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Alternative Teacher Certification: Secondary School Principals' Perceptions in Indiana

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ALTERNATIVE TEACHER CERTIFICATION: SECONDARY SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS' PERSPECTIVE IN INDIANA

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty

of

Purdue University

by

Jane Corinne Newblom

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This is dedicated to my husband, Bob for encouraging me by saying, "You can do this and you should do it!" It was his support that kept me moving forward, even when times were challenging. Thank you for your patience, encouragement, and for our love of infinity times infinity plus three.

This is also dedicated to my parents, Larry and Corinne Tangeman. I can reflect on the beginnings of this accomplishment and can still see the tan briefcase and smell the leather mixed with the scent of colored pencils and crayons. I remember spending hours looking at those picture books and stacking them high in the library and using those colored pencils to create, design, and imagine. Mom and Dad, thank you for modeling the importance of public education and what it is to be an educator and for always striving to meet goals through hard-work, tenacity, patience, and perseverance but always doing it together.

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ABSTRACT

Newblom, Jane C., Ph.D., Purdue University, December 2013. Alternative Teacher Certification: Secondary School Principals' Perspective in Indiana. Major Professor: Dr. Marilyn A. Hirth.

As teacher recruitment intensifies to locate qualified teachers for our nation's classrooms, alternative teacher certification programs are becoming prevalent. Initially these programs were designed to attract professionals and college graduates to enter urban classrooms. However, what has occurred is that over 140 alternative certification programs are available to teacher candidates. Some of these programs are well designed with education courses and content area methodology along with pre-service teaching internships while others may not provide the opportunities for new teachers to be successful in their first years of teaching. This study investigated the perceptions of secondary school principals regarding the effectiveness of traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs.

Keywords: alternative teacher certification, traditional teacher certification, alternative teacher certification pathways, teacher attrition, highly qualified teachers.

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Statement of Purpose

In the early 1980's predictions of teacher shortages became a discussion at local, state, and national levels.   Although at the time these were just discussions, it was a prediction that has emerged into reality within the past few decades.   Based on the literature, there are varying causes for the teacher shortages that are evident today. Some of these causes include: an increase in teacher retirements; class size reduction initiatives; expanding numbers of immigrant families and children enrolling in schools; increases in population of baby boomer children; and professional dissatisfaction of teachers already in our nation's classrooms (Abell et. al, 2006; Russell, 2006). Additionally, the shortages are more pronounced in urban and rural school districts and within specific hard-to-fill areas such as special education and some secondary subject areas such as science, mathematics, and technology (Abell et. al, 2006; Russell, 2006). Over the last decade the demand for science and mathematics teachers has increased 22% with predictions for continued shortages in these areas along with a need for expertise in technology, both for students and for teachers. (Abell et. al, 2006; Russell, 2006). A shortage in the pool of teachers is a real dilemma that has driven changes in teacher certification and teacher education and training programs.

Teacher attrition and retention is also a cause in the teacher shortage quandary. New teachers are leaving the profession at an alarming rate of 55% within their first three years of teaching (Abell et. al, 2006). When compared to other professions this translates to over five times the rate of professors, lawyers, and nurses. This high attrition rate could be attributed to poor working conditions, reduced quality of life, dissatisfaction with the profession of teaching in general, and/or increased accountability and high stakes testing of students who struggle (Abell et. al, 2006; Russell, 2006). It seems we have made a concerted effort to attract teachers to the field but have not addressed how to keep them once in the profession.

As a nation, we need to plan accordingly to ensure we have teachers trained who are highly qualified, ready to enter the teaching profession, and who are making a long-term, career commitment. One solution has been to increase the number of certified teachers. However, rather than adhering to the traditional teacher training routes of a four-year college degree in education, what has ensued in our nation are alternative pathways to certification. Currently, there are more than 140 alternative routes to certification: some have competitive admission guidelines; other programs allow candidates to complete the requirements more quickly; while other alternative programs may not be accredited. Generally, teaching candidates within these programs already have a bachelor's degree with career and professional experience and are just completing coursework to obtain a master's degree, a post baccalaureate degree, or just teacher certification (Unruh & Holt, 2010). Not only are there increasing numbers of alternative certification programs being offered but the number of teaching candidates through these programs is also increasing rapidly. According to the National Center for Education

Information in 2005, 48 states and the District of Columbia issued approximately 50,000

alternative teaching certificates. And to date, approximately 200,000 teachers have been

certified through alternative programs since 1985 (Feistritzer, 2006). The philosophy of

alternative pathways to certification is convincing—if we increase the number of

teaching candidates, the teacher applicant pool will also increase ultimately eliminating

the teacher shortage in our nation.

Another perspective in resolving the teacher shortage dilemma is insuring those

entering the profession will remain. Approximately 28-40% of alternative certified

teachers leave the classroom within three years and 56% leave by the fifth year (Carter &

Keiler, 2009). As teachers leave the profession so does their expertise. As teachers gain

experience they make greater gains in student achievement due to a positive impact in the

classroom on instruction, student learning, and classroom management and discipline. It

seems that the focus on finding enough good teachers should be countered with

acknowledgement that we can't keep good teachers (Abell et. al, 2006).

Significance of the Study

Recruitment and hiring the best and most qualified teachers for vacancies for any

administrator is challenging. First, it is essential to have an applicant pool of interested

and qualified candidates and then the process evolves to trying to predict the potential for

effectiveness based on a candidate's credentials, the interview, and references. A

candidate's educational background and pre-service teaching experience provides a

glimpse of potential success in conjunction with the candidate's professional references.

These two resources may also inform the administrator about the potential areas of

challenges, strengths, and weaknesses for additional areas of needed training, support, and professional development.

With the introduction of alternative certification pathways, administrators must now assess the quality and the depth of the alternative certification program when evaluating potential teacher candidates.   Currently, the research and comparative analyses between alternative and traditional teacher training are vague and ambiguous which makes recruitment and hiring difficult.   This lack of research also limits the ability to identify potential professional development needs for new teachers and support them effectively in the first years of teaching.

There is also controversy regarding how to measure teacher effectiveness. Should a teacher be evaluated using student achievement data or student learning growth, self-evaluation with reflection, and/or administrator observations? As a result of these vast changes to educational policy, research in teacher education is behind policy implementation. Rather than research designed to improve education, educators are focusing on whether the changes are productive and effective while they are trying to prove what is right and what has gone wrong.   The educational field is prime for common sense recommendations and decisions based on research and data.

As administrators strive to hire the best teacher candidates for the classrooms for a school district, they question if alternative certification has prepared the applicant for not only planning and instruction, but also classroom management, building relationships with students and families, and whether they have the ability to work collaboratively with other teachers.   Teachers, entering the profession from traditional teacher training routes, generally have been provided extensive pre-service training and pedagogical instruction.

Administrators have an understanding and have experience with teachers from traditional teaching programs and are prepared for overall weaknesses of first year teachers. From these experiences, administrators are able to intervene quickly if teachers need support and are able to implement interventions and professional development opportunities based on prior experiences. However, an alternatively certified teacher may have different areas of weakness that could be attributed to limited pre-service experience and pedagogical understandings; thus, making support and professional development needs less predictable.

As local school districts wrestle with providing high quality educational opportunities for all students, they must also consider current state and federal mandates and initiatives. These include but are not limited to: insuring all teachers have highly qualified teacher and content area status; renewed interest in teacher evaluations; school accountability measures and grades; student learning growth and academic proficiencies; graduation rates; implementation of common core curriculum; and career and college readiness. In reviewing all of these categorical areas, teachers are the essential common denominator; they have the capacity to make a difference and they provide the foundation for making an impact within our schools. Teachers are not only important but are essential in the educational process.

Administrators within their leadership role evaluate teachers. They have experience in observing, listening, coaching, monitoring, and supporting teachers from both traditional and alternative certification pathways. Their perceptions of teachers from both teacher-training routes are valuable in the discussions, current implementation of programs, and assessing the quality of all modes of teacher preparation. Administrator

perceptions are a critical component in any future policy implementation, future program development for teacher training programs, and the creation of alternative pathways to certification.

Research Questions

Rather than identifying individual teachers and analyzing their input, these questions are designed to capture the perspectives of the principal. Overall how do principals perceive the differences in teachers who pursued teaching through the traditional route and teachers who transitioned to teaching through alternative certification pathways? And then, what do these principals report regarding differences in teacher retention?

1.   Do principals perceive a difference in overall teacher effectiveness for teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?

In an effort to identify core competencies and create a framework for comparison of alternatively and traditionally certified teachers for this question, standards from InTASC—Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (2011) provide an excellent foundation for this research study. These ten standards are based on current research on the essentials of best practices in teaching and the identification of strategies and methodologies for improved student achievement. The standards also support the empowerment of educators to become educational leaders in their districts. Each of the ten standards is organized into three levels of competencies: Performances can be observed and assessed in teaching practice; Essential Knowledge is the foundational

knowledge for effective implementation; and professional attitude, practice, and moral responsibilities are identified in the areas of Critical Dispositions. These standards are also classified into four general categories and formed the framework for measuring principal's perceptions within the design of the study. The following is a condensed overview of the InTASC Core Teaching Standards: The Learner and Learning, Content, Instructional Practice, and Professional Responsibility.

2. Do principals perceive professional and peer relationship differences in teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?

Peer relationships, teamwork, and collegiality impact teacher success. When these professional attributes are present in the school culture, teacher success and effectiveness is more likely. Teachers supporting teachers in the workplace translates into higher achievement gains for students.

3. Does school type, location type, enrollment size, percentage of minority students, and teacher certification type serve as significant predictors of overall teacher effectiveness?

Schools come in all types, sizes, and locations throughout the nation and an administrator leads each school. Rural, urban, and suburban administrators compete to hire teachers from the same applicant pool. These variables may also provide a glimpse of the perceived effectiveness of a teacher.

4.   Do principals report differences in the reasons teachers leave their

positions within the first five years in the classroom between teachers who

were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an

alternative certification pathway?

Just as there is acknowledgement that the first years of teaching are the most

difficult, there is also the recognition that experience and years of teaching makes a

difference.   Tournaki et. al, (2009) suggest that the more years a teacher has been in the

profession; the more likely there will be positive impact on important student outcomes

such as student achievement.

The Null Hypotheses

Null Hypothesis #1: There is no significant difference in principal perceptions

between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in overall teacher

effectiveness from a principal's perspective.

Null Hypothesis #2: There is no significant difference in principal perceptions

between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in a teacher's

ability to relate to other teachers and maintain a professional demeanor and attitude.

Null Hypothesis #3: There is no significant difference in a principal's perception

of overall teacher effectiveness based on school type, school location, school enrollment

size, a school's percentage of minority students, and teacher certification type.

Null Hypothesis #3: There is no significant difference between alternative

certification and traditional certification pathways in the reasons for teacher attrition

within the first five years teaching in the classroom.

Limitations of the Study

The findings from this study were limited to the perceptions of secondary (grades 6-12) school principals within the state of Indiana. The design of the study determined only overall and general perceptions of teacher effectiveness based on principal perceptions rather than obtaining data based on each individual within these two categories—alternative certification and traditional certification. Actual principal perceptions based on content areas of teacher certification and licensure were not delineated within the study but rather were all-inclusive for all subject areas at the secondary level. These perceptions may be biased based on the professional judgments and philosophies of these reporting principals and their individual experiences and beliefs of what constitutes a well-developed program of study for training highly effective teachers. Finally, without one standard, clear, and accepted definition of what constitutes a well-developed alternative certification program the responses may be subject to professional interpretation based on each principal's experiences with teachers who have entered the classroom in a pathway other than the traditional certification route. The perceptions from principals provided a foundation for evaluating alternative and traditional pathways to teaching.

Definitions

To help the reader understand and interpret the literature, research, and the study, the follow terms are defined:

Alternative Certification: the requirements outlined by each state in order for a teacher to be qualified to teach at a grade level and in a content or subject area but the teacher

obtains the required credentials outside of the traditional framework and outside of the traditional four-year degree in education.

Alternative Certification Program: a program developed to provide potential teacher candidates an abbreviated teacher-training program. Generally a candidate may have a bachelor's degree and/or have career experience that could translate to the classroom. Some programs such as Teach for America, Troops to Teachers, and Fellowships are well defined with competitive entrance requirements. However, more recently some of these programs are for-profit, online, and lacking in teacher education accreditation.

Teacher Certification: the requirements outlined by each state in order for a teacher to be qualified to teach at a grade level and in a content or subject area. Included with this requirement are minimum competencies identified as essential skills and standards for potential success.

Traditional Teacher Certification: an approved education-training program offered by a post-secondary college or university that offers a degree in education. Each program of study aligns to state teacher certification guidelines and provides pre-service teaching and pedagogical coursework requirements.

CHAPTER 2 - REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

One of the first steps of teacher evaluation begins with the school administrator charged with the responsibility for hiring teachers. In fact, it begins prior to hiring any teacher as they strive to hire the best teacher for each and every vacancy. Through a process that includes: recruitment and application; a review of a candidate's credentials including past job experience and educational preparation; interviews and sometimes multiple interviews; and references checks, a teacher is hired. It is during this process that the administrator is trying to predict if the candidate would work well with others within the district and ultimately they want nothing more than to hire the best teacher; one who is prepared academically, instructionally, and personally. A teacher who has the potential to be successful in the classroom and an instructional leader within the school and the district; a leader, role model, and an effective teacher who can challenge students while creating a culture where students can flourish academically, socially, and behaviorally.

Traditionally, teachers obtained certification by attending a college or university and earning their bachelor's degree in education with a concentration in a content area of study. However, sometime in the 1990's with the predictions of teacher shortages, especially in urban and rural communities of the country and also in specific content areas, alternative certification programs were developed and implemented across the nation.

With the increase in numbers of not only alternative certification programs but also the significant increase in teachers obtaining certification through these routes, it is apparent that all administrators will need to have a greater understanding of these alternative pathways to teaching. An understanding will be imperative as administrators consider applicants from alternative certification pathways and know what they can expect as they enter the classroom. As administrators design professional development programs and opportunities for the staff members within a district, consideration for supporting alternative certified teachers would be recommended. This literature review will look at the history of teacher preparation, the prediction and emergence of a teacher shortage, and the justification of alternative routes to teacher preparation and certification.

Brief on the History of Teacher Preparation

In 1787, Thomas Jefferson wrote in a letter to James Madison, "Educate and inform the whole mass of the people as (they) are the only sure reliance for the preservation of our liberty" (as cited in Ogden, 2006). Thus, even in the beginnings, our forefathers of the United States of America provided the foundation for the importance of education for its citizens. In an effort to illuminate the importance of teacher education in the process of education for all, Ogden (2006) writes in the article *Let's Bring Back the Teacher's College,* "Horace Mann and Henry Barnard were instrumental in the development of institutions that provided teachers for the growing Common School movement. Horace Mann viewed schools as the great equalizer of American society and promoted good teachers as the very foundation of the system" (p. 784). From these

beginnings in public education, it was evident and a basic understanding that good teachers equate to a good educational system.

The training of good teachers and the continual need to provide enough teachers for our school systems has been ongoing. In the 1820's, established teacher-training programs began to appear in the United States modeled after European programs that focused on norms—standards, principles, and rules of teaching. These schools, often carrying the name of "normal schools" and the philosophy of this movement was teachers, teachers-in-training, and the students were all in the same building; teaching and learning was ongoing by all. These institutions began to replace the "scholarly-perceived schoolmaster of colonial and post-revolution institutions" (Ogden, 2006, p. 784) with one to three year professional preparation programs designed specifically for training teachers. Over time, these "normal" schools transitioned into the four-year teacher's college or an established department on university campuses (Ogden, 2006).

Colleges and universities along with local state legislatures, departments of education, and standards boards began to implement educational and teacher license and certification requirements. Generally these requirements included a bachelor's degree in education with a content area focus and in more recent years passing standardized competency tests in mathematics, reading and English, and in the content area of licensure. These programs, now known as traditional certification programs, provided one to two years of pre-service teaching experience prior to full-time teaching status. Traditional teacher education programs provided the only route to becoming a certified, licensed teacher until alternative teacher certification programs began to surface within the last twenty years (Rochkind, Ott, Immerwahr, Doble, & Johnson, 2007).

Beginning in the 1980's, predictions of teacher shortages began to emerge. Researchers indicated that increased student enrollments, reductions in class size, influx of immigrants and their children, attrition rates of new teachers, and accelerating teacher retirements would contribute to this problem (Archer, 1999; Darling-Hammond, 1997; Feistritzer, 2001; Russell, 2006). What was a prediction has now become a reality for school districts nationwide. This shortage is most severe in urban school districts where principals report greater difficulty in hiring teachers than their rural or suburban counterparts, and more specifically, teachers who are certified in the areas of special education, mathematics, and science (NCES, 1998; Saffold, 2006).

Justification for Alternative Teacher Preparation and Certification

As the need to recruit and retain quality teachers in urban areas has increased, numerous states have adopted alternative means of preparing teacher candidates. Will these alternative programs replace the traditional certification route to teaching? McKibbin and Ray (1994) suggest the development of alternative certification programs is not to replace the traditional teacher education programs but rather to provide opportunities for individuals who have an interest in teaching. Policy makers were also striving to attract content area experts in the career world into the classroom. For example: chemists interested in teaching chemistry and engineers teaching mathematics and physics. For potential and interested teaching candidates, the traditional route to certification is too expensive and time consuming and thus, regardless of a potential teacher's interest to do so, it is a choice that seems too difficult to pursue. Therefore, with the need to address teacher shortages in communities and school districts, alternative

certification became attractive to teacher candidates as a means to avoiding the costs and the time required within a traditional teacher training program and to begin to teach more quickly (Kee, 2012).   Research suggests that almost half of the teacher candidates enrolling in these alternative certification programs share that they would not be able to pursue teaching without these new pathways to certification (Rochkind et. al, 2007).

Stevens and Dial (1993) categorized the reasons why individuals chose to transition from other careers into teaching: 1) they always wanted to teach; 2) they wanted to be an influence on the lives of children; 3) teaching seemed like a practical choice based on their subject area interests, current careers, and education; and/or 4) there was a lack of other career options (as cited by Rochkind et. al, 2007; Thomas, Friedman-Nimz, Mahlios, & O'Brien, 2005). Overwhelmingly, the primary reason for the vast majority of all teachers wishing to become a teacher is their belief that they can make a difference to students academically, in their lives, and for their future (Rochkind et. al, 2007).

As the demand for teachers continues to rise and the interest in teaching is noted by potential candidates, the challenge for policymakers will be to open up pathways to the teaching profession without sacrificing the quality of professional preparation. This is a serious issue because over the last five years the number of alternative certification entrants into teaching has doubled—and now almost one in three new recruits enters teaching through a non-traditional pathway (Berry, 2010). According to the National Center for Education Information in 2005, 48 states and the District of Columbia certified

approximately 50,000 alternative teaching certificates. And to date, approximately

200,000 teachers have been certified through alternative programs since 1985 (Feistritzer,

2006).

These alternative certification programs can vary in terms of completion

requirements, responsibility of agencies involved, length, and intensity. Generally, these

programs enroll individuals who already have, at the minimum, a bachelor's degree and

are completing some level of coursework to obtain a master's degree, a post-

baccalaureate degree, or just teacher certification (Unruh & Holt, 2010).   However, there

is not one standard, clear, and accepted definition of what constitutes an alternative

certification program. This lack of standard definition and oversight or accreditation is a

concern especially when researching the effectiveness of these certification pathways

(Abell et. al, 2006).

