

10-29-2009

# Helping Teachers "Do What They Do": Teachers' Perceptions of the Influence of Peer and Administrator Support on Teacher Retention

Jonathan Hires Grantham  
*Florida State University*

Follow this and additional works at: <http://diginole.lib.fsu.edu/etd>

---

## Recommended Citation

Grantham, Jonathan Hires, "Helping Teachers 'Do What They Do': Teachers' Perceptions of the Influence of Peer and Administrator Support on Teacher Retention" (2009). *Electronic Theses, Treatises and Dissertations*. Paper 4049.

This Dissertation - Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the The Graduate School at DigiNole Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Electronic Theses, Treatises and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of DigiNole Commons. For more information, please contact [lib-ir@fsu.edu](mailto:lib-ir@fsu.edu).

THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

HELPING TEACHERS “DO WHAT THEY DO”:  
TEACHERS’ PERCEPTIONS OF THE INFLUENCE OF PEER AND  
ADMINISTRATOR SUPPORT ON TEACHER RETENTION

By

JONATHAN H. GRANTHAM

A Dissertation submitted to the  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education

Degree Awarded:  
Fall Semester, 2006

Copyright © 2006  
Jonathan H. Grantham  
All Rights Reserved

The members of the Committee approved the dissertation of Jonathan H. Grantham defended on October 30, 2006.

---

Jeffrey S. Brooks  
Professor Directing Dissertation

---

Sherry Southerland  
Outside Committee Member

---

Robert A. Schwartz  
Committee Member

---

Lynn Wicker  
Committee Member

Approved:

---

Gary Crow, Chairperson, Department of Education Leadership and Policy Studies

The Office of Graduate Studies has verified and approved the above named committee members.

This dissertation is dedicated to my wife Katrina Janine Grantham. Without your love and support, this would not be possible. I could not have survived all of the late nights and frustrating moments without you assuring me that it would soon be over. You are the air in my lungs and the reason I live. You are my strength and my foundation. All that I do, I do for you.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I offer my most sincere thanks to the teachers who participated in this study. I am forever grateful because without your support and honest feedback, this research would not be possible.

I would like to thank all of the people within the Leon County School District that have given me support throughout this journey. Bill Montford, my first Superintendent, you have inspired me to reach my dreams of becoming whatever I desire. To Jim Croteau thanks for genuinely being concerned with my research. Your knowledge and compassion is what I admire most of you. To my principal and friend, Pink Hightower, I will always be grateful for the understanding and support you have given me. You have been a role model for me and it has been my honor to work for you. To my fellow administrator, Allen Burch, you have been my colleague but more importantly someone I could call a friend. Your concern for my well-being and support will never be forgotten. Special thanks go to my friends Ricky Ardley and Craig Henry. I know when times get tough, both of you will be there. I will battle in the trenches with you two anytime.

I would like to thank all of the students and faculty of the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department at the Florida State University. More specifically, Diane Hodgins, you have been a great ally in this battle we call graduate school. You are a great researcher and a better friend. You are someone I respect and admire. Next, Kyle Ingle, thank you being someone I could have fun with. You are a great colleague and friend.

I would like to thank all of my committee members for their encouragement and support. Your guidance and assistance in my journey to the completion of this research did not go unnoticed and I am always thankful. Special thanks go to Sherry Southerland for always challenging me to think outside of my comfort area and field of expertise. You always coerced me into digging a little deeper to see the entire picture. Thank you Robert Schwartz for listening to my idealistic ideas of what I think education should be. You always made me believe I was a colleague. Next, thank you Sande Milton for helping me feel comfortable in my own skin. You may never know the impact you had on me my first semester of graduate school. You welcomed me the first time I met you and I will always remember your hospitality. To my long-time friend, Lynn Wicker, you have supported me since my first day as a teacher. You have provided

unending support and I always knew that you were there if I needed someone to talk to. You are a great role model, mentor and friend. You will always be in my fondest of memories.

To Jeff Brooks, my major professor, my toughest critic, my continuing supporter, my amigo and my life-long friend, I do not have enough time or the vocabulary to explain the importance you have made on my life. The first day we met, you taught me the meaning of having high-quality expectations and it has continued throughout our relationship. Because of you, I have learned not to accept mediocrity in anything in life. I can say with fullest conviction, I would have not completed this degree without your support and guidance. You are someone I respect and admire both professionally and personally. I consider it an honor to know you. I will forever be in your gratitude. I will always be your friend.

I would be remiss not to thank Michael Biance. Without you, I would have not began my doctorate degree, met the professors at the university, learned what life was like at a higher education setting, but most importantly, I would not have met my wife, Katrina. I am still honored that you introduced me to your niece and welcomed me into your family. Mike, if I follow your footsteps as an administrator and professor, I will be more successful than I could have ever imagined. If I follow your footsteps as a man, I will be privileged. Thank you for being all of this to me, but thanks for simply being you.

To Donna and Joe Ramos, thanks for accepting me as part of your family and supporting both Katrina and me through this roller coaster of emotions. I thank you for allowing your daughter to share her life with me.

And lastly, I would like to thank my parents, Jim and Roberta Grantham. You have molded me into the man that I have become today. You have given to me when you had nothing left to give. You are one of the reasons that I am at this point in my life. I will forever be grateful. Without your perseverance and support, I could not have made this dream a reality.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES.....	vii
ABSTRACT.....	ix
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION.....	1
Statement of Problem.....	1
The Purpose of the Study.....	2
Research Questions.....	3
Design of the Study.....	3
The Unit of Analysis.....	3
Organization of the Dissertation.....	4
Definition of Key Terms.....	4
Chapter Summary.....	6
CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	7
Teacher Attrition.....	7
Teacher Retention.....	12
Peer Support.....	16
Administrative Support.....	19
Chapter Summary.....	25
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY.....	26
Design of the Study.....	26
Site Selection.....	29
Participant Selection.....	30
Data Collection.....	30
Data Analysis.....	32
Validity.....	33
Chapter Summary.....	34
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS.....	35
Introduction.....	35
Demographics of Each Teacher Group.....	35
Teachers with Three or Four Years of Experience.....	59
Teacher with Five to Eight-Years of Experience.....	82
Teachers with at least Twenty-five Years of Teaching Experience.....	101
Chapter Summary.....	117
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	118
Introduction.....	118
Perceptions from First-Year Teachers.....	118
Perceptions from Third and Fourth-Year Teachers.....	122
Perceptions from Fifth through Eighth-Year Teachers.....	124
Perceptions from Teachers with at least Twenty-five Years of Experience.....	127
Discussion.....	129
Recommendations.....	131
Reflection and Extension: Areas of Future Research.....	135
Conclusion.....	136
APPENDIX A: LEON COUNTY SCHOOLS APPROVAL.....	137
APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL.....	138

APPENDIX C: PRINCIPAL APPROVAL .....	139
APPENDIX D: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (#1) .....	140
APPENDIX E: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS #2.....	141
APPENDIX F: INFORMED CONSENT FORM.....	142
REFERENCES .....	143
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH .....	148



## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: First-Year Teachers' Perceptions of Needs.....	119
Figure 2: Third and Fourth-Year Teachers' Perceptions of Needs.....	123
Figure 3: Fifth through Eighth-Year Teachers' Perception of Needs.....	125
Figure 4: Teachers with at least Twenty-five Years of Experience: Perceptions of Needs.....	127
Figure 5: Teachers Perceptions of Needs for All Groups.....	130

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate which forms of administrative and peer support facilitate teacher retention. Specifically, I explored both administrative and peer forms of support in an attempt to understand the relationships between this support and teacher retention. While most researchers are aware the growing attrition rate within the teaching profession (Darling-Hammond, 2001; Hope; 2000; McCreight, 2000), this paper focused on what can be done to keep teachers in the profession. My goal was to understand teachers' perspectives on how administrative support and peer support influenced the rate of teacher retention at a school. Since teachers are leaving high minority, low socio-economic schools at an alarming rate (Ingersoll, 1999), administrators need to be aware of the reasons behind the attrition. After closely examining the literature on attrition, I examined specific concepts related to what administrators and other teachers can do to support first-year teachers and encourage them to remain in the profession.

This study is a meaningful contribution to our understanding of teacher retention and attrition because it explores the perspectives of teachers at critical junctures in their careers. I used a qualitative case study approach to investigate teacher attrition and retention at a Florida high school. I collected data from interviews with focus groups to answer research questions. Guided by extant literature, I recruited and then interviewed four different groups of teachers based on years of experience. These focus groups were made up of: (1) five teachers in their first-year of teaching; (2) five teachers who have taught for three or four years, (3) six teachers who have between five to eight years of teaching experience and (4) four teachers who have been teaching for at least twenty-five years.

My findings suggested that first-year teachers perceived a need for help from many sources. They wanted assistance from the district, administrators and from teachers. However, after this first-year of teaching, findings suggested that teachers perceive a need for less, but more focused support. In summary, I offered conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of this research. Specifically, my recommendations were made for district personnel and school-level personnel, primarily administrators and teachers. I also listed some areas of future research that might produce rich data that could change the way researchers view teacher retention in high schools.

## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### Statement of Problem

Teacher attrition and retention have come under increasing public scrutiny, as evidenced both by the passing of education-specific federal legislation and also an increasing awareness in mainstream media of an impending teacher shortage. However, teacher retention and attrition are not new phenomena. They are both long-standing challenges to school effectiveness. In the mid-1970s, Lortie exposed some of the fundamental sociological challenges facing teachers and school systems, and documented various factors which prompt teachers to leave their workplaces or the profession altogether. Although Lortie's (1975) work heightened awareness of these factors among researchers, 1983's high-profile publication, *A Nation at Risk* (1983), moved teacher retention and attrition issues to the forefront of public discourse. In 2002, the *No Child Left Behind Act* shifted the issue from a matter of interest to one of legislative mandate—by law, there must now be a “highly qualified” teacher in every classroom.

Ingersoll (1999) summarized the level of interest in teacher retention and attrition when he noted that “few educational problems have received more attention in recent times than the failure to ensure that our nation's elementary and secondary classrooms are all staffed with a qualified teacher” (p. 26). Indeed, retaining qualified school teachers is one of the most pressing problems facing public education in the United States.

The National Center for Education Statistics (1998) predicted that by 2008 there will be a need for approximately 2.4 million new teachers in the United States; a rate of over 200,000 per year. If these predictions are correct, this number will be far greater than the “four percent of the entire civilian work force” (Ingersoll, 1999, p. 148). Ingersoll (2003) has termed teacher attrition a “revolving door.” However, these calculations indicate that the door may not be revolving, and may more accurately be characterized as an “exit door”.

Based on this, it seemed reasonable to infer that the need to evaluate and retain teachers was a critical issue for the entire nation. Some researchers suggested that attrition has been a feature of the public school system for a long time and that there was no cause for alarm. Although it was true that high rates of teacher attrition and turnover have occurred for many

decades, workforce trends suggested that the problem is reaching epidemic proportions (Ingersoll, 2003).

Teacher attrition was the largest single factor determining demand for additional teachers in the U.S. (McCreight, 2000,). Darling-Hammond (1999) argued that increased birth rates and increased immigration were important determinants. Merrow (1999) pointed to the reduction of the number of students in each classroom as a significant contributor. However, age may have played a significant role in teachers leaving. In 1998, 33 percent of the teaching staff was 50 years or older and most-likely to retire (Recruiting New Teachers, 1998).

This teacher shortage has provoked legislative action highlighting more aggressive recruiting practices, numerous induction programs and career changers; currently, the system is actually supplying more than enough teachers to meet the demand overall. Nonetheless, newly trained teachers are leaving the profession at an alarmingly high rate (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 2003). With attrition still rising, we must now refocus our efforts towards retention.

Why does retention need to be addressed? First, the NCTAF (2003) stated “the real school staffing problem is teacher retention. Our inability to support high-quality teaching in many of our schools was driven not by too few teachers entering the profession, but by too many leaving it for other jobs” (p. 23). Secondly, the enormous cost of continually hiring new teachers was important enough to warrant careful attention by policy makers. The Texas Center for Educational Research (2000) estimated that teacher turnover costs \$329,000,000 a year, or at least \$8,000 per recruit who leaves in the first few years of teaching. Secondly, with the constant recycling of teachers in schools, the quality of instruction will suffer (Ingersoll, 1999). Teacher attrition and student performance are inverse functions; as one goes up the other goes down. This inconsistency in instruction provided similar results in learning. The school level administrator has a significant impact towards improving retention. The administrator must re-shift efforts to retain high-quality teachers and assume student learning will improve as a result.

### The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate which forms of administrative and peer support facilitate teacher retention. Specifically, I explored both administrative and peer forms of support in an attempt to understand their relationship with teacher retention. My goal was to ascertain whether or not administrative support and peer support enhance the rate of teacher

retention at a school, and to make actionable recommendations that can inform decision making in schools.

### Research Questions

1. What forms of formal and informal support do administrators and colleagues provide teachers?
2. What are teachers' perceptions of the forms of support they receive from administrators and colleagues?
3. How do teachers perceive the relationships between teacher attrition and forms of administrative and peer support?

### Design of the Study

This qualitative case study was conducted in a high-minority, low socio-economic, urban, public high school. Data were collected through group interviews. Participants were chosen purposively to secure insights from teachers from different levels of experience, using a stratified sample. These data were then analyzed using an inductive and iterative coding strategy. As a measure of internal validity, I conducted member checks with participants throughout the duration of the study. Taking a cue from Wolcott (2003), this research was written in the past tense.

### The Unit of Analysis

Jordan High School was the pseudonym of a case analyzed in this study. As the name for this school was a pseudonym, all names of participants were transformed to preserve anonymity (Wolcott, 2003). Jordan High School received a "D" in the 2004-2005 school years. It consisted of a high percentage of African American students (76 percent) and 43 percent of those students receive free-or-reduced lunch.

This school was selected as the unit of analysis due to the large amount of teacher turnover each year. In the 2004-2005 school year, roughly 20 percent of teaching positions were rehired. This site was appropriate for the study since it represented other urban schools with high minority and low socio-economics.

## Organization of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 included the study introduction, purpose of the study, research questions, rationale for the study, scope of the study, definitions of the terms, research methods, sources of data, study limitations, and an outline of the study organization. Chapter 2 provided a literature review on teacher attrition, teacher retention and forms of teacher support. Chapter 3 explained the research design including the data collection procedures, data analysis techniques, the reliability constructs used during the study. Chapter 4 was a detailed narrative, organized thematically, of the study results and an analysis of the data. Chapter 5 discussed the implications of this study and offered recommendations for future research and improved clinical practice.

## Definition of Key Terms

The following terms were used through the study.

Administrator: The formal designees in charge of a school site. This includes principals and assistant principals, but does not include any instructional personnel with administrative duties.

Administrative Support: Any assistance that an assistant principal or a principal provides a teacher or group of teachers.

ESE: Exceptional Student in Education.

FCAT: Florida Comprehensive Achievement Test. This test is a high-stakes test that can determine if a child passes 3<sup>rd</sup> grade, 8<sup>th</sup> grade and even graduates high school. Without passing these series of tests, a student cannot receive a high school diploma. This test is constructed around the SSS (Sunshine State Standards) and NRT (Norm Referenced Test).

FDOE: Florida Department of Education.

High Minority School: Any school where a racial or ethnic minority (African-American, Hispanic, Asian, etc.) make up more than half of the school's population.

Highly Qualified Teacher: According to NCLB, to be considered highly qualified, "one must pass a rigorous State academic subject test in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches or successful completion, in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches, of an academic major, a graduate degree, coursework

equivalent to an undergraduate academic major, or advanced certification or credentialing.

IB: International Baccalaureate Program.

Induction Program: a program that offers support, guidance, and orientation for beginning elementary and secondary teachers during the transition into their first teaching jobs.

Low Socio-Economic School: Any school where federal monies for free-and-reduced lunch total more than 25 percent of the student population.

Mentor: Any person who helps a novice teacher in any capacity.

Non-administrative personnel: Any personnel besides the principal or assistant principals who work at a school (teachers, media specialists, guidance counselors, deans, teacher aides, bus drivers, custodians, food service personnel and (SRO-school resource officer).

Novice Teacher: A first-year teacher.

Organizational Support: Any assistance that is given to a teacher by any other member of the school community other than an administrator or teacher.

Peer Support: Any support that is given to a teacher by another teacher or colleague.

Personal Relationship: Any relationship, beyond the school day, in which people might: address each other by first names, discuss other topics other than what takes place at school, meet at a restaurant for dinner or drinks, or any circumstance where roles and duties are not present.

Professional Relationship: Any relationship that takes place at school: members are addressed by Mister and Miss, not much interaction takes place after the school day, and roles are a definitely adhered to.

School Size: The total number of students enrolled during the February survey period as required by the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP).

Teacher Attrition: Separation from teaching, such as non-teaching employment, retirement, returning to school, or non-teaching employment in schools.

