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**SURPRISE AND SENSE-MAKING:
THE ORGANIZATIONAL SOCIALIZATION OF FIRST-YEAR TEACHERS IN
INTERMEDIATE GRADES FOUR THROUGH SIX**

by

Kathleen J. Daley Peterson

A DISSERTATION

**Presented to the Faculty of
The Graduate College of the University of Nebraska
In Partial Fulfillment of Requirements
For the Degree of Doctor of Education**

Major: Educational Administration and Supervision

Under the Supervision of Dr. Gary Hartzell

Omaha, Nebraska

December, 2001

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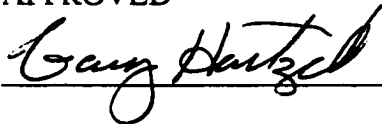
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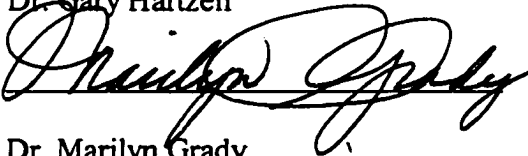
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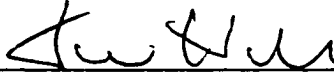
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**SURPRISE AND SENSE-MAKING:
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Kathleen J. Daley Peterson, Ed.D.

University of Nebraska, 2001

ABSTRACT

This qualitative dissertation study used grounded theory methodology modified to accept received theory to examine organizational and professional socialization as experienced by a group of ten first-year teachers in grades four through six. Stage model theory and surprise and sense-making theory supplied the study's conceptual framework. The first-year teachers were interviewed three times during the 2000-2001 school year to identify elements of their organizational socialization experience.

The grand tour question asked: Are there discernible patterns of teacher socialization for first-year teachers in grades four through six as predicted by socialization theory and research? Results indicated that there were discernible patterns and that they were consistent with those predicted by the organizational socialization theory and research. The first sub-question asked: If there are discernible patterns, then is there an identifiable set of common experiences that contribute to that pattern? While there were common experiences, the teachers did not experience them at the same time, nor in the same order, nor did the experiences equally impact all of the first-year teachers. The second sub-question asked: If there is such a set of experiences, then are there elements of those experiences that teachers find surprising in their first-year teaching experience?

150 surprises were reported. These centered on not being fully prepared for all aspects of teaching, professional relationships with other adults, and the impact the job had on their private lives. The third sub-question asked: If there are surprising elements, then are first-year teachers able to reconcile the differences between what they anticipate and the reality that surprises them upon encounter? The teachers were able to reconcile the differences by using the sense-making process drawing on pre-service experience and knowledge whenever possible, along with seeking feedback from socialization agents.

These teachers did not report feelings isolated. Their friendships tended to shift toward fellow teachers who better understood the demands of the job. Findings and conclusions are delineated and discussed. Implications for practice and further research are detailed.

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DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my family. They gave up much and gave much to make it possible.

Chuck, my husband, thank you from the bottom of my heart. You were always there, and I know you always will be. I love you.

Patty, my daughter, I have enjoyed being a student with you. I am proud of who you are and who you will become. Learn much and learn well. The world needs you. I love you.

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John and Dorothy Daley, my parents and my first teachers, you taught me well. Thanks for your love, your caring, and all the years of believing in me. I love you.

A special thanks to the ten first-year teachers who let me into their lives, so that I truly came to know what it means to be a teacher for the very first time. You are wonderful.

Now that the end is here, I truly understand it was the journey, not the destination that mattered.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The first-year of teaching could be called "the wonder year". It is a year that the new teacher spends wondering, "Am I doing this right?" "Why are my students acting this way?" "Why did I become a teacher?" "Does anybody care?" Too often first-year teachers are left alone attempting to answer these questions because of inadequate attention to organizational socialization.

The first-year teaching experience has a tremendous and lasting impact on the lives of teachers and the quality of instruction they offer to their students (Bullough, 1987). Most new teachers enter teaching with idealism. They look forward to teaching and putting into practice what they have learned at the university. This optimism can soon fade as the reality of life in a classroom conflicts with their mental image of life as a teacher. This loss of idealism may be followed by a period of disenchantment. Difficulties are compounded as first-year teachers frequently are given the most difficult teaching assignments. In that situation, they often experience feelings of inadequacy and insecurity that makes them question their identity as professionals (Veenman, 1984). The resulting dissatisfaction can lead to disillusionment, most deeply expressed when beginning teachers choose to leave the profession (Gold & Roth, 1993).

As many as 30% of teachers leave teaching within in the first two years (Harris, 1993). The best and the brightest are often among the first to go (Gonzales & Sosa, 1993; Schlechty & Vance, 1983). The loss of such significant number of teachers with great potential is especially troubling just at a time when large numbers of teachers reach

retirement age and reforms associated with lowering class size will require additional teachers.

Teacher retention appears directly correlated to the success of the first teaching experience (Chapman, 1984) and those who remain are profoundly affected by it. What happens at the beginning of a teaching career impacts future personal and professional development (Bullough, 1987).

As beginning teachers discover what works for them, instructional behaviors are reinforced and habits are formed. What works best in the eyes of a beginning teacher is not always what is best for student learning. Those who remain in the survival mentality through their first year restrict their teaching methods and later tend to resist curricular and instructional change throughout their teaching careers (Huling-Austin, 1986). Their true teaching potential is never realized. Most teacher induction programs have goals of increased teacher retention and the improvement of the instruction offered by beginning teachers (Odell, 1989). It is a matter of controversy whether programs accomplish this or simply offer the new teachers enough support to allow them to survive and adapt to school life as it exists (Little, 1990).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the process of organizational entry as it is experienced by teachers in intermediate grades four through six. It was a qualitative study that followed ten first-year teachers and explored the events that defined their socialization. The study examined the process through which these

teachers made sense of the surprises they encountered and came to reconcile the job they found with the one they had anticipated.

This study proposed to gain a better understanding of how beginning teachers made sense of what they encountered upon entering teaching. The qualitative nature of this research facilitated this by reporting on the process as it unfolded over the course of the school year. A cross-sectional snap shot study could not have accomplished this. Lortie (1975) refers to "the riddle of teacher socialization", arguing that it is not readily captured by a single-factor frame of reference simply because it is a process.

The qualitative approach to research is concerned with meaning and how people make sense of their lives. This is particularly applicable in regard to the essence of this study as it reported participant perspectives of the first-year teaching experience. This assisted in understanding how meaning was construed and reality defined by the study subjects.

The teachers were interviewed in depth three times during the 2000-2001 school year to collect data concerning their first-year teaching experience. In the highly personal and context-specific world of the first-year teachers, numbers could not capture and convey what words could. The experiences they reported then were examined in light of what is known concerning organizational socialization in other occupations. The intent was to reveal the lived experience of first-year teachers in order to better understand what works and how it works in the induction process.

What was learned from this study could be valuable in designing more effective induction programs for future teachers and may have implications for teacher education both at the pre-service and in-service levels.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study.

Grand Tour Question.

Are there discernible patterns of teacher socialization for first-year teachers in grades four through six as predicted by socialization theory and research?

Sub-questions.

1. If there are discernible patterns, then is there an identifiable set of common experiences that contribute to that pattern?
2. If there is such a set of experiences, then are there elements of those experiences that the first-year teachers find surprising in their first-year teaching experience?
3. If there are surprising elements, then are first-year teachers able to reconcile the differences between what they anticipate and the reality that surprises them upon encounter?

Theoretical Framework

Rather than attempting to generate new theory, this study was based on two theories drawn from existing research on organizational socialization. The intent was to test and extend those theories in an elementary classroom context.

The first theory was a three stage model of organizational socialization that has been well developed and widely accepted for over 40 years (Feldman, 1976; Hughes, 1958; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1992). Stage one is the anticipatory (the period prior to the actual start of the job in which expectations of the job and of oneself are developed), stage two is the encounter (the initial experience through the first year), and stage three is the accommodation (the second year and beyond) (Wanous, 1992).

The second theory was Louis's (1980) theory of surprise and sense-making. This theory argues that there is always a gap between what one expects in a job and what one actually finds. Part of the socialization process involves making sense of and accepting a job reality different from that anticipated.

Definitions

Culture- Culture includes the subconscious assumptions, shared meanings, and ways of interpreting things that pervade an entire organization (Reichers & Schneider, 1990).

First-year teacher- First-year teachers are teachers employed for the first time as a teacher. Teachers who previously substitute taught or are returning to teaching after a break in employment are excluded from the first-year teacher pool for the purposes of this study.

Organizational socialization- Organizational socialization is the process that transforms new hires into fully functioning members of a work group. This is accomplished by insiders transmitting cultural knowledge to newcomers (Feldman, 1976).

Limitations

The study was limited to ten first-year teachers in public schools in a mid-western metropolitan area and conclusions are drawn in reference to the studied group only. Ten was thought to be the maximum number of study subjects that I could realistically interview given the time constraints of this study and the interview schedule. At the same time, ten is a large enough study pool to allow for a variety of responses and to generate the quantity of data needed to conduct an in-depth study with meaningful results.

Individuals with prior teaching experience, even as a short-term teacher or substitute, were excluded from the study. This study focused on teachers of students in grades four through six in elementary buildings.

The procedure and initial interview protocol are detailed enough in chapter three so that another researcher wishing to replicate this study at another site should be able to do so.

Significance of the Study

Given the qualitative nature of this study, its results were not intended to be generalizable in the traditional quantitative sense. However, the results of the study are useful in illuminating existing theory and helping us to better understand elements of the first-year teaching experience.

The significance of the study rests in what it adds to our understanding of the process of organizational socialization for first-year teachers. This study expands on the existing educational practice knowledge base by offering a more complete understanding of what it means to be a first-year teacher. It also adds to the body of organizational

socialization research which has only infrequently been applied to the teaching profession in the past.

The application of what we know about organizational socialization to what we know and can learn about first-year teachers is important. The U. S. Department of Education estimates that two million new teachers will be inducted in the next decade (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996). This is relevant to both researchers and practitioners. By listening to the voices of beginning teachers and learning how they make sense of the first-year teaching experience, more effective ways of assisting them might be determined. First-year teachers should not be left alone to wonder as they question themselves.

Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter two examines the literatures that pertain to the fields of organizational socialization and first-year teaching. This literature review clarifies what research has been done in these areas as well as point out gaps that currently exist in that research. Implications for practice and research are delineated. Chapter three outlines the methodology employed. Chapter four presents the findings of the study. Chapter five offers an interpretation of the findings and makes recommendations for practice and further research.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

This literature review describes literature on the topics that are pertinent to this research topic. It is organized around two bodies of literature: (1) that relating to organizational socialization and (2) that relating to first-year teachers. The organizational socialization literature is divided into five parts: stage models, the first year on the job, surprise and sense-making, communication with peers and supervisors, and socialization tactics. The first-year teacher literature review concentrates on stages of teacher development, problems typically encountered during the first year of teaching, new teacher acculturation, students as socialization agents, and the reality shock of the first teaching experience. Implications for practice and research pertaining to the intersection of organizational socialization and the first year of teaching are discussed.

Organizational Socialization

What is organizational socialization? Organizational socialization is the process that transforms new hires into fully functioning members (Feldman, 1976). It is through socialization that an individual learns the norms, values, expected behaviors, and social knowledge needed to assume a role and successfully function within the organization (Louis, 1980). Newcomers learn about their job-related tasks, work roles, group processes, and organizational characteristics through organizational socialization (Feldman, 1981; Fisher, C. D., 1986). Organizational socialization processes communicate the internal nuances and workings of an organization that are not overtly revealed.

Only by understanding the culture of their work environment can new employees become an integral part of an organization. Organizational socialization involves the transmission of knowledge about the organization's culture (Louis, Posner, & Powell, 1983). Culture includes the subconscious assumptions, shared meanings, and ways of interpreting things that pervade an entire organization (Reichers & Schneider, 1990). Culture helps us understand the hidden and complex aspects of organizational life. It helps establish continuity, control, identity, and integration of group members (Louis et al., 1983). Schein (1992) offers this explanation of culture:

The concept of culture helps explain all phenomena (of differences) and "normalizes" them. If we understand the dynamics of culture, we will be less likely to be puzzled, irritated, and anxious when we encounter the unfamiliar and seemingly irrational behavior in organizations, and we will have a deeper understanding, not only of why various groups of people or organizations can be so different but also why it is so hard to change them. (p.5)

Group or organizational culture is associated with phenomena shared, or held in common. Schein (1992) further describes culture as the norms, values, behavior patterns, rituals, and traditions bound together into a coherent whole that reflects the group's learning. He defines the culture of a group as:

A pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration,

that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems. (p. 7)

Learning the culture of the organization allows new employees to embrace the group as their own as they transition from newcomers to insiders.

Planned organizational socialization has been shown to reduce newcomers' stress while adjusting to a work group and the context in which it operates. Buchanan (1974) found that formal and informal socialization practices affect the level of organizational commitment. This is significant because research has demonstrated a correlation between commitment and the choice to remain with an organization (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Randall, 1990). As the worker moves toward a feeling of competence in the work environment, he or she will assimilate the role and develop greater identification with the task and the culture of the organization. Katz (1980) and Wanous (1980) found that organizational longevity is a positive effect of socialization. This is important when evaluating the time and costs of training a new employee as opposed to retaining current employees. Turnover costs are expensive (Dean & Wanous, 1984).

Stage Models of Organizational Socialization

The most common conceptualizations of the organizational socialization process are stage models (Buchanan, 1974; Feldman, 1976; Porter, Lawler, & Hackman, 1975; Schein, 1978; Van Maanen, 1976; Wanous, 1980, 1992). Stage models are offered as a means of delineating the phases of organizational socialization a newcomer typically goes through in encountering a new work environment. Wanous (1992) integrates the critical

parts of the most recognized stage models to propose a comprehensive stage model of organizational socialization. This is the prevalent stage model theory accepted in the field as a framework for understanding the socialization process (Saks & Ashforth, 1997a).

Although some theorists identify more than three stages of organizational socialization, all identify three basic process components: a pre-entry phase; an entry or encounter phase; and a final stage of role management. The boundaries between the stages are not definitive, and overlap exists. There is no set timeline because individuals proceed through the sequence at varying rates depending on their personal characteristics and the variable events they experience in the workplace (Wanous, 1992).

Stage theory contends that most entering employees go through a process of confronting and accepting reality, eventually reaching a point where expectations and reality are reconciled. This is followed by the achievement of role clarity through which the individual comes to understand his or her place in the organization. Role conflicts between professional and private life are resolved. Finally, the newcomer locates herself in the organizational context and is viewed by others as a valuable and committed member (Wanous, 1992).

Stages of Organizational Socialization

Stage one- anticipatory socialization.

The first stage in the socialization process is anticipatory socialization, a period when the individual is primarily concerned with “getting in” the organization (Feldman, 1976). All prior learning impacts the individual during this initial stage of socialization.

This stage encompasses everything that occurs before entering the organization including the training and preparation of the individual, the recruitment and selection process, the hiring decision, and the actual job placement (Feldman, 1981).

An individual participates in two main activities during this phase as he or she (1) forms job expectations and (2) makes employment decisions (Jablin, 1984). This also is a time when the employee forms expectations of the organization and of his or her own role in it. Since the recruitment process may have unrealistically inflated a new employee's expectations, these pre-entry expectations are not always congruent with the needs and values of the newcomer (Wanous & Colella, 1989). The organization may have limited resources to address this disparity

Problems can arise when the information presented by either the employer or the employee has been less than accurate during pre-employment discussions (Wanous & Colella, 1989). Wanous (1977) found a correlation between the accuracy of expectations, job satisfaction, and subsequent decisions to leave an organization. Feldman (1976) noted that the closer the newcomer's and the organization's expectations matched, the greater the ease of the employee's transition from outsider to insider. He reported that realism in knowing what the job is really like and possession of the skills to do the job satisfy the needs and preferences of the employee and this leads to greater satisfaction and longer tenure.

The accuracy and pertinence of anticipatory socialization is put to the test when an individual enters the organization for the first time as a worker (Van Maanen, 1976). Realistic job previews (RJPs) have been recommended as a means to assure that the

employee is fully aware of the reality of the job (Wanous, 1976). Because RJPs lead to a factual portrayal of the job and company, and because employee expectations more closely match reality, there is a negative relationship between RJPs and turnover (Wanous, 1977).

Stage two – encounter socialization.

Stage two is the encounter phase of organizational socialization. Newcomers enter the workplace, quickly experience task initiation, role definition, and encounter the work group. Their role in the organization is defined both for and by them. At entry, newcomers are confronted with an ambiguous organizational context to make sense of, and they try to do so in light of the knowledge the organization provides in the induction process (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen, 1977). These early experiences are critical in the development of attitudes and behaviors within newcomers that are consistent with the expectations of the organization.

When they encounter a reality that does not match their expectations, entering newcomers frequently experience “reality shock” (Hughes, 1958; Van Maanen, 1977). Even when RJPs have been offered as a solution to this problem of melding that which is anticipated to that which is real, the literature does not conclusively support the effectiveness of RJPs to communicate cultural awareness (Louis, 1990).

The newcomer learns how things actually operate in the workplace only through actual participation. This stage facilitates personal role clarification and the acceptance of the individual into the work group (Buchanan, 1974). Organizational socialization enables individuals to structure their environment by paying attention to those variables

deemed important by the group, while ignoring others (Weick, 1979). Katz (1980) stresses the importance of social interaction to assist the newcomer in mapping out his or her role in the context of the organization. This allows the individual to map out causality and have some ability to predict outcomes and act accordingly in the work environment.

Social rewards encourage compliance and are an integral part of the socialization process. The degree to which a newcomer is influenced by fellow employees in the workplace depends on the strength, immediacy, and number of others functioning as socialization agents (Latane, 1981). Van Maanen (1976) theorizes that rewards may work to initially produce the desired behavior, but identification with the primary work group or mentor will later emerge as the basis for motivation. As the values of the individual merge with the values of the organization, this internalization of motivation causes behavior to remain consistent with that encouraged by the organization.

Stage three – accommodation socialization

Stage three is the accommodation phase, characterized by resolution of conflict between work and non-work roles (Feldman, 1976). The reality that was unexpected and unknowable at the time of encounter has been accepted. Individuals understand their role in the work group and how that group interfaces within the organization as a whole. This settling into the organization leads to a more satisfied employee.

The transformation from newcomer to insider may be accompanied by outward signals such as a promotion or pay increase (Schein, 1978), or simply evidenced by adherence to group norms in terms of loyalty, commitment, and performance (Buchanan,

1974). At this stage, the newcomer has worked through the major conflicts between personal and organizational beliefs. There is an internalization of the organization's culture as seen by change in attitudes and personal values converging towards the values and norms of the organization (Van Maanen, 1976; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Role modification, individualization of the organization, and innovation typically occur at this stage, as the worker has adjusted to his or her role and is comfortable in the work environment. Individualization of the organization occurs when newcomers cause modification of the organization as opposed to the newcomers being changed by the organization. This phenomenon is not well studied, as newcomers do not typically enter in the numbers or strength to greatly impact change in organizations.

The newcomer is changed by the process, because when taking on a new role one must change from the former role (Louis, 1980). This process of personal change and adjustment along with the forming of new relationships, values, and behaviors within the context of the organization can be overwhelming (Porter et al., 1975). The self-image of the employee is altered by the experience. Conrad (1990) states that the newcomer has successfully transitioned to insider when the assumptions of the organization are so completely accepted that it is forgotten that they are assumptions. The culture of the organization has been assimilated.

The First Year on the Job

The encounter or entry stage of organizational socialization deserves closer scrutiny because it has been demonstrated to be the pivotal phase where the majority of the socialization process takes place. An in-depth examination of this most important

stage of organizational socialization will assist in the preparation of more effective induction programs.

The encounter period begins with the first day on the job and consists of initiation to group expectations and sense-making activities and concludes prior to role individualization (Feldman, 1976; Jablin, 1987). Research shows the first year on the job is a critical one (Buchanan, 1974; Fisher, C. D., 1986). Organizations socialize newcomers through experiences that serve to undo old values so that they will be prepared to learn and accept new values (Schein, 1987). Wanous (1980) found that organizations sometimes assign jobs to newcomers without clearly defining the tasks or offering support, leaving them on their own to “sink or swim”. Cohen (1973) reported that an “upending experience” can be employed as a socialization tactic when debasement occurs that alters expectations and even self-image. This leaves the newcomer vulnerable and willing to unquestioningly accept his or her role as defined by the organization.

Induction and the first-year experience have been shown to have an effect on later job performance, with a strong relationship between challenge and performance (Berlew & Hall, 1966). Bray, Campbell, and Grant (1974) conducted a long-term longitudinal study of A T & T managers to determine what factors in the first-year job experience influenced subsequent performance. They found an immediate job challenge positively related to later job performance, commitment, and salary. They hypothesized that those who succeeded in their early difficult assignments subsequently set higher work standards and higher performance goals for themselves, effectively beginning a cycle of success within the organization.

Surprise and Sense-making

During the entry process, Louis (1980) found that newcomers experience stress caused by the unexpected “surprises” or differences between what they anticipate prior to arrival at a new job and what they experience upon entering the organization. The focus of expectations and subsequent surprises can be directed toward self or toward the organization. Surprise occurs when expectations, conscious or unconscious, are either over-met or under-met by the reality encountered (Louis, 1980). Unmet expectations in the new setting affect commitment, satisfaction, and turnover intent (Buchanan, 1974; Major, Kozlowski, Chao, & Gardner, 1995; Matthieu & Zajac, 1990; Randall, 1990).

The encounter stage is a time during which newcomers experience surprises (Louis, 1980). She found these surprises could be grouped by type. The first form of surprise takes place when conscious expectations about the job are not met. A second form of surprise occurs when conscious and unconscious expectations about self in the work context are unmet. This can be especially trying as it forces newcomers to see that they are not as they perceived themselves to be. A third form of surprises arises when unconscious expectations are not met or if parts of the job requirements are not anticipated. The differences can stand out in contrast as undesirable. A fourth form of surprises takes place when newcomers are personally unprepared for their reactions to surprising incidents in the new work experience. Even experiences they anticipate may feel different than they thought they would. A fifth form of surprise happens when the newcomers try to utilize cultural assumptions that worked in their previous setting as an

interpretive schema for their new setting. Newcomers experience this surprise as they find they must adapt to the specific culture of the new workplace.

Newcomers are especially sensitive to organizational contexts and their relationships during organizational entry (Louis, 1980). New employees seek to clarify their roles in the workplace in order to make sense of that which is surprising. This can be problematic. Not equipped with an adequate understanding of the organizational culture or knowledge of what constitutes acceptable behavior in this context, newcomers seldom know what they do not know about how things work in an organization until they confront a situation that points it out (Van Maanen, 1977).

Established members take for granted the inner-workings of the organization, but newcomers must use past experience to begin to understand the organization (Van Maanen, 1977). Culture is specific to each organization, so newcomers must attempt to cognitively map out an interpretation of the rules and procedures in an attempt to understand how the organization really works. Established members of the organization give feedback and rewards to cue appropriate behavior (Louis, 1980). Learning takes place when newcomers are able to use the information given by insiders when making sense during the entry phase of organizational socialization (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen, 1977).

Newcomers are anxious to show their peers and superiors that they can learn and adjust easily (Wheeler, 1966). At this stage, newcomers have a need to be accepted and belong. They are therefore more malleable and willing to unquestioningly accept the

culture of the workplace. Peers can help newcomers feel at home and become more effective in their work roles (Latane, 1981; Louis et al., 1983).

Newcomers look to members in their immediate work groups for clues in deciphering the new setting (D.C. Fisher, 1986; Latane, 1981; Schein, 1987). Positive feedback from others has been shown to be the most helpful to the newcomer (Katz & Kahn, 1978; Wanous, 1980). To reduce uncertainty caused by role ambiguity, newcomers look for interpretive schemata that allow them to orient their behavior to the expectations of others (Louis, 1980; Van Maanen, 1976). Experience gives valuable feedback and newcomers can adjust their behaviors accordingly (Katz, 1980). As newcomers gain knowledge about the new setting, they are able to make sense out of the surprises, uncertainty is reduced, and their actions are more likely to be influential (Smith & Kozlowski, 1995).

This cognitive approach concentrates on the internal processes that newcomers utilize to make sense of their work environments and their work roles. This stresses the role of the newcomers' expectations in light of the interpretations they use to shape the way they make sense of their organizational environment and their roles (Jones, 1983; Louis, 1980).

The socialization process does not produce uniform results in all who pass through an organization (Wheeler, 1966). Individual differences in socialization adjustments may have been underestimated (Arnold & Nicholson, 1991; Louis, 1980). Arnold and Nicholson (1991) found evidence of some change in self-concept during the transition from outsider to insider, but found that the amount and type of change varied

greatly among individuals. They concluded that organizational socialization affects individual participants differently.

Communication with Peers and Supervisors

Communication serves an important role in socialization. “ Memorable messages” help newcomers make sense of their surroundings and interpret events. Stohl (1986) found that newcomers give greatest credence to messages of personal significance received early in their encounter with the organization. They tend to assign great importance to these messages and frequently refer to their content later.

Communication between superiors and subordinates is critical to organizational socialization. Communication that builds relationships between supervisors and newcomers can greatly influence newcomers’ development of perceptions, expectations, and appropriate behaviors within the organization (Falcione & Wilson, 1988).

Communication with peers and work group is vital to the development of roles and interpretive schemas for the newcomers.

While early research focused on the process of organizational socialization as something that happened to new employees, recent research has increasingly pointed out that the proactivity of newcomers impacts the outcome of the socialization process (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993). Individuals actively seek feedback via inquiry and monitoring (Ashford & Cummings, 1983). Miller and Jablin (1991) have categorized newcomers’ information seeking tactics into these seven areas: overt; indirect; third party; testing; disguising conversations; observing; and surveillance. Newcomers may vary

tactics depending on the source, perceived social costs, and nature of the information sought.

Typically, the primary sources of information are supervisors and coworkers (Jablin, 1987; Morrison, 1993). Morrison (1993) found that newcomers seek job instruction and performance feedback from supervisors and look to peers for cultural and relational information. Organizational newcomers rate the information received from supervisors and peers as the most helpful part of the socialization practice, and this activity is correlated to job satisfaction (Louis et al., 1983). This feedback from insiders is useful in role clarification and assessment of performance as the newcomer seeks to reduce uncertainty (Miller & Jablin, 1991). There is evidence that feedback seeking has a small but significant effect on newcomer task mastery, role clarity, and social integration (Morrison, 1993) and some research reports that individual proactivity in seeking out interaction opportunities has an affect on socialization (Reichers, 1987). Saks and Ashforth (1997a) conclude that the process employed by organizations during socialization is related to what newcomers do in terms of information acquisition.

Socialization Tactics

The use of varied socialization tactics has been correlated to socialization outcomes (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). Socialization tactics are the methods those in the organization use to structure the experience of employees in transition to influence the role orientation of newcomers (Van Maanen & Schein, 1979). In their theoretically developed model, Van Maanen and Schein propose six bipolar tactics of organizational socialization. These include the following: collective vs. individual; formal vs. informal;

sequential vs. random; fixed vs. variable; serial vs. disjunctive; and investiture vs. divestiture.

The tactic of collective (vs. individual) socialization groups newcomers and puts them through common experiences as opposed to handling each newcomer alone. The formal (vs. informal) tactic has newcomers grouped apart from current employees for a period of socialization. The sequential (vs. random) tactic refers to a lock-step sequence leading up to full assumption of duties, as opposed to a fluctuating sequence. Fixed (vs. variable) employs a set time frame prior to newcomers assuming their role in the organization. Serial (vs. disjunctive) utilizes an insider of the organization as a socialization agent as opposed to a process without a role model. Investiture (vs. divestiture) builds on the individual characteristics and identities of the newcomers rather than trying to minimize them. Van Maanen and Schein (1979) theorize that the tactics utilized influence newcomers and their role identification and later adjustment to the organization.

Jones (1983, 1986) further developed the socialization tactic model of Van Maanen and Schein to propose that while each of the tactics represents a unique dimension, the grouping of the divergent tactics could be classified as institutionalized socialization versus individualized socialization. The use of collective, formal, sequential, fixed, serial, and investiture as tactics of socialization tend to promote the agenda of the organization in that they encourage newcomers to accept the status quo and their pre-set roles. Jones (1986) refers to this set of tactics as institutionalized socialization and notes that it produces a custodial role orientation in the newcomer. He

reports that institutionalized socialization reduces the uncertainty and anxiety of the entry process by providing information that is useful to the newcomer. He found a negative correlation between institutionalized socialization and role ambiguity and role conflict. This structured approach is thought to be most important during the early entry phase when newcomers' attentions are focused on learning necessary information and uncertainty reduction (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993).

Conversely, the tactics that are individual, informal, random, variable, disjunctive, and divesting tend to promote questioning of the status quo and individual development of role and therefore lead to greater role innovation. Thus, Jones labels this grouping as individualized socialization.

Jones (1986) further proposes that the six tactics have three areas of focus: (1) organizational context is the focus of collective and formal tactics; (2) socialization content is the main focus of sequential and fixed tactics and (3) social aspects are the focus of serial and investiture tactics. He further notes that while each of the six dimensions is distinct, they could be categorized as individual or institutional based on the role orientation they produce. He also found that differences in the self-efficacy of newcomers moderated the effects of organizational socialization outcomes.

Ashforth, Saks, and Lee (1997) did a factor analysis that supported the study of each of the six tactics as unique entities rather than grouping them into three focus groups or by institutional versus individual socialization. They suggest that the most valid and meaningful research will employ the full-scale survey that Jones (1986) originally formulated testing all six tactics.

This demonstrates that the affects of the organizational socialization process can vary depending upon the tactics used. Research has shown that specific results are dependent on the methods of socialization employed.

Summary and Implications

Implications for practice.

The organizational socialization literature, while not perfect or complete, offers knowledge that should be utilized by any organization that inducts new employees. The important function of the transmission of cultural understanding of the work environment is too important to be left to chance. New employees will be able to work more effectively and cohesively with their work group and the organization if given this foundation.

Comprehension of the stages of organizational socialization and the greater commitment to the organization that results from progressing through the stages will lead to better understanding on the part of employees as well as employers. This basis for knowing what is happening and why it is happening can be useful to all parties involved. If it is known that there may be discrepancies between the job that is expected and the job that is encountered, dialogue can occur and interpretations can be clarified. This will lead to the employees becoming proficient more quickly and more satisfied with the alignment of their skills to task requirements.

New employees desire feedback from their superiors in evaluating job performance, and early initial evaluations can assist in assuring congruence between the opinions of employees and employers in this regard. Knowledge of the vital role

communication serves for newcomers in interactions with peers and superiors can be useful in encouraging new employees to proactively seek out opportunities to interact. This also makes employers aware of the need to allow discussion and even orchestrate situations that demand communication between newcomers and insiders.

As organizations formulate induction plans for their new employees, they can decide what organizational tactics to use based on the results that they desire. It makes sense to utilize the research that is available to do the best job possible in the induction process. As additional research is conducted, the body of knowledge about organizational socialization grows and will result in more effective induction programs.

Implications for research.

Feldman (1976) points out that many studies on organizational socialization tend to be one-shot, cross-sectional designs that ask current employees to remember their entry into the organization and to report what happened, how they felt, and evaluate the realism of their expectations. This limits the reliability and usefulness of information that results from such studies. The research on organizational socialization has historically been fragmented, non-empirical, and much less productive than it could and should be (C. D. Fisher, 1986; Van Maanen, 1976). Current research has shown improvement along these lines.

Progress has been made over the last five years in that there are more longitudinal investigations being conducted in which the respondent is surveyed at various times during socialization (e.g., Ashford & Black, 1996; Chao, O'Leary-Kelly, Wolf, Klein, & Gardner, 1994). However, very few longitudinal studies specifically assess the tactics

employed during organizational socialization. Bauer and Green (1994) point out that little is known about the effects of organizational socialization beyond six months after entry and that the long-range effects of the process should be further investigated.

Organizational socialization is a process that involves rapid change. Cross-sectional design and retrospective accounts of socialization experiences cannot adequately capture the dynamic nature of the socialization process (Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). Longitudinal studies could address the question of what affects the rate of progression through the stages of socialization. Over reliance on self-report as a means of data collection is limiting and could be supplemented by information from supervisors, documents, and observations (Wanous & Colella, 1989).

The timing of the administration of the instrument has been questioned and considerable variance has been noted in when the subjects are surveyed. Many recent studies (Adkins, 1995; Ashforth & Saks, 1995; Morrison, 1995) suggest that socialization variables need to be measured early in the process, as rapid change followed by greater stability seems to be the pattern.

A lack of experimentally designed research means that variables such as kinds of socialization, effectiveness of socialization, and types of newcomers have not been scientifically examined. This limits the ability to draw cause and effect conclusions and results cannot be generalized. The empirical studies that have been done are seldom replicated and this further limits their reliability. Qualitative studies could add to the breadth and depth of our understanding of the process of organizational socialization.

Sampled populations tend to be homogeneous and drawn from only a few occupations and are overly dominated by recent graduates (Fisher, C. D., 1986). Socialization research needs to include greater diversity in sampling to result in true understanding of the consequences of organizational socialization (Saks & Ashforth, 1997a). Future research must investigate socialization as seen by the organization, rather than just the newcomer's point of view. This will lead to a less fragmented and more complete theory of organizational socialization (Saks & Ashforth, 1997b). Organizational socialization potentially holds a wealth of information about the induction process. Further research is needed that addresses the shortcomings of the research of the past and leads to a more complete understanding of the organizational socialization process.

The First-Year Teacher

This part of the literature review will focus on the literature dealing with the first-year teaching experience. Research will be examined for information on the first-year teaching experience and the socialization process of the first-year teacher. This will include stages of teacher development, problems that new teachers typically encounter in their first year, the acculturation of new teachers, students as socialization agents, and the reality shock of the first teaching experience. The conclusion will summarize what is known and how it could be applied to practice as well as identify areas that require further clarification and study.

Definition of the First-Year Teacher

What is a first-year teacher? Typically first-year teachers are thought of as a young adult who entered college right after high school and graduated four years later. In reality the first-year teacher can be someone like that, or a nontraditional student who delayed college and was older as he or she embarked on a teaching career, as well as someone who had a different career prior to teaching. Consequently, for the purposes of this literature review the first-year teacher will be defined as a person entering the teaching field as a full time teacher for the first time.

Stages of Teacher Development

As in the general socialization literature, there is evidence that teachers progress through stages of development (Cheney, Krajewski, and Combs, 1992; Fuller, 1969; Katz, 1972; Kremer-Hayton and Ben-Perez, 1986; Maynard and Furlong, 1993; Moir and Stobbe, 1995). Most, but not all teachers progress to the higher levels of development within their first year of teaching (Kremer-Hayton and Ben-Perez, 1986). The names given to each phase and the number of identified phases vary among researchers, but the overall concepts of developmental stages for new teachers remain consistent. There is an anticipatory phase, an engagement phase, and a resolution phase.

During the first phase, prior to any actual teaching, future teachers report few concerns about teaching as they do not know what they should be concerned about. The second developmental period, early teaching phase, shows teacher concern is primarily with issues concerning self. Beginning teachers report concerns about their personal adequacy in the classroom. They are concerned primarily with class control, knowledge

of the subject content, and how they fare in the evaluation process. It is only in the later stage when concerns with self have been resolved that focus becomes centered on concerns with student achievement. The final phase is one of late teaching concerns. At this point in development, teacher focus tends to be directed more toward pupil and less toward self. Mature teachers tend to be less concerned with how others evaluate them while exhibiting greater concern about how they evaluate themselves in light of pupil achievement.

Problems of First-Year Teachers

The first-teachers are apt to encounter myriad unanticipated problems in their initial teaching experiences. Most educational researchers point out the difficulties of the first year of teaching (Huling-Austin, Odell, Ishler, Kay & Edelfelt, 1989). Many of these problems center on the same issues. Empirical evidence shows that beginning teachers have similar types of problems and experience similar kinds of concerns (Johnston & Ryan, 1983). Classroom management and discipline are foremost issues for beginning teachers (Brock & Grady, 1997).

Veenman (1984) conducted a frequently cited meta-analysis of 83 studies of beginning teachers. He identified the ten areas most problematic for new teachers as: classroom discipline; student motivation; dealing with individual differences among students; assessment of student work; obtaining sufficient materials for adequate instruction; dealing with students' personal problems; heavy course loads with inadequate preparation time; and getting along with colleagues.

To further exacerbate these problems, new teachers feel a particular sense of isolation from adults in the school setting (Lortie, 1975). They do not know where to turn to for help. They do not even know if they should admit that they need help. First-year teachers under stress feel that their professional lives are at stake. They are fighting for their survival and feel like personal failures in a public arena. New teachers are immensely concerned about evaluation and are reluctant to admit problems to which they feel they should know the solutions (Fuller, 1969).

Generally, a newcomer is given time to adjust to a new position and learn the ropes of the organization (Becker & Strauss, 1956). One way teaching differs from other careers is how quickly newcomers are expected to assume full responsibility (Lortie, 1975). Huling-Austin (1989) identified this rapid assumption of full duties and responsibilities as one of the top problems for first-year teachers. Neophyte teachers are expected to perform at the same level as veteran teachers and are often given the most difficult assignments (Gordon, 1991). In addition, they have not had time to observe, let alone understand, the school's culture.

The Acculturation of the First-Year Teacher

The formal organizational culture of a school is apparent in artifacts, mission statements, documents, and rules (Owens, 1995). While the informal organizational culture is less observable, its values, norms, and assumptions determine the way things are done in an everyday, routine manner.

Socialization is the process through which the new teacher becomes informed of the school culture. Yet the primary socialization strategy that many schools employ is

“sink or swim” where a job is assigned to a newcomer without clearly defining the task and offering little support. When Deal and Chatman (1989) did research with first-year teachers, they found that 75% of new teachers in their study reported that trial and error in conjunction with experience were their primary means of adjusting to norms.

New teachers are frequently left on their own to figure out the workings of the school organization but are chastised when they do not conform to unstated norms (Rust, 1994). The power of culture is manifested when a newcomer tries to do things in a way other than the established behavior pattern of the group (Hanson, 1996). Culture actually has more of an impact on the way that things are done than official policies (Sergiovanni, 1995). The important task of the acculturation of new teachers is difficult because the way schools are organized often isolates teachers from one another (Deal, 1985).

Students as Socialization Agents

The isolation from adults that a first-year teacher experiences in the configuration of a typical school building may cause them to rely on their students for feedback and suggestions on a daily basis (Camp & Heath-Camp, 1991). Lortie (1975) also found the rewards of teaching come largely from the students. First-year teachers are anxious for administrative approval and suggestions for improvement, but this does not always occur on a regular basis. So, teachers tend to look to their readily-accessible students for validation rather than colleagues or administrators. There is substantial evidence that pupils' responses reinforce teachers' behaviors and that students play an important role in shaping the way that teachers behave (Lieberman & Miller, 1984).

This significant role of students in the occupational socialization of teachers can be supported on logical grounds and by empirical research. Haller (1967) and Doyle (1979) argue that the important role of students in teacher socialization is understandable given the isolation of teachers from their colleagues and supervisors, the availability of time with students, and the nature of the teaching process. Doyle (1979) further notes that the influence of students ranges from the general teaching methods and patterns of language teachers use in classrooms to the type and frequency of questions and feedback given to individual students.

This can result in the neophyte teacher being socialized by the very ones they were employed to socialize. It can also lead to a reflex of survival, where whatever is found to work through trial and error is used regardless of whether it is the best for student learning (Feiman-Nemser, 1983). Other teaching strategies are not employed, even when they could be more productive and successful in the long run.

"Reality Shock" of First-Year Teachers

The initial period of employment in any career is one of transition and adjustment. Often expectations of what a job will be like do not coincide with the reality of the work environment. What new employees experience as they enter an unfamiliar organization has been referred to as "reality shock" (Hughes, 1958). Corcoran (1981) applied the concept of reality shock to beginning teachers in a multiple case study. She reported that the shift from the university to the public school is so shocking that it serves to paralyze beginning teachers, as they find out that they do not know what they need to know to appear confident and competent in their new setting. The paralysis makes movement

toward solving problems by accessing knowledge from the pre-service program or from sources within the school difficult.

There is a loss of idealism during the first year that further points to the notion of "reality shock" for first-year teachers. Lacey (1977) summarizes this: "The major finding of this research underlies the importance of discontinuity between training and the reality of teaching. The attitudes of beginning teachers undergo dramatic change as they establish themselves in the profession away from the liberal ideas of their student days toward the traditional patterns in many schools" (p. 48). The conflict within first-year teachers is immense when their teaching practices do not reflect the preconceived image they formed of themselves as teachers (Kuzmic, 1994). It can be a personally difficult transition to adjust images and practices into closer alignment.

