

TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF HOW LEADERSHIP STYLES AND
PRACTICES OF PRINCIPALS INFLUENCE THEIR JOB SATISFACTION
AND RETENTION

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Teachers' Perceptions of How the Leadership Styles and Practices of
Principals Influence Their Job Satisfaction and Retention

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ABSTRACT

Eric M. Denton. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF HOW LEADERSHIP STYLES AND PRACTICES OF PRINCIPALS INFLUENCE THEIR JOB SATISFACTION AND RETENTION. (Under the direction of Dr. Michelle Goodwin) School of Education, July 2009.

This study addresses the challenge principals face in retaining highly qualified and effective teachers in their schools. Although efforts to recruit new teachers have proven successful, teachers are leaving education at alarming rates, especially in the first four years of their careers. The purpose of this study was to identify what school principals can do to increase teachers' job satisfaction and retention. To do so, 12 veteran teachers from four schools were interviewed from February to April 2009. The participants answered questions concerning their levels of job satisfaction, their perceptions of their principals' leadership styles, and their reasons for continuing to teach. The data revealed that principals can increase teachers' job satisfaction and retention rates by encouraging positive and respectful relationships among teachers and their students and among the faculty, staff, and administration; treating teachers as professionals and providing them with opportunities for professional growth; providing teachers with positive feedback; being accessible and listening to teachers; establishing high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance; and supporting the efforts of teachers. This data will increase principals' awareness about what leadership styles and practices can increase the job satisfaction of their teachers and help them retain highly qualified and effective teachers in their schools.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Since the increased emphasis of school accountability that includes highly publicized standardized test results, school report cards, and sanctions for failing schools, educational leaders have had to intensify their efforts to raise student achievement despite the growing needs of the students they serve. Successful school principals have the ability to wade through the myriad of ideas that promise to improve student learning and focus on specific goals and objectives that produce improved achievement. The most significant factor that influences student learning in school classrooms is the quality and commitment of the teachers who provide the instruction. The ability of schools to create and maintain standards of academic excellence and to foster student achievement, therefore, is largely determined by the performance of the teachers they employ. Faced with the daunting task of staffing their schools with effective teachers, administrators must possess a clear understanding of what attracts such teachers to their schools and what motivates them to continue teaching in their schools year after year. This dissertation is a report of how veteran teachers perceive their principals' leadership styles and practices. Its purpose is to determine how principals' leadership can improve teachers' job satisfaction and retention. This study is based on information gleaned from interviews of 12 teachers from public and private elementary, middle, and secondary schools in South Carolina.

The first chapter includes the background of the study, the problem statement, the significance of the study to the field of education, an overview of the methodology, and the delimitations and definitions of the study. Chapter 2 provides a review of the

literature concerning teacher job satisfaction, teacher retention, and the leadership styles of school principals. Chapter 3 explains the qualitative methodology of the study including the general perspective, research context, participants, instruments used, procedures for collection and analysis of the data, as well as methods for ensuring the trustworthiness of the study. Chapter 4 reports the findings from interviews of 12 veteran elementary, middle, and secondary teachers from one private and three public schools in South Carolina. The final chapter discusses the conclusions drawn from the study and includes an introduction, restatement of the problem, review of the methodology, and a summary of the results.

The Background of the Study

To meet the expectation of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 that every classroom has a highly qualified teacher by 2005-2006, public school administrators have been faced with the task of recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers. In December of 2005, just months before the deadline, only 11 percent of states responding to a survey reported that all of their teachers were highly qualified (Center on Educational Policy, 2006, p. 155). Although private school administrators are not required to comply with the No Child Left Behind legislation, they often have limited budgets for teacher salaries and benefits, which exacerbate the challenge of recruiting and retaining committed and qualified teachers in their schools. Small private schools have also been identified as having a high rate of teacher turnover. Between the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years, over 19 percent of private school teachers moved to different schools or quit teaching, while 16.5 percent of public school teachers switched schools or left teaching (Marvel, J., Lyter, D., Peltola, P., Strizek, G., & Morton, B., 2007, p. 7). Of the teachers who moved to other schools, 39 percent of public and 33 percent of private

school movers said the opportunity for a better teaching assignment was very important to them. Of the teachers who left teaching, 25 percent of public and 30 percent of private school leavers said that pursuing another position other than that of teaching K-12 was very important (Marvel, J. et al., 2007, p. 3). Many successful efforts, such as offering signing bonuses, college loan forgiveness plans, alternative certification routes, and programs like Teach for America and Troops-to-Teachers, have been made to assist in the recruitment of new teachers and to encourage bright students to pursue careers in education (Ingersoll, 2001). America showed a tremendous increase in the number of people entering the teaching profession during the 1990s. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), the number of students earning bachelor's and master's degrees in education increased by over 50 percent from 1984 to 1999 (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003). However, much less attention has been given to the more crucial challenge of retaining promising teachers once they have begun their teaching careers.

Teacher shortages are not new phenomena as there have been times in the last fifty years when the demand for teachers was greater than the supply (Cochran-Smith, 2004). In the past school districts have most often increased their recruiting efforts to combat teacher shortages; however, teacher retention has been identified as the most significant challenge of late (Cochran-Smith, 2004). In the early 1990s, the teacher attrition rate in the United States was 14 percent (Ingersoll, 2001). Research suggests that up to two million teachers will be needed to meet the demands of growing enrollment and high teacher attrition rates in the near future (Kelley, 2004). Texas had 63,300 teacher vacancies for the 1999-2000 school year. Many of these vacancies were caused by the loss of 22 percent of Texas teachers who left the profession. In 2003 the

Texas Teacher Demand Study indicated that 5,000 special education teachers would be needed to fill vacancies in elementary and high schools in Texas (Otto & Arnold, 2005). Teacher turnover appears to be the greatest in small private schools and high-poverty public schools (Ingersoll, 2001).

Since the 1996 publication of NCTAF's *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*, "...the nation has reached a consensus that well-prepared teachers are the most valuable resource a community can provide to its young people" (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003). Although the awareness of the importance of effective teachers has risen in America during the last decade, and more people are entering the teaching profession than ever before, rising student enrollment and teacher attrition have rendered America ill equipped to provide its young people with such essential resources as highly qualified teachers. According to NCTAF the number of people entering the teaching profession rose from 176,344 in 1987 to 232,232 in 1999; however, the number of teachers leaving the profession has increased from 172,645 in 1987 to 287,370 in 1999 (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003). Fifty percent of teachers who taught in the 1990s are expected to retire between 2000 and 2010, and "fledgling teachers are fleeing at astronomical rates, particularly in economically challenged urban areas" (Easley, 2006, p. 241). Teachers in highly specialized areas such as math, science, and special education are the most likely to leave the teaching profession; therefore, vacancies in those areas prove quite difficult to fill. Schools with large percentages of minority and low income students have the most difficulties retaining a stable staff of qualified teachers (Easley, 2006).

The Problem Statement

As efforts to recruit more people into the teaching profession have proven to be successful, determining how to keep high-quality teachers in the classrooms providing meaningful and effective instruction has remained an enigma. Not only does teacher turnover present significant staffing problems for administrators, but it also has a strong relationship to the performance of schools (Ingersoll, 2001). The problem educational leaders face is not the number of people entering the teaching profession; it is the number of people leaving teaching prematurely. Too many classrooms are staffed by teachers who lack the required credentials and experience to be deemed highly qualified by their states. The purpose of this study is to identify teachers' perceptions of how leadership styles and practices of their principals can improve their levels of job satisfaction and likelihood of continuing to teach in their schools. The study will attempt to answer the following questions: 1) What factors have increased or decreased teachers' job satisfaction? 2) How do teachers perceive the leadership styles of their principals? 3) What, if any, specific leadership practices of principals have encouraged teacher retention and job satisfaction?

The Professional Significance of the Study

Much has been written about the importance of increasing teacher salaries to attract and retain the brightest and most talented teachers, but that is most often left for states and local school boards to determine. Many factors have been identified as influencing teacher job satisfaction and retention, and salary is often at the top of the lists. In most public school settings, school principals have little control over teacher salaries. Private school leaders, on the other hand, may have more input in determining teacher salaries, but they are often plagued by smaller budgets for salaries. Although school

administrators do not always have more money at their disposal to offer lucrative bonuses or raises, the literature indicates there are many factors that they can control that influence teacher job satisfaction and retention. In addition to compensation, student discipline problems, school leadership, professional support, school climate, and working conditions are also cited as affecting teachers' job satisfaction (Liu & Meyer, 2005). The principal's leadership style and the organizational structure of the school can also have significant effects on teacher retention (Billingsley & Cross, 1992). When school leaders improve working conditions in their schools by seeking teacher input in decision making and offering sufficient administrator support, teachers are more likely to want to stay in those schools (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007). Effective teacher induction programs that help beginning teachers make a smooth transition into their profession and prevent them from feeling as if they have been left alone to sink or swim also encourage retention (Day, Stobart, Sammons, & Kington, 2006). On the other hand, poor administrative support, inappropriate principal leadership style, and lack of organizational structure of the school can have negative influences on teacher retention (Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler, 2005).

Overview of the Methodology

Letters (see Appendix B) were sent to principals in four schools in South Carolina asking their permission to interview veteran teachers in their schools who have taught for a minimum of five years. The schools were selected purposely to allow the researcher ease of access, closeness of proximity, and school diversity. They included one private K-12 school, one public elementary school, one public middle school, and one public high school. Since a large percentage of teachers leave teaching within their first five years in the profession (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003), the administrators were asked to identify teachers in those areas who have taught for at least five years. The teachers in

the sample were interviewed by the researcher and asked standardized, open-ended questions pertaining to the leadership practices and styles of their principals. They were asked to explain which practices and styles have encouraged them to continue teaching at their schools and which practices and styles of their principals have caused them to consider leaving a teaching position. An interview guide (see Appendix A) was used to direct each interview; however, the interviewer maintained the right to vary the wording and sequence of the questions to maintain a conversational tone. The interview guide ensured that the same issues were explored in each interview, but it allowed each interview to take place as the conversations progressed.

The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. They were written in the form of narratives to allow the researcher to analyze the responses of the teachers in the sample to determine common themes that would help administrators determine how their leadership styles and practices improve teachers' job satisfaction and retention. Common themes from the interviews were identified and coded. They were organized according to their frequencies to determine the conclusions of the study. The conclusions were based on the participants' perspectives about if and how their principals' leadership styles and practices have had significant positive impacts on their job satisfaction and willingness to continue teaching at their schools.

Delimitations and Definitions of the Study

This study was limited to the information provided by a sample of twelve teachers from four schools in South Carolina who were interviewed using a systematic interview protocol over a period of three months. Its conclusions focus on teachers' perceptions of specific leadership practices and styles that they view as encouraging their desire to continue teaching in their particular schools.

To help the reader understand this study, there are some important terms that must be defined. The terms and working definitions for how they are used in this study are as follows:

Affiliative leader- a leader who unites followers in harmonious relationships.

Authoritative leader- a confident leader who mobilizes followers to realize his or her vision by providing clear direction.

Coaching leader- a leader who develops followers for the future by providing instruction and encouragement.

Coercive leader- a leader who demands followers to comply with his or her policies and directives.

Democratic leader- a leader who solicits input and builds consensus by encouraging followers to participate in decision making.

Highly qualified teachers- teachers who meet the certification requirements of their states.

Pacesetter leader- a leader who motivates followers by setting high standards for performance and leading by example.

Teacher attrition- the movement of teachers away from the teaching profession due to retirement or moving to another profession.

Teacher migration- the movement of teachers from their schools to other teaching positions.

Teacher retention- the act of teachers remaining in teaching at their current schools.

Teacher turnover- the movement of teachers from teaching in their schools for any reason.

Transactional leader- a leader who is characterized by being authoritative, creating high expectations, monitoring employees to identify their mistakes, rewarding those who do as they are told, disciplining those who do not, and controlling their employees through a reward/discipline system.

Transformational leader- a leader who is characterized by having charisma, developing and clearly articulating vision, building consensus, inspiring others to share the vision and to sacrifice to make it a reality, and empowering others.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

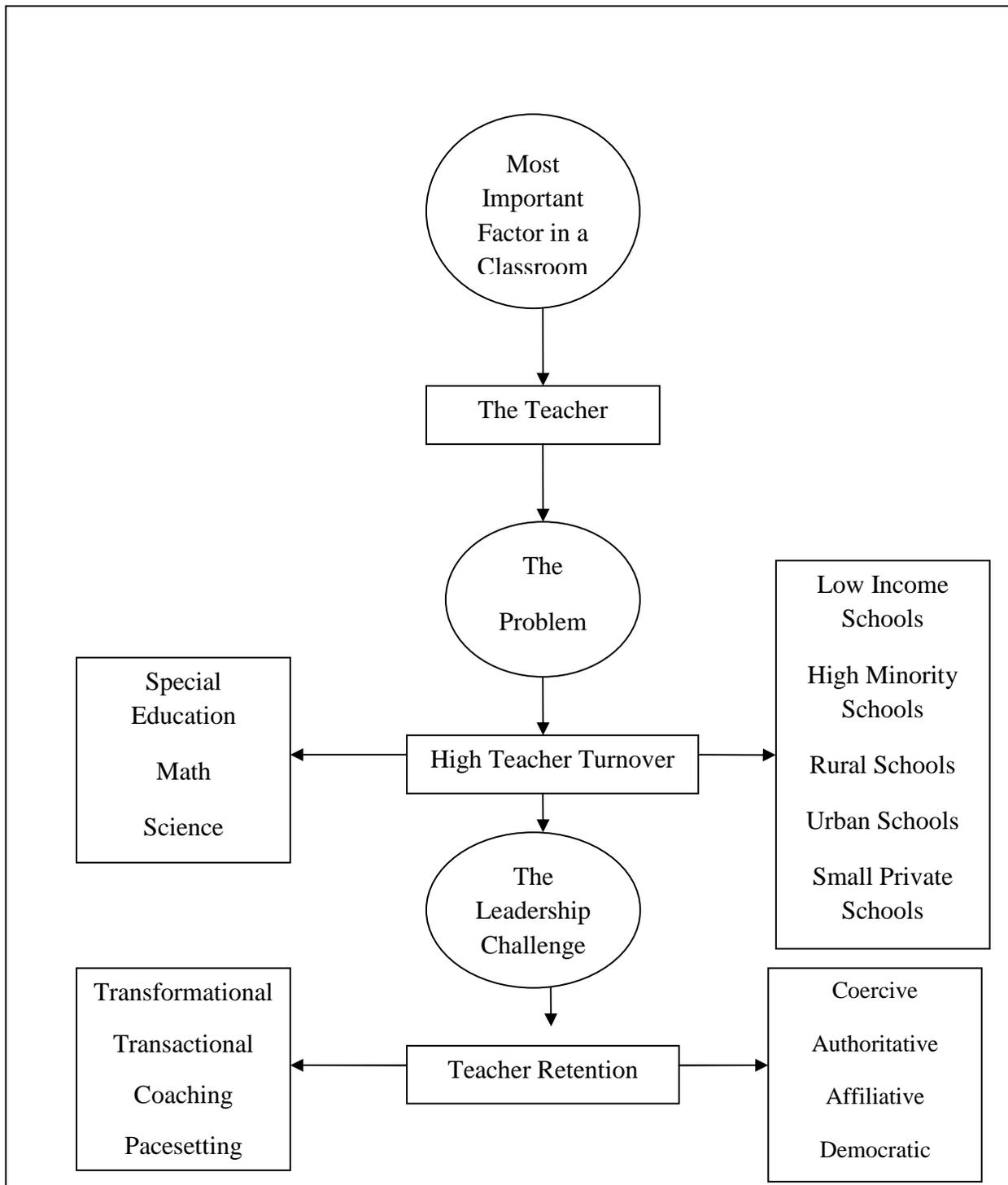
Much has been written concerning the problem of retaining highly effective and qualified teachers in schools. In addition, many studies have been conducted to study the effectiveness of various leadership practices and styles exhibited by school principals. This literature will provide the basis for this study of how teachers perceive their principals' leadership styles and practices in relation to their job satisfaction and retention. This chapter begins with examining literature that identifies the need to have highly qualified and effective teachers in every classroom. Next, it reviews the literature that explains the existing problem of retaining highly qualified and effective teachers, including the areas of greatest need. It then analyzes the literature concerning teacher job satisfaction. The review concludes by discussing the literature relating to leadership practices and styles of school principals and other organizational leaders, and then by providing a summary of the literature.

Figure 1 provides a visual representation of the framework of this literature review. It begins by establishing the importance of having highly qualified and committed teachers in every classroom. Although many factors contribute to student achievement or lack of achievement, the teacher in the classroom is one of the most important, if not the most important, factor in determining student achievement. The problem is that many school leaders face alarming teacher turnover rates every year due to the large percentages of teachers leaving their schools or the teaching profession altogether. The literature shows that schools most likely to have significant turnover rates include rural and urban public schools with high poverty rates and/or high percentages of minority students. Small private schools are also likely to experience high

teacher turnover rates. According to the literature, teachers of special education, math, and science are the most difficult to retain. Retaining strong teachers, especially in those content areas, presents a considerable challenge to principals and other educational leaders. Literature describing the causes of the teacher retention problem will also be examined. The literature provides many examples of leadership styles and practices that have proven successful in increasing employee job satisfaction in education as well as in other areas. Leadership styles and practices discussed in this review include those described as transactional, transformational, coercive, authoritative, affiliative, democratic, pacesetter, and coaching. Mixtures of the above styles, as well as other leadership styles, will be examined. Literature explaining specific leadership practices and strategies that are characteristic of the various styles will also be explored. A thorough examination of the literature that relates to the challenge of retaining effective teachers will provide insight into the reasons teachers leave their schools and their careers in teaching, as well as the reasons teachers choose to remain in their classrooms providing instruction. In addition, the literature that pertains to organizational leadership will illuminate leadership styles and strategies that encourage employee job satisfaction and retention.

Table 1

Framework of the Literature Review



The Importance of Highly Committed and Qualified Teachers

The most significant factor in determining student achievement is the quality of the teacher providing instruction. In their 1996 report *What Matters Most: Teaching for America's Future*, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future challenged America to provide "competent, caring, qualified teachers in schools organized for success" by 1996 (p. 4). In addition they said, "the nation has reached a consensus that well-prepared teachers are the most valuable resource a community can provide to its young people" (p. 4). In their 2003 summary report *No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children*, the members of NCTAF, which include noteworthy educators, politicians, experts in child development, business executives, and other leaders, detailed characteristics of highly qualified beginning teachers:

When we speak of "highly qualified beginning teachers," we mean teachers who: possess a deep understanding of the subjects they teach; evidence a firm understanding of how students learn; demonstrate the teaching skills necessary to help all students achieve high standards; create a positive learning environment; use a variety of assessment strategies to diagnose and respond to individual learning needs; demonstrate and integrate modern technology into the school curriculum to support student learning; collaborate with colleagues, parents and community members, and other educators to improve student learning; reflect on their practice to improve future teaching and student achievement; pursue professional growth in both content and pedagogy; and instill a passion for learning in their students. (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003, p. 5)

No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America's Children (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003), reaffirms the belief that quality teaching is the most essential ingredient to successful students and schools, and the authors identify the essential staffing problem in schools as being teacher retention and not teacher recruitment. School administrators should be asking, "How many teachers left last spring—and why?" (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003, p. 8). Teaching has become a "revolving door" profession (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003, p. 11). The key element to retaining teachers, according to NCTAF, is finding ways to organize schools so that teachers can collaborate with their colleagues in professional learning communities where teaching and learning flourish (2003).

When addressing the need to improve American students' achievement in science, Wojnowski, Bellamy, and Cooke (2003) stated, "The only way to combat the problem of low student achievement is to improve the quality of science teaching in America's schools" (p. 24). Johnson, Kahle, and Fargo (2006) add that student achievement in science is higher "when students experience effective standards-based instruction compared to students in traditional science classrooms" (p. 373). Their study of teacher effectiveness and student achievement in science showed that only grade level and teacher effectiveness were reliable predictors of student achievement scores. They found that students with the most effective teachers scored higher on achievement tests than did those who were taught by neutral or ineffective teachers during each of the three years of their study. They also found that students who had ineffective teachers after having effective teachers suffered a setback in achievement. They concluded that effective teaching is the most essential factor in determining student achievement.

When studying student achievement in reading, Duffy-Hester (1999) questioned the relationship of theory regarding reading instruction and teachers' practice of reading instruction. She said, "I am convinced that the teacher is more important and has greater impact than any single, fixed reading program, method, or approach" (p. 492). She found that many elementary teachers felt unsure of how to assist struggling readers; however, the most effective reading teachers are the ones who research proven, balanced literacy programs and establish their own beliefs and practices in their teaching of reading. They make instructional decisions based on both research and practice. According to Blair, Rupley, and Nichols (2007), research shows that the reading achievement of students is highly influenced by the quality of their reading teachers' methods and belief systems. In addition to using sound methods of instruction and assessment, they found that effective reading teachers believed that they could teach their students how to read. Blair, Rupley, and Nichols (2007) also cited research that showed that effective teachers use explicit instruction to teach their students. They effectively imparted new knowledge to their students through direct interactions with them.

Kati Haycock (1998), director of The Education Trust, reported the results of research in Tennessee, Texas, and Massachusetts about the relationship between teacher effectiveness and student achievement. This research determined that good teaching does make a difference. Tennessee teachers were rated in five quines based on their effectiveness in helping their students make learning gains. The most effective teachers produced learning gains of 53 percent points, while the least effective teachers produced gains of only 14 percentage points in a school year. Distinct differences were also shown with middle and high achieving students. Those with the most effective teachers scored significantly higher than those with the least effective teachers. The Tennessee results

also showed that the effects of teachers are long term. Two years after being in third grade, the fifth graders scores reflected the quality of their third grade teacher. In Dallas, Texas, fourth graders who were taught by highly effective teachers for three consecutive years improved from the 59th percentile to the 76th percentile in reading by the end of the sixth grade. On the other hand, students who were taught by highly ineffective teachers for three consecutive years dropped from the 60th percentile to the 42nd percentile in reading. In three years a gap of over 34 percentile points developed among students who began at almost the same level of achievement. In math the gap was over 50 percentile points between those taught for three consecutive years by highly effective teachers and those taught by ineffective teachers. In Boston, the researchers charted the progress of tenth graders who began the year at about the same level. Students taught by the top one-third of teachers gained 5.6 points while those taught by the bottom third of teachers showed no gain. In math, students taught by the top one-third of teachers gained 14.6 points while those taught by the bottom third of teachers showed no growth. Haycock goes on to report research findings of characteristics of effective teachers: 1) strong verbal and math skills, 2) deep knowledge of content, and 3) teaching skill. Whether the subject is reading, science, math, or history, the literature is clear that highly qualified and effective teachers are essential to raising student achievement and that efforts must be taken to ensure that every classroom is led by a teacher who is equipped to provide quality instruction.

The Problem of Teacher Attrition

John Merrow (1999) emphasized the problem of teacher attrition: “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 attrition” (p. 48). According

to Mary Cochran-Smith (2004), many people enter the teaching profession for idealistic reasons of making the world a better place and providing children with opportunities to be productive citizens. They love children, and they love learning. These reasons and attitudes have not proven to be enough to sustain people in the teaching profession. She explained,

To stay in teaching, today's – and tomorrow's – teachers need school conditions where they are successful and supported, opportunities to work with other educators in professional learning communities rather than in isolation, differentiated leadership and advancement prospects during the course of the career, and good pay for what they do (p. 391).

