anywhere on the form. There are no known risks involved with this study. Participation is completely voluntary and there will be no penalty or loss of benefits if you choose to not participate in this research study or to withdraw. If you choose not to participate you can leave the survey site. You may choose to not answer any question by simply leaving it blank.

Once you complete the survey you can delete your browsing history for added security.

Completing the on-line survey indicates your consent for use of the answers you supply. If you have any questions about the study you may contact Doctor Tom Hisiro at 304746-2516, Kelli Epling at 304-421-5354.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research participant, you may contact the Marshall University Office of Research Integrity at (304) 696-4303.

By completing this survey, you are also confirming that you are 18 years of age or older.

Please print this page for your records.

Supportive Leadership

Consent Form

* 1. I agree to participate in this study.

Yes

No

Supportive Leadership

Instructional Supports

Please rate the importance of each of the following statements.

1. The principal assigns beginning teachers to subject areas and grade levels for which they are certified (i.e. all beginning teachers are considered highly qualified for the subjects and grade levels they are assigned to teach).

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. The principal does not assign beginning teachers more than two different academic subjects to teach.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. The principal does not assign beginning teachers the most challenging students.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. The principal provides sufficient resources and supplies to meet the needs and expectations of beginning teachers.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. The principal provides beginning teachers resources and teaching spaces equal to those of veteran teachers.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. The principal protects beginning teachers' time by limiting meetings, extra duties, and responsibilities (e.g. committee/club assignments, coaching, extracurricular, paperwork).

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. The principal clearly communicates and monitors expectations for teaching and learning.

Not Important

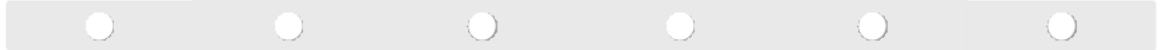
Slightly Important

Moderately Important

Somewhat Important

Important

Very Important



A horizontal scale bar with six radio buttons corresponding to the importance levels above. The buttons are evenly spaced along a light gray bar.

8. Are there any additional comments you would like to make?



A rectangular text box for additional comments.

Supportive Leadership

School Climate Supports

1. The principal facilitates a campus orientation to welcome beginning teachers and highlight available resources, procedures, and policies.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

2. The principal clearly communicates the school vision and goals to all beginning teachers.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

3. The principal creates opportunities for beginning teachers to collaborate with other teachers.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

4. The principal maintains an open-door policy so beginning teachers can ask questions and seek advice when necessary.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

5. The principal maintains regular communication with beginning teachers to build relationships.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

6. The principal ensures that beginning teachers are aware of expectations for collaborating with students and families (e.g. discipline and grading policies, grading periods, mandatory parent conferences).

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

7. The principal assists beginning teachers with required school, district, and state paperwork requirements.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

8. The principal models and promotes collaborative working behaviors.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

9. The principal communicates with all teachers frequently about school events.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

10. The principal articulates and enforces disciplinary policies in order to reduce negative effects on teaching and learning.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

11. The principal encourages beginning teachers to take part in the decision-making process that results in school change.

Not Important Slightly Important Moderately Important Somewhat Important Important **Very Important**

12. Are there any additional comments you would like to make?

Supportive Leadership

Professional Growth Supports

1. The principal matches beginning teachers with a suitable school-based mentor.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. The principal creates a plan to provide time for mentor teachers to meet with beginning teachers during the school day.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

3. The principal provides professional development opportunities for beginning teachers in the areas of classroom management, instructional strategies, technology, and topics upon request.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

4. The principal visits beginning teachers' classrooms regularly to provide individual feedback outside of the formal evaluation process.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. The principal schedules peer observations for all beginning teachers.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

6. The principal reviews beginning teachers' lesson plans and provides instructional feedback.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. The principal thoroughly explains expectations and procedures for the evaluation system to beginning teachers at the beginning of the school year.

Not Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. The principal gives corrective but positive feedback when necessary.

Not Important

Slightly Important

Moderately Important

Somewhat Important

Important

Very Important



9. The principal assists beginning teachers in setting reasonable goals for learning and development.

Not Important

Slightly Important

Moderately Important

Somewhat Important

Important

Very Important



10. Are there any additional comments you would like to make?

Supportive Leadership

Demographic Information

1. How long have you served as a school administrator?

- 0-5 Years
- 6-10 Years
- 11-15 Years
- 16-20 Years
- 21-25 Years
- 26 or More Years

2. How long did you serve as a classroom teacher?

- 0-5 Years
- 6-10 Years
- 11-15 Years
- 16-20 Years
- 21-25 Years
- 26 or More Years

3. What is your sex?

- Female
- Male

4. How many teachers will you hire (or have you hired) for the 2016-17 school year for any reason with the exception of newly created positions.