New teachers have been to school and they are familiar with what goes on in schools, but all they know of schools was learned from the perspective of a student. Consequently, they do not realistically foresee what the assumption of the role of teacher will be like for them. They have been successful in school as a student and assume they will continue in this manner now as a teacher. Often the reality of life in the classroom does not match with expectations and the newcomer must come to terms with this.

Goodlad (1982) calls into question the notion of reality shock, but does report anticipatory socialization as the most significant influence on teacher development. Teachers tend to teach as they were taught even when it does not coincide with their training or intentions. Lortie (1975) refers to this as "the apprenticeship of observation"

as he notes teachers frequently draw upon models of teaching that were internalized during their time as pupils long ago.

The newcomer needs help interpreting the new setting and insiders could provide such assistance in the sense-making process. Reality shock can be lessened by the organization's active involvement in realistically portraying jobs and selecting personnel best suited for those positions (Deal, 1985). This alignment of expectations and real working conditions builds organizational commitment, lessens job dissatisfaction, and employee turnover.

Summary and Implications

Implications for practice

The U.S. Department of Education predicts that the United States will need two million new teachers in the next ten years. We must use the research to help determine how to recruit and retain the best teaching staff for our schools. What can be done to alleviate the problems caused by inadequate teacher socialization? Some of the concerns can be addressed by examining how we currently induct teachers and determining what is being done well and what could be done better.

Even at the pre-service level, students should be prepared for real-world classrooms. Classroom management issues must be addressed. Application must be coupled with theory. Young people who are prepared can do some "sense-making" in advance in order to be better equipped to cope with their new work tasks, colleagues, and organizations (Arnold, 1985, 1986).

Once hired, the role of the new teacher must be clearly delineated at the district level as well as the building level. Socialization programs affect the satisfaction of workers and their feelings of autonomy and personal influence. This satisfaction is positively correlated to lessened employee turnover and absenteeism, as well as having demonstrated positive effects of mutual influence.

Much of the first-year teacher literature suggests that programs that assign a master teacher to mentor the incoming first-year teacher can be an effective way of socializing the newcomer to the way things are done (Deal & Chatman, 1989; Littleton & Littleton, 1988; O'Dell, 1989). Huling-Austin (1989) found that an effective mentoring program increases the retention of promising beginning teachers, promotes their personal and professional well being, and serves to transmit the school culture to the first-year teachers. However, little consensus currently exists on the effectiveness of the wide-variety of mentor programs currently being used in teacher induction.

Implications for research

While many opinion pieces are written about the phenomenon of the first-year teaching experience, there is little research available that is quantitative or qualitative in nature. What does exist is typically not done longitudinally. Additional longitudinal research done over the first-year teaching experience needs to be conducted on the effectiveness of the induction programs as currently used to assist first-year teachers. Odell (1986) found that questionnaires typically used only yield self-reported, retrospective data that may be unreliable. The problems retrospectively perceived may not be the same ones teachers would seek aid for in an induction program.

Stories of teaching have been found to be useful in studying what it means to be a teacher and in building a greater knowledge base about teaching (Jalongo & Isenberg, 1995). However, simply giving voice to teachers through the telling of their stories is not enough. In order to be meaningful these stories must be examined for common elements and themes. First-year teachers must be studied in depth, so that despite their differences in personal characteristics, socialization agents, and institutions some generalities can be drawn that will increase the understanding of the process of becoming a teacher. That was the purpose of this study.

CHAPTER 3

Methods

Qualitative Design

This study examined the socialization of ten public school first-year teachers in grades four through six in a mid-western city to determine if discernible patterns existed in their experience as predicted by socialization theory and research. Since individual experience was the unit of analysis, qualitative research methods were most appropriate. Qualitative research generates more meaningful data in interpreting human experiences because it is exploratory and descriptive in nature (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). It assumes the value of context and setting, and searches for a deeper comprehension of the phenomenon of the participants' lived experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). This captured the essence of the study.

Qualitative research adds to our understanding of the first-year teaching experience by allowing us to hear and understand the participant voices. Locke, Spirduso, and Silverman (1993) describe qualitative research as “a systematic, empirical strategy for answering questions about people in a bounded social context” (p. 99). An understanding of what it means to be a first-year teacher can best be achieved by first gathering data through actively listening to their descriptions of the encounter phase of organizational socialization in the context of their work environment cultures, and then by individually and collectively analyzing the data generated by these conversations.

The qualitative framework was appropriate for this study because it concerned construed meaning from lived experience (Merriam, 1988). Qualitative methods are

most effective in capturing the contextual meaning that participants assign to their personal experience (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Quantitative research could not address the subtleties that reveal construed meaning, because it would have been the equivalent of trying to preserve a moving picture by taking a snapshot. Much of the clarity of the subject matter would have been lost. Qualitative methodology allows for greater richness and detail in description than that which could be simply captured and quantified.

Since the encounter phase of organizational socialization neither impacts all newcomers equally, in the same order, nor in a specific time frame (Wanous, 1992), the employment of qualitative measures over the first year of teaching in this short-term longitudinal study was apropos. The exploratory nature of the study allowed the year-long process to be fully investigated as it unfolded rather than to be limited to the constraints of predetermined questions that would be requisite in a quantitative study.

The stage model theory of organizational socialization guided the study. The encounter phase, or first-year of teaching, was the primary focus. As the beginning teachers experienced the reality of full time teaching for the first time, this research captured their primary experiences and their feelings about those experiences, both positive and negative. These surprises were identified and categorized, allowing the sense-making process to be described.

Grounded Theory/Received Theory

The study of the lived experience of the first-year of teaching was undertaken using grounded theory methodology (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). That methodology was modified to accept received theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) from organizational

socialization and extended it into the field of education where it has seldom been employed. Existing theory can be extended by discovering how it applies to new areas (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). This strengthens the theory as it is further enhanced and developed, rather than remaining limited to situations to which it had been applied in the past. Miles (1979) views the incorporation of received theory as a strengthening of the grounded theory methodology. Strauss and Corbin (1998) contend that "If the researcher is interested in extending an already existing theory, then he or she might enter the field with some of the concepts and relationships in mind and look for how their properties and dimensions vary under a different set of conditions" (p. 50). They propose that the use of received theory results in the emergence of new information and categories that further enhance the development of the present theory.

Strauss (1994) views extending theory, as opposed to continuously generating new grounded theory in isolation, as a vital step in building a cumulative body of knowledge necessary for a viable theory. He proposes that gaps in an extant theory should be filled if its scope and meaning are to be extended. This results in theory that becomes more meaningful as it becomes more integrated and conceptually dense.

Consequentially, no new theory emerged from this study. Instead, the results generated a better understanding of the encounter phase of socialization viewed through the experiences of the participating teachers. This new application extended the existing theory of organizational socialization to beginning teachers at a specific and previously unexamined level.

An emergent research design was employed because it allowed the initial focus of inquiry to be refined during the continual process of data collection and analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This enabled me to continuously analyze data as they were collected to ascertain concepts as they emerged. These emergent concepts helped determine the focus and direction of the study as it progressed.

The constant comparison method was used as data were continuously analyzed to determine how the concepts that emerged from multiple data sets related to one another (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Similarities and differences were examined to develop categories of concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). The relationships between concepts and categories were ascertained as they continued to develop. Careful attention was paid to the participants' responses to assist in understanding the phenomenon of the socialization process during the first-year teaching experience.

Researcher's Role

The qualitative tradition views the researcher as the instrument through which data are collected, categorized, and analyzed. Qualitative researchers need to be concerned with the effect their subjectivity will have on their data (Le Compte, 1987). In using grounded theory in particular, the researcher is instrumental in processing the data that results in the construed meaning of the phenomenon under study. Researchers must be aware of the potential impact their personal experience could have on their collection and interpretation of the data. Therefore, it is important to note that I have great interest in the topic of the first-year teaching experience. I had my initial teaching experience twenty-five years ago, and I have remained in or close to classrooms ever since. Over the

past eight years I have taught pre-service teachers on a part-time basis. During my years of classroom teaching in the public schools, I had the opportunity to work as a cooperating teacher with many student teachers.

During the 1998-1999 school year I served as the university supervisor for twelve student teachers, which gave me an opportunity to view them and student teaching through a different lens. I gained additional knowledge about the encounter phase of organizational socialization during the school year when my primary work assignment was to work as a mentor intensively assisting beginning teachers. Working with future teachers during the anticipatory phase of the organizational socialization process has helped me gain insight into what assumptions education students bring with them as they prepare to transition into teachers. My current position as a building principal with three first-year teachers also resulted in looking at the first-year of teaching from another perspective. These experiences have helped me to understand the complexities of the initial teaching assignment, particularly in regard to reconciling what was expected to that encountered as a beginning teacher.

As the study progressed, I made every attempt to remain objective and to bracket personal opinions and experiences. However, even while doing all I could to avoid observer bias, I knew that observers' effect, or the "Heisenberg effect", would be a factor (Le Compte, 1987). Heisenberg noted that it is virtually impossible for any investigator to avoid having an effect on whatever he or she investigates. Even in laboratory research, he observed, studied electrons move faster simply by being placed under an electron microscope. In quantitative survey research, for example, just the asking of a question

causes a respondent to think about something that he or she otherwise would not be thinking of. I made every attempt to remain aware of the possible effects of my presence.

Because only data that were accurate and honest would be useful, I was as unobtrusive as possible to ensure that the informants felt comfortable to share the real story of their experience. I exercised caution not to inject my personal opinion into the data, as it was only the research participants' views of their experience that mattered.

Despite the potential for bias, prior knowledge still was useful in the interpretation of data. Strauss and Corbin (1990) see professional experience as useful in constructing meaning from data because the researcher has a basis of comparison against which to measure what the participants reveal. Guba and Lincoln (1999) view the human-as-instrument as a strength, "for reasons such as their greater flexibility, and responsiveness, the fact that they are able to take a wholistic [sic] view, are able to utilize their tacit knowledge, and are able simultaneously to acquire and process information" (p.145). Prior knowledge did prove useful in assessing what data to collect and how to go about collecting them.

Data Collection Procedures

Informants

This research was conducted using first-year public school teachers in a mid-western city as informants. The sampling was purposive (Patton, 1987). Subjects were selected because they were to be teaching in an intermediate classroom, grades four through six, in an elementary building setting for the first time during the 2000-2001 school year. Given the differences in student characteristics and teaching responsibilities

between the primary and intermediate grades, the study was limited to intermediate teachers in grades four through six in order to eliminate the potential intervention of extraneous organizational and structural variables.

A total of ten teachers was studied. This number of study participants was selected to allow for manageability, given the constraints of time and distance, while allowing for a range of participants' perceptions. Participants for study were sought from a variety of schools within a single school district. This purposeful sampling provided a wide-range of school demographics with variations in building cultures and was designed to draw out differences and commonalities concerning the first-year teaching experience. As much as possible, study subjects reflected the demographics of the first-year teacher pool from their school district, although primary focus was on the inclusion of different school cultures.

Methods of Data Collection

This study employed a variety of techniques of data collection allowing for multiple sources of data. This enabled me to more fully understand and explain what it is to be a first-year teacher. I used the constant comparative method of data collection to produce an inductive analysis of the data (Glasser & Strauss, 1967; Guba & Lincoln, 1985). This allowed, as Goertz and LeCompte (1981) have argued, for continuous refinement as initial categories changed and as new categories emerged and relationships between categories fluctuated.

As the study progressed, however, I was able to modify or add to the protocol as the data were collected and analyzed. This right to modify is an identified strength of the

qualitative paradigm as it allows for flexibility as the data come in so that the direction of the study can be modified as deemed appropriate by the researcher.

Interviews. The primary means of data collection was in-depth interviews (Patton, 1987). I used open-ended questions with follow-up probes as needed, active listening, and an accurate recording of data.

Interviews have been referred to as “conversation with a purpose” (Kahn & Campell, 1956; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The researcher must spend adequate time in the field to build trust and rapport in order to be come close enough to the subjects so that they will be willing to dialogue and freely share their experiences and perceptions (Kalnins, 1986). Patton (1990) argues that a person willing to ask and actively listen can actually enter into the experience of another. Kalnins (1986) found that open-ended structured interviews were useful to focus on culture and the first-hand encounters that reveal the perceptions, meanings, and interpretations of others. This is precisely why in-depth interviews were most appropriate to the purposes of this study.

Kvale (1996) defines the in-depth interview as “an interview whose purpose is to obtain descriptions of the life world of the interviewee with respect to interpreting the meaning of the described phenomena” (p.6). An interview allows for dialogue through which the researcher can accurately discern the nuances of meaning to be fully described by the interviewee.

Patton (1990) addresses the need for interviewers to have follow-up probes in order to find details, to elaborate, and to clarify initial answers. This level of verbal interaction in conversation can ensure that the researcher is precise in description and

meaning. Phenomenological interviewing adds “structure and essence” to the shared experience (Patton, 1990, p. 70.) It explains the phenomenon. In-depth interviews are qualitative rather than quantitative in type, and given the personal nature of the responses, there are ethical and strategic issues that must be addressed (Locke, Spirduso, & Silverman, 1993). Primary consideration must be given to maintaining confidentiality by assuring participant anonymity.

Patton (1990) contends that the period following the interview is the most important to the validity of the study. He points out that in order to assure the highest quality data, it must be acted on while it is fresh and can accurately be remembered. It is imperative to reflect and to elaborate on the interview as soon as possible. The analysis starts to take place immediately and must be written down in order to preserve an accurate record of the thought process at the conclusion of the interview.

The ten teachers were interviewed three times during the 2000-2001 school year concerning their first-year teaching experience. I personally conducted these interviews face-to-face with each subject. The initial interview protocol was outlined in a semi-structured format. The ultimate direction and total scope of the interview however, was dependent on what happened during the interview. While the protocol used open-ended questions and served as a guide, it was not intended to be strictly adhered to regardless of the informants' responses. Subsequent interview protocols were determined after the results of each set of interviews were coded and categorized. The emerging data and information then influenced the direction of future interviews. Patton (1987) views this as a strength of the methodology.

All interviews took place during the first year of teaching, the encounter phase of organizational socialization. The initial interview (See Appendix A) took place in October, 8 to 10 weeks into the school year. This gave participants time to get through the orientation that research points out consumes the new teacher in the beginning (Kurtz, 1983) and allowed enough time for the beginners to accumulate experiences on which they could report. This interview focused on how the reality of teaching compared to what they had anticipated it would be.

The second interview (See Appendix B) took place in January, 18 to 20 weeks into the school year. This was the halfway point of the first-year teaching experience. The specific questions were determined by the analysis of the data from the first round of interviews and from journal responses. The focus was on what had happened to the first-year teachers in the interim since the first interview.

The third and final interview (See Appendix C) occurred in late March and early April, 28 to 30 weeks into the school year. The timing of this interview was such that it did not interfere with the teachers' end of the school year responsibilities, but it still allowed ample time for them to have fully encountered their workplace and to have made sense of any surprising incidents.

Multiple interviews were necessary to capture the first-year teaching experience over the full year. This allowed the informants time to become socialized to their work settings in order to report on the process. The use of multiple interviews also permitted me to use the data generated from one set of interviews to follow up during additional interviews on how the respondents reported their experiences.

The results of the interviews were coded and analyzed as collected to determine concepts and to allow me to place them into categories that defined the first-year teaching experience. Data were further analyzed to note if themes emerged that described the socialization process of first-year teachers. I wanted to find out if what we know from organizational socialization research fit with what I found out about the encounter phase of the first-year teaching experience.

Journals. As an additional data source, I asked each participant to keep a journal. I originally contemplated asking them to keep a reflective journal, but rejected the idea as too time consuming, both for the first-year teachers to produce and for me to process. They could easily have written too much in terms of volume and revealed too much personal information not really needed for the study. Instead, using a bulleted format, I asked them to record their best, worst, and surprising incidents in a journal on a weekly basis (See Appendix D). Researchers have voiced concern that self-reported data are sometimes flawed because they are contingent upon memory (e.g., Feldman, 1976; Van Maanen, 1976; Wanous & Colella, 1989) and I thought this would help counter over-reliance on retrospection and memory alone. I asked them to share their journals when they were interviewed, and found that they offered additional insight into the organizational socialization process as it applies to first-year teachers.

The journal writing strengthened the research because they contained reports of the first year of teaching that might have escaped being reported in the interview process. As opposed to interviews which took place months apart, the more frequent journal notations allowed the recording of experiences while they were current and fresh in the

beginning teachers' minds. This gave me the opportunity to delve into experiences that may otherwise have escaped notice. Information revealed by the journal writing also was used to shape questions for the second and third interviews. The journal entries were coded and analyzed for themes that emerged from the data.

Participants were asked to review their journals one week prior to each interview. This allowed them to reflect on the totality of what they had experienced, and I hoped that this would cause a more accurate picture to emerge during the interview. Each participant's journal was accessible during the interview. This enabled the participant and researcher together to know what the informant found to be the best, worst, and most surprising incidents week by week during the first year teaching experience. My review of the journal entries with the participant also allowed for discussion of these recorded events and their ramifications.

Observations. I did not attempt to observe participants teaching in the classroom. I decided this intentionally because the teaching process was not being studied, but rather the process of organizational socialization in the context of the first year of teaching. There was only a minuscule possibility that an incident would occur during an observation that both the researcher and the participant would view as surprising. I could not tell by observing whether or not an incident was surprising to the beginning teacher. I also thought that greater candor would result and more useful data would be generated without observation that might be interpreted as evaluative or judgmental. I thought that observation by someone the teachers knew to be a principal was likely to be interpreted as

evaluative and thereby affect their behavior and possibly negatively impact the level of trust established.

Interviews were conducted in the participants' classrooms, but never when students were present. The purpose in this was to maintain the role of the researcher as non-evaluative and to ensure the teacher's complete concentration. To assure trust was established and maintained, I minimized and avoided extraneous contact with the administrators who actually were responsible for the evaluations of these first-year teachers.

Confidentiality

I obtained IRB approval (See Appendix E) for this study prior to the start of data collection. The identity of all study participants has been held in confidence. As apparent in chapters four and five, the research report has been written in a manner that protects both the identity of the first-year teachers and their respective schools. Participants were asked to give written permission as proof of informed consent (See Appendix F) prior to taking part in this dissertation study. Following each interview and when the final study write-up was done, participants were invited to read through the narrative to determine if I had accurately portrayed their interpretation of the first-year teaching experience and to evaluate if any information appeared that could possibly identify them to readers. These member checks were important in assuring that the narrative description of the data accurately reflected the reported experience as viewed through the eyes of the participants. Informants had the right of refusal in determining if

any data they reported were to be included in the research findings summary. As a testament to the accuracy of data collection, no one exercised that right.

Data Recording Procedures

The interviews were audio-taped, each with the subject's permission. It is a common practice to audio-tape during an exploratory interview of this type. It allows the interviewer to focus on meanings by observing interviewees as they speak, rather than to shift her concentration into taking copious notes (Good, 1966). This type of personal attention also builds trust and rapport and may result in more in-depth disclosure.

A written record of salient answers to interview questions was maintained. All remarks were transcribed verbatim immediately following each interview. Field notes were taken during the interviews to allow me to record elements that could not be discerned by audio-tape, such as facial expression, body language, my own observations, and other subtleties. These could add meaning to the interview and could be overlooked if I had been occupied with note-taking or otherwise unaware (Good, 1966).

Marshall (1987) found that the use of field notes in conjunction with audio-tape recorded conversation can yield conceptually intriguing phrases that are connected with the related literature or suggested by earlier data analysis. I used memos within field notes to delineate my analytical thought process. This was useful in guiding the research over the course of the school year given the longitudinal nature of the study. This documentation assisted in the creation of an audit trail (Rodgers & Cowles, 1993). The data from the interviews and journals were coded and analyzed as outlined in the following section on data analysis procedures.

Data Analysis Procedures

Glaser and Strauss (1967) reported that specific data analysis procedures are necessary to identify clear and consistent patterns of the phenomena by a systematic process. This analytical procedure organizes data; generates categories, patterns, and themes; tests emergent hypothesis against the data; searches for alternate explanations in the data; and culminates in the written report (Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

In qualitative research, data analysis begins as soon as data begin to come in. During this early stage of data collection, the first stage of analysis is inductive as the researcher gives initial codes to the data. Strauss (1970) found that qualitative data analysis needed to occur early and be analytical to check and test emerging ideas. Data are continually compared as they are processed to give order, structure, and meaning. The use of graphs and charts to visually depict categories and perceived relationships between categories can be useful in analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Strauss, 1987). Graphic organizers are useful in committing thoughts to paper in a clear and concise manner in order to test the analytical process.

I used the constant comparative method (Glasser & Strauss, 1967) of data analysis. While comparative analysis results in grouping data together, the data must first be taken apart and subjected to micro-analysis. This allowed me to examine and interpret the data line by line or even by phrase or word. This initial close examination allows the data to be clearly understood and correctly interpreted (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This close attention to detail helps ensure the accuracy of the initial direction of the study.

Data generated from interviews and journals were analyzed by coding. During the first stage of data analysis, qualitative data were initially coded using open coding to develop the codes and categories that emerged (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). Open coding is the analytic process through which concepts and their properties and dimensions are identified (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The data were continuously analyzed and categories were compared and contrasted to ensure that an accurate identification was being made. I used the “in vivo” codes suggested by Glaser & Strauss (1967) that describe the phenomena in the participants’ words to add color and meaning to concepts.

Axial coding took place in the second stage of data analysis as I worked to inductively develop relationships within and between categories. Strauss and Corbin (1990) view this as making connections between the category and sub-categories. Finally, selective coding was used to determine and further explore the central category as it related to and was explained by other categories. Categories should be described in a manner that will assist in determining if a concept is a good fit in that grouping.

The third stage of data analysis involved the process of data reduction that allows for interpretation that gives meaning and insight into the process of the encounter stage of organizational socialization as it takes place for first-year teachers. Codes and categories were analyzed until all of the relevant data were categorized and the relationships that gave meaning to the data emerged. At this point, the irrelevant data were set aside and categories that came to the forefront with patterns and themes were compacted into larger units of conceptual meaning. This allowed for meaningful description and a concise portrayal of the studied phenomena.

Data analysis is a sequential but ongoing process. Even though the data were continuously revisited and reworked, the study had to end at the conclusion of the school year. The time for collecting data was over even though the one year time frame and limited sample size for the study of the first-year teaching experience made it impossible to achieve theoretical saturation.

Looking back on the research question and a need to know the results of the study led to terminal analysis, the fourth stage of data analysis. As data collection took place and as categories and connections between categories became known over the course of the school year, an understanding of the surprise and sense-making process that first-year teachers employ during the encounter phase of organizational socialization became apparent.

Methods for Verification

Rationalistic inquiry has well-developed standards of trustworthiness. In recent years, naturalistic inquiry has come under closer scrutiny in this regard and is being increasingly held accountable for the development of standards of trustworthiness. Guba and Lincoln (1999) argue that four standards should be applied to the trustworthiness of qualitative research (1) credibility, (2) transferability, (3) dependability, and (4) confirmability.

Credibility. Credibility is defined as the fit between the data and the interpretation of the data by the researcher in light of the realities of the informants.

Transferability. Transferability is the extent to which a study can be replicated in a similar context.

Dependability. Dependability requires a level of consistency while making allowances for emergent design and developing theory.

Confirmability. Confirmability addresses the need for conclusions to be accurately grounded in the data.

The study was designed with internal validity in mind (Merriam, 1988; Miles & Huberman, 1984). Merriam (1988) and Miles & Huberman (1984) define internal validity as the “fit” between the report and reality. External validity in qualitative research does not have generalizability in mind. Merriam (1988) points to the accurate interpretation of events via a clearly delineated data collection and analysis protocol as the necessary components for external validity.

While the qualitative nature and limited numbers of informants preclude generalization of this study’s results, I believe that what is reported is clear and accurate. This will facilitate the replication of the study at other sites, although consistency in results between different sites and different researchers may not be a realistic goal.

To address accountability, a clear audit trail was established and maintained throughout the study (Miles & Huberman, 1984). My inductive and deductive reasoning processes were delineated by this procedure. The research design and analytical process were subject to peer review following each interview session and at the conclusion of the study to further maintain internal validity.

Report of Outcomes

The outcomes of this study are presented in the form of a doctoral dissertation written in a narrative format to describe the process of organizational socialization as it existed for the studied group of teachers.

The Study Informants

Potential study participants were initially identified from a pool of first-year teachers in grades four through six at the start of the school year 2000-2001. Teachers were screened by telephone to determine that they had no previous teaching experience, even as a substitute teacher. Substituting experience could alter the impact of the surprises of being a first-year teacher. Anyone teaching in the same building where he or she had student taught was similarly excluded. The socialization process would be significantly different for such an individual, as he or she had previously been exposed to the culture of the school for a length of time. Based on that experience, the person must be a good fit within that culture as the authorities there are willing to hire him or her and he or she is willing to work there.

Ten teachers were identified for study. All were invited to take part, and all agreed. While all ten first-year teachers were from the same school district, they taught at nine different schools. The schools were selected because they represented a wide-range of geographical areas and socioeconomic populations. Not all schools contacted had a first-year teacher in the intermediate grades. Two male teachers were selected to enhance the representativeness of the sample since roughly 20% of the intermediate elementary teachers in the school district are male.

The first-year teachers were not prescreened by race or age. All informants were white and ranged in age from twenty-two to forty-seven. Eight were twenty-five years of age or under. At forty-seven, one was significantly older. Two were male and eight were female. Three were fourth-grade teachers, four fifth-grade teachers, and three sixth-grade teachers. Seven of the ten had attended the same teacher training institution. Seven of the female informants were unmarried. Three of these seven resided with their parents and four were out on their own. The two males and the remaining female were married. The older male had grown children and the younger one had a ten-month old child. None of the female subjects had children.

Table 1.

Study Subjects

teacher	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
gender	f	f	f	f	m	m	f	f	f	f
age	23	24	23	23	24	47	30	23	25	22
race	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	w	w
marital status	s	s	s	s	m	m	s	m	s	s
resides	parent	own	parent	own	own	own	own	own	parent	own
children	no	no	no	no	baby	grown	no	no	no	no
grade	4	4	6	5	5	6	6	5	5	4
same college	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	

Analysis

After each interview took place, it was immediately transcribed verbatim using field notes and the audio-tape recording. A copy of the transcription of the interview was sent to each informant. The informants were asked to read through the transcript to be

sure that I had captured their words as they had intended. None of the study subjects reported any discrepancy or concern with any of the transcripts. This served as the member check for each interview.

Each participant was assigned a color and his or her full-text response to each question was printed out by color code. All of the designated color responses were then compiled. I put the groups of individual responses together by question and mounted them on poster board. I went through the statements and coded the events and surprises along with evidence of the sense-making process. The sources of the surprises were identified along with the socialization agents who assisted in making sense of the surprises.

After each subsequent interview, the individual's response to each question was mounted adjacent to his or her earlier answer to facilitate finding changes and signs of development. I further examined the documents to look for commonalities, differences, and any discernible patterns. Due to the cumbersome nature of the poster board display, participants' answers were condensed into salient terms and are included in the appendix as a matrix of answers to interview questions (See Appendix G).

From their responses a list of surprises was made. The experiences that the teachers were surprised by were compiled after each individual interview was completed. At the conclusion of the first, second, and third rounds of interviews the individual interview results were charted and surprises were tracked. The data were examined for patterns. By the end of the study, 150 surprises had been identified (See Appendix H).

Initial Interview Protocol. The questions for the first interview were arrived at using the research from organizational socialization, surprise and sense-making, and first-year teachers as a starting point. A pilot study (See Appendix I) was conducted during the summer of 1998 to test the feasibility of conducting this study. The pilot study involved interviewing three intermediate teachers within a week after the conclusion of their first-year teaching experience. As a result of this endeavor, adaptations were made and interview questions and techniques were refined. In light of what was learned during the pilot study, it became clear that using in-depth interviews in a semi-structured format with open-ended questions would be the most appropriate to employ in this research.

Initial Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your first year of teaching so far.
 - A) What is it like to be a first-year teacher?
 - B) Is it what you thought it would be like?
 - C) Are there some things you like the best? If so, please tell me about them.
 - D) Are there some things you like the least? If so, please tell me about them.

Rationale:

The first question and the follow-up probes were based on the organizational socialization literature. At the time of job entry, the fit between the anticipatory phase of socialization and the encounter phase of socialization is put to the test (VanMaanen, 1976). Determining how first-year teachers deal with encountering a reality different from the one they anticipated helps us understand the process through which reality is confronted and accepted (Wanous, 1992). I wanted to know if the studied first-year

teachers would encounter “reality shock” (Corcoran, 1981; Hughes, 1958; Veenman, 1984). Because each teacher is an individual, and because each school has a unique culture, school cultures impact each beginning teacher differently, and it was important to make an accurate assessment. Researchers (e.g., Cohen, 1973; Schien, 1987; Wanous, 1980) often point out that the socialization tactics many organizations employ are aimed at eliciting employees’ unquestioning acceptance of their roles as defined by the organization. I thought that this line of questioning would help determine if this occurs with first-year teachers.

2. How do you assess your preparation for the job so far?

A) Are there parts of the job for which you feel the best prepared? If so, please tell me about them.

B) Are there parts of the job for which you feel the least prepared? If so, please tell me about them.

Rationale:

Organizational socialization is the process through which newcomers learn the culture of the organization and come to accept it as their own (Wanous & Collella, 1989). Their preparation and skills can influence them personally as well as professionally in this process. They can affect how rapidly the beginners are assimilated into the work group. A newcomer needs a basis of professional knowledge to be capable of seeking out the information needed for uncertainty reduction (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Ostroff & Kozlowski, 1993). These questions were helpful in assessing how the beginning teachers felt they were prepared to teach now that they were teaching.

3. Have you had any experiences that you found unexpected or surprising?

A) If so, please tell me about those experiences.

B) How do you feel about them now?

Rationale:

These questions were based on the theory of surprise and sense-making (Louis, 1980; Miller & Jablin, 1991). This theory argues that upon job entry there invariably will be incidents that newcomers finds surprising, and that they need to make sense of the surprises in order to fully engage in their role within an organization. With this sense-making process comes cultural knowledge that can be used as an interpretive schema, so that what the newcomer once found surprising is eventually either implicitly or explicitly understood. Smith and Kozlowski (1995) found that knowledge and experience are useful in the process of sense-making. This line of questioning was aimed at investigating how the teachers would make sense of their initial teaching experiences.

4. What is it like to work with the groups of people that you work with?

A) Is working with students what you expected it to be?

B) Have you had interactions with your students' parents? If so, were those interactions what you expected them to be?

C) Is your relationship with your fellow teachers what you thought it would be like?

D) Are there any people who are especially helpful to you?

E) Are there any people who appear to be deliberately not helpful to you?

- F) Are you part of a formal mentoring process? If so, how do you find that relationship?
- G) Have you found informal mentors? If so, how do you find that relationship?
- H) Is your relationship with the principal what you thought it would be like?
- D) Have you had any feedback on your teaching so far? If so, did you find it useful?

Rationale:

This line of questioning was intended to determine the roles of the various socialization agents and their impact on the newcomers within the school context. Latane (1981) found that the strength, immediacy, and number of potential socialization agents determined their social impact on beginners. Katz (1980) views social interaction as a necessary component in order for newcomers to map out their roles.

Jablin (1987) and Morrison (1993) found newcomers reported that their primary sources of valuable information were their supervisors and peers. Louis (1980) and Van Maanen (1976) also demonstrated that newcomers rely on established organizational members to clarify the expectations they have for newcomers and to give feedback on how the newcomer is doing in meeting those expectations.

Schools are unique work organizations in that teachers tend to work in isolation from one another. This is not, however, to say that they are not influenced by those around them. Students may be influential in the socialization of first-year teachers (Camp & Heath-Camp, 1991; Lieberman & Miller, 1984; Lortie, 1975). First-year teachers need and want interaction with their principals and seek feedback on how they are doing

(Brock and Grady, 1998). Mentors can be an important factor in the socialization of beginning teachers (Deal & Chatman, 1989; Huling-Austin, 1989; Littleton & Littleton, 1988; O'Dell, 1989). Finally, communication is very important in organizational entry. Newcomers receive “memorable messages” (Stohl, 1986) from socialization agents during entry. These are given great importance and frequently referred back to as a point of reference. This set of questions was designed to reveal who gives first-teachers their socialization cues.

5. Has teaching impacted other parts of your life? If so, could you tell me about it?

A) Have your relationships with family members been impacted? If so, please tell me about this.

B) Have your relationships with friends been impacted? If so, please tell me about this.

Rationale:

This question was developed out of the data gathered during the pilot study. The three teachers studied reported that beginning teaching overwhelmed and consumed them and greatly impacted their personal lives. One of the tasks of work adjustment is the resolution of personal and professional role conflict (Feldman, 1976). This signals that organizational entry is complete and the accommodation stage has been reached (Wanous, 1992).

6. How do you feel about the parts of your job that do not involve direct contact with students?

- A) How do you feel about the paperwork?
- B) How do you feel about planning?
- C) How do you feel about grading papers?
- D) How do you feel about student assessment?
- E) How do you feel about staff meetings?
- F) How do you feel about committees?
- G) How do you feel about district-level meetings?

Rationale:

This series of questions was based on the fact that beginning teachers do not anticipate how much more there is to teaching than just classroom interactions with students. Problems that new teachers encounter both within and outside their association with students is well documented (e.g., Fuller, 1969; Johnston & Ryan, 1983; Veenman, 1984). This line of questioning further determined the progress the first-year teachers were making in accepting the reality of their teaching position.

7. What are you finding about the time required to do your job?
- A) What is a typical instructional day like for you?
 - B) What defines a “good” or “bad” day for you?
 - C) Do you have especially good days? If so, please describe them to me.
 - D) Do you have especially bad days? If so, please describe them to me.
 - E) What is the usual week like?

Rationale:

These questions addressed the first-year teachers' acceptance of job realities. The pilot study informants found the time required to teach extended well beyond their contracted hours. I wondered how the first-year teachers would view the time required to do the job.

8. In looking over the first quarter, how did you feel it went?

A) What do you see next quarter being like?

B) Do you anticipate certain things being the same? If so, please tell me about them.

C) Do you anticipate certain things being different? If so, please tell me about them.

Rationale:

This last question was designed to get the new teachers to summarize what they were feeling. It aimed at the crux of the research question.

The Second Interview

The second interview questions were formulated from the results of the first interview and journal entries. The core questions remained the same; the background research for these can be seen above. The reasoning in this is that while some of the first-year teachers had had a particular experience early on, not every individual would have had that experience by any given date. By revisiting the original line of questions, I could see when situations developed, events took place, and surprises occurred, and then determine how the informants had made sense of their experiences as they worked their

way through the first year of teaching. This also would assist in distinguishing between experiences that all first-years teachers have and others that are situationally unique.

During the course of the first interview it became apparent that the student teaching experience that occurred during the anticipatory phase of socialization had greatly influenced the study group and how they viewed their current teaching positions. The main purpose of the new line of questioning was to determine just what their prior experience had been and how it affected the encounter phase of socialization of teachers. The following rationale further explains the process for continued inclusion or adaptation of the given questions in the second interview.

Second Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your first year of teaching so far.
 - A) What is it like to be a first-year teacher ?
 - B) Is it what you thought it would be like?
 - C) Are there some things you like the best? If so, please tell me about them.
 - D) Are there things you like the least? If so, please tell me about them.

Rationale:

The first question and the follow-up probes remained as written for the initial interview. Responses to these questions were varied and their continued use allowed all the respondents adequate time to fully engage in the encounter phase of organizational socialization. Changes in response or attitude thus guided the direction of the research.

2. How do you assess your preparation for the job so far?

- A) What role did student teaching play in your preparation?
- B) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the best prepared? If so, please tell me about them.
- C) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the least prepared? If so, please tell me about them.

Rationale:

This question continued to probe how prepared the first-year teachers felt when they assume their first teaching position. I wondered if they would feel more or less prepared after additional experience. The follow-up probe of 'What role did your student teaching play in your preparation?' was added to clarify just how this experience affected their assimilation into the school culture. Initial interview findings indicated that this experience and its effect on the first-year teaching experience could account for some differences in ease of entry into the school organization.

- 3. Have you had any experiences that you found unexpected or surprising?
 - A) If so, please tell me about those experiences.
 - B) How do you feel about them now?

Rationale:

These questions on surprise and sense-making were repeated because they constitute a part of received theory that was the basis for this research. It takes time for the sense-making process to reveal itself. Responses to the follow-up prompt of 'How do you feel about them now?' helped explain the sense-making process as it occurred in each first-year teacher's experience.

4. What is it like to work with the groups of people that you work with?
- A) Is working with students what you expected it to be?
 - B) Have you had interactions with your students' parents? If so, were those interactions what you expected them to be?
 - C) Is your relationship with your fellow teachers what you thought it would be like?
 - D) Are there any people who are especially helpful to you?
 - E) Are there any people who appear to be deliberately not helpful to you?
 - F) Are you part of a formal mentoring process? If so, how do you find that relationship?
 - G) Have you found informal mentors? If so, how do you find that relationship?
 - H) Is your relationship with the principal what you thought it would be like?
 - I) Have you had any feedback on your teaching so far? If so, did you find it useful?

Rationale:

Teaching is a profession full of interactions and exchanges with other people. This line of questioning remained in order to discern the socialization agents and their influence on the first-year teachers.

5. Has teaching impacted other parts of your life? If so, could you tell me about it?
- A) Have your relationships with family members been impacted?
 - B) Have your relationships with friends been impacted?

Rationale:

This line of questioning continued to be valid in tracking how teachers were able to achieve balance between their professional and private lives. The true effect on their private lives had not been fully realized, nor had how they would deal with this long-term been addressed. The resolution of home and work conflict is a pivotal phase of socialization research (Feldman, 1976), and needed continual monitoring.

6. How do you feel about the parts of your job that do not involve direct contact with students?

- A) How do you feel about the paperwork?
- B) How do you feel about planning?
- C) How do you feel about grading papers?
- D) How do you feel about student assessment?
- E) How do you feel about staff meetings?
- F) How do you feel about committees?
- G) How do you feel about district-level meetings?

Rationale:

The need for this line of questions continued in order to determine how the new teachers were adjusting to their first teaching position. Often the focus is so directly upon students that a neophyte teacher does not initially grasp the complexity of her new position.

7. What are you finding about the time required to do your job?

- A) What is a typical instructional day like for you?
- B) What defines a “good” day for you?
- C) So you have especially good days? If so, please tell me about them.
- D) What defines a “bad” day?
- E) Do you have especially bad days? If so, please tell me about them.
- F) What is the usual week like?

Rationale:

These questions remained as they help me to understand the reality of the first year teaching experience in terms of time and quality of days. There is great potential in these two areas for teacher satisfaction or dissatisfaction. For the purposes of this study, this needed to be tracked over time.

8. In looking over the second quarter, how did you feel it went?

- A) What do you see next quarter being like?
- B) Do you anticipate certain things being the same? If so, please tell me about them.
- C) Do you anticipate certain things being different? If so, please tell me about them.

Rationale:

This line of questions continued in order to allow me to gauge how the first year was going from the first-year teachers’ point of view. In light of their experiences, what did they anticipate their immediate futures would be like? This also offered another way of knowing how they felt about and were reacting to their current job situations.

The Third Interview

Following the same procedures as I had used for the second interview, I scheduled the third set of interviews for 28 to 30 weeks into the school year. Again, they were held in the informants' classrooms when students were not present. At the time of the third interview, the subjects had completed three quarters of the school year.

The third interview questions were formulated from the combined results of the first and second interviews and more information gleaned from the journals. The core questions remained the same. By revisiting these questions one more time, I was able to ascertain what experiences each teacher had had and when and how each had made sense of them. This enabled me to identify commonalties and differences in the socialization process as it unfolded for members of the studied group. The following rationale further explains the process for continued inclusion or adaptation of the given questions in the third interview.

Third Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your first year of teaching so far.
 - A) What is it like to be a first-year teacher ?
 - B) Is it what you thought it would be like?
 - C) Are there some things you like the best? If so, please tell me about them.
 - D) Are there things you like the least? If so, please tell me about them.
 - E) Did your feeling in this regard changed as the year went on?

Rationale:

The first question and four follow-up probes remained as written for the first two interviews. The continued use of these questions allowed my informants adequate time to explore and explain what it means to be a first-year teacher throughout the encounter phase of organizational socialization. Changes in response or attitude helped to explain the surprise and sense-making process. The follow-up probe of 'Did your feeling in this regard changed as the year went on?' was added to assist in giving voice to what it means to be a teacher and how each individual arrived at that meaning.