Generally, alternative certification is defined as a program leading to teaching

certification but requires significantly less time to complete than the traditional

certification route.   In some cases, since requirements are not mandated or outlined

within policy, candidates may not have a bachelor's degree upon entry to the program

(Glass, 2008) and other have minimal pre-service teacher training. Additionally, some

states consider emergency teaching licenses a form of alternative certification even if a

teacher was previously certified in another state or have let their certificate lapse or are in

the process of renewal (Saffold, 2006). Currently there are more than 140 alternative

routes to certification, or provisional certification, into the teaching profession in the

United States. Additionally, online programs are appearing such as the University of

Phoenix, Walden University, National University, and Western Governors University

(Glass, 2008) and cumulative were identified in *USA Today* as the largest education school in the nation (Toppo & Schnaars, 2012). These varied and sometimes unregulated programs make it difficult for research to validate programs in relation to teacher effectiveness. A sampling of some alternative certification programs include:

- Candidates are admitted into a master's degree program following an undergraduate degree program and complete additional credits in education toward a master's degree (Tournaki, Lyublinskaya, & Carolan, 2009);

- Candidates are admitted into a master's degree program prior to receiving their undergraduate degree and complete 100 hours of pre-service training (Tournaki et. al, 2009);

- A licensure-only degree requiring candidates with a bachelor's degree to complete required education courses before applying for jobs as a fully licensed teacher (Unruh & Holt, 2010);

- A lateral-entry certification allowing a candidate with a bachelor's degree in a specific content area to teach while taking education and licensure courses (Unruh & Holt, 2010);

- A lateral entry certification allowing a candidate with a bachelor's degree to take online courses, complete an eight week summer course, and then receive a paid teacher internship in a teaching assignment with follow-up assessments; (Russell, 2006);

–   An explicit program to attract professionals such as instructional assistants who have specific knowledge of a local district or the job requirements and recommend the general course requirements for an education degree (Russell, 2006);

–   Programs developed on a state and national level with specific requirements and prerequisites. Generally these programs require competitive academic requirements and a service commitment; and in return, they receive a post-graduate degree, and financial compensation or tuition credit vouchers for continued education. Such programs include: Teach for America, Troops to Teachers, the New Teacher Project, and Fellowships through various college, universities, and communities (Glass, 2008).

National Alternative Teaching Organizations

Although there is not a specific and accepted definition for alternative teacher certification with mandated or legislative requirements, there are programs being implemented at the national and state levels that are being recognized. As we try to comprehend and analyze alternative certification pathways, these programs are useful in allowing us to gain perspective and understanding of what is required of the teacher candidates participating in these programs.

Teach for America is a national organization comprised of outstanding recent college graduates and professionals of all academic majors, career interests, and professional backgrounds who commit two years to teach in urban and rural public schools. The philosophy is to bring outstanding young leaders into the schools and

classrooms to enhance and expand educational opportunities for some of the nation's most needy students and schools. Since 1990, Teach for America has become the nation's largest provider of teachers for low-income communities and has supplied nearly 17,000 teachers to public schools. Two-thirds of teachers in this alternative group are teaching in middle schools or high schools. The vast majority, 82 percent, are also teaching in high-needs schools (Rochkind et. al, 2007). Teach for America teachers receive the normal school district salary with benefits as well as an AmeriCorps voucher to cover costs of student loans or to apply to further education (Glass, 2008).

Troops to Teachers was originally established in 1994 as a Department of Defense initiative. Under this program, eligible military personnel have the opportunity to pursue a second career in public education. The primary objectives of the program are to: relieve teacher shortages especially in the areas of mathematics, the sciences, and special education; 2) provide role models for the nation's public school students; and 3) assist military personnel to successfully transition to teaching as a second career (Rochkind et. al, 2007).

The New Teacher Project is a national non-profit organization dedicated to increasing the number of outstanding individuals who become public school teachers and to creating environments for all educators that maximize their impact on student achievement. This project has recruited, trained, placed and/or certified approximately 28,000 high-quality teachers, worked with over 200 school districts, and established more than 55 programs or initiatives in 26 states (Rochkind et. al, 2007).

Fellows programs are unique to states and communities and designed to address specific educational and economic needs. Generally, Fellows come from the career

ranks—accountants, nurses, recent graduates, chief executives, secretaries, artists, reporters, and retirees. They have decided to use their diverse experiences, knowledge, and achievements to positively affect the lives of students (Carter & Keiler, 2009). Generally, fellowship programs have a rigorous screening process including: a competitive grade point average, transcripts verifying a bachelor's degree, an application and interview, letters of recommendation, and a personal statement of why the candidate wants to enter the field of education. These programs also include a mentoring component along with a program advisor to support the teaching candidate in the first two years of teaching and training. Generally, this program is organized in a cohort format where a small group of candidates move through the program together (Saffold, 2006).

Alternative Teacher Certification Diversifies Teaching Profession

Alternative certification programs can generally fill specific geographic or content area teacher shortages by enlarging the teaching pool. So, not only do alternative certification programs address qualified and certified teacher shortages in areas of specific need but as stated in the article, *Research on Alternative Certification: Where Do We Go from Here?,* a demonstrated strength is that, as a whole, alternative certification provides diversity within the teaching profession (Abell et. al, 2006). "As a group they are more ethnically diverse; have a higher percentage of males in an otherwise female dominated profession; and likely to have lived in an urban setting and thus more willing teach in an urban setting" (Abell et. al, 2006, p. 3). They also provide a diverse group of prospective teachers and participants who can become full-time teachers and in

some cases with as little as just a few weeks of pre-service training prior to full-time

teaching (Kee, 2012).   Shoho and Martin (1999) concur with this demographic and

elaborate that most often teachers from alternative teacher certification pathways bring

with them not only past career experiences but they continue to live in their same

communities, consequently they have a better knowledge of the local culture and are able

to contribute to the communities in which they live and teach (Eifler & Pothoff, 1998;

Saffold, 2006).

Alternative Certification vs. Traditional Certification on Student Achievement

In 2000, Dan Goldhaber and Dominic Brewer published an article in *Educational*

Evaluation and Policy Analysis suggesting that teacher certification be abandoned based

on the research comparing teachers with traditional certification and those with

emergency permits in the areas of math and science since the students performed the

same (D. Goldhaber & D. J. Brewer, 2000). The assumption is that certification and

teacher training is insignificant if teachers have a command for the content area they are

teaching. Goldhaber and Brewer provide compelling documentation by referencing

several articles with varying outcomes, regression studies, results and assumptions, and

licensure requirements for teacher certification. In each reference, discussion regarding

the issue or problem is included and relevant.

Within some of the articles there is evidence that students' test scores are similar

in classrooms where teachers are alternatively certified when compared to teachers from

traditional routes to certification. There is praise for Teach for America recruits who

were able to effectively increase student math scores and similar reading scores in

comparison to the students of other teachers; even teachers with years of experience (Decker, Mayer, & Glazerman, 2005). Torff and Sessions (2005) agreed with this finding in *Principals' Perceptions and the Causes of Teacher Ineffectiveness* by highlighting that these achievement gains could be related to the actual achievement of Teach for America recruits themselves, 70% who come from the nation's most highly rated colleges compared with fewer than 3% of other teachers.

Additionally, in a report published in 2009 by the National Center for Educational Evaluation (Constantine et. al), "There was no statistically significant difference in performance between students of alternative certified teachers and those of traditional certified teachers. Average differences in reading and math achievement in all instances were not statistically significant" (p. 18). The report continues with the summary of findings stating that there was no evidence that teacher training coursework affects student achievement and no evidence that content area coursework correlates to student achievement (Constantine et. al, 2009).

Contrary to these positive theories for alternative certification is research suggesting exactly the opposite: there is a negative correlation between alternatively certified teachers and student academic outcomes. In *Evaluating the Evidence* by Darling-Hammond, Berry, and Thoreson (2001), the article provides that teachers who have education training are more effective when measuring student achievement. The article continues with a thoughtful and well-researched critique, which refutes Goldhaber and Brewer's (2000) findings. Most evident within the Goldhaber and Brewer article is the lack of an accepted definition for alternative certification and included within the sample were teachers who held emergency licenses. This positively skewed the position

for alternative certification in error because most of these emergency licenses were obtained by traditionally trained teachers renewing their license or were teachers transferring from one state to another. Among the research cited by Darling-Hammond et. al (2001) are the following citations:

- There is a consistent and positive relationship between students' achievement in science and their teachers' backgrounds in both education courses and science courses; specifically a combination of these two areas (Druva & Anderson, 1983).

- Teachers' coursework credits in science were not significantly related to student learning, but that coursework in science education was significantly related to students' achievement on tasks requiring problem solving and application of science knowledge. Teachers with greater training in science teaching were more likely to use laboratory techniques and discussions. Those with less education training placed more emphasis on memorization (Perkes, 1967-1968).

- Positive relationships were observed between the extent of teachers' professional education coursework and their teaching performance, including their students' achievement (Denton & Lacina, 1984).

Berry (2010) provides endorsement for teacher training programs and recommendations within those programs based on a 2008 examination of student achievement gains and outlines these characteristics within teacher training programs: 1) extensive and well-supervised student teaching; 2) opportunities to engage in the "actual practices involved in teaching" including lesson preparation, discussions with other

teachers, lesson evaluation and reflection; 3) opportunities to study and assess local

school curricula; and 4) a capstone experience using action research and/or a data-

focused portfolio (Berry, 2010). The article provides convincing documentation that

"alternatively trained teachers who had very limited pedagogical coursework before they

began to teach actually lowered their students' achievement scores over the course of the

academic year and that the pathway into teaching does matter for student achievement"

(Berry, 2010, p. 16).   Abell et. al (2006) also noted that alternative teachers relied on

instruction that encouraged memorization and following rules more than did traditional

certified counterparts. Additionally, Perkes' (1967-1968) findings state that teachers who

are well-prepared appear to be better able to use teaching strategies that respond to

students' needs and learning styles and encourage higher-order learning, critical thinking,

and problem solving (Darling-Hammond, Berry, & Thoreson, 2001).

Alternative Certification vs. Traditional Certification using
Teacher or Self-Evaluation

As researchers strive to provide support or disclaim the success of alternative

teacher certification, various types of assessment and evaluation are being considered.

Self-evaluation and self-efficacy is a form of evaluation that can be an important

predictor. Studies in 2005 by Johnson, Birkeland, and Peske found three elements, which

contribute to the feelings of preparedness of alternatively certified teachers: the person,

the program, and the school (Kee, 2012). So, if the person believes they are successful,

they support their plan of study, and they enjoy and are loyal to the school in which they

teach; there is an assumption of success.

An illustration of this measurement of teacher success is noted in an article by Yao and Williams (2010), *A Comparison of Three Teacher Preparation Programs in Terms of Their Impact on Teacher Competencies,* and the following pathways were compared: a traditional four-year teacher training program; an alternative certification where candidates took extensive coursework in research methodology, curriculum theory, advanced psychology, and an internship which culminated in a Master's of Arts in Education degree; and an alternative certification program with a master's degree component. "The results suggest that regardless of teacher education program or status, the teachers in these programs held similarly positive views about their programs. Their positive views were confirmed by the perceptions of their employers, who provided high ratings of their teachers' competencies in all three programs" (Yao & Williams, 2010, p. 22).

Kee's (2012) article, *Feelings of Preparedness Among Alternatively Certified Teachers: What is the Role of Program Features?,* summarizes the positive program components of a well-planned alternative certification program which recognizes the basic requirements for a classroom teacher: they are required to handle discipline and classroom management; understand and implement instructional methods and strategies; assess students and use assessment to guide instruction; and differentiate and modify instruction based and different learning styles and academic abilities (Kee, 2012). Research has also determined that secondary teachers without methods courses on how to teach their subject area were limited in their ability to engage students and more likely to teach like they were taught in their years of schooling during their youth (Brown, Bolen, Lassiter, & Burke, 2006; Grossman & McDonald, 2008). Overall, teachers in alternative

pathways felt most prepared when there were required methods courses and with a

substantial field experience, internship, or practice teaching experience. The length of

the field experience also had a positive correlation to how well-prepared the teacher felt

in their first year of teaching and in their first teaching assignment. The longer the

experience correlated to more self-confidence and feelings of preparedness by the new

teacher (Kee, 2012).

Teacher preparation seems to be the common theme regardless of the pathway to

certification. All teachers tend to have problems in their first year of teaching and

observers, colleagues, and administrators may express concerns at some point. However,

what is notable and evident within the research is that well-developed and well-respected

teacher training programs prepare new teacher candidates for the unknown by integrating

relevant and authentic situations and opportunities; thus, helping new teachers to react

effectively (Wayman, Foster, Mantle-Bromley, & Wilson, 2003).

Various research methodologies are being used to evaluate alternative teacher

certification. One method noted earlier is self-evaluation. When self-evaluation was

used to compare teachers from alternative and traditional certification, a notable outcome

within the literature was that alternatively trained teachers were more negative with the

overall experiences than their traditionally trained peers. One argument for these results

has been that often alternative certified teachers are assigned to challenging, urban school

districts. However, even when this group of teachers is compared to traditionally trained

teachers in the same assignment, the negativity was still prevalent and noticeable in the

results. Overall alternatively certified teachers were:

– More likely to believe they have been assigned to teach the hardest-to-reach students;

– More likely to give fair or poor ratings to administrators for providing strong instructional leadership or for supporting them on discipline issues and for providing needed resources;

– More likely to give fair or poor ratings to colleagues and mentors for giving them support and good advice (50% alternative certification vs. 88% traditional certification);

– Less likely to say that their cooperating teacher was a good role model;

– Less likely to give their cooperating teacher high marks for providing good advice and guidance in important areas;

– Less likely to say they had enough time working with a real teacher before having their own classroom;

– More likely to say they plan to leave the profession within the next five years (63% alternative certification vs. 16% traditional certification).

These self-evaluations and commentaries are concerning because perception is a reality; these teachers do not believe they are receiving the level of support, mentoring, and encouragement they need in their current assignments, nor do they feel they have the background and experience to feel comfortable dealing with a wide variety of issues (Rochkind et. al, 2007). In comparison, traditionally trained teachers are more likely to suggest that extensive testing, accountability, and the lack of freedom to be creative are their greatest concerns. In addition, traditionally trained teachers have a more positive response to a simple question pertaining to their teaching career by responding, "There is

nothing I'd rather be doing than teaching" with 88% responding favorably in comparison to 49% of the alternatively trained teachers (Rochkind et. al, 2007).

Alternative Certification vs. Traditional Certification based on Administrator Evaluations

One of the most widely used and accepted methods for measuring teacher effectiveness has been administrators observing teachers in the classroom and evaluating teacher performance. In fact, teacher evaluation is generally one of the most important and primary responsibilities of administrators. However, currently on a national level, there is argument that this type of evaluation is subjective and does not utilize data nor include measurable and concrete information to effectively measure teacher effectiveness. Without using administrator evaluations, what are the recommendations for evaluating teachers? In *Principals' Perceptions and the Causes of Teacher Ineffectiveness,* Bruce Torff and David Sessions (2005) analyze the effectiveness of using student test scores, student learning growth or value added measure, or administrative supervision and evaluations to measure teacher effectiveness. The article concluded that test scores are not sufficient because socio-economic backgrounds, school resources and class sizes, demographic and cultural influences of the community, and parent educational attainment affect the results. Using student learning growth is also difficult to assess because not everything that is taught has a test to measure student learning. Torff and Sessions clarify this methodological concern with the example that some subjects are only year-long courses such as physics and chemistry and test measures are not available that could be deemed reliable, objective, and valid to measure actual student

learning growth. Additionally, if most of the students in one class are already at the 95%, there is only the possibility of 5% growth; whereas, a class at 65% has the potential for 35% learning growth (2005).

So what is the recommendation for teacher evaluation? Torff and Sessions conclude that using administrators to evaluate effective teachers seems most reliable for measuring teacher effectiveness even if it is a subjective measure. Every method of teacher evaluation has limitations but principals have a unique perspective that is valuable when measuring teacher effectiveness and it is therefore recommended that the primary means for determining teacher effectiveness, ineffectiveness, or professional development needs is through evaluations conducted by administrators (Torff & Sessions, 2005). Administrators have a unique and school-wide perspective, are educated and trained to be instructional leaders, most were former classroom teachers and can identify best practices, and they have access to and use data within the evaluation instrument. Evaluating teacher effectiveness requires administrators to identify areas that might be difficult to define and is often dependent on the evaluation instrument provided at the local level. Bruce Torff and David Sessions (2005) identify three of the most common components of pedagogical knowledge required for teacher effectiveness: classroom management skills, lesson-planning skills, and rapport with students. Without these teacher attributes evident in the classroom, it is realistic for the evaluator to perceive teacher ineffectiveness.   Unquestionably, the nation is inundated with how best to evaluate teachers, and understandably, evaluations and observation by principals and administrators could potentially be biased and subjective when using evaluative tools. In

spite of these concerns and as suggested by Torrff and Sessions, a principal's voice should be heard and this evaluative means should never be eliminated (2005).

From the perspective of administrator teacher evaluations, what are the observable differences between traditionally trained and alternatively certified teachers? If required to delineate concerns between alternative licensed teachers and traditionally licensed teachers, there were similar issues within the first years of teaching. However, traditionally licensed teachers were rated more positively in almost every area with significant positive differences in the areas of effective instruction, classroom environment, and classroom management. Within the literature, there was a notable concern in the area of negative collegial relationships for alternatively trained teachers. Collegiality and teamwork is an area that provides the greatest support among new teachers and is essential for continuous learning and effective teaching (Wayman et. al, 2003). Without collegiality, teamwork and peer relationships can become strained and even non-existent ultimately affecting teacher success.

Within the discussion of teacher training, very few principals (18 percent) and superintendents (12 percent) believe that traditional certification provides full assurance that an individual has what it takes to be a good classroom teacher. Most say traditional certification guarantees only a minimum level of skills. On the other hand, relatively few teachers, principals or superintendents view alternate routes as a pivotal breakthrough for improving the field. The majority of educators state better mentoring and professional development once the teacher is in the classroom is a more effective way to improve teaching, although in reality, these approaches can easily exist alongside either traditional or alternate training paths (Rochkind et. al, 2007).

In another study, school principals perceived both lateral entry or traditionally prepared teachers as having marginal or inadequate mastery of major teaching competencies (Brown et. al, 2006). Rochkind et. al (2007) report that more than half of public school principals, approximately 55 percent who work or who have hired alternatively trained teachers say that based on their experience, teachers coming from an alternate route are as good as those from traditional education programs.

Alternative Certification vs. Traditional Certification to Improve Teacher Shortages

Identifying the cause of teacher shortage which includes teacher retirements; class size reductions; expanding numbers of immigrant families and children; increases in baby boomer children; professional dissatisfaction; and hard-to-fill areas such as special education and some secondary subject areas such as science and mathematics has increased in demand by 22% in the past decade. Based on the literature, another area creating teacher shortages is the numbers of new teachers leaving the profession at an alarming rate of 55% within three years. When compared to other professions this translates to over five times the rate of professors, lawyers, and nurses. This high attrition rate could be attributed to poor working conditions, quality of life, dissatisfaction with the profession of teaching in general, and/or increased accountability and high stakes testing of students who struggle (Abell et. al, 2006; Russell, 2006).

Alternative teacher certification has been identified as a solution to eliminate teacher shortages and the initial intent was to attract qualified professionals to the field of education (Brown et. al, 2006). As with almost all of the alternative certification research, there are contradictions in the research notated in Darling-Hammond's (2000)

national study of teacher standards. This research found that not only do students of alternatively certified teachers achieve less than those taught by traditionally certified teachers but that at the time of that study, it was also observed that 60 percent of individuals who enter teaching through such programs leave the teaching profession within three years.

As the teacher shortage increased, more candidates began to seek alternative certification who were neither highly qualified or skilled in the area they were to be teaching (Brown et. al, 2006) and more alternative teacher training programs have been developed and are now currently being offered. These alternative routes have recruited a diverse pool of teacher candidates and increased the number of teacher candidates but what has occurred is heightened concern about the quality of the teachers recruited and trained (Abell et. al, 2006). Also emerging into the discussion is the commitment level of candidates entering the profession (Wayman et. al, 2003). Not only are alternative and traditional certified teachers having notable attrition rates, but also so do graduates from nationally recognized programs:

- By the third year of teaching, 28% to 40% of teaching Fellows leave the classroom and by the fifth year that figure increases to almost 56% (Carter & Keiler, 2009);
- Few Teach for America teachers continue in the classroom after their two year commitment; however, some do continue in the education profession in other positions (Glass, 2008);

- Slightly less than one-third of teachers anticipate teaching as their primary career and uncertainty exists if they would stay in the classroom for the long term (Peske, Liu, Moore Johnson, Kauffman, & Kardos, 2001);

- Kwiatkowski (1999) asserts that many young teachers do not see teaching as a long-term career, estimating that the profession will have lost 40 to 50 percent of first-year teachers within seven years (Wayman et. al, 2003).