Although much has been done to recruit new teachers into the profession, keeping them in education has proven to be much more of a challenge. Educational entities have instituted initiatives such as career-change programs, alternative certification programs, recruitment of international teachers, signing bonuses, housing allowances, tuition reimbursement, and student loan forgiveness incentives (Hirsch, Koppich, & Knapp, 2001). These efforts are necessary; however, they will not solve the staffing problems that school administrators face because of the vast numbers of teachers who leave their classrooms to pursue other careers or more appealing teaching situations at other schools. Snyder, Hoffman, and Geddes (1997) report that both teacher retirements and student enrollment have increased since 1984. Ingersoll and Smith (2003) recognize the significance of the increase of teacher retirement on the problem of school staffing, but they conclude that “a larger part of the problem is teacher attrition—which is particularly high among teachers in their first few years of service” (p. 30). Although efforts to

recruit more people into the teaching profession have been successful, the large number of teachers who are leaving teaching far outnumber the new recruits.

The Teacher Retention Challenge

The inability of school districts to retain bright, committed, and enthusiastic people in the teaching field is not a new problem. The November 16, 1962 issue of *Life* magazine reported, “Too many will quit permanently because they are fed up. Their ambition and self-respect will take them into business or other professions.... They leave behind an increasing proportion of tired time-servers” (Tye & O’Brien, 2002). As a profession, teaching has historically been infamous for the relatively low compensation it offers; however, it has attracted those who love children and who want to have a positive impact on their lives. Educational sociologists, according to Ingersoll (2001) have said as early as 1925 that the development of a close-knit community is an indicator of a successful school; however, Ingersoll found that small private schools, which are more likely to be characterized as close-knit communities, are most susceptible to teacher turnover. He explained, “Since the teaching force in the United States is predominantly female, turnover was taken for granted because women frequently left the field to raise families” (Jalongo & Heider, 2006, p. 379). Except during periods of declining enrollment in the late 1970s and early 1980s, teacher shortages have been prevalent during much of the twentieth century in areas experiencing population growth (Dove, 2004). Researchers predicted that severe teacher shortages in elementary and secondary schools were eminent due to a “graying” teacher force and rising teacher attrition (Ingersoll, 2001). In *Finders and Keepers: Helping New Teachers Survive and Thrive in Our Schools* (2004), Susan Moore Johnson and the other members of Project on the Next Generation of Teachers from Harvard’s Graduate School of Education studied fifty new

teachers during their first year of teaching. They describe the rise of a “perfect storm” created by the large number of teacher retirements, growing student enrollment, mandated reduction of class sizes, and the requirements of the No Child Left Behind legislation. In 2001 the National Education Association reported that 38 percent of teachers had over twenty years experience, which indicates that a large percentage of teachers will be retired by 2010 (Johnson, S.M., 2004, p. 5). Many career teachers who entered teaching in the sixties and seventies have already retired or are soon approaching retirement. Student enrollment increased tremendously during the 1990s. In Nevada the student population grew by 69 percent; in Arizona, it grew by 37 percent (Johnson, S.M., 2004, p. 3). These circumstances point to a growing discrepancy between the numbers of school-age children and the number of qualified teachers. According to the researchers, U.S. public schools must recruit, support, and retain 2.2 million new teachers between 2004 and 2014 (Johnson, S.M., 2004, p. 4).

One of the most prolific researchers on the topic of teacher retention of late is Richard M. Ingersoll of the University of Pennsylvania. In his 2001 study, “Teacher Turnover, Teacher Shortages, and the Organization of Schools,” Ingersoll states, “One of the pivotal causes of inadequate school performance is the inability of schools to adequately staff classrooms with qualified teachers” (p. 3). Ingersoll found that school staffing problems were not necessarily the results of an insufficient number of teachers, but from the demand for teachers caused by a “revolving door” of teachers leaving their jobs “for reasons other than retirement” (p. 5). In addition, he found that teachers were leaving the profession due to “low salaries, inadequate support from school administration, student discipline problems, and limited faculty input into school decision-making” (p. 3). Public schools in high poverty areas and small private schools

suffer the most teacher turnover; whereas, neither urban public schools nor large public schools have significantly high teacher turnover. Teachers in high poverty schools and in small private schools are 17 percent more likely to leave their teaching positions than are other teachers. Teachers in rural and suburban schools are slightly less likely to leave than teachers in urban schools while secondary teachers are less likely to leave than elementary teachers. An enrollment increase of 100 students decreases the odds of teachers leaving. Ingersoll also identified age as a factor in teacher retention. Younger teachers and older teachers are more likely to leave education, but those between thirty and fifty are more likely to settle into their teaching careers. Ingersoll's 2001 study also linked employee turnover to the performance of organizations. Effective organizations usually have a well-managed turnover that brings in new employees with fresh energy and novel ideas to help the organization avoid becoming stagnant. Too much turnover leads to dysfunction and subpar performance by organizations (Ingersoll, 2001).

Areas of Greatest Need

The unfortunate trend in education is that the most needy students often have the least qualified and effective teachers. "The pattern is cyclical, as the least prepared teachers—many teaching out of their content area or without teaching certification—are hired for difficult-to-fill positions in low-performing schools" (Johnson, C., Kahle, J., & Fargo, J., 2006, p. 1). In a survey by the Center on Education Policy (2006), 24 states reported difficulties recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers in middle and high school math, science, and special education. Urban schools, such as the Chicago Public Schools and the Cleveland Municipal School District, as well as rural schools such as those on Kodiak Island, Alaska, reported significant problems staffing schools with teachers who met the requirements of No Child Left Behind. The Kodiak Island District

had to go as far as employing Internet-based teachers for some upper-level subjects. States reported that providing highly qualified teachers in special education under the No Child Left Behind guidelines was their most significant problem area as they require those teachers to be highly qualified in both special education and the core content areas they teach. Clark County, Nevada, serves 280,840 students of whom 44 percent are low income. In addition to having difficulties staffing their classrooms with math, science, and special education teachers, they also reported great difficulty in recruiting and retaining teachers in bilingual education. Schools identified as being hard to staff, typically those serving large percentages of minority or poor students, cited several causes for their difficulties including school conditions, lower pay, safety concerns, lower student achievement, and longer commutes. The teachers with the most experience and qualifications, on the contrary, choose to work “in schools serving wealthy, high achieving, and white students” (Center on Education Policy, 2006, p. 158). Districts such as Berkeley County, which serves students from the outskirts of Charleston to very rural schools in South Carolina, have opted to provide professional development funding particularly for teachers in rural schools with high poverty rates. Teachers at those schools are offered financial incentives to pursue advanced degrees as long as they serve those schools for at least three years (Center on Education Policy, 2006).

In his article for *Science Educator*, Ingersoll (2003) focuses on the problem secondary school principals have in securing and retaining qualified science and math teachers who can often earn more money in other fields. Science and math teachers represent 11 percent of the entire teaching force in elementary and secondary schools. Although they gave similar reasons for leaving teaching as other teachers did, forty percent of math and science teachers said they left teaching due to dissatisfaction with

their jobs; whereas, 29 percent of all teachers listed job dissatisfaction as their main reason for leaving (p. 4). The most common reasons for their dissatisfaction include low salaries, 78.5 percent; discipline problems with students, 34.9 percent; lack of administrator support, 26.1 percent; lack of student motivation, 17 percent; and lack of input in school decision making, 6 percent. Factors such as large classes, interruptions of instruction, lack of planning time, and few opportunities for professional advancement, on the other hand, were not commonly related to teacher turnover (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, p. 4). Retirement accounts for a very small portion of science and math teachers leaving; school staffing decisions account for a larger portion, but the largest portion of science and math teachers leave because of job dissatisfaction or to pursue better professional opportunities (Ingersoll, 2003).

In addition to science and math teachers, special education teachers have also proven to be very difficult to recruit and retain in schools. The Individuals with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the subsequent reauthorization requires that all children with special needs receive free and appropriate education. More children are being identified as having special needs now than ever before; however, the number of qualified special educators is significantly decreasing. Due to concern with the shortage of special education teachers in Texas, Otto & Arnold (2005) studied the perceptions of veteran special education teachers concerning the amount of administrative support they received. Texas had a state-wide attrition rate of 22 percent. A fourth of those receiving teaching credentials did not take jobs in teaching within two years after being certified, and about one-half of new teachers in Texas leave teaching within the first five years. Special education teachers in Texas described lack of administrative support as a primary reason why they leave the profession. Many of them felt that administrators lacked

understanding of students with special needs as well as sufficient knowledge of special education laws. In addition, they felt “stressed, overworked, and underappreciated” when they did not receive necessary support from their administrators (Otto & Arnold, 2005, p. 257). Special education teachers revealed that they need more time to complete all of the necessary paperwork and to collaborate with other teachers. They expressed a need to reduce their caseloads, to provide meaningful professional development opportunities, and to have the necessary technology and resources for their students. The researchers found a distinct difference between the perceptions of special education teachers with fewer than five years experience and those who were more experienced regarding administrative support. Sixty-nine percent of experienced special education teachers indicated satisfaction with the amount of support they received from their administrators, which is quite a contrast to the literature’s description of the perceptions of beginning teachers (Otto & Arnold, 2005).

Causes of High Teacher Attrition

The literature reveals that younger teachers are more likely to leave education than are teachers in the middle of their careers. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, 9.3 percent of public school teachers fail to complete their first year of teaching before they leave the profession. Over 20 percent of public school teachers in America leave teaching within their first three years (Dove, 2004). Susan Moore Johnson (2004) distinguishes between the expectations of contemporary teachers and those who entered the profession in the 1960s and 1970s. “They expect to be paid well... for the important work they do. They expect variety in what they do with differentiated roles and opportunities to advance in the profession. They want a chance to collaborate with colleagues and to work in organizations that support them” (p. xii).

Schlichte, Yssel, and Merbler (2005) interviewed five novice special education teachers about their first year teaching experiences. Their findings indicated that to be successful, new teachers need strong relationships with an experienced mentor teacher as well as with supportive administrators. To deal with the many stressors of teaching, beginning teachers indicated that they benefited from being assigned buddy teachers. Developing positive relationships with students also helped first-year special education teachers to continue teaching. Establishing these relationships helped them to develop strong support networks that encouraged retention. Darling-Hammond (2003) identified low salaries, unsatisfactory working conditions, inadequate preparation, and lack of mentoring as the four most prevalent reasons for teachers leaving the profession. Increased accountability, paperwork, and pressures related to high stakes testing have also been found to adversely affect teacher retention (Tye & O'Brien, 2002). In addition to low levels of pay, high workload and poor job status are common reasons for teachers leaving the profession (Butt, Lance, Fielding, Gunter, Rayner, & Thomas, 2005). On the other hand, they identified working with children, the intellectual challenge of teaching, and autonomy as contributing to the job satisfaction of teachers. Ware and Kitsantas (2007) linked teacher efficacy, "the extent to which a teacher feels capable to help students learn," to teachers' commitment to continuing in their teaching careers (p. 303).

In their study "Oh, Won't You Stay," Strunk and Robinson (2006) researched reasons why so many leave the teaching profession. One theory they discuss is the "opportunity wage theory," which suggests that teachers of subjects such as math or science are more likely to leave teaching because they have a higher market value outside of education. Although their research failed to support the premise that math and science teachers were more likely to leave teaching, they did find that foreign language teachers

had a high attrition rate possibly due to the growth of a global economy that demands international communication. English and social science teachers, on the other hand, were less likely to quit teaching perhaps due to limited opportunities to earn more in other fields. Vocational teachers also exhibited low attrition rates. One of their most significant findings was that teachers certified in their teaching fields are less likely to leave education. The researchers postulate that this may be due to their investment of earning their certification. Strunk and Robinson found no significant evidence that gender plays a role in determining attrition rates. They did find that experience is a strong predictor of teacher attrition. Teachers in their first four years of teaching are much more likely to quit teaching than those who are more experienced. The probability of attrition for teachers with zero to two years experience was .174 while the probability of attrition for teachers with three to four years of experience was .177. Teachers with five to ten years experience had a .120 likelihood of leaving education. Teachers with advanced degrees were not found to be significantly more likely to leave teaching although they were more likely to leave. The researchers suggest this may be related to the opportunity wage theory since those with higher degrees are likely to have more opportunities to earn higher wages. Although they expected to find teachers in rural areas to be less likely to leave their jobs due to a lack of other opportunities, the researchers found that school location did not play a significant role in determining teacher attrition. Strunk and Robinson did find, as expected, that higher teaching salaries meant lower attrition rates, and teachers were less likely to leave larger schools possibly because of larger support staffs and fewer additional duties. Their research findings support the social identity theory that teachers are more likely to leave schools with high minority populations. They suggest that this finding has less to do with racial bias and

more to do with people being more comfortable around others of similar races and ethnic backgrounds.

According to the literature, those who suffer most from the paucity of well-prepared teachers are low income students. Low income students are more likely to be taught by inexperienced and unqualified teachers. Large urban schools with the highest percentages of low-income and minority students have the highest percentages of first-year teachers and teachers with fewer than five years experience as well as the lowest percentages of proven, veteran teachers. “Excessive teacher turnover in low-income urban and rural communities undermines teaching quality and student achievement” (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2003). In a California survey, teachers reported that high-minority, low-income schools were characterized by poor working conditions that included large classes, inadequate facilities, insufficient support staff, and a lack of availability of textbooks and supplemental materials. The survey found that teachers’ decisions to leave these schools were more strongly influenced by poor working conditions and lower salaries than by the student composition of the schools (NCTAF, 2003). Teacher turnover was found to be 50 percent higher in high poverty schools than in schools characterized as low poverty schools, and teachers in urban schools are more likely to leave than are those in suburban schools (Dove, 2004). According to the authors of *No Dream Denied: A Pledge to America’s Children*,

The impact of high teacher turnover in low-income and high-minority schools falls directly on students because, for them, a churning faculty creates a true no-win situation. Having lost one or more of their teachers, they are forced to sit in classrooms taught by unqualified replacements or short-term substitutes, daily diminishing their chances of achieving a quality education (NCTAF, 2003).

Cochran-Smith (2004) also cites evidence that teacher attrition most severely affects schools located in low income rural and urban communities, “where students arguably deserve the best teachers and the most continuity in their schooling” (p. 12). Such low income schools remain in a constant state of discontinuity in which they must recruit and hire a large percentage of teachers each year, and many of those teachers hired are inexperienced and lack the credentials of those who leave. According to Cochran-Smith, classes in low income schools are often staffed with willing, but unqualified and/or inexperienced, adults to the detriment of their students.

The Development of School Leadership Roles

Bottery (2001) cites the work of Grace (1995) that traced the development of the headteacher’s leadership role in schools in England. Headteachers in the nineteenth century had the roles of “social control and the transmission of upper and middle-class moral, spiritual and cultural values” (Bottery, 2001, p. 209). Until the end of World War II, the headteacher’s primary role was to control teachers and students and to require their subordination. From the 1940s to the 1980s, they were given much autonomy, which encouraged innovation in curriculum and instruction, and they continued in the role of the “trusted standard-bearer” in their schools. By the mid-1990s, the role of the headteacher required more public relations and marketing. He or she had to have more business savvy of a chief executive officer than the moral and scholarly characteristics of headteachers of earlier times. According to Bottery, this transformation of school leadership roles greatly limits the possibilities of true transformational leadership. More recently, however, with the implementation of a national curriculum, benchmark testing, student standards, and school evaluation in England, headteachers have had to become adept strategists who examine student data and foster school improvement based on the

trends of that data. They have been identified as being the essential factor in school improvement. Effective headteachers are able to transform schools into successful teaching and learning communities, while ineffective headteachers inhibit the progress and success of schools (Bottery, 2001).

Korkmaz (2007) studied the effects of leadership style on the organizational health of schools in Turkey. He cited studies that relate the dissatisfaction of teachers to low salaries, lack of resources, inappropriate administrative leadership styles, and job-related stress. In addition, he cites studies that attribute strong correlations between the principal's leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. He said, "In many respects, the principal is the most important and influential individual in the school. It is his or her leadership that shapes the school's learning climate, the level of relationship between staff, and the teacher morale" (p. 25). Leaders with transformational styles have a positive influence on teacher job satisfaction because they encourage innovation that leads to climates more conducive to learning and positive relationship among administrators, teachers, and students.

Johnson (2004) describes the need for school leaders to reform their schools into more effective learning communities in which teachers have the opportunity to learn and grow as professionals. She illustrates how schools have not changed much from the days of the one-room school house in which one teacher worked in isolation to educate students from multiple grade levels. As student enrollment grew in the mid-nineteenth century, larger schools were developed, but they functioned as a cluster of one-room school houses in which teachers continued to work in isolation. Johnson describes contemporary schools as "egg-crate" organizations in which teachers still work independently in isolation and are left to sink or swim on their own. School reform, on

the contrary, must include “team teaching, job-embedded professional development, and differentiated roles for expert teachers” (Johnson, S.M., 2004, p. 97). In addition the new teachers in Johnson’s study identified the importance of administrator support and effective induction programs in determining their success and job satisfaction.

Johnson (2004) cited research studies that identify the school principal as having the most significant influence in determining how and how well a school will function. The teachers in Johnson’s study desired school leaders who were “present, positive, and actively engaged in the instruction life of the school” (Johnson, S.M., 2004, p. 98). They hoped to work in a school where order was maintained, and where they received support in classroom management. More of the new teachers than not described dissatisfaction with their principals; however, principals who received accolades from the new teachers were identified as being visible, innovative, fair, supportive, effective problem solvers, positive in their interaction with teachers, strong instructional leaders, and clear communicators. Eleven of the fifty teachers in Johnson’s study left teaching by the third year of the study. After four years, two-thirds of the teachers in study had left teaching or switched schools. Those who moved to other schools or left teaching expressed dissatisfaction with the overwhelming demands of teaching, low salaries, and few prospects for improvement. They described their principals as being “arbitrary, abusive, or neglectful” (Johnson, S.M., 2004, p. 113). They described themselves as being isolated and unsupported.

Leadership Theory

The question arises: What can school leaders do to retain highly effective and qualified teachers? Much has also been written about leadership styles and practices and their influences on organizational effectiveness. More specifically, research has been

conducted that points to specific practices teachers are looking for from their principals and other school leaders. Not only must principals understand the significance of the teacher retention problem, but they must also recognize that today's new teachers are looking for different working conditions than their more veteran colleagues. Sergiovanni (1996) addresses school leadership specifically as he describes its roots in Community Theory. He explains how leadership is the ability to influence a group of people to share a vision and move forward until it is realized. Unlike commanding or coercing, the Community Theory of leadership relies on the leaders' ability to influence followers by persuasion or example. Emphasizing school leadership or administration as servanthood, Sergiovanni describes the roots of school leadership as a "commitment to administer to the needs of the school as an institution by serving its purposes, by serving those who struggle to embody those purposes, and by acting as a guardian to protect the institutional integrity of the school" (p. 88). When discussing the leadership tasks of school principals, he begins with the leader's call to be purposeful in synthesizing the shared visions of his or her constituents into a clear vision to guide the direction of the school. Recognizing the diversity of the school's stakeholders--its students, parents, teachers, and administrators--Sergiovanni highlights the challenge of maintaining harmony. He cites the leader's responsibility to effectively establish and communicate how the school should function while recognizing differences in individual style and conscience. In addition, the leader must clarify the values of the school and create a workable set of procedures and structures that advances the school's mission and provides the norm for desired behavior of all involved. A leader must be effective at motivating others by providing for both their psychological needs as well as their cultural needs. Another component of leadership is the management of day-to-day operations to keep the school

functioning effectively and efficiently. Instead of demanding others to comply without question, Sergiovanni says school leaders must explain why it is necessary for people to perform certain tasks. Leaders must show their followers how they fit into the bigger picture of the whole school. School principals can enable their teachers and staff members to be more successful by removing obstacles that prevent them from being successful and by providing necessary support and resources for them to meet the challenges of their jobs. School leaders must also model the purposes and values they advocate for others to willingly follow. Finally, school leaders, according to Sergiovanni, must provide supervision to ensure the school is fulfilling its mission. When it fails to do so, the leader is responsible to determine why and work with others to identify solutions.

Leadership Styles

Contemporary leaders are encouraged to become change agents who utilize transformational as well as transactional leadership characteristics. Transactional leadership is based on motivating and managing people through extrinsic rewards. The leader controls the rewards and distributes them to those who do as he or she says. The leader's influence and power are tied to the rewards that he controls (Bottery, 2001). Transactional leadership is based on an exchange of rewards for service between the leader and the follower. "Positive reinforcement is exchanged for good work, merit pay for increased performance, promotion for increased persistence, a feeling of belonging for cooperation, and so on" (Sergiovanni, 1999, p. 74). Sergiovanni refers to this as leadership by bartering: "Leader and led strike a bargain within which leader gives to led something they want in exchange for something the leader wants" (p. 74). The basest form of leadership, according to Sergiovanni (1999), transactional leadership follows the rule that "what gets rewarded gets done" (p. 71). Leadership by bartering proves to be

especially useful when the followers lack competence to perform with excellence. Jane Kendrick became a middle school principal in 1979, and she created and enforced the rules for her faculty and staff to follow. According to Kendrick, her leadership practices became “tell, regulate, delegate, and evaluate” (p. 78). She worked to provide the right combination of rewards and punishments to motivate her faculty and staff to meet her expectations (Sergiovanni, 1999). Transactional leadership is often effective in the short term by providing a necessary push to stimulate action, but because it relies so heavily on the self-interest and individual needs of the followers, it often fails in the long run.

Transformational leaders, on the other hand, are those who are able to share vision and create consensus among their followers while they modify organizational structures to encourage the vision to unfold. They inspire their followers to sacrifice self-interests to reach for the greater good of the organization. Other common practices of transformational leaders include “providing high standards, valuing diversity, [and] communicating openly” (Feinberg, Ostroff, & Burke, 2005, p. 472). Transformational leaders are commonly characterized by their charisma and their abilities to create unity within organizations. They lead by example and provide a consistent image to their followers (Feinberg et al., 2005). According to Sergiovanni (1999), transformational leadership appeals to higher-order, intrinsic motives of followers who are driven by doing what is rewarding and what is good rather than just by what gets rewarded.

Transformational leadership is characterized by providing a culture of building that fulfills followers’ need for “achievement, responsibility, competence, and esteem” (Sergiovanni, 1999, p. 74). It is marked by a culture of bonding in which the leaders and followers share values and a mission. Finally, transformational leadership promotes a culture of binding the leader and followers together through a strong sense of

commitment to the shared values of the organization. After the initial stages of her principalship, Jane Kendrick turned her attention from bartering to coaching her team leaders and building effective teams of teachers. She worked to create a leadership team and faculty who had shared values, vision, and a clear sense of purpose. She saw a shift in focus from issues of safety and discipline to those involving moral integrity. She stated that her goal was to become the keeper of the vision and a servant who develops the leadership skills of others. Successful school improvement must begin at the bartering level through transactional leadership, but it must transition into higher-order, transformational strategies of building, bonding, and binding (Sergiovanni, 1999).