2. How do you assess your preparation for the job so far?

A) What role did student teaching play in your preparation?

B) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the best prepared? If so, please tell me about them.

C) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the least prepared? If so, please tell me about them.

Rationale:

This question continued to measure how professionally prepared the first-year teachers felt at this point in the first year teaching experience. I was interested in whether additional experiences had made them feel more or less prepared. The follow-up probe of 'What role did student teaching play in your preparation?' continued as important in understanding just how the student teaching experience affects the first-year teaching experience and how it may account for difficulty or ease of entry into the school organization.

3. Have you had any experiences that you found unexpected or surprising?

- A) If so, please tell me about those experiences.**
- B) How do you feel about them now?**

Rationale:

These questions remained as they are indicative of the surprise and sense-making theory of organizational socialization that was central to the research question of this study. The encounter phase needed to be fully revealed over the course of the first-year teaching experience. The follow-up probe of 'How do you feel about them now?' allowed the participants to explain the sense-making process as it applied to their experiences.

4. What is it like to work with the groups of people that you work with?

- A) Is working with students what you expected it to be?**
- B) Have you had interactions with your students' parents? If so, were those interactions what you expected them to be?**
- C) Is your relationship with your fellow teachers what you thought it would be like?**
- D) Are there any people who are especially helpful to you?**
- E) Are there any people who appear to be deliberately not helpful to you?**
- F) Are you part of a formal mentoring process? If so, how do you find that relationship?**
- G) Have you found informal mentors? If so, how do you find that relationship?**

- H) Is your relationship with the principal what you thought it would be like?
- I) Have you had any feedback on your teaching so far? If so, did you find it useful?

Rationale:

Interactions with different of people make up a great deal of the teaching day. This line of questioning remained vital in discerning who the teachers deemed as socialization agents and to help determine their influence on the first-year teachers.

- 5. Has teaching impacted other parts of your life? If so, could you tell me about it?
 - A) Have your relationships with family members been impacted?
 - B) Have your relationships with friends been impacted?

Rationale:

This line of questioning continued to determine how first-year teachers find balance between their professional and private lives. Since the literature contends that the resolution of home and work conflict is a pivotal phase in the beginner's experience, I wanted to know if the first-year teachers had been able to find the needed balance.

- 6. How do you feel about the parts of your job that do not involve direct contact with students?
 - A) How do you feel about the paperwork?
 - B) How do you feel about planning?
 - C) How do you feel about grading papers?
 - D) How do you feel about student assessment?

- E) How do you feel about staff meetings?
- F) How do you feel about committees?
- G) How do you feel about district-level meetings?

Rationale:

This line of questioning remained appropriate to determine how new teachers cope with aspects of the position they found initially challenging and unanticipated. I wanted to know if those things they had initially found to be surprising had come to make sense at some point.

7. What are you finding about the time required to do your job?

- A) What is a typical instructional day like for you?
- B) What defines a “good” day for you?
- C) So you have especially good days? If so, please tell me about them.
- D) What defines a “bad” day?
- E) Do you have especially bad days? If so, please tell me about them.
- F) What is the usual week like?

Rationale:

These questions had to be repeatedly asked over the course of the first-year teaching experience because the definitions of good and bad and the time required to complete a certain task seemed likely to change with increasing experience. This area was most surprising to new teachers as reported in the first interview and remained an issue for many at the time of the second interview. It seemed important to know what they were finding and feeling as the year drew to a close because these feelings could

have great influence on their long-term engagement and satisfaction in teaching as a career.

8. In looking over the year, how did you feel it went?

A) How do you assess your fit to the culture of the building you teach in?

B) What do you see next quarter being like?

C) Do you anticipate certain things being the same? If so, please tell me about them.

D) Do you anticipate certain things being different? If so, please tell me about them.

Rationale:

Questions 8-11 were new or differed substantially from the form they had taken in the first two interviews. Questions 9-11 were not appropriate any earlier in the year since they asked informants to reflect upon ideas and meanings drawn from the whole year's experience. These questions allowed an understanding of the experience from the teacher's frame of reference. In addressing how the year had gone and predicting how they thought it would go, the new teachers let me into their reality. I could better understand what it means to be first-year teachers by knowing how they viewed their then current job situations. The probe of 'How do you assess your fit to the culture of the building you teach in?' was added to assess goodness of cultural fit from their individual viewpoint.

9. What advice would you give to teachers who enter a classroom for the first time this

August?

Rationale:

This question was added to listen to the advice this year's new teachers would give to next year's new teachers. By exploring their words of wisdom, I expected that a lot could be determined about their experiences both individually and collectively. Specifically, I was looking for what they deemed the most important part of this learning experience that they would pass along to others.

10. What suggestions would you make in regard to new teacher induction?

Rationale:

This question gave the first-year teachers a chance to explain what they viewed as helpful during their induction process and allowed them to give suggestions for improvement. This helped add meaning to the reported experience of the first year of teaching and gauged their reaction to the socialization experience as applied to them individually.

11. Do you plan to be a career teacher?

Rationale:

The exploration of this question allowed each teacher to report on whether he or she intended to engage in teaching over a long period of time. I was interested in the level of their commitment to their chosen profession over time after the first-year experience.

CHAPTER FOUR

Introduction

The findings of this study are presented in this chapter. First, the set of results of each question throughout the three interviews is presented and discussed independently. For this initial analysis, I took each individual teacher's interview transcript and journal contents and examined what happened in terms of organizational socialization over the course of the first-year teaching experience. I simultaneously compared the reported experiences of the ten first-year teachers as a whole and looked for patterns, both similarities and differences, in the socialization process that unfolded over the school year. In the final analysis, I identified common patterns shared by the first-year teachers across time that refined categories that had emerged and were clarified throughout the study. The theme of surprise and sense-making as central to the socialization process was continuously revisited throughout the analytical procedure.

Presentation of the Findings

Question 1. Tell me about your first year of teaching so far.

Interviewed in October, 8 to 10 weeks into their initial teaching experience, the participants reported simultaneously enjoying the experience and being overwhelmed by their work load. Most reported feelings of stress and inadequacy in light of the scope of their job responsibilities. One young female teacher summarized these feelings as:

It has been a lot of work, a ton more than I anticipated it would be, more than anybody told me it would be. Of course, if anyone

could have explained it to me, I don't think that I would have believed it.

By the second interview in January, the majority felt more comfortable in their teaching roles. They continued to report feeling too busy, confused, and overwhelmed, but glimmers of hope had begun to shine through. Students were becoming more used to them and they were beginning to see signs of student progress. As one reported:

It has been a big change. I've noticed since Christmas time we have settled into a groove and the kids are a lot more settled. It is easier to teach them. So I feel a little more like I am teaching them and less behavior managing. Although there are still days when it's like for every two steps forward we take one step back, but it is much better.

It's changed quite a bit since the very first day.

The first-year teachers still had much to say about the first year of teaching at the time of the third interview in April. The end of the year brought new experiences and challenges. Almost all described the first year as busy, challenging, fun, and surprising. One teacher told of his first year as:

It's been a series of eye-opening events. A lot of things - I don't want to say I wasn't prepared for - coming out of classes, but so many details, so many things to keep track of, everything is new. It is challenging. Even something like even a field trip - how do we get on the bus - how do we keep the kids together - everything.

Another teacher depicted her year as:

It has been like a roller coaster ride with ups and downs. Most of the complaints have been with the adults - not the kids. I expect the kids to do rotten things. I never expect the adults to, I think everybody has a conscience like me.

Question 1 A. What is it like to be a first-year teacher?

At the initial interview, six informants told me that life as a first-year teacher was busy. They were surprised by the number of hours required to do an adequate job. One young woman had a typical response, "It is really tough. I meet myself coming and going. I have no time for myself. All I do is school. I eat, breathe, and sleep school, and it is never done."

By January, they were showing some signs of growing into the job. One summarized the experience as, "It's been hectic, crazy, stressful. It's been very enjoyable though. I'm getting now where I am seeing more progress in the kids than I did in the beginning, so it is more rewarding."

Still, the teachers remained busy to the point of being overwhelmed. They had become more used to it, as they had experienced it for a period of time, but for most of them it was still an issue. As one told me,

You know, it's very busy. I feel like I am the first one here in the morning and the last one here at night. I see other people get here at eight-thirty in the morning and leave at four at night, and I'm like,

“How do you get everything done?” I feel that I am always so much busier than everybody else. It’s given me experience. I’m learning how to be more organized myself, and everyday I am learning new strategies to try with the kids. I’m learning the tricks of the trade, both academically and with behavior. I’m learning what not to do next year.

The theme of inadequate information and knowledge was repeated by others and in one man’s statement:

It is like being a freshman again in high school, because everybody around you, with the exception of a few, are older and have ‘been there and done that.’ Some of them are willing to help and some of them aren’t.

The fact that teaching encompasses a rapid assumption of all areas of responsibility regardless of rookie status was apparent in this first-year teacher’s statement:

Things are kind of crazy. I’m learning all kinds of new stuff and remembering that next year will be so different because then I will know all this stuff and know that this has to be done by then. It’s kind of confusing and sometimes there is so much coming at you all at once. It’s not just like a gradual process. All at once it is like, “Did you get this turned in?” and “This is due here.” and

“Did you get signed up for this?” and it’s just like “Oh!” But, it has been really good. Next year will be easier in knowing what to do, but I will have had a first year to get going and know what is expected of me. There will still be papers to grade and all that stuff.

All three of the first-year teachers who started the school year living at home with their parents decided at mid-year that it was time to move out on their own. The results of that decision added to their to-do lists and to their stress levels. This substantially increased the pressure on them over what they had felt during their student teaching. Living independently also reduced the level of built-in support they had from family members, while adding complications as they worked to form new relationships with roommates. One shared:

Last night I was here until 6:15 so I don’t get home until 6:30, so I still have to make dinner and I have laundry to do. Our Laundromat is in the basement, so I took my papers down there. But I still have cleaning to do and no time to just sit and relax and maybe read a book.

At the final interview in April, many teachers characterized their first year as a “learning experience”. A typical statement came from a suburban teacher:

It is a huge learning experience. I think I am learning as much as - if not more than - my kids. I have this huge list that I am going to

write down of what I am going to do next year. Things that I am going to do, or not going to do, and things that I am not going to tolerate from them. It has just been a huge learning experience.

A teacher in a middle-class socioeconomic setting found, "It is overwhelming. There are so many expectations that are set on you right away, by the district, by parents, and even by kids in the classroom. I have my own high expectations, too." A male teacher reported, "You feel like a little fish in a big pond. You have don't have any pull anywhere and you just hope you survive."

Six reported that their feelings in this regard changed for the better as the year went on. They had made sense of aspects of teaching that had been confusing earlier in the year. One reflected,

At the beginning of the year I was somewhat nervous and apprehensive. I wasn't quite sure what it was going to be like. I didn't know what to expect. I thought it was going to be a lot harder than it ended up to be. So, in that way, my feelings changed about it for the good. I was scared I would end up hating it after going through all this college.

Five specifically noted that as the year went on, things became easier. "Yes," one said, "as time went on I got more confidence in my abilities. In August and September there were times when I thought I would not make it through the year. Now, I look back and think that was so silly. I made it. It wasn't that bad."

On the other hand, four felt things had remained more constant. One stated, It's pretty much stayed the same. I have had times when I think, "Oh, my gosh!" I have had thoughts of "What am I doing?" "What have I gotten myself into?" It's been a tough year, and I just keep that in mind whenever something happens. I keep telling myself it's got to be better next year.

Question 1 B. Is it what you thought it would be like?

At the October interview, respondents were divided on whether teaching was proving to be what they had thought it would be. Five were surprised by some aspects of their jobs. Those teachers in teaching situations markedly different from their student teaching experience reported greater discrepancies between the workplace anticipated and then encountered. Five thought that teaching was "pretty much" what they thought it would be. One reported feeling more adequately prepared than her peers because,

I had the advantage of having a teacher as a parent. So I knew it was not eight to five, you don't really get the summer off, it is not easy, and it is the most exhausting job. You are in bed by eight-thirty or nine o'clock every night. On days with no specials - oh, my goodness - you put a lot into it and you are even more tired than usual.

By January, the divisions were reduced. Teachers reported that they thought they had known what they were undertaking, but often were overwhelmed by the reality of

their lives as teachers. They found it difficult to grapple with things they assumed they could handle. Location did not seem to matter - urban or suburban, they felt much the same. One suburban first-year teacher revealed,

I never dreamed of the amount of paperwork. I never realized the kinds of problems that I would be facing because of my children's backgrounds and what I would have to be dealing with because they were in my room. Like their moods that they come in with in the morning and what I would have to do to try to get them to put that aside. How to somehow get stuff resolved here at school so that they could learn. That is nothing like what I thought would be happening.

At the same time, a teacher in an inner-city school expressed that,

I knew that it would be a joy to work with kids and watch them learn everyday, and that is definitely the positive about my job. I didn't know how much of a paperwork shuffle it was going to be, like all the documentation

One first-year teacher in a middle-class neighborhood school told me that she was glad to have known teachers and having had experienced being around schools previously because:

I knew that teaching can be all-consuming if you let it get that way. It can really get out of hand. I knew it was going to be busy. That is one thing I am so grateful for, aside from my student teaching, is

spending so much time with teachers and all my volunteer work to help me know what it was like and how much teachers put into it.

So I kind of knew that part that I was getting into. That part...

In contrast, one gentleman in a middle-class neighborhood school was reluctant to talk about being surprised. At this point in time he felt, "There aren't a whole lot of surprises. The kids are a little bit lower ability-wise than I thought, but I guess that just goes with it."

By April the sense-making process was evident. Most new teachers found that, for the most part, teaching was evolving into what they thought it would be. One responded,

Yes, my dad is a teacher so I knew I would be busy. There is not enough time to get things done. Just when I think I am ahead of the game, I get behind again. I am lucky to stay five minutes ahead. I do enjoy the kids. That was not a surprise, I thought that I would like working with the kids and I really do. They are the highlight of my day.

But it was not emerging identically for everyone. One suburban teacher who continued to struggle a bit, commented,

Some things are - but some things aren't - like the things that my kids bring into the classroom emotionally and the things going on in their home life - never in a million years did I think I would be

dealing with those kinds of problems. I knew there would be paperwork, but I never imagined how never ending it is.

Even though all of the teachers felt overwhelmed, the intensity of the feeling ebbed and flowed individually and each teacher struggled to find ways to handle it.

Question 1 C. Are there some things you like the best? If so, please tell me about them.

In October, eight described the best part of the job as working with children and the actual on-the-floor teaching.

Again in January, seven of the ten reported that students, learning, and teaching were what they liked the best about their jobs. As one excitedly described it,

I think my favorite thing would be when I am doing a lesson and a kid will be all excited and say, “Isn’t that like what we did in this class?” “I remember when I was at this place, or at that store, and it happened just like this.” When you can actually see them making some connections and pulling things together, then you start to think that there really is some hope.

One first-year teacher was more introspective as she pointed out that time she could interact with her principal was valuable,

I could say my plan time. As stupid as it sounds, I do like my plan time. I get things done. I get a chance to get out and talk to other people, like my principal. Sometimes I have questions and she is busy before school and she is busy after school, so it is hard to fit

a time in to talk to her. I do like that really well.

I like seeing the results of projects that we have spent a great deal of time on. An example of that would be six-trait writing. I have gotten a couple of really great pieces of writing from a couple of the kids in here. Looking at what we have focused on and seeing the end product is really great. You really feel that they learned something, instead of just the day-to-day worksheets and things, that gets discouraging.

Still, not all was positive or even under control for everyone. A first-year teacher talked about the joys and simultaneous frustrations of teaching. She remembered a time when she was uncomfortable in her loud vocal reaction to a situation because it did not fit with her image of herself as a teacher or who she wanted to be. "The kids and learning are the best thing about my job," she said.

They are such a joy to work with, they make me smile; they make me laugh. There are days when they frustrate me sometimes [laughs]. That is one of the worst things, because I just sort of lost it one day and was yelling at them. I really try not to yell at them. The kids just kind of looked at me because I don't think they had ever heard me yell before. So, I got their attention, but I didn't like going about it that way.

One teacher spoke for many with the simple statement that, "I like the actual teaching. I would like someone else to do the paperwork."

At the final interview, nine reported teaching and the students as the things they liked the best. The other teacher was appreciative of the support that he had received from his mentor and peer support teacher. “Now, towards the end of the year,” one said in a typical statement, “it is the actual getting in and teaching the lesson. Of course, the paper work is not fun and the discipline is not fun, but when you can get everyone involved and at least half way paying attention, that is great.” Another echoed, “I like the contact with kids and the actual teaching the best. I wish I could chuck the rest of it, that would be ideal.”

This became one of the driving themes of the study. The teachers wanted to concentrate on their teaching so much that they were frustrated by anything that got between them and their efforts to teach their students.

Question 1 D. Are there things you like the least? If so, please tell me about them.

There was a wider variety of responses to what the teachers liked least about their jobs. The most frequent responses for four of the ten centered on classroom management and discipline. One teacher reported correcting student behavior as her least favorite part of teaching because,

They know the rules and the consequences of breaking rules, but they still want to argue over the rule that they broke. They don't want to accept the consequences for their actions. No matter what, they want to argue about it.

Others cited paperwork, grading papers, dealing with parents, and lack of administrative support and communication as least-liked elements.

By midyear, the list of things that the first-year teachers liked the least about teaching had grown. They were surprised by the amount of preparation that it took to teach. They found themselves spending their own time and money to gather materials for lessons that they wanted to teach beyond the scope of the textbook. For many, this is how they had been taught to teach and this is how they would have liked to teach, but they were surprised by the time commitment it required.

[I am surprised by] the preparation time it takes to get all the things done. The time and money it takes to get some things done. I will think of a cool project and then it is like that will require me to go to Kinko's and run here and there and get this and that. I mean we have a lot here, but there is still a lot of stuff we don't have. I am surprised by how much money I spend. I sit down and look at my credit card bills and wonder "What have I got?" Then I figure out I don't have clothes or stuff for me, but it is school. I know that next year it is not going to be like that because most of the stuff I can use over and over again, but I was surprised at how much money I have spent.

After the lesson is taught, there is paperwork to deal with, and the volume of student-generated papers threatened to bury the first-year teachers. Many reported it as a leading candidate for their least favorite part of the job. As one remarked, "I can't stand paperwork. This job would be so much easier without paperwork." Another continued along this line:

The paperwork, I hate. If I could get around having them turn papers in, I think life would be great because you go through so much. You can have seven papers a day and even though I only have twenty-one kids and you end up with 147 papers a day. You have to give them things that are really structured and fit the outcomes so that they know what they are going for.

Another first-year teacher summarized this as, "The paperwork. I hate grading papers. There is such a huge volume of paperwork. It is endless. Organization is very important."

In addition to the daily papers that come from work assigned to students, there is administrative paperwork required by the school district. They wanted to do this correctly, but they worried about future paperwork and adding to a work load they felt was barely manageable then. As one shared,

What I like least is all the paperwork. At the beginning when you first came, I didn't feel like I had that much paperwork, but I am seeing it now. I had a student transfer and I had to fill out all that paperwork and it is such a pain. I am thinking, "Oh my gosh!"

At the end of the year I have to fill out all those cums, and I think report cards are bad.

At the third interview, paper work and discipline were still most frequently mentioned as things that teachers liked the least; particularly because paperwork and discipline were viewed as things that took time away from teaching.

One remarked,

I've got a class that needs a lot of discipline. They take it the wrong way. When I give them a check on the clipboard, they think that I think that they are stupid and that they are worthless. We just get into a situation where they just don't get that that is just not appropriate behavior for the classroom.

Another agreed, "Dealing with all the behavior issues and all the baggage they brought from home. I didn't like that at all." The gap between the behavior the teachers expected in the classroom and what apparently was expected of some children at home became a strong concern in the teachers' experience.

One focused more on paperwork and testing when she stated,
 Paperwork - The CAT [California Achievement Tests] tests were okay, but the CRTs [Criterion Reference Tests] were so time consuming. It is just enormous.. It was frustrating because we would have questions and we would call down and ask, and the people didn't have answers to our questions. All the paperwork and grading is what I like the least. If I could do away with the CRTs, paperwork, and grading it would be great.

Hypotheses:

1. Beginning teachers are surprised by the amount of time and energy it takes to be a teacher.

2. Beginning teachers do not enjoy paperwork and discipline as they take away from the energy and time available for students and to teach.

Question 2. How do you assess your preparation for the job so far?

At the first interview in October, participants reported positive feelings related to their preparation. Four specifically mentioned their knowledge of content areas and curriculum as a strength while four others felt prepared to work with students due to pre-service experiences.

By the second interview, however, some serious reassessment seemed to be underway. The first-year teachers reported they were not feeling as well-prepared as they had thought they were at the beginning. They continued to report that experience was their best teacher and that they would use the first-year experience to guide them in what they would do and would not do next year. Even though they had encountered some of these same challenges in student teaching, they had been on a smaller scale. They often did not feel ready for all of the situations they found themselves in when they began to teach full time and had no supervising teacher to turn to. One shared,

I still think not enough [preparation], in spite of student teaching, in spite of spending so much time doing volunteer work, I still feel like I wasn't completely ready. I know I said this before, but this summer I didn't have time to get ready because I didn't know what grade I had. So there was that, too. It's just, there are things, almost daily, that I keep going back and saying, "I will not do this

next year” or, “The next time that I do this lesson, I will not do it this way.” But, part of it is the foresight. I have not been there before, so I do not know what is going to work or what will be effective.

One first-year teacher spoke of the contrast between pre-service and first-year teaching experiences with this comment, “I thought I was more prepared. There is no time for the detailed lesson plans like in college. I have a better grasp of things now.” Understanding the time pressures on teachers was emerging as a major theme.

By the final interview in the spring, the beginning teachers had come to feel that they were academically prepared to teach, but thought there were some things one needed to experience to understand. In looking at the teacher preparation program, one shared,

I guess college prepared me, but there are a few things that I am like “Why didn’t they tell us about this?” I feel like writing it down and going back to the college and telling them they should have told us about this.

More than in the first two interviews, the teachers in April seemed able to articulate specific dimensions of need. They would have liked to have been taught more strategies and given more information about classroom management. One young man commented,

Classroom management- they always talked about classroom management in college, but now that I think about it they never

gave us any good ideas. Like how to keep them interested. I mean the practicality of what they taught us in the first couple of classes in the College of Education was a joke. As much as they talked about how you have to have good classroom management skills, they never talked about any of the skills. They never told us how to develop them and you know that your rapport with the kids is a big part of it, but they never gave us any ideas on how to do it.

A young female teacher concurred that there needed to be more information given on discipline in her comment:

Discipline, they need to have college courses that focus on them. They need to tell you this is this person's theory and tell you how it works. Then they need to get you into classrooms where you can see the different theories at work. A professor might throw out things like give them choices or turn the lights out, but you need more than that.

A teacher in a suburban setting commented,
I was somewhat prepared. Every class in college seemed to focus on lesson plans. We did lesson plans, lesson plans, and then some more lesson plans. It seems like that is all we did in every class. The classroom management was completely lacking. It was just little things that go on, like giving CAT tests or CRTs. You can't

do that in your student teaching because it has to be given by someone who is certified. Now, I am just diving right in and giving them and hoping that I am doing them right.

Question 2 A. What role did student teaching play in your preparation?

This question was asked for the first time at the second interview. First-year teachers acknowledged the vital role that student teaching played in their preparation. They even expressed the desire for a full-year experience rather than just a semester. As one observed,

You need to student teach for a year so that you can see the whole school year. The methods classes are too easy and too juvenile.

You need to spend more time in the classroom, in the schools. My student teaching went very well. I had observed five different fifth grades in the same district, and I got to choose where I wanted to student teach. It was a good fit. I teach at the same grade level in the same district.

Those who had student taught first semester were worried now that they were into the second semester that they would not know enough about ending the school year and closing down a room. One expressed this as:

Experience is the best teacher. Student teaching is not the same as being a teacher. Maybe they should have made student teaching longer. It would have been nice to see the end of the year, because

now I am nervous because I didn't see the end in student teaching.

I student taught at the beginning of the year, so I got to see how to set it up but not how to close it down.

Simultaneously, the teachers who had student taught second semester spoke of not fully grasping how to set up a classroom because they had gone into an assignment where everything was in place and routines and procedures were already established. One teacher told me,

I think the part that student teaching was most helpful for was preparing the lesson plans and actually carrying them out. You know a lot of the little stuff, especially for me, because I student taught second semester, like I didn't have to set the classroom up and all of that beginning stuff. I came in and the rules were in place and the kids knew the rules. I just saw lesson plans and teaching. I didn't see any of the other stuff that went on. So I went into this semester pretty much blind.

Regardless of which semester they had student taught, both groups reported that a lot goes on in teaching that they did not observe, notice, or have pointed out to them as student teachers. "The student teaching process did not prepare me as well," one said. "You just don't see it all. There is a lot that goes on behind the scenes in teaching." But most acknowledged that student teaching was a crucial aspect of their preparation. One beginning teacher from a suburban school commented,

That was by far the biggest and most important part of it. You sit in the classes and you see things and you talk about things, and you do practicums where you go out and observe, but student teaching is so involving, it gives you a better picture and an idea of what the day is like. You only have control of the class for two weeks, but you still get the big picture.

Another confirmed this, saying, "I think student teaching was the best part of college." She continued,

It felt more real and it showed me how to organize. It was a good starting point, like lesson plans, I am still using the same format, but now I am thinking of other ways that I want to do things. It is good, I would not have known where to start. I had no experience with discipline and that gave me some strategies.

By the time of the third interview, all participants had reported that student teaching had been the most vital part of their preparation. "Student teaching was by far my biggest learning experience," one teacher commented. "That is really where I learned everything. It was the cornerstone of the whole process. It helped that I had a good cooperating teacher and I put forth a lot of effort." Although they described it in terms of "biggest" and "best", they increasingly noted that they had not absorbed everything that went on in the classroom. One remarked, "It helped, but I only saw the surface. I didn't see all the behind the scenes things that go on." Another agreed in her statement that:

That was the biggest part of my experience. It was way more than just sitting in college classrooms. It gave you a feel for what you would be doing. Although I wasn't completely prepared, because now that this is my very own classroom this year - I am doing way more than I ever did student teaching. I almost feel like my cooperating teacher did things for me that I was completely unaware of.

While the student teaching experience was seen as very important, it was not enough by itself to constitute the whole of the preparation process. There inevitably are too many differences between schools and students for student teaching to cover all the bases. One spoke of differences between the school at which she student taught at and the school where she is currently employed.

Student teaching is just so different. It was in the same district and it just amazes me how different schools in the same district can be. Principals have totally different philosophies about how things should be run. They have so much freedom there and that makes the school so different.

The contrast in school climates between student teaching and first teaching experience can be hard for rookies to reconcile. As one stated,

All the miscommunication and the lack of support from the administration [were surprising] . Where I did my student teaching

I always felt like I had the backing of the principal and the support staff. Here - if you are not on the good side of the administration you can't do certain things.

"There are some things that they cannot prepare you for - you just have to experience it to really understand it," one teacher explained. She continued, "Like with parent things - you get all kinds of tips - but until you actually do it, calling parents, dealing with angry parents, you have to actually do it to understand how to deal with it."

The bottom line was that the teachers came to feel that there were some things that could only be learned through experience, but that there were others that could have been better addressed in their pre-service training. One teacher felt that you could not be adequately prepared for everything and shared, "No, it just comes with the job that there are some things that you are not going to know."

Question 2 B. Is there a part of the job for which you feel the best prepared? If so, please tell me about it.

When asked to assess their preparation for the job in October, they generally reported feeling well-prepared, especially in lesson planning and knowledge of grade level curriculum. Early experiences involving student contact were viewed as beneficial. One summarized this as,

I felt I was well-prepared. I had a lot of contact with children during my clinicals and student teaching. We taught as part of our methods classes. I knew the various grade levels and the corresponding levels

of maturity.

By January at the second interview, eight reported feeling best prepared and most confident in lesson planning. Lesson planning had been emphasized in their college methods classes and then student teaching helped them see the application of lesson planning to the actual teaching and evaluation of students. One told me, "I was best prepared for lesson planning, really. In college and student teaching, it was lesson plan, teach, grade the papers, lesson plan, teach, grade the papers." Another voiced that this was the case as, "Probably just the lesson plans and things like that. I knew how to do it. I felt really well prepared and competent in that. I was hired late, and so that was a good thing."

Although lesson planning emerged as a strength - only two of the first-year teachers did not mention it as the area in which they felt best prepared - teachers want and need feedback on how their administrators evaluate their lesson plans. One first-year teacher in an inner-city school told me,

Lesson planning- I feel pretty confident about that. Lesson plans were picked up and not evaluated, and I want to know how I did. I want to know if they want them any different. I'm up for constructive criticism and I'm getting nothing.

Another first-year teacher in a suburban setting expressed that while the actual planning of individual lessons was getting easier, it was difficult to coordinate the lessons into units within the curriculum. Although she had a grade level mentor at the same building, she felt she was being left alone to try to sort it all out. She commented,

I am actually getting better at lesson planning. It is still hard to figure out when and how to teach the units and activities. I want to know if I am doing it right and there really is no one to help me.

Consistent through the year, the third interview found that lesson planning was still reported as the area of best preparation. The best preparation, one said, was “Probably the lesson planning. If you look back on it now, those long, stinky lesson plans that I hated so much in college, now have become automatic. When you have to write it all out - it becomes automatic.” Another expressed agreement when she stated, “Probably lesson plans, that was drilled into me.”

Question 2 C. Is there a part of the job for which you feel the least prepared? If so, please tell me about them.

For seven, the identified areas of least preparation included classroom management and dealing with the wide range of academic levels within the classroom. Three of the ten felt inadequately prepared to deal with problems that students brought from home that greatly impacted the students’ classroom performance and sometimes their behavior. One of the teachers in a suburban school expressed it this way:

Classroom management- there should be a whole college class on it.

College teachers give you little tidbits, but there needs to be more.

Dealing with kids’ home situations is difficult. I have an unbelievable mix of kids. Dealing with Special Education and gifted, the wide-range of abilities within one grade level is hard.

A focus had begun to develop by the second interview in January. Most teachers felt they were least prepared for working with the wide-range of academic levels. This had emerged as cause for concern for almost all. One simply stated, "I wasn't prepared for dealing with individual students, because they are all so different." Many reported that while they understood there would be differences in the abilities of students in their classrooms, they did not comprehend the complexities of managing to teach and reach students all across that range at the same time. Even one first-year teacher who had been trained for special education was surprised by how difficult this was in a regular education classroom. "I knew I would be dealing with special needs students," she said,

I understood that coming in at the beginning. Now I understand some of the frustrations that regular classroom teachers have. It has really been an eye-opening experience for me to understand it from the view of a regular classroom teacher rather than a special education teacher. I totally understand now that it is so hectic trying to work with the special education students and modify their assignments and keep a handle on what cycle day it is and where they need to be.

Another informant, this one in a middle-class neighborhood school, concurred, "It is hard to teach to meet the needs of all students. In the same room you have challenge readers and those with very low comprehension and everything in between. It is the same with math

and every other subject.

Just as in other parts of the job where new teachers had difficulties, time was a factor. Designing lessons targeted at multiple levels of ability and motivation takes a lot of time. Teachers continued to voice that they were not adequately prepared for the amount of time they would spend on the job and related tasks.

Overwhelmingly, however, the dominant responses had to do with student variables and classroom management. At the final interview, the parts of the job for which the first-year teachers felt the least prepared continued to be classroom management and the wide-range of academic levels within the classroom. One expressed,

Classroom management - I got to work with it during student teaching - but not during classes or observations. It was something I really had to work on. Fortunately, during student teaching I really improved by the end, but it is one of those things you have to experience. I still am working on it. I don't feel like I have it completely down. I had a good class this year, but next year there are more students with hard to manage behavior.

A teacher in a suburban setting elaborated on the range of academic levels of students as the area she felt least prepared. She commented,

Getting an ESL [English as a second language] student and working with her in the regular classroom was something that I was not

prepared for. I knew there would be different levels of students, but I needed more on how to teach to all the different academic levels from top to bottom. Some days you get to everybody and other days I can't always get to everyone.

Hypotheses:

1. Teachers are surprised they are not fully prepared to deal with certain aspects of teaching.
2. Beginning teachers view student teaching as the most important part of their preparation process, but feel there was much they were not made aware of as student teachers.
3. Beginning teachers wish that they had experienced an entire year as student teachers.
4. Beginning teachers wish that they had had more preparation and pre-service experience in working with the wide range of academic levels within the classroom.
5. Beginning teachers would like more pre-service and in-service information about discipline and classroom management.
6. Beginning teachers who student taught in the same school district and at the same grade level have an easier transition into teaching.
7. Beginning teachers view their first year as a learning experience.

Question 3. Have you had any experiences that you found unexpected or surprising?

If so, please tell me about those experiences.

Multiple unexpected or surprising experiences were the norm at the first interview in October. One teacher could have spoken for the group when she said, "Pretty much

everything has been surprising so far.” Two areas of surprise, however, emerged as the most striking: (1) their own emotional reactions to student transfers, both in and out of their classrooms and (2) the struggle to assess school culture.

Teachers were surprised by both how quickly and how deeply they developed emotional attachment for their students. They were touched by the ways that students demonstrated that they liked their teachers. A male teacher in a middle-class neighborhood school was surprised by the attachment he felt for students and the personal pride he took in them. He told me,

I have been surprised by how close you get to your students - the feelings of pride you experience when they do well. One student had a solo in the winter program, and I was so proud of him. He could have been my own son. That came as a surprise.

This led to frustration when they felt that the school’s culture did not support the building of close relationships. One gave the example of having students change classes after the year started:

I was surprised that two weeks into the year we had to switch kids like they were trading cards. I love my kids and I didn’t want them to go in the first place. Students cried and said they didn’t want to go. I had to try to explain and defend something that I totally did not agree with.

The teachers revealed their surprise at how they came to view the arrival of new students. They acknowledged that their lower numbers of students logically suggested

that any additional incoming child should be placed in their class, yet they registered hesitation over whether they could handle the addition to their workload. One teacher with a challenging class thought the number of students with behavior problems in her class warranted new students being assigned to the veteran teacher at the same grade level.

Teachers who had student taught in districts other than the one in which they were currently employed experienced more difficulty in trying to figure out how things were done within the school system. One new teacher was told to redo all of her report cards after handing them in. She was frustrated that she had to “mess up” before she was told “this is how we do this.” She felt the procedure should have been explained to her in advance and that could have prevented a difficult situation. Beginning teachers reported wishing they had been told other sorts of things ahead of time, before they encountered a situation and mishandled it. A first-year teacher in an inner-city school pointed out one such incident and said,

Recently drugs were found in my classroom. A child dropped some crack on the floor. It was devastating. He is out on a 19 day suspension. The way I handled the situation was questioned. One administrator said I did it all wrong, that it was a crime scene and should have been left intact and that when I moved the crack I acted inappropriately. Another administrator said that I handled it exactly right. I wish they would tell you what you are supposed to

do before something happens rather than waiting until it happens and telling you did it all wrong.

Another teacher's surprises centered on conflict with other teachers over discipline by administrators over whom she has no control. She explained,

I won't give up on a kid. The administrators know that and there is a lot of pressure as a result. At a staff meeting, the principal announced that if a kid hit a teacher they would be gone. They would not be at this school anymore. Since then two of my kids have hit other teachers, and they are still here. I am getting all kinds of flack about it from the other teachers. Today it happened, a kid hit a teacher and I told the administrator that I needed to know what to do so that the teachers wouldn't get all over me. It's not my fault. Teachers really get on me about what my kids do when I am not with them. I can't control them when they are not in here. I don't like that they think that I am always responsible for them.

How the principals made decisions such as student assignment and how well he or she communicated procedures and expectations began to emerge as factors in how they new teachers viewed the principal as a leader and in how well they saw themselves treated.

This was particularly true for beginning teachers who had identified closely with the culture of the building in which they had student taught. They often struggled to adjust to differences in their teaching situations. One new teacher told me:

I was surprised by the differences in the sense of community between this school and the one where I did my student teaching. We were very close there, and I thought all schools would be more like that. This school is massive and it is hard to get to know everyone. Luckily, I work with a first-year teacher who student taught here, so that is helpful.

They were still being surprised in January and continued to report many unexpected experiences. While the pace of surprises seemed to have slowed down since the first interview, it was still on-going and surprising incidents were still frequent. One teacher from a suburban school told me,

There is always something surprising going on in here. My big surprise is some of things that come out of their mouth. I keep thinking if I were your mother you would have a big bar of soap jammed in your mouth. The disrespect that those kids can show. I had a child yesterday shove another child into a big pile of mud. This poor little kid was just caked in mud. Then this same child just waltzes up to the front of the room and kicks a child who was sharpening his pencils. Just kicks him for nothing.

The big shock is that they think I am stupid. I was in fourth grade once. They are oblivious that I can see from the front of the room. It is entertaining to say the least.

Another first-year teacher in a similar suburban school echoed this with her surprise and frustration with the lack of maturity and respect her students demonstrated and how these qualities impeded her ability to teach:

I am surprised by sixth graders' immaturity, really surprised. That is something that comes up almost daily. I really am surprised by that. I have an instance of a principal's referral because of that.

Another thing I am surprised at is how I can really teach and teach and teach and show them videos, and they looked like they were really immersed. After you spend so much time on a topic and they look like they are learning, but they can't give you any feedback because they just don't get it. I have told them before that I can stand up here every day and teach and teach, but unless you try nothing is going to happen. But there are a lot of them that don't really care if they learn or not. Some of the ones that are apathetic really have surprised me.

Such feelings were not limited to suburban settings. One first-year teacher in an inner-city setting was surprised that her students appeared to intentionally misbehave while she was being observed and when they were with other teachers:

It surprises me that it seems like some of my students want me to look bad. They act up during observations. They are bad in specials, for the science teacher, and I recently had a substitute and

they were terrible.

Another inner-city teacher was surprised by how she did not understand the reality of her students' home lives. She found herself taken aback by things they lacked that she took for granted in her life and never thought about. She termed these surprises 'reality checks' and explained,

Just the reality checks that my kids give me. One thing is that we asked kids to just use one bathroom and we explained that even though there were two bathrooms we would just use one. I told them it was just like at home. Some of them were absolutely amazed that some people had two bathrooms in their house. I never thought about how that could be the most amazing thing of all.

Another kid wanted to use the phone to call her mom because her mom just got out of jail and she had not talked to her for a month. I said that she would be seeing her that night. She said she wouldn't because she was going over to her uncle's house. I said, 'Why don't you just call from there?' She said he doesn't have a phone. That brings up a bunch of things. Why isn't she with her mom when her mom just got out of jail? Why was her mom in jail? And some people don't have phones.

She wrote in a little essay that sometimes she wishes that I

was her mom and that just breaks my heart. We were doing writing about a bad day and she wrote when she was four or five she went to some party with her sister and her sister left her there and some guy was touching her and stuff. I had her talk about it with the counselor. I guess those are not good surprises.

At the time of the third interview, the experiences reported as unexpected or surprising seemed to center on unresolved situations that conflicted with the teachers' personal beliefs. This is apparent in a suburban teacher's answer:

Yes, a couple kids put ropes around their necks and tried to strangle themselves in the middle of class. That was a good one. Students storming out of the principal's office and going home. I would never dream of it. Some of their language just shocks me. I am surprised by some of their attitudes. It seems like when I was going to school us kids cared about our education and we knew we needed to take it seriously and most of these kids don't.

It was becoming increasingly clear at this point how much difference the teachers saw between their students and their memories of themselves as schoolchildren.

A suburban teacher also reported surprises with discipline, saying, Yes, many parents aren't happy with the fact that I am a first-year teacher. I have had some surprises with discipline. I have had to reevaluate my teaching every couple of months, just so I am sure

that I am doing it right - or I make changes. I have had to make changes. You think you have a system that works - and maybe it does for awhile - and then you have to redo it.

The first-year teachers reported many different surprises, big and small and positive as well as negative. As one remarked,

It is never-ending. It is just the little things day-to-day that surprise you. There is always going to be something that happens everyday and they [new teachers] are just going to go 'Oh, my goodness.' They [surprises] keep things interesting. They won't necessarily be the big huge things that they take with them, but just all the little surprises.

Another similarly commented, "It has been crazy. There are some things I have expected and then there are other things that I have not. There have been a lot of surprises. It has been fun though; I've enjoyed it."

Question 3 B. How do you feel about these surprising incidents now?

In October, how these teachers reported feeling about their surprising experiences over time depended on the strength of the initial impact. If it involved a conflict within their personal core values, they continued to view the surprise as "shocking." They tended to accept events they did not feel as conflicted about they as "the way things are around here."