John Merrow (1999) presents a different perspective in the teacher shortage and also a different solution, "In the rush to fill teaching positions, so much attention has been focused on entry and access that few policy makers and school officials have thought systematically about how to retain these teachers once they are hired. The teaching pool keeps losing water because no one is paying attention to the leak. That is, we're misdiagnosing the problem as recruitment when it's really retention" (as cited by Peske et. al, 2001, p. 308). The National Commission of Teaching and America's Future (2003) concurs that low retention has been noted as a major contributing factor to the teacher shortage and although as a nation we believe we do not have enough trained and certified teachers, in reality for whatever reason, we have been unable to keep good teachers in our nation's classrooms. And when teachers leave the profession, so does their expertise and the investment of time, resources, and financial support provided by school districts. Tournaki et. al, (2009) suggest that the more years a teacher has been in the profession, the more likely there will be a positive impact on important student outcomes such as student achievement.

Additional literature suggests lack of administrator support as another key factor to teacher attrition (Russell, 2006). If we could identify and insure teachers are provided

with professional learning opportunities, ongoing and embedded professional development, and administrative support, teacher retention could possibly be improved. Teacher induction programs also provide a significant support for new teachers in the classroom. Other solutions and recommendations were noted in the 2002 study by Darling-Hammond, Chung, and Frelow:

> States that do not hire unprepared teachers have developed successful strategies for boosting the supply of qualified teachers. These include increasing and equalizing teacher salaries, subsidizing candidates' teacher education costs with service scholarships, providing incentives for teachers to enter high-need fields and locations, and ensuring mentoring for beginners to reduce attrition. Some evidence suggests that in the long run, the greater entry and retention rates of well-prepared teachers may actually save money over the costs of hiring, inducting, and replacing underprepared recruits who leave at high rates (Darling-Hammond, Chung, & Frelow, 2002).

Recommendations and Implications

Over the past several years discussions and policies have intensified regarding the issues of teacher shortages, retention, accountability, and effectiveness. Educational mandates and policies have been legislated at the national, state, local, and institutional levels. States, and in turn, secondary institutions have increased academic requirements for entry-level teachers by raising minimum grade point averages, requiring majors in the subject areas in which a candidate will be teaching, and the need for all teachers to be highly effective in all subject areas for all students. Also within these last several years,

policies and pathways have been implemented to encourage alternative routes to teacher certification. Initially, these policies were designed to encourage academically qualified individuals and professionals to enter the teaching profession (Gitomer, 2007; Tournaki et. al, 2009). However, what occurred since alternative certification programs have been implemented is contradictory research, discussions, and concerns regarding teacher preparedness and effectiveness.

As a result of these vast changes to educational policy, research in teacher education is behind policy implementation. Rather than research designed to improve education, educators are focusing on whether the changes are productive and effective; they are trying to prove what is right and what has gone wrong. It seems the educational field is prime for common sense recommendations and decisions based on research and data.

Continuous Evaluation of Alternative Pathways and Traditional Certification:

"Good enough teachers should not be good enough for anyone's children, and we need to move beyond the current territorial debates about where teacher preparation should occur and focus instead on what is achieved by different forms of preparation" (Zeichner, 2006, p. 337). The qualifications of teachers—those fully certified continue to be the strongest predictors of how well students perform on state-wide and national assessments; thus, ongoing and continuous research and evaluation of current programs needs to be encouraged (Abell et. al, 2006).

In an effort to maintain high standards within certification programs, Zeichner (2006) continues by suggesting that educational programs focus on four elements: a) the quality of teacher education program rather than on the organization offering the

program; b) evaluation of student achievement outside of standardized test scores and aligned curriculum focused solely on raising test scores—focusing on a well-rounded program of studies for all students; c) assessing and evaluating teacher education programs through the quality and effectiveness of teachers matriculating from these schools and alternative programs; and d) insuring that college, universities, and teacher training programs assume the seriousness of teacher training to the education profession (Zeichner, 2006).

College and universities need to maintain high standards for both traditional teacher education programs and alternative certification programs.   Ongoing improvements should always be considered to advance teacher training programs by using data, resources, and research. However, of utmost concern is the lack of regulation and requirements identified within some alternative programs which actually place teachers into the public schools without the field experience or preparation required for successful and effective teaching (Zeichner, 2006). In general, it is this pre-service preparation including student teaching and coursework in education that seems to be the difference between alternative and traditional certification (Schonfeld & Feinman, 2012).

There also needs to be a concerted effort toward accreditation within any pathway to teaching especially with the two competing views about how best to prepare, license, and hire teachers in the years ahead. One opinion calls for extensive pre-service preparation and rigorous, enforced certification requirements. The other argues for opening many routes to teaching and deregulating teacher certification. Much of the literature suggests that while each of these arguments has its strengths, neither is sufficient to meet the demand for large numbers of high-quality teachers (Peske et. al,

2001). Thus, we return to the importance of retention within the ranks of the teaching profession.

<u>Mentoring and Induction Programs</u>

Regardless of the pathway to certification or the pre-service preparation, the first year of teaching can be difficult, challenging, and also rewarding. Many states require either some type of mentoring or induction program to help beginning teachers in their first year in the profession. A mentoring program helps new teachers adjust and transition to the responsibilities and demands of the profession. Mentoring and induction programs are not designed to provide additional education for beginning teachers but instead to provide support, guidance, and orientation during the candidates first year of teaching. Most mentors are generally veteran teachers working with beginning teachers who believe that their primary task is to provide emotional and technical support. Essentially new teachers are actually teaching and learning to teach at the same time. Working collaboratively within a teacher induction and mentorship program provides the required support on both a professional and personal level (Unruh & Holt, 2010).

Effective mentorship programs help teachers transfer learned-skills into the classroom; acclimate new teachers to the school community; provide both personal and professional advice as needed as well as discuss current issues and concerns; provides the opportunity to meet privately with experienced teachers on a scheduled basis; and allows the new teacher the chance to observe veteran teachers in the practice of teaching (Abell et. al, 2006; Schonfeld & Feinman, 2012). Effective and purposeful collaboration and peer learning also leads to new teacher success and retention and assists with the transition into the teaching profession. Overall, not only do teachers report that mentors

provide support but 90% of the teachers report that fellow teachers and colleagues contribute to overall teacher effectiveness (Berry, 2010).

Administrative Support

Within the literature, teachers would like to look to their administrators to help them solve classroom management problems, as well as, seek instructional ideas and discuss student academic concerns. However, most new teachers expressed their concerns that seeking assistance from their evaluators would affect their evaluations and contract renewal. They worry that seeking help could translate to perceptions of incompetency (Schonfeld & Feinman, 2012). For that reason, administrators must find methods to build relationships with these new teachers to insure they feel supported while thoughtfully assigning a veteran teacher or colleague to help them acclimate to the profession. Administrators can also help support new teachers by providing instructional resources and allowing them the opportunity to attend professional workshops and conferences. Finally, administrators might consider meeting regularly with individuals or groups of new teachers to help open the lines of communication and to foster regular, open, honest, and trusting professional relationships.

Professional Development

Noted within the literature and in professional practice for effective teaching is the need to provide continuous, ongoing, and embedded professional development. "It is clear that in addition to improvements in teacher education programs, the working conditions in schools, including the provision of high-quality professional development will need to be strengthened" (Zeichner, 2006, p. 326). Professional development is not just for new teachers; all teachers need support and skill-development during the first

year and beyond. Experienced teachers can benefit from educational topics, the same as first year teachers in the areas of classroom management, lesson planning and instructional strategies, data driven decisions using assessment, student behavioral issues, and best practices. Actually, the list of topics is endless (Brown et. al, 2006).

<u>Ongoing and Continuous Research</u>

As our nation focuses on quality education and teacher effectiveness, "We seem to agree at least on the narrative level, that all children deserve good schools and high-quality teachers. If alternatively licensed teachers provide high quality experiences for their students and lower the teacher attrition rates in hard-to-staff schools, then we must recognize this avenue as a vital one for recruiting teachers" (Wayman, et. al, 2003, p. 39). And also, as a nation we must ensure that research supports the policy implementation toward that common goal. This seems to be very difficult because based on the literature, supporters for each pathway to teacher certification can find research to justify and support alternative certification and/or traditional teacher certification.

Questions will continue to arise as we strive to provide the best teachers for all students. In the question of traditional teacher certification vs. alternative teacher certification, determining the effectiveness and potential for success is imperative. With over 140 alternative pathways to a teaching certificate and with varying definitions of alternative certification, the research findings in support of both alternative and traditional teacher certification are ambiguous. Similar to the reform efforts over the past five years, these questions make it very difficult to interpret the success of not only alternative certification but also the pathways and programs in which teachers are obtaining certification.

We are just in the beginnings of the teacher training controversy. The need for further and ongoing research is critical since much of the new educational policy has undergone such significant changes; many of which conflict with some of the educational foundations of the past. Additionally, as administrators strive to recruit and hire the best teachers within their schools, they must be informed of not only traditional certification changes and modifications but also of the various alternative certification pathways. Essentially schools have been subjected to a national experiment on teacher preparation (Tournaki et. al, 2009). So without conclusive evidence regarding the effectiveness of alternative pathways to teaching or that traditional certification is preferred, as educators we must make recommendations based on what is conclusive, common sense, and supported by the research-to-date realizing that it is all subject to change.

Conclusion

As a nation we are striving to improve education and opportunities for children by insuring that our students have the best teachers in our schools. This is in the midst of teacher shortages, which has created a dilemma for school administrators as they try to hire highly qualified and certified teachers from a diminished applicant pool. In recent years, the solution to teacher shortages has been the development and implementation of alternative teacher certification programs to entice career professionals knowledgeable in their subject area and vocation into classrooms. The theory is valid but the outcome has resulted in questions about the quality of these alternative programs and the effectiveness and success of teachers obtaining certification through these routes.

As we try to identify and evaluate effectiveness and success of alternative certification pathways in comparison to traditional teacher training, ongoing research will be necessary. It seems current research is inconclusive because of varying definitions for what is categorized as an alternative certification program and the bias of the research as presented in the literature is contradictory. Additionally, the vast and broad alternative certification programs being implemented nationwide and the teacher candidates themselves demanding this fast track to the classroom are making an argument that should be substantiated through research.

In an effort to translate the success of alternative certification pathways into our classrooms and schools, state and national officials want to measure teacher effectiveness and value by referencing student academic learning and success. Although student learning and academic growth is a consideration, there are too many variables to evaluate solely using these data alone. Historically, administrator classroom observations and subsequent evaluations have identified teacher ineffectiveness, effectiveness, as well as strengths and challenges. Although this mode of evaluation is often considered subjective and biased, it does have the potential for providing a well-rounded perspective by an individual understanding of the variables for individual students, the challenges within the school, and the culture within the community.

A measure of evaluation that has not been explored extensively based on the research I have been able to obtain is the perspectives of administrators of alternatively certified teachers. As a beginning administrator, I remember trying to clarify a negative situation. The parent exclaimed that perception is reality. Although I did not necessarily appreciate this viewpoint, the statement and this idea has guided many of my discussions

and helped me analyze solutions based on an outside perspective. Absent from the research is a comparison between alternatively certified classroom teachers and traditionally certified teachers from the perspective of a building level administrator.

Within this literature review, the comparative research between alternative certification and traditional teacher training is inconclusive. However, what is apparent:

- There is an ongoing need for highly effective teachers in our nation's classrooms to insure our students have been provided the best opportunities for life-long success;

- There are inconsistencies in philosophies and policies on how best to educate, train, and transition quality teachers for the nation's classrooms;

- Due to these inconsistencies, continuous and ongoing research and evaluation in the area of teacher training will be essential to be able to articulate and transfer these findings into teacher education, teacher training, and teacher certification and licensure;

- Increasing the pool of teacher candidates includes a need to not only increase the number of certified teachers but also an analysis of teacher attrition— retaining effective classroom teachers will be part of the solution to the teacher shortage dilemma.

This comparative research study is significant and timely to the ongoing discussion regarding teacher certification. It provided an opportunity for principals to share their perceptions and perspectives between differences of alternative and traditionally certified teachers in the state of Indiana.

CHAPTER 3 - METHODOLOGY

In an effort to remedy the shortage of teachers and increase the pool of teacher candidates, alternative pathways to teacher certification is acknowledged as an acceptable pathway to the classroom. This acceptance of alternative teacher certification has been based on research that is vague, ambiguous, and contradictory in comparison to the traditional route to teacher certification. Certification is still a requirement for all teachers entering the classroom, but changes have been significant even in teacher training programs at the college and university levels. Additionally, alternative certification programs have skyrocketed nationwide with over 140 alternative teacher certification programs nationwide (Glass, 2008). With contradictory conclusions, it seems the educational field is prime for ongoing and continuous research, unbiased recommendations, and common sense approaches to teacher training and certification to provide our nation's classrooms with the best and most qualified teachers.

As we try to increase the numbers of teachers entering the education profession through alternative certification programs, an area that also deserves attention to the teacher shortage dilemma is retention. John Merrow (1999) highlights, "In the rush to fill teaching positions, so much attention has been focused on entry and access that few policy makers and school officials have thought systematically about how to retain these teachers once they are hired. The teaching pool keeps losing water because no one is

paying attention to the leak. That is, we're misdiagnosing the problem as recruitment when it's really retention" (as cited by Peske et. al, 2001, p. 308). Although as a nation we believe we do not have enough trained and certified teachers, in reality for whatever reason, we have been unable to keep good teachers in our nation's classrooms.

In the midst of this change is confusion as administrators strive to hire the best teacher candidates for their classrooms. At the same time, local school districts must consider school accountability mandates and initiatives, student learning growth within evaluation systems, graduation rates, and career and college readiness. Without a doubt, teachers have the ability to make the greatest impact toward overall student success. They have the capacity to make a difference and they can and will continue to provide the foundation for student learning. So as administrators strive to hire the best teachers, they must then ask: Are there differences in alternatively certified teachers in comparison to traditionally trained teachers? Are both types of candidates prepared for the demands of classroom teaching? Is there a difference between alternatively certified teachers and traditionally trained teachers in their commitment to education as a career and if hired, will they stay?

As emphasized within the literature, current research comparing alternative and traditional teacher training is inconclusive. Further and ongoing research is indicated to be able enhance teacher training, make suggestions regarding teacher certification, to provide the support required to transitioning teachers into the classroom, and most of all, to be able to staff classrooms with the best teachers based on research.

Research Questions

Overall how do principals perceive the differences in teachers who pursued teaching through the traditional route and teachers who transitioned to teaching through alternative certification pathways:

1.   Do principals perceive a difference in overall teacher effectiveness for teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?

2.   Do principals perceive professional and peer relationship differences in teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?

3.   Does school type, location type, enrollment size, percentage of minority students, and teacher certification type serve as significant predictors of overall teacher effectiveness?

4.   Do principals report differences in the reasons teachers leave their positions within the first five years of teaching in the classroom between teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. alternative certification pathway?

The Null Hypotheses

Hypothesis to Question #1 (Ho1 Null): There is no significant difference in principal perceptions between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in overall teacher effectiveness.

Hypothesis to Question #2 (Ho2 Null): There is no significant difference in principal perceptions between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in a teacher's ability to relate to other teachers and maintain a professional demeanor and attitude.

Hypothesis to Question #3 (Ho3 Null): School type, location type, enrollment size, percentage of minority students, and teacher certification type do not serve as significant predictors of overall teacher effectiveness.

Hypothesis to Question #4 (Ho4 Null): There is no significant difference between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in the reasons teachers leave their position within the first five years of teaching in the classroom.

Population Sample

Within the last decade there has been controversy regarding how to measure teacher effectiveness. Should a teacher be evaluated using student achievement data or student learning growth, self-evaluation with reflection, and/or administrator observations? The argument implies that administrator evaluations are subjective, is absent of measurable data, and concrete facts; however, new teacher evaluation plans currently in implementation may not be the panacea for measuring teacher effectiveness either. Test scores are not sufficient because socio-economic backgrounds, school resources and class sizes, demographic and cultural influences of the community, and parent educational attainment affect the results. Additionally, using student learning growth is difficult to assess because not everything that is taught has a test to measure student learning (Torff & Sessions, 2005). So, even though administrator evaluations

may have limitations, principals have a unique perspective. They are able to assess the effectiveness, or ineffectiveness, of teachers through observations; conversations with students; contact with parents; review of statewide assessment results and student presentations of projects; teacher self-evaluations and reflections; and community discussions within the local school district. The opinion of principals is important in determining the effectiveness of teachers who have received alternative certification. A principal's voice should be heard and this evaluative means should never be eliminated (Torff & Sessions, 2005).

In an effort to hear the voice of principals, this study incorporated the perspectives and perceptions of secondary public school principals in the state of Indiana. Although alternatively certified teachers may be increasing in all states within the nation, this study focused only within the state of Indiana. As posted on the Indiana Department of Education website, in the 2009-2010 school year there were 273 alternative certified teachers entering secondary classrooms which represents a 47% increase from 2007-2008 ("Transition to Teaching," 2012). As the numbers of teachers entering the classroom through alternative certification pathways in Indiana increases, the results from this study will assist administrators as they interview, employ, support, and evaluate teachers from this pathway into teaching and recommendations are discussed in Chapter 5 of this dissertation. Indiana Association of School Principals is a professional organization for principals and administrators in the state of Indiana and provides professional development, advocacy, and support to its members. The organization provided a database of contact information for secondary school principals within its membership.

Public, private, and charter secondary school administrators were included in the sample for this study.

Survey Instrument

While researching for this study on alternative teacher certification, a similar study was conducted by Jacquelyn Mahatha (2005) using a survey tool created by Nusbaum (2001) based on InTASC (Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium) Core Teaching Standards comparing alternatively to traditionally certified teacher performances. This survey tool consisted of 40 Performance questions using a 1-5 Likert scale; with a "1" denoting Strongly Disagree to a "5" rating of Strongly Agree and appears to be easy to understand and self-explanatory for any respondents while providing the framework based on accepted best practices outlined by InTASC Teaching Standards.   However, the tool was identified in preliminary reviews and validations as lengthy, time consuming, cumbersome, and repetitive for respondents. Since Nusbaum (2001) created the framework and design of this survey tool over ten years ago, it was based on the InTASC recommendations for that time and not only lengthy but was dated.

In an effort to update this instrument and identify core competencies within the framework for comparison of alternatively and traditionally certified teachers, standards from InTASC—Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (2011) were utilized. These ten standards within the InTASC framework are based on current research on the essentials of best practices in teaching, the identification of strategies and methodologies for improved student achievement, and elicit the empowerment of educators to become educational leaders in their districts. Additionally, these standards

and competencies could realistically be integrated into the new evaluation tools being utilized by school districts. These standards are categorized by: The Learner and Learning, Content, Instructional Practice, and Professional Responsibility. The following is the organizational framework for the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards:

The Learner and Learning—Teaching begins with the learner.

Standard #1: Learner Development

Standard #2: Learning Differences

Standard #3: Learning Environments

Content—Teacher knowledge translates into student mastery of information.

Standard #4: Content Knowledge

Standard #5: Application of Content

Instructional Practice—Assessment, planning, strategies, objectives, goals, modifications.

Standard #6: Assessment

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies

Professional Responsibility—Self-reflection, improvement, leadership, collaboration.

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration

The Learner and Learning suggests that effective teachers are able to identify the specific and unique needs of student within their classrooms and are able to communicate high expectations while considering the individual learner. A teacher's understanding

and mastery of the Content is essential to be able to integrate authentic learning experiences and help students relate to the subject area while Instructional Practice identifies the requirements for effective lesson design, instruction, assessment, and providing learning experiences and opportunities for students to learn within the context of the subject area. The survey items related to Learner and Learning (Standard #1 – Standard #3); Content (Standard #4 and Standard #5); and Instructional Practice (Standard #6 – Standard #8) provided the comparison for alternative and traditional teachers for the first question within this research study:

Ho1: Do principals perceive a difference in overall teacher effectiveness for teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternate certification pathway?