Teacher Retention: The term, retention, refers to the stayers-teachers who remain in the same teaching assignment, in the same school as in the previous year.

Teacher Support: Anything that is given to teachers that may provide encouragement or assistance. This may be given by other teachers, administrators or members of the community.

USDOE: United States Department of Education.

### Chapter Summary

This chapter has given a brief description of the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, identified the research questions, the design of the study, the unit of analysis, the organization of the dissertation, and the definition of key terms. In the next chapter, I focused on the literature regarding teacher attrition and retention, peer support and administrative support.



## CHAPTER 2

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this study was to investigate which forms of administrative and peer support facilitate teacher retention. Specifically, what a school level administrator can do to help eliminate teacher attrition was researched. This review of literature was divided into three sections: 1) *teacher attrition* (leaving the teaching profession) and *teacher retention* (remaining in the teaching profession), 2) *peer support* (any assistance given to teachers by another teacher or colleague) and 3) *administrative support* (any assistance given to teachers by an administrator). Since teachers are leaving high minority, low socio-economic schools at an alarming rate (Darling-Hammond, 2001; Hope, 2000; Ingersoll, 1999; McCreight, 2000), administrators need to be aware of the reasons behind the attrition. After closely examining attrition, I examined specific ideas of what administrators can do to support teachers and encourage them to remain in the profession.

#### Teacher Attrition

Gonzalez (1995) defined attrition as a “separation from teaching, such as non-teaching employment, retirement, returning to school, or non-teaching employment in schools (e.g., counseling, or administration)” (p.4). In Gonzalez’s definition, attrition could be a promotion or a change of position inside education or a symbolic finale to a triumphant teaching career and for the reason that of, “some teacher turnover is acceptable or even desirable (e.g., moving to a new school or a leadership position) and some is inevitable (e.g., retirement)” (Boe, Bobbitt, & Cook, 1997, p.374).

Some chose not to use attrition as a definition at all and rather used the term turnover (Boe, Bobbitt, & Cook, 1999; Ingersoll, 2003). Turnover was categorized into two different groups: mover and leavers. The movers were those who relocated from one teaching job to another school while leavers left the teaching profession altogether (Ingersoll, 2003, p.147). A mover may have changed schools because of location, convenience, or moved to a different leadership role at a new school, whereas a leaver left teaching as a profession.

Boe, Bobbitt, and Cook (1999) also refrained from the word attrition. They contended that attrition was one part, but not the sole characteristic for teachers leaving. They preferred

“turnover.” Teacher turnover was best used as a generic term for all changes in teacher status from one year to the next, with attrition being one of its components. The other components of turnover were: public school reassignment (teacher transfers to another school in the district) public school migration (teacher transfers to another school in the state), public school migration out of state (teacher transfers to another public school in another state), and public school exit attrition (teacher leaves education entirely).

For the purposes of this study, teacher attrition and teacher turnover were inherently alike and were used interchangeably. I used the terms teacher attrition and teacher turnover to refer to the loss of anyone from the teaching profession. If a teacher had to be replaced, I labeled this as attrition or turnover. In short, turnover or attrition was the departure of a teacher, no matter the reasoning.

In this discussion, I asked three questions concerning what researchers are currently doing or have done when discussing attrition: (1) Who leaves teaching? (2) Why does a teacher leave? (3) Do demographics or socioeconomics have an impact on teacher turnover?

### Who leaves teaching?

The NCES (1995) found that first year teachers are 2.5 times more likely to leave the profession than their more experienced counterparts. The first years of teaching were the most difficult and it was a situation ripe with frustration (Lortie, 1975; Stansburry et al., 2000). Teachers felt secluded and inundated with tasks that were not directly associated with teaching. Brooks (2006) used terms such as saturation, speed and distraction when he described these daily tasks of teachers.

Hope (1999) described this new journey as “the beginning of their sojourn of the isolation chamber known as the classroom” (p. 54). Hope’s definition seemed accurate and Shanker (1990) continued this isolation suggestion descriptor when he stated “the narrowness of the teacher’s world which denies the possibility of satisfying exchanges with other adults and the sense that one is part of a thoughtful community of professionals” (p. 210.) He followed up with a societal comparison not having numerous former doctors, former lawyers, or former engineers but an abundance of former teachers.

Again, Little (1999) noted a physical isolation of teachers when he described schools as “individual classrooms connected by a common parking lot” (p. 256). Following pre-planning, a

teacher was sent to this isolation chamber with a roll of students, lesson plans, barely any support from veteran teachers or administrators and little contact beyond the safety of the classroom. In a case study by Schlichte, Yssel and Merbler (2005), a first-year teacher said, “I don’t feel supported, I’ve just been placed here and dumped” (p. 38).

Secondly, marital status was a predictor. Single people were more likely to choose another profession and/or leave “whereas married teachers moved on to other roles in education, such as administration” (Hammond, 1997, p. 4). Single people were not often committed to financially supporting anyone other than himself or herself. This lack of obligation promoted more flexibility and mobility. A married person oftentimes sought financial stability to help provide for his or her family and leaving teaching, or any employment, was not an option.

Another strong predictor of teacher turnover was age (Halford, 1999; Ingersoll, 1999, McCreight, 2000). They described age as a U-shaped graphic representation where turnover was much higher at a young age (less than 30) and again at an older age (50 and up). Not having considered retirement, this indicated that new teaching professional, some directly from college and others in second careers, had extreme difficulty completing the first few years of teaching. Whether just receiving a new degree or making a career change “over thirty percent leave within the first five years” (Halford, 1999, p. 8).

Loeb and Darling-Hammond (2005) interviewed teachers that report teacher turnover problems. After conducting research within numerous districts, in regards to racial teacher turnover trends, Black teachers were six times more likely to report turnover problems (Loeb & Darling-Hammond, 2005,). These teachers knew that a higher rate of turnover was simply another expectation of their job. Turnover was noticeable to these teachers. Not coincidentally, these teachers also worked at high-minority, low-socioeconomics schools. Presumably, these teachers were aware of the environment that they teach and the turnover rate of teachers was obvious.

### Why does a teacher leave?

Teaching can be rewarding as a profession. However, it can be discouraging as well. As McCreight (2000) stated “teachers leave the field because they can’t cope with the teaching problem” (p. 5). Teaching is not simple and at times, can be overwhelming for beginning teachers. With standardized testing and the quantity of tasks that each teacher has, occasionally

the job becomes too difficult, especially for a rookie (Brooks, 2006; Hope, 1999; Lortie, 1975). More duties, more responsibilities, added pressures to perform and the reality of accountability did not provide novice teachers a red carpet welcome into education.

Lucksinger (2000) gave a vivid description of the novice teacher's experience:

Often the novice is given the most difficult assignments or classes with known student discipline problems. The novice teacher is the least likely to be able to handle these assignments. This sets a teacher up for failure. Teachers move through the developmental stages as they learn to become experts. The first year of teaching is a survival stage (p. 12).

Gaede (1998) described the first year of teaching as "keen disillusionment" and Certo and Fox (2002) found that new teachers are unprepared for the demands of teaching. Why are these teachers not having a good idea of what teaching really is? This "disillusionment" and "unprepared" notion should be a concern for teacher and administrator preparation and induction programs.

Teaching is not a career that brings instant success and it takes time to develop ample skills (Olson, 2000). Since it is not instantaneous, professional development was considered a necessary element in the development of a teacher. Thus, it was extraordinary for a first-year teacher to be the best teacher within the school. Teachers need time to develop within this new organization and should observe what good teachers do in classrooms and how good teachers live life (Lortie, 1975). To be an effective teacher, the young teacher must allow some time to season. As Olson (2000) stated "it is critical to retain new teachers for at least five or six years so they can reach their full potential" (p.7).

Hare (2000) noted the "Top five reasons for leaving teaching, nationally, are retirement, pregnancy, new career, move and personal reasons" (p. 17). A few of these reasons for departure seem typical of other professions (nurses, accountants, social workers) and should be expected, but are these contributing a considerable amount of turnover to explain the mass exodus from the teaching profession? Ingersoll (2003) did not believe so. He stated that retirement, school staffing cutback and personal reasons (pregnancy) are certainly contributors of attrition but not significant enough to explain this large attrition rate currently. "Almost half of all departures report as a motivation 1) job dissatisfaction, 2) a desire to pursue better jobs, different careers, or improved career opportunities" (Ingersoll, 2003, p. 150). Other authors listed similar

sociological explanations for leaving the profession. LeCante and Durkin (2001) argued that burnout played a large role in teachers leaving. Farber (2000) used stress and most recently, Brooks (2006) emphasized five forms of alienation for teachers leaving the profession. They were powerlessness, normlessness, estrangement, isolation, and disengagement.

Hammond (1997) suggested:

A consistent list was generated when teachers were asked to rate the conditions of most concern. In order of priority, these were low salary, lack of promotional opportunities, poor accommodations, lack of upgrading opportunities, and lack of teaching materials and supplies (p. 5).

With the exception of promotional opportunities, these conditions listed were extrinsic rewards or material desires. Nevertheless, these promotional opportunities may be based solely on increased wages as well.

Gonzalez (1995) also listed externally-guided motivators as to why they left the teaching profession:

Examples of external factors include (a) economic trends (e.g., recessions, labor market trends); (b) societal factors (e.g., changing birth rates, regional population shifts); and (c) institutional factors (e.g., particularly strong pre-service programs that instill a high degree of commitment, the successes/failures of the teacher union objectives, regulations promulgated by federal/state agencies) (p. 5).

Darling-Hammond (2003) listed four major factors for people leaving the education profession. They were “salaries, working conditions, preparation, and mentoring support in the early years” (p. 9). In another study in 2005, Loeb and Darling-Hammond stated that the working conditions of the teacher did play a significant role, even more so than salary. They even called this the strongest predictor of teacher turnover (2005). Examples of these working conditions were: administrative support, availability of necessary materials, participation in decision making, and collegial opportunities.

#### Do demographics or socioeconomics have an impact on teacher turnover?

In 1997, Shen discovered that teachers leave more frequently from schools with larger proportions of low-income and high-minority students than other schools. This situation was made difficult due to lack of resources and teachers’ perceptions of minority students as

traditional learners (Darling-Hammond, 2001). “With nearly 30 percent of new teachers leaving within five years, and even higher attrition rates in disadvantaged districts, a revolving door of candidates makes recruitment a Sisyphean task” (Darling-Hammond, 2001, p. 14).

In a 2001 study, Ingersoll confirmed that teacher turnover was 50 percent higher in high-poverty schools as opposed to low-poverty schools. These schools were referred to across the nation as Title I schools. A Title I school was “federal compensatory education program that funds supplemental education services for low-income student” (Kauchak & Eggen, 2005). “Teachers in high-poverty schools have higher rates of turnover than do those in more affluent schools” (Ingersoll, 1999, p. 18) and “teachers are more prone to leave schools serving high proportions of low-achieving, low-income, and minority students for more economically and educationally advantaged schools” (Loeb & Darling-Hammond, 2005, p. 44).

With teachers exiting these higher-need schools so often, the quality of instruction will most likely suffer. Ironically, these students were those needing the best instruction and for that reason, “students who most need skilled teaching are least likely to get it” (Darling-Hammond, 2001, p.14). Ingersoll (1999) again reemphasized, “it is, for instance, widely believed that the most needy students in the U.S.-those from poor and low-income communities-are often taught by the least-qualified teachers” (p. 30) and Fideler and Haselkorn (1999) characterized this as a form of affirmative action in reverse, which ensured that students in the nation’s most challenging classrooms received its least qualified teachers.

### Teacher Retention

“While accurate measures of teacher attrition are important for school systems, administrators, and potential teachers are to effectively plan for the coming years, the need to identify factors which cause teachers to remain in the profession is perhaps of greater importance” (Inman & Marlow, 2004, p. 605). In short, the reason teachers stayed and not the factors that caused them to leave, it is the most important area of focus. Our system should concentrate on keeping the teachers that we already have.

Gonzalez (1995) defined the term retention as “the ‘stayers’-teachers who remain in the same teaching assignment, in the same school as in the previous year” (p. 4). In Gonzalez’s definition, a teacher who left for an administrative job or moves to another school or district was not considered a stayer. A stayer was the opposite of what Ingersoll (1999) called a mover or a

leaver. In most instances, the definition of retention was in no way discussed because of the spotlight shining on attrition. For the purpose of this study, I followed Gonzalez's definition of retention and define it is a person who stayed in the same teaching position as the previous year.

In this discussion, I asked three questions concerning what researchers are currently doing or have done when discussing retention: (1) Is the system producing enough teachers? (2) How does teaching, as a profession, measure to similar professions? (3) What can be done to balance the teaching profession with similar professions?

### Is the system producing enough teachers?

With so many resources (e.g. additional federal funds, Troops to Work, alternative certification) concentrated on recruitment and production of teachers, is the system producing enough teachers? "The problem does not lie in the numbers of teachers available: we produce many more qualified teachers than we hire. The hard part is keeping the teachers we prepare" (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p. 7). Again Ingersoll (2003) reiterated, "The problem is not primarily shortages, in the conventional sense of too few teachers being recruited and trained; rather, the problem is turnover: too many teachers departing prior to retirement" (p. 150). In short, the system is producing enough teachers, but they did not stay in the profession. The system is not retaining teachers.

Since the system was producing an adequate amount of teachers, it seemed reasonable to suggest that retaining teachers should receive systemic focus. However, policy failures of such initiatives as troops-to-teachers, alternative certification programs, and financial incentives, have suggested that recruiting of teachers will not solve the teacher shortage (Ingersoll, 2003; Merrow; 1999). Ingersoll called these efforts "the wrong diagnosis with the wrong prescription" (p. 146). Merrow (1999) also discovered that this is a misdiagnosis of the ailment. He states, "We're misdiagnosing the problem as recruitment when it's really retention" (Merrow, 1999, p. 64).

The implications for school leaders were clear. School leaders should be more aggressive in recruiting new teachers, develop a relationship with newly hired teachers, provide individualized support through rapport building and provide assistance by allocating more resources for the novice teachers. "It is likely that the retention of many experienced teachers would enhance the overall quality of the teaching force. Therefore, administrators might

consider investing more effort and resources in retaining experienced teachers and investing less in the training and recruiting of replacements” (Boe, et.al., 1997, p. 377). A final source, the NCTAF (2003) also dismissed the notion of attracting qualified teachers as a problem, but the calamity becomes noticeable when the system attempts to keep teachers.

According to this line of research, the approach that educational policy makers were implementing was not adequately correcting the deficiency of teachers; it was only finding new teachers and overlooking the veteran teachers. Ingersoll’s (2003) analogy of a bucket full of holes supported this idea. As an alternative to plugging the holes, our current method for addressing the leaking water was to continue to pour more water (new teachers) in the bucket (classroom) and not plug the holes (teachers already hired).

All of these researchers have highlighted the magnitude of the retention problem instead of the familiar quick-fix approach of recruitment. The educational system continued to misdiagnose the teacher shortage. It focused on supplying new teachers rather than keeping those who are already in the profession. To summarize these ideas, our educational system should deliver more attention to the teachers that are presently employed instead of spending the majority of efforts on novice teachers who may not stay.

#### How does teaching, as a profession, compare to similar professions?

It is regarded as one of the lowly professions within our society. Teaching as a profession is just about non-existent. “For too many of today’s aspiring professionals, teaching is no longer viewed as an attractive profession. Instead it is seen as a vocation hampered by a rigid bureaucratic hierarchy in which teachers were treated as children rather than as professionals” (Futrell, 2000, p. 324). A colorful quote from a former elementary teacher who later taught at the college level stated, “...we are somewhere above cockroaches and below the custodian” (Eggens, 2002, p. 2).

In these views, teachers were not regarded as professionals. The salaries of teachers reflected this negative perception. According the 2001 Bureau of Labor Statistics, the mean salary of a teacher (\$44,040) was below registered nurses (\$48,240), accountants (\$50,700), dental hygienists (\$56,770) and computer programmers (\$71,130) (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future [NCTAF], 2003). The harsh comparison of these salaries demonstrated the lack of professional respect when a dental hygienist, a job requiring two years



of education, makes \$12,000 more than a teacher, which requires at least a four year degree. Administrators can have an impact on the image of teacher as professionals.<sup>1</sup>

### Teacher Attrition and Retention: A Summary of Extant Findings

An indication of who is leaving the profession:

1. first year teachers (McCreight, 2000: Stansburry, 2000),
2. single teachers (Hammond, 1997),
3. teachers within the first five year of employment (Halford, 1999),
4. teachers less than 30 and over 50 years of age (Ingersoll, 1999), and
5. teachers in high-minority, low socio-economic schools (Loeb & Darling-Hammond, 2005: Ingersoll, 1999).