Nguni, Slegers, and Denessen (2006) studied the effects of transformational and transactional leadership on teachers' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship in schools in the developing country of Tanzania. They cite the research of Burns (1978) who says that transformational and transactional leadership are distinguished by the different ways leaders motivate their followers and appeal to the emotions and values of their followers. "Transactional leadership motivates followers by appealing to their self-interest, and it is based on an exchange relationship, whereby follower compliance is exchanged for expected rewards" (Nguni, Slegers, & Denessen, 2006, p. 147). Transactional leadership, therefore, lacks the moral purpose discussed by Fullan (2001). Transformational leadership, on the other hand, seeks to use motivation that goes beyond exchange and appeals to followers' sense of greater purpose to produce not only higher levels of performance, but also self-fulfillment and self-actualization. According to the researchers, transactional leadership is characterized by contingency reward, active management by exception in which leaders closely monitor the performance and mistakes of their followers, passive management by exception in which

leaders are unaware of problems and fail to intervene until problems become serious, and laissez-faire leadership in which leaders avoid responsibility. Transformational leadership is most often characterized by charismatic leadership through which leaders inspire others by creating and sharing vision and encouraging goal setting, enthusiasm, and optimism; intellectual stimulation through which leaders help followers understand the challenges and conflicts they face; and individualized consideration through coaching, mentoring, and opportunities to grow professionally. The study included 700 primary school teachers from 70 schools in Tanzania. Eighty percent of the teachers responded to a 95 question survey that referred to leadership, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior. The Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) was employed for the teachers to rate their headteacher's leadership style. The teachers rated their headteachers particularly high on the transformational leadership traits of charismatic leadership, individualized consideration, and intellectual stimulation. The transactional characteristics of contingent reward and active management by exception were also ranked high while passive management by exception and laissez-faire leadership were rated low. The teachers showed more organizational citizenship behavior and value commitment than commitment to stay. Charismatic leadership produced more value commitment and commitment to stay. In contrast laissez-faire leadership had a negative correlation with value commitment and commitment to stay. Contingent reward and passive management by exception also had negative effects on the teachers' commitment to stay. Job satisfaction was also positively correlated with charismatic leadership, intellectual stimulation, contingent reward, and passive management by exception. The results of this study show that transactional and transformational leadership styles of the

headteachers in Tanzania did impact teachers' value commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, job satisfaction, and commitment to stay to varying degrees. Transactional leadership behaviors had weak influence on value commitment, organizational citizenship behavior, and job satisfaction; but they had a strong positive impact on teachers' commitment to stay. The transformational leadership behaviors had stronger positive effects on the outcome variables than did the transactional behaviors.

Daniel Goleman, author of *Emotional Intelligence* (1995) and *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998), writes that effective leaders use emotional intelligence to guide their leadership styles. He defines emotional intelligence as "the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively" (2000). According to Goleman, emotional intelligence includes four distinct capabilities: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skill. Leaders who demonstrate self-awareness show the ability to read and understand their own emotions and recognize how they influence the work of those around them. They understand their own strengths and weaknesses, and they have confidence in themselves to achieve their goals. Those who demonstrate self-management control their own emotions and impulses. They consistently display honesty and integrity. They are conscientious about their responsibilities, and they are able to adapt to change. Such leaders are driven to achieve, and they have the initiative to seize opportunities when they arise. Leaders who demonstrate self-awareness, according to Goleman, exhibit empathy for their followers and take an active interest in their concerns. They have a keen perception of the direction the organization is heading, and they have the ability to understand and meet the needs of their customers. Goleman's final component of emotional intelligence is social skill, which includes the abilities to motivate others with a clear and unifying vision, to develop others through coaching, and

to listen and communicate clearly. Leaders with social skill are effective change agents and relationship builders. They manage conflicts and are proficient team builders.

Goleman (2000) identifies six distinct leadership styles and says his research proves that the leaders who get the best results are those who employ various leadership styles depending on the challenges their organizations are facing. The six styles and their brief definitions are as follows: “Coercive leaders demand immediate compliance. Authoritative leaders mobilize people toward a vision. Affiliative leaders create emotional bonds and harmony. Democratic leaders build consensus through participation. Pacesetter leaders expect excellence and self-direction. And coaching leaders develop people for the future” (Goleman, 2000, p. 80). Goleman refers to research by psychologists George Litwin and Richard Stringer that was refined by David McClelland. They studied the impact of leadership styles on work climates or environments. Six factors that influence working environment include flexibility to innovate, responsibility to the organization, the level of standards, performance feedback and rewards, clarity about the mission and values of the organization, and the level of commitment to a common purpose. They found that four of the six aforementioned leadership styles had positive effects on an organization’s climate. While the coercive and pacesetter styles had significantly negative effects on climate; authoritative, affiliative, democratic, and coaching styles had significantly positive effects on climate.

The coercive style demands immediate action on the part of subordinates and often helps struggling organizations pull out of a crisis; however, according to Goleman (2000), it is one of the least effective leadership styles in most situations. Its top-down management adversely affects the flexibility of the organization. People lose their motivation because they have little ownership of the strategies of the organization, and

the rewards system of the organization is damaged because it depletes pride in the organization.

The authoritative style inspires people to come along side the leader and his or her clearly communicated vision; as a result, it had the most positive impact on organizational climate. “People who work for such leaders understand that what they do matters and why” (Goleman, 2000, p. 83). Authoritative leaders identify standards and strategies that will move the organization in the direction of the vision. Doing so increases the commitment to the organization.

The affiliative style builds strong relationships within organizations by placing people first. It builds harmony and loyalty within organizations because people care about one another and work together in trusting work communities. Affiliative leaders are able to create unity in organizations where trust has been broken; however, Goleman says that the affiliative style should not be used alone. It has been found to be most effective when it is combined with the authoritative style.

The democratic leadership style is characterized by the leader spending time listening to people and seeking their ideas. It was found to increase flexibility and responsibility within organizations. In addition, workers’ morale was improved when leaders demonstrated democratic leadership. It is best used when leaders are not sure what the best direction is for the organization to take, and when they have able employees to include in decision making. However, it has negative aspects including long meetings, wasted time, escalating conflicts, and indecision.

The pacesetter style is characterized by a leader who sets very high standards and practices them himself. A pacesetter leader is quick to identify employees who cannot meet his or her standards and either demand immediate improvement or replace

such employees. According to Goleman, the pacesetter style has its place, but it should be used in small doses because it has the potential to destroy organizational morale due to its intense demands for excellence.

Coaching leaders are those who help their employees identify their strengths and improve their weaknesses so that they may succeed in their careers. They are encouragers who delegate responsibilities effectively and give their subordinates the authority and respect they need to successfully get the job done. Although coaching is a very effective leadership tool in improving climate and results, it is used least often because it requires much time and effort. Many leaders find themselves too busy to take the time to develop their employees, but those who do reap the benefits. Goleman concludes his article by reiterating that the most effective leaders employ four or more of the above styles, especially the authoritative, democratic, affiliative, and coaching styles. They are guided by their emotional intelligence to move from one style to another as the need arises.

Leadership Practices

John P. Kotter is a guru of business management and expert on creating necessary and lasting organizational change. According to the introduction of his book *The Heart of Change* (2002), people change more because they have been exposed to truth that changes their feelings than by information that influences their thinking. His premise is that when people see and feel a need for change, they are inspired to act to bring about that change. The most significant problem with organizations is not strategies, systems, or cultures; instead, it is the way people behave. To bring about lasting and significant change, Kotter says that people's behavior must first change. To change behavior, he advocates an eight-step leadership process that includes the following: (a) "increase

urgency,” (b) “build the guiding team,” (c) “get the vision right,” (d) “communicate for buy-in,” (e) “empower action,” (f) “create short-term wins,” (g) “don’t let up,” and (h) “make change stick” (Kotter, 2002, p. 2).

Kotter believes that effective leaders must first create a sense of urgency for change in the hearts of their followers. Leaders must identify the most significant needs of their organization and clearly communicate them to their followers. They must make their objectives both real and relevant. Next, Kotter emphasizes the need for team building that begins with the leadership team and is transmitted throughout the organization. Leaders must get the right people in the right places collaborating to move the goal of the organization forward. Lasting change requires commitment from the entire organization, not just from the one in charge. Vision is at the heart of most leadership philosophies; however, Kotter stresses the importance of getting the vision right. This requires the guiding team to develop a clear and simple vision along with the appropriate strategies to advance it. Next, leaders are called to share the vision with all of their constituents and create buy-in by appealing and responding to people’s needs. The goal is for the vision to be shared, understood, and supported by as many people as possible. For true and lasting change to be realized, leaders must empower action by removing barriers to that action. Leaders must develop other leaders not only by giving them more responsibility, but also by giving them the necessary authority to carry out their added responsibilities. This requires strong trust to elevate others and empower them to lead. To change the direction of a large organization is a daunting undertaking that requires time. Early setbacks can dampen the spirits of constituents, so Kotter advocates creating and celebrating short-term wins. Initial objectives should be easy to achieve, and each stage should be completed before another is begun. Kotter’s seventh

step is to foster determination and perseverance so that people will not let up. Goals that have been reached should be celebrated while future goals are being established and promoted. Finally, change that does not last is not true change. The last step in Kotter's change process is making change stick by developing new change agents and making change a part of an organization's culture (Kotter, 2002).

Kouzes and Posner advocate five practices of exemplary, transformational leadership. To bring about necessary change and improvement, they say leaders should (a) "model the way," (b) "inspire a shared vision," (c) "challenge the process," (d) "enable others to act," and (e) "encourage the heart" (2002, p. 13). Outstanding leaders must lead by example to bring about organizational transformation. "Exemplary leaders go first" (Kouzes & Posner, 2002, p. 14). They must consistently model what they believe to influence others to follow them. True leaders are dreamers and visionaries who have the ability to clearly create and communicate a vision and get others to agree with that vision. Through group consensus, they are able to achieve their vision and achieve excellence. Leadership involves risk taking and challenging conventions and traditions. Leaders must be pioneers who are willing to challenge established processes in the name of innovation. Not only do leaders lead by example, but through collaboration with others, they also build trust and share responsibility and authority. Finally, Kouzes and Posner (2002) say that leaders take the time to encourage others to persevere and to show their appreciation through thoughtful gestures, actions, and words. They create a culture of celebration in which they celebrate both group and individual achievements. Achieving these five goals requires that leaders build relationships with their followers that are marked by trust, collaboration, and teamwork. Barth (2006) quoted Casey Stengel as saying, "Getting good players is easy. Getting 'em to play

together is the hard part” (p. 3). He goes on to say that schools are full of good teachers who do not play well together. His article discusses adversarial relationships in schools that can be characterized as us versus them. School leaders must encourage collegial relationships by creating learning communities in which students, parents, teachers, and administrators work together to promote teaching and learning.

Leadership Practices of School Principals

A prolific writer on the topic of Educational Leadership, Michael Fullan (2001), details five leadership practices that are essential to bringing about organizational reform. First, he says that leaders must have moral purpose for their organizations that is shared with and by their followers. The most successful organizations are those who are inspired by the belief that they are making a significant positive difference in the lives of their constituents and communities. In education, the moral purpose of schools is to make a positive difference in the lives of students by providing them with the skills and knowledge they need to lead productive and fulfilling lives. To do so requires school principals and other leaders to treat their teachers well because ultimately teachers have the greatest influence on students of anyone in the school.

Secondly, Fullan says effective leaders must understand that change is a complex process that requires a variety of strategies for the varying challenges and situations they face; therefore, leaders should never employ a single checklist of practices to solve all problems. On the contrary, “...elements of different leadership styles must be learned and used in different situations” (p. 46). He says, for example, that confidence usually appears to be a more desirable leadership characteristic than hesitancy; however, a false sense of confidence can motivate some leaders to move their organizations in the wrong

directions while hesitancy can cause other leaders to study the problem more thoroughly and make better informed decisions.

Next, Fullan emphatically calls for leaders to invest in relationships. Along with moral purpose, he believes that relationships determine the success of organizations. He advocates making schools professional learning communities characterized by mutual respect and collaboration instead of institutions characterized by selfish ambition and competition. Collaborative cultures in schools are characterized by professional autonomy as well as by a strong sense of community.

Fourth, Fullan describes the importance of knowledge building, knowledge sharing, knowledge creation, and knowledge management. Leaders who bring about positive change do not do so in unchanged environments. Instead, they place individuals in settings and contexts that are more conducive to learning and sharing what they have learned. He cites the efforts of District Two in New York City to improve student achievement across the district. District leaders established peer networks of teachers and principals who visit each other's schools on a regular basis and share what they observe. These efforts helped create a culture of collaboration throughout the district that led to improved student achievement.

Finally, Fullan discusses coherence building. He says that the complexity and messiness of change can get leaders into trouble. On one hand the chaotic nature of creating necessary change can be positive as it motivates experimentation and creativity; however, on the other hand, too much chaos and unnecessary innovation can be unsettling and lead school administrators from one educational fad to another at the expense of student achievement and teacher efficacy. Effective leaders must help maintain balance between healthy chaos and necessary structure.

Specific leadership practices are cited in the literature to answer the requests of beginning teachers for more administrative support. Kelley (2004) discusses the importance of establishing effective induction programs to aid new teachers in transitioning effectively into the classroom. Rather than limiting induction programs to district-sponsored orientation meetings or evaluation processes, Kelley advocates induction programs that are characterized by weekly mentoring of beginning teachers, cohort group networking in which beginning teachers attended seminars twice a month to discuss standards, expectations, and to share resources, and continued reflection on teaching practices. Kelley found these induction activities encouraged teacher retention. Schlichte (2005) identified teacher isolation and alienation as significant causes of teacher burnout. To combat these problems, she discusses the requests of beginning teachers for veteran mentors to assist them in their evaluation of their own teaching practice. Other case studies indicated a desire for better relationships with administrators who were said by teachers to be “distant” and “narcissistic” (p. 37).

According to Johnson (2004), many schools fail their new teachers because they lack systematic induction programs for their new teachers and leave their new teachers without the necessary support to succeed. The researchers cite three schools with exemplary induction programs. Brookline High School in Massachusetts begins their induction of new teachers with an orientation before the start of school. They hold retreats every two years for new teachers that include speakers, teacher collaboration, and bonding as a group. Two times per month new teacher seminars are provided to discuss relevant topics and programs. New teachers were provided mentors who shared a common planning period and office space. Program coordinators provided coaching and support for new teachers and observed their classes four times per year. New teachers

were also released to observe other teachers. Evanston Township High School in Illinois began their induction program with the hiring of new teachers that included a group interview with members of the candidate's department. They provided a four-day course for new teachers. Expert teachers were assigned the roles of staff developers to observe new teachers and provide them feedback. Like Brookline High School, Evanston's induction program included an orientation, systematic mentoring, and a course for new teachers. At Murphy Elementary School, new teachers were placed on grade-level teams that met regularly. They were provided with an eight-session seminar on becoming powerful instructors and reflective educators. They were provided support and assistance from teacher specialists and coaches as well as by their principal and lead teachers. Each new teacher was assigned a paid mentor whose role was specified by Boston's official mentoring program.

The new teachers in Johnson's study indicated a desire to become confident and competent teachers in their first years. Many found teaching to be much more challenging than they had expected. They desired professional development that would help them broaden their knowledge of teaching and learning. They were well aware of the areas in which they lacked expertise and sought to improve their skills and understanding in a variety of ways. Some worked in groups with their colleagues to solve relevant problems while others attended workshops, seminars, or took graduate classes. Surprisingly, several of the new teachers did not anticipate long teaching careers. They felt limited by the lack of opportunities for professional growth outside the classroom. Although a few expressed a desire to pursue opportunities in school administration, many others felt no desire to move into administration. They did, however, want other options that focused on the classroom such as curriculum

development, participating on the school leadership team, and supporting other teachers. The message for school leaders is to provide outstanding teachers with differentiated roles within the school. At Brookline High School, experienced teachers had opportunities to serve as mentors and coordinate the induction program, both of which provided release time and stipends for the teachers. At Murphy School lead teachers who served as mentors, content specialists, program planners, and staff developers could earn 7 to 20 percent beyond the base teacher's salary. At Evanston High School, veteran teachers could serve as induction coordinators, mentors, mentor trainers, staff developers, and course instructors for the new teacher courses. Johnson (2004) also cited the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) for offering teachers new challenges that in many states such as South Carolina, Mississippi, Kentucky, and North Carolina provide substantial financial benefits. To earn national board certification, teachers are required to complete extensive reflection on their own teaching practice by videotaping and analyzing their lessons, responding in depth to written questions about their own teaching, and passing a rigorous exam about their subject matter as well as teaching and learning. Johnson said that accomplished teachers who earn NBPTS certification are prime candidates to be considered by school principals for leadership roles within the school. According to the literature, school principals have the ability to improve teacher retention. To retain the best teachers in their schools, principals must provide relevant professional development activities for inexperienced teachers as well as opportunities for different roles and responsibilities for accomplished teachers.

According to Johnson (2004), the large group of teachers who are quickly approaching retirement age have been motivated to continue teaching for the intrinsic rewards it offers; however, they have remained in subordinate roles with their influence

being often limited to their classrooms. They have “valued and protected their privacy—a privacy that has allowed some to refine and deepen a personal teaching style and craft, and others to conceal their failure to become the teachers they had hoped to be” (Johnson, S.M., 2004, p. 250). Teaching, for this group of retiring teachers has been an isolated profession in which most of them have worked independently within the confines of their classrooms. Johnson’s research concluded that the traditional top-down structure of schools that limits teachers to their classroom roles will not be successful in retaining the new generation of teachers who are less accepting of top-down hierarchy and who are looking for further opportunities for professional growth within education. Unlike their predecessors, many of them have not entered the field of education with the goal of being career teachers. “They seek opportunities to excel and to be recognized for their accomplishments. They are attracted by opportunities to develop new skills, and they see themselves eventually exercising influence beyond the domain of their classroom. They believe that schools should encourage and reward them as they grow and improve their practice” (Johnson, S.M., 2004, p. 252). Johnson challenges school and district leaders to transform schools into environments where teachers want to be and where teachers have opportunities to grow professionally. They should begin with systematic induction programs and continue by offering differentiated roles for teachers in which they are given responsibilities and authority to exercise influence beyond their classrooms. School and district leaders should establish school-based hiring procedures that achieve good matches between schools and prospective teachers. In addition, schools and school districts should move away from the standardized salary scale and offer financial incentives for teachers who tackle leadership responsibilities within their schools.

Ted Kolderie (2004) advocates reforming schools to allow teachers opportunities to take leadership roles not only in their own classrooms, but also in their schools. He says that in traditional schools being a teacher means being an employee. In such schools professional development programs are organized and initiated by administrators for teachers to participate in and implement. Teachers are told about new ideas and the need to try them, but the teachers often demonstrate little buy-in because they are treated as employees rather than as professionals who make decisions about teaching and learning. Teachers are not encouraged to be professionals or leaders in such situations because they take little or no part in the decision making that directly affects their schools and classrooms. According to Kolderie, the term principal was once used as an adjective to describe the “principal teacher,” but it has become a noun to refer to an administrator (2004, p. 98). The title of principal teacher implies a teacher assuming the role of instructional leader of a school. Kolderie says, “The old notions need to be re-thought. If the object is to improve teaching, we should be looking for an arrangement that mobilizes teachers’ energies and abilities fully toward change and improvement, that gives teachers a real opportunity to improve what they do and reasons to make these changes in their own interest” (2004, p. 98). Giving teachers ownership in the decision making of their schools and treating them as professionals provides them real incentives to transform their schools and create effective teaching and learning communities. In addition, giving teachers leadership roles in their schools expands their professional opportunities and creates an environment which, according to Kolderie, is more conducive to change and improvement than traditional school settings (2004).

Barr and Parrett (2007) also emphasize the importance of building-level leadership in improving student achievement. They say that although effective principals

have changed their focus from management, budget, and discipline to instructional leadership, the principal has always been the essential element in school improvement. They identify practices of principals who have demonstrated high levels of success in high-poverty schools. First, they must be focused on students and hold high expectations for student learning and achievement. Their high expectations, in turn, are passed to the teachers and students in their schools. Second, effective principals understand effective professional development that involves the collaboration of teachers who work in teams. Third, Barr and Parrett advocate the creation of professional learning communities, in which members of the faculty and administration collaborate to improve their schools. To do so, principals must mentor teachers to help them assume leadership roles and then provide them with the support needed to carry out those roles. Their premise is that high-poverty schools can and do become high performing schools if they are provided with effective instructional leadership (Barr & Parrett, 2007).

Summary of the Literature

The literature revealed that American school districts are recruiting more new teachers than ever; however, they are plagued by their inability to retain highly qualified teachers. Classrooms, especially in the areas of science, math, special education, and bilingual education, are too often staffed with unqualified teachers or substitute teachers. Although the number one reason given for teachers leaving their profession is to make better salaries, many other problems are cited that must be addressed by effective leadership styles and practices. Many dissatisfied teachers indicate that they do not receive enough support from their administration; they are not included in school decision making; their classes are marked by severe discipline problems; they are overwhelmed by large classes and too much paperwork; and they have no time to

collaborate with other teachers. The literature on transformational leadership reveals that effective change agents build relationships with their followers that are characterized by trust, vision, consensus, empowerment, and shared decision making. School principals have been cited as having the greatest power to bring about positive change in schools through transformational leadership styles and practices.

The abundance of empirical and theoretical literature on the subjects of teacher retention, teacher job satisfaction, principals' leadership styles and practices have helped establish a solid foundation on which to build this study. The literature establishes the importance of staffing every classroom with qualified and committed teachers and that a significant problem exists regarding retaining such teachers in both public and private schools. It also identifies the areas of greatest need, which include supplying teachers of special education as well as secondary math and science teachers. Both urban and rural schools with student populations characterized by high poverty and high percentages of minorities are most likely to have high teacher attrition rates and to be staffed with inexperienced and unqualified teachers. In addition, small private schools also experience high rates of teacher attrition and difficulties providing highly qualified teachers in every classroom. The literature provides evidence of factors that encourage teacher job satisfaction and retention, including higher salaries, thorough induction programs, administrator support especially in student management, and collaborative working environments. The literature also includes an extensive amount of theory and empirical research concerning effective leadership styles and practices, some of which is specific to educational leadership and some of which is more broad, but applicable to school leadership.

CHAPTER III: EXPLANATION OF METHODOLOGY

Purpose and Research Questions

This chapter will describe the qualitative methodology that was utilized in this study. As explained earlier, teacher retention is a significant challenge for school leaders, and strategies must be implemented to ensure that schools will be able to staff every classroom with highly committed and qualified teachers. The purpose of interviewing teachers in this study was to discover their perceptions of their principals' leadership styles and practices in hopes that their perceptions will lend insight into helping principals solve the teacher retention challenge in their schools. As the literature shows, there have been many studies undertaken to quantify what factors affect teacher retention and job satisfaction. The intent of a naturalistic study such as this, however, is to emphasize "a phenomenological view in which reality inheres in the perceptions of individuals" and to find meaning from events as they occur naturally (Glatthorn & Joyner, 2005, p. 40). The goal of employing a qualitative design was to provide greater depth of understanding regarding teachers' perceptions, opinions, and feelings as they relate to principals' leadership styles and practices, as well as to their own levels of satisfaction with their particular schools, their students, and teaching in general. The researcher gathered data from teacher interviews that answered the following questions:

- 1) What factors have increased or decreased teachers' job satisfaction?
- 2) How do teachers perceive the leadership styles of their principals?
- 3) What, if any, specific leadership practices of principals have encouraged teacher retention and job satisfaction?

The General Perspective

Qualitative research uses a variety of methods to study its subject matter using a naturalistic and interpretive approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). “Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 3). Max Van Manen distinguishes between natural science and human science. Natural science, he says, is concerned with studying objects and events of nature; whereas, human science studies the “mind, thoughts, consciousness, values, feelings, emotions, actions, and purposes” of humans (Van Manen, 1990, p. 3). Qualitative inquiry lends itself to studying human phenomena as it “involves description, interpretation, and self-reflective or critical analysis” (Van Manen, p. 4, 1990). It provides an effective means for the researcher to gather, interpret, and describe data collected from human participants concerning their thoughts, opinions, and perceptions.

This study was descriptive as its intent was to “describe and interpret an experience by determining the meaning of the experience as perceived by the people who have participated in it” (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, p. 461). In this case, the researcher was interested in discovering how teachers perceive the role of school principals in encouraging teacher job satisfaction and retention. The data included the feelings, opinions, and perceptions of teachers. The inquirer’s challenge was to accurately interpret common themes and meaning from the interviews. Qualitative inquiry relies on the researcher as the human instrument to gather data within a specific context. The researcher must immerse him or herself into the natural settings of the phenomenon being studied and gather significant amounts of descriptive data ... “that are in the form of words and pictures, rather than numbers and statistics” (Ary et al., 2006, p.