- 0-5
- 6-10
- 11-15
- 16-20
- 21-25
- 26 or more

APPENDIX D: ROUND TWO SURVEY

Round 2-Supportive Leadership

Supportive Behaviors

* 1. Rank the following instructional supports in order of importance, 1 being the most important.

The principal clearly communicates and monitors expectations for teaching and learning.

The principal provides sufficient resources and supplies to meet the needs and expectations of beginning teachers.

The principal provides beginning teachers resources and teaching spaces equal to those of veteran teachers.

* 2. Rank the following school climate supports in order of importance, 1 being the most important.

The principal clearly communicates the school vision and goals to all beginning teachers.

The principal maintains an open-door policy so beginning teachers can ask questions and seek advice when necessary.

The principal creates opportunities for beginning teachers to collaborate with other teachers.

* 3. Rank the following professional growth supports in order of importance, 1 being the most important.

The principal thoroughly explains expectations and procedures for the evaluation system to beginning teachers at the beginning of the school year.

The principal visits beginning teachers' classrooms regularly to provide individual feedback outside of the formal evaluation process.

The principal matches beginning teachers with a suitable school-based mentor.

4. What best practices or supports would you recommend to retain beginning teachers?

APPENDIX E: INDIVIDUAL PANELIST DEMOGRAPHICS

Participant	Years in Administration	Years in Teaching	Sex	New Teachers Hired for 16-17
Participant 1	16-20 Years	16-20 Years	Male	0-5 Teachers
Participant 2	6-10 Years	11-15 Years	Declined	6-10 Teachers
Participant 3	6-10 Years	0-5 Years	Male	6-10 Teachers
Participant 4	11-15 Years	6- 10 Years	Female	6-10 Teachers
Participant 5	11-15 Years	0-5 Years	Male	6-10 Teachers
Participant 6	6-10 Years	11-15 Years	Male	0-5 Teachers
Participant 7	11-15 Years	6- 10 Years	Male	0-5 Teachers
Participant 8	6-10 Years	6-10 Years	Male	6-10 Teachers
Participant 9	Declined	Declined	Declined	Declined
Participant 10	0-5 Years	26 or More Years	Female	0-5 Teachers
Participant 11	6-10 Years	11-15 Years	Male	0-5 Teachers
Participant 12	21-15 Years	16-20 Years	Male	0-5 Teachers
Participant 13	6-10 Years	6-10 Years	Male	0-5 Teachers
Participant 14	6-10 Years	6-10 Years	Female	6-10 Teachers

APPENDIX F: VITA

Kelli Epling

Education

- Doctor of Education, Educational Leadership, Marshall University**
Graduation: 2016
Admitted to Candidacy: 2015
Major: Public School Administration
Dissertation: Supportive Leadership: The Principal's Role in Beginning Teacher Retention
- Principal Certification, Marshall University**
Graduation: 2010
- Master of Teaching, Marshall University**
Graduation: 2006
- B.A., English Literature, West Virginia State University**
Graduation: 2003

Work Experience

- Curriculum Assistant Principal, 2013-Present**
Stonewall Jackson Middle School
Charleston, West Virginia
- Curriculum Assistant Principal, 2010-2013**
Andrew Jackson Middle School
Cross Lanes, West Virginia
- English Teacher, 2006-2010**
Kanawha County Schools
Charleston, West Virginia

Professional Service

- 2013 WVASSP Principal Conference**

Organized Conference at The Greenbrier Resort

- **2014 KCSP Celebration of Education Gala**
Organized and Presented Opening Speech
Recognized 20 Educators for Their Commitment to Education

- **2015 KCSP Celebration of Education Gala**
Organized and Presented Opening Speech
Recognized 21 Educators for the Relationships They Build

- **2015 WVASSP Assistant Principal Conference**
Organized and Presented Round Table Sessions
Served as 2015 West Virginia Assistant Principal of the Year

- **2016 KCSP Celebration of Education Gala**
Organized and Presented Opening Speech
Recognized 24 Educators for their Passion for Education

Research & Presentations

- Epling, K., Hisiro, T., & Hoylman, E. (2013). Investing in teachers, investing in the future: Quality selection of novice teacher mentors.
Paper presented at the Southern Regional Council on Educational Administration conference in Oklahoma City.