The reasons given for teachers leaving the profession were:

1. teachers leave because they cannot cope with the problems of teaching (McCreight, 2000),
2. they are set up for failure (Lucksinger, 2000), they are not given substantial time to be successful (Olson, 2000),
3. retirement, pregnancy, new career, move and personal reasons (Hare, 2000),
4. job dissatisfaction and a desire to pursue better jobs (Ingersoll, 2003),
5. low salary, lack of promotional opportunities, poor accommodations, lack of upgrading opportunities and lack of teaching materials and supplies (Hammond, 1997),
6. economic trends, societal factors, institutional factors (Gonzalez, 1995), and
7. salaries, working conditions, preparation, and mentoring support (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

The impacts of demographics or socioeconomics on teacher turnover were:

---

<sup>1</sup> What can the education profession learn from other professions? Have teachers operate professionally, converse and articulate correctly, reveal knowledge and expertise and be a role model that students can have a high regard for. "If we treated teaching, as a highly valued profession, one requiring expertise and skill, there would be no problem attracting and retaining more than enough excellent teachers, and there would be little problem ensuring that all classrooms were staffed with qualified teachers" (Ingersoll, 1999, p. 35). To create a more professional culture we might make salaries more enticing for teachers. "If the teaching profession is to compete with other professions for our most talented students, it must be likewise willing and able to pay salaries commensurate with being a member of a profession" (Futrell, 2000, p. 324). To be competitive with other professionals, we need to offer competitive salaries.

1. turnover is more evident in high minority and low-income schools (Shen, 1997),
2. high-poverty versus low-poverty schools (Ingersoll, 2001), and
3. low-achieving, low-income, high minority schools (Loeb & Darling-Hammond, 2005).

Research indicated that the system is producing enough teachers. The system produced more than we employed (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 2003). However, according to the average salary of comparable professions, (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future [NCTAF], 2003) teachers ranked toward the bottom. To make teaching comparable with other professions, teachers must be considered highly valued professionals (Ingersoll, 1999).

### Peer Support

Schemp, Sparkes, and Templin (1999) stated that new teachers asked for assistance from other teachers they think they can trust. Hertzog (2002) stated novice teachers who needed assistance with teaching chose to go to others experiencing or have experienced similar situations. Feiman-Nemser (2003) stated that good teachers solve things for themselves. They did not need any assistance from others. New teachers did not want to appear incompetent. It was much easier to locate a teacher. Novice teachers oftentimes thought that asking questions of an administrator may raise some questions regarding teaching effectiveness.

Teachers needed some way to vent their frustrations and share their successes that are common with the first-year of teaching. They needed to be able to talk with someone who has experienced the same difficulties and receive input from that person (Hope, 1999). This support was central and "is also critical in helping new teachers deal with the inevitable stress, fatigue and personal insecurity that accompany learning to teach in the first year" (Worthy, 2005, p. 381).

### Teachers Supporting Teachers

In this discussion, I asked two questions concerning what researchers were currently doing or have done when discussing peer support: 1) What are the most common peer support programs that are being used? 2) Are the costs of these programs equitable to the benefits?

### What are the most common peer support programs that are being used?

The way that most school systems attempted to aid in this peer support is through induction programs. Smylie (1995) defined induction as a planned program designed to facilitate the process by which new teachers in a school acquire the social and technical knowledge and skills they need to perform effectively in their work roles and interpersonal relationships. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) defined induction as a program that offers support, guidance, and orientation for beginning elementary and secondary teachers during the transition into their first teaching jobs. Menchaca (2003) characterized induction as the process of providing adequate training and support for teachers in the period including the first one to three years of teaching after receiving certification or a teaching license. The intended outcomes of these programs were to improve teacher effectiveness, encourage promising teachers to remain in the profession, promote professional and personal well being, communicate both district and school cultures to new teachers, and help meet state and federal mandates (Seyfarth, 2005).

One of the most common intricacies within an induction program was providing a mentor teacher (Seyfarth, 2005). Mentor teachers were commonly referred to as: buddy teachers, supervising teachers, lead teachers and maybe even teacher leaders.

Matthews and Crow (2003) used this definition of a mentor as someone who:

Acts as a coach, much like in athletics, advising and teaching the political nuts and bolts, giving feedback, and rehearsing strategies. He or she provides you with exposure, visibility, and sponsorship, helping to open doors to promotions and seeing that you get assignments that will get you noticed. And mentors take the blame for your mistakes, acting as protectors until you're established enough to shoulder criticism on your own (p. 8).

Whatever the title, these mentors were to make the new teacher feel welcomed and help alleviate some unneeded pressures within this new educational venue. Typical expectations of mentors were: introduce new teachers to rest of the staff, provide copies of handbooks and curriculum guides, explain grading and discipline policies and help set up the classroom (Tickle, 1994).

The mentor should have a significant impact on the new teacher. To be effective and to encourage new teachers to remain in the profession, a mentor teacher oftentimes had some

specific qualities. According to Tickle (1994), mentor teachers should have the following attributes: experience as a teacher, sensitivity, approachability and a calm manner.

Sometimes people assumed that good teachers will make good mentors (Wagner, 1995). This was not always true. Being a good teacher did not make the person a good mentor. Feiman-Nemser (2003), because of isolation within schools and unforeseeable expectations of a mentor, stated that training for the mentor teacher is most crucial. Training for mentors was a vital piece of the induction process.

Simply being given a mentor without any other piece of the induction process was not enough. Having a mentor was a part of the induction process. They were not the same and should not be treated as equal. However, too many times the terms mentor and induction were used interchangeably. To differentiate between the two, Wong (2004) stated,

The two terms are not synonymous. Induction is a process-a comprehensive, coherent, and sustained professional development process-that is organized by a school district to train, support, and retains new teachers and seamlessly progresses theme into a lifelong learning program. Mentoring is an action. It is what mentors do. A mentor is a single person, whose basic function is to help a new teacher. Typically, the help is for survival, not for sustained professional learning that leads to becoming an effective teacher.

Mentoring is not induction. A mentor is a component of the induction process (p. 57).

#### Are the costs of these programs equitable to the benefits?

Having a high quality mentor program has a high price tag monetarily but the unforeseen costs within a district of not doing so may prove more devastating regarding the quality of instructors. For example, “quality mentoring programs are expensive to develop and operate, but they have a high probability of helping to retain young teachers” (Seyfarth, 2005, p. 121). Brown (2003) stated the dropout rate will drop from roughly 50 percent to 15 percent during the first five years if an effective mentorship program is in place.

Simply stated, more invested in a high-quality mentoring program will possibly keep novice teachers in the profession long enough to understand how to be a successful instructor. This is reiterated again when Darling-Hammond (1999) supported the effectiveness of a high-quality mentoring program for districts by reporting a two-thirds reduction in teacher attrition within the district.

## Peer Support: A Summary of Extant Findings

Induction programs were one of the most common peer support programs being used (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004; Menchaca, 2003; Smylie, 1995). The intended outcomes of these programs were to improve teacher effectiveness, encourage promising teachers to remain in the profession, promote professional and personal well-being, communicate both district and school cultures to new teachers, and help meet state and federal mandates (Seyfarth, 2005). Within these induction programs, providing a mentor was an essential part of retaining new teachers (Seyfarth, 2005). These mentors should be trained (Feiman-Nemser, 2003) and should possess some specific qualities: experience as a teacher, sensitivity, approachability and a calm manner (Tickle, 1994).

The price of a high quality induction program required many resources (Seyfarth, 2005); however, these initial costs should minimize the retention rate among new teachers (Brown, 2003; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Seyfarth, 2005).

The terms mentor and induction were not synonymous and should not be used interchangeably. A mentor was one part of the action. An induction process was the comprehensive plan that included mentors within it (Wong, 2004).

## Administrative Support

“While principals have many other important responsibilities, the current teacher shortage makes the principal’s role in the induction of new teachers arguably their most important because it may help retain new teachers” (Quinn & Andrews, 2004, p. 167). Eggens (2002) argued that “If it ‘takes a village’ to raise a child, then perhaps it also takes a village to support a new teacher.” This notion emphasized the importance of support from the educational community. Teacher support is any assistance (advising, mentoring, listening) given to a teacher, especially in the first year of teaching. Novice teachers need satisfaction and affirmation from a variety of sources. “Intrinsic rewards such as positive experiences with students, and recognition and appreciation from colleagues, parents, and principals play a key role in increased job satisfaction” (Gonzalez, 1995, p.6).

## Administrators Supporting Teachers

In this discussion, I asked three questions concerning what researchers are currently doing or have done when discussing administrative support: (1) What kind of support does a

novice teacher need? (2) Is the support from the administrator or principal expected or desired from novice teachers? (3) What can administrators do to make the transition period for novice teachers more acceptable?

#### What kind of support does a novice teacher need?

To assist in that, providing mentor support from the principal and other teachers was another important component for retaining new teachers (Colley, 2002; Hope, 1999; Worthy, 2005). A mentor must be provided to a new teacher; however, simply assigning mentors without the proper administrative support rarely worked (Worthy, 2005, p. 394). The principal should take the lead role as mentor and provide time for substantial feedback to the new teacher despite the fact that a veteran teacher has been assigned (Hope, 1999). The principal must closely examine the development of the mentor course of action and be confident it was sustaining the new teacher. Colley (2002) reconfirmed this suggestion by stating, “As a mentor or mentor coordinator, the principal ensures that novice teachers have the support they need to start strong and stay strong” (p. 24).

It is considered fundamental that administrators assertively aid novice teachers in the initiation process since “principals play a key role in the induction process” (Seyfarth, 2005). Strong administrative leadership was an essential element of a quality comprehensive induction program (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004). “Peer mentor programs are an important part of the new teacher’s induction, but principals should be highly and personally involved in all aspects of the induction and mentoring process-much more than just assigning a good peer mentor to coach and assist a new teacher” (Matthews & Crow, 2003, p. 80). When the novice teacher began the induction process, this was the instance when administrative support was desired the most. However, veteran teachers still needed support throughout their careers.

Bartell (2004) stated:

The support of the site administrator is crucial to the success of the induction program at that particular school site. Site administrators need to understand and be supportive of the efforts made on behalf of the new teacher at their own sites. They should understand and support the goals of the induction program so that their own advice and counseling is consistent with the goals of the program and the visions of teaching that is being

promoted. They need to support those who will assist and mentor the novice teachers at their own site (p. 49)

### Is the support from the administrator expected from novice teachers?

Throughout this literature review, each journal article, book and educational clipping placed sizeable importance on the administrator's role in supporting novice teachers. According to Eggens (2002), beginning teachers leave teaching primarily because of the lack of support from the administration. In addition, Worthy (2005) demonstrated that teachers do leave for personal reasons but the majority of attrition happened primarily because of the lack of support from the principal. In fact, Brock and Grady (1997) cited the principal as the chief reason that they did not give up. Research indicated that administrative support was important in both teacher retention and attrition.

Once novice teachers entered a school and later in their careers as veteran, they expected support from their administrator. They wanted to know how many classes and what grade levels they were teaching. Matthews and Crow (2003) stated that although teachers did appreciate the guidance and support from a peer teacher, they still expected assistance from administrators which was probably who hired the novice teacher. They also wanted to know what resources were available (supplies, classrooms, aides, etc.). Furthermore, they needed to know geographical layout of the facility. Novice teachers needed assistance from events such as issuing reports to understanding the student code of conduct. Incoming teachers in this occupation expected administrative support and they became dejected when that support was not there. "The teachers expected and longed for a network of support that did not exist for them" (Eggens, 2002, p. 3). Teachers had no help understanding the school as an organization.

Often times, teachers did not receive help from an administrator. In fact, they found themselves in opposition of the administrator. "Beginning teachers expected administrators to be 'on their side' but often found themselves either ignored or embroiled in confrontation with those administrators" (Eggens, 2002, p. 2). Because the administrator ignored or confronted the new teacher, the teacher felt isolated and alone.

### What can administrators do to lend support during the transition period for novice teachers?

Since principals held a pivotal role in the recruitment of the novice teacher (Wood, 2005), they should develop a relationship preferably, or at the minimum, an association, with a new

teacher prior to being hired. “Although hiring teachers and placement of new teachers are extremely important, the leadership role in supporting and developing new teachers is even more important” (Matthews & Crow, 2003, p. 80). The principal needs to actively build an individualized relationship that supports instruction, but more importantly, prevents the administrator from appearing unapproachable. When a teacher has problems or concerns, the administrator should be someone the teacher can rely upon.

Subsequent to the teacher arriving at school, school administrators should supply support (Ingersoll, 2003). A principal should craft an individual connection, present emotional support and soon after integrate the particulars of the profession. “Beginning teacher support should be looked at as a continuum, starting with personal and emotional support, expanding to include specific task or problem-related support and, in the ideal, expanding further to help the newcomer develop a capacity for critical self-reflection on teaching practice” (Stansbury et.al, 2000, p. 4). This rapport building is more than a brief “ciao” and “adieu,” but to a certain extent, an authentic effort to be a counselor, an ally, or even a colleague.

Hope (1999) suggested:

Orienting new teachers to the school and to principals’ expectations entails more than reviewing policy and procedures in a handbook, more than thirty-minute getting-to-know you meeting in the office, more than a walk around campus to point out important locations such as the media center, cafeteria, and teachers’ workroom. It involves systematic contact with the intention of assisting in the new teacher’s professional growth and development and of engaging in collegial conversation about the work of teaching (p. 54).

During the discussion between the administrator and the teacher, definite areas needed to be addressed regarding the school as a working organization. Administrators should discuss the school culture, the demographics of the school, and the lay-out of the school and the expectations of the principal. Since “knowing the principal’s expectations for instructional practices, grading, and student achievement seem to be more important to novice teachers than any advice given by a mentor” (Colley, 2002, p. 22), and “above all, principals need to explain that an evaluation is a means of improving teacher effectiveness, not an instrument of criticism” (Hope, 1999, p. 55). Time and again, new teachers were unsettled by classroom observations because they did not



understand the basis behind the instrument. It was to be used as a means to advance the skill of instruction (Hope, 1999).

Next, administrators should attentively search for and provide support to first year teachers. Hope (1999) confirmed:

“Principals should likewise understand that every effort must be made to help first-year teachers succeed and principals need to seek out first-year teachers and initiate conversation about instructional matters until the new teachers develop a level of comfort to initiate contact on their own (p. 55).

It was possible that this newly-acquired comfort level will, at bare minimum, gave reassurance to the teacher that the principal was in fact concerned.

Unless specific administration steps are taken to protect them, beginning teachers often end up with the toughest assignments. To make life less stressful for them, administrators can reduce the number of students in beginners’ classrooms, refrain from assigning them the most challenging students, and minimize their extracurricular and committee assignments (Stansburry, et.al, 2000, p. 7).

Administrators have some control over “supportive environment, financial support, behavior management support and workload/work role support” (Eggen, 2002, p. 1). Because of the toughest teaching assignments, the larger classes, and the enormous amount of extracurricular assignment, another idea for administrators was to alleviate the amount of bureaucracy that new teachers are required to deal with. Stansburry et.al, (2000) stated, “principals can protect beginning teachers from getting spread too thin by helping them prioritize their time spent in professional development and by excusing them from all but the most essential activities” (p. 8). Clearly stated, if a meeting or a document is not essential for a new teacher, administrators should take that requirement from them. Administrators should allow new teachers to give their attention to becoming better teachers and do not give them exterior, unconnected obstacles to surmount.

Not only should principals support new teachers, but they should provide opportunities for teachers to observe what high-quality instruction looks like. This will “help new teachers compensate for their inexperience by sharing, modeling, and encouraging best-practice experimentation” (Colley, 2002, p. 22). This observing of other teachers will also provide a

network of support for the novice teacher. When a site administrator organizes and/or supports institutional activities that promote professional relationships among novice teachers and experienced teachers, morale is greatly improved and beginning teachers' self concept is strengthened (Colley, 2002).

Kurtz (1983) listed six practices to ensure beginning teachers success during the first years of teaching. They are:

1. plan special in-service sessions for beginning teachers throughout the school year with timely topics addressing the concerns of that group.
2. pair beginning teacher with experienced teachers, matching individuals for subject taught physical proximity, and teaching philosophy.
3. if the school has a mentor program, plan to meet periodically with monitor teacher to review their experiences working with the beginning teacher and, when necessary, to identify general problems that need addressing.
4. avoid allowing beginning teachers to end up with only the courses and students more senior teachers do not want.
5. exercise care and judgment in making extra-duty assignments in order to avoid jeopardizing the teaching effectiveness of beginning teachers.
6. if an induction program is offered, schedule sessions for beginning teachers separately from the sessions for experienced teachers but give beginners the opportunity to attend both

#### Administrative Support: A Summary of Extant Findings

Novice teachers need administrative support (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2004; Bartell, 2004; Eggens, 2002; Ingersoll, 2003; Wood, 2005). Support from the administrator or principal is expected or desired from novice teachers because it was anticipated but it was not always certain to new teachers (Eggens, 2002).