454). The analysis of data is inductive in nature as it occurs as the data is being collected. It is organized into a descriptive narrative based on the common themes that emerged from the data.

Research Context

Qualitative inquiry relies on descriptive data, including direct quotations, that describe people's perceptions of the phenomenon being studied (Patton, 1990). To gather such data, the qualitative researcher should have personal interest and experience with the topic of his or her research. The researcher studies the phenomenon in the context in which it naturally occurs. The context for studying the perceptions of teachers, therefore, should take place in their schools. For the purpose of this particular study, four schools in South Carolina were selected that included one public elementary school, one public middle school, and one public high school from the Berkeley County School District. In addition, a private K-12 school was also included in the study. The duration of the study was approximately three months from February to April of 2009. The four selected schools represented a wide range of grade levels and both public and private schools. In addition to their diversity, the four schools were accessible and in close proximity to the researcher. The principals of each of the schools studied had served at their schools no fewer than four years. The names of the schools have been omitted to preserve confidentiality.

School A was a public elementary school of 1,069 predominately middle-class students from K4-5th grade located in a metropolitan suburb in South Carolina. The student population was 59 percent white and 41 percent minority with 48 percent of the students receiving free or reduced lunch. Its leadership was comprised of its principal, assistant principal, and Title I facilitator. Its principal served as the school's assistant

principal before assuming the role of principal in the fall of 2002. School A received an Absolute Rating of Average on the South Carolina Annual School Report Card for the years 2006-2008.

School B was a public middle school that served 560 students in rural South Carolina. Seventy-two percent of the student population was white while 27 percent of the students were African-American, and one percent of the students were Hispanic. Fifty-four percent of the students were eligible for free or reduced lunch. The school was led by a veteran principal and assistant principal, and its students had consistently scored well on the state's achievement tests and school report cards. School B had also received an Absolute Rating of Average on the South Carolina Annual School Report Card for the last three years, 2006-2008.

School C was a rural 7-12 middle/high school that served 444 students in rural South Carolina. The student population of the school included 83 percent African-American, 14 percent white, two percent Hispanic, and one percent unknown. Seventy-five percent of the students were eligible for free or reduced lunch. The school was led by a veteran principal who was in his fifth year at the school, a first-year assistant principal, a part-time assistant principal, and a Title I facilitator. The principal first came to the school in 2004 as a principal specialist from the South Carolina Department of Education due to the school's low state report card ratings. School C received an Absolute Rating of Average in 2006 and 2008 and Below Average in 2007 on the South Carolina Annual School Report Card. The school received the Palmetto Silver award for improvement in 2007 and the highest award, the Palmetto Gold in 2008.

School D was a large, private school in South Carolina that served 970 students from pre-school through the 12th grade. The student population was predominantly

white. Founded in 1972, School D has become one of the largest schools in the South Carolina Independent School Association. School D's student achievement helped it earn Advanced Accreditation, awarded to 25 of over 100 schools in the South Carolina Independent School Association. The school was led by a headmaster, who was a five-year veteran at the school, a lower school principal, and a middle school principal.

Research Participants

Unlike random sampling that is commonly associated with quantitative studies, qualitative researchers purposely select samples to represent everything they could observe. According to Patton, purposeful sampling relies on "information-rich" samples that allow the inquirer to learn a great deal about the focal points of the study (1990, p. 169). Qualitative researchers are concerned with using samples that will provide the greatest depth of information and understanding (Ary et al., 2006). The principals from each of the four subject schools were contacted by letter and telephone to request their permission to allow their school's participation in the study (see Appendix B). Because qualitative studies seek to obtain a significant depth of information, their sample size is relatively small (Ary et. al., 2006). Three teachers from each school were selected as participants in the study.

Criteria for Research Participants

For the purpose of this study, participants were chosen from a variety of grade levels from kindergarten through twelfth grade and a variety of content areas. They included both male and female teachers who had served a minimum of two years with their current principal and at least five years in teaching. Participants from the three public schools were required to have met the certification requirements of the state of South Carolina and to have held at least a master's degree in education or in their content

area. The three teachers from the private school were required to have met the requirements of the South Carolina Independent School Association and to have held at least a master's degree in education or in their content area. Teachers with National Board Certification were given first consideration. Five of the twelve participants held National Board Certification.

The researcher selected three teachers at School A that included one from the second grade, one from the fourth grade, and one who teaches special education. Three teachers from School B, a public middle school, were chosen and included one physical education teacher, one business education teacher, and one English/social studies teacher. The researcher selected three teachers from school C, a public middle/high school that included an English teacher, a math teacher, and a special education teacher. Three teachers from School D, a private school that served students from pre-school through high school, were chosen that included one high school science teacher, one middle school social studies teacher, and one second grade teacher.

The purposeful sampling included both maximum variation sampling and critical case sampling. Patton (1990) distinguishes sixteen types of purposeful sampling. Using maximum variation sampling, the inquirer intentionally selects a wide range of participants to determine common patterns that emerge from a variety of participants. Critical case sampling includes participants who are of particular importance to the study. The above sample was identified to represent a wide variety of teachers at various grade levels and subject matters from public and private schools that were conveniently accessible to the researcher. Due to the purpose of the study and the challenge of retaining teachers of special education, math, and science, it was necessary that they be included in the study. Since a high percentage of teachers leave teaching in their first

five years, the sample included only participants with five or more years of teaching experience. The researcher gathered information from the principals of each school to determine which teachers met the criteria for participating in the study. He then personally invited such teachers to participate via a letter explaining the purpose and scope of the study. The letter included a consent form for participants to read and sign. The participants' names were omitted to ensure their confidentiality.

Data Collection

To confirm access to the schools and teachers participating in the study, the researcher wrote letters first to the principals of each of the four schools to briefly describe the study and to request their participation in the study. In the initial letter, principals were also asked to recommend teachers to participate. Upon receiving the principals' permission, the researcher e-mailed the prospective participants requesting them to participate in the study. After receiving affirmative feedback from prospective participants, the inquirer contacted them via e-mail to establish a time and date for an interview. One private school headmaster declined to participate because he felt his school and the school where the researcher served as headmaster were competitors; therefore, another headmaster of a large private school was asked to participate. The interviews required approximately forty minutes to complete. The interviewer scheduled three interviews on the same day at School C and School D to avoid unnecessary travel. Interviews at the first two schools, which were closer in proximity, were conducted over two days.

The goal of this research design was to collect first-hand, descriptive data from teachers regarding their feelings, perceptions, and opinions about their jobs and the leadership of their principals. "Pure description and quotations are the raw data of

qualitative inquiry” (Patton, 1990, p. 31). To gather data from the participants of the study, the researcher utilized open-ended interviews that encouraged detailed responses that revealed important information concerning issues relevant to the study. Open-ended interviewing allowed the inquirer to access the participants’ perspectives rather than supplying preconceived ideas for the participants. “Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit” (Patton, 1990, p. 278). The researcher employed a standardized open-ended interview approach that identified questions to be discussed prior to the interview. This interview guide approach ensured that the researcher covered the same relevant topics with each participant while allowing necessary flexibility in the wording and sequencing of questions (Patton, 1998). It also allowed data to be collected systematically as similar questions were asked to each participant. Interviews were conversational in tone, but structured enough to elicit participants’ thoughts and ideas that provide comprehensive data relating to the effects of principals’ leadership styles on teacher retention and job satisfaction. The researcher formulated the questions for the interview guide (Appendix A) to solicit answers to the research questions. It was necessary to begin by asking questions about the professional background of the participants. The next questions pertained to factors that impacted the job satisfaction of the teachers. The participants were then asked questions about their perceptions of their current and former principals’ leadership practices and styles. The final questions dealt with factors that encouraged or discouraged teacher retention. The interview protocol was reviewed and approved by the Liberty University Institutional Review Board.

Data Analysis

Each interview was captured by a digital recorder to allow the interviewer to have a verbatim recording. The researcher transcribed each of the twelve interviews to identify and review common themes and answers as well as individual thoughts, feelings, and opinions. In qualitative inquiry, data analysis occurs concurrently with the data collection. “All qualitative analysis involves attempts to comprehend the phenomenon under study, synthesize information and explain relationships, theorize about how and why the relationships appear as they do, and reconnect the new knowledge with what is already known” (Ary, et al, 2006, p. 490). The use of the above-mentioned interview guide facilitated data analysis as each participant was asked to respond to the same questions in the same order.

Through the transcription of the interviews, the researcher familiarized himself with the data. The inquirer then summarized each of the interviews into a narrative organized according to the questions from the interview guide. The narratives included the participants’ responses about their professional background, their perceptions of factors that impact their job satisfaction, their opinions of principals’ leadership styles and practices, and their thoughts about factors that influence their retention. Next, he reread the narratives and highlighted common words, phrases, and sentences from the participants’ responses, such as “principal support,” “open-door policy,” “positive expectations,” and “listens to input.” From the highlighted responses, the researcher charted each participant’s common responses into three columns: job satisfaction, leadership styles and practices, and retention. See Table 2 for an example of Teacher #3’s charted responses.

Table 2.

Example of Charted Participant Responses

Teacher	Job Satisfaction	Leadership Style, Practices	Retention
#3	Testing pressure	Progressive	Likes kids
	Camaraderie	Encouraged collaboration	Friendships
	Interesting children	Professional development	Positive, innovative
	Incentive program	Listens	Encouragement
	Unrealistic expectations	Allows experimentation	Appreciation
	Progressive principal	Lets teachers do their jobs	Hires quality people
	School report cards	Positive thinking	Life-long learner
	Praising teachers	Corrects teachers individually	Improvement
	Accountability	Rewards good teaching	Bad principal
	Kids changed	Analyzed data	
	Short attention spans	Blasting whole faculty	

The researcher then color coded the charted responses of the twelve participants to begin to identify common themes that occurred. For example, all responses that pertained to relationships with students were coded yellow, and all responses that related to the principals' expectations were coded pink. Next, the researcher synthesized the coded responses into nine themes that emerged during the analysis of data. Teacher #3 indicated that her job satisfaction was increased by the interesting students she taught and by the fact that she liked her students. On the other hand, her job satisfaction was

decreased by her perception that kids had changed and have shorter attention spans. These responses, along with those from the other participants, contributed to the identification of the following theme: Teacher job satisfaction and retention is impacted by the relationships they have with their students. “Theme analysis refers then to the process of recovering the theme or themes that are embodied and dramatized in the evolving meanings and imagery of the work” (Van Manen, 1990, p. 78). Table 3 identifies the common factors that impacted the participants’ job satisfaction and retention along with the number of times they were mentioned or referred to by the participants in the interviews.

Van Manen (1990) indicates that human science meaning must be communicated through text. Each interview was written as a descriptive narrative in which the participant’s professional background, feelings about job satisfaction, thoughts on his or her principal’s leadership style, and suggestions for strategies to improve teacher retention were described. The descriptions of the interviews are narrative in style and follow the flow of the questioning. “Making something of a text or of a lived experience by interpreting its meaning is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery

Trustworthiness

The teacher has an obligation to represent the realities of the research participants as accurately as possible and must provide assurances in the report that this obligation was met” (Ary et al., 2006). The researcher took necessary steps to limit his own personal bias from influencing the results of the study. For example, prior to conducting this study, the researcher hoped that teachers would report that some of their principals’ leadership styles and practices had encouraged their job satisfaction and retention; however, he believed they would report that their principals had little influence on how

they feel about teaching. In addition, the researcher believed that teachers would favor transformational leadership styles and practices. The use of the interview guide helped to prevent the researcher from asking leading questions that would have solicited answers he hoped to receive. To reduce the effects of researcher bias and ensure the credibility of this study, the researcher employed the use of member checks. Each participant was given the opportunity to review the data he or she provided to determine its accuracy and meaning prior to the publication of the final document. In addition, the nature of this qualitative study called for the use of thick, rich description that included many direct quotations as well as paraphrases and vivid description of the context (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The detailed description enhanced both the credibility and transferability of the study as readers have a great deal of information in context that will allow them to make necessary comparisons and evaluations. Ary et al. refer to this as “descriptive adequacy” (2006). The dependability or trustworthiness of the research will be established through the use of an audit trail. The transcriptions of the interviews will provide a record of the participants’ responses to the interview questions. In addition, copies of e-mails will confirm data gathered outside of the personal interviews.

Instrumentation

Qualitative research is distinguished by the methods used to collect and analyze data (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, p. 453). One of those distinguishing factors of naturalistic inquiry is the use of the researcher as the primary instrument. The validity of the study, therefore, is contingent on the skill of the researcher to gather and analyze data and to form accurate and meaningful conclusions (Patton, 1998). The human instrument provides flexibility and adaptability to study complex human thoughts and actions (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorensen, p. 453). This researcher has over 21 years experience in

education as a teacher and administrator. For the first ten years of his career (1987-1997), he served as an English teacher at a public high school in Virginia in a school district that included a total of three schools: an elementary, a middle school, and a high school. The district faced a yearly challenge of competing with larger and wealthier districts to recruit and retain teachers. For the next seven years, he taught English at two high schools in South Carolina. The first was, at that time, a new rural school that served over 900 students from three rival communities. From 1997-2000, it was a Title I school, in which over 70 percent of its students received free or reduced lunch. The second school is located in the small town in South Carolina. From 2000-2004, it served approximately 1400 students, 45 percent of whom received free and reduced lunch. During his final year at that school, the inquirer served as the chairman of the English department and assisted the principal in staffing the English department. From 2004-2006, the researcher served as a Title I Facilitator at a small high school in rural South Carolina. This school was made up of 450 students in grades 7-12. Over 85 percent of its students received free and reduced lunch. The researcher assisted the principal in efforts to recruit and retain teachers in that setting that included high percentages of poor and minority students. Since August of 2006, he has served as the headmaster of an independent Christian school of 400 students in South Carolina. In his present position, he has the responsibility for all personnel decisions, including recruiting new teachers and retaining current teachers.

The inquirer visited teachers at their schools to gather descriptive data through the use of personal interviews. The interviews followed an interview guide (see Appendix A) that included questions about the participants' experiences in teaching, opinions about job satisfaction, feelings about the effects of principals' leadership styles and practices,

and teacher retention. The consent forms (see Appendix D) were distributed by the researcher to each participant in the study to inform the participants of the procedure, duration of participation, and confidentiality of the study. Each participant was required to sign and return the consent form prior to participating in the research.

Summary of the Methodology

The goal of this qualitative research design was to collect, record, and analyze an abundance of data that was solicited from veteran teachers to gain further insight and understanding as to the possible effects of principals' leadership styles and practices on teacher retention and job satisfaction. Teachers representing elementary, middle, and high schools from both the public and private sectors were asked to participate in the study. The interviewer visited the participants at their schools to conduct personal, open-ended interviews. The participants included teachers from a cross-section of grade levels and subject matters. Teachers of special education, math, and science were included since they have the lowest retention rates. The interviews were written as descriptive narratives that follow the flow of the questioning. Member checks, as well as the use of detailed description of the context and direct quotations from the participants, helped establish the rigor of the study. The results of the interviews were summarized to emphasize common themes and ideas that emerged. It was the hope of the researcher that interviewing teachers would produce detailed and candid information that can assist school principals and leaders in improving teacher retention and job satisfaction.

CHAPTER IV: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

As previously stated, the purpose of this study was to address the problem of teacher turnover and determine how school principals can encourage teacher retention and job satisfaction. The goal of the researcher was to identify teachers' perceptions of how leadership styles and practices of their principals can improve their levels of job satisfaction and likelihood of continuing to teach in their schools. The study attempted to answer the following questions: 1) What factors have contributed to teachers continuing to teach in their current schools? 2) How do teachers perceive the leadership styles of their principals? 3) What, if any, specific leadership practices of principals have encouraged teacher retention and job satisfaction? This chapter presents the data provided by twelve teachers from four different schools in South Carolina in the order it was gathered. Teachers #1-3 are from School A, a large, suburban, public elementary school. Teachers #4-6 are from School B, a large, rural, public middle school. Teachers #7-9 are from School C, a small, rural, public middle/high school. Teachers #10-12 are from School D, a large, small-town, private school.

Teacher #1

Professional Background

On March 10, 2009, the inquirer met with Teacher #1 in her classroom at the end of the school day. Teacher #1 is a fifteen-year veteran female who teaches special education to students in K4 through the fourth grades at School A. She has a master's degree in education and has earned National Board Certification. She has been teaching at School A for eight years, and she taught at another elementary school in South

Carolina, for seven years prior to coming to School A. Teacher #1 changed her major from art to education after working in an after-school program while she was in college. She chose to enter special education because she felt she would have a better chance to secure a job after graduation because of the abundance of elementary education teachers at that time.

Job Satisfaction

When asked about what factors have increased her job satisfaction, Teacher #1 emphatically stated, “The kids! It’s not the paperwork. It’s the kids. Seeing them make gains and seeing them proud of themselves.” She continued by saying that when her students make gains, she feels like she has achieved her goal and is motivated to push them harder. She prefers teaching special education classes rather than other classes because they allow her to work one on one with students or with small groups of students. She was satisfied teaching at her first school because she received a great deal of support from her principal, and she enjoyed the diversity of students she taught who she described as coming from “all different economic backgrounds.” When asked how her first principal supported her, Teacher #1 said, “She didn’t know the acronyms for special ed, the ER, the MH, but if I went to her and explained my situation, explained what I needed, then she would do everything to back me up or help me get what I needed to do. She listened.” Although her first principal did not understand everything about special education, she asked questions and learned about it. When discussing coming to her present school, she said, “...it was just nice. It was easy to be here, and everybody greeted you, and it was friendly. It was a nice atmosphere compared to other schools that I went to.”

When asked to identify factors that decreased her job satisfaction, she cited the negative portrayals of schools by the news media:

They don't ever put the positive on the TV. They put the negative on the TV, and when I left Charleston County, we had to sign papers and say why we were leaving, and that was one of the reasons I left there. You know, you work so hard every day, and then you come home, and there was just nothing but all the bad stuff.

She also identified increasingly poor student behavior and lack of parent involvement as decreasing her job satisfaction.

She said that although her principal has initiated many programs to increase parent involvement, many parents still do not come. On the other hand, the principal implemented a school-wide management system two years before that has worked:

It's the ROCK Expectations, and there are certain rules, respect, organization, cooperation, and knowledge, set up all through the school with evidence in the hallways and in the bathrooms and in the cafeteria. Children know what they are supposed to be doing in different areas, and then they get rewarded. They get a punch on their ROCK ticket.

She went on to explain how the students could redeem their ROCK tickets for rewards on Fridays and how individual classes could earn popcorn parties and other incentives. She said that her principal has helped special education teachers significantly by telling teachers of general education classes when it becomes appropriate to mainstream special education students into their classes. Before, the teachers of special education faced conflicts when they went to teachers of general classes to identify opportunities to mainstream the students with special needs. Teacher #1 explained, "It comes from her

now, and therefore, there are no teacher arguments or frustrations. It's a lot easier." Now the principal asks the special education teachers, "Where do you want your kids to go? She sends out the master list, and she says these kids are going here." The principal has also adapted the master schedule so that the schedule for students with special needs meshes more effectively with the schedule of students in the mainstream.

Leadership Styles and Practices

When asked to describe the leadership styles of the principals with whom she has worked, Teacher #1 began with the principal of her first school. She identified her as being authoritative. "It was her way or no way. And if you didn't have a problem with that, and she told you to do it, and you'd do it, and you did your job, then there were no problems." She felt that she learned a great deal from her first principal. A most important lesson was to consider what a child was going through before making disciplinary or academic decisions. Teacher #1 shares the belief that her first principal held that young teachers benefit from beginning their careers in rural schools because that experience helps teachers to consider the challenges their students face at home. Her current principal, on the other hand, is more democratic and open to the opinions of the school's teachers.

She seeks the opinions of teachers, whether it's in an informal questioning or a formal questioning. I think she tries to please the majority of the teachers that she can. When she knows something's going to be good for the school, she'll persist with it whether there are teachers who like it or not.

Teacher #1's current principal has made efforts to include the special education students and teachers in all activities of the school. Teacher #1 said, "She tries to include special ed. in everything, and that helps a lot, too." She said that both of the principals she has

had have been accessible to her and willing to help her with any problems she has experienced.

When asked about leadership practices of principals that have had an adverse impact on her desire to continue teaching, Teacher #1 could not identify anything her principals had done, but she identified some practices that would bother her. The first was if a principal was not interested in her or her concerns and passed the buck off to someone else. She also indicated that she had heard of principals who have deprived special education teachers of necessary tools for their classrooms.

Oh, there are a lot of principals who, even in our district, have taken Smartboards out of special education teachers' classrooms because they don't think special education teachers need them. They've taken away computers. They don't get them the supplies they need.

She indicated that it was very important to her that principals treat special education teachers the same way they treat the regular education teachers and take an interest in special education.

Retention

Teacher #1 said she has stayed in teaching for fifteen years because she has opportunities to learn new teaching styles including using technology in the classroom. She said she has thought of teaching in other areas such as art, but she has never contemplated leaving teaching. "It's for the kids," she explained. She stayed at her first school for seven years because of her principal's support.

I mean the school got renovated, and during the renovation, she said to design your own room. I got to design my own room! At the beginning of the school year, she'd say, 'just don't go over \$500 in one catalogue. Order what you need.'

She said that her first principal was willing to support her as long as she knew the circumstances and that she was concerned for Teacher #1's students. Her principal was creative with the finances and knew how to find the funds for necessary materials and equipment. She said she left her first school because she had a long commute each day and wanted to teach closer to home and provide the opportunity for her young children to go to school closer to their home. She has stayed at her current school for similar reasons. She has felt strong support from her principal and enjoys her students and the small class size. She said there is not as much funding available as there was at her first school; however, her commute was cut from fifty minutes to about five minutes.

When asked what principals can do to retain highly qualified and committed teachers such as her, she answered succinctly: "Listen to the teachers, respect the teachers, praise the teachers, and fight for the teachers."

Teacher #2

Professional Background

Teacher #2 is a 31 year veteran teacher at School A who has taught at multiple grade levels at eight different schools. She has a master's degree in education and is certified by the state of South Carolina to teach both elementary and special education.

The researcher interviewed her in her classroom on March 10, 2009, at 3:10 PM.

Teacher #2 said that when she went to college, she did not have a clear direction about what field to enter, but she always felt that she would be good with children. She said, "I felt like working with children was a talent I had, and so that's why I pursued teaching."

When asked about her vast array of positions in education, she explained:

I started out teaching special education for seven years, and when I moved into regular education, I found that I really enjoyed it, and I always had a desire to be a

resource teacher to teach children with learning disabilities. And my first seven years, I taught trainable mentally handicapped, and I wanted to get certified to teach children with learning disabilities. I was intrigued that children with average intelligence, but for some reason, they just have trouble learning, so I went back and got re-certified.... I always wanted to be an elementary guidance counselor. I just always had things I wanted to do. And so I went and got certified in that area.... I felt like everything I had done strengthened me as a teacher.

She explained that after working in several different schools in various positions, including teaching special education in both elementary and high schools, teaching resource classes, teaching general education, and working as an elementary guidance counselor, she has settled in at School A for the last 15 years. "I had a lot of respect for the administration, the first administration and the second administration, because we have had two administrators here."