Professional Practice highlights the connection that peer relationships, teamwork, and collegiality impact school culture. Specifically, when teachers support teachers in the workplace it translates into higher student achievement gains. The items within the survey instrument within the category of Professional Responsibility (Standard #9 and Standard #10) are associated with Question #2:

Ho2: Do principals perceive professional and peer relationship differences in teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?

The organization of the survey instrument requested Demographic Information inclusive of gender and administrative experience. School Related Information included: the grade levels of the school to insure all survey respondents are currently serving in secondary schools and categorized by public school, private, and charter; ethnicity of the

student body; total number of teachers; and number of alternatively certified teachers. This basic information helped analyze responses demographically while insuring that the respondents' qualifications were within the design and criteria for this study.

Additionally, through examination of various school demographics and teacher certification type, I was able to determine whether any of the predictors in research Question #3 can explain a significant amount of variance within an overall teacher effectiveness score. This information served as a basis of overall impact for teacher effectiveness.

Ho3: Does school type, location type, enrollment size, percentage of minority students, and teacher certification type serve as significant predictors of overall teacher effectiveness?

In an attempt to compare differences in certification to longevity and retention, a question followed the basic demographic information of the instrument: "Approximately how many alternatively certified teachers who were hired within the last five years are no longer employed at your school?" This question was duplicated for traditionally trained teachers to provide comparative data. Responders were able to answer this question using a selection within a predetermined numeric range. An additional question provided the opportunity for responders to identify a reason or justification for teacher attrition. The responses from this question helped determine an outcome for Question #4:

Ho4: Do principals report differences in the reasons teachers leave their positions within the first five years of teaching in the classroom between teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. alternative certification pathway?

Finally, included within the survey instrument was an open-ended response section in which respondents could provide additional comments or notes that may not have been addressed in the survey. From this portion of the survey, a qualitative analysis was conducted and relevant common themes were extracted to help provide a better understanding of principals' perspectives of teacher training (see Appendix B-Survey).

Survey Validity

As noted within the dissertation of Matatha (2005), the initial survey created by Nusbaum in 2001 was validated using an expert panel. Thus, the framework for using a Likert-type survey tool and utilizing core teaching standards has been validated.

However, since this tool was updated using the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards and it incorporated teacher performances and dispositions, it was distributed to a panel of experienced administrators for further analysis and to insure its clarity and accuracy. Modifications were made to the survey instrument based on input from these experienced administrators prior to being distributed to the principals identified to participate in this study.

Reliability

Within the first section of the survey instrument written instructions were provided along with a request for principals' demographic and school related information. This information is generally requested in almost any survey because it helps build confidence that the sample matches the population of survey sample. Additionally, although the sample size was small, analysis by sub-groups was possible.

Demographic information requested in this instrument included: gender and years of administrative experience. Additional school related information included: grade level of the school to insure all survey respondents are currently serving in secondary schools; ethnicity of student body; total number of teachers; and number of alternatively certified teachers.

The portion of the survey connected to teacher performances on teaching standards was determined using a Likert scale. Likert scales are commonly used in determining an opinion, attitude, or level of understanding within a polling type of measurement or assessment. This survey included five indicator points from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree". Finally, in an effort to gather opinions, statements, facts, and personal observations from respondents that may not have been addressed within the survey instrument, an open-ended or comment section was allowed.

Distribution of the Survey

The survey was distributed electronically using Qualtrics, a web-based software and survey tool provided to students of Purdue University. The survey instrument was written, designed, and created following all guidelines and suggestions provided by Qualtrics. Using the database of e-mail addresses provided by Indiana Association of School Principals, an e-mail was sent to secondary public school principals in the state of Indiana. The e-mail included an opening introduction outlining the purpose of the study and the significance for their input along with a link to the Qualtrics survey (see Appendix A). Qualtrics allows for anonymity and also tracks each respondent using the unique IP address of the respondent's computer and Internet connection.

Data Analysis

Qualtrics provides for output of the results in various formats, which were utilized in the data analysis. Initially, the results were analyzed using descriptive analysis such as frequencies of responses, means, standard deviations and ranges within those responses while looking for outliers in relation to demographic information. In order to answer the following research questions appropriate assumptions for each inferential test were conducted.

In research Question #1, which examined overall instructional effectiveness based on teacher certification type, an independent samples *t*-test was utilized to determine if significant differences exist. This type of test is appropriate when evaluating whether significant differences exist on dependent variable with two groups.

In research Question #2, which examined professional and peer relationships based on teacher certification type, an independent samples *t*-test was utilized to determine if significant differences exist. This type of test is appropriate when evaluating whether significant differences exist on dependent variable with two groups.

In research Question #3, which examined if a series of predictor variables can explain a significant amount of variance in the criterion variable (overall teacher effectiveness) was tested utilizing a multiple regression. This type of test is appropriate when examining the amount of explained variance on one criterion variable with multiple predictor variables.

In research Question #4, which examined the reasons for teacher attrition within the first five years of teaching using a bi-variate correlation was used to analyze similarities and differences (looking at the relationship between ratings on the various survey components for both traditionally and alternatively prepared teachers).

CHAPTER 4 - RESULTS

As our educational system continues to strive for educational improvement, hiring and retaining the best and most qualified teachers for our nation's classrooms is a critical and essential component. In this regard, teacher certification has been a foundational consideration. In an effort to recruit qualified and content area specialists into the secondary school setting, alternative teacher certification programs have been allowed and are expanding the pool of teacher candidates nationwide. However, are these alternative teacher certification programs successful in providing and preparing qualified and effective teachers in our classrooms? This study provided school administrators who are responsible for evaluating teachers the opportunity to share their perceptions regarding the effectiveness of teacher certification.

For this study the following questions guided this research:

Ho1: Do principals perceive a difference in overall teacher effectiveness for teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternate certification pathway?

Ho1 Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in principal perceptions between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in overall teacher effectiveness

Ho2: Do principals perceive professional and peer relationship differences in teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?

Ho2 Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in principal perceptions between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in a teacher's ability to relate to other teachers and maintain a professional demeanor and attitude.

Ho3: Does school type, location type, enrollment size, percentage of minority students, and teacher certification type serve as significant predictors of overall teacher effectiveness?

Ho3 Null Hypothesis: School type, location type, enrollment size, percentage of minority students, and teacher certification type do not serve as significant predictors of overall teacher effectiveness.

Ho4: Do principals report differences in the reasons teachers leave their positions within the first five years of teaching in the classroom between teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. alternative certification pathway?

Ho4 Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the reasons teachers leave their positions in the first five years of teaching in the classroom between teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. alternative certification pathway.

Description of the Sample

Several questions and items within the survey provided information about the respondents in general. These responses provide background information about the study sample to help with the analysis knowing who, where, what, and why respondents participated in this study.

Description of the Respondents

Within the survey, respondents were requested to provide some demographic information to provide a description of who completed the survey for this study. Of the 93 respondents, the sample consisted of 72 males (77.4%) and 21 females (22.6%); thus the majority were male administrators for this particular study.

Each of the respondents identified their position in the school as Principal, Assistant Principal, or Other as categorized within the actual survey and each affirmed their role as an evaluator of both alternatively certified and traditionally certified teachers (see Table 1). Respondents were specifically asked if they had observed and evaluated a teacher(s) with alternative certification and if they had not, the survey diverted them to the end of the survey.   There were 58 (62.4%) respondents responding affirmatively to observing alternatively certified teachers and 19 (20.4%) stating they had not observed alternatively certified teachers while 16 (17.2%) did not provide information or did not answer this specific question.

Table 1

Role or Position within the School

Title	n	%
Principal	89	95.7
Assistant Principal	1	1.1
Other	3	3.2

Description of the Respondents' Schools

The survey was distributed to secondary school administrators of public, private, and charter schools in Indiana. The majority of respondent schools represented are public schools in Indiana (see Table 2).

Table 2

School Type

School Type	n	%
Public	82	88.2
Charter	3	3.2
Private	8	8.6

Approximately 95% of these schools were considered secondary schools. The survey provided for traditional high school, junior-senior high school, middle school only, and ninth grade only configurations (see Table 3). Five respondents identified their school as "Other" and therefore the grade level configuration cannot be determined.

Table 3

School Grade Level Configuration

School Type	n	%
High School (9-12)	55	59.1
Junior-Senior High (7-12)	32	34.4
Freshman Center (9)	1	1.1
Other	5	5.4

School Categorized by Location

Respondents were able to identify their school based on its location in relation to the metropolitan centers in Indiana. Approximately 66% or 2/3 of the sample is considered rural, 25% as suburban schools, with only 9.7% located within the urban and metropolitan centers of Indiana (see Table 4). The majority of the respondents are rural school principals.

Table 4

School Categorized by Location

Location	n	%
Rural	61	65.6
Suburban	23	24.7
City/Urban	9	9.7

Student Enrollment of the Schools

The majority of the schools (n=72; 77.4%) represented in this survey have an enrollment that falls below 900 students. Approximately 50% (n=46; 49.4%) of the schools had enrollment under 600 students as evidenced in Table 5. With 66% of the respondents from rural schools, this could account for the small school enrollment of under 900 students; the majority of the respondents are responding based on a rural

school perspective. With only 9.7% of the respondents from City/Urban schools, this is

relational to 15% of the respondents from large schools with enrollment over 1300

students (see Table 5).

Table 5

School Enrollment

Enrollment	n	%
Below 400	19	20.4
400-599	27	29.0
600-899	26	28.0
900-1299	7	7.5
1300-1799	4	4.3
1800-2499	6	6.5
2500-3600	4	4.3

Teachers on Staff for Respondent Schools

      Approximately 70% of the respondents' schools have 50 or fewer teachers on

staff as indicated by Table 6. The highest reporting group was 21-35 teachers on staff

representing approximately one-third of the sample.

Table 6

Approximate Number of Teachers on Staff

Teachers on Staff	n	%
1-20	7	7.5
21-35	32	34.4
36-50	26	28.0
51-75	10	10.8
75-125	15	16.1
Over 126	3	3.2

Licensure of Teachers on Staff

As illustrated in Table 7, approximately one-third of surveyed administrators report that all teachers on their staff have obtained licensure through traditional certification pathways.

Table 7

Approximate Number of Alternatively Certified Teachers on Staff

Alternatively Certified Teachers on Staff	n	%
Zero (0)	28	30.1
1-5	58	62.4
6-10	3	3.2
11-15	2	2.2
20 or more	2	2.2

Teachers Hired in the Past Five Years

In comparing the number of alternatively certified teachers to traditionally certified teachers hired in the last five years, traditionally certified teachers were hired in greater frequency. Although 56 (60.2%) respondents reported hiring one to five alternatively certified teachers in the last five years, traditionally trained teachers were hired in greater numbers with 63 (68%) reporting they have hired more than six and up to 20 or more traditionally trained teachers. Alternatively certified teachers were hired less frequently than traditionally certified teachers (see Table 8).

Table 8

Approximate Number of Teachers Hired in the last five years

Teachers Hired in Last Five Years	Alternatively Certified Teachers		Traditionally Certified Teachers	
	n	%	n	%
Zero (0)	3	3.2	1	1.1
1-5	56	60.2	29	31.2
6-10	4	3.2	28	30.1
11-15	1	2.2	17	18.3
16-20	1	1.1	5	5.4
20 or more	0	0.0	13	14.0

Teacher Retention

Of the teachers hired in the last five years, approximately 59% of the alternatively certified teachers are still on staff in comparison to approximately 16% of the traditionally trained teachers (see Table 9). Interestingly, it was reported teacher attrition within the traditionally certified teacher ranks as significant with approximately 84% of the respondents losing teachers within their schools.

Table 9

Approximate Number of Teachers Hired in the last five years who have left, resigned, or are no longer employed at the school

Teachers Remaining on Staff	Alternatively Certified Teachers		Traditionally Certified Teachers	
	n	Valid %	n	Valid %
All Remain on Staff	36	58.7	15	16.3
1-5	25	40.3	56	60.9
6-10	0	0.0	16	17.4
11-15	0	0.0	3	3.3
20 or more	0	0.0	1	1.1
Unknown	1	1.6	1	1.1

Missing Responses:
Alternatively Certification n=31 (33.3%); Traditional Certification n=1 (1.1%)

Secondary Administrators' Perceptions based on Professional Experience

The foundation for this research has been to allow secondary school administrators the opportunity to provide input based on their experiences, observations, and evaluations on the effectiveness of teachers entering the field of education through alternative certification or traditional pathways. Administrators provided their perceptions on the Best Model for Teacher Preparation; Teacher Attrition and/or Retention; and Teacher Effectiveness using the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards.

Of the 93 respondents, 90 (96.8%) believe that preparation in Education is the best model for teacher preparation. Whether it is a Bachelor's degree (n=65; 69.9%) or a Bachelor's degree with an additional Master's degree in Education (n=24; 25.8%), the perceived value of pre-service teaching and fieldwork, educational philosophy, pedagogy, instructional strategies, and child development was evident in the results (see Table 10).

Table 10

Administrator's Perception: Best Model for Teacher Preparation

Teacher Preparation	n	%
Bachelor's degree in Education	26	28.0
Bachelor's degree with an academic major and a minor in Education	39	41.9
Bachelor's degree with an academic major followed by a Master's degree in education	24	25.8
Alternative Certification	3	3.2
*Other	1	1.1

*Respondent stated: the reverse of Bachelor's degree with an academic major and a minor in Education or believed that the best model for teacher preparation is a Bachelor's degree in Education with an subject area/academic minor.

Summary of Reasons for Attrition based on Principals' Perceptions

Administrators were asked to provide reasons why these fairly new teachers on staff were no longer at their school. Their responses were based on their perceptions and they were able to respond to more than one reason or choice (see Table 11). Of these multiple choices, traditionally certified teachers (n=68; 73.2%) were more likely to continue in the field of education through advancement or an opportunity at another school district than alternatively certified teachers (n=7; 7.5%).

Inadequate Preparation, both academically and instructionally, are notable reasons that both traditionally certified and alternatively certified teachers may have resigned or left the profession or teaching positions within the first five years of being hired. For alternatively certified teachers, Inadequate Preparation Academically and Instructionally and Non-Contract Renewal are primary reasons for teacher resignations or attrition based on the ranked order provided in Table 12. Respondents indicated that for traditionally

certified teachers, Opportunities at Another School District, Low Pay, Non-Renewal of Contract, and Career Opportunities Outside of Education were primary reasons for leaving the teaching position (see Table 13). Since Contract Non-Renewal and Career Opportunities and Low Pay were provided as a few of the top ranking reasons for both groups, the differences can then be analyzed from two specific areas. Alternatively certified teachers lack academic preparation and instructional skills and classroom management, which vary greatly in comparison to traditionally certified teachers who find educational opportunities at other school districts but still remain in the profession. Although the reasons are varied, the significance of these differences was not determined using statistical analysis. This was due to respondents' being able to select more than one reason and thus related to the perception of the respondent rather than actual reasons for the attrition. This study failed to reject the null hypothesis for Question #4: There is no significant difference in the reasons teachers leave their positions in the first five years of teaching in the classroom between teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. alternative certification pathway.

Table 11

Reasons for Attrition

Reasons	Alternatively Certified Teachers		Traditionally Certified Teachers	
	n	%	n	%
Opportunity at Another School District	7	7.5	50	53.8
Advancement within Education (Administration, Supervisory, Counseling)			18	19.4
Career Opportunities Outside of Education	9	9.7	23	24.7
Low Prestige	1	1.1	6	6.5
Inadequate Academic Preparation	10	10.8	3	3.2
Inadequate Preparation for Instructional Expectations and Classroom Management	17	18.3	14	15.1
Inadequate Mentoring or Induction	2	2.2	3	3.2
Low Pay	9	9.7	28	30.1
Lack of Peer Support and Collegiality	1	1.1	1	1.1
Demands of the Job lead to burnout	6	6.5	16	17.2
Lack of Personal Satisfaction	1	1.1	5	5.4
Non-renewal of Contract	10	10.6	28	30.1
Unknown	1	1.1	5	5.4

Table 12

Reasons for Attrition – Alternatively Certified Teachers
 (in ranked order)

Reasons	n	%
Inadequate Preparation for Instructional Expectations and Classroom Management	17	18.3
Inadequate Academic Preparation	10	10.8
Non-renewal of Contract	10	10.8
Career Opportunities Outside of Education	9	9.7
Low Pay	9	9.7
Opportunity at Another School District	7	7.5
Demands of the Job lead to burnout	6	6.5
Inadequate Mentoring or Induction	2	2.2
Low Prestige	1	1.1
Lack of Peer Support and Collegiality	1	1.1
Lack of Personal Satisfaction	1	1.1
Unknown	1	1.1
Advancement within Education (Administration, Supervisory, Counseling)	n/a	n/a

Table 13

Reasons for Attrition – Traditionally Certified Teachers
(in ranked order)

Reasons	n	%
Opportunity at Another School District	50	53.8
Low Pay	28	30.1
Non-renewal of Contract	28	30.1
Career Opportunities Outside of Education	23	24.7
Advancement within Education (Administration, Supervisory, Counseling)	18	19.4
Demands of the Job lead to burnout	16	17.2
Inadequate Preparation for Instructional Expectations and Classroom Management	14	15.1
Low Prestige	6	6.5
Lack of Personal Satisfaction	5	5.4
Unknown	5	5.4
Inadequate Academic Preparation	3	3.2
Inadequate Mentoring or Induction	3	3.2
Lack of Peer Support and Collegiality	1	1.1

InTASC Core Teaching Standards - Teacher Effectiveness and Professionalism

The 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards were introduced and provided within

the survey to outline the performances, knowledge, and critical dispositions that effective

teachers incorporate into their instruction and in their role as a professional educator.

These ten standards are based on current research of the essentials of best practices in

teaching; the identification of strategies and methodologies for improved student

achievement; and elicits the empowerment of educators to become educational leaders in

their districts.   These standards are categorized by: The Learner and Learning, Content,

Instructional Practice, and Professional Responsibility. The following is the

organizational framework for the InTASC Core Teaching Standards:

The Learner and Learning—Teaching begins with the learner.

Standard #1: Learner Development

Standard #2: Learning Differences

Standard #3: Learning Environments

Content—Teacher knowledge translates into student mastery of information.

Standard #4: Content Knowledge

Standard #5: Application of Content

Instructional Practice—Assessment, planning, strategies, objectives, goals,

modifications.

Standard #6: Assessment

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies

Professional Responsibility—Self-reflection, improvement, leadership,

collaboration.

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration

Overall Teacher Effectiveness

The Learner and Learning suggests that effective teachers are able to identify the

specific and unique needs of students within their classrooms and are able to

communicate high expectations while considering the individual learner. A teacher's

understanding and mastery of the Content is essential to be able to integrate authentic

learning experiences and help students relate to the subject area. And, Instructional

Practice identifies the requirements for effective lesson design, instruction, assessment,

and providing learning experiences and opportunities for students to learn within the

context of the subject area.

The survey items related to Learner and Learning (Standard #1 – Standard #3);

Content (Standard #4 and Standard #5; and Instructional Practice (Standard #6 – Standard

#8) provided the comparison for alternative and traditional teachers for overall teacher

effectiveness. These eight standards relate to Question #1 (Ho1): Do principals perceive

a difference in overall teacher effectiveness for teachers who were prepared through

traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternate certification pathway?

Standard #1: Learner Development

Within this standard, teachers are able to utilize assessment to guide instruction;

are able to scaffold instruction incrementally for ongoing and increasing development in

academics, socially, emotionally, and physically; are able to differentiate instruction

based on individual and group capabilities; and collaborates with families, colleagues,

and professionals to promote student learning at all levels and for all individuals.