Administrators can do the following to lend support for novice teachers during the transition period:

1. principals should develop relationships with teachers (Hope, 1999; Ingersoll, 2003, Stansbury, 2000),
2. inform the new teacher of future expectations (Colley, 2002),

3. explain the effectiveness of evaluation (Hope, 1999),
4. aggressively recruit new teachers (Hope, 1999),
5. create a supportive environment (Eggen, 2002),
6. limit the unnecessary projects for new teachers (Stansbury, 2000),
7. be a mentor for a new teacher (Colley, 2002; Hope, 1999; Worthy, 2005) and
8. model what high-quality instruction looks like (Colley, 2002).

### Chapter Summary

This review of the literature focused on *teacher attrition* (leaving the teaching profession), *teacher retention* (remaining in the teaching profession), *peer support* (any assistance given to teachers by another teacher or colleague) and *administrative support* (any assistance given to teachers by an administrator). Based from the literature review, I can now move forward in composing my interview questions. In the next chapter, I discussed the methodological process in which I conducted my research.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study was to explore the formal support that administrators provided teachers in an effort to better understand teacher perceptions of how these forms of support influenced teacher attrition and retention in a low performing high school. This study examined teachers' perceptions of this support and offered recommendations based on these findings. I used a qualitative case study approach to investigate teacher attrition and retention at a Florida high school. I collected data from interviews with focus groups to answer the questions in this proposed research.

I sought to answer the following questions:

1. What forms of formal support do administrators and colleagues provide teachers?
2. What are teachers' perceptions of the forms of support they receive from administrators and colleagues?
3. How do teachers perceive the relationships between teacher attrition and forms of administrative and peer support?

#### Design of the Study

Qualitative methods were used throughout this study. A qualitative approach was chosen to provide a thick, rich description of people, places, and conversations as described by Bogdan & Biklen (2003). Further, as this phenomenon was not well understood from a teacher's perspective, this approach promised to reveal emergent themes. Merriam (1998) believed that qualitative research should be an umbrella that covered several forms of inquiry that helped us explain and understand social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible. My role as a school administrator demanded that I carefully navigate within this organization to provide as close to an accurate picture as possible.

Conducting research at my place of employment provided meaningful research, in that it gave me particular insights into my workplace, but may also have invited some limitations (Eisner, 1998; Mason, 1996; Silverman, 2001, 2005; Wolcott, 1994). To account for this, I followed Mason's (1996) ethical framework while conducting this research. According to Mason (1996), researchers must address three questions regarding ethics:

1. decide what is the purpose of your research, e.g. self-advancement, political advocacy, etc.,
2. examine which individuals or groups might be interested or affected by your research topic, and
3. consider what are the implications for these parties of framing your research topic in the way you have done?

I was an assistant principal for discipline and attendance at Jordan High School. I was the researcher. I personally interviewed teachers in a group setting, more specifically, a focus group. A focus group is defined as “a group of subjects interviewed together, prompting a discussion” (Babbie, 2004, p. 302) and “group interviews that are structured to foster talk among the participants about particular issues” (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The purpose of this research was not for self-advancement or political advocacy but was rather, as Mason (1996) explained, designed to discover something “socially useful” (this term is also used by Eisner, 1998). I wanted to learn what kind of support, if any, teachers needed from administrators. Perhaps this socially useful information can be used to reduce the number of teachers leaving high schools with similar characteristics as Jordan High.

Adapting Mason’s (1996) second question, I attempted to answer: Are teachers being interviewed interested and how will they be affected? I expected that teachers might not provide genuine answers initially (Wolcott, 2003) since I was technically classified as an evaluator of their work. Teachers might have considered my questioning as intrusive and may have perceived that it could impact their jobs. However, in my school, I did not have power to hire or fire teachers. My principal had total control over the employment and evaluation process. Thus, it was not possible to use what I discovered from teacher interviews to make any formal personnel decisions. Again, no data collected during this study was shared with any other person; all interview transcripts were typed using pseudonyms and were free of identifying characteristics. When reporting my findings, all data were “transformed” to ensure confidentiality (Wolcott, 1994).

Silverman (2001) suggested ethical problems could arise if the observer did not inform the research subjects about the study and its implications. Addressing Mason’s (1996) implications regarding ethics, I made the interviewees aware that this research was meant to help our school, and to contribute to a greater understanding of teacher attrition. More specifically, it

was intended to help teachers. My discussions with the teachers were an opportunity for them to explain to me what administrators and peers could do to help teachers. I wanted to know how administrators and peers could prevent attrition from occurring at such a rapid rate.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (2003) there were five fundamental features of qualitative research. These were naturalistic (takes place within the natural setting), descriptive data (portrays a picture rather than a statistic), concerned with process (focuses on practice rather than post-test), inductive (allows the research to guide decisions) and have meaning (how people make sense of the research). To fit my study with Bogdan and Biklen's criteria, (1) Jordan High was my naturalistic environment where (2) real people with real conversations did take place instead of a generic labeling given by a statistic (3) that commonalities did arise that re-shifted my study that (4) asked new precise questions to determine (5) what all of these interviews and observations actually meant to me and other educators.

Merriam (1998) focused on five key points when discussing substantive qualitative research. The most important of the five was for the phenomena to be understood from the participant's point of view instead of the researcher's. I was able to listen to what each teacher was saying and not judge my findings from an administrative perspective. Next, the researcher must be the primary form of data collection and analysis. I did not allow another researcher to have access to the primary data. Thirdly, qualitative research requires fieldwork. I did collect data at my school. Next, inductive research, which builds upon concepts, abstractions, theories and hypotheses, did take place. The nature of this study invited hypotheses and intrigue. My study did certainly twist and turn but did provide me an insight into what impact administrators and peers can have on teacher attrition.

The final key for Merriam was that the research be descriptive. Teacher's perceptions, observations, and documents were descriptive data that did allow me to visualize what was actually occurring at my school. It was not a statistic that I read and later forgot. It was not a number that classified a teacher as a first year English teacher. Rather this was Ms. Smith, the 9<sup>th</sup> grade English teacher, in the 400 building, whose daughter was in the band and someone I really knew and cared for.

This study was a case study, a descriptive study of one particular setting (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1994; Yin, 1989), at a single high school. This research was a participant observation case study, which used group interviews as the primary data collection process. Bogdan and Biklen

(2003) described a case study as a detailed look at one setting or one specific event. Smith (1978) believed that case studies focused on single units or bounded systems. Typical organization for an observational case study included: a particular place within the organization (the school facility), a specific group of people (teachers) and some activity of the school (retention among teachers) (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

For the purpose of this study, a case study did allow me to conduct an in-depth examination of the social aspect (Babbie, 2004) of why teachers left or remained at Jordan High School. To conclude, the aim was to understand the particular case by paying close attention to detail and discovering non-numeric meanings. My case study began broadly and gradually funneled towards a purpose. For the purposes of this study, I began by interviewing teachers who remained at school, and attempted to document some dominant patterns that did guide and re-shape my thinking.

### Site Selection

The site for this study was chosen based on the review of literature regarding teacher attrition and retention. This school is a high-minority school, with low socio-economics, that had a high attrition rate among new teachers. Because of those factors, choosing this school setting made this purposive when selecting a site.

Jordan high school is in a city in Florida with a population of roughly 150,000 people. Within this city, 61 percent of the population is White, 32 percent is Black, and 2 percent Asian, 3 percent Hispanic and 2 percent is Hawaiian or Pacific Islander. Jordan has one principal, three assistant principals, two deans, 80 teachers and 1,271 students. Jordan High School also has an International Baccalaureate program comprising almost 300 students. The school's student demographics demonstrate almost an inverse distribution of the city's demographics, with 75 percent of the students being African-American, 20 percent Caucasian and 5 percent 'other'. Nearly 42 percent of the students receive free or reduced lunch monies from the federal government. Of the 84 teachers working at Jordan High School, 55 percent are African-American, 42 percent are Caucasian, and 3 percent are 'other'. Jordan High's Teachers are 70 percent female and 52 percent of the teachers are married.

Jordan High School is located on the south side of town and is considered by many in the county to be the "Black high school" within the district. Within this school, there are formal

gangs. Gang violence is steadily growing within the community and school. Jordan High School received a “C” in the 2003-2004 school year and a “D” in the 2004-2005 school year as measured by Florida’s A+ Plan but paradoxically was named one of the country’s top 300 high schools as reported by Newsweek magazine.

### Participant Selection

In my research, I chose teachers who fell into specific categories of teacher attrition as identified in the literature review. I used a stratified sample; (5) first-year teachers, (5) third or fourth-year teachers, (5) fifth through eighth-year teachers, and (5) teachers with more than twenty-five years of teaching experience. In a purposive sample, “individuals were selected on the basis of accessibility, with little concern for the composition of the sample” (Worthen, et al, 1997).

I chose teachers who were accessible within my school and who agreed to be interviewed. Again in a focus group setting, I organized groups according to years of experience. For example, I interviewed all of the first-year teachers selected as a group, followed by third and fourth-year teachers, fifth through eighth-year teachers and teachers who have taught at least twenty-five years.

### Data Collection

#### Interviews

I carried out formal interviews within a group setting, as well as, informal discussions outside of this setting. Babbie (2004) defined an interview as a data-collection encounter where the interviewer asks a respondent a series of guided questions. Bogdan and Biklen (2003) defined an interview as a purposeful conversation between two people but sometimes involving more and may be used two ways: dominant strategy for data collection or used in conjunction with participant observation. Interviews were the most important data collection technique in a qualitative study (Fetterman, 1989).

Patton (1990) listed five major purposes of interview questions. They should answer:

1. background or demographic questions
2. opinion or value questions
3. knowledge questions



4. experience or behavior questions
5. feeling questions.

I used a guided conversation, which helped define the direction of the interview (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). As Bogdan and Biklen (2003) recommended, I did not ask questions that can be answered with a yes or no and I did use the 8 probes they suggested in keeping the interview moving and concise:

1. What do you mean?
2. I'm not sure that I am following you.
3. Would you explain that?
4. What did you say then?
5. What were you thinking at the time?
6. Give me an example.
7. Tell me about it.
8. Take me through the experience (p. 96).

These interviews did take place in a group setting, not individually. This type of setting was known as a focus group. These focus groups normally consisted of four to six people, and were used to encourage discussion within the group about a general subject that an individual interview might not provide (Babbie, 2004; Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Krueger (1988) listed five advantages to focus groups: the technique is a socially oriented research method capturing real-life data in a social environment, it has flexibility, it has high face validity, it has speedy results, and it is low in cost.

In contrast, focus groups also have some disadvantages. Again Krueger (1988) listed: afford the researcher less control than individual interviews, data are difficult to analyze, moderators require special skills, difference between groups can be troublesome, groups are difficult to assemble, and the discussion must be conducted in a conducive environment.

Within the interview process, I specifically selected a group of teachers using a purposive sample (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). My sample, a piece of the population, included 20 teachers. A purposive sample was successful in qualitative research and was helpful to describe a subgroup or to better understand a reason or purpose. Silverman (2005) also stated a purposive sample allowed us to choose a case because it illustrated some feature or process in which we were interested. A sample was drawn based on specific purpose (Worthen, Sanders, & Fitzpatrick,

1997). My purpose was to identify various factors within the teaching profession such as years of experience, annual contract versus continuing contract, race, gender and age.

### Data Analysis

Data analysis or “the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcripts, fieldnotes, and other materials that are accumulated to enable you to come up with findings” (Bogdan, et.al, 2003, p. 147) was different from data interpretation. Data interpretation was defined as the “developing of ideas about your findings” and how it relates to the literature and broader concepts (Bogdan, et.al, 2003, p. 147). I was able to understand how to analyze the data but more importantly interpret the data. I looked to identify patterns that might inform future practice for instructional leaders.

After the data had been collected, I developed a strategy for coding. Babbie (2004) defined coding as a process that transforms raw data into thematic categories. I grouped data according to trends or families. Materials that allowed me to group my research into large groups are called setting or context codes. Examples of these codes, according to Bogdan et al, (2003) are:

process codes, “words or phrases that facilitate categorizing sequences of events, changes over time, or passages from one type or kind of status to another” (p. 164), activity codes, “directed at regularly occurring kinds of behavior” (p. 164), event codes, “directed at units of data that are related to specific activities that occur in the setting or in the lives of the subjects you are interviewing” (p. 165), strategy codes, “the tactics, methods, techniques, maneuvers, ploys, and other conscious ways people accomplish various things” (p. 165), relationships/social structure codes, “regular patterns of behavior among people not officially defined by the organizational charts” (p. 165), narrative codes, “the structure of talk itself” (p. 166) and methods codes, “isolates materials pertinent to research procedures, problems, joys, dilemmas, and the like” (p. 167).

I conducted two interviews with each focus group. Each interview lasted for roughly 45 minutes. After conducting my first interview, I identified common themes within and between teacher groups. For example, if a few teachers from each group stated that first-year teachers felt isolated and they received little support from administrators, this was something that I focused on during the next interview. This was an example of a theme within groups. An example of a

between group theme would be an idea that one group stated but was not mentioned in another group. After the transcriptions were completed, I established codes so that I could organize my data and to restructure my second round of questioning.

### Validity

Internal validity compared how the findings of research match reality. Silverman (2005) simply defined validity as the truth. Babbie (2004) defined validity as a term that measured accurately what it intended to measure. Merriam (1998) suggested six strategies for internal validity within a study. I used each of these in my study after these strategies.

I used triangulation to maintain the validity of this study. Although advising against the use of the term, Bogdan and Biklen (2003) offered multiple definitions for triangulation. “To establish a fact you need more than one source of information, many sources of data were better in a study than in a single source, multiple subjects, multiple researchers, different theoretical approaches and different collection techniques” (p. 172) were specifics given.

Next, using member checking, I took transcriptions from each focus group to each member of the group. I did take my findings back to the people whom I interviewed and checked that I had not misinterpreted what they stated. They were allowed to read what I recorded as their response and alter any misrepresentation that I may have reported. I did not want to misstate or misinterpret what someone had reported to me in the interview. If I did make a transcription error, the members within the focus group were allowed to clarify their statements. This process did not allow me to create any bias from the interviewee.

Peer examination was beneficial in helping me, as the researcher, remain impartial. Taking advice from my committee members and my peers guided my research to be free of bias but more importantly useable. While conducting the research, I shared my research with other graduate students and professors. They recommended suggestions for further examination of my findings. In addition, these same colleagues challenged my thinking and questioned my methods that allowed me to rid researcher biasness.

Participatory modes of research were also be used for validity. With so many participants involved with this research, new ideas and theories emerged because of the collaborative effort. Constantly taking the findings to my fellow students, committee members and interviewees allowed my research to include new questions that may clarify the existing theoretical

framework. This collaboration of stakeholders provided a much larger description of what was really occurring within the school.

Finally, I was certain to inform the reader of any bias on my part. I did clarify my assumptions and beliefs so that my opinions did not seep into my findings. I did this by recognizing the importance of being a researcher and not an administrator. In forming my questions, I made certain they were not leading to answers that administrators wanted but rather gaining insight into the participant's perspective. For example, when discussing a former teacher, my observations or negative evaluations did not have any impact on how I reported the data.

### Chapter Summary

This study did provide a picture of what actually goes on within a high school regarding teacher attrition and retention. By using a qualitative approach, real solutions for decreasing this attrition were discovered. Following a strict methodology process enabled me to eliminate my personal bias and to discover what was happening at this high school. Validity and reliability were important issues that I did consider throughout the entire process so that I did not jeopardize my findings. This did produce some outstanding, but more importantly, applicable results since it was done correctly.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

#### Introduction

The purpose of this chapter was to present data I have collected and analyzed. Each focus group participant provided substantive comments and insight within the interview process. Groups were comprised of teachers according to years of experience in the teaching profession. The first focus group was made up of five first-year teachers. This was the first time they have ever taught. The next focus group was made up of five teachers who have taught three or four years. The third focus group consisted of six teachers with five to eight-years of teaching experience. The final focus group contained four veteran teachers, which have been in the profession for at least twenty-five years. According to researchers, teachers leave after their first, third, fifth, or twenty-fifth year of teaching (Halford, 1999; McCreight, 2000; Stansbury, 2000) hence the selection of these groups.

Analysis of these interview questions provided significant findings and a rich description of how different teachers, categorized by years of experience, perceived support from other teachers and administrators. After transcribing and carefully analyzing the data, some emergent themes developed. Some were more parallel with the literature review than others. However, some themes almost mirrored the literature review. I discovered that teachers who taught within the IB department did share similar ideas as the teachers not within IB. My findings did not suggest a strong reason to differentiate between these teachers.

The organization of this chapter dealt with themes within each group, followed by a synopsis of themes that were consistent between groups. For example, a theme was discussed within the first year teacher group that was also discussed in the twenty-five plus teaching group.

#### Demographics of Each Teacher Group

Below, I have listed the teachers according to years of teaching experience. In each group, I have given the age, gender, race, years of teaching experience, marital status and subject taught. A short explanation of how these particular teachers were chosen will be provided for each group.