By January, however, first-year teachers were reporting that as time had gone on they had become more able to adapt to most situations that they initially found surprising.

The semester of experience was proving to be useful in the classroom. One suburban teacher reported,

I have gotten more used to it, but every once in awhile it takes everything not to just laugh at what a child just did. It gets a little bit easier. I can almost predict what some of them are going to do. Like when I am planning a lesson I think maybe I should do it like this - because I can see complete pandemonium if I do it like that. It helps. Like the way I say certain things, it's like I will be saying something that is not rude and not inappropriate, but with the mentality of some of my students they will think it is. So then I decide not to even say it because it will create a big fuss and parents will be calling and I will be saying, 'You know what, this is what I said. You can find it written in some where in school district policy written exactly like that.'

Another teacher indicated that the passage of time had altered her reaction to events in the school setting in this statement:

Time has made me cynical, or rather I would say realistic. Before I would say I am going to teach and they are going to learn and they will always remember me, this great teacher. Now, I'm going, 'Oh, well.' I cannot be superman for these kids, and I am not. They don't see me as that. They see me as this lady they come see

everyday and they're bored. One thing I am surprised about is that I don't laugh with them very much. I don't seem as connected. There are some I can joke with but there are others I haven't connected with. I don't know if that is because I am a first-year teacher and I have not learned how to build rapport with sixth graders yet. With third graders it is easy, you just pull them aside and they share and share. Sixth graders just grunt an answer at you. They don't want to share.

A male teacher in an inner-city school reported that minimizing his own expectations better prepared him to accept the expectations he found at the school. He stated,

I take it as a given. I really hate to complain too much. You really didn't know what you were getting into when you took the job, but complaining about it isn't going to change it. I try to be more positive and try to think that there has to be a reason they are having us do it this way, even though I am uncomfortable and don't like it.

By April, the first-year teachers had made sense of many experiences they had earlier reported as surprising. One typical remark was, "I guess it doesn't bother me as much because I have gotten used to it." Time and experience seemed to do wonders for resolving most conflict and helped teachers to accept that which was initially surprising as "the way things are around here." However, conflicts with deeply embedded belief systems were not as quickly resolved. In conversation about the recent testing, a

suburban teacher remarked,

I am still frustrated. The CRTs were so contradictory to everything I was taught. The ESL student was allowed no accommodation, so I had to give her tests that I knew she couldn't pass. It still makes me angry. I will never like the CRTs.

It was especially difficult when the new teachers were surprised to discover themselves lacking capabilities that they thought they had. One male summarized this as, "This is the most humbling job. I really thought I was going to be the one who changed the world. It was pretty shocking to find out that I could not even control my little part of it." Another shared, "No matter how good you think you are, you're not. You go into it thinking you are ready to go. You think that you are a teacher, but you're just not."

Hypotheses:

1. All teachers experience surprises, but their reaction to the surprises are mitigated by the sense-making process over the first year.
2. Beginning teachers who are older and have had more life experiences are more able to make sense of their surprises more quickly than are their younger colleagues.
3. Beginning teachers who have principals, peers, and mentors willing to support and assist have an advantage in making sense of surprises.
4. Male teachers report fewer surprises.
5. Teachers who student taught in districts other than where they go to work experience more surprises.

6. Beginning teachers find some surprises are easier to deal with than others, and the most difficult surprises are those that make the teacher question his or her ability to teach and make a difference.

Question 4. What is it like to work with the groups of people that you work with?

Question 4 A. Is working with students what you expected it to be?

When asked about the groups of people with whom they worked, seven found that, for the most part, working with students was pretty close to what they thought it would be like based on their student teaching experiences. Classroom management and behavior issues were frequently mentioned as areas of concern. As first-year teachers, they were not ready for every situation they encountered. One reported,

It is pretty much what I thought it would be like. I wasn't prepared for some of the home situations. I have a student who witnessed a relative murdered and buried, not the funeral kind of burial, just a burial to cover up the murder. He saw the whole thing, and I don't think I have taught him anything. It's like there is this brick wall ten feet thick that I have to get through. I'm not trained to deal with things like that. You knew you would have kids from all kinds of backgrounds and things going on at home. I guess I never realized how much it would affect their schoolwork.

Two of the first-year teachers reported surprising experiences when early in the school year their students left the school and school grounds without permission. One incident occurred during an observation, and the other during a discipline conference held

in the office with a student, the teacher, and the principal. The teacher involved in the second incident said she was stunned: "I never imagined that I would have a student bold enough to do that."

By the time of the second interview, they were expressing fewer surprises related to their work with students. It appeared that experience over time had somewhat tempered the differences between reality anticipated and reality encountered. "Yeah, it's what I expected," one of them said. He continued,

I don't think I was prepared in the first quarter for this group of kids, but now that I have been here and I kind of know where they are coming from a little bit more, I think it is going to get easier as time goes on. I wasn't prepared for the needs the kids have, the basic needs like clothing. It seems like phone numbers change daily sometimes. You can never tell they will be living out of the shelter one day and not the next. I just lost one student and another one is getting ready to leave.

Nevertheless, another teacher in an inner-city school found that even after almost five months of working with students there can still be surprises:

Yeah, I mean the reason I came to an inner-city school is because that is what I thought I was called to do, but still some of those reality checks, you just kind of get blown away. Some of the things that these kids go through and their reactions to things. They are so

excited to get a reward, because it's like they don't get anything like that at home.

A suburban first-year teacher reported,

It has come as a surprise that students in [an affluent part of the district] would have so many problems. They are different problems, like dealing with divorce and the problems it causes students to deal with those types of situations, but they still are problems.

From a teacher on the outskirts of town came disappointment that her students continued not to behave. She explained,

I was hoping they would be a little more respectful. But I think a couple of my boys, if I talked to them one-on-one, would say it is not cool to be nice and that is how we get accepted is to disobey the rules.

A suburban teacher stated, "Overall, yes. Some you really aren't prepared for even though you think that you are. Their [students'] actions still shock me."

By the end of their first year, the dual nature of working with students had emerged. At the final interview in April, most reported that some parts of working with students were what they expected and some were not. A teacher in a suburban setting stated,

Some of it is, and some of it isn't. The baggage that they bring with

them is just unbelievable. The little kid behaviors - I expected - they would try to be sneaky and daydream - looking at the clouds out the window. They are really good at hiding what is going on. One child said, "I never had a good day in my life, and nobody has ever loved me." That is the only thing he has ever said, but I know he saw grandpa being murdered by grandma and him being buried in the backyard. He doesn't know that I know this, but if I didn't I would be really baffled by his off the wall behavior. They do hide things, and then take out their anger on their classmates or me. I will ask if they are having a bad day and they will tell me they are having a bad life. So you get the big picture, but not any of the specifics or anything that you can deal with and help them through. A teacher in an inner-city setting reported,

Yes and no - Yes, I knew they would be challenging. No, because they act so grown when they are only nine and ten, but they act like they are my age. Their weekends are more exciting than mine. The outfits they wear, the things they talk about, and their actions are just so dramatic. One little girl was talking about the "hook up" with a guy she meet at the mall. That just shocked me.

Students did not always seem to care or to be highly motivated to learn. This stood out in marked contrast to the way the teachers themselves had behaved as students. A twenty-two year old teacher commented, "It seems like when I was going to school, we

cared about our education and we knew we needed to take it seriously and most of these kids don't."

Question 4 B. Have you had interactions with your students' parents? If so, were those interactions what you expected them to be?

Interactions with parents were a matter of concern to the neophyte teachers from the beginning. Reflecting on experiences with parents early in the school year, they reported difficulty in the October interview. One parent wanted her child moved from the classroom of a first-year teacher prior to the start of the year. When the principal refused, the parent withdrew the child from that school.

Beyond academics, discipline issues were common. Some teachers had to deal with parents who were skeptical that their children were capable of the misdeeds the teachers reported. One shared, "She [his mom] claimed he never did stuff like this last year, so I went to his fourth grade teacher and found out he did. That made me feel better, because it is not just me."

The beginning teachers viewed parent-teacher conferences as the first true test of working with parents. Of the four teachers who had had conferences prior to the first interview, three reported positive experiences overall. The parents who did not attend conferences concerned the teachers because their children were typically not performing as well as their peers. Acknowledging the importance of parents and teachers working together to the benefit of the students, these informants were frustrated by the lack of commitment on the part of some parents and with their own inability to engage these parents. The teachers interviewed prior to their first parent teacher conference experience

were looking forward to it with trepidation.

When asked about parental involvement and support, one first-year teacher reported,

Most of them are [what I expected], but there have been a couple that kind of just shocked me. Where does a parent get off having the audacity to say this to me? I have had a couple of nasty parent notes. It's basically parents that don't want to face that their kids are low and won't ever be at the same level as the other students. Because their child is receiving low grades and not behaving they want to say that, 'My child has never received low grades or had trouble behaving until you came along.'

When I got a note one morning, I was bummed all day long - until I went to the principal and other staff members and they said this parent has an issue and it's not you. They need a person to blame. One night I got on the phone with a step-dad and he said that he had been having the same problems with him for years. It was kind of reassuring to hear that I am right, and I know what I am doing.

Parental interactions proved to be a continuing issue. At the second interview in January, the teachers remained concerned about their relationship with their students' parents. They worried about what the parents thought of them as rookie teachers. Parent-teacher conferences were viewed as a milestone, and most first-year teachers were happy

to be past that initial experience. One male teacher reported, "Parent-teacher conferences really surprised me after first quarter. How some parents reacted and how some of them [parents] were really respectful and I learned where some of them [students] get their disrespect from."

A sub-theme in their concern was that while most parents were caring and interested, some appeared apathetic. It seemed to them that the parents who have children with the most reason for concern, tend to be the least involved. This is a theme that carried over from the first interview. One suburban teacher stated,

Some parents are really wonderful - they are involved in the P.T.A. and supportive. I had four parents here today for the class party. Most are good, but a select few, you hope they would be involved for the child's sake, but it is a struggle to even make contact with them.

An inner-city teacher voiced similar concerns with some of the parents of children in her class as she reported,

Some are really good and some are not so good. The kids are getting 5's and I called them - that is if their phone is hooked up. That is a surprise that the phones are disconnected, and how hard it can be to get in touch with them to communicate. It just surprised me so much that some of the parents just don't care. They bring a child into this world, and then they just don't care about how that

child does in school. Sometimes when you do get a hold of them, they tell you that by the time they get home and make dinner they are too tired to follow through on homework. It tells you why the kids are that way, because the parents are that way.

Another girl was gone for a month, came back for two weeks and then was gone for another month. Finally, we called Protective Services on them and she was at school the next day. I had a meeting with mom after school and told her how important it is that her child comes to school. She's got to learn that you come to school and are successful. She has already been held back for one year because of not coming to school. Mom says her husband doesn't care if she doesn't come to school, so she will have to get in a fight with him. I know - obviously there are some other issues there. She was making excuses and the child knew the real reasons. That is another surprise - that I can't believe that somebody can not come to school for a month. Don't you think that you would get sick of your child being there all the time? The mom did admit that she does help around the house, so I think that she is just kind of being babied.

That some parents seemed disinterested in their children and their education surprised the teachers. Drawing attention again to a continuing theme, four teachers said that the contrast between the way their own parents had behaved in terms of their

education and the way that these parents behave exacerbated the problem. One suburban teacher stated,

It seems like they aren't involved in the kid's education. They expect the teacher to handle everything. They don't care if their child is having trouble in school. They are so wrapped up in their own lives and themselves. It is hard because that is not at all the way that I was raised.

One informant struggled with being in the middle of a dispute between the principal and a parent. As a result, her negative opinion about her principal stood out in marked contrast to the first interview. She recalled,

Most of them are fairly supportive - or at least say they will support you when you call them. They say that they will do something - whether they do or not. I've had one call me and say that her daughter had problems on the bus and I mentioned it on the mid-quarter [report]. She said that I should have called her about it.

The reason that I didn't is because after that day she no longer rode the bus, and the principal is the one that told me she had problems because there was a tape of the bus. The parent refused to sign the mid-term report because I had no proof, and the principal would not let her see the video. So, that was kind of interesting.

The feeling of being caught in someone else's relationship struggle took a number of forms. Three of the first-year teachers felt they sometimes were trapped in the middle

of conflicts between a child's parents. Usually one parent sided with the teacher and the other parent sided with the child, and the teacher was left to negotiate his or her way through these situations. One found,

There are some who have been relatively harsh, but I mean some parents really baby their sixth graders. That's unfortunate because next year that student is going to having an eye-opening experience when they hit the halls of junior high. It's sink or swim, and I see a couple of them that are just sinking now. The parents are letting the kid do what he wants. We have a couple, and when they don't want to come to school they don't, and mom calls and says that they are sick. Then other kids that live near them see them and know what is going on and they tell me.

A couple of parents get upset over grades. I find there are actually arguments between the parents where one father agrees with me that their student should have been doing the work when I call home. Then mom comes up and I mention it, and she is all surprised and she tries to blame me for his grades. I have two or three that are like that where mom and dad disagree. It is usually mom taking up for the kid.

One suburban teacher found that a few parents are almost overly involved, to the extent that they wanted to do for their children what the children were capable of and should have been doing for themselves. She reported, "Some are so closely involved

with their kids that they almost do too much for them. There are others who are completely uninvolved.”

As in so many other areas, working with parents made the new teachers seem and feel vulnerable. Only two reported relatively few problems. One of these happily stated, “I have good parents. I have one who I have had no interaction with. I try not to take it personally. They are very good to me as a first-year teacher.” Another in an inner-city school found positive things to say about parental participation in that, “Honestly, my relationships with the parents are very good. We work together as a team.”

The summary feeling by the end of the year was that the first-year teachers had found interactions with their students’ parents were not what they had expected them to be. Although conferences had gone better than the first-year teachers had anticipated that they would, conferences did not constitute the full picture of parental interaction. In other settings and in communication to the principal about a given teacher, parents were often more difficult to deal with and to understand.

Conferences went very, very well- both rounds. I was very surprised by that. I had a teacher tell me that she had parents just get up and scream at her in front of everyone in the gym, and I thought, “Oh, please God, don’t let that be me.” So, I was very surprised at how well the conferences went. I have had some parents come up here and be pretty snippy and rude and I have gotten some rude notes, but face-to-face they back down. I don’t know what it is, but if they

can say it on the phone or in a note those extreme emotions come out.

It's pretty interesting.

Teachers worked hard to communicate with parents and tried to reach those hardest to contact. One teacher reported,

I don't want to stereotype, because everyone said I would not have parental support at my school. I was surprised in the fall - sixteen out of eighteen parents came to conferences. They must have been coming to check out the new teacher, because this spring there were only nine out of eighteen who showed up. It was disappointing. I still write them a letter each week to let them know what is going on. If only one parent reads it, it is worth it.

That fact that it appeared that some parents did not care about how their children did in school remained a continuing theme. Six of the ten commented on it in the final April interview. One remarked along this line, "No, I was surprised because it seems like a lot of them don't care about how their children do in school." Perhaps this comment best illustrated the teachers' perspective:

I'm still fighting the belief that all parents are like mine. I am still looking at it from my frame of reference and I realize I can't do that. Some parents are just like my parents and always come to conferences and volunteer. I have a parent I have not seen and conferences were a month ago. That was the parent I really needed to talk to. My ESL

student has been gone for days and her phone got disconnected.

Trying to communicate was hard before. I still have the mindset that parents should care if their child is getting grades of 4. I don't understand why some parents don't care.

One teacher shared an unpleasant, but memorable message that a parent had given her. While the incident occurred before the first day of school, she did not share it until the third interview, recalling that:

When I did my get acquainted call before school started and said I was a first-year teacher, one mother said, "Great." [in a very sarcastic manner] It really hurt. It was painful. I think I will carry that experience throughout my teaching career. I hope to have student teachers when I can, and I plan to share that experience with them. That way, maybe, they can be prepared and know ahead of time what it can be like.

On the other hand, one was pleasantly surprised and indicated, "I get along with all the parents great. There are a few I never talk to. I send stuff home and they sign it, but that is about it. I have great rapport with the parents."

Question 4 C. Is your relationship with your fellow teachers what you thought it would be like?

Two months into the school year, seven of the first-year teachers had been pleasantly surprised by the willingness of other teachers to interact with and support them as the year began. They viewed their fellow teachers as busy and helpful. One mentioned

that his actual teaching was done in solitude, but for the most part felt his peers were well-intended. The opinion of the majority was voiced with this comment,

When I interviewed, the principal told me this was a great staff. They have been very helpful. They actually care. They are always stopping me and asking me if there is anything they can do to help. They are just a great staff.

In contrast, one first-year teacher with an excellent student teaching experience had come in expecting more. She stated,

No. I expected support, warmth, and tightness from student teaching. I am super close with one other first-year teacher. I don't think we would make it without each other. I didn't come here to play games with other adults.

The teachers' perceptions of the quality of their relationships had dipped a little by midyear. In January, only six of the teachers reported that their relationships with fellow teachers were completely positive, but those six were emphatic. "They [our relationships] exceed what I thought they would be like," one said, "I can go to the staff and the principal. I don't think I could ask for better. I have felt very welcome here right from the beginning."

The measure of a relationship seemed to be rooted in a comparison to the relationships they had had with faculty members during their student teaching experiences. They frequently compared their current experience to student teaching, using it as a point of reference. The contrast stood out as another found, "It is better. In

my student teaching situation, my cooperating teacher and the other teachers did not get along that well. Here the staff is wonderful. You couldn't ask for any better."

These positive relationships, however, were not always easily established. A mid-town teacher found it took time to get to know fellow teachers and spoke of the ways teaching is a unique profession in this aspect:

It wasn't as much at the beginning of the year, but now that I have gotten to know them it is. At the beginning, I was just kind of attached to my mentor, but now I have gotten to know a lot of them and it is better. It is kind of weird because teaching is such a different job, you know it's funny because you work with them, but you don't really interact with them while you work. I think teachers become closer than people who work other jobs and have desks beside one another because you need to talk to other adults or you will go crazy. You have a common thing.

Another teacher, one who taught with a very experienced and well-established staff, answered this question as:

Yes and no. There have been some unexpected things that have come up. There are some you get a little more quickly allied to and others that are more stand offish. Some of them are a lot more friendly than others. I guess again it is the idealism versus the realism. You go into this thinking that we are all

teachers and have so much in common that we are going to instantly bond. You don't stop long enough to think that they are human beings, too - and they have different interests and likes and dislikes, too. We may not agree on things, and we may not be best friends. But then there are others - and it is wonderful.

A male teacher in an inner-city school also reported having found variations in relationships with individual teachers in that:

It's kind of what I expected. Some of the teachers are friendlier - and some of them just come and go to their room and stay in their own little world. You don't see or hear from them until Friday - when everybody goes into the Teachers' Lounge for donuts.

As socialization theory predicted, there was a gap between expectations and reality for virtually all of the participants. It was strongest in those who had had a very supportive student teaching experience. One who had student taught with a very cohesive staff voiced disappointment in the negativity of some veteran staff members and stated, "I thought it would be a bit more positive. I don't know how realistic that was, but I probably expected more."

Relationships, of course, are built from interaction, and they often take time to develop. Teaching relationships brightened for most of the participants as the year progressed. By the third interview, eight found their relationships with fellow teachers to be better than they anticipated and better than they had reported earlier: "It is better. The staff here is just wonderful. It just gets better as I have gotten to know them, and they

have gotten to know me. They are still very helpful with all the moving and everything.” Another typical comment was, “It is better. I was hoping that it would be good, and it’s great. There are a lot of them that I can talk to, and they are very supportive.” Only one teacher reported not getting to know many teachers and commented that, “I have been surprised that you really do not get to know your fellow teachers very well unless you happen to be scheduled to eat lunch at the same time.”

Question 4 D. Are there any people who are especially helpful to you?

All ten informants reported having people who were especially helpful to them. As one might expect, the individuals who filled this role for each varied widely. Fellow teachers, the counselor, the principal, the secretary, custodians, peer support, mentors, and team leaders were all mentioned.

At midyear, the teacher who moved to the district from another state reported that while teachers were very friendly at school, she would have enjoyed socializing more after duty hours. She shared, “I thought there would be more outside of school, especially because it is such a small place, but they all have their own families and do their own things.”

Participants found there were many helpful people. Although the range of identities was still very broad, mentors were the most frequently cited group. As one said, “My mentor, I would not have survived without her. She really showed me the ropes.” Another commented, “My mentor is very helpful with ideas and moral support.” One talked about the fact that the fact she was in a re-locatable classroom limited whom she interacted with on a daily basis as she reported, “Mainly my mentor. All of the

teachers here are supportive, but I don't see them much because I'm not in the building." Another agreed, "My mentor, it was nice to get my district-assigned mentor at the same grade level and in the same building. There is another teacher I can always go to and ask questions if I don't understand something."

Mentors were not the only helpful people. One teacher pointed out the useful roles that many different people played in helping her figure out how things were done. She remarked,

My mentoring teacher is very helpful. There is a kindergarten teacher who knows the principal on a more personal level and she will let me know what the principal will think about something. I can ask her if I say this to her, what will the spin on that be? What will she really think? I work closely with another new teacher. It is the blind leading the blind, but we make it through.

Eight reported having fellow teachers they called on for support. Both veteran teachers and fellow first-year teachers were mentioned. Peer support teachers also were mentioned as helpful people who also supply needed feedback. A teacher in a middle-class neighborhood school remarked,

My peer support teacher compliments me on organization and management and told me she has people who probably need her more. I think the peer support is really good. She came in one day and sat for an hour and a half and graded papers. That

is the part that I hate. I hate grading papers. My roommate loves it, but you have so many other things to do when you are really teaching.

By midyear the role of the principal was becoming clearer. Two of the first-year teachers noted their principals among the helpful people. One worried aloud that she was concerned that although the principal assured her she was not asking too many questions, she might really be tired of having to help her all the time. She reported,

My principal is wonderful. She is so supportive. I told her she would be so sick of seeing my face by the end of the year. She said, “No, no, no,” and is so reassuring. The PAC [Positive Action Center] facilitator and the counselor are both so wonderful. As far as that goes, I could not wish for anyone better. They are just spectacular people. They are phenomenal. The other teachers in this wing are very helpful.

Another beginning teacher reported, “The other sixth grade teacher and the fifth grade teacher are helpful. The principal has been supportive and has helped a lot. I have been surprised by the extent to which she is involved.” The perception that the principal cared about a teacher was an important factor in how that teacher perceived the principal as a leader. This was an emergent theme that is further discussed later in this dissertation.

By the end of the year, there were many people who had emerged as especially helpful. Proximity was a factor, as most mentioned people who were “nearby”. Eight reported calling on fellow teachers. Both veteran and first-year teachers were mentioned.

Six teachers referred to their mentors and three categorized their principals as helpful.

Question 4 E. Are there any people who appear to be deliberately not helpful to you?

Initially, only one of the first-year teachers felt that another faculty member was a negative factor in her environment, but she did not feel comfortable discussing the situation at the first interview in October.

By midyear, seven study informants had more to share concerning less than helpful people than they had had at the time of the first interview. Only a few, though, found themselves a specific target of someone's unpleasantness. In general, the subjects were more affected by generally displayed negative attitudes that seemed to detract from their overall experience. One reported, "There is one on my grade level. This is a veteran teacher who does not give up anything, but wants my stuff. I can't even get any advice." A teacher in an inner-city school setting found, "Yes, someone who questions my classroom management. As a result, I have been observed and an administrator is working with my class."

Three were surprised by the negative attitude that some veteran teachers displayed. One reported, "There are a couple with negative attitudes." Another concurred, "There are some teachers with a negative attitude, but they don't try to pull everybody else down. They just need to get out." One found that the teachers with negative attitudes tended to congregate and she preferred to stay away from them. She stated,

There is a detracting place and that is the teachers' lounge. A lot of

times I go in there and just say, 'Hi.' It can be pretty negative. I think my special education background has helped in confidentiality. There are some things that other people don't need to hear. It's not like they are asking for help or ideas - it is just to moan and groan. It's not all the time.

The sense that generalized negativity on the part of a few veteran staff members detracted from the first-year experience was fairly solid by the end of the year. Eight reported having to interact with such people at this time. On an encouraging note, four of these teachers had figured out how to deal with them or at least how to minimize their impact. A typical comment came from a suburban teacher. She said, "We have decided that is just the way it is, and we don't let it bother us. We just get on with it." Three of the group continued to be bothered. One was frustrated over a lack of willingness of some veteran specialist teachers to communicate needed information to her. She voiced,

There are a couple, and lately it seems like they don't want to come and talk to me. I don't know if it because I am new, but she really doesn't talk to me. They prefer to go to the grade level veteran. That doesn't help me. It makes me feel like I never know what is going on. I feel like they look down on me. It could be my perception, and I might be wrong. I just get the feeling that they think I'm new and there is no point to talking to me. I find that very frustrating. Just because I am new doesn't mean I don't have

something to bring to the conversation and something to share. I think people forget about that.

A teacher in an inner-city school encountered a strongly negative force in a fellow teacher who questioned her management skills. She reported,

Yes, a teacher turned me in for my classroom management. That's a problem. We just have different management. I don't think it is necessarily better or worse. She does some things that I see that work for her, but I don't want to do them in my classroom. Like if a kid is not participating - she has them stand at the back of the room. I don't want to do that.

Question 4 F. Are you part of a formal mentoring process? If so, how do you find that relationship?

In October, eight of the ten first-year teachers reported having had a formal mentor assigned to them. Six of the mentors were in the same building and worked at the same grade level as their first-year teachers. Physical proximity to the mentor emerged as important. These with ready access to their mentors expressed the greatest satisfaction and closeness in their working relationships. One teacher without a mentor expressed disappointment and shared,

I thought everyone was supposed to be assigned a mentor, but I have not been. I thought anyone with no experience and especially no experience in this school system was supposed to be assigned a mentor.

Having a mentor at the same building and at the same grade level again emerged as key to a successful mentoring relationship. Six of the seven with mentors had them at their buildings at the same grade level. As one indicated,

It's great. I feel really lucky to have someone at the school on the same grade level as me. I think that is the key. Peer support is great, but they can't be here all the time. It is really good to have a mentor who is handy.

The activities and amount of time the pairs spent working together varied greatly. One indicated, "We get together every quarter and set goals. We meet briefly on a daily basis and in-depth every two to three weeks."

Match of personality and style emerged as important. This is reflected in one teacher's affirmative statement that, "My relationship with my mentor is very good. We have the same positive attitude. We both work very hard and like to have fun." Conversely, one match was not as good as the others and that teacher expressed disappointment in that, "The district assigned another fourth grade teacher here. It has not been as helpful as I hoped."

The one teacher who had a mentor in another building found their relationship more strained. She said that it felt like it was one more person critically evaluating her teaching when her mentor showed up one day without warning to observe in her classroom.

At the time of the final interview, eight reported having mentors. All but one of them were very positive about their relationships with their mentors and had found them

to be very helpful. A typical comment came from a mid-city teacher. She found, "It's great, I don't think I could have made it through this first year without a mentor, especially one in my building at the same grade level. It was just wonderful. She gave me so many ideas." Another remarked, "Yes, the relationship has been good the whole time. I can go to her for anything. I can call her anytime day or night."

The need for proximity and support continued to be demonstrated as vital for a meaningful mentoring relationship. The teacher who had a mentor in another building did not find the relationship to be as helpful. She stated,

The relationship didn't really work out. She did try; it was probably me. I didn't necessarily push her away, but she didn't understand the way things are at this school. I think if I had been at her school, she would have just been fabulous.

The teacher who had not initially been assigned a mentor had enlisted her own and had had the relationship formally recognized by the school district. She was pleased with this and said that it was wonderful.

Question 4 G. Have you found informal mentors? If so, how do you find that relationship?

As early as October, nine of the first-year teachers reported having found informal mentors. The teacher who wanted a formal mentor was the only one who did not find an informal mentor. They reported going to their informal mentors with emotional concerns and the need to talk and vent. The informal mentors were self-selected and therefore relationships based on compatible personalities and philosophies resulted.

By the time of the second interview in January, all had found informal mentors. The self-selection allowed for a compatible match and gave the new teachers the emotional support and sounding board they deemed necessary at this time. As a result of individual differences, their responses varied widely. Participants found it useful to have someone just to visit with and help sort things out. "There is another teacher," one said, "and it is nice just to talk to her and pass things by."

Informal mentors supplied needed emotional support and understanding. The value of a mentor may be even greater in the personal/emotional realm than in providing technical assistance on how to do something. As one beginner told me, "Not so much instructionally, but emotionally there is somebody I always go to if I need someone to talk to."

Informal mentors supplied much needed guidance. The beginning teachers had many first time experiences and enjoyed having someone they did not feel they were imposing on who could help them through those experiences. One gratefully reported, "My team leader is an informal mentor. She walked me through the SAT [Student Assistance Team] process and even sat through my first SAT with me." Another reported her informal mentors were comforting and familiar, "...my cooperating teacher and my dad."

By the end of the year, all had found informal mentors and their reliance on them seemed to have increased. They had self-selected these people because they had found them to be approachable and compatible. They were willing to listen and the first-year teachers liked to "bounce ideas off" of them. When the beginning teachers voiced their

ideas, their informal mentors helped them to understand how their ideas would be interpreted and might play out within the context of that particular school. Informal mentors were viewed as supportive and nonjudgmental. One first-year teacher shared this illustrative story:

The specialists, like the music and art teacher, I just click with them.

I can talk to the art teacher. Like today, this parent came up and told my principal she was concerned- she [the principal] didn't think much of it, but I was really upset. It just upset me that a parent would do that. It just bothered me. The art teacher said, "I know her son is that way. Do you want me to call her up and tell her? Then mom will know that it is not just you, that he is doing this with other teachers." I thought that was cool. She's just like that.

Some reached back to student teaching for mentor-like help. Two of the first-year teachers reported that they continued to turn to their cooperating teachers from student teaching in other buildings for support. As one explained, "I still rely on my cooperating teacher. She is a genius."

Question 4 H. Is your relationship with the principal what you thought it would be like?

In October, five of the first-year teachers reported that their relationship with their principal was even better than they had expected it would be. One said it this way,

It's even better. She is very open. She always has time for

whatever you need. She will drop whatever she is in the middle of to help with problems. She told my mentor to tell me to come to her for anything. It has been a big surprise the extent to which she goes for her staff. She goes the extra five miles.

But this feeling was not universal. The other five teachers were less enthusiastic.

One said she needed more support and communication from the administration:

They are trying. They have new teacher meetings on Open House and report cards. I gave some grades of 5's and the principal was not very happy with me about that. I had to change the grades of 5 with satisfactory effort to 5 with needs improvement effort. I really felt students had worked hard but the achievement was not there. Sometimes it seems like the nit-picky technicalities are emphasized over what is really important. I wish I had more support. The communication is not there. Be honest with me and just say it.

Communication with all groups emerged as an important element of the first-year experience. Clear communication was needed with students, with parents, with peers, with mentors, and with the principal.

At the second interview in January, six (as opposed to five in the first interview) found that their relationships with their principals had proven better than they had anticipated that they would be. Perhaps this was because it takes time for a new teacher to understand what a principal really does - or because it takes time for a beginner to see

the principal as a person. One emphasized the importance of a personal as well as professional relationship when she stated,

I had this picture, like here is the principal and here is you. I thought she would say this is how we do it and then I would do it that way. She is always there; she goes above and beyond. I will walk in her office and whatever she is doing, she will drop it. She will stay late at night; she will come early. You can talk to her about anything. Like if you are having a problem at home and are feeling down, she will notice it. She will come to you and say, “What’s going on?” and “What can I do to help?” I think it is pretty neat that she can read her staff like that and just isn’t just about school but cares about your whole person. She wants you to be well so that you can do your best to teach those kids. It’s pretty incredible.

“It is better than I thought it would be,” another shared.

I always had this mental image like principals are scary. I mean they have my job in their hands; any boss is kind of a scary thing. She has just been so awesome, at observations and evaluation type stuff. I just don’t get scared anymore at observations, because they have been so positive. She has a way of pointing things out without making you feel like you were not doing it right. I feel like

it is more of a sharing of ideas, and it is really good. Lesson plan evaluations were good. She has a nice balance of positive comments and suggestions.

Feedback from the principal emerged as very important to the new teachers. It appeared they valued positive feedback that gave approval for what they were already doing rather than truly evaluative feedback that might be critical of elements of their performance. However, any type of feedback was preferable to none. An absence of feedback was viewed most negatively. When feedback wasn't given in a professional and timely manner, their responses ranged from anxiety to resentment and it had an effect on their view of the administration. Three had not received their formal evaluations at the time of the third interview. They were anxious to have this process completed. As one of them put it:

I am not real concerned, but getting curious as to the final evaluation process. I have had informal observations. I suppose she is waiting for the last quarter to give me, as a first-year teacher, time to get up and going to perform at my best.

Another remarked on the lack of feedback she had experienced, commenting that,

I turned in my CRTs to my curriculum specialist, and she said I should get some kind of award. She told me I was doing great. That was kind of nice to get feedback, because I don't get feedback from anybody else. I have only had one observation by the

instructional facilitator and that was because I begged for it. The principal is never here.

The four who were dissatisfied with their principal relationship seemed to focus on what they perceived as support inadequacies. As one expressed it,

No, he is definitely not supportive of me. He doesn't listen about what I have to say about anything. If there is a situation with a parent, he will just listen to the parent and not even involve me in the situation. Like I'll get new students and I won't even know about it until they show up. That might be more of a secretary thing rather than a principal thing, but I just think that he has a lack of management skills and little things like that could be cured if he had management skills and communication skills. The assistant principal is really supportive, so I look to her as my principal. He [the principal] is never around anyway, and if he is, he is tooting his horn.

The relationship satisfaction/dissatisfaction split was still six and four at the end of the year. The six who reported positive relationships with their principals told me that things were better than they had anticipated. They described their principals as "supportive" and "positive". A representative answer follows:

It is better, way better. She gets to know you on a personal level. I mean, one time things were crazy - I was supposed to be moving

into this place and the girl moving out, wasn't getting her stuff out of there. I was living out of boxes on the living room floor - and my kids were driving me nuts. The principal noticed something was wrong and stopped me in the hall. She said, "Something is up. What's up? Let's get you better."

Another appreciated advice she had been given by her principal. She remembered,

My principal told me, "This year your job is to survive. You won't be teacher of the year, you won't raise their CAT test scores by 30 points, your job is to survive. The second year you will know what to expect." That really was true.

On the other hand, after nearly a year of working together, four did not feel personally connected with their principals. One mentioned a lack of communication as problematic. Her dissatisfaction stemmed from concerns in the professional arena as she shared, "No, there really is no communication. A girl was taken out of my room, and I wasn't told about it. A kid left the school and came back to my room and I wasn't told about it." As for the other three, they had been hoping for a more personal relationship with their principals. As one mentioned,

Not really, I thought it would be a little more personal. Maybe that she would be a little bit more one-on-one with people. She is there for me when I need her, but I would like a bit more. That's because

I like her so much.

Question 4 I. Have you had any feedback on your teaching so far? If so, did you find it useful?

When we met in October for the first interview, nine informants said their peer support teachers had given them informal feedback on their teaching. With one exception, they felt positive about the feedback and had found it useful. Only one had been formally observed by her principal by that time, but five mentioned informal administrative observations. They were grateful for feedback on their performance.

In the midwinter interview, six reported having received useful feedback on their teaching from their principals. These teachers felt that the feedback was positive and gave them needed information about instructional strategies or different teaching techniques to try. One spoke for the majority when she commented,

The feedback has been helpful because they can see things that I would never see and give me suggestions that I would never think of. They can say, 'Yeah, you taught that a good way, but here's another way that you can re-teach people who didn't get it when you taught it that way.' It is stressful to think that the principal is coming in and writing down everything that you say for an hour, but then you leave the office with a whole handful of new strategies to try. You think, 'Wow, I did a good job and I can try this next time.' So, I guess the more I think about it the more I want them coming in and

telling me what I did wrong and how to fix it. They are really coming in to give me helpful advice and I'll take that any day.

Two felt their peer support teacher was only offering negative feedback and they tended to disregard it because "she does not understand these kids." Two other teachers were becoming increasingly apprehensive about the formal evaluation process because they had as yet had no feedback. One stated,

I have not had any formal observations yet and I'm kind of getting anxious about that. I have a feeling they will all be crammed into a four month period. I have a fear she [principal] will pop in on a day when nothing is going right and that will be my first formal observation.

The other disappointedly remarked, "I have had no feedback on my teaching."

By the end of the year, nine had received some formal administrative feedback on their teaching. They did find it useful, although they clearly preferred feedback that was positive and which reinforced how they performed in their classrooms. A suburban teacher exemplified this in her comment:

From [the principal] - it was very useful, but there was one [assistant principal] and all she tried to do shoot me down. The principal is so very helpful, positive, and upbeat. This other one said everything was wrong, nothing was right, and she hasn't seen me teach all year. I really felt low. I went into the principal and I asked if I was really

doing that bad. She said I would have been out of there a long time ago if I wasn't teaching the kids.

Hypotheses:

1. Anticipatory socialization factored heavily in forming expectations and interpreting the current experience.
2. The teachers were surprised by ways their students differed from how they themselves had been as children.
3. The severity of problems some students encountered at home and dealing with the aftermath of those situations concerned teachers.
4. Teachers were further surprised when some parents did not appear to care about how their children did in school, particularly because it was so different from their experience with their own parents.
5. Teachers wanted and accepted feedback from all groups of people with whom they worked. They particularly liked feedback that was confirming, but all was deemed useful in interpreting and making sense of surprises.
6. Teachers viewed the principal as important in their beginning teaching experience.

Question 5. Has teaching impacted other parts of your life? If so, could you tell me about it?

Even as early as the October interview, eight of the first-year teachers reported that teaching had significantly impacted other parts of their lives. They were surprised by the hours they spent at school and the amount of work that they had to take home.

Even when they went home, they said, they did not leave their jobs. Three were surprised by the emotional burdens. They thought about their students when they were not at school with them. The remark by a teacher in an inner-city setting was typical,

Yes, I worry about these kids. At night I go home and think about them. I try to leave mental baggage at school, but it is hard. I tell my students to just try to do their personal best, and I try to do that myself.

By January, the spillover of teaching demands into private areas was emerging as a major theme. The eight female teachers all mentioned being tired, too busy, and having no time for parts of their lives that did not involve school. Their comments reflected real pain. One shared, "It has affected my personal life and it hasn't been very good. My boyfriend broke up with me, and I think it was mostly because I was always so stressed out." Another complained that, "Yes, I have no social life. I am tired when I get home. It is always late and I still have to eat, plan, and check papers even on Friday and Saturday. It is endless." A teacher sighed that, "It definitely makes me tired. I go to bed at 8:30 or 9:00 every night." One simply remarked, "Teaching takes a lot of time."

The three teachers who moved out of their parents' homes for the first time during their first year of teaching found an additional challenge. One stated,

Yes, the biggest one right now is moving...trying to set up some kind of stable place where I can go at night and relax and enjoy myself. But right now I am still trying to find things to go into that

little space, so at night I am consumed with that. After I finish here and I'm done and I walk out, I go home, but I can't stay there because I have to get groceries, or like tonight I need to buy a little television set so I can get the news and weather. That's all I want. Moving has added to the burden. I really wish that I had found my apartment before the last weekend of Christmas break. I could have used a week to get more settled in, but that is falling into place a little more.

I don't know if I am learning to deal with it more, but I don't talk about school so much anymore. People ask how my day was, like my boyfriend, and I'll just say well it's been pretty good this week or it's been not so good, there might be a few things that I go into detail with or gripe a little bit, but not nearly like I did at the beginning. I would go home in tears some nights because I was so frustrated and it was not what I expected right off the bat. Who would have thought I would have a class like this right off the bat? But then I stop and think I am not at an inner city school where they have the higher numbers and all the extraneous elements to deal with as well. I'm kind of starting to count myself very lucky.

The time demands of teaching and their impact on outside relationships remained a major theme all year. Teaching had impacted other parts of their lives primarily

because it left little time and energy for anything else. By May, the impact was clear, continual, and almost universally recognized: “Yes, my personal relationships have been affected. I have no time.” Another teacher elaborated,

I can't really have a social life, because there is no time for one.

After I get done here and go workout, sometimes I don't get home until eight or nine at night before I sit down to work on lesson plans and grade papers.

Question 5 A. Have your relationships with family members been impacted?

At the first interview they commonly talked about the effect teaching had on their time and energy levels. Nine found there was an impact on relationships with family members. “It takes a chunk out of your personal life,” one reported, “because you spend so much time at school and on school work.”