The results of this survey indicate that responding administrators Strongly Agree

or Somewhat Agree that 89.2% (n=66) of teachers who trained through traditional

programs toward certification understand or have an understanding of the development of

students as a learner. Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less at 43.3% (n=32); a

difference of 45.9% (n=34).   In contrast, respondents either Strongly Disagree or

Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified teachers understand Learner Development

as defined within the InTASC Core Standards (n=33; 44.6%) in contrast to traditionally

certified teachers (n=7; 9.5%). Additionally, one respondent was unable to determine or

decide if the traditional teachers they have evaluated incorporate an understanding of

Learner Development into their planning, organization, delivery, and assessment of

classroom instruction and student learning (n=1; 1.4%); while 12.2% (n=9) of

respondents were Undecided when referring to teachers who obtained certification

through alternative pathways (see Table 14).

Table 14

Standard #1: Learner Development
The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of
learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic,
social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally
appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	12	16.2	21	28.4	9	12.2	19	25.7	13	17.6
Traditionally Certified	5	6.8	2	2.7	1	1.4	42	56.8	24	32.4

Standard #2: Learning Differences

A teacher who effectively meets Standard #2: Learning Differences—

understands the uniqueness of each individual in the classroom. Through lesson

planning, organization, and design; utilizing a variety of curricular resources, supports,

and specialized assistance and services; and providing multiple perspectives and

experiences teachers are able to differentiate the units of study for individual and for all

students.

The results of this survey indicate that responding administrators Strongly Agree or Somewhat Agree that 87.8% (n=65) of teachers who trained through traditional programs toward certification understand or have an understanding of the learning differences of students in their classrooms and are able to differentiate and embrace these differences within the instruction. Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less with 47.3% (n=35); a difference by 40.5% (n=30). In contrast, respondents either Strongly Disagree or Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified teachers understand Learner Differences as defined with in the InTASC Core Standards (n=25; 33.8%) in contrast to traditionally certified teachers (n=7; 9.5%). Additionally, 16 respondents could not decide if the teachers they have evaluated have an understanding of learning differences and incorporate that understanding into the planning and delivery of instruction. Of those responding to Learning Differences, 2.7% (n=2) were undecided for traditionally certified teachers and 18.9% (n=14) for alternatively certified teachers (see Table 15).

Table 15

Standard #2: Learning Differences
The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities to ensure inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	9	12.2	16	21.6	14	18.9	22	29.7	13	17.6
Traditionally Certified	4	5.4	3	4.1	2	2.7	45	60.8	20	27.0

Standard #3: Learning Environments

The InTASC Core Teaching Standards addresses the importance of a safe learning environment by establishing positive and supportive relationships with students, teachers, families, and the community. Safe learning environments are supportive of all learners by allowing them to participate in making decisions, engaging them in exploration and discovery, providing collaboration and independent purposeful learning, and fostering mutual respect in all interactions.

The results of this survey (see Table 16) indicate that responding administrators Strongly Agree or Somewhat Agree that 86.6% (n=64) of teachers who trained through traditional programs toward certification understand or have an understanding of the impact a positive learning environment has for students to be engaged and learning. A positive learning environment can be accomplished through mutual respect, collaboration with students and families, and is a thoughtful and responsive listener.   Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less with 64.9% (n=48); a difference of 21.7% (n=16).   In contrast, respondents either Strongly Disagree or Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified teachers understand the Learning Environment as defined within the InTASC Core Teaching Standards (n=17; 23.0%) in contrast to traditionally certified teachers (n=8; 10.8%). Additionally, 11 respondents could not decide if the teachers they have evaluated understand how the learning environment impacts positive learning gains for students. Of those responding to Undecided for Learning Environment, 2.7% (n=2) were undecided for traditionally certified teachers and 12.2% (n=9) for alternatively certified teachers.

Table 16

Standard #3: Learning Environments
The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and
collaborative learning, and that encourage positive social interaction, active engagement
in learning, and self-motivation.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	3	4.1	14	18.9	9	12.2	33	44.6	15	20.3
Traditionally Certified	4	5.4	4	5.4	2	2.7	41	55.4	23	31.2

Standard #4: Content Knowledge

Content knowledge is critical for teacher success and student learning and

understanding of the content standards and skills. When a teacher has a strong content

area foundation, they are able to interpret misunderstandings and misconceptions to help

guide students to better understandings; a teacher is able to provide authentic and relevant

learning applications; and they can integrate subject area knowledge into other subjects

and programs.

As summarized in Table 17, Content Knowledge, respondents Strongly Agree or

Somewhat Agree that 90.5% (n=67) of teachers who trained through traditional programs

toward certification have a deep understanding of the content knowledge in the subject

area in which they teach.   Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less with 60.8%

(n=45); a difference of 29.7% (n=22). In contrast, 28.4% (n=21) of the respondents

either Strongly Disagree or Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified teachers

understand Content Knowledge as defined within the InTASC Core Teaching Standards

in comparison to traditionally certified teachers (n=6; 9.1%). Additionally, 9 respondents

could not decide if the teachers they have evaluated had sufficient content knowledge or

content understanding to insure content area mastery by all learners. Additionally, of

those responding Undecided for Content Knowledge, 1.4% (n=1) was undecided for

traditionally certified teachers and 10.8% (n=8) for alternatively certified teachers.

Table 17

Standard #4: Content Knowledge
The teacher understands the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the
discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects
of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	7	9.5	14	18.9	8	10.8	26	35.1	19	25.7
Traditionally Certified	4	5.4	2	2.7	1	1.4	35	47.3	32	43.2

Standard #5: Application of Content

A critical disposition as defined by InTASC Core Teaching Standards is the

ability for the teacher to constantly explore a variety of methodologies while engaging

student learning in real-world problems and applications. The teacher understands and is

able to challenge students to think creatively and critically while enhancing

communication and literacy skills in all learning processes. These are the teachers that

can bring relevancy and authentic learning opportunities into the classroom to enhance

learning and understanding.

Respondents to this survey, Strongly Agree or Somewhat Agree that 86.5% (n=64) of teachers who trained through traditional programs toward certification have an essential knowledge as they develop and plan learning opportunities which allow students to apply and master content knowledge. Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less with 58.1% (n=43); a difference of 28.4% (n=21).   In comparison, 32.5% (n=24) of the respondents either Strongly Disagree or Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified teachers understand the Application of Content as defined within the InTASC Core Teaching Standards in comparison to traditionally certified teachers (n=8; 10.9%). Additionally, 9 respondents could not decide if the teachers they have evaluated were able to apply content knowledge to insure learning mastery and application by all learners. Of those administrators responding Undecided for Application of Content, 2.7% (n=2) were undecided for traditionally certified teachers and 9.5% (n=7) for alternatively certified teachers (see Table 18).

Table 18

Standard #5: Application of Content
The teacher understands how to connect concepts and use differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to authentic local and global issues.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	9	12.2	15	20.3	7	9.5	24	32.4	19	25.7
Traditionally Certified	3	4.1	5	6.8	2	2.7	44	59.5	20	27.0

Standard #6: Assessment

Assessment is evident in many forms in the learning process. It can be used to evaluate mastery or understanding along a continuum; it can be a demonstration of knowledge through discussion, questions and answers, collaborative projects, or formative and summative assessment tools; a self-assessment or teacher driven assessment; modified based on student needs and abilities; and/or enhanced to challenge a student's future understandings. An effective, thoughtful, and purposeful teacher uses a variety of assessments to guide instruction, to determine individual and class needs, to analyze student progress and growth while identifying supplemental resources and instructional strengths and deficiencies. When assessment is used effectively, it is an essential and critical component to the learning process.

The perceptions of administrators evaluating teachers in regards to assessment are reported in Table 19. Respondents to this survey, Strongly Agree or Somewhat Agree that 83.8% (n=62) of teachers who trained through traditional programs toward certification understand the essential role of assessment to learning and instruction. Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less with 47.3% (n=29); a difference of 36.5% (n=33).   In comparison, 39.2% (n=29) of the respondents either Strongly Disagree or Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified teachers understand Assessment as defined within the InTASC Core Teaching Standards while traditionally certified teachers were ranked at 12.2% (n=9). Additionally, 13 respondents could not decide if the teachers they have evaluated were able to utilize assessment to affect positive instruction and mastery learning. Of those administrators responding Undecided

for Assessment 4.1% (n=3) were undecided for traditionally certified teachers and 13.5%

(n=10) for alternatively certified teachers.

Table 19

Standard #6: Assessment
The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in
their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's
decision making.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	7	9.5	22	29.7	10	13.5	25	33.8	10	13.5
Traditionally Certified	3	4.1	6	8.1	3	4.1	41	55.4	21	28.4

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction

Planning for instruction incorporates assessment, prior learner knowledge, student

interest, and learning goals; the teacher understands all students learn in a variety of

ways. When planning for instruction, the teacher utilizes resources, materials, and

technology in multiple ways to engage students and garner interest, integrate real world

applications, and provide relevant examples to help students understand. Planning and

instructional delivery may require frequent and ongoing adjustments and the teacher

obtains and values input from colleagues, families, and the larger community.

Respondents to this survey, Strongly Agree or Somewhat Agree that 90.5%

(n=67) of teachers who trained through traditional programs toward certification are able

to effectively plan for instruction. Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less with

48.7% (n=36); a difference of 41.8% (n=31). In comparison, 31.1% (n=23) of the

respondents either Strongly Disagree or Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified

teachers have the ability to plan for instruction as defined within the InTASC Core

Teaching Standards while traditionally certified teachers were ranked at 8.1% (n=6).

Additionally, 16 respondents could not decide if the teachers they have evaluated were

able to effectively plan for instruction. Of those administrators responding Undecided for

Planning for Instruction, 1.4% (n=1) was undecided for traditionally certified teachers

and 20.3% (n=15) for alternatively certified teachers (see Table 20).

Table 20

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction
The teacher plans instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning
goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills,
and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	4	5.4	19	25.7	15	20.3	25	33.8	11	14.9
Traditionally Certified	2	2.7	4	5.4	1	1.4	47	63.5	20	27.0

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies

As the effective teacher implements the instructional plan, they also utilize a

wealth and variety of instructional methods and forms of communication; learning and

instructional tools; and cognitive tasks and complex thinking processes. A variety of

methodologies and resources including technology, primary sources, verbal, written, and

visual are incorporated and integrated into the instructional plans by an effective teacher.

The effective teacher is able to provide instruction engaging to students through a variety of instructional strategies.

Respondents to this survey, Strongly Agree or Somewhat Agree that 91.9% (n=68) of teachers who trained through traditional programs toward certification are able to effectively utilize and incorporate instructional strategies into their teaching. Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less with 52.7% (n=39); a difference of 50.1% (n=45).   In comparison, 32.4% (n=24) of the respondents either Strongly Disagree or Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified teachers effectively utilize and demonstrate an understanding of instructional strategies as defined by InTASC Core Teaching Standards while traditionally certified teachers were ranked at 6.8% (n=5). Additionally, 12 respondents could not decide if the teachers they have evaluated were able to utilize instructional strategies effectively. Of those administrators responding Undecided for Planning for Instruction, 1.4% (n=1) was undecided for traditionally certified teachers and 14.9% (n=11) for alternatively certified teachers (see Table 21).

Table 21

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies
The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep understanding of content areas and their connections, and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	6	8.1	18	24.3	11	14.9	30	40.5	9	12.2
Traditionally Certified	2	2.7	3	4.1	1	1.4	46	62.2	22	29.7

Summary of Results

The results from the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards was used to analyze and determine the overall perception of principals in two categories regarding alternative and traditional certification of teachers. The first question of this study references overall teacher effectiveness and the second is focused on professionalism of the teacher.

Secondary Principals' Perception of Overall Teacher Effectiveness

The first question in this research was to determine if principals perceive a difference in overall teacher effectiveness for teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs versus an alternate certification pathway. Ho1 Null: There is no significant difference in principal perceptions between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in overall teacher effectiveness.

Using the Independent Samples t-test, several assumptions were considered and analyzed. Levene's Test of Equality of Variances was used to ensure the homogeneity of variance was met between the two groups (alternatively certified and traditionally certified teachers) on the dependent variable. This assumption was violated with $F = 11.73, p = .001$. An examination of box plots confirms no outliers exists since there was not a data point more than 1.5 standard deviation from the box. Using the Shapiro-Wilk test, normality is confirmed with $p > .05$. Due to this violation, the degrees of freedom were reduced to accommodate for unequal variances.

Based on the responses and outcomes from InTASC Standards #1 through Standard #8, teacher effectiveness was analyzed. Using an Independent Samples t-test, the mean and standard deviation was calculated for these first eight standards.

Traditionally certified teachers (*M = 4.05; SD = .85)* were rated significantly higher than

alternatively certified teachers (*M = 3.29; SD = 1.08)* on instructional effectiveness with

t (138.09) = -4.795, p <.001, two-tailed. As evidenced by inferential test results the

principals believed traditionally certified teachers perform at higher levels than their

alternatively certified counterparts when measured by the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching

Standards.

Professional Demeanor and Attitude

InTASC Core Teaching Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

and Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration are the two standards identified as

Professional Responsibility and include critical dispositions such as self-reflection,

improvement, leadership, and collaboration. Standard #9: Professional Learning and

Ethical Practice states that a teacher is a life-long learner and engages in opportunities to

continue to develop knowledge and skills in the content area or in the field of education.

Additionally, the teacher is a role model to his/her colleagues and to students and is

aware and practices legally and ethically in all aspects of the education profession.

These two InTASC Standards provided the comparison for alternative and traditional

teachers for demeanor and attitude in an effort to answer Question #2 (Ho2): Do

principals perceive professional and peer relationship differences in teachers who were

prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification

pathway?

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

As summarized in Table #22, respondents to this survey, Strongly Agree or

Somewhat Agree that 81.1% (n=60) of teachers who trained through traditional

certification programs are professionals as they practice life-long learning and partake in

ethical practice. Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less with 64.8% (n=48); a

difference of 16.3% (n=18). In comparison, 20.3% (n=15) of the respondents either

Strongly Disagree or Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified teachers follow or

understand Professional Learning and Ethical Practice as defined within the InTASC

Core Teaching Standards while traditionally certified teachers were ranked at 9.5%

(n=7). Additionally, 18 respondents could not decide if the teachers they have evaluated

were practicing professional learning or ethical practice. Of those administrators

responding Undecided for Professional Learning and Ethical Practice, 9.5% (n=7) was

undecided for traditionally certified teachers and 14.9% (n=11) for alternatively certified

teachers.

Table 22

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice
The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	4	5.4	11	14.9	11	14.9	30	40.5	18	24.3
Traditionally Certified	2	2.7	5	6.8	7	9.5	41	55.4	19	25.7

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration encourages teachers to take an active leadership role in the school, the community, and the overall profession of education. This includes collaboration with all stakeholders to help build a shared vision, provide support, develop and identify common goals, and be able to evaluate the progress toward the vision and goals of the school. Each teacher must accept responsibility for their personal role in school improvement and in reaching the mission and vision of the school and the community. Additionally, the teacher is a role model to his/her colleagues and to students and is aware and practices legally and ethically in all aspects of the education profession.

Respondents to this survey, Strongly Agree or Somewhat Agree that 85.1% (n=63) of teachers who trained through traditional certification programs have assumed leadership roles in the school and work with students, colleagues, families, and community. Alternatively certified teachers were ranked less with 67.6% (n=51); a difference of 17.5% (n=12). In comparison, 16.2% (n=14) of the respondents either Strongly Disagree or Somewhat Disagree that alternatively certified teachers understand Leadership and Collaboration as defined within the InTASC Core Teaching Standards while traditionally certified teachers were ranked at 6.8% (n=5). Additionally, 18 respondents could not decide if the teachers they have evaluated were accepting of a leadership role or able to work collaboratively with their colleagues, families, and the community. Of those administrators responding Undecided for Leadership and Collaboration, 8.1% (n=6) were undecided for traditionally certified teachers and 16.2% (n=12) for alternatively certified teachers (see Table 23).

Table 23

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration
The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

	Strongly Disagree		Somewhat Disagree		Undecided		Somewhat Agree		Strongly Agree	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Alternatively Certified	6	8.1	6	8.1	12	16.2	33	44.6	17	23.0
Traditionally Certified	2	2.7	3	4.1	6	8.1	45	60.8	18	24.3

Summary of Results-- Secondary Principals' Perception of

Professional Demeanor and Attitude

The second question in this research was to determine if principals perceive a difference in professionalism or in professional demeanor and attitude for teachers who were prepared through a traditional teacher certification program from those teachers who pursued an alternate certification pathway. Based on the responses and outcomes from InTASC Standards #9 and Standard #10, professionalism of teachers was analyzed. Using an Independent Samples *t*-test, the mean and standard deviation was calculated for Standard #9-Professional Learning and Ethical Practice and Standard #10-Leadership and Collaboration.

Using the Independent Samples *t*-test, several assumptions were considered and analyzed. Levene's Test of Equality of Variances was used to ensure the homogeneity of variance was met between the groups (alternatively certified and traditionally certified

teachers) on the dependent variable. The assumption was violated with *F = 9.92, p =.002.*   Due to this violation, the degrees of freedom were reduced to accommodate for unequal variances. An examination of box plots confirms there are no outliers since there was not any one data point more than 1.5 standard deviation from the box. Using the Shapiro-Wilk test, normality is confirmed with *p >.05.*   Traditionally certified teachers (*M = 3.97; SD = .83)* were rated significantly higher than alternatively certified teachers (*M = 3.65; SD = 1.09)* on professional demeanor and attitude with *t (135.91) = -2.034, p = .044,* two-tailed. As evidenced by inferential test results, the principals believed traditionally certified teachers demonstrated higher levels of professional responsibility than their alternatively certified counterparts when measured by the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards.

Analysis of Predictor Variables

To further examine principals' perceptions regarding teacher effectiveness and teacher professionalism based on certification, a multiple regression analysis was conducted.   Question #3-Null Hypothesis states: School type, location type, enrollment size, and percentage of minority students do not serve as a predictor of overall teacher effectiveness. A Multiple Regression Model test was used to determine whether school type, location type, enrollment size, percentage of minority students, and teacher certification type serve as a predictor of overall teacher effectiveness.

The assumptions of multiple regression were tested to determine reliability of output. The assumption of Independence of Residuals was tested using a Durbin Watson test and this assumption was met because the value was approximately 2. The

assumption of linearity examined the collective linear relationship by plotting the residuals versus the predicted values. This assumption was met as residuals form a horizontal band thus indicating a linear relationship between the collective predictor variables and the criterion variable. Also, to insure the assumption of linearity was met, the linear relationship between each of the predictor variables and the criterion variable was examined utilizing the partial regression plots. This assumption was met as the partial regression plots demonstrated a linear pattern.

The assumption of homoscedasticity was tested utilizing the plot of the residuals versus the predicted values. This assumption was met due to no residual spreading occurring as the predicted value of the criterion variable increases. The assumption of no multicollinearity was examined by looking at tolerance levels. The assumption was met as no tolerance level was below the recommended .2 level. No outliers were detected through examination of the standardized residuals as all residuals were within 1.5 standard deviations. The assumption of normality of residuals was tested using the normal P-P plot of regression standardized residual. This assumption was met as residuals fell along the diagonal line for this plot.

The model summary demonstrated a medium relationship between the criterion variable and the predictor variables as evident by multiple correlation coefficient with R = .388. The R^2 of .151 indicates 15.1% of the variance in the criterion variable can be explained by the predictor variable. The adjusted R^2 indicates 12.1% of the variance in the criterion variable is explained when adjusted by the sample size and number of

predictors. This is a more conservative estimate. The standard error of the estimate is the average residual distance from the regression line for data points in this model (see Table 24).

Table 24

Multiple Regression Model Summary

R	R-Square	Adjusted R Square	Standard Error the Estimate
.388	.151	.121	.978

ANOVA output was used to determine if there was a significant predictor. The ANOVA determined there was a significant predictor of administrator perceptions for instructional effectiveness because $F (5, 141) = 5.004, p<.001$. These results indicated a significant relationship between the criterion variable of instructional effectiveness and at least one of the predictors.