### First-year teachers:

Within this group of teachers, I emailed ten first-year teachers to be interviewed. Three stated that they had too much to do outside of school to be interviewed, and two stated that they would be there but never showed. These five teachers were there on time and expressed much interest in the research questions.

#### Teacher 1

*Age: 23, Gender: Female, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 0, Marital Status: Married, Subject Taught: IB Guidance Counselor*

#### Teacher 2

*Age: 23, Gender: Female, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 0, Marital Status: Single, Subject Taught: Science*

#### Teacher 3

*Age: 23, Gender: Female, Race: African-American, Years of Teaching Experience: 0, Marital Status: Single, Subject Taught: Chemistry*

#### Teacher 4

*Age: 22, Gender: Female, Race: African-American, Years of Teaching Experience: 0, Marital Status: Single, Subject Taught: Government*

#### Teacher 5

*Age: 24, Gender: Female, Race: African-American, Years of Teaching Experience: 0, Marital Status: Single, Subject Taught: Math*

### Third and fourth-year teachers:

At Jordan High School, there were only four teachers that were a third or fourth year teacher. I emailed every teacher fitting this description and they all expressed interests in being a part of this research.

#### Teacher 1

*Age: 45, Gender: Female, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 3, Marital Status: Single, Subject Taught: IB Science*

#### Teacher 2

*Age: 42, Gender: Female, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 4, Marital Status: Single, Subject Taught: Remediation Reading*

Teacher 3

*Age: 25, Gender: Male, Race: African-American, Years of Teaching Experience: 3, Marital Status: Single, Subject Taught: IB Math*

Teacher 4

*Age: 29, Gender: Male, Race: African-American, Years of Teaching Experience: 3, Marital Status: Married, Subject Taught: Math*

Fifth through eighth-year teachers:

Again, only six teachers at Jordan High had five to eight years of teaching experience. I did send an email to all of these teachers and again they all demonstrated genuine interest in be a part of this research.

Teacher 1

*Age: 33, Gender: Male, Race: Years of Teaching Experience: 8, Marital Status: Married, Subject Taught: ESE Math*

Teacher 2

*Age: 30, Gender: Female, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 8, Marital Status: Married, Subject Taught: IB English*

Teacher 3

*Age: 34, Gender: Female, Race: Years of Teaching Experience: 7, Marital Status: Single, Subject Taught: IB Spanish*

Teacher 4

*Age: 33, Gender: Female, Race: Years of Teaching Experience: 8, Marital Status: Widowed, Subject Taught: IB History*

Teacher 5

*Age: 26, Gender: Female, Race: African-American, Years of Teaching Experience: 5, Marital Status: Single, Subject Taught: Reading Coach*

Teacher 6

*Age: 33, Gender: Female, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 8, Marital Status: Married, Subject Taught: History*

### Teachers with at least twenty-five years of experience:

At Jordan High, there were 16 teachers that have at least twenty-five years of teaching experience. Of these 16 teachers, four agreed to be a part of this interview. Some teachers within this focus group never replied to me and some told me they did not have time.

#### Teacher 1

*Age: 53, Gender: Female, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 25, Marital Status: Married, Subject Taught: IB Science*

#### Teacher 2

*Age: 54, Gender: Female, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 27, Marital Status: Married, Subject Taught: IB English*

#### Teacher 3

*Age: 59, Gender: Male, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 33, Marital Status: Married, Subject Taught: History*

#### Teacher 4

*Age: 53, Gender: Female, Race: Caucasian, Years of Teaching Experience: 33, Marital Status: Married, Subject Taught: ESE Coordinator*

### First Year Teachers

On two different occasions, I interviewed this focus group of teachers at 3:00 after school in a private conference room within the Media Center. During the first meeting, I attempted to inform this group of teachers what the purpose of the research was and build a rapport with them so they might feel comfortable giving me substantive feedback and not party line answers. To my surprise, they did not need much coercing at all. They began firing comments as soon as the first questions were removed from my lips. They used each other for support and did give me answers that I honestly did not expect.

#### Duties of a first-year teacher: Perspectives from first-year teachers

I asked these teachers to tell me what they were currently doing as first year teachers. I knew that some first year teachers did much more than simply teach. Often, they were taking graduate classes or college classes for certification. They were commonly involved in a teacher induction program. They may have been a sponsor of a club or maybe even a coach. They might even have had a second job.



To clarify the level of training so far, I asked them to also tell me if they graduated from a College of Education program or if they were seeking an alternate certification. I also asked them to list their current responsibilities and anything other things that they are responsible for.

After talking with the first year teachers, many of them had other responsibilities than just teaching. First, all of these teachers were attending the teacher induction program as provided by the district. A few of these teachers were sponsors of a club or organization. One teacher had another job as well as being a full-time teacher.

This first teacher, who graduated from a College of Education program, explained her current duties that are required of her. She was attending the teacher induction program as well as the SGA sponsor. In her first response, she already mentioned her frustrations with being a sponsor of a club.

Yes, I am a college education major. I am in the Teacher Induction Program. I am SGA sponsor, which gets very old.

Another College of Education major told of her duties during her first year. She was not doing anything extra beyond teaching and attending the new teacher induction program.

I am in the first year Teacher Induction Program. I am a college of education graduate so I am just doing that work and I am not doing any extracurricular right now.

Ironically, the person who did not graduate from an education program had more responsibilities and jobs than anyone within the group. She was working at a clothing store, coaching girls' softball and attending the new teacher induction program.

I am not a college of Ed. grad. I am a chemistry major and the softball coach. We are starting a float, which they never had for softball, so that is a lot of work out of season.

Trying to get parents involved is serious stuff. Other than that, I still have a second job. I work part time at a clothing store to get a discount, and that is about it.

These new teachers, within this focus group, had many duties as first-year teachers. The two common responsibilities were teaching and attending the teacher induction program. However, a few teachers had taken on more than other first-year teachers. In the next section, I

asked these first-year teachers about the mentor program that was currently taking place within the district.

### Teachers supporting new teachers: Perspectives from first-year teachers

In this district, first-year teachers were given mentors. These mentors were trained by district personnel and given a stipend to perform this duty. There were minimal qualifications to be a mentor within this county. Also, the department head was to play an active role in supporting first-year teachers. I asked these first-year teachers questions about the role of the mentors and to explain the effectiveness of the mentors. They did not find these assigned mentors helpful. In fact, they did not speak of mentors but instead spoke of another person helping them through the first year of teaching. In most of my findings with these first-year teachers, the department heads and veteran teachers were doing an exceptional job in supporting the new teachers, not the mentors.

This first-year teacher commented on the support she received from her guidance department head. She mentioned the department head assisting with guidance concerns but other things such as finding office supplies. She has felt welcomed because of her department head.

From my department, guidance, I receive great help with anything asked. Also in IB [International Baccalaureate] they have just been very helpful, anything I need like office supplies, offering everything like just a place to keep stuff since we do not have an office right now and everything. So, I had a very warm welcoming into it.

The next teacher smiled when she explained the amount of help she has received from another veteran history teacher. She mentioned another history teacher helping her move in her classroom and assisting her with lesson plans. Secondly, her mentor teacher she interned under was at Jordan High so she felt comfortable in this environment.

In my department, I have received an overwhelming amount of help from a senior teacher. I mean everything above and beyond. So, I am getting that backbone, and also I interned here, so I had an excellent supervising teacher, so the classroom is not foreign at all.

Another teacher from this focus group was not quite as complementary about her department head or teachers within her department. However, she knew that if she needed

something she could ask for support and it would be given. She did not believe that her department was actively seeking her out to give her assistance.

As far as my department goes, I have no complaints about their support. I feel I can go to them when I need to and I know where to go when I need something for help. I have certain members of our department that I can really go to and they really give you some good ideas and some good feedback on things. So I am happy with the department support.

After completing the analysis regarding the mentors in this district, these first-year teachers did not devote any time to a discussion about the mentors. They focused on the veteran teacher or the department head that has helped them so far. Most of these new teachers had made it because of someone other than a mentor. The discussion continued with how much support administrators are giving these new teachers.

#### Administrators supporting new teachers: Perspectives from first-year teachers

I asked these new teachers to tell me the amount of support they received from administrators. They immediately explained their frustrations. I found that these new teachers were not receiving much support from all of the administrators. In fact, they felt that some of the administrators did not have much time for them at all. Some new teachers even believed they were viewed as a nuisance and were unwanted while others believed that some administrators were there if they were needed.

One teacher within this group did not feel as if all of the administrators were truly concerned with what she was doing. She did not think that had time for her. They gave orders with little support. She explained,

On the administrative level, I feel like I have not had anyone reach out. I feel like half of the administrative I have to go to and they do not seem that welcoming of me. Of course, they will answer, but they seem like they are just so preoccupied. They just tell you to do stuff, and they are just ..., and I am like, okay. I feel like I am pestering them all the time. I feel some of the administration is just straight reaching out and then there are ones that are in their own 'la la' land.

Again, another teacher echoed those similar remarks. She believed that some administrators were helpful and other administrators she need not bother. She had learned who to go to when she needed something.

I have gotten a lot of support from certain administrators and from other administrators have not really heard two words from them since school started.

According to my findings, these first-year teachers within this focus group did not have very much support from any administrator. Some even felt like administrators did not have time for them and believed they were of little importance. However, these first-year teachers did say there were some administrators who did reach out to lend support. In the next section, I asked questions about the relationships between the administrators and teachers.

#### Relationships with administration: Perspectives from first-year teachers

I asked these new teachers to talk with me about their relationships, not the support they received, from administrators. I found that administrators and first-year teachers did not have much of a relationship at Jordan High School. Also, some teachers had more contact with certain administrators opposed to others. Some new teachers did not know how to approach administrators or know what was expected. Some teachers believed that was because of the specific duties of the administrators. For example, a teacher with discipline problems might have only seen the assistant principal in charge of discipline and another teacher might have seen the assistant principal in charge of attendance because truancy was more of a problem than discipline. This first-year teacher explained,

Recently, I have spoken with administrators more because I had some discipline problems in my class. Not having interned in the classroom, I need some feedback from people that can tell me how to perhaps control my classroom. So lately I have been talking to the administrators' one on one. It is just when I had a discipline issue. They do ask me every time I see them, how is it going? Other than that, that is about it.

Another teacher stated that certain administrators were more available than others. She knew that some administrators were in the hallways and others were in their offices. She mentioned that she now realized who to ask and what to ask for.

When I was trying to get all the paperwork situated, I had more contact with certain members of administration before I even started working. Since I have been here, there

have been certain members of administration who have been a lot more available when I need the help. I just know who to go to now and who I can go to.

A guidance counselor has seen administrators frequently simply due to the geographical location of the guidance department. She was located in the same building as most of the administrators so seeing and talking with them was easy for her. Therefore, she felt very connected to administrators and felt comfortable asking for assistance.

I think I have had more interaction with administration just because of where I am located and doing the guidance stuff. I have had quite a bit of interacting with almost all of the administrators.

A new teacher who completed her internship at Jordan High School before being hired believed that her comfort and accessibility of administrators was due to her being here during the previous semester. She already knew all of the administrators and was comfortable talking with any of the administrators.

I actually have a lot of contact with administration. I think it has a lot to do in some ways with the fact that I am more comfortable with them because of my internship. I had some issues in the past and I had to talk with them a lot. So I actually have a lot of contact. I recently asked an administrator about a specific topic in my class.

Finally, one teacher said she has absolutely no relationship at all with any administrator. She was geographically located on the opposite end of the campus and saw administrators when she was near the main office. She did briefly see an administrator before school when she checked her mail and that was her last contact with them until the next day.

I do not feel as though I have a relationship really with any of the administrators. I see them in the morning and that is it.

My findings have shown that these first-year teachers did not have much of a relationship with administrators at all. Some teachers believed they have a good relationship with administrators because the location of their office in relation to the location of the administrators. Other teachers suggested that being across campus can have the same sort of effect but in a negative way. The next section discussed the first-year teachers' perceptions of why people leave Jordan.

### Reasons for leaving Jordan High: Perspectives from first-year teachers

I asked these first-year teachers to give me possible reasons why teachers would leave Jordan. These first-year teachers were aware that teachers leave Jordan High every year. They knew that some left to go to other schools within the district or move to a larger city for social reasons. Some teachers have moved away to attend graduate school and some have left the profession altogether. Whatever the reason, teachers were leaving Jordan at an alarming rate. When I interviewed first-year teachers, their answers covered the entire gamut from teachers believing it was easier in another school for teachers switching professions.

The history teacher listed several reasons why a teacher may leave Jordan. This teacher had several possible reasons that a teacher might leave the profession.

I think a lot of it depends on the individual. They may feel like they cannot handle the students, think it is not worth it, or there would have been a school that is easier. If they are not that much of a “go-getter”, they may say it is a lack of resources. If they just feel teaching is not for them, they may decide to go and do something else. [They might] go back to school and go find another job. It depends on the individual and their situation.

The next teacher did not intend to stay in teaching her entire life. She admitted to taking this job so she could coach softball. This was a job that she was doing for a short time and then she would probably move on to something else. She had no intentions of being a teacher forever and explains that it was just something to do for now.

Personally, I did not intend to teach my whole life. I think that our generation, new teachers today will teach for about five or six years and then go back to school to make more money somewhere else. Personally, I honestly never wanted to be a teacher. I got this job because I wanted to coach and I thought it would be easy because my whole family is teachers. My family is in education, my mom is a principal, my dad is a superintendent, and I have seen them do it my whole life. I was like, oh, well, that is easy. It is not as easy as I thought once I got here. It requires a lot of work that I did not think that I would have to put in. If I like it I might stay. I am not really sure why I would leave, but I do not plan on staying forever.

Another teacher suggested that the expectations of what teaching was about did not match what actually takes place. She believed teachers did not know what they were in for once they finally became teachers. Also, she believed that discipline at Jordan High might have certain characteristics that were not present at other high schools in the district. For example, new teachers might imagine that there were less discipline problems at a different high school within the county.

I think a lot of people come into it, with different expectations. I think, just into education in general. I know when I taught, it was totally different than what I really expected. You always hear about the extra work just to grade the papers. I think it can be overwhelming. I think part of it could be discipline. I do not know how bad the discipline problem is here, but you know discipline. People get overwhelmed and it is just like they cannot take it anymore. So they might switch to another school or they might switch professions.

Another teacher from this group stated that discipline might be easier at another school. She thought that this school demanded more discipline than that of other schools. She suggested a possibility could be for teachers to think that discipline was the toughest in the district.

I think teachers leave because the discipline. They might feel like the discipline here is the hardest. They might think it is easier at another school.

One first-year teacher mentioned that schools with demographics similar to Jordan provided incentive for teachers financially. Some forgiveness programs would eliminate student debt if a teacher worked at a particular school for a certain number of years. She also believed that first-year teachers came to schools like Jordan to practice their craft until they knew how to be good teacher. A final explanation was her beliefs that all teachers could not relate to the students that attended Jordan.

I think a lot of people exploit low socio-economic schools. There are a lot of loan forgiveness things, a lot of people practice on minority kids, and then they go teach their own and make it. They just practice on them and they think nobody cares. I also think that another reason people leave is based on your background. The type of behavior

problems that you see here are not ones that you are used to dealing with, and you cannot handle it. You feel like those kids are so much worse. In reality if you went to another school their problems are just on another level.

These first-year teachers, in my focus group, listed several possible reasons for teachers to leave Jordan High. Some were beliefs about less discipline problems while others were loan forgiveness programs. However true or whatever reasons these teachers listed, these teachers did have ideas of why teachers did leave. The next section, I asked these first-year teachers what was needed to keep teachers at Jordan High.

#### Keeping teachers at Jordan: Perspectives from first-year teachers

While interviewing these new teachers, they told me specific things that they needed to be successful and remain at Jordan High School. These teachers honestly desired to remain at Jordan but they needed some help. Every teacher that I interviewed stated they wanted to remain at Jordan High School next year and had no intentions of going to another school.

One teacher wanted a supporter to push her along. She needed someone to understand what she was going through and let her know that what she was experiencing was normal. She was experiencing what veteran teachers experienced, but she wanted confirmation.

Everybody has been really helpful and all the teachers and all the administrators have been very encouraging and helpful. One thing I need is encouragement and support. That is it generally. I have a sixth and seventh period that go crazy. If I lose it, I need somebody to come and tell me it is okay and their sixth and seventh period acted like lunatics too, and we can make it. I feel like it is good here because I feel like we are all working together for one thing.

Another teacher wanted some assistance with curriculum and organization. He found it difficult to manage six different sections of students in one period. He understood why it was done, but he needed some help managing so many preps in one classroom.

I need curriculum development and more classroom organization. My second period class has six subjects in one class, and it is very, very hard to manage six different subjects in one class. And I understand why it was done, but I am just still trying to find a way to deal with it for the rest of the year.



An economics teacher needed more resources. Resources that would help her become a better teacher of economics. She requested help with teaching economics and knowing what to grade. To make matters worse, she did not even have enough books.