The same themes of lacking time and energy for relationships with family members were continued in the second interview. One of the males mentioned “working it out”, and the other one commented, “My wife sees less of me.” Female teachers were more vocal. As one remarked, “Sometimes I get stressed out and am short with them. It definitely cuts into the time I have available to spend with them.”

By April, the impact that teaching demands had on family relationships had taken on a variety of characteristics. The three who had recently moved out of their parents' homes attributed most of the change to the move. One stated it best in her comment:

Not really so much. I still lived at home when I started here, so that

has changed. Often when I get home at night, I could pick up the phone and talk to them or get into my car and drive over there, but the last thing I want to do is keep on talking, so I don't.

One teacher shared, "I definitely don't see them as much. All I talk about is teaching, and thank goodness they don't mind." The two male teachers were more reticent and were the only ones who reported "not really" as a response to impact on family relationships. Whether their responses were accurate or tempered by some gender-driven self-image is open to speculation.

Question 5 B. Have your relationships with friends been impacted?

In October it also was obvious the demands of teaching were having effects beyond immediate family members; relationships with friends had been similarly affected. The teachers spoke of the emotional toll of teaching and of being too tired to do anything at night. One young female teacher lamented that,

All I do is school. I cry on my boyfriend's shoulder. I recently went out with a friend from out of town and for an hour and a half, all I did was talk about school. I had to explain to her that this is my life.

Another echoed:

Yes, because I have no time. I am in bed at eight thirty every night. It has definitely impacted my social life. My social life has gone out the window. I don't have time to grocery shop. I went out one night and it took me a week and a half to recover. I have nothing to fall

back on.

It seemed that some adjustments were being made by midyear. Although not everyone adjusted at the same rate, the impact on relationships with friends seemed less direct than those on family. Seven of the teachers remarked in January that their friendships were shifting to include more teacher friends, including the ones they met at school. As one explained,

My roommate and I work on school together. I have made connections with other people who are teachers. You end up hanging out with those people. I guess it had affected who I chose as friends. The time has been a big factor.

The shift was toward getting closer to people who had some inkling of what teaching requires. The greatest apparent challenge was in maintaining relationships with those who did not understand the demands of teaching. Another reported more of a struggle with non-teaching friends when she noted, “My social life is going downhill. Some friends don’t understand the time and energy requirements of this job.”

At the April interview the importance of friends understanding teaching remained a factor in their relationships. Most of the study group continued to contend that relationships with friends had been impacted, mostly by a lack of time. As one stated, “I am just so busy there is no time. A lot of people I don’t talk to as much.” Some of the new teachers found they had more in common with fellow teachers as friends. One explained, “Actually some of them have gotten a little bit better - the ones that are starting out teaching. We tend to get together and exchange war stories. You hear someone had a

worse day than you.”

In contrast, non-teaching friends did not always understand what life as a teacher was like. One suburban teacher commented,

Sometimes, like during the week, it is hard for them to understand that I can't do things because I have work I need to get done. They don't understand report card times. They don't understand that at 5:00 my job doesn't end.

Hypotheses:

1. Teachers are not prepared for the time and energy it takes to teach, nor the effect this will have on self and relationships.
2. Beginning teachers become more aware of the ways teaching affects other parts of their lives as the year progresses and must reconcile themselves to the idea that it is not going away.
3. Beginning teachers become more willing to recognize and discuss the effects of long hours at school, school work taken home, and the emotional burden of working with students in need as the year progresses.
4. Teachers who assume additional personal burdens or who make significant changes in their private lives (such as moving out of their parents' homes to establish their independence), face added challenges in handling their work.
5. Beginning teachers may shift their friendships toward fellow teachers as they can better relate to the demands of teaching as a profession.

Question 6. How do you feel about the parts of your job that do not involve direct contact with students?

Question 6 A. How do you feel about the paperwork?

It did not take the new teachers long to discover the burden of paperwork. It was a painful subject to them in the October interview. In assessing parts of the job that did not involve direct contact with students, seven of the ten first-year teachers expressed negative reactions to paperwork, usually tempered with a perfunctory comment that it was necessary. They viewed it as one more thing stacking up and competing for their time when they had so many things - some of which they perceived as more important than others - that simultaneously vied for their attention.

By the second interview in January, the teachers were very straightforward in their responses regarding paperwork. They were more critical than they had been in the early fall. Eight offered flatly negative responses. Their complaints centered on the time-consuming aspect of paperwork, its tendency to pile up and get out of control, and the fact that it is never-ending. A teacher in a mid-town school summed it up, "There is more now than there was at the beginning of the year. I am feeling it more. It is not that overwhelming, but you get it done and then there is more." A teacher in a suburban setting agreed and worried about the time paperwork takes away from teaching as she commented, "It is not fun. It is necessary. It takes a lot to motivate myself to do them. It always seem like there is more paperwork coming in. I am, like - 'You want me to teach - when?' I am too piled up in paperwork." The clearest statement left no doubt, "Hate it, hate it, hate it. I do not like it. It is time consuming and my least fun thing to do."

While they did not like paperwork, the teachers appeared to be less overwhelmed by the time they were halfway through the year. The two male teachers were more positive in their comments. One remarked, "I think that at the first part of the year it was a little overwhelming, but now that I've looked at the paperwork that we have to do and I stay on top of it and I don't put it in a stack and let it pile up, then it is really, really manageable. There is nothing that's too overwhelming." The other male teacher commented, "A lot of the paperwork is in direct support of instruction."

By April, the teachers seem to have reached some accommodation with their feelings about paperwork. Although paperwork continually emerged as an area of concern, they were adapting. As one stated,

It is difficult to keep up with the district generated paperwork. At first it was overwhelming. I coped with it. I learned how to deal with it. I figured out a way that works for me. The first quarter was the worst.

The end of the year brought a renewed discomfort in the shape of new and unfamiliar forms. One teacher commented,

I don't like it. I didn't see a lot of it before, but now at the end of the year, I am really seeing it, like all the forms we have to fill out for the CRTs and the CAT, the end of the year forms, and the cums. It just seems to all come at once rather than in a steady stream. I know it is very necessary, but it is tedious. I feel like there are better

ways for me to spend my time and more important things that I should be doing.

While they reported they did not enjoy paperwork, they accepted it. “It is not fun,” one said, “I know that it is necessary, but if there was one part of the job that I could do without, it would be paperwork. I think teachers need a secretary of their own.”

Question 6 B. How do you feel about planning?

In October, most of the teachers reported being comfortable with the planning process. Six indicated they had difficulty finding enough time in the day to plan. Still, as one teacher said, “I’m pretty fine about planning. It is just that I can’t find a big enough chunk of time to plan for a week. If I can find the block of time, it goes fairly smoothly and quickly.” Another acknowledged the importance of planning as he stated, “I feel it is essential. The more you plan, the better your days are. Then you have the right amount of work for the students. It is better to have too much than too little.”

By January, they felt even more positive about planning than they had in the fall. They had become more used to writing “real teacher style” lesson plans, and they viewed planning as necessary and valuable in guiding their instruction. One reported,

I’m comfortable with it. It is a necessary part of the job. I am not one who can have a plan tentatively in my head. I have to think about it and write it down. That is the one thing that I don’t really mind doing every week. I want to get it done. It helps me get organized.

Another concurred and pointed out the value of previewing the lesson:

Planning- I enjoy doing it because as I do it I get to try and learn a new way to get to teach children something. I get to role play and see if I think something will work, because I know that if I don't like my plans there is no way students are going to like them.

Two of the teachers mentioned that while the lesson planning has gotten better, it could still be difficult to find the time to adequately plan during the school day. One told me:

I thought at the beginning of the year that I could get things done during plan time, but someone says, "I need to talk to you for five minutes" and it ends up stretching into fifteen, and then someone else comes. You need to check your mailbox and then your plan time is done. It is something else. I look back on the day sometimes and feel like I didn't get anything done for what I needed tomorrow. That is why I stay here so late sometimes is because I don't have time during the day to get to things.

Adding to her burden, one first-year teacher in an inner-city school assumed several after school responsibilities in addition to her teaching assignment. She reported being overwhelmed in that,

I don't feel that I was prepared for all the paperwork, grading papers, and lesson planning. I probably took on too many extra curricular

activities. After school one night a week I do speech, another night I do Girl Scouts, and on a third night I do boys' basketball. I was not prepared for all the time I would spend at school.

Just as in the first and second interviews, teachers at the third interview acknowledged the need for planning, viewing it as necessary for effective teaching. By April, however, they were beginning to view planning more as developing a guide rather than a blueprint. "Planning doesn't bother me," one said, "Without plans, I would be lost. I don't always stick to them, but I need to have an aim of where I am going for the day and for the week."

Comments about lacking adequate time to plan had dissipated by April. Planning also had become a more comfortable and familiar process than it had been at the outset as shown in this comment:

I feel more positive and comfortable than at the beginning of the year. It used to really stress me out. It goes better. I know I can move things around in order to capture a teachable moment. I can take advantage if something just kind of pops up. I don't have to follow them exactly as written, they are a plan, a guide.

Question 6 C. How do you feel about grading papers?

While grading papers is important and necessary, it is also time consuming and never-ending. The new teachers warned of staying on top of things or facing a pile they were sure they could never dig out from under. None enjoyed grading papers, but all viewed it as vital in knowing what their students understood. Some found it to be a

struggle to find a workable system of handling papers. As one put it,

I am not enjoying it that much because there are so many. It is hard to find the time to adequately evaluate and re-teach. It is hard to get an organizational system of getting papers in and out. Late work is an irritant.

Finding the time and energy to grade papers had become more of a challenge by midyear. Seven expressed negative feelings about grading papers in the second interview. Their opinions were similar to those they held about other forms of paperwork in that there appeared to be no end to the students' papers. It was hard to find the time to grade, and it was difficult to arrive at a workable system of cycling through papers. Grading papers enabled them to know how their students were grasping the material they presented, but it wasn't easy.

Apart from the simple issue of volume, and compounding the difficulty of the work, was how difficult they often found it to determine subjective grades. One commented,

I like grading the ones with definite right answers and wrong answers. If it is a project or involved writing, I have to sit and think about every paper. Like, if it is a student who does not usually work real hard and it looks like they tried and did a good job, do you give them a good grade? How about the student who tries hard every time? I just hate that. It stresses me out every time I grade a stack

of papers like that.

Another reported, "I don't like it. There is always a stack. It is a downer when it shows that they do not understand and don't get what you are teaching," In the end, though, they knew that grading papers was inescapable. One pragmatically stated, "Grading papers takes a lot of time. It is part of life as a teacher. Papers need to be graded."

There was little discernible change between the second and third interview regarding grading papers. The first-year teachers still believed that grading papers was necessary to know what the students understood and to give them feedback on their work. It still was time consuming and grading student writing still was challenging. The most important change was that most of them had arrived at a system that worked for them. These feelings all came together when one of them said:

I want to keep them busy. I want to keep them learning, but every time I assign them something - it all comes back to me. At first, at the beginning of the school year, I did find it overwhelming. But then I worked out some systems that seem to work. There will be revisions for next year. I found out real fast to stay up with them on a daily basis, because otherwise the weekend would come and you would have a huge stack of papers to deal with.

Question 6 D. How do you feel about student assessment?

In the early fall, nine of the ten first-year teachers initially reported assessment as challenging. They wanted to employ a variety of assessments, both formal and informal,

in order to really have an accurate picture of what their students knew and understood. Assessment is difficult. "Assessment," one said, "doesn't come as easily as some other things. Some students might know the material, but not test well. I find it hard to get it all in, in order to be sure of an accurate assessment."

By midyear, they had come to view assessment as both more complex and more anxiety producing than they had thought in October. Part of the complexity was in the assessment act itself and part in the environment in which it took place. One teacher in an inner-city school expressed concerns about the departmentalization that the staff in his building favored, while he did not think that it was the best for students. He stated,

I think that departmentalization makes assessment hard, because it puts it on an impersonal level. You just get to see a student for forty-five minutes a day and you never really get to know them. It makes it hard to give them any leeway either way.

Five revealed some apprehension about the CRT process and CAT testing that would be taking place in March, and their anxiety showed in comments like this,

I don't like CAT tests and big standardized tests, because I don't think they are a valid judgment of what the kids really know. So, I try to use different things besides just tests to see. I don't like having to teach to the tests like I am having to for the CRTs.

Another teacher in a suburban setting shared her feelings about assessment:

There are some times that I just think about all these tests that they

are expecting us to take that we are getting ready for. I think that it is a little ridiculous all they are expecting them to do. I talked to other teachers and they are pretty much in agreement that their expectations are too high and that with the level that these kids are on; I mean maybe kids in other school can do them, but given my kids and where they are it - it's going to look like my kids don't know anything. That just bothers me that they put that much emphasis on those kinds of things.

Their comments also reflected their sense of commitment to the children in their charge: "I don't want students to be at a disadvantage because they have a first-year teacher."

In October, there had been much conversation about the need for a variety of assessments. Now a few months later, a first-year teacher in a mid-town setting expressed a conflict between how she wanted to assess students and what she was doing. She reported that a lack of time negatively impacted how she assessed her students:

It's kind of difficult to know. It's hard when you have the visual kids over here and it is hard to come up with a variety of assessments. It is easy just to get the test out of the book and pass it out. I don't want to do that all the time. I have done it some this year, but I think that is understandable because it is my first year. It is hard to come up with a variety of interesting ways to assess them like projects, and again those take time. It is easier to take a

book down to the copy machine and give them a test.

There was a clear evolution of feeling about assessment over the course of the year. Generally, by the final interview they had become more comfortable with assessment, but three of the new teachers felt there was too much emphasis on standardized testing. As one stated, "I like to use a variety of assessment not just book tests. I'll pull out what I think is important, what they need to know, and how it fits the standards and I will test them on that." Some commented on assessment being easier now that they have a better understanding of their students and the curriculum. One shared, "I have gotten much more comfortable with informal assessment. I am much better at reading body language and facial expressions. I can tell if they are puzzled and not getting it."

However, many outside factors remained to consider in assessment. One teacher struggled with this and reported,

I think it is, obviously, very necessary. There are aspects of it that are very difficult. You have to think - we have a test this day - and you have this kid who came in and had the worse night a kid could possibly have - and you know that they are not there mentally with you. There are things you have to take into consideration like how heavily should I weigh that fact. So, it can be very confusing.

Question 6 E. How do you feel about staff meetings?

Staff meetings were initially viewed as an opportunity to receive information. In October, eight responded that they found staff meetings a necessary component of

teaching rather than a burden. There appeared to be some correlation between how teachers felt about staff meetings and how they felt about the principal who conducted the meetings. One reported for the majority that,

They are not bad. All the meetings that I have been to have had information that is pertinent. We have them only once every few weeks, so I don't get bored. I don't dread them as I get information that my principal thinks that we need.

The other two teachers felt that meetings should be shorter and more organized. They thought some could be replaced by a memo. One teacher questioned the content of staff meetings and remarked, "A lot of what should be covered isn't covered, and we spend the time on things we don't really need to cover."

By midyear, the group was less positive about staff meetings and did not appear to view the information meetings provided as useful, let alone necessary, as they had at the time of the first interview. There was more dissatisfaction expressed with the length and frequency of meetings and greater mention of the time consuming aspect.

At the same time, the teachers' feelings about staff meetings continued to appear correlated to their feelings about their principals. Four teachers had positive comments, describing their principals as using meetings "wisely", being "organized", and not having "too many meetings". "Our principal is very organized," one said. "She knows what she needs to get covered, and she does it. They are informative and not real long. She's very good at that." Among the other six, however, feelings were less positive. As one stated, "I don't like staff meetings. A lot of the things are very pointless, and I mean how much

more six-trait writing do we really need?"

By the end of the year the teachers were evenly divided on how they felt about staff meetings. These continued to correspond to feelings about the principals who ran the meetings. One representative positive comment was,

They are very lengthy. We have a windy principal, but she tells us stuff we need to know. They are very informational. I don't mind them. Sure, we are here past our 4:00 duty time, but if I didn't know the information I would have even worse days.

In contrast, another teacher felt, "They are pointless, although we do not have them as often as some. A lot of what we meet about could be covered in a memo."

Question 6 F. How do you feel about committees?

By October, seven of the teachers had already served on committees and had been satisfied with their involvement. Two were concerned that they did not know what had been done in the past and were not sure what was expected of them on their committees. Some actively sought involvement. Three viewed committee participation as a way to become known outside of their classrooms. As one stated,

I signed myself up. I think it is a fun way to get to know students.

I can get known as a teacher, so that when I tell someone to stop running they will know that I am a teacher and that I mean it.

In general, by midyear, the members of the group still felt fairly positive about committees. Five said they were involved by choice and felt that it was a good way to become known by students and staff. One commented, "I joined our Drug Free

Committee. I knew that they needed people, and I wanted to be involved. It is not too much work and can be fun. It doesn't take up a lot of time." Another agreed, "I like committee work. I am on the courtesy committee. I do it by choice. It is a way to get to know people."

Three reported that they did not sign up for any major committee work because it was their first year. Two others continued to feel unsure of the expectations that others had for them. One expressed frustration in that, "Well, there again, I signed up for committees at the beginning of the year and have not heard anything. Then there is the activity sheet I need to fill out and I wonder what to do about that."

By the end of the year, feelings about committees were mixed. Three had not made major committee commitments during the first year. Five had played some part on committees and did not feel that participation required too much of them. Some even felt it was "fun" and they "learned a lot". Two struggled throughout the year with unclear expectations of their roles on their committees. Although they tried to please everyone, they frequently felt they failed. One elaborated on this as:

I'm on the social committee, and it is stressful. Half of the people are always complaining about whatever we decide to do - that dinner is \$12.95 and that is too expensive. The others want to do more. I put up sign up sheets and then they disappear. Once I put eighteen pins in and it still disappeared. It's kind of like sabotage.

Question 6 G. How do you feel about district-level meetings?

The beginning teachers all felt that the district-level meetings at the start of the year were largely a waste of time. The teachers were focused on their classrooms at the opening of the school year and were frustrated not to be in their rooms preparing. At the same time, though, many noted that of the district meetings, those that were grade level specific were the most useful and informative.

Their view of district meetings had not improved by midyear when seven expressed negative feelings. An important point from the first round of interviews was reinforced. Even in January, many continued to speak of frustration with the beginning of the school year meetings that were held when they would have rather been working in their classrooms. One stated this as, “The beginning teacher meetings at the start of the year are worthless. The grade level meetings are valuable. You feel autonomous [independent] in that you deal directly with the school rather than the district.”

In the main, the teachers had difficulty perceiving much value in district meetings at any time this far into the year. A few of the January comments contained faint praise, but most were overwhelmingly negative. Another criticized, “Usually unorganized, it seems like they waste a lot of time trying to figure out what they are doing.” One suburban teacher did not feel the meetings were pertinent to her. She stated, “To be honest, I can’t stand them. They are a waste of time. I am just out of college and am already trained in what they are talking about.” A teacher from an inner-city school was the most positive as she said, “They are okay. They are not the greatest things, but they are not totally pointless. Sometimes I learn things, but some of it could be sent out in

writing.” It appeared that teachers were primarily concerned with life in their classrooms and to a lesser extent within the context of their individual schools. In their minds, the district level remained in the distance as something less relevant to their everyday work life and those details could be worked out at a later date, when more burning issues had been resolved.

The negative perceptions of district-level meetings persisted through the year. Six expressed negative feelings about district-level meetings in the third interview. As late as April, the teachers still were making comments like: “They are pointless. They are a waste of my time.” The other four teachers had little better to say, expressing only mixed feelings towards the meetings. They still complained of the opening meetings from last fall. As one stated,

I have had both good and bad experiences. Some - I get good information and materials and other times - I feel like I completely wasted my time. The new teacher meetings at the beginning are very repetitive. I’m glad I don’t have to do them again.

Hypotheses:

1. Beginning teachers are primarily concerned with teaching and the interactions in their classrooms. They are secondarily concerned with the building as it affects them in their classrooms. They are not as concerned with the district-level, as it lacks immediacy to their day-to-day teaching.
2. Beginning teachers view lesson planning as a strength.

3. Beginning teachers view administrative paperwork and grading student papers as time consuming, but these become less intimidating as they figure out systems of dealing with papers.
4. Beginning teachers see staff meetings early in the year as a time to get information.
5. As the year progresses, feelings about meetings become closely associated with feelings about the principal.
6. Beginning teachers are concerned about committees only when they were not clear on what is expected of them as committee members.
7. Beginning teachers come into the job generally knowing the theory of assessment but some experienced difficulty putting this into practice both because of concerns with their own ability and because of time pressures.

Question 7. What are you finding about the time required to do your job?

The time commitment teaching required was one of the most striking surprises in the first interview. All of the first-year teachers reported having to spend a lot of time at school and time at home on school-related tasks. A young female teacher from a suburban school stated, “I am here a lot more than I thought I would be. I am the first here and the last to leave. I have work to take home every night.” A male teacher in a middle-class school setting told me,

Now I am working sixty to sixty-five hours a week. I was putting in seventy hours at the start of the year. Getting down to fifty hours is my goal. I was surprised by the time required to do this job.

It clearly emerged that regardless of the individual's background and independent of any setting, the one universal surprise was how much time teaching took. Two reported they thought that they had known that teaching was time-consuming, but they could not understand the extent to which this was true or the impact it would have on them until they experienced it for themselves.

Nothing had changed by midyear. All ten of the first-year teachers reported that teaching took more time than they had anticipated. "It is a lot more than I ever imagined," one said. "I am the first car here and the last to go. I have a big pile every weekend that I want to accomplish. I came up a couple of days over Christmas break. It takes a lot of time."

The intensity of the time commitment caused wonder among some. Indicative of this feeling was this comment:

There is not enough time to get everything done. I don't know how some of the teachers do it. I am envious of some teachers in this building. Their students just work like busy little bees, and they can get things done. There is just not enough time for me.

The time necessary to do their job surprised all teachers regardless of their age, gender, background, or teaching situation. The overwhelming impact the time factor had on most of the teachers was summed up by one when she said when she said,

The time required to do this job is never-ending. Daily I have only two to three hours to spend on non-school things. That includes

eating, working out, and showering. I wish I had more free time. I think that would help to relieve stress.

As with paperwork, grading papers, and assessment, however, some had shown early signs of adjusting, at least emotionally. One seemed to have made the most progress reconciling himself to the time requirements of the job when he commented, “I still spend at least 55 hours a week on school. I don’t resent it. It’s just part of the job.”

As they had done in the first two interviews, all reported at the April interview that a lot of time was required to do their job. This was a continuing theme throughout the year. As one shared, “It takes a lot of time. At night and on the weekends, the job is still there saying, ‘Aren’t you going to do me yet?’”

Like the inevitability of paperwork, however, the teachers had begun to adjust themselves to the time requirements, although two expressed that perhaps they should be paid more. One commented,

It is more than the required, set hours. I can’t complain too much about it. There is no way I could do this if I just worked eight-thirty to four and get done what is required of me. In a way, we should get paid extra for all the extra hours we put in.

Question 7 A. What is a typical instructional day like for you?

Universally, “busy” was the word that new teachers used most frequently throughout the year as they described their typical day at the first interview. They tried to fit it all in and be sure that their students understood it.

By the second interview, busyness had emerged as a constant theme. For all but one, the response to this question was similar to what it had been in the fall, when nine had described the typical instructional day as “busy.” A “typical day,” one said, “It is jam packed. It takes a lot of time. I am hopeful I won’t be here as long next year. I leave at five-thirty and I still have papers to grade and lesson planning to do at home.” A teacher on the outskirts of town iterated, “Very busy - I feel like I spend too much time on classroom management. I don’t get to teach as much as I would like.” An inner-city teacher summarized, “Very packed - trying to hit everything and meet my goals and the standards that I have to meet. Juggle, juggle, juggle!”

By April at least, the teachers expressed being more used to the long hours than they had been at the beginning of the year. As one stated, “I expected it, but it is a lot. I am getting to be more efficient. Now I feel I have a little more time than I did at the beginning of the year.” Another teacher clarified,

In the beginning, I was coming in at seven and leaving at seven. I put in some long days trying to get everything set up and running. Now I still come in at seven-thirty or a quarter to eight, but I usually leave at four-thirty or five o’clock. I think that that is more an organizational thing where I am getting things done more during the day instead of waiting until after school.

Question 7 B. What defines a “good” day for you?

Even as early as October, two major themes had emerged: (1) appropriate student behavior and (2) evidence of student learning. Seven teachers described a good day as

one with a minimum of behavior problems and one where learning took place. One teacher told me, "A day where I can tell the kids in my class have left with new knowledge. When you see that light bulb go off and you know they truly understand, the rest is inconsequential." Another agreed and reported, "A good day is when I come out smiling because my students learned. I taught them something useful."

The definition of a good day did not change much from October to January. Nine defined a "good" day in terms of little need for discipline and the resultant student engagement in lessons and learning that allowed the teacher to get through the planned lessons. One recounted:

When the kids are successful in here. I see kids who are actually catching on and they don't stress me out so bad that I leave with a smile on my face rather than 'I can't believe they actually did this'. I have had some outstanding days when I leave just jumping up and down thinking that was a great day and I can't wait to come back tomorrow.

Another teacher concurred, "A good day is one with relatively few management problems. That way - I have the opportunity to teach and get a lot done."

A teacher in a suburban school setting offered this explanation:

A good day is when I get a lot done - when I get everything done that I set out to accomplish done - when the kids are listening and there are no disruptions. Even if there are just one or two kids who

never get it who get it - that is a great day for me. I'm like, "Yes, yes!" A child that doesn't normally do real well gets a 1 on a test, then that is really a good day for me.

The tenth teacher did not state it exactly in the same terms as the others, but spoke of the results of a good day as, "When I come out and I don't have a headache, and I am smiling. My students say it was fun."

The definition of a good day had shifted slightly by the late spring. This may have signaled some type of professional integration for these teachers. Teachers were then defining "good" days in terms of learning taking place. Implicit in this was the assumption that in order for children to learn, good classroom management must be in place. One shared, "A good day is when I get through my schedule - or at least most of the schedule - when the kids are on task." Another offered this example:

A good day is when I feel that somebody in my class has learned something either socially or academically. The other day I had the most rewarding experience. On election day I was so proud when one of my students said, "Pardon us," to a little old lady as we went by her. I have been working on that with them and to see him apply it... I was just so proud. That was an example of a good day. I was so proud of that little gentleman. I taught them just to be a good human being. I'm happy.

Question 7 C. Do you have especially good days? If so, please tell me about them.

An informant told a good day story at the first interview. It was centered on personal success and student learning. She recalled,

I survived my first observation and it was positive. A student unlocked division. When he got it, he was so excited. He wanted to practice flash cards outside during recess. I am so happy that he's tasted success.

By the second interview, more were saying that they had had good days, but it was difficult for them to articulate the reasons. Even with prompting, few specific stories of good days were reported. There was an apparent irony in that good days tended to be defined as much or more by what was missing as by what was present. For example, one shared,

Yes, there are some days when one of my five students who require a lot of discipline is absent. Or when one remembers to take her medication. I don't have to keep reminding her of things all day and she gets work done. It can be a day when someone is absent - or when she gets her medicine - or when they don't come debating - or when they come focused. At this point, I don't even think about the planning and what I do or don't have done. I'm just basing it on the behavior and how the behaviors are. If we can get the behaviors under control - the rest of it can be mine. It's just the

behaviors.

A male teacher shared, “There are some days when we don’t switch classes and those days are better than others. We have one a week. It gives us one whole day a week when we can do extra writing and get caught up.” A teacher in an inner-city school reported, “Yes! I brought in a bunch of stuff about Navaho Indians and it made them see me in a different way and it was awesome. They said it was their favorite unit so far.”

By April a good day was even more clearly defined as a day of achievement than it had been in January or October. “Good days,” one said are, “The days we get everything done that we set out to accomplish. The days the kids get it, they are all engaged and focused. No parent phone calls and being called down to the office.”

Question 7 D. What defines a “bad” day?

A bad day, as one might expect, was defined as a mirror image of a good one. In October teachers defined bad days in terms of negative student behavior and a lack of evidence of learning taking place. One first-year teacher explained, “When I don’t feel like I’ve made a difference in their learning. For the first month, I was unsure of myself. I would ask, ‘What am I doing here?’ ‘Did I teach them anything?’” A teacher in an inner-city setting defined a bad day as one in which she doubts she made the correct career choice. She noted, “A bad day is when I question if this is the right thing for me to do.”

In January, eight defined a “bad” day as the opposite of a good day. They cited management issues as the cause of a bad day and clearly linked negative behavior with a lack of learning and progress in the classroom. One teacher shared her frustration:

Behaviors - they set the tone. They sometimes come in - and they come in the mood that they are not going to do anything - because they don't want to do anything - and it just seeps through the room. If they are a little bit wayward they are pulled in by that. It sets the tone - definitely the behaviors. They come in and they are here to socialize - they are here to run around the room - they are here to do whatever they want. It really seems like they don't care at all. Again, they are here to goof off. They are here to horse around.

Another teacher expressed,

When I'm feeling disorganized and lessons don't go right like I planned them or there's just the opposite of a good day. I don't feel like I got anything done. The bad days are the days when we have all sorts of school things planned, but there are disruptions with behavior. I don't have a whole lot of that but once it does it sets the tone for the rest of the day. They are just in that mood for the rest of the day.

An accumulation of bad days could have a powerful effect on a teacher's attitude.

One teacher from a suburban school shared, "Pretty much the whole first quarter was one long bad day. I would leave everyday feeling pretty much like a failure because I wasn't teaching, because all I was doing was dealing with behavior."

Another teacher in a suburban school setting pointed out the negative effect that interruptions had on her students. She stated this as:

The fact that so many kids get wound up if anything out of the ordinary is going on. Today a parent skipped a SAT meeting before school. Then she showed up at noon to talk. Well, I had to stop teaching math to talk because I am concerned about this child and that is why I held the SAT that the mother did not come to. Now, I get to try to talk to her while my students go ballistic because I had to stop teaching before they got their assignment, so they had nothing to do.

By late spring, the two elements of students behavior and student learning had solidified as the causes of both good and bad days. Eight mentioned negative student behavior and the resultant lack of learning as part of their definition of a “bad” day. One explained, “A bad day is when parents are complaining, when the kids are just so unruly, and I don’t feel like I am being a good teacher.” Another commented,

A bad day is when kids come in here with poor attitudes and no matter what I do or say they are going to sit and pout and sulk and not give a hoot about what is going on with learning. I think that if I can keep them half way positive about it and actually get into the teaching, someone in here has to take something away from it. I mean, one of them just has to, but there have been some days when they are doing something else and it takes every ounce of energy to try to get them to focus.

Question 7 E. Do you have especially bad days? If so, please tell me about them.

There was no shortage of bad day stories at the first interview. One teacher shared,

I have had more bad days than not. Students are not allowing me to do my job. Some students do no work. For some of them nothing works. Motivation must come from them. It is frustrating to think how some of them will be getting further behind.

One unique definition of a bad day surfaced. It was unique in that its cause was not rooted in student behavior of one type or another. A teacher in a suburban setting was told to change grades and do her first report cards over again. She did not enjoy the experience and reported, "Yes, I had to redo report cards - that was a bad day. Even teachers don't like going to the Principal's Office."

At the second interview in January, six said that they had had especially bad days. They did not go into much detail or tell specific stories, but they did share their frustration when things do not go as planned and there was not a lot of instructional progress made. One stated, "Bad days are when things don't go as you planned, and you can't seem to get anything done." Another concurred, "They are frustrating. You feel like you are not getting stuff done." One of the male teachers stated, "No, I can't really think of a bad day." He admitted, "Some days are longer than others."

While more of them reported having had especially bad days than had done so in October, by April it seemed that each experienced fewer bad days as the year went on. Seven of them reported having bad days, but did not offer many specifics. In the main,

bad days - including especially bad days - remained more closely tied to student behavior than to any other factor. One shared,

When it gets to the point that I take things personally. They just won't be quiet, and I feel like they are doing it just to aggravate me. I take it personally because I love them so much and here they are being so mean. It is emotional for me. A day when kids get suspended, that is never a good day. That's a bad day.

Question 7 F. What is the usual week like?

A sense of a weekly pattern was only beginning to emerge by October. When asked about the usual week, half of the teachers indicated that Mondays tended to be quieter and students tended to be more excitable by Fridays. Teachers noted that mornings were better for instruction than afternoons.

The sense of a daily and weekly pattern had strengthened by the time of the second interview. Routines were more firmly established. Mondays tended to be quiet and Fridays noisier. Students accomplished more in the mornings than they did in the afternoons. The teachers still felt busy, but not quite as overwhelmed. One put it this way:

There are really great days and then there are really bad days.

There are days when maybe I am not as focused as much as I should be and then we don't get as much done. Then you try to cram it all in the next day. It is kind of like a roller coaster or

walking over hills.

Another shared, “Busy, I usually get a lot accomplished, but I have had a couple of weeks where I feel like I am recopying lesson plans from the last week.”

The emergence of a consistent pattern was disrupted by the weather this year. At the final interview, teachers talked about the usual week in terms of cycle days and patterns to days of the week. They continued to speak of being busy and putting in long hours each week. One mentioned that this had been a year without too many typical weeks. She shared, “Each cycle day is the same. I was looking back in my lesson plan book and was trying to remember what a full week was like. I just kept flipping back, because of all the testing and snow days.”

Hypotheses:

1. Teachers are not adequately prepared for the time it takes to teach.
2. Teaching is more demanding than what they observed and experienced as student teachers.
3. Good days are tied to positive student behavior and learning taking place; while bad days are the opposite, with more misbehavior and little progress through the curriculum.

Question 8. In looking over the first (second, third) quarter, how did you feel it went?

As predicted by socialization theory, beginning teachers felt that the first quarter had been an intense learning experience for them. As one reported,

It came and it went. It was very quick. Now looking back and

having done it, it wasn't as bad as when I went through it. There were times when I wondered if I was going to make it. Reflecting back, I can see how to get on track and how to get students to see it.

Again, as socialization theory would suggest, eight thought that the second quarter had gone better than the first. They felt more confident, organized, and into a routine by the second interview. One remembered:

The first quarter I spent trying to get on my feet. It was like swimming and barely keeping your head above water. It took awhile to get to know all the people and the ins and outs of the system. Discipline took a lot of time. I had to figure out what was working and what was not and get it nailed down. The first couple of months are hard; I like having a routine. It took a lot to get my room up and going. Each month changing bulletin boards and getting the room ready takes time and money.

Most were optimistic that things would continue to get better. As one shared:

I saw some improvement second quarter. It wasn't as much as I was hoping for, but even this last week since the holiday break, I came back feeling more confident in my teaching. This week it seems like the kids grew some or matured over the two weeks that I did not see them. I don't know if it is just me holding them to higher expectations. I can't pinpoint what the big difference was,

but things are chugging along.

Another reported that second quarter had been, "Better than the first, the students are more used to the routine and how I discipline. They are used to having to hand things in. I am glad that I graded a little harder because they actually worked." One candidly stated, "It went well. I felt more like I knew what I was doing."

Socialization and adaptation do not occur at the same rate for everyone. Two of the teachers did not feel things had significantly improved for them between the first two quarters. One new teacher in a middle-class neighborhood stated,

It was pretty much like first quarter. There were some of them that settled down, but there were others that just didn't. I had a parent call just last night, and she called in indignation and asked about the grades. They were horrible. I told her he was messing around in class and not getting anything done or turning anything in. She complained about not having been notified about grades. I tried to let her know that he was responsible for taking progress reports home. Some of the parents are not ready to let them go or not ready to let them grow up, and it is such a transition year. It is almost like a rite of passage. The change between sixth and seventh grade is so dramatic. The metamorphous that happens is just amazing. There are some days when I look out there and I see doctors, and lawyers, and teachers, and bankers, mechanics and plumbers and all the

people that we need in the world. Then there are other days when they act terrible and I look out there and I see high school dropouts, gang members, alcoholics, teenage mothers, and drug addicts. It is quite a contrast.

In looking back over the year at the third interview, eight of the teachers expressed positive feelings about how it had gone. They felt it had been a learning experience as reflected in this teacher's statement, "It was successful. It was really a good learning experience. There were a lot of new things to learn." In retrospect, things were not perceived as being as bad as they had originally seemed at the time. One commented, "Now looking back, it went very well. In September I didn't think that I would make it through the year. Now I can say I made it through the year, and I didn't do a bad job!"

Question 8 A. How do you assess your fit to the culture of the building in which you teach?

In April, all thought they were a good fit to the culture of their building. One stated this as,

I think I fit here pretty well. They think that getting students to take responsibility is really important, and so do I. The behavior philosophy of making students understand that they are responsible for making choices and the consequences of their choices is one that I agree with and it is emphasized here

A philosophical match was deemed as important in the assessment of personal fit to that of the school culture. Another remarked,

I felt like I fit in pretty good. Discipline is important here and it is important to me in my classroom. I think I share a lot of the same values with those of the school. It seems to be a good philosophical fit.

A young female teacher explained, "I think it is definitely a good fit. People here take their job seriously, and so do I. I love what I do, but we don't forget to have a life outside of school.

Question 8 B. What do you see next quarter (year) being like?

In October, looking forward to the second quarter, they acknowledged that they had learned a lot, sometimes by trial and error. A teacher in a suburban setting said, "Hopefully better because I have learned the right and wrong ways to do things. I'm changing them. You never know unless you try." Seven were hopeful that things would go better from then on because they had some experience and the students knew them and their understood expectations better.

At the second interview, they generally voiced more confidence in themselves, although there were still concerns and there was anxiety about what yet might lie ahead. A teacher in an inner-city school planned changes and shared, "In some ways it is better and in some ways it was worse. I think I got too comfortable and informal with the students. I tried to focus on too much. This quarter is a big learning quarter."

With half a year under their belts, in looking forward to the third quarter, six of the teachers mentioned the upcoming CRT and CAT testing. They viewed this new challenge as somewhat intimidating and worried that it would "stress out" their students.

One teacher from the suburbs predicted,

Looking at next quarter I see a lot of testing. January and February will be rough on the students because there is so much testing- CRTs, State Writing Assessment, and pre-CAT. Making up minutes from the snow days makes for a long day. That is not fun.

A teacher in a mid-city school shared,

I think it will be busier. Maybe a little bit more challenging with testing coming up. It is just going to be different. I felt like the first couple of quarters was just getting into it and a lot of review. Now they are like, "We've never done this before. How do you do it?"

The actual teaching of new concepts is happening. The second quarter was better, and the first quarter was pretty good.

Another agreed, "It will be more stressful with all the testing, the CRTs, CAT, and reflection." One expressed optimism that next quarter would be better when she shared,

I have high hopes. I have seen improvement. Now that we are starting the second half of the year, I am raising my expectations. I think you have to so they are ready for next year. They will have a lot more responsibility. This week has been really hopeful - just seeing what they have done this last week I really feel like we are going to go even farther. We will make the progress we made in the first two quarters in this one quarter. They are all at such

different levels, like some of them are 10 going on 40 and some have no clue as to who they are right now. They are just all over the place.

One teacher thought next quarter would be, "Very different, I have two students in particular - when they saw their report cards - they were determined to bring their grades up. Like I said before, they just seem more settled."

A teacher in an inner-city school felt she needed to make some changes and adjust how she did things. She reported, "This quarter will be extremely different. I won't be playing music. An administrator has been helpful in helping me make changes in my classroom. Students want to act better so that I won't call their parents."

By April, looking ahead was taking on a new feel. The last of their first-time-through periods was just about over. Their perspective changed from a shorter concentration on what might happen to them in the next quarter to a longer view in which they considered the next year as a whole. As they looked forward to next year, most of the new teachers anticipated that it would be somewhat easier then since they had had a year's experience to help them determine what to do and what not to do the next time around. One teacher expressed this as:

I have heard a lot of people say that the second year is a lot better. There will be fewer surprises. It will be easier to get through, because there will be fewer things that are new to me. I will have been through it once.

A male teacher similarly reported, "There will be fewer, I don't like to call them surprises, but there will be fewer new, unknown things."

Question 8 C. Do you anticipate certain things being the same? If so, please tell me about them.

In assessing what they thought would stay the same at the first interview, three of the teachers with classes they viewed as challenging said they expected that negative behaviors would stay the same. One reported, "Behaviors and struggling with students to get their work turned in." Four of the other new teachers wanted to try different teaching strategies and vary their approach on lessons now that their schedules and routines were in place.

In January, three were still expecting a certain sort of negative stability. One in a suburban setting remarked,

I guess I will always anticipate for them to shock me with something everyday. Some of their behavior will - unfortunately - be the same. No matter what I do, some of my kids will just do things because that is who they are and what they do and they are not disciplined at home.