Through examination of significance levels for each of the predictor variables, certification type was the only significant predictor within this regression model with $t = 4.724, p < .001$. All other predictor variables had significant levels greater than .05. Through examination of the unstandardized coefficients a traditionally certified teacher is expected to score .763 points higher than the alternatively certified teacher while holding all other predictor variables constant.

Overall Summary of Results

The purpose of this study was to determine if secondary school principals perceive a difference in overall teacher effectiveness and professional and peer relationships for teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification

program vs. an alternate certification pathway. Overall, the perception of secondary school evaluators is there is a difference between teachers who have been certified through traditional teacher training programs from teachers who have sought certification through alternative pathways. These differences were noted in teacher effectiveness and professionalism using the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards. Predictor variables of school type, location type, enrollment size, and percentage of minority students indicated only certification type could be used to predict instructional effectiveness scores.

As noted, there are differences and these findings should help guide future discussions, decisions, and programming at the post-secondary teacher training level and within the classrooms for current teachers. In Chapter 5, the perceived differences will help guide the discussion of how to prepare and develop teachers to become effective professional educators. This is a national question to help entice and encourage future teachers and support current teachers as they prepare our youth for their futures socially, educationally, and in skill development for college and career success.

CHAPTER 5 - SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

Although the list of responsibilities for any school administrator seem endless, hiring the best teachers is critical to the overall mission of providing the best education possible for all students. Once a teacher is hired, the administrator's role changes from recruitment to insuring every teacher has an opportunity to continue to learn and develop their expertise as a classroom teacher.   The administrator becomes an observer, evaluator, coach, listener, and facilitator. They have the capacity to be able to identify and make recommendations within the areas of teacher strengths, challenges, and opportunities to insure the teacher has the resources to grow personally and professionally toward continuous and ongoing improvement as a professional educator. The first years of teaching are some of the most difficult for any teacher and educators in all capacities have come to know this through personal experience.   So, within the recruitment and hiring process administrators strive to hire the candidates who are the most prepared for success because it is every administrators' mission to always make decisions based on what they believe is best for all children in their school.

Within the past few years, Indiana has legislated measures to insure that all classrooms have highly effective and effective teachers in every classroom. It is the administrators' responsibility to observe and evaluate all teachers using evaluation tools, rubrics, and methodology adopted by the school district. These expectations are

created, outlined, summarized, and approved by teachers, teacher associations, advisory committees, district administrators, and school board members, and submitted to and approved by the Indiana Department of Education. School administrators have been entrusted to evaluate, counsel and coach, analyze curriculum and instruction, identify student engagement in the classroom, provide direction in the area of classroom management, and to recommend and provide professional development opportunities. Or in other words in today's world of educational and school accountability, the outcomes are dependent on the expertise, experiences, professional judgment, opinion, and perception of the school administrator in determining teacher effectiveness.

It is also an era when alternative teacher certification is an approved pathway to the classroom. However, are teachers trained through these alternative programs as effective as traditionally certified teachers? As administrators recruit, interview, and hire new teachers, what research can they utilize to help in the staffing process? What administrators will find is the research is minimal and contradictory in comparing the effectiveness of teachers who obtained certification between traditional and alternative certification programs. There are also inconsistencies in philosophies and policies on how best to educate and train our future teachers. An additional consideration is the lack of certified teachers in some content areas within the applicant pool as current teachers retire and/or leave the education profession. With a lack of substantiated evidence and research, this is an opportune time to search for answers. For this particular study, the primary focus is the perceptions of secondary school principals in regards to teachers who have obtained certification through alternative pathways.

Review of the Literature

The positive effects of education for our citizens will never be argued, but how to educate our citizens and how to educate and prepare educators will probably always be on the forefront of the discussion. Traditional teacher training programs were introduced in the United States in 1820's and focused on norms (or what we now know as standards), principles, and rules of teaching. Over time these programs transitioned into four-year programs with teacher candidates earning a bachelor's degree in education with a content area focus as a requirement for certification. The traditional certification consists of content area coursework, pedagogical instruction, and one to two years of pre-service experience in actual classrooms.

As teacher shortages have become evident, especially in the areas of special education, mathematics, and science (NCES, 1998; Saffold, 2006), alternative teacher certification programs have skyrocketed nationwide over the past decade. These alternative programs are vast with over 140 alternative routes to certification and varied from university transition programs to for-profit and/or online programs (Toppo & Schnaars, 2012) and differ in prerequisite entry requirements and level of a degree earned upon completion. Some alternatively certified teachers earn a bachelor's degree in education, some earn a master's degree, and other programs offer only teacher certification.

Justification for alternative certification programs is also as vast and varied as the numbers of programs and the candidates seeking certification. The primary justifications include: the potential to attract content area experts in the career world into the classroom; to provide a less timely and expensive option for candidates who wish to

teach and already have a four-year degree; to increase the teacher applicant pool to reduce shortages in rural and urban areas; and to increase diversity amongst teacher candidates.

The success and effectiveness of alternatively certified teachers in comparison to traditionally prepared teachers is also contradictory within the literature.   In the journal article, *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis* it is suggested that a teacher's understanding of content area translates into positive student learning and outcomes and that formal teacher training provides insignificant results (D. Goldhaber & D. J. Brewer, 2000).   Reports by the National Center of Educational Evaluation summarizes that there is no evidence that teacher training and content area coursework correlates to student achievement (Constantine et. al, 2009). However, Darling-Hammond, Berry, and Thoreson (2001) provide that teachers who have education training are more effective when measuring student achievement. Within the current research and literature, some of this contradiction may come from the lack of an accepted definition for what constitutes alternative certification. Teachers who have emergency permits are considered alternatively certified and included in some studies; however, these teachers may actually be traditionally trained but their licensure is in transition from state-to-state or in renewal status (Darling-Hammond et. al, 2001).

A teacher shortage is one of the justifications for alternative certification programs. The intention is to create alternative means to certification to increase the pool of qualified candidates. However, within the literature there is a noted concern the shortages are actually being created by new teachers leaving the profession at an alarming rate. The high attrition rate is attributed to poor working conditions, quality of

life, dissatisfaction with the profession of teaching in general, and/or increased accountability and high stakes testing of students who struggle (Abell et. al, 2006). Teacher retention is critical to the solution of teacher shortages but more importantly to the academic success of students. Tornaki et. al, (2009) suggests there is a correlation between the number of years a teacher has been in the profession to the positive impact on overall student outcomes such as achievement.

With the influx of alternative certification programs, the need for qualified teachers in our classrooms and the focus on teacher effectiveness, continued and ongoing research is timely for evaluating alternative and traditional teacher certification. The next dilemma is what methods should be used to evaluate teacher effectiveness using the pathway to certification as a variable. Bruce Torff and David Sessions (2005) conclude there are limitations to any method but school principals have a unique and school-wide perspective; they are trained instructional leaders and most have classroom experience as a teacher; and they have access to school-wide resources and student and district data. The voice of the school administrator should be heard and his or her perspectives should be included in the process of teacher evaluation (Torff & Sessions, 2005).

Purpose

As districts strive to hire the best teachers, the potential candidates' education, teacher preparations, experiences, qualifications, and philosophies are always discussed in the recruitment process. Within the last decade, alternative certification programs have become an approved pathway into the education profession. With this change, there is a need for understanding, the opportunity to ask questions, and the quest for answers

especially as administrators seek to provide the best education possible for all children—our students. Administrators, as educational professionals will look to their colleagues for some of these answers and it will be through those perceptions that answers to a foundational question can be obtained. The quandary for all administrators will be: Are teachers who enter the classroom through alternative certification pathways effective educators and how do these educators compare to teachers who were traditionally trained and certified? Since alternative certification programs are new to the field of education, ongoing and continuous research is essential.

Research Questions

Ho1: Do principals perceive a difference in overall teacher effectiveness for teachers who were prepared through a traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?

Ho2: Do principals perceive professional and peer relationship differences in teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?

Ho3: Does school type, location type, enrollment size, percentage of minority students, and teacher certification type serve as significant predictors of overall teacher effectiveness?

Ho4: Do principals report differences in the reasons teachers leave their positions within the first five years in the classroom between teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?

Methodology and Procedures

A survey was created using Qualtrics (a survey tool provided by Purdue University to its students). The survey included demographic questions; school based information; utilized the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards as a reference and foundation for teacher effectiveness; and allowed an opportunity for open-ended responses by the respondents. This survey along with the research questions and explanations was submitted to the Institutional Review Board. Upon approval, the survey was e-mailed using a distribution list provided by the Indiana Association of School Principals to Indiana secondary school administrators. The primary purpose for this survey was to obtain the principals' perception of teacher effectiveness based on teacher certification. This survey obtained demographic information and utilized a Likert-scale to measure effectiveness based on the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards; and provided an open-ended response section for additional and unsolicited comments. These data were analyzed for frequency of responses, means, standard deviations and ranges. Also utilized in the analysis were independent samples, multiple regression, and bi-variate correlation tests. The open-ended responses were analyzed using qualitative methods and a few individual comments from these responses will be included within this chapter.

Participants

Since school administrators' perceptions and opinions are utilized in determining teacher effectiveness, this study was distributed to secondary school administrators in the state of Indiana to obtain opinions and perceptions of alternatively certified teachers in

comparison to traditionally certified teachers. The study included principals from public, private, and charter schools and schools with various grade level configurations from 6th to 12th grade. Respondents were also administrators who have evaluated teachers prepared through traditional and alternative certification programs. The survey was distributed to 425 principals via e-mail; approximately 22 were returned as undeliverable. After waiting two weeks, the response rate was 12.3% so another e-mail was sent in an effort to obtain more responses and data. There were 105 final responses (25% return rate) some of which were incomplete surveys or did not match the criteria for the study. Public school principals made up 88% of the participant pool and 66% were from rural locations.

Summary of the Results – Overall Teacher Effectiveness

Research Question #1: Do principals perceive a difference in overall teacher effectiveness for teachers who were prepared through a traditional teacher certification program vs. an alternative certification pathway? Using the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards as a resource, overall teacher effectiveness was determined as follows:

The Learner and Learning—Teaching begins with the learner.

Standard #1: Learner Development

Standard #2: Learning Differences

Standard #3: Learning Environments

Content—Teacher knowledge translates into student mastery of information.

Standard #4: Content Knowledge

Standard #5: Application of Content

Instructional Practice—Assessment, planning, strategies, objectives, goals,

modifications.

Standard #6: Assessment

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies

Collectively these first eight standards summarize the performances, essential

knowledge, and critical dispositions required to be, to become, and/or to be identified or

evaluated as an effective teacher. These eight standards provided the framework for the

survey tool and were used to analyze the results to determine perceived differences by

administrators between alternatively and traditionally certified teachers for overall

teacher effectiveness.

<u>The Learner and Learning</u>

The Learner and Learning—teaching begins with the learner and incorporates the

first three standards: Standard #1: Learner Development; Standard #2: Learning

Differences; and Standard #3: Learning Environments.

Standard #1: Learner Development outlines the expectations for teachers to be

effective specifically by differentiating instruction based on individual and group

capabilities; respecting all learner's strengths and needs; and encouraging and promoting

learning for all individuals by collaborating and building relationships with the students.

The effective teacher also realizes the importance of working with families and with their

colleagues and other professionals to promote academic achievement and social and emotional development.

Standard #2: Learning Differences identifies the importance of teachers understanding the unique and individual differences and diverse cultures of the school community. Effective teachers believe all learners can achieve and respects and values the family backgrounds, languages, perspectives, talents, and interests of all learners and their families

Finally, Standard #3: Learning Environments encourages an understanding and all-inclusive, positive climate and classroom culture where each learner is able to meet high expectations. Teachers who understand the importance of fostering mutual respect and who are thoughtful and responsive listeners and observers are modeling this standard.

The results from this survey indicate principals were more likely to "agree" that traditionally certified teachers have an understanding and effectively implement indicators and expectations within The Learning and Learning category. Additionally, the administrators were more likely to "disagree" that alternatively certified teachers have a foundational understanding of The Learner and Learning standards. In simple terms, alternatively certified teachers have a significant weakness in the implementation of The Learner and Learning Standards in comparison to traditionally certified teachers (see Table 25).

Table 25

The Learner and Learning	Standard #1 Learner Development		Standard #2 Learning Differences		Standard #3 Learning Environments	
Administrator Ranking of Teacher Proficiency within the Standard	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees
Alternatively Certified	44.6%	43.3%	33.8%	47.3%	23.0%	64.9%
Traditionally Certified	9.5%	89.2%	9.5%	87.8%	10.8%	86.6%
Variance		45.9%		40.5%		21.7%

Content

Content—Teacher knowledge translates into student mastery of information and includes Standard #4: Content Knowledge and Standard #5: Application of Content. These two standards are critical for any teacher to be an effective instructional and learning facilitator. A teacher must have a strong content area foundation to be able to interpret misunderstandings and provide authentic and relevant learning applications.

In the area of Content, administrators again ranked traditionally certified teachers higher by "agreeing" there is evidence that these teachers have sufficient content area knowledge and consistently incorporate content applications in the planning and delivery of the instruction while providing relevant and authentic learning opportunities (see Table 26).

Table 26

Content	Standard #4 Content Knowledge		Standard #5 Content Application	
Administrator Ranking of Teacher Proficiency within the Standard	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees
Alternatively Certified	28.4%	60.8%	32.5%	58.1%
Traditionally Certified	8.1%	90.5%	10.9%	86.5%
Variance		29.7%		28.4%

Instructional Practice

   Instructional Practice—Assessment, planning, strategies, objective, goals, modifications include Standard #6: Assessment; Standard #7: Planning for the Instruction; and Standard #8: Instructional Strategies. Effective teachers utilize multiple assessment methods to monitor student academic understanding and learning growth and understand the importance of using outcomes from assessment to help guide instruction. Effective teachers purposefully plan the instruction by drawing on the prior knowledge of their students and design lessons to help all learners reach rigorous learning goals. Instructional Strategies are described as the tools utilized by teachers to reach the learning goals identified within the curriculum.   In the area of Instructional Practice and in all three standards required for effective teachers in this category, administrators indicated a positive perceived difference for traditionally certified teachers in comparison to the alternatively certified counterparts (see Table 27).

Table 27

Instructional Practice	Standard #6 Assessment		Standard #7 Planning for Instruction		Standard #8 Instructional Strategies	
Administrator Ranking of Teacher Proficiency within the Standard	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees
Alternatively Certified	39.2%	47.3%	31.1%	48.7%	32.4%	52.7%
Traditionally Certified	12.2%	83.8%	8.1%	90.5%	6.8%	91.9%
Variance		36.5%		41.8%		39.2%

Overall Teacher Effectiveness Results

Research Question #1 (Ho1): Do principals perceive a difference in overall teacher effectiveness for teachers who were prepared through a traditional teacher certification program vs. an alternative certification pathway? The Ho1 Null suggests there is no significant difference in principals' perceptions between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in overall teacher effectiveness. Using an Independent Samples *t*-test, the mean and standard deviation to analyze the results from this study, ensuring the homogeneity of variance was tested and normality confirmed, the Ho1 Null can be rejected. The findings conclude that traditionally certified teachers were ranked significantly higher than their alternatively certified counterparts on all 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards. The outcome from the study indicates that administrators perceive a significant positive difference of traditional certified teachers when compared to alternatively certified teachers in overall teacher effectiveness.

Summary of the Results - Professional Demeanor and Peer Relationships

Research Question #2 (Ho2): Do principals perceive professional and peer relationship differences in teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway? Utilizing and referencing Professional Responsibility within the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards, Standard #9-Professional Responsibility and Standard #10-Leadership and Collaboration provided a framework for the survey tool and for this study:

Professional Responsibility—Self-reflection, improvement, leadership, collaboration.

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration

Professional Learning and Ethical Practice includes the importance of teacher reflection and assuming responsibility for student learning; the impact of building relationships with students and families to positively affect student achievement; the teacher is a learner and continues to seek opportunities to improve educational practice; and the teacher understands and demonstrates ethical practice, and relevant laws and educational policies. Leadership and Collaboration describes the effective teacher as someone who contributes to the advancement of the profession; embraces challenges and creatively seeks and promotes continuous improvement; and shares in the responsibility to advocate for learners, families, and other teachers. In the area of Professional Responsibility referencing both Standard #9 and Standard #10, administrators indicated a positive perceived difference in traditionally certified teachers in comparison to their alternatively certified counterparts (see Table 28).

Table 28

Professional Responsibility	Standard #9 Professional Learning and Ethical Practice		Standard #10 Leadership and Collaboration	
Administrator Ranking of Teacher Proficiency within the Standard	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees	Strongly or Somewhat Disagrees	Strongly or Somewhat Agrees
Alternatively Certified	20.3%	64.8%	16.2%	67.6%
Traditionally Certified	9.5%	81.1%	6.8%	85.1%
Variance		16.3%		17.5%

Overall Professional Demeanor and Attitude Results

Research Question #2 (Ho2): Do principals perceive professional and peer relationship differences in teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs vs. an alternative certification pathway?   The Ho2 null states there is no significant difference in principals' perceptions between alternative certification and traditional certification pathways in overall teacher effectiveness. Using an Independent Samples *t*-test, the mean and standard deviation to analyze the results from this study, ensuring the homogeneity of variance was tested and normality confirmed, the Ho2 null can be rejected. The outcome from the study indicates that administrators perceive a significant positive difference for traditionally certified teachers when compared to alternatively certified teachers in the area of professional demeanor and peer relationships.

Standards in Rank Order by Mean

By analyzing the mean for each 2011 InTASC Core Teacher Standards and comparing alternatively and traditionally certified teachers, each had perceived differences in strengths and opportunities. For the alternatively certified teacher, areas of strength are Leadership and Collaboration and Professional Learning and Ethical Practice and weaknesses are identified as Learner Development, Assessment, and Learner Differences (see Table #29). Notably even the highest mean rank of Leadership and Collaboration was lower than any of the rankings for traditionally certified teachers.

Administrators ranked traditionally certified teachers significantly higher with strengths identified as Content Knowledge and Instructional Strategies and weaknesses in the area of Professional Learning and Ethical Practice, Assessment, and Application of Content (see Table #30). Identifying these areas of strength and weakness will assist in identifying measures to support, coach, provide targeted and embedded professional development, and mentor new teachers from both alternative and traditional certification pathways.

Table 29

**Rank Order for Areas of Strength and Opportunities based on
    InTASC Core Teaching Standards**
Alternatively Certified Teachers

Standard #	Standard Description	*mean*
#10	Leadership and Collaboration	3.66
#9	Professional Learning and Ethical Practices	3.65
#3	Learning Environments	3.58
#4	Content Knowledge	3.49
#5	Application of Content	3.39
#7	Planning for Instruction	3.27
#8	Instructional Strategies	3.24
#2	Learner Differences	3.19
#6	Assessment	3.12
#1	Learner Development	3.00

Table 30

Rank Order for Areas of Strength and Opportunities based on
      InTASC Core Teaching Standards
Traditionally Certified Teachers

Standard #	Standard Description	*mean*
#4	Content Knowledge	4.20
#8	Instructional Strategies	4.12
#7	Planning for Instruction	4.07
#1	Learner Development	4.05
#3	Learning Environments	4.01
#2	Learner Difference	4.00
#10	Leadership and Collaboration	4.00
#5	Application Content	3.99
#6	Assessment	3.96
#9	Professional Learning and Ethical Practice	3.95

Predictor Variables

Question #3 (Ho3): Does school type, location type, enrollment size, and

percentage of minority students serve as a predictor of overall teacher effectiveness? In

this case, the Ho3 Null hypothesis was rejected. School type, location type, enrollment

size, and percentage of minority students are not predictor variables. This was

determined through multiple regression models, ANOVA, coefficients test, and an

Independent Sample *t*-test. The only predictor variable was teacher certification type.

Attrition based on Principals' Perceptions

Approximately 67% of the respondents have hired alternatively certified teachers

in the last five years. However, traditionally certified teachers were hired in greater

frequency. Interestingly respondents indicated that of those teachers hired within the past five years almost 59% of the alternatively certified teachers remain on staff compared to only 16% of the traditionally certified group. Upon further analysis, traditionally certified teachers were more likely to continue in the field of education through advancement such as counseling or administration or an opportunity at another school district.