I need more resources because I cannot teach kids Economics, something that I am already struggling with, if I do not have enough books. They are seniors and they are going to work during my class. I am supposed to run off all these copies and not give them homework but I do not have enough books. I need more than just textbooks because nobody wants to sit and just read through a textbook. Sometimes there are supportive resources to that.

She also wanted her co-workers and her to follow the same rules and policies. She knew what other teachers followed the rules and which ones did not. She wanted the teachers' expectations to be the same.

I also need better co-workers in the sense that we are not all on the same page with the policies. I know we do not all execute them the same. If we are not all following them and I have got a kid going off on me when I am trying to take a cell phone because such and such does not do it, it makes it difficult for me. I have got a kid thinking that they can pack up before the bell knowing that all this is my class time. I mean to use all of this. When a student asks me what time do we leave, I say, when the bell rings? I have children coming to me now saying they thought that they could never be in such a harder than last year.

She continued by urging administrators to hire "better" teachers. She did not want teachers hired because they interview well or because they knew somebody, she wanted them to investigate prospective teachers more. She made recommendations for future hiring practices that administrators might try.

I guess administrators should think about some of these teachers that you hire. Do not do it because their friends that they know. I mean really do some real interviewing, maybe a mock teaching lesson, something like that. I know that it will not go smoothly, because some people are nervous. Just something more in depth with the interview process because it is just not quite working.

Another teacher cannot find enough time to complete her duties and she pointed towards the lack of technology as a possible reason. She was trained to teach using technology in the classroom and found it difficult to teach without the appropriate instructional tools.

To me there is never enough time for anything. I am always slow no matter what it is, I always run out of time. I am always teaching through the bell telling my students to wait, do not get up. I never have enough time, but that could be because we lack the technological resources. At college all of our teachers had laptops and they brought them to class and they used the projectors and everything was set up, and you could get pictures. You could get online stuff, and you could get video examples. Being in science and talking about chemistry and stuff, and they do not understand stuff on a molecular level. If you can break it down and show it to them in a way that makes sense, I think that that would be much more beneficial than having to write out overheads and having to wait for everybody to copy it. If we had it on the computer, then everybody could bring their jump drives and copy it off for them. Then they could take that home and study in addition to their book. That would be the supplemental stuff that they could have.

Another teacher in this group simply wanted an orientation of what goes on at Jordan. She did not enjoy confusion and needed to be organized. She wanted to be told what to expect during fire drills and pep rallies. She did not like surprises.

Organization is one thing that I think I would need from the school, as far as being my first year. Let me know the procedures for faculty and pep rallies. Let me know around the time when we are going to do a fire drill, because I had a quiz to give today. I did not know when to give it to my kids. I did not want to start it and then the fire drill happened. They are walking around talking about the quiz. I did not want to wait and then the fire drill ... I just did not know when to give it to them.

A recent college graduate was upset because she felt that this job consumed her entire life. She went from college, which she had a good social life, to teaching in which she has no social life. She was having a difficult time adjusting to this new change of lifestyle.

There are not enough hours in the day for me to do all the stuff that we do as a teacher and still have some sort of a life, and just coming out of college, I do not know how to have a life anymore.

Although these teachers need different things to encourage them to remain at Jordan, the fact that they need some items to be taken care of still remain. They did need a few things to stay at this school. Next, I asked these new teachers to give me some suggestions for what the veteran teachers could do to assist them.

#### What new teachers need from veteran teachers: Perspectives from first-year teachers

I asked these first-year teachers to tell me what they needed from veteran teachers at Jordan High. This group of new teachers wanted to know the basics. They requested assistance with minor things that veteran teachers might take for granted. They wanted to know how other teacher average grades and what constituted good lesson plans. Several of these teachers stated they need a basic orientation of how things were done in the school. A final thought was the different levels of training within this group. For example, these new teachers did not have the same level of training. Some members of this group graduated from a College of Education program while others did not. For these first-year teachers, the College of Education majors should have been taught some of these things in their program of study, whereas, the non-College of Education majors were hearing this for the first time.

This Science teacher, who also did not graduate from a College of Education, requested help with lesson plans and grading. She was not sure of how many papers she should grade and it was causing her to become overwhelmed. She needed help prioritizing her grades.

I think that it would have been very helpful for me to see lesson plans. Nobody ever showed me how to do lesson plans because I was not a college education major. If somebody would have sat down with me and showed me maybe old lesson plans and how to do them, that would have helped a lot...and just maybe grading also. The situation I have is I have all these papers to grade. I am overwhelmed and it is because I think I give too much graded work. I have talked to teachers now that say oh, you should just check it off in your notebook and just put checks but I thought I try to grade everything, and have worked myself to death.

Another teacher, not a College of Education major, discussed problems she was having with grading in regards to using software for grading and what software she should be using. She

did not know what her department expected from her. She did not know where to record her grades after she evaluated them.

As far as grading, I do not grade everything. As far as how the grades should be done, in my department, I do not know where I put my grades when I grade the papers. I do not know if I am supposed to be using software or anything.

The first-year guidance counselor wanted help with the geographic layout of the school. She had to ask the media specialists to take her to a classroom when she visited her classes. She had to ask for help finding where her students were located.

I think for me, one of the things that would have been very helpful for me if I just knew where everything was. I did not know where certain classrooms were. I had to ask our media specialist to take me around when I was going to visit classes cause I did not know where they were.

She also wanted to know basic protocol for the school and what was expected of her within her department. She needed some structure.

Certain procedures, protocols for different things and also I think just knowing what is expected of you in time. Kind of like pacing yourself but for me just in guidance knowing what I need to be doing when, with testing you need to have this done by this date, that kind of stuff.

This new teacher asked for constructive criticism and positive feedback from veteran teachers. She did not need teachers being critical of what she was trying to do. She understood the importance of feedback but did not want anything negative said to her because she had a different method of teaching than a veteran.

I would say maybe other teachers should not be so critical of things that you do just because that is not the way that they do it. I would just say not being very critical just because I do not do it the way you do it. I may wanna grade a lot of things and it may work for me. Some people cannot organize themselves and they may not grade everything. That may not work or it may work for them but things may work for me. Do

not be critical of me because I am doing it. Do not tell me I will not last cause I am doing this.

These first-year teachers did perceive a need for assistance from veteran teachers. This was the first time I noticed a difference between the College of Education graduates and the non-College of Education graduates. Their needs varied because of the limited amount of training. College of education graduates did not need help with grades because they should have been trained in college how to do this, whereas, non-College of Education graduates needed to be trained on almost everything. Next, I asked these first-year teachers to tell me what they needed from administrators.

#### What new teachers need from administrators: Perspectives from first-year teachers

I asked these first-year teachers what they needed from administrators and they did not hesitate to tell me. In my study, these new teachers requested some guidance and support from the administrators at Jordan High School. They believed they were not receiving the amount of resources or feedback that they needed to be successful. They were frustrated with how much support they were receiving from administrators.

This teacher stated that she wanted more feedback from administrators. She was not having problems in the classroom but outside of the classroom, she wanted some assistance. She also wanted some answers when she asked questions. She did not enjoy sending emails and receiving no reply.

Both feedback and support, I need that support. I have not had too many problems with things in my classroom, but I have spoken to some administrators. I asked them to help me out with this but I have not heard anything back.

The next teacher echoed needing support and feedback. She mentioned having the same problem of not getting replied to on her emails. She believed that email was the primary way to communicate within the school and has asked for help on email. She stated that she has not had a reply back.

I would say the same thing about feedback and support just when you need it. I think I have had the same issue. I emailed some administrators and just never received replies back until my third or fourth time.

This teacher still wanted the administrator to provide positive feedback from an outside perspective. She did say that she did not desire any negative comments. She wanted constructive criticism that would make her a stronger teacher.

Sometimes I need feedback. Anybody can look from outside and see something different or they can see something that you do not see. So anytime that people give a suggestion I am fine [with that] as long as it is a positive suggestion and not criticism. So anything that could help me be a better teacher or be better disciplining my children if my classroom's out of control.

An economics teacher was having problems with her subject area and requested that more resources be made available to her. She needed help teaching Economics to make it more meaningful. She was having a difficult time "reaching" her students.

I need resources. Just because I am certified in social sciences does not mean I know everything in social sciences and I have the expertise in that. I need resources and if I do not have those. I cannot do different instructional approaches for those students if I do not have something to reinforce that.

This same teacher wanted an orientation to the school as well. She again stated of needing the basics. She did not know how to check her voice mail

I do not know basic things like how to check my voice mail. Is somebody gonna tell me that when you hire me? I think just those kinds of things that I do not know. I still do not know how to do that kind of stuff.

In my findings, these first-year teachers did need some assistance from administrators. One of the most obvious needs was the lack of feedback that these teachers were receiving from administrators. Whether through email or classroom observations, these teachers needed some guidance from administrators. The next section, I asked first-year teachers to tell me what kind of relationship they wanted with other teachers.

#### New teachers desired relationships with other teachers: Perspectives from first-year teachers

After the interview was over, I was surprised by the responses I received from these first-year teachers. I assumed that they wanted personal relationships over professional relationships. I

did discover that teachers within this group did want both a personal and a professional relationship. However, most of these teachers leaned toward a stronger professional relationship instead of having a personal relationship.

This math teacher wanted to be able to talk with another teacher and receive assistance if needed, but she still preferred a more professional relationship. She did not need to form a friendship at school but did admit to enjoying being able to speak in a friendly manner.

I would say more professional, but a little bit of both. I think that it is nice to be able to know that you can go to them for help, that you can ask them to cover my class for five minutes. There is no problem with a little bit of a friendship just because it makes life easier.

Another teacher used “a little bit of both” as her reply. She made it clear that gossip follows friendship some times. She wanted to have control over gossip.

I would say more professional but a little bit of both. You do not wanna just say ‘hey, how you doin’, Just be brief, because then you start gossiping, and you do not really want that. Although it will happen anyway, you just wanna put on a leash on it.

This teacher suggested that teachers can “hang out” and still be professional at the same time. She would have no problem meeting for drinks after work and venting to her peers. However, she mentioned that there is a line that teachers should not cross.

I do not have coworkers you go to happy hour with after school and hang out and talk about the kids. It needs to stay professional but there is the line you can cross between too much and just being friends. You can still be friends and hang out with somebody.

Another teacher mentioned gossip when discussing relationships. She wanted the more professional approach so that “gossiping” did not start. She did not want other teachers gossiping about her so she preferred keeping it professional.

I mean more professional than personal cause that friendship thing, you have with one of the teachers and they [other teachers] start gossiping about it. [I prefer] a more professional relationship than a friendship.

Surprising to me, these teachers did not desire a personal relationship with other first-year teachers. They stated that being personable at work would be nice but the negative repercussions of getting too close are not worth it. They just preferred to be professional because it was

probably safer. In this next section, I followed up on this question which asked about the relationships that teacher desired with administrators.

First-year teachers desired relationships with administrators: Perspectives from first-year teachers

After discovering that these first-year teachers did not desire a personal relationship with teachers, I was almost certain that these teachers within this group would not desire any personal relationships with administrators. When we began discussing the relationships that they desire with administrators, this same group had similar ideas. They wanted to deal with administrators in a professional manner more so than be involved in a personal relationship. Some did still want both, but others almost refused a personal relationship.

This chemistry teacher somehow began discussing a dating situation with an administrator. I did not understand why she assumed a relationship with an administrator had to be dating situation.

I would veer more to the professional side of it because you would not wanna get into the situation where if you are dating your boss and then you know how people get, they take break ups hard. So you just wanna, I would say [keep it] more professional than anything. At the same time, you do not want tension in the air where you feel like you are afraid of them, so a little bit of collegial but way, way, way [more] professional.

This next teacher still mentioned “lines” that are between administrators as friends or professionals or as she noted, “boss and employee.” She did not mind friendly words in the hallways but did not want to get too close to any administrator.

Yeah, I think you can be friends with somebody but you still have to keep that line between the boss and employee. I know that there is a certain amount of respect that you have to give them. When you get too close to them and other people see that, that could take away from the respect that other people have for them. They cannot let themselves [administrators] get close to an employee to a certain degree. Like my grandma always said, ‘you do not poop where you eat.’ So you do not date bosses and stuff like that, professional, very little collegial.

One teacher had no deliberation on the matter. She was almost insulted by the question. The relationship should be strictly professional and that was it.



[It should be] professional, yeah, no elaboration on that.

These first-year teachers made it very obvious that they did not want any personal relationship with administrators. They wanted to keep administrators at a distance to keep the respect and professionalism in place. In the next section, I asked first-year teachers to make some suggestions how the district could help new teachers.

What the district can do to help with the induction of first-year teachers: Perspectives from first-year teachers

When conducting this interview, I noticed immediately that this was the area in which this group of teachers had the most enthusiasm about. They were extremely honest and did not hold anything back. This discussion received much more conversation than I anticipated. I found that all of these new teachers were currently attending the district induction program and their frustration became extremely evident. Each of these teachers had some idea that might make the induction program more effective.

This Economics teacher wanted to see a difference between the College of Education majors and the non-College of Education majors. She felt that it was redundant and she stated that she already knew the information from her college coursework. She thought this program encouraged teachers to leave the profession and not stay.

First, they [the district] need to say what my goal is and outline my goal. If I am trying to retain teachers I do not wanna do stuff that is gonna drive them crazy and make them go to another profession. That would make them eliminate most of that program, if they just look at it. If they look at it and say maybe I need a bigger difference between college of education and non-college of education because it seems like with college of education is repeating a lot of the stuff. With the non-college of education maybe they should say okay, maybe they need to do this stuff before they get into the classroom and not while they are in it. So two months later, they do not say, 'oh I should have done this' but they cannot go back.

This same teacher also desired relevant ideas that would help in her particular classroom. The repetitiveness of the program was not what she needed. Unlike the non-College of Education

majors, she already had this training in college. She also wanted someone who has taught high school history on the south-side and not a teacher who has taught at a wealthy elementary school.

The classes are repetitive. They have to understand that when you have five hour classes all throughout one month, then four hour classes in the same month and two and a half hours in another month, we do not have the time to balance. We get behind so they really need to re-evaluate the program overall. Maybe for my focus group, I need teachers that understand exactly what I am going through and not giving me these fairy tale programs of what is gonna happen at their school because that works them. Maybe you need to come over and see where I am teaching and see what works here. I do not care if you are a national board [teacher], do you have some type of experience that you are going through that helps me relate? They just need to re-evaluate the program all over.

This non-College of Education graduate reflected on the amount of time that this induction programs takes and also needed the training, especially concerning classroom management, before the school year began. She requested help before she began teaching and not in January.

It is not hard. It is just very tedious and time consuming. Being a new teacher is not easy in itself because it is up to you what you are doing every day. Especially not being an education major, I had no idea what I was in for and now they are slapping all this work on me. They should have had a summer program or even two weeks of classes before, pre-planning, which was classroom management. Why would I not get classroom management until January? I am gonna have the knowledge I need by then by trial and error. There is so, so much stuff to do. I think that if they could do the pre-planning like the summer orientation even or something that you could knock a lot of that out of the way before you start teaching, and then it would prepare you better as a new teacher. It would introduce you to classroom management and you could over the other stuff and see how you are evaluated and maybe actually practice teaching. I am sure [college of education majors] have taught in classrooms. If you are going to hire somebody that you want to teach children, you want to make sure that they are effective. Showing me a way to do it if they have never done it before would be ideal for me before I started teaching.

Another teacher discussed the amount of time involved, added to being a first-year teacher. She also noticed some repetitiveness since she graduated from a College of Education.

It is very time consuming. It takes a lot of time. How can you balance that between your job and these workshops or training? With the college of Ed graduates, it is very repetitive. We had to do this portfolio to graduate and a lot of that stuff we are seeing it again.

The IB guidance counselor wanted to talk with someone who was experiencing what she was. In her focus groups, she could not relate to elementary guidance counselors or homeless coordinators. She wanted to be with other high school guidance counselors. She wanted to be with other counselors that have something in common with her and her situation.

I think one of the biggest things for me is my focus group; I am the only guidance counselor. I had the homeless coordinators in my group and it is just this wide array of jobs in our group. The leaders are all elementary counselors, so they have no idea about the high school level. They are very nice but they do not know the resources for a high school.

This counselor, another College of Education graduate, did not understand why she must hear the same topics that she has already heard in her course of study. She has even had a graduate-level class on one of the topics that is being discussed.

Also the ethics workshops, I took a three-hour graduate level class in ethics but they will not take that. The suicide prevention I have done classes on that. I try to I ask if can I show proof. I did a presentation on this stuff at a conference. [The district] should begin looking back at what you have already gone through and letting you say, 'I have done this within the past year at a graduate level or at even at a bachelor's level,' instead of making you just repeat all of it.

The economics teacher, who is a College of Education graduate, stated that she did not need any more training right now and she certainly did not want to be patronized. She wanted to be allowed to do what she has been taught to do and not be told that veteran teachers were learning from her.