Others reported that paperwork, documentation, meetings, and schedules would stay the same. Two teachers specifically mentioned their relationships with students. One remarked, "I don't think their feelings toward me will change, even though they will behave differently, hopefully. The paperwork and the meetings will still be there." Of course, the responses were not universally downcast. Another one commented, "I am

the same. They still know that I am a big-hearted, caring person. They trust me.”

Because they were looking ahead to a different year with different students, the teachers had many different responses to the things they anticipated being the same by the third interview. There was no common answer among them. They seemed to center on what they personally wanted to be the same or what they viewed as inevitable. Individual answers include kids, behavior; classroom management, paperwork, parents, time, grading, and planning. A teacher remarked, “One thing that I can count on being the same is the district standards being the same.” Another mused,

Hopefully, I will have another group of good kids. This is my first class and I worry that because I think they are so special - no other class will be able to measure up. Hopefully, the rapport will be the same. My mentor will be the same and the administration will be the same.

Question 8 D. Do you anticipate certain things being different? If so, please tell me about them.

In discussing what they anticipated would be different at the first interview, there was a wide variety of responses, these appeared to be dependent on what the individual teacher viewed as being in greatest need of change. One stated, “I hope I can quit having to fight the administration. That is not the greatest. I want to make learning fun and use a variety of teaching strategies.” Teachers voiced that they looked forward to things improving as schedules and routines were more established and students understood their procedures.

At the second interview, the teachers anticipated that some things would be different next quarter. Testing was again raised as a concern by three of the teachers. Two of the teachers hoped that student behavior and effort would improve. One in a suburban setting stated, "Their behavior - and I am hoping that their effort and the quality of their work - will improve. I think they will work harder after these report cards, and they see their grades have not improved." A sense of the value of experience began to emerge by January. Three of the teachers mentioned that their own work performance would continue to improve. One stated, "Hopefully, it will improve and even my time management will- I will know how long it takes to plan and how long it takes to grade papers." Another remarked, "Lessons are going better as I have taught more."

By the third interview, the new teachers anticipated that certain things would be different next year. One teacher leaving the state knew that her location would be different. A teacher working where lower numbers of students were projected for the following year thought that she would be going to another building and that would mean that everything would be different. The remaining eight pointed out things that they wanted to change with classroom management or anticipated differences in their classes. They planned to apply the experiences of this year to make next year easier and better. One who struggled with management said,

The way the whole year is going to get started off next year will be different. The things that I am going to do as far as procedures, I will show them what I expect from them. I am definitely going to

start off tougher. It is way easier to lighten up than to toughen up.

I found that out the hard way this year. I am trying to tighten the reins on them, and it has been hard.

Another typical answer was based on the application of this year's experience to make next year better. One confirmed,

I am planning to do a few things differently knowing now what I know. I think the biggest thing will be long term planning. Now that I know the curriculum I will get right in there and plan. I will refine how I teach the curriculum.

Hypotheses:

1. Teachers experience initial shock and surprise; then later come to identify closely with the school culture they had originally found confusing.
2. Beginning teachers do not all progress at the same rate. Anticipatory socialization, age, experience, gender, setting, and personality are possible factors that influenced the pace of socialization.
3. Teachers view their first year as a learning experience and plan to apply this knowledge to what they do and do not do in subsequent years.

Final Interview Reflection Questions

The following three questions were added to the final interview protocol as a means of ascertaining what the beginning teachers deemed as important in their first-year experience (See pp. 77-79 for the full rationale). The advice that they offered has the potential to disclose additional data concerning what they would have liked to have

known in advance of assuming their first teaching position, thereby revealing what was missing along with what was present in their socialization experiences. This summarization served as a check on the whole experience and my interpretation of the content of the three interviews.

Question 9. What advice would you give to teachers who enter a classroom for the first time this August?

In April, this group of teachers had much advice they would give to teachers who enter a classroom for the first time this August. Three of them focused on flexibility, but there were many thoughtful and personal responses. Their answers reflected themes that consistently emerged throughout the study. One from a suburban school stressed,

Be prepared- get into your room as soon as you can and get it set up.

You are going to be so nervous, having your classroom set up will make everything so much better. That way when it comes time for all those meetings, you will feel better and not so overwhelmed.

Doing as much as you can before will make you feel so much better.

Remember that this is what you wanted to do and why you wanted to do it. There will be days, especially in September, when you just feel like you haven't taught anybody anything. There is a reason you chose this profession. It wasn't because of the money or the short hours.

A teacher in an inner-city school stressed flexibility and pointed out things that she found to be true her first year. She stated,

Be flexible, be flexible - there will always be situations where you will need to be flexible. Be prepared to stand on your feet and make fast decisions, go with it, and stand by them. Get to know the secretary, custodians, support staff, and principals and get them on your side. You will need them. They can hurt you more than help you, so get on their good side. Don't stress out. Every day is a new day. Focus on the positives and try to smile. If a kid says they hate you, let it roll off. You can have the worst day, and then come back the next day and have the best day. Be glad that you are there and can make a difference in their lives. Don't eat in the teachers' lounge.

A teacher in a suburban setting also advised newcomers to be flexible. She indicated,

Be flexible - it took until March for me to have all textbooks for all students. That was a surprise. I thought everybody would have a book. I had to run copies out of other books. You have to be flexible and figure out how you are going to solve this problem. So, whatever your surprises are, just go with the flow and figure it out. You don't have a choice.

A male teacher shared how important it is to communicate with veteran teachers who have first-hand knowledge of the school:

My advice would be listen to the veteran teachers who have been here for years and years. Nine out of ten things that they tell you will come true. I read The First Days of School and made plans hour by hour. They looked at what I had planned and told me what would happen and it did. The first day they will test the limits with talking. No matter how hard you try to keep them quiet they will want to talk to their neighbors and talk to their friends. They will moan and groan about who is in the class. You aren't supposed to smile until after Christmas, but you can't be too mean. A laid back atmosphere seems to work best. You can't be too mean.

A suburban teacher emphasized self-efficacy in her response. She suggested that new teacher should,

Hold on tight. They are in for a long ride. I guess they have to believe in themselves, and they have to know that what they are doing is good and not everything they are doing is wrong. They just have to stick to their guns and just keep plugging along.

Another teacher focused more on the ramifications to her personal life and discipline as she expressed,

Be prepared not to have a life. I would say to take time for yourself, even if you think you can not afford the time. Find someone in your building to talk to, or just find anybody you can talk about your job

with. They need to be open-minded. Spend time thinking about discipline and deciding what you want to do. You think one way will work and it doesn't. Think up a lot of different ways, not just one. Ask people what they do and how they handle discipline.

One of the teachers suggested that a beginner should try to keep his or her personal life as uncomplicated as possible for the first year of teaching. She explained,

I would advise them not to do anything life-changing right off the bat.

I know people who were fine getting married, but if you have a real involving class like I had, you don't want to have to be making wedding plans and travel plans. I would just keep it as simple as you can.

Another focused on paperwork and the contrast between the childhood of teachers and their students when she advised,

Always have your pen handy for all the paperwork. If they are going to be at a school like this - they need to remember not all kids were raised the same way you were. Teachers are like, "I would never do that." I think, let's see, you are fifty years old and it was forty years ago when you were ten and no child would be doing that. Then the principals could spank. It really depends on the person and what kind of school they are going to and then I could talk to them forever about what I think. More than advice, I would let them

know that they could just come to me for things for help. I would make my resources available to them.

One first-year teacher cautioned to stay on top of things even though it will be hectic as she stated,

Don't let yourself get behind on things because you will never catch up. Sometimes I just look at the baskets where my kids turn in papers and I think, "Oh, my gosh." They are full to overflowing. Just try to stay one step ahead on everything. I know it is hard. A couple of weeks ago I looked up and saw a bulletin board in the back of my room that said 'A Blizzard of Good Work' with snowflakes all over it. I real quickly made a spring one. I am sure anyone who saw it thought it was bad.

A teacher from a small school suggested, "Find someone you can talk to. You will need to talk." Words of advice from one concluded, "Be very flexible. Be open to some hard work. Enjoy the kids and your job."

The advice that teachers offered explained what they wish they had known and what got them through the challenges of the first year. Themes that emerged reflected those in the study. Teachers suggested future new teachers would want to prepare early because of all the meetings, be flexible, focus on the positive and stay away from the negative, be true to yourself, listen to experienced teachers, figure out your surprises, have self-efficacy, hold on tight, find someone to talk to, work on discipline, keep your personal life uncomplicated, be ready for paperwork, remember your students were not all

raised like you were, and don't get behind because you will never catch up.

Question 10. What suggestions would you make in regard to new teacher induction?

Informants had suggestions in regard to new teacher induction. During each of the interviews, many had expressed the need for first-year teachers to be in their classroom earlier and to have more time there. One representative comment was:

Hire them sooner. They need to be in their buildings more than one week before school starts. Don't schedule them to be in meetings then. They can't focus and care. Their minds are in their rooms and worrying about everything they need to be doing. New teachers need to be in meetings and the veterans teachers who already have all their stuff are in their rooms. We really care about our rooms.

Another common theme was to divide the meetings by grade levels and even by zones to personalize them and allow for more pertinent discussion. One comment representative of this follows:

I think if they had more zone level meetings and went over things in more detail it would be better than the huge new teacher meetings where everybody is all together. You don't really feel comfortable in that kind of venue asking questions and seeking information - like about the CRTs. I would have loved to be able to talk to other sixth grade teachers and just communicate like about how they are handling certain things. How are you dealing with this?

New teachers said they would like to have had more opportunities to observe others at their grade levels teaching. A male teacher expressed this as:

It would be nice to get to go observe in other classrooms. It would be helpful to go watch a master teacher teach at your grade level and see how they handle the curriculum. You would need to do this after you start teaching so that you would be able to observe techniques and strategies. Three or four of these observations a year would be very helpful.

Question 11. Do you plan to be a career teacher?

At the time of the third interview, all the teachers in the study still planned to be career teachers and to teach the next school year. One wanted to return to her home state, so she was leaving the district but not the profession. The other nine teachers intended to stay with the school district, and all but one thought they would be at the same building.

Analysis of the Research Questions

When I took the first measure of their experience in October, the first-year teachers were overwhelmingly busy. They enjoyed teaching and children, but not discipline or paperwork. They were surprised by the wide-range of academic ability and achievement levels in their classrooms and struggled to make accommodations for them. They reported having supportive people around them, and that there were not many people who appeared to be deliberately not helpful. Some surprises were registered about the parts of the job that did not involve direct contact with children. Many made references to their student teaching experiences and those experiences frequently

appeared as a point of comparison by which to gauge the nature and quality of their current positions.

At the time of the initial interview I noted that the first five teachers I visited with expressed greater reaction to the surprises of being a first-year teacher than did the second five. I wondered if the two-week interview schedule had spanned enough time to allow members of the latter group more time to reconcile the reality of their experience to that they had anticipated. Another possible difference was that parent-teacher conferences took place during the course of the interviews, so while the earlier interviewees were expressing doubt and trepidation about these, the later interviewees had already conducted their first parent-teacher conferences before the interview. While the differences were slight, they were noticeable and bear some further investigation.

Other variations in experience also emerged. The two male subjects did not report as many surprises. The three who had student taught in other districts registered the greatest number of surprises and appeared to be more deeply affected by those surprises.

I am pleased that all participants appeared to enjoy the opportunity to talk about their experiences so far.

At the time of the second interview in January, the new teachers were halfway through their first year of teaching. Winter Break had just occurred, and the time off seemed to have refreshed and rejuvenated them. Although nine of the teachers reported being busy and tired, they appeared not quite as stressed and overwhelmed as they had been at the first interview. Still, long hours continued to take their toll, and relationships

with friends and family were a growing concern. Seven of the informants reported a shift in friendships to fellow teachers. Their ability to plan was a definite strength, but finding adequate time to plan was reported as a struggle for two of the participants.

Students and learning were focused on as the positive aspects of the job, while discipline, paperwork, and grading continued to be the least favorite. Meeting the needs of students at varied academic levels remained a major challenge. The teachers strongly linked student behavior with learning and with their definition of good and bad days. Nine of them reported that a good day with positive behavior allowed for learning to take place, and a bad day was one with disruptions and poor behavior that resulted in a lack of academic progress.

By the time of the second interview, relationships with parents had increased in complexity and negativity. Four of the teachers reported difficulty relating to the parents who appeared not to care about their children and their education because that was not how their own parents had behaved and it was not how they had been raised. All told of student teaching as their most important pre-service educational experience. Eight of the teachers felt that second quarter had gone better than the first. They planned to use the knowledge they had accumulated so far that year to make the next quarter even better.

The research questions were revisited during and after each interview. At the conclusion of the study after the third interview, data were analyzed and the research questions were addressed. Each question will be discussed based on findings from the study as evidenced through data collected from the three interviews.

Grand Tour Question. Are there discernible patterns of teacher socialization for first-year teachers in grades four through six as predicted by socialization theory and research?

Yes, the socialization these first-year teachers in grades four through six experienced reflected the research on organizational socialization. As socialization theory predicts, their experiences fell into a series of patterns that could be discerned. They first experienced “reality shock” (Corcoran, 1981; Hughes, 1958; Wanous, 1992). They then individually moved through a series of stages in which their expectations of the job and themselves encountered the reality of both and they had to resolve the inevitable conflicts between what they expected and what they found (Feldman, 1976; Lacey, 1977; Louis, 1980). They felt overwhelmed by parts of the job as they worked to form new relationships, adjust their behaviors, and adapt their attitudes (Porter et al., 1975). They sought feedback from their peers and supervisors (Feldman, 1976; Louis, 1980; Morrison, 1993), looking to people in their immediate environment for information that will help them decipher the culture, learn about the operation and values of the organization, and develop some way to assess their own performance on the job (D.C. Fisher, 1986; Latane, 1981; Schein, 1987). They particularly sought information that would clarify responsibilities about which they did not have a clear understanding (Van Maanen, 1977; Wanous, 1980). At the same time they were anxious to show their peers and supervisors that they could learn and adjust as necessary (Wheeler, 1966).

They were surprised by what they found, but as they gained knowledge about the new setting and the people in it, they became able to make sense of it (Katz, 1980; Louis, 1980; Smith & Kozlowski, 1995). They struggled to resolve conflicts between the

demands of their personal and professional lives (Feldman, 1976). Their ability to understand and adjust varied individually because the varying experiences impacted each of them individually (Schein, 1987; Wanous, 1992; Wheeler, 1966).

What we know about organizational socialization from other fields does apply to teaching as a profession. The stage model theory explained and predicted the process of becoming a teacher. Anticipatory socialization had a great impact on the neophyte teachers. The informants made frequent references to their student teaching experiences and compared them to their current teaching experience either favorably or negatively. Marked contrasts between the two experiences stood out in their minds and affected the ease and rate of their assimilation into the school culture.

These teachers experienced conflict when the people with whom they worked did not adhere to behavior patterns that they had encountered as school children themselves. They expressed concern that students did not behave or care about school as they had years earlier. They felt that some of their students' parents did not appear to care about their children and how they performed in school as their own parents had. The new teachers made assumptions about veteran teachers based on their own experiences and professional standards they had been taught as students of education. While they were pleasantly surprised by the willingness of most staff members to assist them as rookie teachers, they were disappointed when some veteran teachers behaved or spoke negatively in what they considered an unprofessional manner.

Six teachers in this study reported positive and more supportive relationships with their principals than they had originally anticipated. Some of this may be attributed to the

fact that they were viewed by their principals as fully functioning adult staff members while they themselves initially felt less sure of their own ability and more like students in transition.

Their socialization was impacted by a wide variety of groups of people, including students, parents, mentors, fellow teachers, principals, support staff, and peer support teachers. The degree of influence exercised by each varied from teacher to teacher. There appeared to be some correlation between this and where the teacher was on the level of teacher concerns scale. It appeared two were still in the earlier stages of teacher development and were more dependent on their students to provide feedback and positive reinforcement than those who had progressed further.

Sub-question 1. If there are discernible patterns, then is there a set of identifiable set of common experiences that contribute to that pattern?

Yes, there is a set of identifiable set of common experiences that contribute to the pattern of teacher socialization. The identifiable set of experiences clustered into three categories:

- (1) Using anticipatory socialization experiences as a measure against which to judge the current experience.
- (2) Realizing a lack of preparation for certain aspects of teaching.
- (3) Feeling driven by a desire to work with children and to teach.

The focus of this study was on the encounter stage of organizational socialization, specifically the first year of teaching. These teachers brought assumptions to the workplace about what life as a teacher would be like and were surprised that the reality of

the job varied from what they anticipated. Encountering that reality, the teachers felt overwhelmed and extremely busy. They were faced with many new and unfamiliar tasks - and even with help and guidance, it took varying amounts of time for each of them to figure out how to do things. The new teachers felt inadequately prepared in some areas. They came to teaching as a career because they enjoyed working with students, they liked learning, and they wanted to teach. They envisioned themselves imparting knowledge to students who would gratefully and eagerly learn. When it did not always work out that way, they were surprised.

Sub-question 2. If there is such a set of experiences, then are there elements of those experiences that teachers find surprising in their first-year teaching experience?

Yes, beginning teachers had many surprises during their first year of teaching. In analyzing the data, it seemed that the things that surprised them fell into three categories:

- (1) the technical aspects of the job;
- (2) their professional relationships with other adults;
- (3) the impact the job had on their private lives.

New teachers were surprised by their students. While they knew there would be a variety of students with individual differences, they were not prepared to deal with the wide range of academic levels that they found within their classrooms. They needed to perfect the balancing act of meeting the needs of individual learners while simultaneously ensuring that all students progressed through the curriculum. Participants did not anticipate the impact that home problems would have on their students and their ability to engage in the classroom and learn. Disparity between some of their students' home lives

and the experiences of their own childhood stood out in marked contrast, and teachers were surprised by these “reality checks.”

To further complicate things, life in the classroom did not always go as planned. Teachers wanted to teach, and they wanted their students to learn. They were surprised that issues of classroom management required so much of their attention and the impact that student behavior had on learning. They consistently found that good days had few management problems and that enabled learning to take place. In contrast, bad days were marked by more behavior problems and a resultant lack of academic progress.

Beginning teachers were surprised by their professional relationships with adults. It seemed that the contrast between expectations and reality resulted in surprises both positive and negative. Some found relationships with principals, peers, and parents better than they anticipated based on previous experiences, while others found things not as good as they expected.

They found that they were busy to the point of being overwhelmed. They were surprised by the amount of time required to perform adequately. The volume of student-generated paperwork threatened to bury them. They routinely took work home with them, with one exception, and even she found herself worrying about her students when she was not with them. They were further surprised to discover how much the amount of time they spent on their professional lives impacted their personal lives. They found they did not have adequate time for themselves, family, and friends. Friendships shifted to include more fellow teachers who understood the demands of the teaching profession.

The new teachers were tired, with all but one describing themselves as exhausted at some point in the year.

Sub-question 3. If there are surprising elements, then are first-year teachers able to reconcile the differences between what they anticipate and the reality that surprises them upon encounter?

Yes, teachers reconciled the differences between their vision and reality by making sense of that which they initially found to be surprising. Teachers are able to reconcile the differences between what they anticipated and what they encountered by utilizing the following:

- (1) match of pre-service to in-service positions;
- (2) socialization agents;
- (3) sense-making process.

It seemed that the teachers who were teaching in schools similar to those they student taught in had an easier transition. Those who student taught in the same district and at the same grade level seemed to have the easiest beginning. While those whose pre-service and in-service positions were not as similar had more surprising experiences and reported greater difficulty in making sense of those surprises. The group members viewed the first year as a learning experience and frequently mentioned they were learning as much, if not more than, their students. Time and experience seemed to factor heavily into the equation.

Fortunately, the beginners were not left on their own to sort through things. Only one teacher mentioned feeling alone or isolated and that was because of the location of

her classroom. The groups of people the teachers work with were employed as socialization agents. This interaction with established members of the school assisted the beginners in developing interpretive schemata of their own that worked in their settings.

Sense-making was evident. As socialization theory proposed, events that were initially “shocking” came to be accepted as “the way things are done around here.” That adjustment was more difficult and sometimes could not be made when it involved events that challenged deeply held core personal beliefs or a disconnect with image of self as teacher. However, at the end of the year all appeared to have readily adjusted to life as a teacher and embraced the culture of their school settings. All of them considered themselves to be a good fit to the culture of the building and intended to be a career teacher.

CHAPTER FIVE

Introduction

Using grounded theory methodology modified to accept received theory, this study examined organizational and professional socialization as experienced by a group of ten beginning teachers in intermediate grades four through six. Stage model theory and surprise and sense-making theory supplied the study's conceptual framework. The first-year teachers were interviewed three times (October, January, and March/April) during the 2000-2001 school year to identify elements of their organizational socialization experience. Based on the findings presented in chapter four, conclusions were drawn. At the end of the study, the literature review was used in conjunction with other literature to illuminate the findings. Relevant literature was examined to confirm or disconfirm the trends that were found and conclusions that were drawn. These conclusions, interpretations, and implications for practice and research are presented in this chapter.

Conclusions and Interpretations

Grand Tour Question.

Are there discernible patterns of teacher socialization for first-year teachers in grades four through six as predicted by socialization theory and research?

Yes, there are discernible patterns of teacher socialization for first-year teachers, and these patterns were predicted by organizational socialization theory and research. Stage model theory is applicable in the context of the beginning teacher's experience.

Much as described in Moir's (1999) application of stage model theory, these teachers moved through an anticipation phase during student teaching where they tended to romanticize the notion of teaching. Although not an exact match to Moir's model, these teachers experienced a phase when they entered teaching in which survival seemed their primary concern, followed by a period of disillusionment, then rejuvenation, and finally reflection. Ultimately, this reflective thinking resulted in something similar to a new anticipation phase as seasoned beginners. They ended the year looking forward to a fresh start with next year's class.

The results of the study validated and supplemented the leading ideas in organizational socialization research and theory. They also, however, generated further questions concerning the influences and experiences that act upon teachers during the socialization process. Of particular interest was the evidence that anticipatory stage experiences continued to be powerful forces during the encounter stage.

Sub-questions.

Question 1. If there are discernible patterns, then is there an identifiable set of common experiences that contribute to that pattern?

Yes, there is an identifiable set of common experiences that contribute to socialization patterns. It is important to note immediately, however, that while these experiences are commonly shared, they neither occur at the same time nor in the same order by each person, nor does each person react to each experience in the same way or at the same level of intensity.

The identifiable set of experiences clustered into three categories:

- (1) Using anticipatory socialization experiences as a measure against which to judge the current experience.
- (2) Realizing a lack of preparation for certain aspects of teaching.
- (3) Feeling driven by a desire to work with children and to teach

1. Anticipatory Socialization

The use of anticipatory socialization experiences as a comparative measure of current experience took two basic forms. These teachers drew on their own experiences as children in school and on their experiences in student teaching.

A. Childhood Experiences at School

Anticipatory socialization factored heavily in how the teachers formed expectations and interpreted their first-year experiences. What had happened to individuals during anticipatory socialization greatly impacted them during their encounter phase. Many used phrases such as “When I was a kid...” and “Where I student taught...” to try to put what they were seeing into perspective. These experiences, along with their own cultural knowledge, colored the world for them.

This might have been anticipated. Long before the first year of teaching, teachers themselves go to school. Their perceptions of what happened there have the potential to greatly influence their actions as teachers many years later. Lortie (1975) spoke of “the apprenticeship of observation” as twelve years that students spend watching and listening to teachers. As was true in this study, he found that the teachers’ own early schooling had a great impact on them and how they taught. This sometimes can complicate the first-

year teacher's socialization. As Jackson (1986) proposed, this prior experience in school resulted in the acquisition of a set of norms that beginning teachers must consciously unpack and reexamine in light of current placement, student needs, and contemporary theory to determine if and how those norms fit the new role and setting.

B. Student Teaching

University students value field experiences (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990), and they view student teaching as the most important part of their preparation process (Goodlad, 1991; Kennedy, 1991). In the course of the interviews, these beginning teachers repeatedly discussed their experiences in comparison to what they had encountered in student teaching.

Nonetheless, for these teachers, as for those Lortie (1986) had studied, student teaching did not significantly alter the impact of prior anticipatory socialization. Even after student teaching, these new teachers still felt there were aspects of the job they were not aware of, which is exactly what is predicted in surprise theory (Louis, 1980) and stage model socialization research (Feldman, 1976; Hughes, 1958; Louis, 1980; Van Maanen & Schein, 1979; Wanous, 1992).

These beginning teachers wished that they had had an entire year as student teachers. They thought that a full-year experience would better equip them to understand all that happens. Those who student taught second semester did not know how to set up rules, routines, and procedures. The ones who had begun in the fall wanted to know more about the challenges of ending a school year. Although student teaching exposed them to many aspects of the teaching experience, a student teacher's responsibility still is

somewhat limited, and it did not prepare them for the intensity they would find when they assumed full responsibility in their first jobs. Teaching is far more demanding of their time and energy than what they had previously observed or experienced as student teachers.

For many, the time spent in student teaching was also the last period of time before they took on increased personal responsibilities. Teachers who assumed additional duties or who made significant changes in their private lives (such as moving out of their parents' homes to establish their independence) with which they had not had to deal as student teachers faced added challenges in handling their work. This experience also has been documented in other research (e.g., Brock & Grady, 1997).

2. Lack of Preparation

As the year went on, these new teachers found they were not as prepared to teach as they had originally thought they were. There were five sectors of their experience in which they felt they were less than adequately prepared. These included their ability to deal with:

- A. The challenges of discipline and classroom management
- B. The wide range of student academic ability and achievement levels
- C. The demands of paperwork and the grading of student papers
- D. The time required to do a good job in teaching
- E. The impact that teaching would have on their private lives

A. Discipline and Classroom Management

These teachers needed to have more information about discipline and classroom management to be proactive and successful. In this, they reflected the experiences of new teachers almost everywhere (Brophy, 1988; Doyle, 1990). They also became concerned about the severity of problems some students have at home and how to deal with those situations when they cause students to act out in class or disengage from learning. They became concerned not only because they were not sure that they would know how to handle a particular behavior, but also because they understood that time spent on discipline took away from the time available for teaching and learning.

B. Wide Range of Academic Levels

The beginning teachers wished that they had developed more background in working with the wide range of academic ability and achievement levels represented in their students. While they knew there would be such differences, they felt they had only limited knowledge about how to deal with them.

In this they were like many other first-year teachers. The challenge involved in addressing the range of student ability often poses a difficulty for beginning teachers as they struggle to adapt lessons to students' abilities. Aspiring elementary level teachers continue to be largely middle-class white females (Feistritzer, 1996), while the children with whom they work are becoming increasingly diverse in culture, language, and socioeconomic status (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Hyun & Marshall, 1996; Zeichner, K. & Hoefft, K. (1996). Dana (1992) found that student teachers working in schools where the students were predominantly of cultural backgrounds different from their own reported

more problems with classroom management.

C. Demands of Paperwork

The paperwork in teaching almost overwhelmed many of the beginning teachers. Administrative paperwork and grading student papers was tremendously time consuming. In time, the teachers learned to deal with the challenge and it became less intimidating, but they felt they should have been given better advice and training during their pre-service training.

D. Time

A universal experience was feeling the pressure of the time commitment teaching requires. Neither their class work nor their student teaching had prepared them for the time demands. One of their primary concerns about the pre-service training was that it did not give them knowledge or warning of how much time it takes to be a good teacher. They initially found themselves busy to the point of being overwhelmed and stressed, a condition that seems to be very wide spread among first-year teachers (Moir, 1999; Wilkinson, 1997).

E. Impact on Private Life

The feeling of too much to do in too little time affected these new teachers personally and in their relationships with family and friends. They reported a trend towards increasing friendships with fellow teachers who could better understand the demands of the position, while moving away from non-teaching friends who could not comprehend that their jobs really did not end at four o'clock.

3. Desire to Teach

The beginning teachers were primarily concerned with teaching and the interactions in their classrooms. They wanted to work with children and they wanted to teach. This was the only part of the job they had observed as children and it had been the focus of their work as student teachers. They knew how to plan lessons and how to stand up and deliver them, but they were not as well prepared for aspects of the job that were less readily apparent. Tasks and behaviors that took time and attention away from teaching frustrated them. The sources of frustration were primarily meetings and committees outside the classroom and student behavior inside it.

A. Meetings and Committees

The teachers expressed resentment about the time they had to spend at district-level meetings, especially those held immediately prior to the beginning of the school year. They wanted to be in their classrooms and getting ready for their students. They perceived those meetings as lacking immediate connection to the day-to-day demands of teaching that consumed them. These meetings were viewed by most as irrelevant and as just one more thing to do in a life already crowded with too many things to do. They were less negative about meetings that were held by grade level because they saw them as more valuable and pertinent to their teaching.

They felt somewhat differently about staff meetings in their own buildings. The beginning teachers saw school-based staff meetings early in the year as a way to get necessary information. These meetings helped them to learn about their colleagues and the school culture and gave them some knowledge about the structure and operation of

their schools.

One interesting aspect of their feelings about building-level meetings was that as the year progressed, their reaction became closely associated with their feelings about their principals. Those who admired their principals viewed the meetings as needed and informative, while those who saw their principals in a more negative light saw them as a waste of time.

For the most part, the beginning teachers were not required to be heavily involved in committee work. Committee participation was voluntary and limited. Any involvement did, however, represent one more thing to do. Beginning teachers who expressed the most concern about committees were those who were not clear on what was expected of them as committee members.

As a side note, two teachers were over committed to extra curricular and coaching activities and came to view that participation as a mistake they did not intend to repeat.

B. Effect of Student Behavior on Learning

The new teachers quickly discovered a link between student behavior and learning. They understood the role of classroom management in enabling learning to take place. However, not all of them were able to consistently maintain a classroom environment conducive to learning. They would have liked better pre-service preparation in this area. This is important because there is clear evidence that teachers must actively engage students so that they are able to succeed (McCaslin & Good, 1992). Teacher knowledge and the ability to maintain the learning environment make a crucial difference in what children learn (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996).

Question 2. If there is such a set of experiences, then are there elements of those experiences that teachers find surprising in their first-year teaching experience?

Yes, there were elements of those experiences that first-year teachers found surprising. First were those areas outlined above in which they thought they were prepared and then discovered they were not. But their surprises went beyond those areas alone. These people came to teaching because they liked children, wanted to teach, and thought they could make a difference. They were surprised when their first attempts at teaching were not overtly successful and when students and their parents did not behave in the predictable patterns they expected. There were many facets of the job they did not fully anticipate.

In analyzing the data, it seemed that the things that surprised them fell into three categories:

- (1) selected technical aspects of the job;
- (2) their professional relationships with other adults;
- (3) the impact the job had on their private lives.

1. **Selected Technical Aspects**

While there is a long list of technical behaviors that make up teaching, four major areas delivered surprises to teachers in this study. As noted, these were also the areas in which the teachers felt the least prepared:

- A. Working with students
- B. Classroom management and discipline

- C. Paperwork and grading
- D. Time commitment required
- A. Working With Students

Concerns and problems of teachers that surprised them in working with students were consistent with those found in the literature (e.g., Fuller, 1969; Veenman, 1984, Corley, 1998). Classroom management, handling student-generated papers, grading, student motivation, and dealing with variations in the academic levels of individual students consistently stood out as most surprising throughout the study. The beginning teachers found some surprises were easier to deal with than others, and the most difficult surprises were those that made a teacher question his or her ability to teach and to make a difference.

An additional surprise came in the form of just common student behavior. The teachers were surprised by the ways in which their students behaved differently from how they themselves had behaved as children.

B. Classroom Management and Discipline

All of the new teachers clearly linked good days with positive student behavior and clear evidence that learning was taking place and bad days with negative behavior and decreased learning. This could have been predicted., as classroom management surfaces as one of the most important factors in student learning even in student teaching (Wang, Haertel, and Walberg, 1993). Good classroom management relies on acceptable student behavior and meaningful learning activities (Brophy, 1988; Doyle, 1990).

C. Paperwork and Grading

The teachers were initially shocked by the volume of paperwork that students generated. It threatened to bury them. They understood that they needed to grade papers in order to know how their students were progressing, but the massive number and wide variety overwhelmed them. As time went on, however, they individually figured out systems of dealing with papers that worked for them.

Many of the teachers initially experienced difficulty with grading. They preferred to grade objective papers such as math or spelling tests and were more intimidated by the necessarily subjective grading of writing and projects. Although they had been taught to assess student work using a variety of methods, some expressed frustration in implementing assessment practices. This was caused by the disconnect between how they had been taught to teach and what they were actually doing, either because of a lack of confidence in their own ability to grade fairly and accurately or because of insufficient time to do the thorough job they wanted to do. It was easier and less time consuming to use the textbook test, but it didn't quite feel right.

New and unfamiliar forms were cause for concern. The new teachers were less intimidated by district required paperwork once they had been through it and understood it. Report cards and the paperwork associated with student transfers were initially difficult for these beginners. They worried future paperwork and voiced uncertainty about adding to their work load. Beginners were very grateful for support from veterans in walking them through the paperwork for the first time.

D. Time

The universal surprise was the amount of time that it took to teach. They became physically and emotionally exhausted and this took a toll on them and their private lives. It seemed that school was all there was time to do. This is typical of the first-year teacher experience (Lortie, 1975; Moir, 1999).

2. Professional Relationships with Adults

New teachers become socialized only through extended interactions with established members of the school community. This allows them to learn what is expected of them, and how to meet those expectations (Gordon & Maxey, 2000). This is vital because different groups have different expectations of the beginning teacher and those vary from site to site as found in this study and others (Corley, 1998; Niebrandt, Horn & Holmes, 1992).

These interactions, however, also allow the new teachers to test their expectations of others. The new teachers' experiences as children, College of Education students, and student teachers had shaped certain expectations for principals, colleagues, and students' parents.

A. The Principal

How each viewed his or her relationship with the principal was highly dependent on past experiences in which the beginning teacher had developed an impression of how a principal was supposed to be and act. They brought these impressions into the job with them and were either positively or negatively surprised if and when they contrasted with the reality encountered.

More than half reported the relationship to be better than expected. They viewed their principals as organized, good communicators, supportive, and interested in them on a personal basis. The four who expressed some dissatisfaction with the relationship thought there would be more support, better communication, and more of a personal, as well as professional, relationship.

This was an important finding because teachers who have supportive colleagues and supervisors are less vulnerable to stress and burnout (Russell, Altmaier, & VanVeezen, 1987). The literature also demonstrates that supervision is most effective, including the teacher's response to supervision, when it is individually tailored to both the teacher and the context in which the teacher works (Blumberg, 1980; Grimmer, Rostad, & Ford, 1992). Teacher attrition studies reveal that new teachers who do not feel such support are more likely to exit the field and that appears to happen more frequently in urban districts (Darling-Hammond, 1997).

B. Peers

Peers are always the greatest source of information for beginners and are one of the most important factors in helping newcomers feel effective in any job (Latane, 1981). The teachers in this study generally felt their colleagues were more supportive and helpful than they had anticipated that they would be. However, a few negative veteran teachers did concern the beginners. Based on their pre-service experiences and training, they were expecting more of a professional response from all their colleagues. In time they learned how to deal with this, as they sought out interactions with their more positive coworkers.

C. Parents

The teachers were surprised when some parents did not appear to care about how their children performed in school, particularly because that attitude was so different from what they had experienced with their own parents. Even though most of the parents demonstrated the expected parental behavior, the few who did not immensely bothered the new teachers. This was important to learn because new teachers need to understand their students' backgrounds and home lives.

Another area of surprise was the frequent discrepancy between a parent's behavior in formal meetings and in informal conversations, telephone conversations, or in written or spoken contacts with the principal when the teacher was not present. The studied teachers typically found formal meetings such as parent-teacher conferences easier and more positive than anticipated. However, some parents in informal conversations and through phone calls and notes were much more critical and harder to deal with and satisfy.

3. Private Life Impact

The teachers were not prepared for the time and energy teaching demands. As a result, they did not anticipate the effects the workload would have on themselves and on their relationships. While intense and sometimes painful for these teachers, this was not a unique experience. It has been demonstrated in other research (e.g., Gordon & Maxey, 2000). There were personal costs in terms of time, energy, and social life consistent with those found in other research (e.g., Cole, 1990). These teachers became more aware of

the way their careers affected other parts of their lives and, as the year progressed, came to realize that it was not going to go away.

Question 3. If there are surprising elements, then are the first-year teachers able to reconcile the differences between what they anticipate and the reality that surprises them upon encounter?

Yes, these teachers were able to reconcile the differences between what they anticipated and the reality that surprised them upon encounter. They experienced initial shock and surprise; then later came to identify closely with the school culture they originally found confusing. An accumulation of experiences over time provided the cultural knowledge that was needed for success in the current work setting. Formal and informal mentors, peers, principals, friends, and family provided much needed support and assistance with interpretation. Even other first-year teachers helped them to make sense of that which was initially surprising. Time was needed to process their experiences through conversation with others in order to understand those events and the school culture.

These teachers were able to reconcile the differences between what they anticipated and what they encountered by utilizing the following:

- (1) Drawing on pre-service experience and knowledge whenever possible;
- (2) socialization agents;
- (3) sense-making process.

1. Drawing on Pre-service Experience and Knowledge Whenever Possible

That there is a gap between what teachers anticipate and what they encounter on the job was clearly demonstrated by this study. Beginning teachers who student taught in the same school district and at the same grade level where they were now assigned had an easier transition into teaching because they perceived less of a difference between expectations and reality to accommodate. Those particular beginners appeared to be able to do some sense-making in advance of assuming the first teaching position. They appeared to have had more of a realistic job preview (Wanous, 1980).

There still was some evidence of “reality shock” when these teachers encountered the classroom, but they did not create such an idealized projection of life as a teacher (Cameron, 1994; Jesus & Paixas, 1996; Veenman, 1984) as those who student taught in different school districts or at different grade levels. There is a body of literature that suggests that prior occupational and organizational socialization has an effect on socialization into new work settings (Jones, 1983; Van Maanan, 1977; Zahrly & Tosi, 1989). This work suggests that someone who has a background in a similar work setting should experience less ambiguity and uncertainty about both the nature of the work and the setting in which it is carried out. This can enhance the speed with which a newcomer adjusts to the new setting.

2. Socialization Agents

Making the transition from student teacher to teacher is difficult. As a result, new teachers can need support because as they lack confidence and feel that they do not have adequate control of their new situations (Gold, 1996). These beginners needed the help

of insiders to attain the cultural knowledge that allowed them to fully function as members of the work group. Principals, mentors, peers, and parents served as socializing agents.

Other people in the work place serve as socialization agents because they share information with the beginning teachers that he or she needs to have in order to understand the formal operating procedures and the informal norms of the school. Some socialization agents take an active and deliberate role in presenting such information to newcomers, such as principals and mentors, and others offer it more unwittingly, such as peers and parents. It is important to note, however, that even those who deliberately offer information also additionally offer information unknowingly through their behavior in other settings that is observed by the new teacher.

A. Principals

As cultural leaders, principals can support new teachers by communicating and modeling their vision (Brock & Grady, 1997). Teachers in this study were frustrated when they did not perceive the principal to be clearly communicating with them. One new teacher was asked to do her first report cards over again and wished that she had been told how to do them before she “messed up”. However, for the majority of the beginners, things were better than expected. Their principals were supportive of them, communicated well, and offered feedback that was meaningful. The new teachers who had principals who expressed interest in how they were doing personally were pleasantly surprised. This is meaningful because new teachers see the principal as vital to their success (Rosenholtz, 1989).

The principal as visionary is critical because the norms of a school can enhance or inhibit the abilities of induction participants (Schrer, 1999). Beginning teachers have a need for collegial support (Weasmer & Woods, 2000). Principals who develop school cultures that encourage and celebrate collaboration among staff develop cooperation, trust, and support within the school community (Rosenholz, 1989).

B. Mentors

As reported by beginning teachers in other studies (e.g., Bartell & Ownby, 1994), many of the new teachers in this study said that they would not have made it without the guidance and support of a mentor. As instructional leaders and master teachers, mentors can be a professional lifeline for their new colleagues (Halford, 1999). The teachers studied here found the same obvious advantages to having mentors at the same grade level and in the same building in close proximity that other teachers have reported (Gordon & Maxey, 2000; Huffman & Leak, 1986).

Master teachers working as mentors help rookie teachers learn the building philosophy, cultural values, and expectations of the school culture (Little, 1990). By paying attention to the socialization process, mentors can make substantial differences in new teachers' lives and positively impact the learning experience of the students as effective learning strategies and classroom management skills are implemented (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 1996).

C. Peers

Teachers who were not mentors also provided cultural information to newcomers. This information was provided intentionally as well as unintentionally. Much assistance

in deciphering meaning was necessary as new teachers wanted to be assimilated into the work group. They wanted and needed to fit in and their peers helped with this by giving them cues as to acceptable and unacceptable behavior.