Job Satisfaction

When asked to identify factors that have increased her job satisfaction, Teacher #2 said she loves the sense of community at her current school. She said,

I feel attached to the other teachers, and I also feel attached to the administration. I feel like they have been on my team, and I am an important part of their team.... I have always felt affirmed for my efforts, good positive feedback, just that open-door policy where you can walk in and have an issue or problem and feel like someone is going to listen objectively.

She also explained how her job satisfaction is encouraged because her school puts effective programs in place to recognize teachers' efforts. "I feel like they go the extra mile to make their teachers feel appreciated," she stated.

Teacher #2 said her job satisfaction is decreased by the increased responsibilities and directives given to teachers. She said that her workload has increased significantly during her 31 years of teaching, and that has detracted from her job satisfaction. On the other hand, her job satisfaction is increased when a principal takes an interest in, and is aware of, what goes on in her classroom.

I think what I'm saying is for the principals to be as aware as they can be as to the makeup of your classroom, who your children are, who the parents are, communicating with the parents as much as possible through school-wide programs, just making the teacher feel like her class is an integral part of the big picture.

A principal's awareness of challenging classroom issues and willingness to help the teachers solve those problems are important factors that increase Teacher #2's job satisfaction.

Leadership Styles and Practices

Teacher #2 described her current principal's leadership style as being very positive. "She is always smiling, friendly. She always speaks. If she comes to your classroom, she always says something positive." Her current principal also establishes clear expectations:

We always know what's expected of us. She doesn't make us wonder what we're supposed to be doing. It's clear. She sends out daily e-mails that tell us what we need to know that day, things we may have forgotten, to remind us to do.

She also indicated that her principal provides necessary guidance and takes the time to help teachers when they need assistance. In addition, she is encouraged by her principal's interest in involving parents:

We have things throughout the school year that involve parents all the time from Meet the Teacher to Open House to Math Night, Reading Night, school carnival, school dances..., and she supports all of that and encourages us to be a part of it, and when we are, she recognizes people who go the extra mile and make the effort to do extra things.

Teacher #2 described her principal as being intentional about making her teachers feel appreciated:

I think she has a way of making her teachers feel appreciated, not just during teacher appreciation week, but just by little things, walking the halls and thanking you for being on your duty station, walking by the classroom and lunchroom saying thank you..., recognizing teachers' efforts.

Retention

Teacher #2 has stayed in teaching because the rewards change and are new each year. She has stayed at her current school for 15 years: "A lot of my wanting to stay here has been my respect for the two administrations that have been here. I felt like I was a good fit for them, and they were a good fit for me." When asked what she respected about her first principal at School A, she said, "I think [she] had very strong awareness about who was teaching the skills and who was maintaining the relationships with the children and parents, and she seemed to always appreciate my effort." When asked what she respected about her current principal, she identified her ability to maintain a personal relationship with her teachers:

She is just so friendly and not guarded. She lets us know who she is. If she's fearful of something, if she's stressed out about something, she'll share that, and in turn, that makes us want to share back. You know, hey, we are in this together. We can do this together to make this work. She is very approachable.

Prior to coming to her current school 15 years ago, Teacher #2 changed schools and positions at least eight times. The changes were made because as she said, "It was like an itch I had to scratch." She left special education to try regular education. She wanted to give guidance a try, but she did not like traveling between two schools. She taught special education students at a high school, but she found she was more effective with elementary children.

When asked what school principals can do to retain highly qualified and committed teachers, she stated,

I think they can try to run an organized facility where teachers know what to expect. I think a principal can create an atmosphere with mutual respect among teachers and among administrators. I think teachers need to feel supported by their principals.

She indicated that principals who do whatever they can to provide teachers with necessary teaching supplies are more likely to retain highly qualified and committed teachers. She commended her current principal for going the extra mile to support her teachers and provide them with needed supplies.

Teacher #3

Professional Background

A 34 year veteran, Teacher #3 has a master's degree in elementary education and has earned National Board Certification. She currently teaches fourth and fifth grade

science to gifted students at School A. After graduating from college, she began her career teaching elementary music in a large school district. After a six-month stint there, she transferred to the adjacent school district and taught middle school at two different schools for the next 16 years. She then moved back to another elementary school where she taught for 12 years. Next, she moved to her current elementary school where she has taught for seven years. When asked why she entered the field of education, she explained, "I entered the teacher profession totally by accident because I was a music performance major ..., and it turned out that I got shifted into music education instead of music performance." She went on to say that she had no childhood aspirations to be a teacher. According to her, "It just happened that way."

Job Satisfaction

Teacher #3 explained that teaching was more fun in the 1970s and 1980s when there was very little testing pressure. She said,

The most fun I ever had at a school was at _____ Middle School, and we were all young teachers in our twenties. I think the camaraderie was what lured me into that situation and made me want to stay.... The children were military children, and they had been all around the world, and they were interesting children to teach.... So I was in total hog heaven as far as having an interesting group of children. They were very smart; testing wasn't what it is today, and there was less pressure to cover the standards. It was really good teaching as opposed to high pressure standards.

She left teaching for awhile after her autistic son was born and decided to go back when he was ready to enter school. She accepted a position at a Berkeley County elementary school where one of her former assistant principals had become principal. She stated that

it was a good move for her because it was a great place for her son to attend school, and she respected her principal, who she said was “way ahead of his time.” He was very progressive and implemented incentive programs for student behavior and achievement that effectively motivated students from very low socio-economic backgrounds. She said, “It was a great place to teach because he made it that way, and the children weren’t as enriched as the ones I spoke about earlier..., so it was more of a challenge and a lot of fun.” When her principal retired, she decided it was time to leave that school, and she accepted a position at School A. She stated, “I have loved it here.” She discussed how teaching has changed and become more difficult with the emphasis on accountability and testing. She added, “The kids have changed, and they are all playing video now, and they have no attention span.” Despite the increasing demands and challenges in teaching, she enjoys her current school because of her principal and the people who are here.

When asked to identify factors have decreased her job satisfaction, she answered directly:

The pressure, and I’m all about being accountable. Don’t get me wrong. I don’t mind putting my name on the roster and saying this is how my children did, but I think there’s a lot of pressure to push children who are not able to do certain tasks... like special ed. students and severely disabled students.

She questioned the wisdom of South Carolina’s Education Oversight Committee because students with special needs are required to meet the same standards as those who are academically gifted. She felt such expectations were unrealistic and presented “a real downer for educators.” She went on to explain that rewarding schools financially for high test results was wrong because of the diversity of student populations. She felt that schools with high percentages of students with special needs were at a great

disadvantage. She said, “To me the whole school report card idea is ludicrous. It’s just ridiculous what they are asking you to do, and it’s not a level playing field.”

When Teacher #3 was asked what school principals can do to increase teacher job satisfaction, she first identified the practice of praising teachers for doing well and creating a positive atmosphere. When her current principal visited her class, she had a room full of active, and excited students playing an instructional game, and her principal said, “Oh my, you need a jeans pass for that.” Teacher #3 explained that her principal gives jeans passes to teachers whom she sees standing at their doorways and greeting students on their way into class or to teachers who have “something awesome” happening their classrooms. She said, “So, it’s just a fun, positive atmosphere of fun and sharing. A lot of times in teachers’ meetings, we share ideas, and that’s very positive.” Teacher #3 identified her principal’s positive thinking as “the best thing that she does for this school.”

Leadership Styles and Practices

Teacher #3 described her principal at the middle school where she taught for 13 years as having a progressive leadership style. He encouraged teacher collaboration to improve instructional strategies that would appeal to various learning styles. “He was a big believer in home visitation,” she said. He was quick to visit homes of struggling students to speak with their parents about the troubles they were having. According to Teacher #3, this principal’s willingness to visit homes motivated those students and parents because they felt he cared about them. Even before the age of accountability, he actively analyzed student achievement test data and instructed teachers to do the same. “They would give you a breakdown on how the children would achieve. We were to take those back to our grade levels and analyze, and you could see trends in patterns of

different teachers and different grade levels even,” she explained. “It was interesting to change the way you taught based on what you saw on those test results.” He was also an advocate of professional development and readily sent teachers to workshops and other training opportunities. She also described him as being willing to listen and allow teachers to experiment even if he was not in total agreement with the teacher.

He would listen to you and even let you try it. If it worked out, he was like, ‘Okay, you changed my mind.’ If it didn’t work, he was the first to tell you not, ‘I told you so,’ but ‘In light of what has happened, can we do it this way?’

She also said he was great at helping struggling teachers to improve their craft. He spent extensive amounts of time observing and coaching those teachers. Teacher #3 was impressed that he would provide substitute teachers to allow struggling teachers to visit other teachers’ rooms to observe.

She described her current principal at School A as being “hands off” as opposed to being a micromanager.

She hires who she thinks will do a good job, and she lets them do it. She’s not poking her head in the door every day or every two days. She pretty much knows who is doing what they are supposed to.... She let’s you do your thing.

Teacher #3 reiterated the effectiveness of her current principal’s positive thinking:

She likes to reward good teacher behavior, and she will not attack a group and say, ‘Y’ all are being absent too much, or y’ all are doing this, or y’ all are doing that.’ She will simply say, ‘If you are present for a whole week, come put your name in a drawing for a whole week, and we are going to give away free dinners.’

And that’s her way of saying we need to be at school more instead of taking so many days off.

According to Teacher #3, even though her current principal avoids punishing the group for the errors of a few, she will not hesitate to correct teachers individually when necessary. Both the middle school principal's progressive style and this principal's hands-off and positive leadership style have had a positive impact on Teacher #3's job satisfaction.

When asked what leadership styles and practices have had an adverse impact on her desire to continue teaching, she identified a principal she worked with for one year who showed favoritism to certain faculty members:

She would get all her little friends and take them in her office, and they would sit there and have a little hen party for a couple of hours with their kids unsupervised, and it was all right for some to do that, but not all right for others to do that.

Teacher #3 said that this principal's partiality and favoritism were very conspicuous. She mentioned again that "blasting the whole faculty for something that everybody doesn't do or preaching to the choir" has an adverse impact on her desire to continue teaching.

Retention

She said her husband asked her why she had not become a principal. She responded,

I like the classroom. I like the kids. If you are good at something you want to stay where you are good. And I feel like, you know, I am doing a good job, and I like it here. And I can't think of anything I'd rather do.

She said reasons that caused her to stay at specific schools included "camaraderie, friendships, good principal, satisfaction on the job, location." The teachers that she worked with, her principal, and her students were the primary factors that made her want to continue teaching at specific schools. She said that she changed schools because her

husband was transferred to another job once. She left another school when a principal she highly respected retired, and “his successor was not to my liking.” She continued to say, “A bad principal will cause a teacher to leave in a heartbeat.” She said that principals can retain highly qualified and committed teachers by continuing those practices that made teachers want to teach at their school in the first place. She referred to her current principal’s positive and innovative style:

She is not just stuck in one thing. She is continuously looking around for ways to improve. I can see that she is a life-long learner.... And I like her personality, and I like her management style of ‘you’re doing a great job. Thank you very much. I’m not going to bother you. Keep doing what you are doing.’

Teacher #3 also felt that her current principal hires high quality people, and she was encouraged to stay at School A because she could trust that only well qualified teachers and administrators would be hired to work there.

Teacher #4

Professional Background

On March 23, 2009, at 8:55 AM, the inquirer interviewed Teacher #4 at School B. Teacher #4 is a middle school physical education teacher and coach with a Master’s of Education in physical education who has been teaching for 39 years. Before moving to the East Coast, he taught and coached in the upper Midwest for several years. Since moving to South Carolina, he has taught in two school districts, and for the last fourteen years, he has taught at School B. Teacher #4 entered teaching because he wanted to work with kids: “Primarily my interest was in coaching and working with young people through that.” He has coached football and a variety of other sports for thirty years at several middle and high schools.

Job Satisfaction

His job satisfaction at his current school has been increased by the culture of the small, close-knit, rural community in which he teaches. He specifically cited “the respect given to the teachers from the community members and the behavior of the children in the school” as having increased his job satisfaction. He added, “I have a great administrator to work under. That has been a real strong factor.” He described his current principal: “Well, she’s tough, but she’s fair. She demands excellence, and if you’re not doing your best, she will let you know. She expects everyone to work together and to work to the best of their abilities.”

Although he described his current students as having “pretty good manners,” he feels that is changing. He said “the lack of respect and humility of young people” are factors that decrease his job satisfaction. He described those as minimal, but increasing problems at School B, and much more prevalent problems at other schools. When asked how school principals can increase teacher job satisfaction, he stated, “I think they have to be firm, but fair, and open with everyone.” He explained,

I think that often times administrators... one or two people break a policy or something, and they overreact, and they want to change everything for everyone and reprimand everyone... you know a blanket sort of thing instead of addressing individually the people who made the mistake.

He said his current principal provides incentives for teacher attendance and provides positive feedback and appreciation to teachers. She gives jeans passes to teachers who have perfect attendance for the nine weeks. He added that she sends out encouraging e-mails:

She has something positive for the faculty telling us we are doing a good job and working hard... appreciating what the faculty does. She constantly gives you positive feedback on excellence, working hard, working as a group, and high expectations for the students, also.

Leadership Styles and Practices

Teacher #4 described his current principal's leadership style: "She's just a strong leader, and she expects everyone to adhere to policies and to work hard together. If you don't meet expectations, she will let you know." He jokingly referred to her leadership as being a "benevolent dictatorship." He clarified that she was not a dictator as she willingly seeks and listens to input from her teachers. She also works with teachers who need to miss school to care for their own sick children, but she encourages them to make appointments around their teaching schedules because "...she emphasizes that substitutes just can't do what you can do."

When asked to describe leadership styles and practices that have had positive impacts on his desire to continue teaching, Teacher #4 said, "I put a premium on honesty and being candid with someone because I worked for some people, one in particular, who would say one thing and do another when you weren't there." He values leaders who are "straight up" and who are willing to discuss problems candidly when they arrive. On the contrary, principals who are dishonest and indecisive have an adverse impact on his desire to continue teaching. He explained, "I've worked with good people. I've had one that stabbed me in the back and one that was so-so. I think being decisive is important because you set the tone." He clarified that principals should seek input from the teachers and not "make every decision a unilateral decision." He said, "Sometimes you

[the principal] ask, 'What do you think about this?' And make the decision with the feedback."

Retention

Teacher #4 said he has stayed in teaching and coaching for 39 years because he enjoys working with kids and watching them grow and develop. He added, "I always enjoyed and appreciated learning." He has been at his current school for fourteen years, his longest stint at one school. He credited the "strong, fair administration, the culture of the area," and "down-to-earth" kids for his long tenure there. He taught and coached at another school for eight years, his second longest stay at a single school. He said it was also a "small community with strong values." His reasons for leaving schools involved finding better coaching opportunities, and on one occasion, he was forced to resign after an unsuccessful coaching stint. He said that the most common reasons teachers leave education are low pay and student discipline problems.

When he was asked what principals can do to retain highly qualified and committed teachers, he referred to his current principal's practices of being positive, encouraging teachers, assigning mentors, and helping inexperienced teachers with classroom management. He said, "You know classroom management is always the biggest hassle." He emphasized the importance of new teachers having mentor teachers to help them develop classroom management skills through their first couple of years in teaching. He also reiterated the importance of principals being honest with their teachers and establishing and communicating their expectations.

Teacher #5

Professional Background

On March 23, 2009, at 9:35 A.M., the researcher interviewed Teacher #5. A middle school business education teacher, Teacher #5 graduated from high school in 1998, and she has earned a B.S. in Business Education, an M.BA, and she is currently working on an M.Ed in Integrating Technology in the Classroom. She has been teaching keyboarding and computer applications to students in grades 5-8 at School B for all six years of her teaching career. She comes from a family of educators; both her mother and father have had long careers in the field, and one of her sisters is a teacher. Teacher #5 said, "I was really inspired by the teachers that taught me, and some of them are still here in the district."

Job Satisfaction

When asked to identify and explain factors that increase her job satisfaction, Teacher #5 explained, "I love what I do. That's the main goal in my opinion. I love what I do. I love my children even though we as teachers and administrators have challenging students sometimes." In addition to loving her students, she has also enjoyed working with the adults at her school:

...we have great camaraderie as far as faculty and staff and the morale. Our principal and assistant principal are excellent as far as teacher support.... We are very family oriented. I really do appreciate that as far as coming to work and feeling that warmth and comfort.

She said that she becomes most discouraged when her students do not behave or achieve to their potential. She stated, "...as a teacher you work so hard and put your all into everything that you do, and then when your students don't perform the way you want

them to perform, you are always in a sense beating yourself up.” When her students do not perform to their potential, she often finds herself asking, “What else can I possibly do to get my students to perform at the level that I expect them to perform at?” or “OK, what did I do wrong?”

Principals can increase the job satisfaction of their teachers, she said, by offering continuous support. She felt that both her principal and assistant principal have an open-door policy: “If you need to speak to them, they are more than welcome to talk to you about different situations.” She felt much support from both of them when her father became ill and was hospitalized for over three months. She credited them with “helping out with an encouraging word, paying for dinner, doing different things, and being there after he passed away.” She liked the manner in which she was treated by her administrators: “You’re not just a teacher; you’re actually a colleague. You do have that support, and I appreciate that.”

Leadership Styles and Practices

Teacher #5 characterized her principal’s leadership as being marked by having high standards for both students and teachers. She said some people describe her as being a “drill sergeant,” but Teacher #5 thinks it is just a matter of having control and being able to get others to follow the standards that she establishes. She feels that her principal provides a safe and secure environment for the children and the teachers, “so she has a very good leadership style,” according to Teacher #5. Her desire to continue teaching at her current school has been encouraged by some of her principal’s leadership practices. She said her principal is committed to the success of all students. As a result, she has implemented a no-zero policy and has created the Re-do Café, where students are given a second opportunity to complete assignments that they had difficulty with the first

time. Teacher #5 added, “She is very involved in rewarding students, which I think is great.” Some of the rewards she has seen her principal use include announcements over the intercom, a note sent home to a parent, and ice cream socials. “So it’s a lot of positive reinforcement, and you see the kids really do respond to it,” Teacher #5 explained. She continued, “We have perfect attendance dances and many different things that students really do enjoy, and I think those are great things that she has implemented here.” She also gives jeans passes to teachers with perfect attendance for a nine weeks grading period.

When asked to describe leadership practices that have had an adverse impact on her desire to continue teaching, she spoke in general rather than speaking about a specific principal. She said,

Sometimes it can really be a hindrance on the actual teacher if your principal is not as supportive as he or she could possibly be. I think the overall satisfaction is having the support and having that principal be behind you and support you even if it comes down to dealing with a difficult parent or dealing with a difficult child. She felt it was very important for a principal to be willing to stand up to defend a teacher when that teacher was faced with a difficult parent or student.

Retention

Teacher #5 explained that her love for what she does and the influences of her former teachers have motivated her to continue teaching. She said, “There have been times that I may have felt discouraged and just wanted to OK, I need to do something else. I’m young. I’m too young to be this stressed.” However, she has pressed through those times by remembering how much she loves teaching and her students. Her father was a primary source of encouragement for her before his death: “I guess it was just

having him constantly there motivating me and keeping me encouraged.” She also said that breaks that she has during holidays help her to “refocus and realize you are not here for yourself. You are here to prepare the students of today for the future.” She continued,

So just being here teaching them and having that joy when you see them succeed or come to you and tell you something that they have done even if it is getting their driver’s license, or your former students coming back to you telling you how much of an impact you had on their life. It’s just a remarkable feeling. So, that’s why I keep doing what I’m doing. I love it.

Teacher #5 said she has stayed at School B for all six years of her teaching career because, “I really enjoy the atmosphere here and the teachers that I work with, my students as well.” She also described how much she enjoys her state-of-the-art computer lab. After talking with other teachers about their lack of resources, she was very thankful for all the resources she has in her lab. She said that when she arrived at the school, she had “very, very old computers that were very, very slow.” She has been able to build her program from scratch: “And I am very proud of what I have done and the resources that I have brought into the actual program itself.” She explained that she chartered the school’s membership in the Future Business Leaders of America and that she has taken students to both state and national competitions. The positive feedback that she has received from her colleagues about her successes has given her “a great feeling” and has encouraged her to continue teaching at her current school.

Although she has never left a school or quit teaching, she discussed feelings of stress that she has experienced when students have not performed to the potential that she knows they have. She became particularly overwhelmed during the time of her father’s

illness and subsequent death. She added, “The feeling that I just want to give up slowly faded away, and then my kids were very encouraging.... Time heals all wounds.” When asked what principal’s can do to retain highly qualified and committed teachers, Teacher # 5 encouraged principals to be supportive of their teachers and to fight hard for their budgets even though they have been cut. She also said that principals should be positive role models for their teachers. She referred to again to the importance of the support she has felt from her principal, and she added, “Some people say she runs a tight ship. I like structure, and I really think that is a good thing as to what has kept me here.... She’s really been a good principal.”

Teacher #6

Teacher #6 earned a B.S. in elementary education from a local university, an M.Ed. from another South Carolina college, and she has been National Board Certified for the last four years. She has been teaching for over eight years, 5½ at one elementary school in South Carolina and three years at School B. Thus far in her career, she has worked with three principals. She currently teaches sixth grade English and social studies. When asked why she entered the teaching profession, she responded,

I wasn’t a very good student.... I would have been classified as a divergent student. I didn’t learn like everybody else did. I had to work really hard, and I had to use some music and movement and those kinds of things and at a time when we didn’t get a lot of that in the classroom. That was kind of my motivation. I wanted to teach kids who learned like me.

She also credited her eighth grade science teacher, who used a variety of teaching styles, for inspiring her to become a teacher.

Job Satisfaction

When asked to identify and describe factors that have improved her job satisfaction at School B, she quickly cited her current principal's leadership:

She does a lot as far as making sure that we know what is going on. We are always aware of any changes that are coming up or any opportunities for our students. She likes to take a consensus from us to find out what our needs are..., and I think that makes for a very smooth transition. Consistency with students is one of the things that I love here.

She described the use of notebooks and a uniform organizational style taught to students throughout the middle school and consistent school-wide rules that create "a smooth working environment" for students, teachers, and administrators. She described the school's environment as having a strong sense of community: "As a grade level, we work together. We have common planning times. I think we have a lot of cross grade level articulation. We work close with our fifth and seventh grade teachers." She described the consistency that is prevalent throughout her school as being a strong factor that increases her satisfaction with her job.

On the other hand, Teacher #6 has become discouraged at times because she feels her students are less prepared for school than they used to be:

We have working parents, and they are not, I guess, as family centered and student centered as we would like. There are a lot of outside distractions now with computers and video games and those kinds of things, and parents just don't have time to spend, so we have to pick up a lot of that.... We have to provide study time and things in class where as students in the old days, you sent it home,

and they brought it back. We have to really adjust some of those expectations to fit into our classrooms.

She also described the teacher anxiety that results from the current budget crisis: “I think that makes for everybody being a little nervous about what is going to happen, but we are pretty much well aware of what is going on, so that can relieve some of that anxiety.”

She felt that effective communication, “letting teachers, students, and parents know what the expectations are,” is a key for principals to increase teacher job satisfaction. She also enjoys the freedom she is given to use a variety of teaching methods to reach her students: “If we go in and say, ‘Hey, I found this great thing, and I think it would work with my kids,’ she is really supportive of letting us try that innovation and encouraging that.” She explained that her students are different and learn through a variety of instructional strategies, and that she appreciates the flexibility she is given by her principal to experiment. She also indicated her appreciation that she and her students have access to instructional technology as well as the necessary training to implement it.