Administrators shared their perceptions for the reason teachers were no longer at their schools. These reasons were placed in rank order to compare any similarities (see Table 11). Interestingly for both traditionally and alternatively certified teachers, Non-Contract Renewal was ranked within the top three reasons. Inadequate Academic Preparation/Instructional Expectations and Classroom Management were the top two reasons for leaving the classroom for alternatively certified teachers. For traditionally certified teachers, the top two reasons for leaving the classroom were an Opportunity at Another District and Low Pay.

Alternative Certification Discussion

This research was conducted to determine if there is a difference in the perceptions of principals between alternatively certified teachers and teachers who obtained certification through traditional teacher training programs. This study found a significant difference in teacher effectiveness and in professional attitudes and demeanor between these two groups using the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards. There was a significant difference in every category. Within the survey instrument, administrators were provided an opportunity to make additional comments on Transition to Teaching

Programs, Indianapolis Teaching Fellows, Teach for America, and the Woodrow Wilson

Teaching Fellowship. Without specific guiding questions, the comments made by the

respondents provide an additional perspective regarding these alternative pathways to

teaching. These comments in addition to the survey results allow for recommendations to

be made as well as evaluative next steps for teacher preparation in the 21st century.

Transition to Teaching Program

Transition to Teaching was made possible by legislative approval in the state of

Indiana in 2005.   Currently there are 26 colleges or universities that have transition

programs approved by the Indiana Department of Education. In general, these programs

are two semesters in duration with specific prerequisites and program of study

requirements outlined by each college or university, and all are approved programs that

lead to teacher certification in the state of Indiana ("Approved Transition to Teaching

Programs," 2013).

Upon analysis of the responses, a teacher's knowledge of the content area is

critical but being able to communicate and transfer this knowledge is essential for a

teacher to be successful.   An understanding of educational methods and instructional

strategies that will engage students; how to utilize assessment to guide instruction as well

as determine a student's grasp and mastery of learning; and classroom management are

areas where Transition to Teaching models could improve. One respondent stated, "I feel

teacher candidates in the Transition to Teaching program need more experience in the

classroom than just eight weeks of student teaching." The time frame is not necessarily

important but rather the assumption that alternative certification programs do not provide

sufficient opportunities for candidates to observe, practice, and student teach to gain the experience for initial success in the classroom.

The individual, their personal attributes, interests, work ethic, and passion for the field of education provide a window into a teacher's success. Administrators commented that maturity of individuals entering through an alternative pathway and being able to embed real-world experiences into the curriculum are assets of teachers obtaining this certification.

There is concern for the dedication and passion to the education profession. Teachers, who enter college and obtain certification through traditional means are choosing the education profession as a career path. They have formally expressed their interest in the profession early and by university program design have visited several schools and classrooms; observed in a multitude of classrooms; spoken with and listened to experienced teachers; and have student taught in the major subject area and at more than one grade level. They have at least two to three years of in depth educational opportunities within a variety of schools and learned from several experienced classroom teachers. Traditionally certified teachers seem to have a better understanding of the overall expectations and requirements necessary to become an effective teacher.

Whereas, transition to teaching creates an avenue for second careers as noted in a survey comment, "One factor is that several who have interviewed expressed they went into teaching after either losing their job or not being able to find one. I think this fact (for some) indicates the general lack of dedication and passion required for effective teaching." The responsibilities and job expectations were also noted, "Several transition

teachers have expressed that the work load and expectations on teachers is ridiculous."

And, "Teaching is not a fall back job, it is a profession."

Indianapolis Teaching Fellows

The Indianapolis Teaching Fellows is a partnership between participating schools

and the program ("Indianapolis Teaching Fellows," 2013). The majority of the

respondents who commented did not know about or have any experience with the

Indianapolis Teaching Fellows or with teachers who transitioned into the classroom from

this program. This lack of knowledge about the Indianapolis Teaching Fellows program

is most likely attributed to the sample of respondents—the majority being from rural

schools (66%) with only 10% from urban areas. Those few administrators who had

experience with this program exclaimed that the teachers they hired were effective and

were described as, "wonderful" and "outstanding!" There were also positive comments

about the follow-up with the new teachers and the ongoing coaching provided for the

Fellows of the program. It seems there is interest in suburban and rural areas for

candidates certified within this program with comments such as, "I would love to have

some of these teachers come north of Indianapolis. Those schools outside of the IPS

nucleus seem to not get the referrals."

Even with the positive comments, the prerequisite of a 3.0 GPA in a candidate's

undergraduate degree for entry into the Fellowship program brought concern from one

principal, "I would look for a stronger student and higher GPA, to teach in my building."

Consistent with prior discussion in Transition to Teaching, there is concern with

the ability for a teacher to transfer content area knowledge to students and/or his or her

instructional abilities and classroom management. Additional goals and educational

philosophies were interjected throughout the survey, "Knowledge of the subject area is important, but an understanding of how students learn and how to motivate them to become learners and eventual lifelong learners and productive citizens." One administrator also had the opportunity to "evaluate and work with a few of the Fellows which was a positive experience each time…I think that a good teacher is just that. The key is the inner drive and passion to truly care about and educate." Simply stated, good teachers are good because of that inner drive, passion, and desire to become an effective teacher and will do what it takes to be successful.

Teach for America

The Teach for America program recruits recent college graduates and professionals of all backgrounds to teach for two years in high need urban and rural public schools. Training is provided for immediate placement into schools with the focus of accelerated change. Candidates accepted into the program must hold a bachelor's degree with an undergraduate GPA of at least 2.50 on a 4.0 scale. Other criteria include: a strong belief in the potential for all children; leadership ability and interpersonal skills; perseverance and adaptability; organizational, planning, and management skills; and respect for diversity and diverse experience ("Teach for America," 2013).

Similar to Indianapolis Teaching Fellows, many of the respondents had not hired or evaluated teachers from the Teach for America program nor did they have any knowledge or experience of the program. Again this is most likely due to the high percentage of rural school responses for this study. Teach for America candidates are generally hired in high need, urban centers. Most of the responses were based on overall

experiences rather than teacher success or effectiveness in the classroom and those comments were positive, "I love Teach for America, their fellows seem ready for the classroom."

Much of this success could be attributed to the young people entering Teach for America. "It may be their energy and idealism; smart kids, put into tough situations, but have good preparation and workshops." Teach for America provides its teachers diverse cultural experiences, which they may not otherwise choose without the support provided by the program. However, one respondent shared that "Teach for America has a great preparation program but follow-up and teacher coaching lacks rigor and are not given the support they were promised." Longevity in a teaching career and commitment is also noted as Teach for America teachers make a commitment for two years and then they can move on to other careers or obtain additional education themselves outside of the field of education. This short-term approach is concerning and affects sustainable programming for schools of diverse and high at-risk populations of students.

Woodrow Wilson Fellowship

The Woodrow Wilson Fellowship has provided an alternative pathway for individuals who have a bachelor's degree and content area preparation in science, technology, engineering, and/or mathematics. In Indiana, the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship is available through Ball State University, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Purdue University, and the University of Indianapolis. With this STEM focus, school districts have been able to take advantage of teachers from the Woodrow Wilson Fellowship for Project Lead the Way (PLTW) implementation and to

provide relevant, hands-on instruction within the science and math curriculum ("The Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellowship," 2013).

Based on the responses, this is a strong teacher preparation program but still has mixed results. It was noted by one respondent that the program provides one year of student teaching rather than a limited or reduced teaching experience required by other alternative programs. Still, respondents shared that content knowledge is excellent for these teacher candidates but "knowledge does not always equate to their ability as a teacher." Of concern for school districts financially is the Woodrow Wilson Fellows obtain their master's degree within the program, so with minimal teaching experience generally they are paid more on a district scale.

Implications

Implications for Teacher Education for Colleges and Universities

At the secondary level, a teacher must have a strong in-depth knowledge and understanding of the content or subject area in which they teach. The importance of content area mastery is evidenced by teacher certification requirements, which include competency based testing in the subject area to be taught and university and college program requirements regardless of the pathway. A strong knowledge of the content provides the foundation for providing relevant and authentic instruction where students are able to learn and achieve toward content area expectations and standards mastery. Teachers who are content area specialists are more likely to be able to problem solve and can understand, correct, and redirect the misconceptions of their students. Colleges and

universities must maintain a well-developed and aligned plan of study with high expectations and rigorous course work to insure teacher candidates are masters in their content.

In addition, to content area knowledge a teacher must be able to understand students and adolescents; have an understanding of learner development; be able to utilize instructional strategies and methods to convey the content; and manage behaviors by diverse learners in the class. These attributes are included within the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards utilized in teacher education programs at most colleges and universities. Within the open-ended responses, principals clearly expressed the need for teachers to be able to communicate, design engaging and relevant lessons, assess and differentiate instruction, maintain classroom management, and demand high expectations for all students. As one respondent states, "Professionally trained teachers are trained to teach the subject matter too…but more importantly, they are educated to immerse themselves into the psychology of how learning takes place." Research supports these comments as noted by Brown, et. al (2006) and Grossman and McDonald (2008) that teachers without methods courses are limited in their ability to engage students and more likely to teach like they were taught. Thus, all teacher preparation programs should have pedagogical and instructional methods requirements within their teacher training programs. They should also have continual and ongoing opportunities for an understanding and mastery of the InTASC Core Teaching Standards which should be utilized and incorporated into the teacher education program for education majors and for teacher certification programs. Zeichner (2006) suggests educational programs focus on the quality of the program, evaluation beyond standardized test scores of students, and

most importantly, all teacher training programs must understand and embrace the importance and seriousness of how its program impacts the education profession overall.

Within the literature, Berry (2010) endorses and recommends four essential components for teacher training programs: 1) extensive and well-supervised student teaching; 2) opportunities to engage in the "actual practices involved in teaching" including lesson preparation, discussions with other teachers, lesson evaluation, and reflection; 3) opportunities to study and assess local school curricula; and 4) a capstone experience using action research and/or a data-focused portfolio.

What could be considered extensive and well-supervised student teaching? Again, by referencing principals' perceptions of teacher training we can garner information from a variety of programs. The Woodrow Wilson Fellowship requires a year of student teaching with ongoing support from the fellowship once hired by a school district; the support is continuous for three years. Colleges and universities require within the traditional teacher preparation programs early opportunities for students to experience diverse classrooms, observe a variety of teachers in the classroom, and practice teaching in several field experiences and assigned practicums prior to the culminating 12-16 week student teaching experience.   In comparison, some transition programs require only 8 weeks of student teaching.   Essential within the student teaching experience regardless of the length, is the need for the experience to include lesson preparation, discussions with other teachers, lesson evaluation and reflection (Berry, 2010). For colleges and universities and alternative certification programs, the time a new teacher candidate spends with experienced teachers in the classroom and the variety of those experiences prior to having their own classroom impacts the success of new

teachers in their first years of teaching.   Additionally, follow-up support is important

once the new teacher is hired. Finally, all certification programs should be adapting and

changing based on current trends, research, and societal expectations. Ongoing and

continuous evaluation and research will be essential as we strive to prepare and hire

highly qualified and highly effective teachers for our nation's classrooms.

Implications for Principals and School Districts in Indiana

Understanding that alternatively certified teachers have significant weaknesses in

comparison to their traditionally trained counterparts is important to every building

administrator. By just knowing, support for new teachers can begin immediately,

development opportunities can be recommended, and resources provided. As illustrated

in Table 30, the areas of weakness for alternatively certified teachers relate directly to

understanding the learner: learner development, assessment, and learning differences.

By identifying these areas, providing professional development for teachers can be

directly targeted to these teacher deficiencies. Some suggestions might include:

providing release time to visit and observe experienced teachers in other classrooms

within the district and outside of the district and recommendations and registration for

workshops, webinars, and seminars specific to any areas of professional or personal

weakness. The article, *Competencies of Traditionally Prepared and Lateral Entry

Teachers: Implications for School Administrators* by Brown (2006) suggests that

professional development is not just for new teachers but for experienced teachers too in

the areas of classroom management, lesson planning and instructional strategies, data

driven decisions using assessment, student behavioral issues, and best practices; the list is

endless.

Assigning mentors to work with new teachers regardless of the pathway for teacher certification is essential to teacher success. This was a requirement for all new teachers through the Indiana Mentoring and Assessment Program (IMAP) until just a few years ago (Indiana Professional Standards Board, 2000-2002) and funding was provided to districts to train mentors and to provide new teachers with the support of a mentor. Although new teachers must still register for IMAP, the structure of the program is far different today and the mentor component is not a requirement. Assigning a mentor is now left to individual districts' implementation as well as funding the program. Mentors can help provide new teachers with family dynamics and information about the community, assist in building collegial relationships in the school and district, and provide the listening ear that is often needed by new teachers entering the profession and in their first years of teaching. Additionally the literature suggests that the majority of educators believe mentoring and professional development in a teacher's first years are effective ways to improve teaching overall (Rochkind et. al, 2007). Insuring that every new teacher has an experienced teacher serving as his or her mentor is important and advisable regardless of the certification pathway.

As noted in the literature by Schonefeld and Feinman (2012), new teachers are concerned to seek advice from the principal and evaluator for fear this will label them as incompetent and may jeopardize contract renewal. For this reason, principals should find ways to foster and build relationships with all new teachers to help them feel and know they are supported. Principals might consider meeting with them regularly in groups or individually to build professional and positive relationships and to create opportunities for open dialogue, problem solving, and honest, open communication.

Another recommendation for school districts to help support new teachers is a formal and organized induction program (Wong & Wong, 2004). Such a program is designed to train and support new teachers on a variety of district-wide and professional topics. Unruh and Holt (2010) state new teachers working collaboratively within a teacher induction and mentorship program are provided with the required support on both a professional and personal level and the new teachers report that fellow teachers and colleagues contribute to overall teacher effectiveness (Berry, 2010).

Implications for Recruitment

For every teacher vacancy in a school district, the recruitment process begins immediately. Whether this process begins by administrators attending recruitment days at colleges and universities, posting vacancies on the Indiana Department of Education's website and on the local district or educational service center website, or just reviewing resumes blindly submitted for consideration, the quest is to find the most qualified and best teacher for the position. Qualified applicants can be experienced or newly certified from both traditionally and alternatively certified teachers.

This study identified that secondary administrators in the state of Indiana perceive teachers who are traditionally certified are more effective than alternatively certified teachers. However, should an administrator rule out a candidate because of their alternative certification credentials? It might depend on the applicant pool for the vacancy or if the candidate is certified in a hard-to-fill content area. Within the open-ended responses of this study, administrators note success is dependent on the individuals themselves, "She is a self-starter; …perhaps the inner drive/the passion to truly care about and educate." And finally but a necessity, a teacher must have a passion for

teaching and enjoy working with adolescents and young adults.   This passion was

reiterated and pervasive throughout the comments in the surveys. Teacher success can

often be attributed to the individual; specifically someone who is conscientious, hard

working, and passionate about teaching and learning.

Throughout the interview process, an administrator and the selection team can

learn more about each candidate's qualifications, experiences, and education. The team

should consider if the candidate has a strong content area mastery to support the district's

academic programs and complement the current staff to help build a positive school

culture based on collegiality and teamwork. Regardless of the teacher certification

pathway, the team's goal should include: determining areas of strength and weakness for

each candidate; the areas where support will be necessary and if professional

development is indicated; the level of interest and passion for teaching; and the

knowledge and understanding of adolescent behavior.

Based on the results from this study, administrators should be cautious of teachers

who have obtained certification through alternative pathways but this should not be a

reason to disqualify or eliminate alternatively certified teachers from consideration.

Knowing more about the certification program might help eliminate doubt and concern.

Respondents noted positive outcomes from teachers who were prepared in the Teach for

America and Woodrow Wilson Fellowship programs. A positive correlation was also

noted based on the length of pre-service training and student teaching experiences.

Johnson, Birkeland, and Peske identified the person, the program, and the school

contribute to the feelings of the teacher candidate's success and self-evaluation and self-

efficacy can be an important predictor of teacher success (Kee, 2012). Thus, questions in the interview process may alleviate the concern for a candidate's level of preparedness.

Within some of the literature there is concern for the reasons a teacher would seek alternative certification or seek an alternative means toward that end goal. Stevens and Dial (1993) suggest the following reasons: 1) the candidate has always wanted to teach; 2) they want to be an influence on the lives of children; 3) teaching seemed like a practical choice based on their subject area, interests, current careers, and education; and/or 4) there was a lack of other career options (as cited by (Rochkind et. al, 2007; Thomas et. al, 2005). Recruitment teams should be able to glean from the interview process information about the candidate that will insure and assure everyone they have hired the best teacher for the children, the school, and the community.

Implications for New Teachers

Todd Whitaker writes in *What Great Teachers Do Differently, "*Outstanding educators know that if a school has great teachers, it is a great school. Without great teachers, the school lacks the keystone of greatness" (2004). Certification programs must utilize all research to help build teacher education programs that will lead to great teachers whether this is a college or university teacher education program or an alternative certification program. New teachers entering the field of education need to understand that their role in education is important; probably more important than any other profession. To make a difference they must also seek continuous and ongoing opportunities to learn new methodologies, understand new teaching strategies, and implement change. Just because they have obtained a certificate to teach, does not necessarily make them a great teacher! Being great takes time, patience, collaborative

work with other teachers, and a care and compassion for the students they teach. It is ongoing and continual throughout a career in education.

Candidates for teacher certification regardless if it is traditional or alternative, must be cognizant that different programs require different requirements, learning opportunities, and varied expectations. Rather than looking for the cheapest, easiest, and most convenient ways to earn licensure, they should be evaluating the program which will help them reach that level of "greatness" described in *What Great Teachers Do Differently* (Whitaker, 2004).

Implications for Teacher Retention

Within the research, finding teachers and retaining effective teachers is and will continue to be a challenge. Teacher shortages have created an opening for alternative pathways into the classrooms of the United States. Within the research the conflict remains: Is the shortage due to a lack of entry-level teachers or retention of the teachers already in the classroom? Peske et. al suggest the problem is really retention (2001, p. 308). When teachers leave the profession, so does their expertise and the investment of time, resources, and financial support provided by school districts. Tournaki et. al (2009) advises that the more years a teacher has been in the profession, the more likely there will be a positive impact on important student outcomes. To help curb the flow of teachers out of the classroom, administrators and school leaders must focus on positive school climate in their buildings and providing support to new and veteran teachers. As previously discussed within this chapter is the recommendation for mentors, induction programs, and scheduling one-on-one time with administrators.

Implications for Future Research

Within this study, it was determined that Indiana secondary school principals believe there is a significant difference in teacher effectiveness and in professional and peer relationships between teachers who were prepared through traditional teacher certification programs versus alternative certification pathways. Teachers with traditional certifications were ranked significantly higher by school administrators on each of the ten 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards. Although perception provided an excellent beginning, the need for more in-depth research is indicative of this situation; this study is only a step in the process and more research is definitely indicated and recommendations include:

- This research was specific to Indiana and yet other states have approved alternative teacher certification programs. If the study was expanded to other states, areas, and/or regions, the outcomes could be compared to this study for a more in-depth understanding and consistency of alternative and traditional certification programs.

- This study was directed toward the building principal in secondary schools in Indiana and by expanding the research to all evaluators in a school, depth to this study would be possible. Most assistant principals, education directors, and coordinators also have evaluative responsibilities and have educational experience, expertise, background, and training. These professionals also have a voice that should be incorporated to enhance this research.

– This study was designed to obtain overall perceptions by secondary school principals. These perceptions were in generalities without specific students, teachers, school districts, or programs identified. Longitudinal studies based on student academic growth and achievement to measure teacher effectiveness for a sample of teachers who were prepared traditionally and alternatively would be beneficial to the field of research. Additionally, research using the actual evaluations of teachers to compare certification type to teacher effectiveness rankings is indicated now that the majority of schools are utilizing an evaluation plan focused on the effectiveness requirement.