D. Parents

Parents unwittingly helped new teachers understand the culture of the community and the school. Parents were not reticent about sharing what mattered to them and their children. In the case of two of the teachers, students' step-fathers agreed with the teachers about the negative behavior of the students even when their mothers did not. This measure of support was reinforcing and gave the teachers more confidence in later interactions with parents.

However, parents were somewhat intimidating to the new teachers. They were concerned because the parents whose children needed the most support seemed to be the least likely to attend school-sponsored events and were the hardest to contact and engage. Teachers were further frustrated because of the differences in how these parents behaved from how their own parents had behaved years earlier when they themselves were students in elementary school. This proved to be another area where the gap between expectations and reality was problematic.

3. Sense-making Process

The teachers utilized the sense-making process to work through their surprises and reconcile themselves to the differences between what they anticipated teaching would be and what they encountered in reality. Communication, experience, and feedback all

provided valuable assistance in making sense of that which was initially difficult to understand.

A. Communication

Conversation is much more important to relationships in organizations than is one-way communication (Champy, 1997). The teachers studied here who were positive and proactive in seeking out communication opportunities positively impacted their induction experience. This effect has been confirmed in other research (Renard, 1999). Mentors in this study supplied much needed information through communication with their mentees. Mentoring is more than just giving advice, it is dialoguing with listening and questioning (Boreen & Niday, 2000).

Beginners with and without formal mentors also sought informal mentors. Helpful people provided much needed emotional support and guidance. The beginners relied on these self-selected relationships to provide a sounding board and information on how their ideas would play out in the school in general and with the principal in particular.

Principals mattered to the first-year teachers. The ones who enjoyed a personal as well as professional relationship with their supervisor had a definite advantage. These relationships facilitate communication in which roles are defined and cultural knowledge is transmitted. The beginners with ready access to such communication adapted more readily than those without. As in so many other areas, expectations contrasted either positively or negatively with reality determined the level of satisfaction with the relationship.

B. Experience

Socialization did not just happen to the new teachers; they were active participants in the process. Each emerged as an individual with a unique personality and set of background experiences that impacted socialization into his or her current setting. This does not come as a surprise because age, prior experience, and availability of materials have been positively correlated to the belief that one's teaching could make a difference (Chester & Beaudin, 1996).

This is best illustrated by the fact that the two teachers in the same building had markedly divergent entry experiences. One consistently reported having an easier transition. She frequently mentioned being slightly older and that having grown up with a father who was a teacher had prepared her ahead of time for some of the surprises and challenges of teaching.

The males appeared to be less surprised, or at least more reticent in discussing their surprises. However, one was older, both were married with children and had more extensive previous employment histories that could further explain the differences, so caution should be used in drawing conclusions based solely on gender.

Whether or not one has experience in a given context also seems important. Those teachers who had student taught in other districts reported significantly more surprises in all three interviews.

C. Feedback

Feedback was essential in helping the teachers make sense of their surprises. It offered them insight into the norms and conventions of the school culture. These teachers

deliberately sought feedback on a number of items, not just on their work. This was to be expected. Feldman (1976) proposed that beginners face challenges in: being initiated to the group, being initiated to the task, trying to define his or her role in the group, learning to deal with conflict in the group, and balancing work and life outside of work.

Beginners needed to know how their supervisors thought they were doing. Positive feedback was enjoyed the most, however, even critical feedback seemed preferable to none. Feedback has been found to be essential in successful employee transitions (Miller & Jablin, 1991; Morrison, 1993; Saks & Ashforth, 1997a).

Implications for Practice and Research

Implications for Practice

The results of this study have implications for practice at both the university pre-service level and the school district in-service level. They will be discussed independently, although it clearly emerged that greater interaction between the university and school district has the potential to positively influence the process of teacher induction by decreasing transition shock. The notion of a closer connection between pre-service and in-service experiences warranted an additional review of the literature. What was found in other research confirmed these findings.

Schlechty (1990) found that in order for the concepts and theories of pre-service education to be viewed as pertinent and meaningful, they must be linked to the realities teachers encounter in their socialization. This is because as teacher socialization progresses, concepts and themes that were rooted in university learning evolve, they are further refined and developed over time and by experience (Hall, Johnson & Bowman,

1995). For optimal impact, pre-service education should become part of a bigger picture that includes the induction process (Hall & Bowman, 1989). In order to successfully transition from student teacher to teacher, students of teaching must be taught to respond to the needs of students in a variety of contexts (Little & Robinson, 1997). New teachers benefit when school districts work more closely with universities to bridge pre-service to in-service (Halford, 1998).

There is evidence when beginning teachers are adequately supported using a collegial team approach, everyone benefits (Turk, 1999). Novices, veterans, and university personnel working together could all learn from one another. Close working relationships between the university and schools has the added benefit of allowing professors to see and better understand the realities of life in a classroom (Metcalf-Turner and Fischetti, 1996). As a result, future teachers would be better prepared to link theory to practice McBee (1998).

Pre-service Level

1. Teachers in this study reported their areas of greatest concern were classroom management and discipline, meeting the needs of students with a wide range of academic abilities, dealing with problems that students bring from home, working with parents, paperwork and grading, and the time it takes to teach. To address these concerns, students of teaching need better preparation to deal with the realities of life in a classroom. This could be accomplished by allowing students more experience in classrooms in order to understand how theory may translate into practice and what it looks like in a school.

2. Teachers in this study experienced a gap between expectations and reality. In order to lessen this gap, education students may benefit from exposure to more than one student teaching experience since no one can predict where each student will ultimately find a job. Exposure to multiple grade levels, students of varied backgrounds, and more than one type of school would better prepare candidates for whatever the real classrooms are like in which they begin their careers.
3. Teachers in this study reported wishing they had experienced an entire year as student teachers in order to better understand all that happened to them over the course of the year. It would be ideal for student teaching to encompass a complete school year. If this is not possible, student teachers who do not directly experience the beginning of a school year should be given the opportunity to observe this or at least to interact with a practitioner and be walked through the process in detail. Room set up, rules, routines, and procedures need to be delineated in order for new teachers to understand how to set up a classroom.
4. Teachers in this study reported feeling intimidated by the standardized testing procedure. It would be helpful if education students had earlier exposure and greater knowledge of the standardized testing purpose, philosophy, and process.

In-service Level

1. Teachers in this study who student taught in a similar school setting and at the same grade level reported easier transitions into teaching as a career. Human Resources Department personnel and principals should heavily weigh the student teaching experience in making decisions about a beginning teacher's initial placement.

2. Teachers in this study were primarily concerned about their classrooms and secondarily about their specific schools. In-services and assistance should be designed to meet their needs and concerns. Smaller meetings by grade level seem more pertinent and personal than larger district-wide meetings and perhaps should be given greater emphasis in teacher induction.
3. Teachers in this study reported that what their principals did and said mattered to them. This implies that principals should be actively involved in both the formal and informal socialization of beginning teachers and should consider trying to build some level of relationship that emphasizes how much they care about the new teacher being successful.
4. The teachers in this study did not all have the same needs. Induction programs should have individualized as well as collective elements.
5. The results of this study suggested that mentors working in the same building and at the same grade level made closer connections with the beginners they mentor. There is social psychology and organizational research indicating that closer relationships tend to be built as a result of frequent interaction with the other person (Sabini, 1992) and on perceived similarity with the other person (Aronson, 1980). Administrators should take these factors into consideration when appointing veteran teachers as mentors for beginners.

Implications for Research

The results of this study suggest that further investigation of the organizational socialization of teachers would be appropriate. What we know about organizational

socialization does apply to teaching and greater theoretical development would be possible by further extension into this field. Conversely, education could benefit from the application of organizational socialization research and theory to teacher induction.

1. This study was limited to the teachers' first-year experience. A longitudinal study, perhaps over a period of three to five years, would allow an even better picture to emerge in regard to how teachers make sense of workplace surprises and whether this impacts career decisions over time.
2. This study was limited in scope to intermediate teachers. Further study, examining teachers' experience at other grade levels (both K-3 and 7-12) could determine if the received theories used to guide this study could be extended to those settings.
3. There were signs in this study that men and women may differ in how they experience organizational socialization. A study involving more males might offer some specific insights into how each gender copes with encounter period challenges.
4. Teachers in this study reported a shift in their friendship toward other teachers who could better relate to the demands of teaching as a career. This pattern of friendship shift bears closer examination. While this was a definite finding of this study, it was not found elsewhere in the literature.
5. The number of teachers studied in this study was limited to ten. This was appropriate because it was an exploratory study. Its results, blended with results from other exploratory studies, might provide ideas for a larger scale quantitative study of first-year teachers.

6. This study was limited in scope to one school district. Replication in a variety of school districts should be considered to see if the results are similar in other organizational structures and contexts.

Further Discussion

Most of the findings of this study were consistent with existing research on first-year teachers. There were two interesting deviations from this pattern, however.

The first centered on the reported friendship shift to fellow teachers who could better understand the demands of the teaching profession. While this was a clear finding of this study, it was not noted in the original literature review nor in the subsequent review of the literature at the conclusion of the study. As suggested in the implications for further research, this would be interesting to study and examine further.

The second area of deviation from earlier research is that teacher isolation did not surface as a significant problem for these first-year teachers. Much of the literature on first-year teachers points to isolation as a problem, but with the exception of one teacher, these teachers did not report this as a concern. The one who expressed concern with isolation felt the location of her re-locatable classroom did not foster interaction with other teachers in the building. She also did not have a mentor at her building.

Organizational socialization is applicable to the process of becoming a teacher. What we know can and should be applied to the induction process. We can no longer afford to have first-year teachers asking questions of themselves when we can help supply the answers. Everyone will benefit, perhaps students most of all.

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APPENDIX A

Initial Interview Protocol

Project: First-Year Teachers Study

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

Opening Statement:

Today I would like to interview you concerning your teaching experience so far. I want to learn more about the first-year teaching experience by talking with teachers who are just beginning their first year of teaching. I appreciate you taking the time to allow me to interview you because what you share will help me to understand what it means to be a first-year teacher.

I want to assure you that your identity will be held in confidence. So, for the purpose of this interview, I will identify you by a number.

Initial Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your first year of teaching so far.
 - A) What is it like to be a first-year teacher ?
 - B) Is it what you thought it would be like?
 - C) Are there some things you like the best? If so, please tell me about them.

- D) Are there things you like the least? If so, please tell me about them.
2. How do you assess your preparation for the job so far?
- A) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the best prepared? If so, please tell me about them.
- B) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the least prepared? If so, please tell me about them.
3. Have you had any experiences that you found unexpected or surprising?
- A) If so, please tell me about those experiences.
- B) How do you feel about them now?
4. What is it like to work with the groups of people that you work with?
- A) Is working with students what you expected it to be?
- B) Have you had interactions with your students' parents? If so, were those interactions what you expected them to be?
- C) Is your relationship with your fellow teachers what you thought it would be like?
- D) Are there any people who are especially helpful to you?
- E) Are there any people who appear to be deliberately not helpful to you?
- F) Are you part of a formal mentoring process? If so, how do you find that relationship?
- G) Have you found informal mentors? If so, how do you find that relationship?
- H) Is your relationship with the principal what you thought it would be like?

- I) Have you had any feedback on your teaching so far? If so, did you find it useful?
5. Has teaching impacted other parts of your life? If so, could you tell me about it?
- A) Have your relationships with family members been impacted?
- B) Have your relationships with friends been impacted?
6. How do you feel about the parts of your job that do not involve direct contact with students?
- A) How do you feel about the paperwork?
- B) How do you feel about planning?
- C) How do you feel about grading papers?
- D) How do you feel about student assessment?
- E) How do you feel about staff meetings?
- F) How do you feel about committees?
- G) How do you feel about district-level meetings?
7. What are you finding about the time required to do your job?
- A) What is a typical instructional day like for you?
- B) What defines a “good” day for you?
- C) So you have especially good days? If so, please tell me about them.
- D) What defines a “bad” day?
- E) Do you have especially bad days? If so, please tell me about them.
- F) What is the usual week like?

8. In looking over the first quarter, how did you feel it went?

A) What do you see next quarter being like?

B) Do you anticipate certain things being the same? If so, please tell me about them.

C) Do you anticipate certain things being different? If so, please tell me about them.

APPENDIX B

Second Interview Protocol

Project: First-Year Teachers Study

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

Opening Statement:

Today I would like to interview you concerning your teaching experience so far. As you know, I want to learn more about the first-year teaching experience by talking with teachers who are experiencing their first year of teaching. I appreciate you taking the time to allow me to interview you because what you share will help me to understand what it means to be a first-year teacher.

I want to assure you that your identity will be held in confidence. So, for the purpose of this interview, I will identify you by a number.

Second Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your first year of teaching so far.
 - A) What is it like to be a first-year teacher ?
 - B) Is it what you thought it would be like?
 - C) Are there some things you like the best? If so, please tell me about them.

- D) Are there things you like the least? If so, please tell me about them.
2. How do you assess your preparation for the job so far?
- A) What role did student teaching play in your preparation?
- B) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the best prepared? If so, please tell me about them.
- C) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the least prepared? If so, please tell me about them.
3. Have you had any experiences that you found unexpected or surprising?
- A) If so, please tell me about those experiences.
- B) How do you feel about them now?
4. What is it like to work with the groups of people that you work with?
- A) Is working with students what you expected it to be?
- B) Have you had interactions with your students' parents? If so, were those interactions what you expected them to be?
- C) Is your relationship with your fellow teachers what you thought it would be like?
- D) Are there any people who are especially helpful to you?
- E) Are there any people who appear to be deliberately not helpful to you?
- F) Are you part of a formal mentoring process? If so, how do you find that relationship?
- G) Have you found informal mentors? If so, how do you find that relationship?

- H) Is your relationship with the principal what you thought it would be like?
 - I) Have you had any feedback on your teaching so far? If so, did you find it useful?
5. Has teaching impacted other parts of your life? If so, could you tell me about it?
- A) Have your relationships with family members been impacted?
 - B) Have your relationships with friends been impacted?
6. How do you feel about the parts of your job that do not involve direct contact with students?
- A) How do you feel about the paperwork?
 - B) How do you feel about planning?
 - C) How do you feel about grading papers?
 - D) How do you feel about student assessment?
 - E) How do you feel about staff meetings?
 - F) How do you feel about committees?
 - G) How do you feel about district-level meetings?
7. What are you finding about the time required to do your job?
- A) What is a typical instructional day like for you?
 - B) What defines a “good” day for you?
 - C) So you have especially good days? If so, please tell me about them.
 - D) What defines a “bad” day?
 - E) Do you have especially bad days? If so, please tell me about them.

- F) What is the usual week like?
8. In looking over the second quarter, how did you feel it went?
- A) What do you see next quarter being like?
- B) Do you anticipate certain things being the same? If so, please tell me about them.
- C) Do you anticipate certain things being different? If so, please tell me about them.

APPENDIX C

Third Interview Protocol

Project: First-Year Teachers Study

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

Opening Statement:

Today I would like to interview you concerning your teaching experience so far. As you know, I want to learn more about the first-year teaching experience by talking with teachers who are experiencing their first year of teaching. I appreciate you taking the time to allow me to interview you because what you share will help me to understand what it means to be a first-year teacher.

I want to assure you that your identity will be held in confidence. So, for the purpose of this interview I will identify you by number.

Third Interview Questions

1. Tell me about your first year of teaching so far.
 - A) What is it like to be a first-year teacher ?
 - B) Is it what you thought it would be like?
 - C) Are there some things you like the best? If so, please tell me about them.

- D) Are there things you like the least? If so, please tell me about them.
2. How do you assess your preparation for the job so far?
- A) What role did student teaching play in your preparation?
- B) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the best prepared? If so, please tell me about them.
- C) Is there a part of the job for which you feel the least prepared? If so, please tell me about them.
3. Have you had any experiences that you found unexpected or surprising?
- A) If so, please tell me about those experiences.
- B) How do you feel about them now?
4. What is it like to work with the groups of people that you work with?
- A) Is working with students what you expected it to be?
- B) Have you had interactions with your students' parents? If so, were those interactions what you expected them to be?
- C) Is your relationship with your fellow teachers what you thought it would be like?
- D) Are there any people who are especially helpful to you?
- E) Are there any people who appear to be deliberately not helpful to you?
- F) Are you part of a formal mentoring process? If so, how do you find that relationship?
- G) Have you found informal mentors? If so, how do you find that relationship?

- H) Is your relationship with the principal what you thought it would be like?
- I) Have you had any feedback on your teaching so far? If so, did you find it useful?
5. Has teaching impacted other parts of your life? If so, could you tell me about it?
- A) Have your relationships with family members been impacted?
- B) Have your relationships with friends been impacted?
6. How do you feel about the parts of your job that do not involve direct contact with students?
- A) How do you feel about the paperwork?
- B) How do you feel about planning?
- C) How do you feel about grading papers?
- D) How do you feel about student assessment?
- E) How do you feel about staff meetings?
- F) How do you feel about committees?
- G) How do you feel about district-level meetings?
7. What are you finding about the time required to do your job?
- A) What is a typical instructional day like for you? Has this changed since the beginning of the year?
- B) What defines a “good” day for you?
- C) So you have especially good days? If so, please tell me about them.
- D) What defines a “bad” day?

- E) Do you have especially bad days? If so, please tell me about them.
 - F) What is the usual week like?
8. In looking over the year, how did you feel it went?
- A) How do you assess your fit to the culture of the building you teach in?
 - B) What do you see next quarter being like?
 - C) Do you anticipate certain things being the same? If so, please tell me about them.
 - D) Do you anticipate certain things being different? If so, please tell me about them.
9. What advice would you give to teachers who enter a classroom for the first time this August?
10. What suggestions would you make in regard to new teacher induction?
11. Do you plan to be a career teacher?

APPENDIX D

**The Best of Times,
The Worst of Times**

**A First-Year Teacher's
Journal of Surprises**

August 21-25

Best

Worst

Surprises

August 28-September 1

Best

Worst

Surprises

September 5-8

Best

Worst

Surprises

September 11-15

Best

Worst

Surprises

September 18-22

Best

Worst

Surprises

September 25-29

Best

Worst

Surprises

October 2-6

Best

Worst

Surprises

October 9-13

Best

Worst

Surprises

October 16-20

Best

Worst

Surprises

October 23-27

Best

Worst

Surprises

October 30- November 3

Best

Worst

Surprises

November 6-10

Best

Worst

Surprises

November 13-17

Best

Worst

Surprises _____

November 20-22

Best _____

Worst _____

Surprises _____

November 27- December 1

Best _____

Worst _____

Surprises _____

December 4-8

Best _____

Worst _____

Surprises _____

December 11-15

Best _____

Worst _____

Surprises _____

December 18-22

Best

Worst

Surprises

January 8-12

Best

Worst

Surprises

January 16-19

Best

Worst

Surprises

January 22-26

Best

Worst

Surprises

January 29- February 2

Best

Worst

Surprises

February 5-9

Best

Worst

Surprises

February 12-16

Best

Worst

Surprises

February 20-23

Best

Worst

Surprises

February 26-March 2

Best

Worst

Surprises

March 5- 9

Best

Worst

Surprises

March 12-16

Best

Worst

Surprises

March 19-23

Best

Worst

Surprises

March 26-30

Best

Worst

Surprises

April 2-6
Best

Worst

Surprises

April 9-13
Best

Worst

Surprises

April 23-27
Best

Worst

Surprises

April 30-May 4
Best

Worst

Surprises

May 7-11

Best

Worst

Surprises

May 14-18

Best

Worst

Surprises

May 21-25

Best

Worst

Surprises

May 29- June 1

Best

Worst

Surprises



Institutional Review Board (IRB)
Office of Regulatory Affairs (ORA)
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October 5, 2000

Kathleen Peterson
Educational Administration
Kayser Hall 414
UNO - Via Courier

IRB#: 362-00-EX

TITLE OF PROTOCOL: First-Year Teacher Socialization Process

Dear Ms. Peterson:

The IRB has reviewed your Exemption Form for the above-titled research project. According to the information provided, this project is exempt under 45 CFR 46:101b, category 2. You are therefore authorized to begin the research.

It is understood this project will be conducted in full accordance with all applicable sections of the IRB Guidelines. It is also understood that the IRB will be immediately notified of any proposed changes that may affect the exempt status of your research project.

Please be advised that the IRB has a maximum protocol approval period of five years from the original date of approval and release. If this study continues beyond the five year approval period, the project must be resubmitted in order to maintain an active approval status.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Ernest D. Prentice'.

Ernest D. Prentice, Ph.D.
Co-Chair, IRB

lw

APPENDIX F

IRB#: 362-00-EX

Informed Consent for Participation in the First-Year Teachers Study

You are being asked to participate in a study on first-year teachers that I am conducting for my doctoral dissertation. You are eligible to participate because you will be teaching full time for the first time in the intermediate grades for the Omaha Public Schools during the 2000-2001 school year. From this study I hope to learn more about first-year teachers. This research will add to what we know about the first-year of teaching and may assist in developing more effective methods of induction that will help first-year teachers in the future.

If you decide to participate, I will interview you three times during the 2000-2001 school year. Each of these interviews will be audio-tape recorded and last approximately one hour. I will ask you to journal in a bulleted format on the best, worst, and surprising incidents each week.

Your identity will be held in confidence. You will be asked to read through the narrative of the interviews to be sure that they accurately portray how you view the first-year of teaching. If you decide to participate, you are free to change your mind and may withdraw from participation in the study at any time.

You are voluntarily making a decision whether to participate in this research. Your signature means you have read and understood the information presented and have decided to participate. Your signature also means that the information on this consent form has been fully explained to you and all of your questions have been answered to your satisfaction. If you think of any additional questions during the study, you should contact the investigator. You will be given a copy of this consent form.

 Teacher's Signature

 Date

 Investigator's Signature

 Date

Kathleen Peterson, principal investigator 457-6711 (school) 493-3978 (home)

APPENDIX G

MATRIX OF RESPONSES TO INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Question 1. Tell me about your first year of teaching so far.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	lot of work	hectic, crazy, busy some progress	crazy, lots of surprises, fun, enjoyable
2	too busy	busy, no time for self, learning curriculum	difficult, a lot more work than I thought
3	overwhelming	big change, getting easier, less behavior	ups and downs, no time, unpredictable
4	challenge like to test the teacher	busy	challenge, ready for it to be over
5	better than I thought fewer behavior problems	better than I thought, surprised by all the help and support	learning experience, less prepared than you think
6	enjoyable, meaningful second career	learning experience, plan changes for next year	challenging, series of eye-opening events
7	enjoyable, like higher grade level	good, daily variety, girls have attitude	fast, overall positive, bad times followed by good times
8	paperwork and meetings too much like working with kids	very busy	roller coaster- ups and downs, more adult problems than kids
9	great, handy mentor	going well, fun, worry about CAT testing	great, smooth, now overwhelmed with end of the year
10	busy	very challenging, trying to reach kids at their levels	interesting, unique challenges, positive, look forward to next year

◆ What is it like to be a first-year teacher?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	busy	very busy, learning tricks of the trade, what not to do next year	huge learning experience
2	really tough, I met self coming and going	tough, time management is hard	hard, parents don't take 1 st year teacher seriously

3	high expectations for self, hard, sick	hard, stressful	overwhelming, every one has expectations for you
4	challenge, students like to test teacher	more used to it, still working on management	exciting, surprised by all the support
5	work at home, I keep my mouth shut	busy	little fish in a big pond, hope to survive
6	biggest surprise is number of hours	fun, enjoyable, quick to get into routine	back to working more hours, better
7	stressful, scheduling is difficult	nerve wracking, question self, rewarding	frustrating, not enough time, inexperience at grade level
8	Veteran teachers talk, easy to feel left out	long hours	good- some slack, too much emphasis on 1 st
9	not too stressful at first, more and more now	exhausted	hard at the end of the year, no experience
10	challenging, completely on your own	frustrated by lack of communication	mixed emotions, enthusiasm that veterans lack, frustrated by things you are expected to know

◆ Is it what you thought it would be like?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	more to deal with, roles- mom, dad, psychologist, teacher	yes - teaching and no - paperwork and problems	not paperwork and problems from home
2	no, unpredictable	no, student teaching doesn't show it all	no, didn't know district would require so much
3	somewhat	busy and all consuming part	not really
4	pretty much	yes	mostly
5	I thought it would be more open and easier to talk	students lower ability-wise than I thought	for the most part
6	really yes, maybe better, few management problems	I am surprised by the amount of time it takes	now see additional challenges with math group
7	yes, advantage of parent as teacher,	teacher dad- knew hours long and paperwork	dad teacher- knew busy, likes kids

	knew long hours, exhausting		
8	pretty much, did not anticipate paperwork	Yes, hung around with teachers	mostly, observations are intrusive, nervous
9	yes, a little easier, apprehensive, worried about being organized	better, fun, challenging, older grade level	mostly, little things come up that were not done in student teaching
10	no, student teaching experience was different	yes and no, kids a joy, paperwork shuffle	yes and no, challenge and frustrating

◆ Are there some things you like the best? If so, please tell me about them.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	when you teach them something and it sinks in	when kids make a connection to a lesson	teaching the lesson
2	the teaching part of it	working with the staff, some days the kids	yes, just the teaching
3	teaching science, the hands-on activities	plan time, talking to principal, projects	the students I connected with
4	working one-on-one with students to see their individual personalities	thoughtful students-made me things, comments	students who acted to make me happy
5	having a mentor at the same grade level in my building	ability to talk with fellow teachers during plan time	peer support and mentor helpful
6	love teaching math, fun to work with upper section	teaching upper level math, worry about lower for next semester	working with the kids
7	rewarding to see progress help students succeed	actual teaching	contact with kids and teaching
8	I like the kids, do extra-curricular activities	people relationships with staff and students	the kids, I have 19 children
9	I like the kids and this age	informal talking with students so they can get to know me better	hanging around with the kids, teaching science
10	working with kids and watching them learn,	kids and learning	get on their level, help them learn, build rapport

	brightens your day		
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- ◆ Are there some things you like the least? If so, please tell me about them.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	discipline	paperwork, discipline	paperwork, discipline
2	district things-EXCELS, six-trait, grading	district- six-trait writing and EXCELS	district requirements-documentation
3	behaviors that make students hared to work with, social studies	paperwork	behaviors and issues they bring from home
4	dealing with behaviors that distract others	behaviors, disciplining, talking out/back	nonstop student misbehavior
5	departmentalization, I would rather keep my kids	departmentalization	departmentalization
6	science not fun, working with the other class issues with management	teaching science	mediating squabbles, negative parental involvement
7	paperwork, no science materials	endless volume of paperwork	paperwork, grading, and CRTs
8	paperwork, complaints about the administration	school and district meetings	paperwork, CRTs
9	dealing with parents, SATs	paperwork, preparation, money spent	social studies, CRTs
10	lack of support and communication from the administration	report cards, documentation	paperwork, meetings, documentation, pointless meetings

- ◆ Did your feelings in this regard change as the year went on?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not applicable	not applicable	stayed the same
2	not applicable	not applicable	no, dealing with it right now
3	not applicable	not applicable	no, increased, CRTs and everything else came up

4	not applicable	not applicable	a little bit, surprised by the parents who were supportive
5	not applicable	not applicable	yes, got better and more support
6	not applicable	not applicable	not really too much
7	not applicable	not applicable	as time went on, I got more confidence and things got easier
8	not applicable	not applicable	changed for the good, easier than I thought
9	not applicable	not applicable	nervous and apprehensive at the beginning, positive change
10	not applicable	not applicable	it has stayed the same

Question 2. How do you assess your preparation for the job so far? Is there a part of the job for which you feel the best prepared? If so, please tell me about them.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	lesson planning	lesson plans and the actual teaching	somewhat prepared, dive in and try to do it right
2	a lot of contact with children	my college did an excellent job	prepared academically, not for unknowns
3	I thought it was discipline. It wasn't.	not completely ready, next year know more	lower level students, not how to balance all
4	contact with children, grade levels/maturity	knew what was coming, different class	core knowledge about children
5	social studies and geography	over-prepared in math and focus on reading	need experience to understand
6	content knowledge in math	thought I was prepared, now better grasp	the big picture, not all the details
7	prepared for how time consuming	well-prepared, got into schools early	organization, management
8	working with minority students	felt prepared, can now see gaps in knowing	relating to people, rapport is there
9	working with special needs students	how to write basic lesson plans	lesson planning is automatic
10	grade level curriculum	exposed to what is really	not prepared for adm.

		out there in schools	miscommunication
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◆ What role did student teaching play in your preparation?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not applicable	helpful with lesson plans need to see start of year	biggest part, more to it than that
2	not applicable	My college did an excellent job.	it helped, only saw surface
3	not applicable	biggest and most important part	best part, but different to really teach
4	not applicable	pretty important, each class is different	student teaching class was well-behaved
5	not applicable	eye-opening, showed how to prepare, routine	showed basics, helpful to know what to do
6	not applicable	helped a lot, should have taken more initiative	best part of preparation
7	not applicable	good cooperating teacher good experience	cornerstone- where I learned everything
8	not applicable	need full year, did well, good fit in experience	should be more and paid/ no tuition
9	not applicable	best part of college, a starting point	pretty big role, real lesson planning
10	not applicable	great experience, but not similar situation	very helpful, different district

◆ Is there a part of the job for which you feel the least prepared? If so, please tell me about them.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	classroom management handling paperwork home situations	beginning of the year, not a lot of ways to discipline	discipline- should be a college class
2	curriculum, did not student teach in district	all that goes on behind the scenes you don't see	just the day-to-day way of doing things
3	setting professional goals	accommodating all the levels	dealing with students who lack motivation
4	unique individual student behaviors	discipline and dealing with individual students	discipline and the wide- range of student levels
5	how to teach writing	writing, all the meetings we would have	how to teach and encourage good writing
6	teaching reading	late work, system for	having working systems

		papers, parent contact	in place
7	grade level-intermediate differs from primary	ESL student- no preparation in how to do	ESL student, different levels, testing
8	good students who drive me crazy	paperwork, too much extra curricular, time	math is a weak area
9	the wide range of ability levels within a grade	end of the year- should student teach longer	classroom management
10	documentation, emphasis on little things	documentation, establish paper trail	documentation, miscommunication

Question 3. Have you had any experiences that you found unexpected or surprising? If so, please tell me about those experiences.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	pretty much everything	always something, the things they say	student behavior, I cared about school / they don't
2	busy, don't know if I am doing it right	parent contact, uninvolved parents	surprises with discipline parents unhappy
3	a student hugged me	student immaturity and lack of comprehension	that they never really attached to me
4	students had a birthday party for me	not really, my mentor warns me about things	how the staff cared about me
5	the needs that students have	conferences, parents respectful & some not	some parents care and some really don't
6	not being able to run copies	how close you get to students, proud of them	working with different levels of students
7	ESL student, frustrated by lack of materials	hard to met all needs, took time to get books	testing and time it takes, ESL still surprising
8	switching kids, different than student teaching	how to deal with serious behavior code infractions	lack of administrative support, discipline
9	money spent, preparation time	all the meetings, lack of personal time	testing time and low results
10	not as close as when student teaching	reality checks from students	miscommunication and lack of support

◆ How do you feel about them now?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	better, it has become a story	more used to it	doesn't bother me as much, used to if
2	you will mess up, tell me before I mess up	work through it the best you can	I am still dealing with it.

3	shocked to hear I'm getting a new student	time has made me more cynical or realistic	experience helps you understand & deal with
4	pretty much the same	mentor is so helpful in explaining things	anxious for the end
5	I am still surprised and shocked.	I understand better, but it is different than I thought	I am more used to the way things are
6	same	better, easier	I thought different class would be hard and it is
7	better about ESL, I can't control the book situation, so I let it go	the things that you can't change you just have to accept and go on	still frustrated, CRTs are contradictory to how I was taught to teach
8	changing students was stupid, high hopes- team	things are going better with coworkers	still working through it
9	it surprised me as I thought I had experience	take it as a given, stay positive, there is a reason	I know how I will do things next year.
10	working through it	still surprising because it is not what I experienced	the same way

Question 4. What is it like to work with the groups of people that you work with? Is working with students what you expected it to be?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not prepared for home situations and impact	yes, in terms of economic and cultural diversity	baggage they bring is unbelievable
2	surprised when student teaching, adjusted quick	really not prepared, their actions still shock me	age-years, not prepared for all the backgrounds
3	no, students not mature and negative behavior	No, I teach and teach and they still don't get it.	No, I thought they would like me.
4	Yes, I expected different personalities.	I was hoping they would be more respectful.	hard with wide-range of reasoning, behaviors
5	student teaching prepared, helpful staff	not at first, now am, needy kids, gets easier	issues from home impact their actions
6	actually more fun, can build rapport	yes	good class, not much discipline
7	yes, students have good days and bad days	mostly, surprised by students' problems	yes, most of the time good, some bad days
8	yes, you really get attached to students	yes	exactly, it is a whole lot of fun
9	no, I didn't know what to expect with this age	somewhat, grade level is different than expected	pretty much, this age is more independent
10	yes, I am called to work in inner-city	yes, but reality checks blow me away	yes-challenging, no-they act too grown

- ◆ Have you had interactions with your students' parents? If so, were those interactions what you expected them to be?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	conferences went well, better than before	couple shocking- parents have audacity	conferences-good, daily interactions worse
2	Yes, I am amazed by all the contact you do.	Some wonderful, others a struggle to contact	no, surprised by how different they are
3	conferences- no one was upset- went well	some supportive, others defensive	some more supportive than I thought
4	No, they do not like that I am first-year.	most say they will support, 1 bad situation	surprised they don't care about child's education
5	No, I thought it would be better.	Some harsh, some baby kid, parents disagree	Some don't care, it doesn't matter, some do
6	yes, very supportive, one cool and distant	most- some too involved, some uninvolved	most pretty good, a few not reasonable
7	very positive, most interested and concerned	good parents, one no contact, good to me	yes, but not all like mine were about school
8	no real surprises yet, suspension-no contact	very good, work together as a team	no, they like me, great rapport
9	one demanding and hard to deal with	intimidated at first, couple still scary	active parents, couple are demanding
10	half don't even care, good fall conferences	surprising how many don't care, explains kids	disappointing spring conferences, I try

- ◆ Is your relationship with your fellow teachers what you thought it would be like?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	better- great staff, really care	exceed expectations, can go to staff, welcome	better, wonderful, helpful staff
2	We have really good teachers.	better than student teaching staff, wonderful	no expectations, it has been really good
3	Yes and no, all busy, some helpful, fellow first-year teacher	idealism versus realism, not instant bond, some disagree, some wonderful	some surprises, get along well with some I didn't initially
4	better, talkative and welcoming, they care	I thought there would be more outside of school.	very supportive, could not have done it without
5	I am outgoing. I find them and interact.	Kind of, some are friendly, some are not	good, fun people-some have issues
6	you work alone mostly, can be helpful to talk	pretty much- close to 3-4 I eat lunch with	surprised- don't get to know except lunch

7	great staff, way better than I imagined	better- everyone likes and helps each other	better, great, can talk with, very supportive
8	no, expected more from student teaching	expected more positive, maybe not realistic	now it is
9	yes, a lot of wonderful people are here	more than at beginning, gotten to know them	approachable, good, helpful people
10	supportive if I ask, many new, fellow first-year	not as close as during student teaching	good at grade level, one I don't agree with

◆ Are there any people who are especially helpful to you?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	fellow first-year teacher	mentor, teacher friend of principal, other first-year	mentor, same teacher, principal
2	grade level teachers, close proximity	close proximity teachers, one earlier at grade level	one former at grade, two neighboring teachers
3	counselor, principal, grade level teacher	principal, counselor, PAC, and close teachers	others in this wing
4	secretary, principal listens but is busy	mentor, don't see others as I am not in building	mentor
5	reading specialist	mentor, teacher I can go to with questions	mentor and peer support teacher
6	grade level teacher, peer support, friendly teacher	grade level teachers, close teacher, principal	grade level teachers, another close teacher
7	grade level mentor, principal	mentor	mentor is great, principal is wonderful
8	team leader	team leader, fellow new teacher, administrator	fellow first-year, team leader, administrator
9	mentor, principal, custodian	mentor, peer support teacher	mentor and principal
10	mom at same grade level in district	mom	mom, fellow young teacher, veteran, para

◆ Are there any people who appear to be deliberately not helpful to you?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	no	veteran teacher at grade level takes w/o giving	one who is not helpful but wants things
2	yes, but I don't want to say	not really	not s, but they don't have time to help
3	no	detracting place teachers' lounge, negative talk	one personality clash

4	no	I don't think so	one other teacher
5	no	not really, some have negative attitude	some I don't get along with as well
6	not at this school	not on this staff	no
7	no	one staff member with negative attitude	couple who detract from ability to do job
8	same grade level teacher threw a chair at meeting	yes, someone who questions management	yes, one questions class management
9	no	couple with negative attitudes	there were, don't see then much
10	a student who was kicked out	some staff not as positive as I hoped	one specialist teacher

◆ Are you part of a formal mentoring process? If so, how do you find that relationship?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	yes, at same school , couldn't ask for better	yes, in this building with experience at this grade	yes, good- can call on for anything, anytime
2	yes, at same school at same grade	yes, not as helpful as I hoped	yes, good relationship
3	yes, new to same school at different grade	no, they are trying to find me one	no
4	yes, at same school at same grade, helpful	quarterly-goals, biweekly meet in depth, daily chat	yes, it was very helpful
5	yes, fellow grade level teacher, very helpful	yes	yes, helpful
6	not formally, teacher one grade lower	no	no, glad did not have to meet
7	yes, great	yes, both positive, work hard and like to have fun	yes, great match, can't imagine better
8	yes, at grade level not at school, uses another	yes, met together, came to observe w/o knowing	yes, relationship did not work out, no fault
9	yes, good relationship, second week of school	great, lucky, key is same grade level and building	yes, great could not have made it without her
10	no, and I have no experience in district	no	yes, it is wonderful

◆ Have you found informal mentors? If so, how do you find that relationship?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
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1	fellow new teacher, students' former teacher	teachers I can talk with	yes, the helpful type people
2	peer support will help in any way	everybody close, teacher who taught this grade	neighboring teacher, one who taught this grade
3	ask advice of fifth grade & kindergarten teacher	staff in wing gives advice if I just ask	kindergarten teacher I can bounce ideas off
4	everyone	not instructionally, but one I go to emotionally to talk	almost all, one really helps with emotions
5	not really	one gives me ideas and lets me vent	not really, some I like to talk to
6	fifth grade teacher is a great help	three people contact me and bring materials	fifth grade teacher very helpful
7	my cooperating teacher- can be great or not great	my cooperating teacher, dad	cooperating teacher- nice to bounce ideas
8	team leader, high school teacher	team leader- walked me through SAT process	helpful people, genius cooperating teacher
9	the sixth grade teacher	a friendly teacher points out things, suggestions	a few, close teacher, music and art teachers
10	not really	another teacher- talk to and pass things by	older same grade teacher, first-year friend

◆ Is your relationship with the principal what you thought it would be like?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	better, open, makes time, talked with mentor	better, she is willing to spend time to help	better, knows and cares about you personally
2	no	not really	no, I hoped it would be more personal
3	no expectations, not far removed from classroom	I worry, she is involved	pretty close
4	better than expected, listens, authority figure	less of an authority than expected, first-year	busy, tries to check up and help
5	yes, I stay away, but she is there if I go to her	yes, tells you if you are doing well or messing up	supportive, give ideas, go ahead, help
6	yes, a little better, more supportive, involved	better, explains, helpful with parents & discipline	positive, helpful and supportive
7	great, supportive, love her, gives feedback	much better, nice, helpful takes time when busy	positive, supportive, better, expects work
8	intimidated, love her, balance personal and job	I didn't think she would be so distant, busy	not really, thought it would be more personal
9	even better, she is very positive	better, positive, gives ideas	better

10	trying, not supportive, cares about details	not supportive, doesn't listen or communicate	no, there is no communication
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◆ Have you had any feedback on your teaching so far? If so, did you find it useful?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	peer support-discipline, informal-ass't. principal	3 observations, want feedback and suggestions	principal-useful, up-beat other very negative
2	Yes, I did find it useful.	Peer support & principal knew feedback already	Yes, useful feedback - principal, peer support
3	principal- 2 informal, peer support-3, helpful	quite a bit, I have a lot of behavior, wonderful	have had some, useful
4	peer support-3, useful, discussed with mentor	peer support negative/ not helpful, principal- 1	uncomfortable, some helpful, some not
5	2 informal- 1 principal, 1 peer support, ideas	no formal, getting anxious for it	learning experience, nice to hear doing well
6	1 informal-nice, helpful peer support, own critic	principal and peer support- useful	not concerned, but curious, waiting for final
7	1 principal positive, like feedback and advice	principal and peer support useful feedback	yes, principal and peer support useful
8	1 administrator / mentor, peer support negative	not much feedback, not getting observations done	evaluation not complete, what happens?
9	4 informal, 1 formal, peer support positive	great- things like questioning techniques	great success, principal happy
10	peer support has been positive	I have had no feedback on my teaching.	only one observation by I.F. , principal not here