Leadership Styles and Practices

Teacher #6 described her current principal’s leadership style as being characterized by effective and clear communication, a team approach, and an open-door policy. She appreciates her principal’s accessibility to teachers, students, and parents. She explained, “She listens to what we have to say. She solicits our input on a lot of things.” She has also been encouraged by her principal’s practice of celebrating the success of the students and the teachers. She not only expects students to rise to the top, but she is also makes the effort to praise and reward those who achieve their goals. In addition, she explained that both her current principal and her first principal at the

Dorchester County elementary school have been visible in the hallways and in the classrooms and not tied to their offices. When asked to describe her first principal and his leadership style, she said, “He was really the person that encouraged us to innovate.” When she was struggling to teach a group of low-performing students, he encouraged her to find different resources to help reach them: “That led to us pulling in business partners and starting a whole tutoring and mentoring program, and those kinds of things, so he really encouraged that innovation.” She said her first principal was a former basketball coach, so he had his “eye is on the prize” and regularly asked, “What do we need to do to take the next step?”

When asked what leadership styles and practices have had an adverse impact on her desire to teach, she referred to her second principal who had no previous experience as a principal. She worked with him for only one semester. She described him as having “a closed-door policy” and not being visible in the school. “He didn’t know the names of the kids, wasn’t in the classroom a lot, very closed off.... The children saw him more as a figurehead... and not so much as a partner in education,” she explained. She added, “I think if you don’t have that open communication with your teachers and your parents that is where a lot of your trouble comes in.” She said she would also be discouraged by principals who demand “lock-step instruction” where teachers are supposed to be on the same lesson on the same day. “I think that would drive me insane,” she insisted. “I would not be able to flourish there because a lesson plan is a lesson plan. That doesn’t always mean that that is the direction that your teaching takes. You’ve got to take that teachable moment,” she continued.

Retention

She said she has remained in teaching because of the opportunities for advancement and to learn new instructional strategies. She stated,

Technology has been huge for me this year. It's changed my entire teaching style.... This year I created a class website. We do the white boards with the notebooks and different things, and it's really encouraged me to keep doing what I'm doing.

When asked why she has stayed at her current school, she said,

I like that it is a rural school because the kids out here are a different mix than anywhere.... I like the community, the parents that are here. They are really supportive. I like that everybody in this building is so accessible.... The sense of collegiality is what I am looking for... working together.

Her previous school in Dorchester County was also located in a small, rural community. She liked that it was a Title I school and had fun after-school programs such as basketball that helped build "community amongst those kids" and kept students interested in school. Teacher #6 left her first school because it was an hour commute from her home.

She said that principals can retain highly qualified and committed teachers in their schools by allowing their teachers flexibility and input "on what works and what doesn't," and building partnerships among teachers, students, and parents within their schools.

Teacher #7

Professional Background

Teacher #7 is a middle school math teacher with 33 years experience. After graduating with a B.S. in mathematics, he began teaching in 1975. He later earned a master's degree in education. For the past 14 years, he has taught at School C, a rural middle/high school in South Carolina. Prior to that, he taught math and coached basketball at a rural middle school for two years, and two other high schools for a combination of seventeen years. He said he entered teaching "because I had a love for mathematics." He said that his high school guidance counselor encouraged him to pursue a career as a teacher.

Job Satisfaction

Teacher #7 said that a school's personnel have the greatest impact on his job satisfaction. He not only identified the principal, but also the secretaries and other support staff with playing significant roles in encouraging his job satisfaction. He said, "It's how they come across to you, how they present themselves, how they manage the school [that] makes a big difference to me." He added,

If I can talk to an administrator, and they will talk to me rather than talking down to me, I feel better about my surroundings, and I feel better working with them. I feel better doing my job because now I feel like I'm important; I'm useful; I'm needed rather than just being treated like a number or figure.

His job satisfaction has also been increased by professional development opportunities. He felt that they were especially important to new teachers to help them develop instructional strategies.

On the contrary, he said he has been so discouraged that he felt like leaving education when he was “being harassed” by a principal because the principal was not pleased with the progress of the basketball team he coached. He stated,

Not having a good rapport with the principal is terrible for the teacher. I think leadership should make themselves available to every teacher whether it’s a favorite or not. Leadership should have a longer arm than the teachers themselves. They should be able to reach out to others.

Teacher #7 said that principals can do several things to increase teachers’ job satisfaction. He said, “First of all, allow teachers to have training within the department or leading within the department.... Not so much the principal involvement, just the teachers collaborating with each other.” He also felt principals should encourage teachers to attend workshops and visit other schools to improve their teaching. Next, he said that principals should be visible in the hallways and in the classrooms: “They don’t have to sit in your class the entire period, but just come by and stick your head in.”

Leadership Style and Practices

Teacher #7 has worked with his current principal for the last five years, and he describes his him as “one of the most enjoyable principals that I’ve worked for.” He describes his principal’s leadership style as a combination of democratic and authoritative: “He’s flexible... so he’s gonna say, ‘I’m gonna allow you to do certain things. A little here, a little there is fine, but if I have to be the principal, I know how to be the principal.” Teacher #7 appreciates how his principal comes by his classroom and speaks to him as well as listens to him. His principal is positive and seeks to involve others in leadership. He involves the guidance counselor, the resource officer, the athletic director, and others in leadership. He comes to faculty meetings with an agenda,

begins with something positive to celebrate, and keeps them concise and effective. He added, “Every voice on the intercom is not his.... He allows the children, the students to participate in a lot of activities around the school, and some of those voices are children’s voices, which I think is marvelous.” He describes his principal as “able to get things done” in the school and in the community. He said the members of the community are happy to have him at their school because of the improvements he has made in student achievement, building and grounds, and in athletics.

He also discussed his first principal with whom he worked for 14 years. He described him as being very visible in the halls, at athletic events, and at other extra-curricular events such as the prom. He called him “one of the best principals that I have had over the years.” He also mentioned an authoritative, middle school principal he had: “He was pretty straight. You just have to do it his way or else.” He described another principal as being “a like sickening type authoritative.” Teacher #7 said this principal was nit picky. He said, “He would call you on the intercom if you were late to the meeting and say stuff like ‘has anyone seen Mr. ...?’” He said this principal would then announce on the intercom that Teacher #7 was late and then count the seconds he was late to the meeting. He said this principal’s leadership style and practices turned many of the teachers off, and there was a great deal of teacher turnover during his tenure as principal. Teacher #7 said he has also been discouraged by principals who took the students’ and parents’ sides rather than listening to the teacher.

Retention

When he was asked what has caused him to stay in teaching, he said, “Teaching is a joy.” He also referred to his love of math and seeing his students succeed: “To watch a child say, ‘Wow, that’s the way it is....’ That’s amazing to me, and then I always tell my

students that math is a subject that doesn't change." He has stayed at his current school because of its close proximity to home as well as his alma mater. He said, "I love the children." He feels that his students are respectable and well mannered: "They still say 'yes sir' and 'no sir.'" It is important to him to give back to his community and show the students that members of their community can be successful. He also enjoyed his first school where he taught for fourteen years for some of the same reasons. He appreciated the diversity of students who came from various communities to this large high school. He experienced success coaching basketball as well because he had large numbers of players to choose from: "I had 75 try out for basketball," and he only had 15 spots to fill.

He left teaching early in his career for one year to pursue a business opportunity; however, it did not work out, and he returned to teaching. He said he left specific schools to seek the financial advancement that came with better coaching positions and to move closer to his home. He said he never left a school because of the principal: "It was me trying to advance myself."

Teacher #7 felt that principals can increase teacher retention in their schools by including teachers in decision making, involving them in his cabinets, and giving them a voice in what goes on at their school. He said,

Any time you have voice in what is going on at school, I think they are more apt to be there and to work out their ideas. If you give an idea, you want to see that idea through. It always helps to have someone there to allow you to give your point of view and to share.

The next practice he identified was being approachable: "If a principal is approachable, and the teacher can talk to them in the hallway, in his office, in the classroom... open-

door policy.... Just the idea of that is good.” He credited his current principal with being approachable and having an open-door policy.

Teacher #8

Teacher #8 is a National Board Certified English teacher at School C. She has earned a bachelor’s degree and a master’s degree, and she has over 30 additional graduate hours from other universities. She has split her 18 years of teaching between School C and a large urban high school in South Carolina. After teaching for nine years at her first school in the 1970’s, she worked as a public relations director for a hospital. When asked why she became a teacher, she replied, “I didn’t want to be a nurse or secretary.” She said those were the options available to her at that time. She added, “I left teaching as soon as I was able to and became a marketing director in a hospital system because of the pay.”

Job Satisfaction

She has enjoyed teaching at both schools because she felt as if she “were making a difference.” Her high degree of job satisfaction has resulted from the freedom and autonomy she has had as a teacher. When discussing her first school, she said, “My opinions were listened to, and we experimented.... I created curriculum.” Although she did not have much contact with the principal at her first school, she had a “very collegial relationship” with an assistant principal who helped her especially during her first years of teaching. Early in her teaching career in the 1970s, a student was shot in the classroom next to her, and she caught some other students in the hall with marijuana. She credited her assistant principal with coaching her through those trials and reassuring her as a teacher. She enjoys working at her current school because her principal regularly

tells her how much she contributes and gives her the freedom in her classroom to do what she feels is best to help her students learn.

However, when she left teaching to become a marketing director, she found the corporate world to be much different from education. In education, she found that principals were usually former teachers who often treated teachers as students by “monitoring every minute of their day”; whereas, in the corporate world, “Managers are there to make sure their front line people are as happy as they can be because those are the people who serve the customers.” She said that most principals make the students their first concern; however, she feels a principal’s “first concern should be his teachers because they are the ones serving the students.” She added, “The principal is not here first and foremost for the students; that’s the teacher’s job. The principals are here to make sure the teachers are happy and taken care of.” She says little things decrease her job satisfaction such as when the refrigerator in the teachers’ lounge broke, and no one repaired or replaced it, or when the administration decided not to provide coffee for the teachers any longer.

In order to increase the job satisfaction of teachers in their schools, principals must let their teachers know they are valued and appreciated, according to Teacher #8. In addition, the principal must work to resolve problems quickly and not let them fester. She described a conflict between two secretaries at her school that has not been resolved and how it has had an adverse impact on the job satisfaction of the teachers who have to work with them. She also emphasized that principals should treat teachers as salaried professionals rather than as hourly workers. Her current principal gives her first period planning and allows her to arrive a little later than other teachers because she has a one-hour commute. She said that she often stays until 4:30 or 5:00 PM. She feels that

administrators should not make teachers punch the clock as long as they are present before their students and get their jobs done.

Leadership Style and Practices

She described her current principal as being “very energetic” and having “great ideas.” She said he is accessible and encouraging, “I enjoy working for him. I went in one time and said, ‘Coach, I need a pep talk,’ and he gave me a pep talk.... I’d just had a bad week.” She said that he does not want to “have to be the principal”; he would rather be the nice guy or encourager. She said, “I don’t think he’s a real rules man,” but she described him as a strong leader who is able to secure necessary resources for the school. She characterized his predecessor as a “really nice guy who knew his stuff.”

Unfortunately, despite successfully raising student achievement scores, he “became the scapegoat” at the school, lost his job, and failed to receive the credit he was due. She identified his inability to “work within the system to get what he and we needed, recognition-wise.”

She has been encouraged to continue teaching by principals who have treated her as a professional and provided her with flexibility and encouragement as well as by feeling she is contributing to the lives of her students. “I feel like I’ve helped some kids. I feel like I’ve contributed to the reputation of the school, but it’s because people, they leave me alone. They don’t stand over my shoulder. They treat me as a professional.” In addition, she feels that principals should actively assist teachers with student discipline problems, so that the teachers are able to concentrate on teaching. On the contrary, she gets discouraged when principals treat teachers like they were children, and address problems to the whole group rather than to the responsible parties individually. She has

also been discouraged by problems that are not resolved promptly and effectively, but allowed to continue and fester.

Retention

After she taught for nine years at a large urban school in the 1970s for nine years and became the chair of the thirty-member English department, her husband was transferred to another job in a small rural community. When she could not find a teaching job there, she became a hospital marketing director and eventually earned a six-figure salary; however, she explained,

Healthcare became so contentious with all the changes, and people would literally... if they knew their job was at stake..., they were fighting, and that was not an atmosphere I wanted to work in. And so, I had made enough money that I could have a beach house; I could have a nice car; I could have things that I want, and by that time, I had divorced. But I quit... I just walked in and quit.

After taking some time off and traveling to Europe, she met the former principal of School C at a job fair and accepted a position teaching English in that small rural school where she has continued to teach for the last nine years.

To retain highly qualified and committed teachers, principals should include them in some of the decision making by offering opportunities to participate voluntarily on school leadership teams, according to Teacher #8. She said that sometimes the most creative teachers can be the most challenging ones for principals because of their creativity. "Sometimes you can put up with stuff in order to get to the good stuff. I know I can be a trouble maker..., but if the heart's in the right place, don't squash them." She added that principals should "show individual appreciation more often... just walking around and saying thanks for being there, great job. You'd be surprised at what that

would do.” Finally, she said that school districts must find a way to pay salaries that are competitive with the corporate world.

Teacher #9

Professional Background

Teacher #9 is a National Board Certified special education teacher who has been teaching for ten years. She earned a B.S. in family studies and an M.S. in elementary education. She has taught in three different schools in two school districts, and she has worked at School C for the past five years. She said, “I always wanted to be a teacher because I talk too much.... I love working with kids. It was a childhood thing for me always wanting to be a teacher.”

Job Satisfaction

It took awhile for Teacher #9 to find her niche in teaching. She began teaching elementary children in general education classes, but she decided that was not for her. She then taught Spanish to middle school children. It was not until she switched from teaching Spanish to teaching special education that she realized that she was motivated by the challenge of helping students with special needs through individualized instruction. She was encouraged by learning a great deal about learning and emotional disabilities. She was especially satisfied to help high school students with special needs earn their diplomas and “helping them plan for life after high school.” She currently splits her day between working as a resource teacher for middle school students and as a transition specialist for high school students. She described the satisfaction she felt when a child with autism transferred to her school as a senior. “He was very low functioning.... He was the most low functioning student we have had here.” She describes the doubt that other adults had about his ability to do anything constructive.

She decided to find out what he liked to do, and to her surprise, she discovered that he liked to clean and mop. She had him placed in the school's cafeteria for one hour per day to clean, and he did so well, he was hired to work their full time after he graduated. She explained,

So, that was so satisfying to me... that one kid that nobody thought was going to do anything was the first one to be employed out of all of our students. That kind of thing makes me want to come back every day.”

Whereas she finds much satisfaction from working with her students, she identified some of the adults she works with as her greatest source of discouragement. She has been particularly frustrated by the emphasis on student achievement test scores and school report cards:

I think is especially frustrating as a special education teacher to lose the idea that we are not necessarily looking at the whole picture. We are just looking at a certain population for test scores, and as much as they can, they try to... not include special education students because you are gonna bring down our scores. She has also been discouraged by the low expectations others have for her students. “In special education, the theory seems to be as long as you keep them in the room, then we are good, when that's not necessarily helping our kids.” She also related that her current school has been plagued by discipline problems, and she feels support from some members of the administration but not all of them.

She believes principals can increase teacher job satisfaction by not only holding students to a higher standard, but also by holding teachers to a higher standard. She feels that principals should address problems directly with the individual teachers who are having them and hold them accountable to correct such problem areas:

I understand you want to keep your teachers happy, and you don't want them to be upset with you, and you don't want them to leave. But what it tells the teachers who are really working hard is it doesn't matter how well you do your job, you are gonna get the same anyway.... It ends up giving the teachers who work hard more work.

She described the adverse impact on teacher morale of correcting behaviors that are not addressed by other teachers and re-teaching information that "should have already been taught."

Leadership Style and Practices

She characterized her current principal as "a very nice person" who is very understanding and flexible: "He's very understanding if you ever had an emergency, and you need to leave if you have situations come up. He's very understanding and flexible in that respect." She added that he delegates authority to others. She indicated that there are positives and negatives with such a leadership style. She appreciates his willingness to work with teachers when emergencies arise, but she would like to see him more directly involved in resolving problems. She also discussed two principals with whom she worked at the middle school. She described the first one's leadership style as being authoritative and direct:

He wasn't blunt, but if there was an issue, he dealt with it. It was dealt with immediately, and you knew there were to be repercussions if you didn't do what you needed to do. He wasn't demeaning. He did it in a very professional way. Her second principal at the middle school, she said, was a very nice person, "but again, you knew she meant business." She continued:

If there was an issue, she really kind of hit it head on... wasn't as strong in discipline with kids, but when it came to staff and faculty, I think she was very good at dealing with those issues personally and really hanging in there.... If she knew at 2:55 [P.M.] there was a problem, at 3:15 [P.M.] she was dealing with it. She didn't put it off until tomorrow.

Teacher #9 felt this principal's leadership style worked well at that middle school.

Leadership practices that have had a positive impact on Teacher #9's desire to continue teaching include "putting children first," having knowledge of all of the school's curriculum, and being willing to seek information that they need to know. As a special education teacher, it is very important to her that principals understand the laws that regulate special education or consult her or others on those matters with which they are unfamiliar. She also values more authoritative leaders who are strong and direct:

I want them to... stand up and really say that 'I am the leader of this school, and it all comes back to me. I am held ultimately responsible for what happens at this school.' I think those types of leaders tend to be a lot stronger and more supportive of their staff.

When asked about leadership styles and practices that have had an adverse impact on her desire to continue teaching, she said referred back to the practice of emphasizing test scores rather than the gains of individual students: "When they play the numbers game, and that seems to be more than the individual student, that leaves a bad taste in my mouth." She is also discouraged when principals fail to "follow-up with staff" to resolve problems. She also discussed the practice of another principal, not previously mentioned, who was unprofessional and harsh to teachers: "When teachers didn't turn their lesson

plans in on time, there was a sign at the front door where parents walked in, and there was a list of teachers who didn't turn in lesson plans.”

Retention

For Teacher #9 the students are the motivating factor that keeps her teaching. She explained,

I love working with our kids.... These are some of the best kids I have ever worked with in my life. I've only been doing this for ten years, but I've had more job satisfaction with these students and knowing that we make an impact on their lives, that they know there's a world out there bigger than.

She also feels strong support from the school district special education staff, and she has made lasting relationships with colleagues throughout the school district while serving on their Teacher Forum, which consists of those who have earned Teacher of the Year honors in their respective schools. “I could do other jobs. I could probably make more money, but this is where my heart is and where I'm going to keep coming back even when I say I'm not.”

She has stayed at her current school for five years because “it's a small community school.” She likes the small staff and the ability to get to know her students. She finds much support from her colleagues. She explained that she enjoyed working with the principals at her previous two schools, but she did not feel connected to the larger community. She prefers the small, rural community of her current school: “I just find that more appealing.” She also added that she receives a financial incentive for teaching at the rural school. She left her previous school because her current school was closer to her home, and it gave her an opportunity to become a department head.

To retain highly qualified and committed teachers, she encouraged principals to use “retention bonuses.” She believes a merit pay system would also help keep the best teachers in education. She also discussed how principals should support all the school’s programs: “I would say a principal who supports every program equally becomes evident to everybody else that it’s important, and we all need to work together.”

Teacher #10

Professional Background

Teacher #10 is a ten-year-veteran high school science teacher who currently teaches chemistry, physics, genetics, pre-calculus, marine biology, and anatomy at School D. After earning her bachelor’s degree in biology with a minor in chemistry, she went to work in a hospital. She then had children, and she decided she wanted to teach so that she could have more time to spend with them. She went to graduate school and earned an M.A.T. in secondary science. She taught for five years at a large, public high school before moving to School D, an independent school of approximately 1,000 students.

Job Satisfaction

She has gained much job satisfaction from the positive feedback she receives from former students who graduate and then return to tell her, “Thanks for preparing me for college.” She added, “Knowing that I have impact, especially on a teenager’s life, is very self-rewarding for me.” She also described becoming more comfortable as a teacher and feeling as though she is performing “a good service” for her students. She expressed appreciation for the trust she is given to do her job in the independent school, and she said, “I think I have found my nitch here.”

On the contrary, she explained her dissatisfaction with teaching in the public school. She was especially discouraged by the paperwork that she found excessive and the regular performance evaluations she received. She discussed the dissatisfaction that resulted from discipline problems that she encountered while working in the public high school. "I felt like the administration was not loyal to the teachers, and that you were more of a disciplinarian in the classroom than you were an educator," she stated. She also described the discouragement with some of her colleagues, "It is dissatisfying as a person who works very hard looking over in another classroom and seeing a teacher who just does worksheets or frivolous things with her class."

She suggested that principals can improve teacher job satisfaction by "giving the teacher more leeway in his or her classroom or trusting the teacher that she is doing her job." She said that she enjoys the opportunity to teach high level courses such as physics and the complimentary feedback she receives from her principal. She also mentioned increasing teacher salaries to improve their job satisfaction.

Leadership Style and Practices

She described her current principal's leadership style as being democratic. "He is a very fair person," she said. She does not feel he is very stern, but she added, "He does expect teachers to follow through with kids who are not working up to their potential." Teacher #10 said that she is very loyal to her principal, and that he is very dependable and supportive of all of his teachers. She felt like her principal at the public school lacked authority and was weak in handling student discipline problems. She said, "He was laissez faire. I think he was scared of the students. You can't be that way as a high school principal." She did not feel that he was loyal to his teachers.

She has been encouraged to continue teaching at her current school by her principal's willingness to trust her to work as the chair of the science department and make decisions regarding curriculum for students in grades kindergarten through twelfth grade. She has also been encouraged when both of her principals have demonstrated appreciation for her work.

The most discouraging leadership practices she has experienced have included when a principal was very stringent about teacher tardiness and demanded that teachers turn in daily lesson plans. She explained that she arrived a little late to school on occasion because of the difficulty of getting her own children dressed for school. Although she felt like writing and submitting lesson plans was worthwhile for new teachers, "For veteran teachers, it's just a waste of time.... It kind of took more time away from your time you could be grading papers or whatever."

Retention

When asked what has caused her to remain in teaching, she said, "I just love it. I love working with kids. I just do. I love teenagers.... I just love the kids that I teach." She stayed in the public high school for five years primarily because of the salary and benefits that she received. She was also teaching advanced placement and international baccalaureate science courses and had two planning periods: "I had the cake and was eating it too." She left the public school because she wanted her children to attend School #4. She had graduated from School D, and there was an opening for a science teacher and department chair. She said the job "just fell into my lap." This position allows her to come to school with her children. She likes her principal, her students, and the close-knit school environment at her current school.

She also described an incident at the public school that contributed to her desire to leave: I was threatened in the parking lot by a group of kids... was told there was a gun and all that stuff, and I went back to my principal, and [he] said they were going to be kicked out of school, and that didn't happen. They ended up graduating... even though they had threatened a teacher, so I feel discipline is just so bad I couldn't do the job I wanted to do there.

To retain highly qualified and committed teachers, principals of private schools must find methods to offer teachers financial incentives to compete with the public schools, according to Teacher #10. She also said, "The environment of the school starts with the principal and works its way down." Principals, in her opinion, should place "a lot of trust in their teachers" and treat them like professionals.

Teacher #11

Professional Background

Teacher #11 has 37 years of teaching experience, the first 30 years in public schools and the last seven in independent schools. She taught middle school students in the same South Carolina public school district the first 30 years of her career, and she taught middle school students at one private school for one year and at School D for six years. When she was in high school in the same city in which she now teaches, she had opportunities to "try out different jobs." Through those opportunities she found that she did not want to be a nurse and that she enjoyed working with children. She said, "I've always been real involved with children. Who they are, how they interact with us, what they teach us, as well as what we teach them. It's meant to be." She has a master's degree in education.

Job Satisfaction

She said that when she began teaching, her job satisfaction was strongly linked to the amount of support she received from administrators and fellow teachers. She explained,

When you first start out, you are so fresh and don't know what to expect even though you go to college, and you are taught classes. Until you walk in the classroom, you don't know what to truly expect each day.