– Primarily public, rural schools responded to the survey for this study. With limited responses from suburban, urban, private, and charter schools the results could be skewed toward the perceptions of rural school principals. Using another research design might garner more interest in the subject for these administrators and thus increase the sample size for a similar research study. However, this rural school perspective can be important for rural school administrators as they strive to recruit teachers for their districts.

– Within the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards is the requirement under Professional Responsibility to be a reflective practitioner. Additional research focused on individual teacher's reflective experiences, preparation, and self-perceived areas of strength and weakness in relation to their specific certification program would interject a teacher's

perspective. This research would help define the similarities and differences within these programs as well as help identify effectiveness for each certification program.

Limitations

The sample size of this study is a significant limitation. To create the distribution roster, the Indiana Association of School Principals provided contact information for its membership, which was then compared to the school data listing for administrators and contact information from the Indiana Department of Education ("IDOE: Compass," 2013). The survey was distributed to 425 e-mail addresses; 22 of these addresses were returned as "undeliverable" and only 105 administrators responded to the survey.   This was reduced even further due to incomplete surveys or because respondents had not evaluated alternatively certified teacher(s) in their role. Thus, the sample represented less than 25% of secondary school principals' perceptions and opinions of the original distribution.

This study was designed to gather the perspectives of secondary school administrators based on teacher evaluations, observations, and experience working with new teachers prepared from a variety of teacher education programs. One could argue these responses could be biased based on personal opinion of alternative teacher programs rather than professional judgment. Additionally, this study was based in Indiana, so the results are limited to perceptions of Indiana secondary school administrators.   There are many factors that could affect the opinions and perspectives of

professional educators, one being the political climate within the state and the nation toward education in 2013.

With 2/3 of the sample responding from a rural school perspective and with only nine respondents from city/urban schools, the results could be affected based on the demographics of the sample. Rural schools generally have smaller enrollments and principal responsibilities in these schools are much different from their urban/city principal counterparts. These small school administrators have more hands-on and direct responsibilities as they become the human resources director, curriculum and instruction director, professional development coordinator, student services advisor, and athletic supervisor. With the differences in administrative expectations, disparate perspectives of teachers and their capabilities are a possibility. However, this rural school perspective is valuable to rural areas seeking to recruit, hire, and retain the most effective teachers.

Within the literature, it was noted that there is not one standard definition for what constitutes an alternative certification program (Abell et. al, 2006). This lack of a standard definition could affect the respondents' perceptions for alternatively certified teachers. There is also the possibility that respondents may not have been aware of the certification pathway for the teachers included in their responses.

Conclusion

As administrators strive to recruit and hire the best teachers for the classroom, the first credential required for consideration is a teaching certificate. A teaching certificate indicates the candidate has met all requirements and prerequisites sufficient to be qualified to teach. In the past, the requirement was earned through traditional teacher

education programs; however, within the past ten years alternative certification programs are available and are an approved pathway to certification. In the state of Indiana, 26 colleges and universities offer programs approved by the Indiana Department of Education and there are nationwide approved programs such as Teach for America, Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellowship, and fellowships similar to the Indianapolis Teacher Fellowship. Additionally, there are over 140 programs nationwide that range from online to for-profit programs. Each of these programs is varied in prerequisites, requirements, and expectations. So in the midst of recruiting new teachers, the administrator must analyze the quality of the candidate based on the teacher education program in which they received certification.

One means of determining teacher effectiveness is to utilize the expertise and experience of building principals who are responsible for observation and evaluations; the professionals who are accountable for the effectiveness of his or her teachers. In this study, secondary school principals' perceptions were obtained to identify any differences between alternatively certified and traditionally educated teachers. In the state of Indiana, building administrators found a significant difference between these two pathways to certification. Traditionally certified teachers were ranked significantly higher in all of the 2011 InTASC Core Teaching Standards in teacher effectiveness and in professional demeanor and attitudes.

However, with teacher shortages especially in specific content areas, finding and placing teachers can be a difficult dilemma. So, rather than eliminate teachers who have obtained certification through alternative pathways, knowing their strengths and weaknesses may assist in not only an administrators willingness to hire but can provide

insight into the areas of developmental need. If we can provide the necessary support early in the first days of teaching, the hope is this will lead to teacher success and ultimately retention.

Principals must seek teachers who are great and find ways to support and provide developmental opportunities for all teachers; the experienced and the inexperienced and the traditionally trained and alternatively certified teachers. Within the literature, Zeichner states, "Good enough teachers should not be good enough for anyone's children" (2006). It will be through ongoing and continuous research with enacted change that our nation will be able to reach the goal of having great teachers in every classroom in our nation.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: E-mail Letter to Participants

Dear School Administrator:

SUBJECT: Alternative Teacher Certification: Secondary School Principals' Perspective
              in Indiana

My name is Jane Newblom and I am a doctoral student in the Department of Educational Studies at Purdue University. My dissertation and study will investigate the perceptions of secondary school administrators regarding the effectiveness of traditional and alternative teacher preparation programs for secondary teachers in the state of Indiana. Additionally, the study will examine the relationship between the type of teacher training and teacher retention rates. In the state of Indiana, school administrators are charged with the responsibility of hiring highly qualified teachers in the midst of teacher shortages due to attrition and retirements. Administrators are then held accountable for the effectiveness, professional development, and support of all teachers. Since principals evaluate all teachers within their schools and make recommendations based on these evaluations, their perspective is valuable in determining the effectiveness of teacher training and preparation; a principal's experience, knowledge, opinion, and perspective is valuable to the future preparation of teachers.

The knowledge gained from this study would be beneficial to administrators in the recruitment of teachers and as they strive to mentor and support all new teachers. It will also provide valuable feedback to both alternative and traditional teacher preparation programs. This is significant as the primary mission for all schools is to hire the most effective teachers to be able to provide the best education possible for our children.

There are no known risks for completing this survey and the survey is voluntary with no costs to you. The survey should take no longer than 15-20 minutes. The responses will not be identifiable by survey participant and will remain anonymous. No identifying information including, names, email addresses or computer IP addresses will be collected nor identifiable in this survey; including your participation or non-participation. The results of the survey may not benefit you directly but may provide information that will help guide current and future teacher training programs.

The following link will provide you access to this survey:

https://purdue.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_bNGb0LGtbmFD4G1

Should you have any questions, issues, or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 317-416-7757 or jnewblom@purdue.edu.

Thank you for participating in this survey. Your perceptions will be valuable and your time is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Jane Newblom, Principal
Sheridan Middle and High Schools

Appendix B: Survey

Default Question Block

General Information

What is your gender?
○ Female
○ Male

What is your current position?
○ Principal
○ Assistant Principal
○ Other
[   ]

How many years have you been a school administrator?
○ Fewer than 5 years
○ 5-9 years
○ 10-14 years
○ 15-25 years
○ 25 years

School Related Information

Which category best describes your school?
Public	Charter	Private
○	○	○

Which category best describes where your school is located?
City/Urban	Suburban	Rural
○	○	○

Which category best describes your school?
○ Middle (6-8)
○ Junior High (7-8)

○ Junior-Senior High (7-12)

○ Freshman Center (9)

○ High School (9-12)

○ Other

[   ]

What is the enrollment of your school?

○ 2500-3950

○ 1800-2499

○ 1300-1799

○ 900-1299

○ 600-899

○ 400-599

○ below 400

Which is the approximate racial and ethnic composition of your student enrollment?

% American Indian or Alaska Native	0
% Asian or Pacific Islander	0
% African American	0
% White/Caucasian	0
% Hispanic	0
% Other	0
Total	0

Teacher Preparation

In your opinion, what is the best model for teacher preparation?

○ Bachelor's degree in education

○ Bachelor's degree with an academic major and a minor in education

○ Bachelor's degree with an academic major followed by a master's degree in education

○ Alternative Certification

○ Other

[   ]

Approximately how many teachers are on staff at your school?

○ 1-20 ○ 21-35 ○ 36-50 ○ 51-75 ○ 75-125 ○ over 126

For the purposes of this study the following definitions should be considered:

Alternative Teacher Certification: Certification is obtained outside of the traditional four-year college or university bachelor's degree in education with content area focus. The teacher is qualified to teach in the state of Indiana at a grade level and in a content or subject area as provided by the alternative teacher certification program completed by the teacher. NOTE: Career Technical Education (CTE) certification should *not* be considered an alternative teacher certification for the purposes of this study.

Traditional Teacher Certification: An approved education-training program offered by a post-secondary college or university that offers a bachelor's degree in education in conjunction with a content or subject area. The program of study aligns to state teacher certification guidelines and includes pre-service teaching and pedagogical coursework requirements.

Alternative Teacher Certification

Approximately how many alternatively certified teachers are currently on staff?

○ Zero (0) ○ 1-5 ○ 6-10 ○ 11-15 ○ 16-20 ○ 20 or more

Approximately how many alternatively certified teachers have been hired in the last five years?

○ Zero (0) ○ 1-5 ○ 6-10 ○ 11-15 ○ 16-20 ○ 20 or more

Approximately how many alternatively certified teachers who were hired within the last five years have resigned, left, or are no longer employed at your school?

All alternatively certified teachers are still on staff	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20 or more	unknown
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

In your opinion, what are some of the primary reason(s) these alternatively certified teachers are no longer employed at your school? Select all that apply.

☐ Opportunity at another school district

☐ Advancement within education (administration, supervisory, counseling)

☐ Career opportunities outside the field of education

☐ Low prestige of the teaching profession

☐ Inadequate academic preparation

☐ Inadequate preparation for instructional expectations and classroom management

☐ Inadequate mentoring or induction in the beginning years of teaching

☐ Low pay

☐ Culture of the school in which the teachers works; lacks peer support, team work, and collegiality

☐ Demands of the job lead to burnout

☐ Lack of personal satisfaction

☐ Non-renewal of contract

☐ Unknown

Traditionally Certified Teachers

How many traditionally certified teachers have been hired in the last five years?

Zero (0)	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20 or more
○	○	○	○	○	○

Approximately how many traditionally certified teachers who were hired within the last five years have left, resigned, are no longer employed at your school?

All traditionally trained teachers hired in the last 5 years are still on staff	1-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	20 or more	unknown
○	○	○	○	○	○	○

In your opinion, what are some of the primary reason(s) these traditionally certified teachers are no longer employed your school? Select all that apply.

☐ Opportunity at another school district

☐ Advancement within education (administration, supervisory, counseling)

☐ Career opportunities outside the field of education

☐ Low prestige of the teaching profession

☐ Inadequate academic preparation

☐ Inadequate preparation for instructional expectations and classroom management

☐ Inadequate mentoring or induction in the beginning years of teaching

☐ Low pay

☐ Culture of the school in which the teachers works; lacks peer support, team work, and collegiality

☐ Demands of the job lead to burnout

☐ Lack of personal satisfaction

☐ Non-renewal of contract

☐ Unknown

Do you currently or have you previously observed and evaluated alternatively certified teachers?

○ Yes

○ No

Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) is a set of ten model core teaching standards that outline what teachers should know and be able to do to ensure every K-12 student reaches the goal of being ready to enter college or the workforce in today's world. These standards outline the common principles and foundations of the teaching practice that are relevant in all subject areas and grade levels. These teaching standards articulate what effective teaching and learning should look like (InTASC, 2011).

Please select the most appropriate indicator on each scale to indicate your level of agreement for alternatively certified teachers and traditionally certified teachers.

Standard #1: Learner Development
The teacher understands how learners grow and develop, recognizing that patterns of learning and development vary individually within and across the cognitive, linguistic, social, emotional, and physical areas, and designs and implements developmentally appropriate and challenging learning experiences.

| | Alternatively Certified Teachers | | | | | Traditionally Certified Teachers | | | | |
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #1: Learner Development	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Standard #2: Learning Differences
The teacher uses understanding of individual differences and diverse cultures and communities and ensures inclusive learning environments that enable each learner to meet high standards.

| | Alternatively Certified Teachers | | | | | Traditionally Certified Teachers | | | | |
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #2: Learning Differences	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Standard #3: Learning Environments
The teacher works with others to create environments that support individual and collaborative learning, and that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement in learning, and self-motivation.

| | Alternatively Certified Teachers | | | | | Traditionally Certified Teachers | | | | |
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #3: Learning Environments	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Standard #4: Content Knowledge
The teacher understand the central concepts, tools of inquiry, and structures of the discipline(s) he or she teaches and creates learning experiences that make these aspects of the discipline accessible and meaningful for learners to assure mastery of the content.

	Alternatively Certified Teachers					Traditionally Certified Teachers				
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #4: Content Knowledge	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Standard #5: Application of Content
The teacher understands how to connect concepts and uses differing perspectives to engage learners in critical thinking, creativity, and collaborative problem solving related to local and global issues.

	Alternatively Certified Teachers					Traditionally Certified Teachers				
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #5: Application of Content	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Standard #6: Assessment
The teacher understands and uses multiple methods of assessment to engage learners in their own growth, to monitor learner progress, and to guide the teacher's and learner's decision making.

	Alternatively Certified Teachers					Traditionally Certified Teachers				
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #6: Assessment	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Standard #7: Planning for Instruction
The teacher plans for instruction that supports every student in meeting rigorous learning goals by drawing upon knowledge of content areas, curriculum, cross-disciplinary skills and pedagogy, as well as knowledge of learners and the community context.

	Alternatively Certified Teachers					Traditionally Certified Teachers				
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #7: Planning for Instruction	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Standard #8: Instructional Strategies
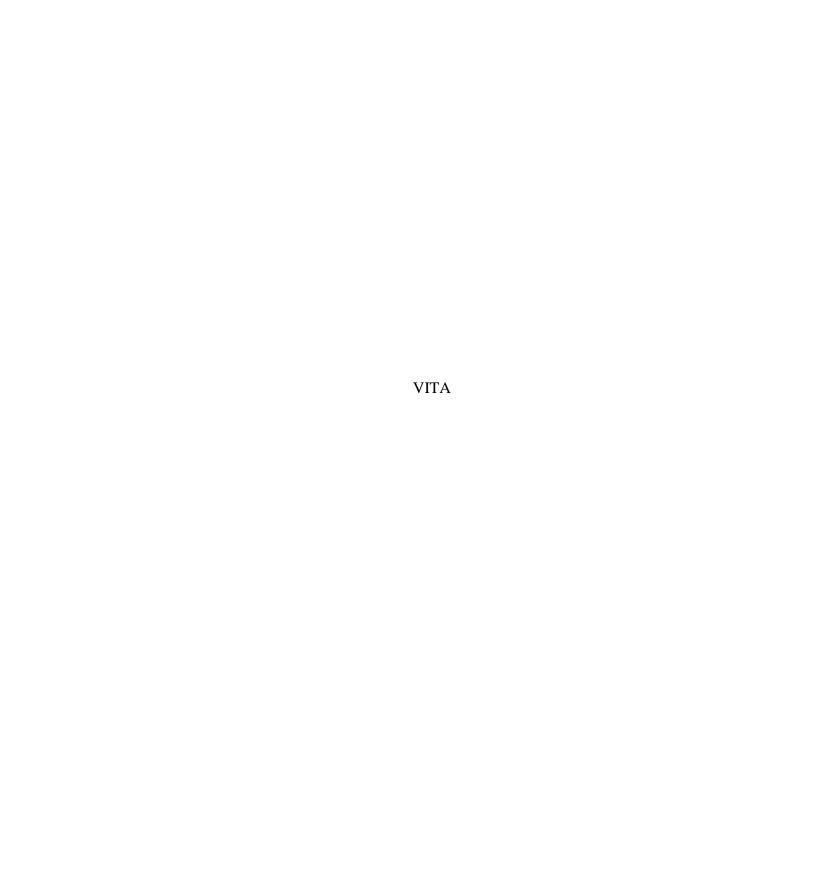The teacher understands and uses a variety of instructional strategies to encourage learners to develop deep

understanding of content areas and their connections and to build skills to apply knowledge in meaningful ways.

	Alternatively Certified Teachers					Traditionally Certified Teachers				
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #8: Instructional Strategies	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice

The teacher engages in ongoing professional learning and uses evidence to continually evaluate his/her practice, particularly the effects of his/her choices and actions on others (learners, families, other professionals, and the community), and adapts practice to meet the needs of each learner.

	Alternatively Certified Teachers					Traditionally Certified Teachers				
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #9: Professional Learning and Ethical Practice	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration

The teacher seeks appropriate leadership roles and opportunities to take responsibility for student learning, to collaborate with learners, families, colleagues, other school professionals, and community members to ensure learner growth, and to advance the profession.

	Alternatively Certified Teachers					Traditionally Certified Teachers				
	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Undecided	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
Standard #10: Leadership and Collaboration	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

The Indiana Department of Education has approved **Transition to Teaching** programs at several Indiana colleges and universities. **Transition to Teaching** is a two-semester program created by Indiana lawmakers to prepare career professionals who already hold a bachelor degrees certification to teach middle or high school classes. Qualified individuals may enroll as non-degree candidates.

Please provide any comments regarding your understandings, experiences, observations, or perceptions of teachers who have obtained certification through a Transition to Teaching program.

The Department of Education also identifies the following three programs as additional pathways to teacher certification: Indianapolis Teaching Fellows; Teach for America; and Woodrow Wilson Teaching Fellows.

Indianapolis Teaching Fellows is a highly selective program that selects, prepares, and coaches accomplished mid-career professionals and college graduates to become teachers in high-need schools and subject areas across Indianapolis and Northwest Indiana. Qualifying teaching Fellows must hold a bachelor's degree with an undergraduate GPA of at least a 3.0 on a 4.0 scale and cannot currently be or ever been a licensed, certified teacher.

Please provide any comments regarding your understandings, experiences, observations, or perceptions of teachers who have obtained certification through the Indianapolis Teaching Fellows program:

Teach for America recruits recent college graduates and professionals of all backgrounds to teach for two years in high need urban and rural public schools. Training is provided for immediate placement into schools with the focus of accelerated change. Candidates to the Teach for America program must hold a bachelor's degree with an undergraduate GPA of at least 2.5 on a 4.0 scale. Other criteria include: a strong belief in the potential for children; leadership ability and interpersonal skills; perseverance and adaptability; organizational, planning, and management skills; and respect for diversity and diverse experiences.

Please provide any comments regarding your understandings, experiences, observations, or perceptions of teachers who have obtained certification through the Teach for America program:

The Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellowship offers recent college graduates and career changers in science, technology, engineering, and math a specially designed master's degree program in exchange for a commitment to teach for three years in high-need secondary urban or rural schools. Four Indiana institutions participate in this selective program: Ball State University, Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis, Purdue University, and University of Indianapolis. Candidates must hold a bachelor's degree in science, technology, engineering, and/or math with a GPA of 3.0 on a 4.0 scale

Please provide any comments regarding your understandings, experiences, observations, or perceptions of teachers who have obtained certification through the Woodrow Wilson Indiana Teaching Fellowship program:

Please provide any additional comments or opinions that pertain to alternatively certified or traditionally certified teachers.

```

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Thank you for completing this survey.

VITA

VITA

Jane C. Newblom

<u>Education</u>

Doctor of Philosophy, Educational Leadership, Purdue University, 2013
Master of Science, Educational Leadership, Indiana University (IUPUI), 2005
Bachelor of Science, Business Education, Chadron State College, 1978

<u>Professional Experience</u>

Principal – Sheridan High and Sheridan Middle Schools, 2012-Present
Sheridan Community Schools, Sheridan, Indiana.

Assistant Principal – Sheridan High School, 2011-2012
Sheridan Community Schools, Sheridan, Indiana

Assistant Principal – Sheridan Middle School, 2006-2011
Sheridan Community Schools, Sheridan, Indiana

Business Education Teacher – Sheridan High School, 2002-2006
Sheridan Community Schools, Sheridan, Indiana

6th/7th Language Arts Teacher – Discovery Middle School, 2000-2002
Penn-Harris-Madison School District, Mishawaka, Indiana

<u>Professional Memberships and Affiliations</u>
Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development
Indiana Association of School Principals
Phi Delta Kappa

<u>Professional Licenses</u>
State of Indiana Professional Educator's License – Administration; All Schools
State of Indiana Teacher's License – Business Education (K-12)