Question 5. Has teaching impacted other parts of your life? If so, could you tell me about it?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	yes, think about kids, at school more	quit my second job, no time, vent to room mate	so much time here, cuts into social life
2	yes, new home owner, can't do things	not good for personal life boyfriend gone, stressful	yes affected personal relationships, no time
3	yes	moving added to burden, not as much school talk	can't have a social life, so time, too much work
4	not too much	getting more used to it, still more tired	it is all I do, but I am adapting to it
5	better, weekends are free	careful to act part, try not to take too much home	it is a balancing act, getting better
6	amount of time takes toll	happier, spend more	time commitment has

		time, break needed	been an adjustment
7	time and energy spent on teaching impacts	no life, tired, work is endless	have gotten more used to the way it is
8	education expert for extended family	Teaching takes a lot of time.	more emotional, relate more to people
9	no time, dropped church activities	no time, less outside involvement, too busy	cut back on volunteering and church, no time
10	yes, I worry about these kids, try not to	definitely more tired, bed at 8:30 or 9:00 daily	go to bed at 8:30 or 8:00

◆ Have your relationships with family members been impacted?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	takes chunk out of life, time at school - working	no	not really, moved out, don't feel like talking
2	family-oriented, less time due to job	no	yes, don't take time together for granted
3	family knows, talk school to boyfriend	not as much	moved out, don't see then as often
4	I talk about teaching and my students a lot	still talk about teaching and students a lot	don't see them as much, talk about teaching a lot
5	I was busy before with school and work	working it out	not really, long days hard on sitter
6	don't see wife, work on school a lot	My wife sees less of me.	not really, children are grown
7	not as much, they understand	stressed out, short with them, less time	it was at beginning, more stress, now better
8	mom mentions that I am a teacher a lot	everyone calls with school questions	increased emotional sensitivity- issues
9	more rent money for mom, plan to move	mom and sisters don't see me, less time	moved out, not at school so much, see mom more
10	I talk more with my mom (teacher).	more in common with mom	closer to mom

◆ Have your relationships with friends been impacted?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	two friends teach- spend time, common interest	closer to friends who are teachers	better first-year teachers share stories
2	tired, bad mood, emotionally wrung out	no	yes

3	all I do is school, it is my life	making new friends here, no time for others	only see boyfriend due to schedule, stay in
4	I have less energy at night	a lot of teacher friends, don't live here	most live out of state, not many new friends
5	can play basketball, late nights to get done	some friends here, many teacher friends	closer to teacher friends
6	I take time on Saturdays for myself.	some envious that I have a job I want to do	no, no time for hobbies
7	social life gone, don't have time to food shop	friends don't grasp the time & energy required	sometimes hard for friends to understand
8	closer to fellow teacher, husband complains	friendship shift, closer to fellow first-year teacher	so busy there is no time, don't talk to as much
9	more tired	roommate and other teachers, no time	slightly, not real negative, just busy
10	no time, too tired, nothing to fall back on	some friends here, no time or money to go out	a couple of us go out, work out buddy

Question 6. How do you feel about the parts of your job that do not involve direct contact with students? How do you feel about the paperwork?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	it's a must, low priority, would rather teach	not fun, necessary, piles up, prefer to teach	not fun, necessary, need my own secretary
2	I hate it.	There is way too much paperwork.	I don't care for it. It is a lot.
3	It is really time consuming	Hate it, time consuming, my least favorite thing	overwhelming, hard to find system
4	used to get overwhelmed don't grade all, organize	okay, don't correct all, report cards overwhelm	students generate a lot, at times overwhelming
5	not bad if someone shows you how to do it	overwhelming at first, manage if you keep up	deal with it, at first it was overwhelming
6	annoying, impediment to my teaching	don't care for busywork, a lot supports instruction	administrative not hard daily kid papers a lot
7	I dislike it greatly. It takes time from kids.	Don't like, do constantly, high maintenance	dig through and keep up with it
8	I hate it when it is redundant.	waste of time, repetitious SASI problems	hate it, more and more, need good way to track
9	not a whole lot, don't like, report card- busy	more now than at start, never ending	more now at the end of the year, don't like
10	overwhelming- grading and documentation	I don't like paperwork. It is very time consuming.	frustrating, students can do some but not all

◆ How do you feel about planning?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	pretty fine, don't have enough time to do	comfortable, necessary, don't mind, organizes me	give me aim for day and week, don't bother me
2	not too crazy, takes every single minute	needs to be done, very time consuming	necessary, hard the first time through
3	fine, the format is formal with objectives	planning is okay, fun to look ahead, need time	better, hard to plan for all levels of students
4	I feel there is not enough time. I try.	no problem, I need to plan a lot, don't stick to plan	planning is easier than it was earlier
5	I plan extensively, 6-8 hours weekly	enjoy doing it, get to see if it will work or not	objective has to be main focus, subs need
6	essential, the more you plan the better it goes	getting better and faster, explore new ways	it is important, a lot of work
7	not my favorite, glad when done, easier	I am getting to see it is a necessary part of the job.	more positive than at start, plan or guide
8	don't mind it, plan books require too much	next year focus on subject, departmentalize	planning is good, want computer program
9	not enough time, it is overwhelming	I don't have a lot of time, start and stop	not enough plan time, get done before Friday
10	not an issue, learned it well in college	don't dread, get into routine and get done	really confident, done for next week already

◆ How do you feel about grading papers?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not the most fun, can entertain, cause laughter	not fun, objective easier than subjective	pain, I put off grading writing assignments
2	least favorite, never caught up, more come	I don't like it, higher grade level means more	don't like it, hard to find fast system that works
3	okay, not favorite, like to teach communication	I don't like it. I wish my other self could do.	overwhelming at first, system seems to work
4	can be frustrating, need to know what they know	papers I can do easily, but not report cards	have to do it, very time consuming
5	can be done in class with students, computer	not a lot, students do their own, don't switch	reveals what they do and do not understand
6	not enjoying, so many, hard to get system	no trouble, need better system, time consuming	good system is important, easier
7	things I would rather do, students help, keep up	don't like, stack up, downer if they don't get	don't like it, necessary, rather plan than grade
8	I grade everything,	takes time, needs to be	I comment and they redo

	coworkers don't	done, part of life	and get it right.
9	don't like, students do some, get behind, piles	not enough time at school, I take home	time consuming, no longer correct all
10	time consuming, they changed grading scale	don't like, it is hard to put a grade on them	hard to do, not always the only way

◆ How do you feel about student assessment?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	doesn't come as easily, hard to get accurate	necessary, helpful to know what they know	very necessary, can be confusing and difficult
2	hard to do as new teacher	can't completely rely on test, interactions & work	necessary, too much emphasis on testing
3	challenging, writing shows what they know	okay, fun, writing shows understanding	standardized tests are over-emphasized
4	lot of work, needs to be done, can tell more	hard with quiet ones, some are obvious in class	getting easier, a lot of testing right now
5	most easy, assessing speaking & listening not	departmentalization makes hard, impersonal	teacher-made are the best
6	okay, checked old report cards, low grades hard	important to know they understand grades	hard to make it meaningful to students
7	more comfortable, informal harder	okay, don't want students disadvantaged- 1 st year	more comfortable with informal, I know them
8	it is hard to give them a 4 if they are below grade	teacher better than standardized, authentic	teacher must go beyond tests
9	creativity hard, tests and daily work easier	difficult to know, easy to just copy tests	formal ones okay, hard to come up with creative
10	important to use variety, not worksheets	don't like standardized tests, not valid, variety	I use a variety, look at standards

◆ How do you feel about staff meetings?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not bad, get information needed from principal	long, frequent, but informational	lengthy, informational, don't mind
2	okay, but keep short, after school too much	don't have a lot, time consuming, tired	I don't really care for them.
3	really good, well organized, and quick	good principal organized, informative, not long	I need the information.
4	too many, not planned or organized, waste time	a lot are not necessary	too many, too long, not organized

5	some meetings could be eliminated, use memos	cut back, principal tries to keep short and sweet	seems like fewer being held right now
6	little shorter, not too involved, focus on room	generally don't like, some more valuable	not as necessary this time of the year
7	pretty good, part of job, the way it is	don't mind, principal uses wisely, snacks	don't mind, needed, don't drag, positive
8	all right, no opinion, have to have	lengthy, people need to pay attention	not as many, don't bother, like agenda
9	not bad, informative, in morning, like to learn	pretty good, can't go on and on in the morning	not too bad, we meet in morning
10	don't cover what needs to be covered	don't like, pointless, too much six-trait writing	pointless, not as often, give me a memo

◆ How do you feel about committees?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	way to get known as a teacher	They need people, I want to be involved, little time	some pretty fun, get to know staff and students
2	I'm on two, no problem, they go fast	I am on two, not bad	okay, we don't meet much at this school
3	nobody's letting me know what to do	there again, I have not heard anything	it is hard when you don't know what you do
4	not on major because of first-year	I'm not on too many.	not really an issue
5	on two, so far not many meetings	two, few funds, nice to have lab wired	hasn't been too bad
6	at this point, few responsibilities so far	will be on after first year, concentrate on teaching	not much this year
7	I like them, part of job you don't expect, takes time	usually don't mind, spent workday in meeting when I had a lot to do	I have learned a lot. You have to do your part.
8	courtesy- so far I have done all I need to do	like it, by choice, get to know people	good, I am just on courtesy
9	I work with Adopt-a-School	not a lot of time, will do more next year	not real involved, will be next year
10	social- stressful, I don't know past expectations	social- kind of a pain, one more thing	social committee stressful, complaints

◆ How do you feel about district-level meetings?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	didn't gain a lot, read to,	haven't been to a lot, not	put it in a handout and

	felt like grade school	impressed, send a memo	give it to me
2	I can't stand them-a waste of time	can't stand, waste time, I trained in college	pointless, waste of my time
3	not negative, like to talk to same grade teachers	would like to go, don't always know about them	too busy to go
4	less organized, presenters not prepared	usually unorganized, waste time	not very good
5	nice to know about them ahead of time	new teacher meetings weren't what I expected	some okay, not the best
6	at start a waste of time, grade level good, room	new teacher meetings worthless, good by grade	one more thing to do
7	building level better than district level	too many at start of year, have in July, in room	good & bad, repetitive new teacher meetings
8	beginning ridiculous, need to be in room	too broad, need specifics to impact teaching	they are unclear, put it in a booklet
9	helpful for first year, too close to start of school	some are better than others	some informational, others are not
10	district is trying, too much at the start	okay, not greatest but not pointless	I'm selective, they have been interesting

Question 7. What are you finding about the time required to do your job?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	here a lot, first here, last to leave, work at home	lot more than I imagined, first here/last to go, home	a lot of it, nights and weekends job is there
2	You have to spend adequate time	It takes a lot of time.	not enough time, not enough hours in the day
3	There is just not enough time.	There is not enough time to get everything done.	busy, it is never-ending
4	it is very time consuming	It takes a lot more than forty hours.	I have gotten more used to it.
5	not 8-3:30, if I leave by 4:30 left work undone	not 8:30-4:30, it's 8:30-6:30, I stay late	I need an extra hour or two to get done.
6	surprised by time, work 60-65 hours a week	I spend 55 hours a week. It's part of the job.	spending a lot time is necessary
7	expected, eat, breath, sleep teaching, is life	never-ending, free time would help relieve stress	expected but a lot, more efficient now, better
8	a lot, not surprised, not in it for money	lots of time, low pay, salary not sole support	could pay you more
9	working a lot, 7/7:30-5/5:30, will change	I am spending a lot of time on school.	can't do it in the required set hours
10	not 9-5, but I know it is	here more than required,	spend a fair amount of

	part of the job	don't take work home	time
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◆ What is a typical instructional day like for you?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	at least 10 hour days, some 11-12 hour days	long, busy days	every day is different, depends on kids' mood
2	busy all day, all week, at home and school	jam packed, stay late, next year better	coaching now has added to time, need more
3	best instruction in morning, specials	full days, stay late as no time to get things done	still very busy
4	messy schedule	very busy, spend a lot of time on management	nine hours at school, at least two at home daily
5	the day goes fast	busy	9-10 hours a day, 2-3 on weekends
6	get ready and go, then do it again next day	here early to prepare, make illegal copies	here at 7:00, home at 5:00, hour at home
7	start early and leave some time to work out	most specials in morning	I am here at 7:30 and don't stay as late
8	rushed all the time	get here early	I am putting in shorter hours than at the start
9	pretty organized	spend a lot of time working at school	more organized, putting in less time
10	busy-trying to fit it all in	very packed, my goals, standards, juggle, juggle	try for a fair, not huge, amount of time

◆ What defines a "good" day for you?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not upset at end, teach lessons, peaceful	kids are successful, don't stress me out, great day	no one hurt, can teach and sign a kid gets it
2	students learn, cover subjects, I don't yell	get through the day as planned, kids interested	get through schedule, kids on task
3	day I keep cool, day kids respectful and learn	don't argue with kids and they are involved	day when kids try and don't argue
4	a day without many behavior problems	I feel like I got a lot done and the students learned.	When students allow learning to take place
5	students come in and get right to work.	class comes in and works, no discipline	more learning and less disciplining takes place
6	well planned, well behaved, no surprises	get plans done, student behavior plays a role	get through scheduled lessons as planned

7	kids leave with new knowledge, lights on	few management issues, I can teach, get done	someone has learned something
8	days I really serve my kids, get through	Nobody argues with me.	don't have to raise voice more than once or twice
9	I got most of what I want to do accomplished	get a lot done, kids listen, no disruptions	accomplish what I need to without disruption
10	they learned, I taught them something	smile, no headache, students say it was fun	when I walk out with a smile

◆ So you have especially good days? If so, please tell me about them.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	a couple, weird to be in good mood, at peace	some	more bad, I hope more good are to come
2	Oh yeah! You have all kinds of days.	We gave had a few.	Yes
3	They are either good or bad.	Days behavior is under control	not too many
4	When I go home smiling none stand out	yes	yes
5	a couple went really well	one day a week we don't switch classes	we have had some great days
6	most are fairly routine	I try to keep it on an even keel.	most days are fairly positive
7	survived observation, student succeeded	yes, I like hand-on science, so do students	lots of good days, way more than bad
8	a few	Fridays are good days.	last few weeks, hug me, one appreciates me
9	students have fun, excited by activities	most days	days they get everything done, kids engaged
10	Yes, we have a lot of good days.	Indian unit made kids see me differently, awesome	when they are really excited by learning

◆ What defines a "bad" day?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	kids' behavior, arguing about my authority	whole first quarter, felt like failure, behaviors	bad attitudes, don't care about learning
2	When you have to go to the principal's office.	Wound up kids, never ending things to do	parents complain, kids unruly, not good teacher
3	argumentative, issues from home, fight	behaviors set the tone, they don't care	students with behavior issues all day long

4	student ran away during observation	it seems chaotic, caused by students	student misbehavior, don't listen to me
5	students walk around and don't try	days after holidays and weekends, don't work	students not focused on work
6	not accomplishing plans, dealing with other class	management issues, lessons don't work	things don't go as planned
7	I don't feel like I am making a difference	management problems, getting worse, not daily	not many, kids off, bring in home problems
8	they talk so much I take it personally	Thursdays bad, don't go well - I'm uncomfortable	take things personally, I love then, they are mean
9	kids don't listen, act up, mad, talking	disorganized, lessons don't go right, behavior	disruptions, discipline, don't get done
10	I question if this is the right thing for me to do.	Is this really what I want to do?	I ask questions they can't answer

◆ Do you have especially bad days? If so, please tell me about them.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	more than not, students don't allow me to do job	definitely	yes
2	Yes, I had to redo report cards over.	things don't go as planned, no progress	yes
3	sometimes when they just don't get along	when they don't listen and do what I say	yes
4	I don't get a lot done, interruptions	students react negatively to specials or assemblies	interruptions to routines trigger
5	not with my own class, pull it together	can't think of a bad one, some longer than others	not really
6	the range is not that wide	most are pretty much routine	a few
7	I am more me centered rather than student	frustrating, you feel like you are not getting done	not really when I look back on it
8	a student left and I cried cleaning out his desk	feel frustrated, kids act up, stressed	not in awhile, all at once everything goes wrong
9	I don't have many.	not really	once in awhile when they don't care
10	administration not supportive, no learning	I haven't had a lot of bad days.	fewer as the year went on

◆ What is the usual week like?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
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1	Mondays calm, afternoons go off	pattern to days and weeks	here at 7:15 not out before 5:00
2	last week was a terrible week	Mondays slow, specials throw them off	Mondays difficult, Fridays more hyper
3	up and down, full moon, I yelled last week	great days & bad days, like a roller coaster	Over 50 hour weeks, work till I can't stand it
4	not that many usual weeks	more of a routine by subject	busy
5	start good, midweek shaky, Fridays good	Thursday best work, Friday down hill slide	students are affected by day of the week
6	Monday mornings quiet, Friday afternoons not	varies a lot, mostly teaching during hours	really depends on what we are doing
7	Mondays good, Fridays chattier	Friday it is nice to be done	I plan early, papers and plan before Friday
8	Mondays good, Friday is my favorite	mid-week can get long	Mondays & Fridays good, Thursdays tough
9	by Thursday and Friday they are ready for end	busy, usually get a lot accomplished, few not	cycle days same, no normal week
10	busy fitting all in, balance is fun	busy	mostly good, learning

Question 8. In looking over the quarter/year, how did you feel it went?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	quick, I made it, not as bad as it seemed	improvement, confident, growing up	very bumpy, lows and a few highs, start over
2	hard, rough, I hope next quarter is different	better with routine, learned ins and outs	okay, a big learning experience
3	low grades, starting to see teacher in charge	pretty much like first, see contrast in students	I learned a lot, it was different than I thought.
4	I have high expectations, didn't teach a lot	better than first, more into routine, know I discipline	it got better as it went on
5	It went pretty well-some stumbling blocks	went well, refined plans, some students improved	really pretty well
6	well, I learned a lot, students learned	quickly, well, hard to get it all in	it was fast
7	really well, proud of self, one fourth done	well, I felt more like I knew what I was doing.	well, I made it and did a good job
8	back & forth, "ah-ha" moments, all right	better & worse, too informal with students	more into relationships, fewer restrictions
9	pretty good, some surprises, not behind	better than first, I felt more organized	successful, good learning experience

10	challenging, students more into routine	more into routine	overall, good
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◆ How do you assess your fit to the culture of the building you teach in?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not applicable	not applicable	comfortable, at home, all are accepting
2	not applicable	not applicable	good fit, happy here
3	not applicable	not applicable	pretty good, fit with behavior philosophy
4	not applicable	not applicable	like small building, they are all there for me
5	not applicable	not applicable	good fit, I was open, clean slate
6	not applicable	not applicable	good philosophical fit share same values
7	not applicable	not applicable	good fit, work hard and have an outside life
8	not applicable	not applicable	can't see myself anywhere else
9	not applicable	not applicable	pretty good, principal knew from interview
10	not applicable	not applicable	fit-many young, I am not in with administration

◆ What do you see next quarter/year being like?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	excited, want progress in behavior & grades	high hopes, many levels, raising expectations	a whole lot better know what to do different
2	hopefully better, know how to do things, change	lots of testing, added minutes not fun	easier now that I know what you have to do
3	similar, can't see behavior changing	very different, students seem more settled in	a whole new year
4	each one will improve, students know me now	good, not as busy, they know me, less disruptions	similar, I hope students are more respectful
5	better, still departmentalization	long, no breaks, CAT tests	want peer support, wish no departmentalization
6	same	focus on CAT & CRTs, new math will challenge	fewer surprises, fewer new things

7	more comfortable, see growth in my abilities	more stressful with all the CAT & CRT tests	could be different-changing grade levels
8	hopeful that things will settle down to routine	extremely different, big changes in classroom	a lot better, more organized,
9	more of the same, SATs busier, lots going on	different , busier, challenging, tests	more organized, more summer time to prepare
10	they are more used to me and me to them	We will learn stuff so that we will pass our tests	I see a lot of positive changes, curriculum

◆ Do you anticipate certain things being the same? If so, please tell me about them.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	struggle to get work in, off the wall behavior	they will shock me every day, negative behavior	kids and little kid behaviors
2	some of my classroom management	not too much	parent contact and their involvement
3	negative behaviors	some continue on with negative behavior	I can count on district standards being same
4	students' reactions, let me know they like me	feelings won't change, behave differently	paperwork, variety of parents
5	departmentalization, fewer long meetings	departmentalization will still be my least favorite	district paperwork, CRTs
6	math class format, kids need a push to read	largely everything will be the same	classroom management successful
7	tailor lessons to kids, steady, no new kids	Kids will be the same.	amount of time, less grading-younger
8	kids will know that I care	me- big-hearted, caring, they can trust me	all different
9	schedule & subjects, better, more fun	schedule same, losing one student, gaining one	curriculum same, students lower
10	try new, different things, vary assessments	paperwork and documentation	good students, same mentor, administration

◆ Do you anticipate certain things being different? If so, please tell me about them.

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	smooth out, more will get that I truly care	improved effort and quality of work, behavior	stricter start to the school year
2	grades, how I grade, management	it won't be my first year	students will be different
3	more challenging assignments, push more	Lessons are going better as I have taught more.	different principal (anticipated move)

4	schedule straighten out, fewer interruptions	time management will improve	location different (another state)
5	go home earlier, real teacher lesson plans	greater effort on the students' part	I will teach different, new kids harder
6	late work policy	teaching lower math may be frustrating	now that I know more-long term planning
7	it's the hardest thing I have ever done	stress of testing, hope they do okay	less paperwork and management issues
8	work on classroom management	more structured and boring, more SATs	easier because not new, departmentalization
9	more hands-on, computer, organized	getting ready for all the testing	class make up, more boys
10	make it fun, don't fight administration	Hopefully, the low kids will understand basics	the stress level will be less

Question 9. What advice would you give to teachers who enter a classroom for the first time this August?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not applicable	not applicable	hold on tight-long ride, stick to your guns
2	not applicable	not applicable	be prepared not to have a life, be open-minded
3	not applicable	not applicable	keep your life simple, no major changes
4	not applicable	not applicable	find someone to talk to, you will need to talk
5	not applicable	not applicable	listen to the veterans, they know what they do
6	not applicable	not applicable	be flexible, be open to hard work, enjoy kids
7	not applicable	not applicable	be prepared, remember why you chose to teach
8	not applicable	not applicable	pen ready for paperwork know kids come from background different than yours
9	not applicable	not applicable	don't get behind you will never catch up
10	not applicable	not applicable	be flexible, stand by your decisions

Question 10. What suggestions would you make in regard to new teacher induction?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not applicable	not applicable	talk to veterans about room set up
2	not applicable	not applicable	go see other teachers at your grade level
3	not applicable	not applicable	smaller, grade level meetings
4	not applicable	not applicable	divide levels so more specific
5	not applicable	not applicable	none
6	not applicable	not applicable not	observe master teachers 3-4 times yearly
7	not applicable	not applicable	give new teachers time in their buildings
8	not applicable	not applicable	hire sooner, get in rooms more
9	not applicable	not applicable	timing off for beginning meetings
10	not applicable	not applicable	school-wide meetings, explain step-by-step

Question 11. Do you plan to be a career teacher?

Teacher	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3
1	not applicable	not applicable	yes
2	not applicable	not applicable	yes
3	not applicable	not applicable	yes
4	not applicable	not applicable	yes
5	not applicable	not applicable	yes
6	not applicable	not applicable	yes
7	not applicable	not applicable	yes
8	not applicable	not applicable	yes

9	not applicable	not applicable	yes
10	not applicable	not applicable	yes

APPENDIX H

MATRIX OF SURPRISES

The following six pages list the surprises and tracks by interview when and if a given teacher had that surprise. Each first-year teacher was assigned a number 1-10 and their surprises are indicated by interview. If their number appears under more than one interview, it means that they talked about the surprise in more than once. If their number appears under never it indicates that that teacher did not reveal a surprise in that area over the course of the three interviews.

	Surprise	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Never
1	Assessment standardized test -	3 10	3 10	1 2 3 4 7 8 9 10	5 6
2	Assessment time consuming	1 4 8	1 2 5 6 8 10	2 8 9 10	3 7
3	Assessment variety	2	2 7	2 5 8 9	1 3 4 6 10
4	Bad day discipline	1 2 4 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 8 10	1 2 8 10	5
5	Bad day little learning	1 2 4 5 6 7 8 9	1 2 8	1 2 8	3 10
6	Better than I thought	5 6 7 8 10	5 7 9 10	1 2 7 8 10	3 4
7	Breaks necessary/refreshing	3 5 7 8 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 10	2 7 8 10	9
8	Bureaucracy	2 7 10	2 4 7 10	2 3 7 9 10	1 5 6 8
9	Busy	1 2 4 6 7 8 10	1 2 3 5 7 8 10	7 8 9 10	
10	Challenging	1 2 4 6 7 8 10	5 7 8 10	7 8 10	3 9
11	Chaotic- out of control	1 2 4 8 9 10	1 8 10	1 8 10	3 5 6 7
12	Classroom management	1 2 3 4 7 8	1 8 9	8	5 6 10
13	Classroom management time on	1 2 3 4 7 10	1 2 4 8	1 2 4 8	5 6 9
14	Committees negative	3	3 10	3 10	1 2 4 5 6 7 8 9
15	Committees positive	1 2 7	1 2 7	1 2 7	3 4 5 6 8 9 10
16	Confusing	1 5 7 8 10	1 3 8 10	1 8 10	2 4 6 9
17	Departmentalization	5	5 6	5 9	1 2 3 4 7 8 10
18	Detractors	2 8 10	1 3 7 8 9 10	1 3 5 7 8 9 10	6
19	Discipline	1 2 3 4 6 8 10	1 2 8 10	1 2 7 8 10	5 9
20	District differences	2 4 10	10	10	1 3 5 6 7 8 9
21	District meetings negative	1 2 6 7 8 10	2 4 10	2 10	3 5 9
22	District meetings positive	3 9	5		1 2 4 6 7 8 10
23	Documentation	2 7 8 10	2 5 7 8 10	2 5 7 8 9 10	1 3 4 6 8
24	EXCELS	2 3 4 7	7	1 6 7	5 8 9 10
25	Exhausted	1 2 3 4 7 8 10	1 2 3 4 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 8 10	6
26	Extra curricular activities	4 8	8	2 8	1 3 5 6 7 9 10
27	Fall on face	1 2 3 7 10	1 2 3 4 8 10	1 2 3 6 10	5 9
28	Family neglected	2	2 7 9	2 3	1 4 5 6 8 10
29	Family proud	1 2 5 7 8 10	1 2 3 6 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 7 8 10	4

	Surprise	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Never
30	Feedback lack of	2 6 8 10	2 8 10	8 10	1 3 4 5 6 7 9
31	Feedback negative	1 2	1 2 8	1 2	3 4 5 6 7 9 10
32	Feedback positive	1 2 3 4 7 8 9	1 2 3 4 7 9	1 2 3 4 7 8 9 10	5 6
33	Feel like a failure	1 2 3 4 5 10	1 3 8 10	1 3 10	6 7 9
34	Friendship impact negative	2 3 4		2 3	1 5 6 7 8 9 10
35	Friendship impact positive	1	1	1	2 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
36	Friendship shift fellow teachers	1 7 8 10	1 3 4 7 8 10	1 3 5 7 8 10	2 6 9
37	Frustration	1 2 3 5 6 7 8 10	1 2 3 4 5 8 10	1 2 3 5 7 8 10	9
38	Fun	1 6 7 8 10	1 5 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 7 8 10	4
39	Good day learning	1 2 5 6 7 8 10	1 2 4 5 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 5 7 8 10	
40	Good day minimal discipline	1 2 4 5 7 8 10	2 5 6 7 8 9 10	2 3 5 7 8 10	
41	Grading cycle	1 2 3 6 8 10	1 2 4 8 9 10	1 8 10	5 7
42	Grading difficult	1 2 3 8 10	3 6 10	4 10	5 7 8 9
43	Grading papers	1 2 3 4 6 7 8 9	3 10	3 10	5
44	Happy	1 2 6 7 8 10	1 2 5 7 8 10	1 2 3 5 7 8 10	4 9
45	Headaches	1 2 3 7 8 10	1 2 3 8 10	1 2 3 8 10	4 5 6 9
46	Humbling	1 2 3 4 5 7 10	1 2 3 4 6 10	1 2 10	8 9
47	Interruptions (assemblies etc.)	4 7 9 10	4 7 8 9 10	5 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 6
48	Involvement in outside activities	1 2 3 5 7 8 9 10	3 4 7 8 10	3 7 8 10	6
49	Isolation from adults	3	3	3	1 2 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
50	Late work	1 3 6 7 8 10	2 3 7 8 10	2 3 7 8 10	4 5 9
51	Lesson planning	2 4 7 8	2 4 8	4 8	1 3 5 6 9 10
52	Lesson plans	2 8	2 8	2 8	1 3 4 5 6 7 9 10
53	Materials	1 3 4 7 8 9 10	4 5 6 10	2 4 10	
54	Mentor negative	8			1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9 10
55	Mentor none	6 10	3 6 10	3 6	1 2 4 5 7 8 9
56	Mentor positive	1 2 4 5 7 9 10	1 2 5 7 10	1 2 5 7 10	3 6 8
57	Money spent	1 2 4 5 7 9 10	1 2 7 10	1 2 7 10	3 5 6 8
58	Multiple roles	1 2 3 5 7 10	2 3 5 7 9 10	2 3 5 7 10	4 6 8

	Surprise	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Never
59	Nerve Wracking	1 2 3 7 8 10	1 2 3 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 8 10	4 5 6
60	No social life	2 3 4 7 8 10	2 3 7 8 10	1 2 3 7 8 10	5 6 9
61	Organization	1 2 5 8 9 10	1 2 8 10	1 2 8 10	3 4 6 7
62	Overwhelming	1 2 3 4 5 7 8 10	1 2 8 10	1 10	6 9
63	Paperwork	1 2 3 4 6 7 8 10	1 2 5 7 8 9 10	1 5 7 8 9 10	
64	Parent communication difficult	2 3 5 7 9	2 3 5 7 10	3 4 5 7 10	1 6 8
65	Parent communication positive	1 2 8 10	2 8 9	1 3 4 8 9	5 6 7
66	Parent don't care	1 2 3 5 7 8 9	2 3 6 7 9 10	2 3 4 7 9 10	
67	Parent negative	1 2 7	2 6	2 4	3 5 8 9 10
68	Parent positive	2 8 9 10	2 8	2 3 4 8	1 5 6 7
69	Parent supportive	1 2 6 7 9 10	2	2 3 4 8	5
70	Parent teacher conferences	1 5 9 10	6	1	2 3 4 7 8
71	Parents involved (overly)	8	6 9	9	1 2 3 4 5 7 10
72	Parents involved (under/not)	1 2 3 5 7 9 10	1 2 3 5 9 10	1 2 3 4 5 8 9 10	6
73	Peer support- negative	4 8	4 8	4 8	1 2 3 5 6 7 9 10
74	Peer support- positive	1 2 3 10	1 2 3 5 10	1 2 3 5 10	4 6 7 8 9
75	Plantime not enough	2 3 4 8 9 10	2 3 4 8 9 10	2 3 8 9 10	1 5 6 7
76	Preparation	1 2 6 8 9 10	1 2 8 10	10	3 4 5 7
77	Preparation time prior to first day	1 2 4 5 7 8 9 10			3 6
78	Principal busy	1 7 8 10	1 4 7 8 10	1 4 7 8 10	2 3 5 6 9
79	Principal close	1 7 8 9	1 3 7	1 3 4 7	2 5 6 10
80	Principal communication negative	2 8 10	2 8 10	2 8 10	1 3 4 5 6 7 9
81	Principal communication positive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9	1 2 3 4 5 7 9	1 2 3 4 5 7	8 10
82	Principal distant	2 10	2 8 10	2 8 10	1 3 4 5 6 7 9
83	Principal helpful	1 2 3 4 5 7 8	1 3 5 7 8	1 2 3 5 7	6 9 10
84	Principal involved	1 2 3 4 6 7	1 2 3 4 7	1 2 3 4 7	5 8 9 10
85	Principal nonsupportive	2 10	2 8 10	2 10	1 3 4 5 6 7 9
86	Principal supportive	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1 2 3 4 5 7	1 2 3 4 5 7	8 9 10
87	Reality checks	1 2 5 7 10	1 4 5 6 7 10	1 3 4 5 7 9 10	8

	Surprise	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Never
88	Report card grades	1 2 7 8 10	4 8 10	3 4 8 10	2 5 6 9
89	Scheduling	1 4 6 7 8 9 10	3 8 10	8 10	2 5
90	School differences	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	10	10	
91	Sense of community- differences	1 2 3 7 10	10	4 10	5 6 8 9
92	Sickness	2 3 4 7 9	2 9	2 3 5 9	1 6 8 10
93	Staff meeting number of	4 10	9 10	10	1 2 3 5 6 7 8
94	Staff meetings negative	4 8 10	2 4 10	2 4 10	1 3 5 6 7 9
95	Staff meetings positive	1 2 3 7 8 9	1 3 5 7	3 7	2 4 6 10
96	Stressed out	1 2 3 7 9 10	1 2 3 7 8 10	1 2 3 7 10	4 5 6 10
97	Student academic levels	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	3 4 6	4 6	
98	Student affection	4 7 9 10	6	3	1 2 5 8
99	Student argue with each other	3 4 7 10	3 10	3 10	1 2 5 6 8 9
100	Student argue with teacher	1 3 4 6 8 10	3 8 10	3 9 10	2 5 7
101	Student attachment	8 10	10	3 4 7 10	1 2 5 6 9
102	Student attendance	8 7 9 10	5 6 7 10	5 7 10	1 2 3 4
103	Student attitude negative	1 2 3 4 8 10	2 3 8 10	2 3 8 10	5 6 7 9
104	Student attitude positive	2 4 10	2 10	2 10	1 3 5 6 7 8 9
105	Student bad for observation	1 8	1	4	2 3 5 6 7 9 10
106	Student behavior negative	1 2 3 8 9	2 3	2 3	4 5 6 7 10
107	Student behavior positive	2 5 10	2 10	2 8 10	1 3 4 6 7 9
108	Student behavior serious level	1 2 4 9 10	1 2 3 10	3 10	5 6 7 8
109	Student death	8 10	10	10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 9
110	Student ESL	7	7 8	7	1 2 3 4 5 6 9 10
111	Student fights	4 8 10	3 10	3 10	1 2 5 6 7 9
112	Student frustrating	1 2 3 4 5 7 8 10	1 2 3 7 8 10	1 2 3 7 8 9 10	6
113	Student fun	1 2 9 10	1 2 10	1 2 3 10	4 5 6 7 8
114	Student home problems	1 2 3 5 7 10	1 2 3 5 10	1 2 3 4 5 8 10	6 9
115	Student immaturity	1 2 3 6 7 8 10	2 3 4 7 8 10	2 3 7 8 10	5 9
116	Student joy	1 2 5 7 10	1 2 7 9 10	1 2 7 10	3 4 6 8

	Surprise	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Never
117	Student lack of effort	1 2 3 4 6 10	2 3 4 10	2 3 4 7 10	5 8 9
118	Student lack of respect	1 2 3 4 10	1 2 3 4 10	1 2 3 4 8 10	5 6 7 9
119	Student learning	1 4 8 9 10	3 8 10	8 10	2 5 6 7
120	Student left building	1 4 10	3 10	10	2 5 6 7 8 9
121	Student losing	1 8 10	6 8 9 10	8 10	2 3 4 5 7
122	Student mobility	5 7 8 10	8 9 10	8 10	1 2 3 4 6 7
123	Student motivation	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 10	8 9 10	3 8 10	
124	Student needs	1 7 8 10	1 5 10	1 4 10	2 3 6 9
125	Student new	1 3 5 7 10	3 8 9 10	2 4 10	6
126	Student pride in	1 2 7 10	1 2 5 6 7 10	1 2 5 7 9 10	3 4 8
127	Student problems	1 3 7 8 10	1 3 7 8 10	1 7 8 10	2 4 5 6 9
128	Student rapport	2 10	2 3 10	1 2 10	4 5 6 7 8 9
129	Student special needs	1 3 4 7 9 10	3 7 10	3 7 10	2 5 6 8
130	Student talk back	1 3 4 6 10	1 3 4 10	1 3 4 9 10	2 5 7 8
131	Student teaching different	1 2 3 4 6 8 9 10	10	10	5 7
132	Student teaching same	5 7			1 2 3 4 6 8 9 10
133	Student variety	4 6 7 10	10	8 10	1 2 3 5 9
134	Student vulgar	1 3 4 10	3 8 10	8 10	2 5 6 7 9
135	Student worry about	1 2 4 7 10	1 4 7 10	1 3 4 5 7 10	6 8 9
136	Student worst group	1 3 4 8	1 3 4 8	1 3 4 8	2 5 6 7 9 10
137	Students variety of backgrounds	3 7 10	6 10	2 4 10	1 5 8 9
138	Substitute	1 2 8	2 3 8 9 10	1 2 3	4 5 6 7
139	Teacher relationships negative	8		3	1 2 4 5 6 7 9 10
140	Teacher relationships positive	1 2 4 7 10	1 2 3 7 10	1 2 3 7 8 10	5 6 9
141	Teacher role outside of school	5 7	5 7	3 5 7	1 2 4 6 8 9 10
142	Teacher talk	6 8 10	10	10	1 2 3 4 5 7 9
143	Tell you ahead of time	1 2 4 5 7 8 9 10	1 2 5 6 7 10	1 2 5 7 10	3
144	Time at school	1 2 3 4 6 7 9 10	1 2 8 10	2 10	5
145	Time goes fast	1 2 5 6 7 9 10	2 5 7 9 10	2 3 4 5 7 9 10	8

	Surprise	Interview 1	Interview 2	Interview 3	Never
146	Time outside of school	1 2 4 6 8 9	1 2 3 8	1 2 3 8	5 7 10
147	Tired	1 2 3 4 7 8 9 10	1 2 3 4 7 8 10	1 2 3 8	5 6
148	Variety	1 7 8 9 10	3 5 7 10	7 10	2 4 6
149	Work at home	1 2 4 5 6 9	1 3 4 8	1 3 4 8	7 10
150	Writing (six-trait)	1 4 5 7 8 10	2 5 8 9 10	5 9 10	3 6

APPENDIX I

Interview Protocol/Summer, 1998

Project: First-Year Teachers Pilot Study

Date:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

Opening Statement:

Today I would like to interview you concerning your first year teaching experience. I want to learn more about the first year of teaching by talking with teachers who have just finished their first year of teaching. I appreciate you taking the time to allow me to interview you because what you share will help me to study and understand what it means to be a first-year teacher.

I want to assure you that your identity will be held in confidence. So, for the purpose of this interview would you choose a name other than your own so that I can refer to you by that name.

Key Questions: (The prompts underneath each key question will serve to give the interviewer follow-up probes to use to ensure the depth of response.)

1. Tell me about your first year of teaching.

A) What was it like to be a first-year teacher?

B) Did your feelings in this regard change as the year went on?

- C) What did you like the best?
 - D) What did you like the least?
2. What was it like to work with the groups of people you worked with?
- A) Think specifically about students. (Discipline)
 - B) Parents?
 - C) Teachers?
 - D) Administrators?
 - E) Would you tell me about the evaluation process?
 - F) Did it offer you the type of feedback you found useful? Was it meaningful?
 - G) Were there any people who were especially helpful to you?
 - H) Were there any people who appeared to be deliberately not helpful to you?
 - I) Were you part of a formal mentoring process?
 - J) Did you find informal mentors?
3. What did you find the paperwork to be like?
- A) How did you deal with it?
 - B) Was it overwhelming?
 - C) What did the first-year teach you about planning and curriculum?
4. In thinking about the time required for you to do your job, what did you find?
- A) What was a typical instructional day like for you?
 - B) What was the usual week like?
5. Did teaching impact your personal life?

- A) Family?
 - B) Friends?
6. In looking back over the year, how do you feel?
- A) What do you see next year being like?
 - B) What do you anticipate being the same?
 - C) What do you think will be different?
 - D) Do you plan to be a career teacher?
7. What advice would you give to teachers who enter a classroom for the first time this August?