She received a great deal of satisfaction in her early years by teaching Title I remediation classes. She described seeing a light come on when she was able to help her students understand new concepts: "You finally made progress with those children." She also finds fulfillment from the appreciation former students show her after they have graduated from high school: "And then when they have graduated, and they come back and say 'Thank you.'" She enjoys teaching in the same small town in which she lives. She finds satisfaction from seeing her students "at church and on the playground at the ball field." She added, "I need a little stroking, as well," and she receives that from seeing her present and former students in her community.

On the other hand, she has also found dissatisfaction during her 37 years of teaching from not being able to reach every child:

Unfortunately in public schools some parents have two jobs and dysfunctional families, and children have so many issues. I wasn't able to reach the parent or the child. It was very frustrating to me because I thought I could save the world.

She continued,

That part to me was the hardest... seeing that child struggle. I couldn't reach them. And unfortunately, I have had some students who have been incarcerated

for various crimes, and that is disturbing. I could see it happening but couldn't do anything about it.

She said that listening to teachers and providing them with support increase teacher job satisfaction. She emphasized that listening to teachers discuss "what's happening in the classroom or what is happening in the school" is important because those issues are real to them. She also felt that principals should support teachers with the personal challenges they face: "We all have issues in our own personal lives that we deal with before we get to school." She said that principals should show they care for their teachers on a personal level, not just as employees. She added that principals should show teachers they care about them the same way they show students they care.

Leadership Style and Practices

Teacher #11 described her current principal at School D as being "very firm" and "consistent." She said that he is faced with the challenges of leading a school in small town America and being friends with teachers, parents, and members of the community, but "he is very consistent with his decision making. I think our community has learned that all of us are consistent with that.... We follow the rules. We don't bend the rules." She said, "He has an open-door policy for his faculty and students," and he is even willing to discuss school matters outside of the normal school day. She added that he is "very fair with the faculty as well as with the students." She described him as a team player who will listen to what teachers have to say, but ultimately he is the leader. "He says, 'The bottom line if I make a mistake, it falls back on my shoulders, not yours. We discussed it. We agree to disagree, but ultimately, I think this is the best way to handle it.'"

She described a former long-time principal from her public school days as being very similar to her current principal. She said he was “very firm,” “passionate,” and “a team person.” A principal of a large middle school, “He relied on us as a faculty to give him input, to help him make decisions. He didn’t just make them on his own. He relied on us to help out.” She concluded, “We had 300 kids in the sixth grade, so we were much larger than we are here. Basically, he had to rely on us for input to make decisions.”

She said that principals who encouraged her to attend professional development courses and workshops have had a positive impact on her desire to continue teaching. When principals have provided her opportunities to visit other schools or attend trainings to share her experiences and interact with other teachers, she has been able to improve herself and grow as a teacher.

She described one “dictatorial” principal who had an adverse impact on her desire to continue teaching during the last five years of her public school career: “It was her way or no way. That’s when you hate to go to work because you just didn’t know what each day was going to bring.” She continued, “Sometimes power became important to certain people as opposed to what was important for the school and the children.” She felt beaten down by this principal and like she had to regularly fight “to rise above” the negativity. “Just getting beat up sometimes verbally... it’s tough when it’s constant. It’s very demeaning.”

Retention

She has continued to teach for 37 years because she likes “to be active.” “The children are just so important in my life,” she stated. In addition to teaching, she coaches varsity tennis. She said,

I get so much from children. I get so much from them, and hopefully, I am giving them as much as I am receiving from them. I can't imagine getting up and not coming to work... truly..., and I am 59, and I can't truly think of anything else I'd rather do. I really look forward to it. The challenges are good and bad.... I feel like God has given me this ability, and I'm not ready to stop it yet.

She taught sixth grade at Manning Elementary School for 30 years because she enjoyed working with adolescents: "They still love you in the sixth grade. They still call you 'mama' accidentally. Guiding them through adolescence is a challenge for me, but I enjoy it." She became "comfortable" teaching sixth, seventh, and eighth graders and was very happy there the first 25 years. The last five years became difficult because of a new principal and superintendent. She felt the kids were becoming more disrespectful as well.

I taught the gifted and talented group my last few years in the public school, and they were great kids, but outside the doors of my classroom, there was a lack of respect. It was really where I didn't want to be at that point and time in my life. I didn't feel like, for me, that we were treated as professionals. We were treated as second-class citizens.

She retired from public school, but she went back to teaching at a private school the following fall. She has found that the kids and their parents have treated her with more respect at her current school, and she stated, "They treat you as a professional."

To retain highly qualified and committed teachers in their schools, "Principals, you have got to keep encouraging your teachers." Teacher #11 said teachers often get "beat up" with student achievement test scores: "The teachers get the blunt of the test scores after they've given their heart and soul after teaching and testing, and you do everything you can, and then you receive a report card back." In addition to encouraging

their teachers, principals in private schools must provide financial incentives when possible, according to Teacher #11. She reiterated the importance of talking to teachers, listening to them, and having an open-door policy. She also felt that principals need to keep their teachers focused on the mission of the school: “And to keep them, I think your mission statement and follow through with that mission statement is very important. This is our statement. This is what we strive to do.” She emphasized the importance of being consistent with teachers in order to keep them coming back.

Teacher #12

Professional Background

Teacher #12 holds a master’s degree in education and has been teaching for seven years, five at a public elementary school in South Carolina and two at School D. She taught kindergarten at the public school, and she currently teaches second grade at School D. She has followed her grandfather’s footsteps into the teaching profession. He currently teaches with her at School D. She said, “I like to tell people that I didn’t choose it, it chose me. I couldn’t have done anything else and been satisfied. I have always known I wanted to be a teacher.”

Job Satisfaction

The major source of Teacher #12’s job satisfaction is the opportunity to learn new instructional strategies and ideas and then share them with others. She described the beginning of her teaching career:

I had a young principal. She and I were on the same page, and I was fresh out of college. She sent me to several trainings to bring differentiated instruction, new teaching styles, different curriculums back to our school.... I gained a lot of experience under her. That was really satisfying. When you enter into teaching,

you just have to find your own style..., and I think having that experience really, really helped me a lot.

She said she has been completely satisfied at School D where,

There is an openness to new ideas. I'm kind of not bound by district regulations or what teaching styles we have to use. There are not specific guidelines that I have to go by. I'm able to do what I see fit to do in my classroom to meet my students' needs.

She said she became dissatisfied in her previous school because she felt bound by "guidelines" dictated from the district level. She described frustration that administrators made decisions, but they were not familiar with her classroom or her students: "They didn't understand what you had to deal with on a daily basis, and they said, 'You have to do this by this certain time,' when they don't understand..." The kindergarten classes she taught included students from a wide range of abilities, and she said,

You were sort of criticized for retention if you saw fit at the end of the year that the children were just not ready to go to the next grade. There was sort of some administrative flack about having to retain so many children.

When she was asked what principals can do to increase teacher job satisfaction, Teacher #12 said, "Teacher support has a lot to do with it." She felt encouraged by continued support and understanding from administrators, and she preferred principals who left the "day-to-day" instructional decisions to her.

Leadership Style and Practices

Teacher #12 discussed the leadership styles and practices of the three principals she has worked with during her seven-year teaching career. She described her first

principal, with whom she worked for three years, as being “wonderful” and “a team player” and “very democratic.” She said,

She was... very involved with the teachers... by coming by and getting to know your students and your daily schedule and getting to know what you were doing and how you instructed, and she was really, really good on team communication.

Teacher #12 said that this principal stopped by her room daily to inquire how her day was going or what she needed. She said the second principal, with whom she worked with for two years, was not as outgoing as the first but more authoritative. Although she had been “wonderful as an assistant principal,” Teacher #12 felt that this principal supported the parents more than she did the teachers. When problems arose with parents, this principal tended to blame the teachers rather than asking them to explain the situation and give their side. She described her current principal as being “very hands on,” “very democratic,” and “willing to help in any way possible.” She said he does things that she did not expect a principal to do such as picking up trash in the school yard, hanging items on the classroom walls for teachers, checking to see if the teacher’s air conditioners work properly in their classrooms, and making sure teachers have sufficient supplies. Rather than viewing the school as “my school,” this principal refers to it as “our school,” she said. He gives the teachers autonomy to make instructional decisions and respects them as the experts in their classrooms. “He lets teachers know that he appreciates them, and I feel very appreciated,” she concluded.

The leadership practices that have had a positive impact on Teacher #12’s desire to continue teaching include giving teachers a voice in school decision making, trusting teachers to do their jobs, and treating them as professionals and not just as employees. “I think that it is very important for teachers to have a voice about what’s going on here,”

she said. When she told her principal that her science curriculum was dated, he asked her opinion about what other curriculum would be better. “To me, that is good leadership. He trusts the teachers are doing their job, and they want to do the best that they can,” she added. She emphasized the importance of “giving the teachers the opportunity to teach and not necessarily to just be an employee.”

Her desire to continue teaching was adversely impacted by feeling as if she was not supported by her second principal: “It puts a damper on your desire when you go to school, and you give your all and don’t have the backing.” She linked public school teacher burnout to the unrealistic expectations of district and building administrators and the emphasis placed on school report cards and how a school “looks on the paper.” She said, “They are not making the students the number one priority.”

Retention

Teacher #12 has continued to teach for seven years because,

It’s something I yearn for. I have that desire to watch my children learn.... I enjoy that smile that you get when you know they got what you taught. They really got it. It makes you feel good. I wake up, and I’m ready to go.

She likes having the opportunity to learn new things and try new practices in her classroom. “I think as long as I am able to do that, am able to make a difference, I think that I will continue to have that desire.”

She stayed at her first school for five years because of the salary and benefits offered by the public school. She was very satisfied during her first three years because of the support she felt from her principal and the good relationships she shared with her colleagues. She became a department chair and school liaison to the district. She felt as though she had opportunities to have her voice heard, to have influence, and to gain

valuable influence. When asked about her current school, she said, "I love it. This is my family. I graduated from high school here. I feel like this is my home. I am comfortable here." She felt well received by the other teachers when she moved from her first school to School D, and she has experienced a great deal of support from her principal.

She left her first school two years after a change in principals. In addition to feeling unsupported by her principal, she had a long commute. She had a small child, and she was offered a teaching job at School D in her hometown. "I felt like the Lord was leading me there," she added. She was able to get home earlier in the evenings and spend more time with her family.

To encourage teacher retention, principals should support their teachers, offer them opportunities to continue their education and grow professionally, and trust them to do their jobs. She added that principals should address problems with individual teachers rather than with the entire faculty. Teachers should be recognized "for good things, not necessarily for having the lowest test scores."

Summary of Interviews

The twelve interviews provided a great deal of information concerning principal leadership and teacher job satisfaction. Throughout the course of the inquiry, the participants discussed several factors that they perceived as having significantly influenced their job satisfaction and retention. They described their professional background to provide the researcher with necessary information concerning their teaching experience and credentials. They discussed their level of job satisfaction and the factors that increased as well as decreased it. They described the leadership practices and styles of both former and current principals. Finally, they provided information that described why they have remained in teaching and why they have stayed at or left

particular schools. The twelve interviews provided a large quantity of data that helped answer the research questions of this study. This data provides useful information to school leaders to assist them in their efforts to solve the challenge of teacher retention. Table 3 identifies the common factors that impacted the participants' job satisfaction and retention along with the number of times they were mentioned by the teachers.

Table 3

Factors and Their Frequencies

Factors	Number of Times Mentioned by Teachers
Relationships with Faculty, Staff, and Administrators	32
Professional Treatment	32
Positive Feedback	30
Principal Support	28
Relationships with Students	21
Listening and Accessibility	17
Principal's Expectations	13
Connection with the Community	13
Salaries	10

CHAPTER V: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of the final chapter is to restate the problem, review the qualitative methodology, and summarize and discuss the common themes that emerged through the research.

The Problem Statement

As efforts to recruit more people into the teaching profession have proven to be successful, determining how to keep high-quality teachers in the classrooms providing meaningful and effective instruction has remained an enigma. Not only does teacher turnover present significant staffing problems for administrators, but it also has a strong relationship to the performance of schools (Ingersoll, 2001). The problem educational leaders face is not the number of people entering the teaching profession; it is the number of people leaving teaching prematurely. Too many classrooms are staffed by teachers who lack the required credentials and experience to be deemed highly qualified by their states. The purpose of this study is to identify teachers' perceptions of how leadership styles and practices of their principals can improve their levels of job satisfaction and likelihood of continuing to teach in their schools. The study attempts to answer the following questions: 1) What factors have increased or decreased teachers' job satisfaction? 2) How do teachers perceive the leadership styles of their principals? 3) What, if any, specific leadership practices of principals have encouraged or discouraged teacher retention and job satisfaction?

Review of the Methodology

As stated in Chapter 2, this study was concerned with discovering teachers' thoughts and opinions concerning how their principals' leadership styles and practices

impact their job satisfaction and desire to continue teaching in their schools. The researcher contacted three public school principals and two private school headmasters in South Carolina to ask their permission to interview three of their teachers. One private school headmaster declined to participate while the four other school leaders gave their consent. The researcher worked with each principal to identify three teachers from his or her school who met the following qualifications: must have a minimum of five years teaching experience and two years with their current principal; must meet the certification requirements of the South Carolina Department of Education, or in the case of the private school, the South Carolina Independent School Association; and must possess a master's degree in education or in their content area. Twelve teachers who met the above requirements consented to participate in the study. They represented a variety of grade levels and content areas from elementary through high school. Four of the 12 had earned National Board Certification.

The researcher visited School A, a large, suburban elementary school in South Carolina on March 10 and March 11, 2009. He interviewed a fourth grade special education teacher, a second grade teacher, and a teacher of fourth and fifth grade gifted students. On March 23, 2009, he visited School B, a rural middle school in South Carolina, to interview a physical education teacher, a business teacher, and an English/social studies teacher. He went to School C, a small, rural high school on April 1, 2009, to interview a math teacher, an English teacher, and a special education teacher. On April 29, 2009, he visited School D, a large private school in a small town in South Carolina where he interviewed a high school science teacher, a middle school social studies teacher, and a second grade teacher. During the interviews, participants were questioned about their professional backgrounds, factors that impacted their job

satisfaction, their principals' leadership styles and practices, and factors that impacted their desires to continue teaching at their schools. At the conclusion of the research, the results were analyzed by the researcher to identify common themes that emerged. Those findings are summarized and discussed in the following two sections of this chapter.

Summary of the Results

Through the interviews of the twelve participants, data revealed a great deal about factors that influence teachers' job satisfaction, how teachers perceive the leadership styles and practices of their principals, and how specific practices of principals encourage or discourage teacher retention. The participants in this study first answered questions concerning their professional background; next, they were asked about their job satisfaction; then, they described the leadership styles of the principals with whom they have worked; finally, they answered questions about teacher retention. Throughout the questioning the twelve teachers' perceptions of both their current and former principals became clear, and they identified several factors that have impacted their level of job satisfaction and their desire to continue teaching at the particular schools in which they have worked.

Perceptions of the Leadership Styles and Practices of Current Principals

Teachers #1-3 were elementary teachers from School A, a public, suburban elementary school, who had worked with their current principal for the past eight years. All three of the teachers referred to her positive leadership style and personality. They commented on her practices of rewarding both students and teachers for meeting and exceeding established expectations. They described her leadership style as democratic and characterized by team building and seeking input from teachers.

Teachers #4-6 were middle school teachers from School B, a rural middle school, who had worked with their principal for at least three years. They described her as being a very strong leader with high expectations for both students and teachers. Her leadership style was described by one teacher as “a benevolent dictatorship.” Although more authoritative than the principal at School A, she too, was described as a team builder who listened to teachers and was committed to student success.

Teachers #7-9 were middle and high school teachers from School C, a rural 7th-12th grade school, who had worked with their current principal for five years. They described him as being a positive, flexible, and encouraging leader who has helped improve student achievement and garnered positive recognition for their school. All three noted that he sought to involve others and delegated authority. He was described as “a nice guy” who knew how to get things done.

Teachers #10-12 represented the elementary, middle, and high school grades from School D, an independent school in a small town in South Carolina. They have worked with their headmaster from two to five years. They described his leadership style as being democratic and characterized by seeking input from teachers and being very supportive of his teachers. He, too, was described as a team player who communicated effectively and made decisions that were fair and consistent with policy.

Most of the 12 participants indicated that they were very happy working with their current principals, and they spoke positively about their leadership styles and practices. Although a few of them did mention characteristics about their current principals that discouraged their job satisfaction and desire to continue teaching at their current schools, they were much more critical of former principals than they were of their current principals.

Explanation of Data Analysis and Theme Identification

The initial raw data came in the form of verbatim transcriptions of the 12 interviews. The inquirer then summarized each interview into narrative form and included direct quotations and paraphrases from the participants' responses. Next, he highlighted key words or phrases from each narrative. The researcher organized the highlighted data into three categories according to the questions that were answered: data relating to teacher job satisfaction, data relating to leadership styles and practices of principals, and data relating to teacher retention. He color coded the data to reveal common answers in each of the three categories. Themes began to emerge that crossed the three categories; for example, some of the teachers felt that their job satisfaction was increased by principals who listened to them. They identified listening as a characteristic of their principal's leadership style or as a leadership practice employed by their principal. Then, they said they were encouraged to remain at their school because their principal listened. Therefore, the following seven themes relate factors that impact both teacher job satisfaction and retention:

1. All 12 participants linked their job satisfaction and retention to their relationships with their students.
2. Eleven of the 12 participants linked their job satisfaction and retention to their relationships with their principals, fellow teachers, and staff members.
3. Ten of the 12 participants discussed their desires to be treated as professionals.
4. Nine of the 12 teachers identified positive communication from their principals as impacting their job satisfaction and retention.
5. Nine of the 12 teachers identified the accessibility of their principals as being a factor that impacted their job satisfaction and retention.

6. Seven of the 12 participants felt both their principals' expectations for students and faculty were strongly linked to teacher job satisfaction and retention.
7. Seven of the 12 teachers discussed the importance of teacher support provided by their principals to their job satisfaction and retention.

Discussion of the Results

Relationships with Students

Although the purpose of this study was to determine what principals can do to retain highly qualified and effective teachers in their classroom, one factor became very clear. Although the participants indicated that principals have a great deal of influence on their job satisfaction, their primary inspiration comes from their students. When asked what factors have increased her job satisfaction, Teacher #1 said, "The kids! Seeing them make gains and seeing them proud of themselves." Teacher #4 added, "I love what I do. I love my children even though we as teachers and administrators have challenging students sometimes." Teacher #7 explained why he has stayed in education for 33 years by citing his love for math and seeing his students succeed: "To watch a child say, 'Wow, that's the way it is....' That's amazing to me." Teacher #11 said she has stayed in education for 37 years because "The children are just so important in my life.... I get so much from the children. I get so much from them, and hopefully, I am giving them as much as I am receiving from them." Schlichte, Yssel, & Merbler (2005) studied five novice special education teachers and also found that positive relationships with their students were very crucial to their early success and job satisfaction as teachers.

As much as these teachers have been encouraged by their students, they have also been discouraged by student discipline problems. Ingersoll (2003) reported that 34.9 percent of teachers in his study reported that their dissatisfaction with their jobs was due

to student discipline problems. Teacher #3 lamented, “The kids have changed, and they are all playing video games now, and they have no attention span.” Teacher #8 explained how early in her career in the 1970s a student was shot in the classroom next door to her and how she caught students in the hall with marijuana. Teacher #10 described being threatened in the parking lot by a group of students. Principals who have implemented successful school-wide student management plans and created safe and secure learning environments were commended by the participants of this study. Sergiovanni (1996) describes the Community Theory and how principals must remove obstacles, such as recurring student discipline problems, from faculty and staff members so that they can do their jobs, and students can succeed academically. According to Fullan (2001), the moral purpose of schools is to make a positive difference in the lives of students. Principals should promote that moral purpose within the school and create environments to foster it. To retain effective teachers, principals must intentionally and actively create safe and secure schools in which teaching and learning can flourish. They must take necessary steps to encourage positive and respectful student-teacher relationships and to ensure that teachers can teach and students can learn.

Relationships with Principals, Fellow Teachers, and Staff Members

The participants in this study indicated that their job satisfaction and retention was largely impacted by their relationships with the adults in the school including the principal. Teacher #2 discussed the sense of community that exists at her current school: “I feel attached to the other teachers, and I also feel attached to the administration, and I am an important part of their team.” Teacher #5 said, “We have great camaraderie as far as faculty and staff and the morale. Our principal and assistant principal are excellent as far as teacher support.... We are very family oriented.” Teacher #7 emphasized that the

school's personnel have played a major role in determining his job satisfaction. When discussing not only the principal, but also the secretaries and support staff, he said, "... it's how they come across to you, how they present themselves, how they manage the school [that] makes a big difference to me."

On the other hand, the participants indicated that poor relationships with the adults in the school, and especially with the principal, can lead to much dissatisfaction. Teacher #4 described the negative effect of having one former principal lie to him and "stab" him in the back. He expressed appreciation for principals who are honest and candid. Teacher #3 discussed a former principal who showed favoritism by inviting a select group of teachers to her office to have a "hen party" while their students were left unsupervised. Teacher #7 said, "... not having a good rapport with the principal is terrible for the teacher. I think leadership should make themselves available to every teacher whether it's a favorite or not."

Goleman (2000) credits leaders who practice affiliative and democratic leadership styles with placing high priority on building such relationships in their organizations. These types of leaders are especially needed when an organization has experienced a breach in trust and a decline in morale. Michael Fullan (2001) says that school improvement is contingent upon investing in relationships by creating professional learning communities that emphasize collaboration among teachers and administrators. To encourage the retention of effective teachers, principals should promote genial and collaborative relationships among the faculty and staff; moreover, they must take the time and make the effort to develop relationships with their teachers that are characterized by mutual trust, fairness, and respect.

Professional Treatment

The teachers in this study were clear that they did not want to be treated as children nor as hourly workers. They wanted to be treated as professionals who are valued for their expertise and trusted to make decisions that are in the best interests of their students and have opportunities to be included on school-wide decision making. They discussed the importance of professional development activities to help them learn new instructional strategies and sharpen their skills. Five of the 12 participants underwent the rigorous process of earning National Board Certification. Others spoke of the encouragement they received by becoming department chairs, school liaisons to their district, and members of school leadership teams. They described themselves as being life-long learners who want to continue to grow professionally. Teacher #1 praised her current principal for seeking the opinions of her teachers and valuing their input. Teacher #10 commended her current principal for trusting her to do her job and giving her the freedom to experiment with new strategies and develop curriculum.

Teacher #8, who worked in the corporate world as a hospital marketing director, described a distinct difference between corporate management and school management. She said that in the corporate world, "... managers are there to make sure their front-line people are as happy as they can be because those are the people who serve the customers." School principals, in her experience, have been too concerned about "monitoring every minute of their [teachers'] day" rather than making sure their teachers feel appreciated and valued. The teachers spoke out overwhelmingly against the practice of some principals of chastising the entire faculty for the mistakes of a few; instead, they preferred principals who would address problems with the individuals responsible for them. They discussed the adverse effects of principals who publicly humiliated teachers

for being late to school or to a meeting. As salaried professionals who work hours after school dismissal, they felt that they should not be required to punch a time clock or be reprimanded for arriving a few minutes late to school.

J.P. Kotter (2002) describes team building and empowering others to act as necessary leadership practices to achieve lasting change in organizations. Kouzes and Posner (2002) said that transformational leaders should “inspire a shared vision” and “enable others to act.” The teachers in this study were motivated and inspired by team-building principals who were able to clearly communicate their vision and empower them with the authority to teach their students and become leaders in their schools. They shared that they were encouraged when they felt valued as contributing members of the team. When describing a former principal, Teacher #11 said he was “very firm, very passionate,” and “a team person.” She added, “He relied on us as a faculty to give him input, to help him make decisions. He didn’t just make them on his own. He relied on us to help out.”