I am not saying some of the things that they do, does not help. They are putting names to the things that I am already doing. I think, when I was in college of education, they told me that I should be doing this stuff for all of the kids, like accommodations for IEP students when technically I am doing it for all of my kids. They tell me technically it is not an accommodation. We will go to the meetings and then the teachers will say we are learning from you guys. Thank you but no thank you. You are learning from me on my time that I could be planning for my class. I do not have five years of lesson plans to pull from.

These first-year teachers had much to offer me when discussing the district and the induction program. These teachers wanted there to be a difference between the College of Education majors and non-College of Education majors. They wanted veteran teachers that had been in the same situation as them. They wanted a more-timely training program that would help before school began. In the next section, I asked these first-year teachers to recommend ways that the school could help with the induction of first-year teachers.

#### What the school can do to help with the induction of first-year teachers: Perspectives from first-year teachers

I was not surprised when these first-year teachers began making many suggestions that can be done at the school level to help first-year teachers be successful. They immediately mentioned needing an orientation of the school and the daily operations. They also requested more assistance with discipline and for the school to get on the same page as the district.

This chemistry teacher desperately needed an orientation to the workings of the school. She needed more than a forty-five minute example of effective classroom management; especially since she did not graduate from a College of Education. She needed more than a brief overview of how to handle discipline in the classroom.

Maybe even have workshops before school starts. I know we had the pre-planning where we met and did little introductions. We kind of went over discipline, how to control a classroom, that was for like thirty minutes. For people that have never done that before, [they] really have no idea what they are in for. Maybe real situations of practicing would be ideal if they want to have better students.

The IB guidance counselor wanted an orientation as well. She asked about how to fill out of leave form when she was going to be absent. She would like to know how to handle the “practical stuff.”

I think that pertains to me even in guidance. That first week was just kind of chaos and of course it will be but I had no idea about leave form or anything like that. The practical stuff just in the schools, I had no idea about it. So that kind of stuff would be very helpful for the school to cover everything ‘cause each school has their own policies.

This teacher suggested that the district and the school to get on the “same page.” She did not understand how schedules between the two can conflict. She wanted some consistency between the two.

I wonder sometimes if the school and the district are even on the same page. Do you all even know what is going on? That is the way it seems to me. When I go to a focus group and they tell me, ‘you should be on a literacy team.’ Then I come back here and they are like ‘we will create one if we need one.’ What do you mean the district said we have to do this? Why do you not know this? That is a problem. Maybe there needs to be some structure and you [the school] should get on the same page with them [the district]. Also, why do we have dates going on at the same time that these specific things for these schools are going on? Do we not need to be here? Why do I not have a third period reading class? I am thankful that I was here last year so I know what to do.

These first-year teachers offered more suggestions to me regarding how the school could help first-year teachers. One teacher wanted more extensive assistance with discipline while another wanted the school and district to get on the same page. Most of the new teachers did want an orientation of the school.

### Teachers with Three or Four Years of Experience

This group of teachers, with three to four years of experience, was comprised of five teachers. There were only eight teachers at Jordan High who had this level of teaching experience and I asked all of them to participate in the study. For whatever reason, only four teachers acknowledged the email and were a part of the research.

I initially believed that I would attempt some minor rapport building; however, this group did not need any ice breaker. This focus group demonstrated much more confidence than the

first-year teachers. Later in the interview, I discovered that their confidence came from their professional contract they recently received. These third and fourth-year teachers were comfortable with themselves as teachers. I had a great feeling that what they told me would be genuine with no deliberation of misconstruing what they thought.

#### Duties of a first-year teacher: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

After allowing these teachers a chance to begin, I noticed these teachers with three or four years of experience had similar duties as first-year teachers in my study. Some were only teaching while others were attending graduate school, but all of these teachers were attending the teacher induction program. A common thread between the first-year teachers and this group was the induction program. All of the third and fourth-year teachers within this group had attended the first-year teacher induction program.

This math teacher told me during his first-year of teaching he only taught and attended the induction program. However, he only taught three different math classes which might have been quite a load for a first-year teacher.

I completed the first-year teacher program my first year, and I taught intensive math; I taught geometry and algebra too.

Another teacher spoke of her only being a teacher and attending a teacher induction program. Later she revealed that she had to do a few extra workshops and hall duty.

And I took the new teacher program. I did it the second semester, and I just did workshops and hall duties.

These next two teachers were doing several things, as well as, the induction program and being a teacher. This math teacher discussed his role of being a sponsor of a club, attending graduate classes at night and teaching four different sections of math.

I was taking grad classes at the time, and I was in charge of the mu alpha theta. So between that and grad classes, I was definitely busy. I also had four preps my first year. Since then, it has grown to six. But yes, I was definitely busy that year.

Another teacher discussed her first year teaching. While still in graduate school, she was teaching and attending the first-year teacher induction program. She could not complete her thesis during school but used her holidays to do so.

I did the new teacher induction program, and I think I did a couple of the teacher workshops, but it was nothing that I had to miss school for. It was a weekend type thing. I was enrolled as a graduate student, but I was not taking classes because I was still working on a thesis. I did not do anything on my thesis while I was there. I did it all during Christmas.

After having discussed the duties that these third and fourth-year teachers were required to do their first-year of teaching, I began to realize that they were similar to what the first-year teachers were doing. If anything, this focus group of teachers did a little more than the first-year teachers. In the next section, I asked these teachers about the importance of other teachers to their success in their first-year.

#### Teachers supporting teachers: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

This same group of teachers, third and fourth-year teachers, told me that they would not have made it without another teacher helping along the way. They gave me examples of different veteran teachers who helped them make survive. Some used guidance from a mentor teacher at another school. Some used veteran teachers at Jordan High for stability and support. Others used another first-year teacher at Jordan to discuss frustrations. Whoever the veteran teacher was, all of the teachers I interviewed had someone encourage them to remain in the profession.

A reading teacher discussed how a veteran teacher from another school guided her. She admitted that she had remained a teacher because another teacher kept telling her she could. This veteran teacher took time out for her and it apparently made a difference.

I have a friend at another school that really helped me. The thing that really helped me was she said you can do this. I was like; okay, okay, and that was what I did. I just hung in.

One science teacher from Jordan spoke highly of the amount of teacher support she had received since her first year as a teacher. She mentioned support from her department head and another veteran teacher. She talked about her and another teacher being confused together.

I had lots of support from the teachers here at school. Everybody in my family has been involved in education or has been involved in education in one point in their lives, so I hear the stories. Some of them are horror stories, and some of them are very great. I had a lot of support. I was next door talking with my department head often, and another teacher's class. Sometimes, we would even scratch our heads together and were not quite sure. I had a lot of support.

This math teacher sought assistance from another first-year math teacher, a former teacher, and the IB coordinator. He would ask for help from several different sources and more importantly, he received support from all of these sources.

And as far as teaching the math goes, another teacher and I stayed in close contact. One of my former teachers helped me out a lot and our IB coordinator. So I had tons of support.

This teacher received assistance from a veteran teacher at Jordan. She stated that she felt at ease once she realized that this older teacher had similar problems as she did as a first-year teacher. When she discovered that the veteran teacher had problems with one of the same students that she was having problems with, it made her more relaxed.

I had a tremendous amount of support from an older teacher. She had been through what I was going through a few years ago; in fact, with this young man. It would actually have helped if we had had a planning period or a lunch period or something in common, which we did not, but she always let me complain to her.

These third and fourth-year teachers received much support from veteran teachers in their first year of teaching. Some received support from multiple sources; department heads, coordinators, veteran teachers and other first-year teachers. I asked these teachers about the amount of support they received from administrators during their first year of teaching.

#### Administrators supporting teachers: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

When speaking to these third and fourth-year teachers about the amount of support from administrators some interesting ideas began to develop. These teachers did receive support from administrators and other did not. Some of these teachers believed that it was not the



administrators place to give support. Therefore, they would seek others for guidance. They thought that administrators were too busy for them.

This math teacher discussed his self-proclaimed realization of what administrators are supposed to do. He mentioned that he would seek out another teacher before he attempted to contact an administrator. He understood that the principal was busy and did not want to bother him.

I realize myself that the job of the principal and the assistant principal is a pretty big and I respected that. So my first inclination was to go to a teacher and then confirm with the math department to get my questions answered. I really did not want to barge in on administration too much. When I would go to the principal's office, he was busy a lot of times and if I did have 15 minutes or 20 minutes to wait around for a free, open spot, then I did not bother with it anymore.

This same math teacher stated that he remained at Jordan because of the dedication of an administrator. This administrator provided a great deal of encouragement but her resiliency is what impacted this teacher the most. The administrator being discussed lost her husband and returned to school the following week. This math teacher was extremely impressed by her dedication to the school.

An assistant principal in my first year was pretty helpful from the aspect of encouragement. She encouraged me a lot. One of the things that really helped me decide that I wanted to be here was, during that first year in her husband passed. She took maybe one day off. She came right back and rebounded. She was right back at the school doing her job, and I was really encouraged by that.

The next math teacher felt supported by administrators. He first appreciated when he did not have to deal with unimportant delays. He stated that administrators cut out the bureaucracy that is often part of being a sponsor. He also felt like administrators were there if they were needed.

They are so very supportive. When another teacher said they are good, but I like the individual kind of aspect. I guess they are kind of minute because you do not wanna go to them for every single thing like that. So as by virtue of being here, they are supportive as

far as keeping our backs and getting contracts and things like that. They are very supportive. I am doing the mu alpha theta, so they are very supportive of whenever I need the kids to do take a math test or something like that or to go to a competition. They pretty much trust me with that, and a lot of schools have to go through a lot of red tape for that. They understand the importance of the club, and, for me, that really helps.

This teacher remembered an assistant principal helping her complete some of the assignments in the induction program. The teacher had to contact the school ESOL (English as a second language) representative and she had a difficult time completing this project. She described the entire process.

I had a lot of support, and especially that first year from an assistant principal. She was here because we all had to do that new teacher program, and I remember there was this one assignment we had to do, where we had to find out like who was the ESOL coordinator. It was like some of the most random things, and she walked me around the school. I took a day off from school and spent it with her, and she helped me complete the entire thing.

This science teacher remembered how terrified she was of administrators as a first-year teacher. She wanted to avoid administrators and handle her problems on her own. She admitted to being afraid of administrators her first year of teaching. She did not want the administrators to look at her in a negative manner.

I would say, in my case, I heard all of the horror stories about administrators not supporting teachers, so I spent most of my time being too afraid to tell an administrator that I had a problem. I dealt with it on my own. I was too afraid to let one of them know, thinking that might look bad. It just was not stuff that I actually thought the principal needed to deal with.

The third and fourth-year teachers did not perceive a need for the same amount of support from administrators during their first-year of teaching. Some felt supported by at least one administrator and one teacher admired the personal qualities of the administrators. Only one teacher admitted to not dealing with administrators because she was afraid to include them in her

frustrations. The next section focused on the relationships that these same third and fourth-year teachers have with administrators at Jordan High.

Third and fourth-year teachers' relationships with administration: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

In this focus group, I found that most of these teachers believed they had some kind of relationship with an administrator. One math teacher stated that he has a good relationship because he agreed with what the administrators were trying to do and the other math teacher was concerned with his relationship he has with all of the administration. One of the most interesting comments that I heard was from the science teacher in this group. She confessed that she was not scared of administrators anymore because she has her professional teaching contract.

This first math teacher believed he has a good relationship with the administrators because they have similar beliefs. He enjoyed the techniques that administrators use and would use some of the same things if he had his own school.

I feel that I have pretty good rapport with the administrators here. I think they have a pretty good understanding, and it seems like a lot of the ideas and a lot of the techniques that they use run parallel to mine. There are some of the things that I would use in terms of my own school as well.

This teacher desired to improve his relationship with the administrators at Jordan. He was experiencing a disconnection with administrators. He viewed administrators as superiors and admitted to being afraid of them. He desired to feel more comfortable approaching an administrator.

I think my relationship with the administration is something that I would like to improve because I think there is, for some reason, a misconception or whatever. It is hard to approach a superior, and it is sensitive in a way. I think that is something I can improve on is speaking to a superior and not being afraid.

This same science teacher who was so afraid of administrators her first year, stated that her relationship with administrators had improved as her confidence improved. She now had a teaching contract and was not afraid anymore. She also believed this gave her more security.

Yeah, mostly it is conversations that we have; hi, bye as you are working and stuff like that. I would say that everything is friendly, and I am not scared of them anymore. My confidence is improved, and part of it is because I am no longer a beginning teacher. I have got that contract, and so I am not afraid. My confidence level is improved to the point where I am not afraid of putting my foot in my mouth quite as quickly as you are when you are.

These teachers did admit having a relationship with administrators. Some admit they had a relationship because they believed in the same things and one other was not afraid to talk to administrators now that she had her contract. One math teacher was aware that he needed to be more assertive around administrators. The next section discussed possible reasons that teachers leave Jordan according to third and fourth-year teachers.

#### Reasons for leaving Jordan High: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

I was almost in disbelief when I discovered that most of the third and fourth-year teachers did not know why teachers wanted to leave Jordan. Some teachers hypothesized why teachers would leave this school, but as a group, they were in disbelief that teachers would want to leave. Not one teacher in this focus group had a desire to leave Jordan High School according to my findings.

One teacher suggested that the lack of resources, in comparison to other schools in the county, might constitute some reason a teacher might leave, but not him. He thought that there was a misconception about Jordan High that might cause a teacher to leave.

I would believe lack of resources is one of the major things. I have friends that teach at some of the other schools. They have everything that you may need. Lack of resources is a big issue, not necessarily the population. I think just the misconception of what our school is about is why teachers leave.

This fourth-year science teacher wanted to remain at Jordan and recommended that teachers might think it was better somewhere else. She imagined herself being at Jordan in 25 years. Her only assumption would be that some teachers might think that students are different at another school setting.

In my case, I cannot imagine wanting to leave. I am teaching exactly where I want to teach, and I can see myself here 25 years from now. That is the only thing I can think

they think. Well, the students will be different, better, smarter, nicer to teachers elsewhere.

An English teacher believes that teachers leave Jordan for reasons other than going to another school. She thinks they are positive reasons and does not believe other teachers leave for other schools in this district. She talks about going home or getting an advanced degree.

I found that it is not any of those reasons. Most of the people that I know wanted to go somewhere else for their Masters. One was here in college; wanted to go home and teach, and then another one went home.

Another teacher is shocked by the idea of teachers leaving this school. He states that teachers should expect students to be kids. He also states that graduate school could be a possible reason that teachers leave. Finally, he provides a great analogy in the conclusion of his statement.

I really do not know why teachers leave. I cannot think of any other reason why a teacher would leave other than selfish reasons. When you get into the education field, I do not really know what it is that you expect. You have to expect kids to act like kids. You have to expect them not to want to come to class. You have to expect them to try to undermine authority, and I think when people say it is the resources or it is the administration or it is the population of the students, those are excuses because everybody wants to take it off of themselves. Everybody – you talk to people; even adults take responsibility for their shortcomings, and I think that is really the reason why. Some teachers, they may want to go to grad school somewhere else that is their own interest. I do not think it really has anything to do with this school community, and it is hard to maintain a community under those terms. I think that is a general consensus. I think that is what people do think this is a stepping-stone. Maybe think about this, if you go into somebody's house and the house is dirty, you're not gonna really pay too much consideration about wiping your feet off before you go in. But if the house is clean, you will wipe your feet off before you go in to maintain cleanliness.

Again, these teachers only guessed why a teacher would want to leave Jordan High. They had no intentions of leaving and were happy here. In the next section, I asked teachers to tell me what they thought would keep teachers at Jordan.

### Keeping teachers at Jordan: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

This group had some ideas for keeping teachers at Jordan High. They were again much different from the first-year teachers. After being a teacher for at almost four years, they emphasized effectiveness instead of duties. For example, a math teacher felt that his assigned mentor was not effective at all but he said that it was not the administrator's duty to mentor a teacher...it was the mentor teacher's.

I will say that the mentor that was assigned to me was not helpful. It is one of those things that they do it, and my mentor definitely dropped the ball. The paperwork got billed as me having been mentored, but that did not happen. I would like to do it right because I think that teachers who actually have a mentor, who really get help will stay. Yeah, the principal is not gonna help you in the classroom. You need a teacher to help you.

The other math teacher in this group stated that he needed a few words of encouragement from administrators and wanted his administrators to believe in what he was doing. He wanted to feel appreciated. He wanted the administrators to have faith in him as a teacher.

Belief from and in you from the administration is a big thing because nothing gives you more confidence than knowing that your superiors have faith in you. I know that what I am doing in the classroom is accepted by the parent support or a student that does not mean much to me. If I know I can come down and my administrator is saying, "You're doing a great job," that makes me feel like I wanna be here. That means that I have done something to gain your approval. For new teachers, if the administration would step out a little bit more and do that, it makes you – nothing beats feeling wanted. Everybody in life wants to be wanted. That is the way we were conditioned. It is the atmosphere that your administration sets that make you feel proud when you drive up to the school; that is the big one.