Positive Feedback and Affirmation

The teachers in Johnson’s study desired school leaders who were “present, positive, and actively engaged in the instruction life of the school” (Johnson, S.M., 2004, p. 98). The four principals of the participating schools in this study were each described by their teachers as being enthusiastic and positive. Transformational leadership is distinguished by charisma and the ability to inspire and motivate others to pursue the vision of the organization (Feinberg, Ostroff, & Burke, 2005). The teachers in this study indicated that they were inspired and motivated by the positive feedback and affirmation they received from their principals. The principal at School #1 was commended by her participating teachers as having a positive attitude and leadership style. Teacher #2

stated, “She is always smiling, friendly. She always speaks. If she comes to your classroom, she always says something positive.” Teacher #3 added that the principal of School #1 rewards positive teacher behavior to motivate them to meet objectives and expectations. Teacher #4 noted that the principal at School #2 provides positive feedback and appreciation to teachers in person and through encouraging e-mails. “She constantly gives you positive feedback on excellence, working as a group, and high expectations for students, also.” When she was becoming discouraged, Teacher #8 went to her principal at School #3 and said, “Coach, I need a pep talk.” She said his enthusiastic and positive response to her was encouraging. Speaking of her principal at School #4, Teacher #12 said, “He is wonderful.” She went on to say, “He lets teachers know that he appreciates them, and I feel appreciated.”

Although they spoke very highly of the positive leadership styles displayed by their current principals, the participants described the discouragement they felt from being beaten down and abused by other principals. Many teachers discussed the emphasis on student achievement test scores and school report cards as well as the adverse effects of principals who attempted to coerce them into meeting state standards. Two of the participants who had been coaches discussed their disillusionment when principals became dissatisfied with the performance of their teams. One of them described feeling “lied to” and “stabbed in the back.” The other felt he was “harassed.” Teacher #1 said that she left one school, in part, because of the negative portrayal of schools by the news media.

The data of this study revealed that teachers desire positive feedback and affirmation from their principals. Johnson said of teachers,

They seek opportunities to excel and to be recognized for their accomplishments. They are attracted by opportunities to develop new skills, and they see themselves eventually exercising influence beyond the domain of their classroom. They believe that schools should encourage and reward them as they grow and improve their practice (p. 252).

The responses from the participants indicate that they are much more inspired and affirmed by positive and encouraging leaders than by dictatorial leaders who demean them and their efforts. As Teacher #8 explained, principals can encourage teacher retention simply by walking around saying, “thanks” and “great job.”

Principals with Open Doors and Listening Ears

Teachers want to be able to have access to their principals when necessary and know that their principals will listen to their thoughts, ideas, and opinions even if they do not agree with them. Teacher #6 explained that her principal at School #2 had an open-door policy and was accessible not only to teachers, but also to students and their parents. She said, “She listens to what we have to say. She solicits our input.” Teacher #11 said of her principal, “He has an open-door policy for his faculty and students.” She added that he is also willing to discuss school matters outside of school. According to Teacher #1, she has appreciated that both of the principals she has worked with have been accessible and willing to help with problems. Teacher #7 said that his principal comes by his classroom, speaks to him, and listens to what he has to say.

On the contrary, teachers in this study said that principals with closed doors and “my way or the highway” leadership styles discouraged teacher retention. Teacher #6 worked for a semester with such a principal. He had a closed door, was not visible in the hallways, and did not know the names of the students. Teacher #9, a teacher of middle

and high school special education students, expressed being discouraged by principals who were unfamiliar with special education laws and did not listen to her recommendations concerning special education issues. Similarly, Teacher #1 stressed the importance of principals learning about and showing an interest in special education. This data coincides with Otto and Arnold's 2005 study, in which they found that many special education teachers in Texas felt that administrators lacked understanding of students with special needs as well as sufficient knowledge of special education laws.

According to Sergiovanni (1996), a leader must be effective at motivating others by providing for both their psychological needs as well as their cultural needs. For a principal to do so, he or she must be accessible to teachers and willing to listen to and value their thoughts and ideas. Michael Fullan (2001) and others advocate the development of schools into professional learning communities. To do so, principals must take the lead in developing communities in which teachers can feel free to express themselves and trust that their principal will open the door and lend an ear.

High Expectations

The teachers in this study indicated their appreciation for principals who hold and clearly communicate high expectations for both students and teachers. Teacher #10 commended her principal for expecting teachers to "follow through with kids who are not working up to their potential." "We always know what's expected of us. She doesn't make us wonder what we're supposed to be doing. It's clear," Teacher #2 said of her principal at School #1. When describing his principal at School B, Teacher #4 explained, "She's just a strong leader, and she expects everyone to adhere to policies and to work together. If you don't meet her expectations, she will let you know." Teacher #5 affectionately compared the same principal to a "drill sergeant" who has high standards

for both students and teachers. She felt her principal effectively motivates others to follow established standards, which helps create a safe and secure learning environment. All of the above teachers respected the strength and high expectations of their current principals.

The participants also described the frustration they have experienced when principals did not hold high expectations for their students and teachers. Teacher #9 expressed discouragement caused by the low expectations she perceived administrators have had for her students with special needs: "...in special education, the theory seems to be as long as you keep them in the room, then we are good." She also felt principals could increase teacher job satisfaction by holding teachers to a higher standard. According to her, principals should directly confront teachers who are not maintaining student discipline or promoting academic achievement. Teacher #10 stated, "... it is dissatisfying as a person who works very hard looking over in another classroom and seeing a teacher who just does worksheets or frivolous things with her class." Teacher #3 spoke out against the unrealistic expectations she perceived from the members of South Carolina's Educational Oversight Committee. In her opinion, they have established the same expectations for students with special needs as they have for students in the mainstream population. She felt that was unfair to those students with special needs, as well as to the teachers who are being held accountable for their achievement.

High expectations are a direct by-product of a leader's vision. Effective leaders see the goal, the end, the culmination, and they understand the process to realize it. Writers on leadership such as Kotter, Kouzes, Posner, and Sergiovanni all write about the importance of a leader's vision and his or her ability to share it and inspire others to pursue it. The teachers in this study shared how their satisfaction with their jobs and

desire to continue teaching were increased by principals who established and communicated high expectations for students and teachers alike.

Administrator Support

Special education teachers in Texas described lack of administrative support as a primary reason why many special education teachers leave the profession (Otto & Arnold, 2005). Ingersoll and Smith (2003) report that 26.1 percent of teachers in their study claimed that lack of administrator support led to their dissatisfaction with teaching. New teachers in Johnson's study cited administrator support and effective induction programs as having positive effects on their job satisfaction and success in the classroom (2004). Consistent with the research, participants in this study identified administrator support as being a crucial factor in determining the job satisfaction of teachers. The teachers in this study reported feeling intense pressure from parents, school district leaders, and from school administrators. The emphasis on test scores and accountability has increased the amount of pressure teachers experience. What they ask from their principals is support.

Teacher #5, Teacher #9, and Teacher #11 commended their principals for helping teachers overcome not only professional challenges, but also personal crises. Teacher #12 said her principal was supportive and understanding. Teacher #2 said, "I think teachers need to feel supported by their principals." She credited her principal with working hard to provide teachers with necessary supplies. When she was asked how principals could increase the job satisfaction of their teachers, Teacher #12 replied, "Teacher support has a lot to do with it." She was encouraged by the amount of support her current principal gave. She said that he did things that she did not expect a principal

to do, such as hanging posters on classroom walls for teachers and checking to make sure their air conditioners worked.

Teacher #7 and #12 recalled former principals who regularly took the parents' side when disputes arose. Teacher #10 said that she had worked in a school where she felt the administrators were not loyal to their teachers. Teacher #9 felt that principals should show support of all school programs. She remembered a principal who posted a sign in the school's main lobby for all to read that listed teachers who had not turned in their lesson plans that week. These practices had very adverse effects on the job satisfaction of the participants. Teacher #8 believed that principals should take care of their teachers because the teachers work directly with the school's customers, the students.

Other Factors

The most obvious factor that influences teacher retention is salaries. Ingersoll and Smith (2003) found that 78.5 percent of teachers in their study said low pay was the number one cause of their dissatisfaction. Other researchers appear to agree that relatively low salaries contribute significantly to teacher dissatisfaction and decrease the odds that teachers will stay in the classrooms. Many of the participants in this study also commented about the need for teachers to earn more in salaries and incentives. The public school district does, in fact, offer incentive pay for teachers to travel to rural Title I schools to teach. Teachers are compensated for earning advanced graduate degrees, and teachers who earn National Board Certification are rewarded with a \$7,500 annual stipend from the state of South Carolina for ten years. As the focus of this study was on what principals could do to increase teacher job satisfaction and retention, teacher pay

was not a point of emphasis as principals have little control over salaries, especially in the public schools.

Another cited factor cited over which principals have little control is the connection that teachers feel to the community in which they work. Teachers #4 and #6 both spoke highly of the rural community in which their school is located. They felt their students behaved better than those in other communities and that both students and parents respected the teachers of the school. Teachers #7 and #12 both graduated from the schools where they currently teach, and they feel as though they are able to give something back to their respective schools and communities. Three of the participants left previous schools for reasons that included long commutes to and from their schools. It was important for them to work closer to home for financial as well as family reasons.

Although principals do not have much control over teacher salaries and the connection teachers have with their community, they should be aware of the significance these factors play in influencing teacher retention. Principals can and should speak up to encourage their states, school districts, and school boards to increase teacher compensation. Principals should also be aware of how important it is for their teachers to connect with their communities, especially those teachers who may drive to school from other communities. They can assist new teachers in getting to know the community and becoming involved in it.

Conclusion

Current research shows that the quality of the teacher in the classroom plays the most crucial role in determining student achievement (Johnson, Kahle, and Fargo, 2006; National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003; Wojnowski, Bellamy, and Cooke, 2003). The research also shows that teachers are leaving the teaching

profession at alarming rates, particularly in the first four years of their careers. Although efforts have been successful in recruiting new teachers into the teaching profession, new teachers are not staying. In addition, a large percentage of the current teaching force is quickly approaching retirement. School principals are therefore faced with the significant challenge of staffing their schools with qualified and effective teachers. Korkmaz (2007) said that the principal is the most influential person in the school and that his or her leadership “shapes the school’s learning climate, the level of relationship between staff, and the teacher morale” (p. 25). This study identified seven themes over which principals have direct influence and two others that they can impact indirectly.

While the results of this study confirm the positive influence of transactional leadership practices, such as providing incentive pay or rewarding teachers who have perfect attendance, the majority of the teacher responses indicated that the participants preferred transformational leadership that includes them in decision making and makes them feel like valuable members of the team. Rather than be coerced into compliance by their principals, they responded more positively to principals who were able to share their vision with them in a positive manner and encourage them to advance that vision. That vision or mission provided the moral purpose (Fullan, 2001) that binds them together in community as advocated by Sergiovanni (1999). The teachers at School #1 spoke very positively of the democratic style of their principal, while those at School #2 appreciated the more authoritative style of their principal. Although those two principals appeared to have very different leadership styles, they both had very positive relationships with their teachers. The teacher responses also indicated the importance of affiliative leaders who help create positive relationships and coaching leaders who provide encouragement when teachers are discouraged. The results suggest that a variety of leadership styles are

necessary and can be effective, but the more important factor to teachers is the quality of relationships they have with their leaders.

Although many of the themes are consistent with the findings of other studies, this study provides teachers with a voice. The data consists of their thoughts, ideas, and perceptions. The evidence comes in the form of direct quotations and paraphrases of the participants' comments. As in other studies, these results point to the importance of administrator support, treating teachers as professionals, and providing appropriate compensation. However, the most significant finding from this study is how important relationships are to teachers. All twelve participants spoke of the encouragement they have received from both current and former students. Many of them also shared of the discouragement they have experienced from recurring discipline problems. The message to principals is to do everything in their power to create safe and secure learning environments characterized by care, respect, and trust among students and teachers.

Eleven of the twelve participants said that having positive relationships with their principals was an important factor impacting their job satisfaction. Some of them also added that having positive relationships with other teachers and staff members was very important to them. In the midst of attempting to create positive relationships with students and parents, principals may mistakenly neglect fostering positive relationships among their school's faculty, staff, and administration. This research suggests that, in order to increase the job satisfaction of their teachers, principals must be intentional and proactive about nurturing the adult relationships within their schools. The other themes such as treating teachers as professionals, providing them with positive feedback, having an open-door policy, and providing administrator support are all related to creating and maintaining positive relationships. Teacher #1 poignantly summarized what principals

can do to retain highly qualified and committed teachers when she said, “Listen to the teachers, respect the teachers, praise the teachers, and fight for the teachers.”

Implications for Further Research

The purpose of this study was to identify a broad range of leadership styles and practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in hopes of helping school principals understand what they can do to retain effective teachers. The results pointed to seven specific factors over which principals have direct influence. Further research that would address these factors individually would be helpful to school leaders who are attempting to improve teacher morale, job satisfaction, retention, effectiveness, and school climate. For example, several of the participants in this study indicated their desires to be “supported” by their principals. Prior studies have also indicated the importance of administrator support to teachers; however, additional research is needed that would further define and clarify what kind of support teachers need and how principals can provide it.

The most prevalent conclusion from this study was that teachers’ relationships with the students and adults in their schools play crucial roles in determining their desires to continue teaching in their schools. Although much has been written about creating professional learning communities, additional research that studies teacher and student relationships, teacher and principal relationships, as well as the relationships teachers have with one another would be beneficial for teachers, administrators, and ultimately for students. In addition, the other factors identified in this study have to do with relationships. Professional treatment, accessibility, positive communication, and high expectations result from professional relationships characterized by trust and mutual respect.

This study focused heavily on teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership styles. Apparent contradictions arose when teachers spoke highly of leaders characterized as having democratic leadership styles as well as some having authoritative leadership styles. In addition, the factors identified by the teachers in this study included those that are associated with both transactional and transformational leadership. Goleman (2000) discusses the importance of leaders implementing a variety of styles as the needs of their organizations dictate. For example, coercive leadership was found to have a negative impact on followers' job satisfaction in Goleman's study, but he concludes that it was an effective leadership style when an organization was in trouble and required immediate improvement. Further study of how and when specific leadership styles should be implemented and combined would assist leaders in their efforts to improve the effectiveness of their organizations.

As math, science, and special education teachers have proven to be the most difficult to retain, further research that focused on each of these three groups of teachers individually would be helpful to principals. Although this study included teachers of math, science, and special education, it was not limited to them. Previous research has shown that math and science teachers often leave teaching for higher paying professions (Ingersoll, 2003). The special education teachers in this study and in previous studies (Otto & Arnold, 2005) indicated their desires for principals to be more knowledgeable about the laws that regulate special education and more intentional about including special education students and teachers in the daily functions of the school. Because each of these three groups of teachers presents unique challenges in terms of retention, they demand to be studied individually to determine how to increase their job satisfaction and retention rates.

The teachers in this study were all veterans with between six and 39 years of teaching experience. Many of them spoke about the adverse impact of the increased emphasis on achievement testing and school accountability that has resulted from the No Child Left Behind legislation of 2002. They indicated that even though they had gained valuable experience, their jobs had become much more demanding and full of pressure. Many teachers have had to take additional coursework to meet the certification requirements to be considered highly qualified and to maintain their jobs. Perhaps the most necessary and relevant research concerning teacher retention would be that which studies the roles that these increased demands and pressures are playing in teachers' decisions to leave the profession. Furthermore, research is needed that will help school leaders understand how they can alleviate the pressures teachers experience and help teachers manage those demands and requirements that are not going away.

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Appendix A

Interview Guide

I. Professional Background

- A. How long have you been teaching?
- B. At what schools have you taught and how long have you taught at each?
- C. Why did you enter the teaching profession?

II. Job Satisfaction

- A. Identify factors that have increased your job satisfaction, and explain how those factors have increased your job satisfaction.
- B. Identify factors that have decreased your job satisfaction, and explain how those factors have decreased your job satisfaction.
- C. What can school principals do to increase teacher job satisfaction?

III. Leadership Style and Practices

- A. Describe your principals' leadership styles at each school.
- B. Describe specific leadership practices of principals that have had a positive impact on your desire to continue teaching.
- C. Describe specific leadership practices of principals that have had an adverse impact on your desire to continue teaching.

IV. Retention

- A. What has caused you to remain in teaching?
- B. Describe reasons that caused you to stay at specific schools.
- C. Describe reasons that caused you to leave specific schools.
- D. What can school principals do to retain highly qualified and committed teachers in their schools.

Appendix B

Letter to Principals

(Date)

Dear (name of principal):

My name is Eric Denton, and I am the headmaster of St. John's Christian Academy in Moncks Corner, South Carolina, and a doctoral student at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. I am writing to request your permission to allow me to visit your school to interview three of your teachers for my dissertation study.

As you know, retaining highly qualified and committed teachers is a significant challenge that faces most school administrators. The purpose of my qualitative study is to identify teachers' perceptions of the leadership styles and practices of present and former principals in hopes that their perceptions will offer insight that will help principals improve teacher retention in their schools.

I am planning to interview a total of twelve teachers from four schools that will include one public elementary school, one public middle school, one public high school, and one private K-12 school. Pseudonyms will be used for the participants, as well as their schools and principals, to protect the confidentiality of all those involved. Participants will be teachers from a variety of grade levels and content areas to include math, science, and special education. Since a large percentage of teachers leave teaching within their first five years, I would like to interview veteran teachers who have taught at least five years, preferably in the same school. Requirements for participants include holding a master's degree in education or in their content area, possessing a valid South Carolina teaching certificate, or if at a private school, holding a master's degree in education or in their content area and meeting the requirements for the South Carolina Independent School Association. Teachers with National Board Certification are preferred. The study will take place from January to March of 2009.

I am hopeful that the findings of my research will help school leaders like you to retain their best and brightest teachers. Please complete and return the enclosed form indicating your decision to permit or not to permit your teachers to participate in this study, place it in the self-addressed envelope, and return it to me. I will be contacting you by telephone or e-mail to inquire of your decision. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Denton

Appendix C

CONSENT FORM

Teachers' Perceptions of How the Practices and Leadership Styles of
School Principals Influence Their Job Satisfaction and Retention

Eric M. Denton

Liberty University

Department of Education

Dear _____:

You are invited to be in a research study of how the leadership styles and practices of school principals influence teacher job satisfaction and retention. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a highly qualified, veteran teacher of five or more years who holds at least a master's degree in education or in your content area. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by Eric Denton, a doctoral student in the Education Department at Liberty University.

Background Information

As efforts to recruit more people into the teaching profession have proven to be successful, determining how to keep high-quality teachers in the classrooms providing meaningful and effective instruction has remained an enigma. Not only does teacher turnover present significant staffing problems for administrators, but it also has a strong relationship to the performance of schools (Ingersoll, 2001). The problem educational leaders face is not the number of people entering the teaching profession; it is the number of people leaving teaching prematurely. Too many classrooms are staffed by teachers who lack the required credentials and experience to be deemed highly qualified by their states. The purpose of this study is to identify teachers' perceptions of how leadership styles and practices of their principals can improve their levels of job satisfaction and likelihood of continuing to teach in their schools. The study will attempt to answer the following questions: 1) What factors have contributed to teachers continuing to teach in their current schools? 2) How do teachers perceive the leadership styles of their principals? 3) What, if any, specific leadership practices of principals have encouraged teacher retention and job satisfaction?

Procedures:

The goal of this research design is to collect first-hand, descriptive data from teachers regarding their feelings, perceptions, and opinions about their jobs and the leadership of their principals. To gather data from the participants of the study, the researcher will utilize open-ended interviews that encourage detailed responses that reveal important information concerning issues relevant to the study. Each participant will participate in one interview held at their school, which will last approximately one hour. Follow-up questions may be asked via e-mail or telephone. The researcher will employ a standardized open-ended interview approach that will identify questions to be discussed prior to the interview. It will also allow data to be collected systematically as similar questions will be asked to each participant. Interviews will be conversational in tone, but structured enough to elicit participants' thoughts and ideas that provide comprehensive data relating to the effects of principals' leadership styles on teacher retention and job satisfaction.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study

The minimal risks involved are those associated with completing a verbal interview. Teachers will be discussing their principal's leadership style and practices, which could possibly lead to conflicts between the teacher and his or her principal. If teachers are uncomfortable discussing their current principals, they may choose to discuss their previous principals. The interviews will be digitally recorded and transcribed. The recordings and transcriptions will be destroyed at the culmination of the study. Pseudonyms will be used for the participants, their principals, and their schools to guard their confidentiality. The principals will not be granted access to the interview recordings or transcriptions. They will only be granted access to the final results of the study. The subjects' principals will sign a statement in which they indicate that they will not hold any of the subjects' comments against them in any way.

The subjects will be given an opportunity of sharing their perceptions concerning what principals can do to increase teacher job satisfaction and retention. This study will provide subjects a voice to help school leaders make improvements that will enhance the working conditions and environment of their schools. Society will benefit from the knowledge and understanding gained from teachers about their feelings and perceptions concerning the leadership styles and practices of their principals. The ultimate benefit of this study is that its findings may help school leaders to solve the teacher retention challenge at their schools and help them to staff every classroom with highly committed and qualified teachers.

Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records.

Pseudonyms will be used to protect the confidentiality of the participating teachers, principals, and schools. If teachers feel uncomfortable discussing the leadership styles and practices of their current principals, they may choose to discuss those of former principals. The interviews will be digitally recorded and then transcribed. The recordings and transcriptions will be stored at the researcher's home and destroyed at the conclusion of the study. The research data will be limited to this research study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the Liberty University. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time with out affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is Eric M. Denton. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact Mr. Denton at (843)697-1749 or

at emdenton@liberty.edu or Dr. Michelle Goodwin, Teacher Education, (434)582-2265, mbgoodwin@liberty.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 2400, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Investigator: _____ Date: _____

Appendix D

Letter to Teachers

(Date)

Dear (name of teacher):

My name is Eric Denton, and I am the headmaster of St. John's Christian Academy in Moncks Corner, South Carolina, and a doctoral student at Liberty University in Lynchburg, Virginia. The most significant factor that influences student learning in school classrooms is the quality and commitment of the teachers who provide the instruction. As you know, retaining highly qualified and committed teachers is a significant challenge that faces most school administrators. I am conducting a research study to identify teachers' perceptions of the leadership styles and practices of present and former principals. It is my hope that my findings will offer insight that will help school leaders improve teacher retention and job satisfaction in their schools.

I am writing to request your participation in my dissertation study. I would like to come to your school to conduct an interview of approximately one hour. I will use an interview guide that will include open-ended questions concerning your professional background, your job satisfaction, your perceptions about your current or previous principal's leadership style and practices, and the reasons you continue teaching. Although your principal's may have access to the results of the overall study, I will not share the results of individual interviews with them. Pseudonyms will be used for the participants, as well as their schools and principals, to protect the confidentiality of all those involved.

I am planning to interview a total of twelve teachers from four schools that will include one public elementary school, one public middle school, one public high school, and one private K-12 school. Participants will be teachers from a variety of grade levels and content areas to include math, science, and special education. Since a large percentage of teachers leave teaching within their first five years, I would like to interview veteran teachers who have taught at least five years, preferably in the same school. Requirements for participants include holding a master's degree in education or in their content area, possessing a valid South Carolina teaching certificate, or if at a private school, meeting the requirements for the South Carolina Independent School Association. The study will take place from January to March of 2009.

I will be contacting you by telephone or e-mail to inquire of your decision. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Eric M. Denton