This teacher told me the reason she stayed was because she "fell in love" with Jordan High. She believed that collaboration between veteran teachers and first-year teachers would prove to be enough to keep new teachers at this school.

I think, the mentor thing; just collaborating and – teachers that have been here for a while going and talking to the new teachers and supporting them and asking if they need anything and telling them that if they need something, just come on over. Whatever I have is yours. I think that is really helpful. The reason I stayed is because I just love it. I just – it was like I love this place.

This math teacher admitted that peer support was a vital part in remaining in the teaching profession, but he stated there was more to it than support. He explained that the teacher needed to understand the requirements of being a teacher and want it. He believed that if a teacher wanted to be a teacher enough, then nothing would come in between that goal.

The support has to be there. There has to be a point where you cannot feel like a fish out of water. Like another teacher said, you want to feel like you belong, and to know that you really belong is seen through student success. If the students succeed, then you belong. You have to want it and if you do not wanna be there. If you do not have a good understanding about the field that you are in, if you are not up for the long nights and the early mornings or the repetitiveness of the whole thing, then you do not want it.

These teachers with three to four-years of teaching experience had given some suggestions regarding what could be done to keep teachers at Jordan High. One teacher fell in love with the school, one asked for some encouraging words from administrators, one stated that he needed that teacher to help him and the final teacher believed that a teacher would stay based on individual drive. In the next section, I asked these teachers to tell me what new teachers needed from veteran teachers.

#### What new teachers need from veteran teachers: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

These teachers, similar to the first-year teachers, suggested they needed a veteran teacher during their first year of teaching. However, this perceived support they required now from veteran teachers is much less. These third and fourth-year teachers did make some recommendations that would have helped them as first-year teachers. This Science teacher explained how she needed somebody to pay her some attention when she did something well

instead of concentrating on the things that she did not do as well. She needed some positive feedback. She also remembered how lonely it was in the classroom with no adults to talk to.

You need somebody who has actually got the time to come by every once in awhile and acknowledge you are alive. It is very lonely the first time you get in a classroom and realize you do not talk to adults. Most of us work through lunch you realize that you are very alone in there with all of them. Just having somebody every once in awhile tell you that you are doing a good job because that does not happen too often either. You always feel like you only get somebody's attention if you have done something wrong. You do not feel like anybody ever notices when you are doing it right.

Another teacher desired another adult to talk to. She enjoyed her students but wanted some interaction with colleagues. She wanted an open-door policy where she could talk to someone if she needed.

New teachers need encouragement, first and foremost. I believe that every school has its own little nuances. It would help if those teachers would kind of give the new teachers a little peek. The best thing that they [veteran teachers] could have done for me was just have an open door policy. From eight to three, I am seeing kids all day long and every now and then you need someone, preferably in your field, to help you out.

For the first time, a veteran teacher stated that he needed an orientation of the school and the "nuances" within the school. He also stated that teachers giving each other support and encouragement are beneficial.

Just to say, 'hey, I noticed what you were doing,' and offer some encouragement. Tell new teachers that 'pep rally days are really hard, do not schedule tests on pep rally days no matter how much you want to. Kids are gonna be focused on the pep rally all day.' Just be prepared not to start class right at 8:40 because announcements come on. Be able to make sure everybody gets settled. Learning the system I guess is what we are talking about.

This teacher remembered who he asked when he needed help. He felt comfortable talking with a specific teacher and asking for help.



Have somebody that you feel comfortable going to and saying, ‘this is happening, do you have any, any suggestions?’ Find somebody who has really has got the time to say, ‘yeah, I remember that and this is what I did to fix.’

These third and fourth-year teachers offered some suggestions to veteran teachers that could possibly help new teachers in their first year. Having a veteran teacher to talk to was something that most all of these teachers agreed on. In the next section, I asked third and fourth-year teachers to tell me what they need from administrators.

#### What third and fourth-year teachers need from administrators: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

I discovered that these teachers need much less from administrators than the first-year teachers. They were already acclimated to the school and the on goings within the organization. They still perceived a need for support from administration but it was only needed when a problem arose. This first teacher stated he did not really need support from administration until he asked for it. He also mentioned needing support to acquire resources.

[I want administrators’] support when needed and to assure that we have access to resources.

This next teacher wanted administrators to support him especially when parents got involved. He felt like it was him versus both the parents and the administrators.

Something else I appreciate from administration is the support of the teacher. A lot of times what I have seen in the past kind is when a parent gets in there; a particular administrator may get kind of rattled and lean towards the side of the fence that the parent is on as opposed to the side of the fence that the teacher is on. It kind of undercuts you and it undercuts your authority. So an administrator who could sit in and have confidence in there staff is what I need.

This teacher wanted administrators’ support from behind the scenes. He did not want any instructional support from administrators because he expected that from the other teachers. He also believed that administrative support gave a teacher more confidence in the classroom.

I agree with just having the support of administrators when we need it because we are all professionals and we are trained in what we do. So instructional support I think can come more from colleagues, from different teachers. If I need a different way to teach or if I have to teach quadratics a different way, I can talk to another math teacher and see how he does it. But having the administrators behind you really makes you feel like what goes on in your class is not only a representation of your rules but they have my back on this too. So if you test me then you know I do not have to worry about you running to one of the assistant principals or principal and having my authority taken from me.

This same teacher explained of this happening several times to him at a previous school. He believed that his power was taken away from administration. Students would run to the administration and the administrators would overrule the decision he had made for his classroom. He explained how complaints from parents or students warranted an administrator overruling his decision.

I used to work at a place where that happened to me several times. It was just to the point where you know kids pick it up. It is like, let us just run to the principal and it will be taken care of. So having that support really makes you feel good.

The science teacher had similar comments about administrators possibly not supporting what she did. She admitted to almost being afraid that the administration would be on the parents' side.

Yeah, I can only third that one. I know that that was my biggest fear. For my first year, I thought nobody would take my side if I got a parent pissed off if they did not like what I was doing. I was always afraid that the administration would side with the parent.

This same science teacher believed that she was in the wrong if a parent became mad at her. She questioned herself with why a student or parent would have a negative concern if she was doing what a good teacher was supposed to be doing. Because of these feelings, she felt that administrators might take the side of the parent.

I always felt like I was the one that was automatically in the wrong because if I were really a good teacher, no parent would get mad at me. No student would be unmotivated or upset. That is kind of like the feeling that I get sometimes.

These teachers mentioned the perceived support that they needed from administrators. They did not need support all of the time but did need it at times. They wanted to know that the administration was behind them. In the next section, I asked this group of teachers to tell me what kind of relationships they preferred.

Third and fourth-year teachers' desired relationships with other teachers: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

Third and fourth-year teachers had similar thoughts about relationships with teachers as the first-year teachers, but they favored the personal relationships a bit more. They did not want cliques to form within the teaching staff. They were content with maintaining a professional relationship with other teachers.

This teacher actually wanted to have a faculty that was built from personal relationships. However, he did not think that was realistic because of the level of difficulty it required. He placed blame on the high amount of responsibilities that were placed on high school teachers. He also stated that he had a limited amount of personal relationships at school. He suggested that this was because of his family obligations and his many responsibilities that he had to do at school.

I would like to have more of a personal relationship with other teachers but I am getting pulled this way and I am getting pulled that way. Especially, since I have a family, they come first; it is just difficult for it to be any other way than professional. I am not opposed to a collegial relationship but it is kind of hard to maintain.

This next teacher agreed with the idea of having a more personal relationship with other teachers. He wanted more than a professional relationship. He believed that having a strong personal relationship will be beneficial and it will take the stress out of the working environment.

I think the personal aspect makes this more than just a come to work from eight to three and do what you gotta do job. Students obviously can always tell how teachers get along.

I know if they know that there is a common theme between the way he is gonna treat some students that are gonna come to me then I can eliminate a lot of the nonsense. If we are cool together and we understand each other and have a relationship, we can eliminate a lot of that. It feels good to have somebody on the staff that you can go to and to talk to. Business is one thing and we are all professionals. This is a business but every now and then, you probably need somebody who understands you. I think that takes a lot of the stress out of work. I think in order to be professionally successful you have to have that connection in culture. You have to feel comfortable around people that you are with.

This next teacher was not opposed to having a personal connection with other teachers, but she warned of developing cliques within the workplace. She did not want to feel uncomfortable because she had a stronger relationship with another group of teachers. She would rather keep it professional so that other teacher's feelings do not get hurt.

Now I do have to say within the same token that we speak in terms of personal relationships, you tend to have cliques. That is what students see also. Even when you go to faculty meetings you may see a group of teachers that sit together or a group of teachers that normally only talk to each other. That is something else that the students pick up on. That is something also that we have to be more aware of in terms of relationships. I think it does make the work day smoother, if you know that you have someone that you can talk to or just you know someone that is in your corner.

These third and fourth-year teachers did prefer having a personal relationship at school. They thought it might make work more enjoyable and the day might run smoother. I did notice that they did not want their relationships to supersede the professional part of teaching and if that would be a problem, they would rather not have a personal relationship at all. I asked these members of this focus group about their desired relationships with administrators in the next section.

#### Third and fourth-year teachers' desired relationships with administrators: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

I noticed immediately that professional relationships with administrators were what third and fourth-year teachers desired. They stated that they wanted a tiny piece of personal

relationship intertwined with a personal relationship, but nothing more. Again, I began hearing teachers talking about a line that could not be crossed between administrators and teachers.

Right away this math teacher began talking about this “thin line” that existed between teachers and administrators. He did not have a problem with being an administrator’s friend, but he still thought that the professional relationship far surpasses having an administrator as a friend.

I think there is a thin line. I have heard that, friendship breeds contempt. As long as certain lines are not crossed and you know there are times and places for everything, I think it is fine. As long as their professional aspect stays intact, and what happens outside of that professional situation stays where it stays, I think that is fine. I would not mind sitting down watching a football game with some of the administration and doing some of those things, but we would probably end up talking about work anyway.

This next teacher agreed with keeping his relationship at the professional level because the administrator was still in charge of his evaluation. He also alluded to this line that cannot be crossed between administrators and teachers. He did mention his desire for the administrator saying hello and being concerned how he was doing.

There is a very fine line between being collegial and being looked at as a professional. You want your administrators to evaluate you for the work that you do in class and for how your students perform on tests because that is their job and that is what they are supposed to do. At the same time you just do not want a hi and bye relationship with them. When I see an administrator in the hall you know he always pat me on the back and shakes my hand. That makes me feel good. Even though he tells me to see him as a colleague, it still makes me feel pretty good that he shook my hand.

This teacher continued that made him feel good when an administrator showed him attention and was concerned about his wellbeing. He enjoyed the administrators checking in on him but he did not the relationship to go further.

When an administrator said, 'I was worried about you,' I was like whoa. That makes me feel good. At the same time I guess being best buddies is not what I am looking for. I would like to have more than a hi, bye.

This English teacher was concerned about a professional relationship impacting her as a professional. She did want to have more than a wave in the halls but she does not want a friendship to interfere with her as a professional. She did not want to be concerned with confidentiality or poor evaluation as a result of a friendship.

Having that open door relationship and knowing that I can, not necessarily that I can sit down and watch the football game, just knowing that anytime I need to bring up an issue or talk to an administrator I do not have to worry about confidentiality or I do not have to worry about even speculating. I do not want to be marked [poorly] on my evaluation or [feel as if] I am being watched more because of something personal. You wanna keep that professional wisdom. At the same time, you want it to be a little bit more than just hey, passing in the hallway. To a certain degree, I want to have that collegial relationship with administration.

This teacher was stunned at the suggestion of having a professional relationship with administrators. She did understand the structure that typically followed the relationships between teachers and administrators because of her military upbringing. However, she did admit that having a bit of a personal relationship would not be so bad.

I never actually thought about being collegial with administrators before. It is a really new idea. Part of that is probably my military background. There is a whole chain of command thing really ingrained in my background. It would be nice to have it be warm and friendly. I do not think there would be anything wrong with, going out and having a beer with somebody or something like that but it is not a requirement.

These third and fourth-year teachers did want a personal relationship with the administrators, but they were certain to inform me of the line that cannot be crossed. I attempted to identify this line as where too much of a professional relationship could create friction within

the work environment. The next section listed suggestions from these teachers that could be done at the district level to help with the induction of new teachers.

What the district can do to help with the induction of new teachers: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

According to the third and fourth-year teachers, the induction program that has taken place in this district was time consuming and simply not what these teachers really needed. They stated that the program needed to eliminate any unnecessary training and add more follow-up once the program was over. These teachers remembered the limited amount of time that they had their first-year teaching. They also mentioned presenting the information in a timelier manner, instead of later in the school year.

This teacher emphasized the word essential when discussing the program and also wanted more feedback after the completion of the program. He wanted to have been trained in classroom management training before he began teaching. He also mentioned the amount of time that this induction program takes.

First, narrow it down to what is actually essential. In terms of classroom management, as a first year teacher you get all of this good information. I am thinking also along the lines of follow up and feedback. As a first year teacher you take these classes, you go through the process and that is it. The only person that followed up with me was from my university. That was the first year and the second year they would call to ask how are things going and do you need anything. So definitely there needs to be a follow up piece. Then look at those courses that they are having teachers take, because it is very time consuming. It is very time consuming.

This teacher discussed the timing of the program and also effectiveness. She wanted survival skills that she might be successful her first few years as a teacher. She also mentioned receiving a survival book geared for first-year teachers being given to her after successfully completing the induction program. She needed this book before she began teaching.

It is the same thing that teachers talk about with professional development. I want something that is gonna be effective, that I know is gonna help me. So it could be the

first year teacher program to expose them [new teachers] to several different things. I think possibly narrowing down the number of classes or just classes that essentially are gonna help them survive, really. I think it would be really wonderful if the classes could actually be offered before you started teaching. We go through the program and they give us a book and we are done. That should be something you hand to the teacher when you hire them. It should not be the prize at the end of the induction program. Teach it to us before school starts. Some of the teachers I know do not get hired till the last minute but I mean there is always something to get them caught up as soon as possible. For those people we know that are coming on, that are scared to death, would probably be glad to take time, a week or two before school starts in order to do that. On top of lesson planning and all of the stuff you are doing from scratch, you are not also going to a class once or twice a week.

Again in the induction program, the time when the instruction was given was being criticized by this teacher. She stated that she needed this before school began and also addressed the idea of classroom management being taught in January. She needed it in August when school was beginning.

I took my effective classroom management in January during my first year. It was like going through the class saying, 'I sure could have used this in August.' So I think if they could find a way to make it in the summer for the first couple weeks of the pre-planning or on a planning date that would be more helpful.

Another teacher said she would have liked to attended these meetings before school began or during the pre-planning week before school. She explained that she was involved in several meetings during pre-planning and needed to be in her classroom.

I would prefer to have these meetings during the summer or maybe a planning day, something where it does not take away from my time. I remember my first week it was just all huge meetings. I was sitting there the whole time needing to get in my classroom. I needed to do this. Maybe if we can find a way to move it up or something, I think that would be the way to go.



This teacher complemented the focus groups which are one piece of the induction process. However, she still became irritated when discussing the topics that she already was familiar with. She did not want to hear the same thing she had heard before.

To me the best part of the induction was the focus groups. You met with other teachers and said, 'okay, I am going through this' and then you had the couple of veteran teachers pooling ideas. Some of the other stuff, the ethics or whatever courses, there are things you gotta know but God, I hate killing three hours during one evening. You know to do that. At the same time, you are writing lesson plans for the first time.

This next teacher was also an advocate for the induction program. He did believe that getting paid for the meeting does make it worthwhile. He did not complain about the amount of time, but he did want some follow-up after the induction process was complete.

I do know how important the induction program is. I definitely do not think they should do away with it. For me it was good. I enjoyed it, and getting paid for it was a good incentive for me to go through it. I wish there was some kind of follow up. While going through the courses you may not know the exact questions to ask. And then when you try to start implementing these things you are like, 'it is over.' The question and answer session is far gone. So if there was some kind of follow up, it would be good

This math teacher explained the difficulty in travel between his place of work and where the induction classes took place. He had to travel across the entire city to get to his induction classes. He also mentioned the long days that he suffered through the first year he taught. When he finally got home, it was time to go to sleep and he had to begin preparing for the next day.

As a first year teacher, when you come to school all day and you are planning for different classes, you do not have it all together. Then you have to leave and go to an effective classroom management on the north side of town. So you leave south side and drive all the way out there and drive home. It is eight o'clock, you are tired, and you gotta get back up and do it again. I think eliminating all the long days for the new teachers [would be helpful].

According to this focus group of third and fourth-year teachers, the induction program that was provided to them by the district needed to change a few things. One of the most important pieces that I learned from these third and fourth-year teachers was for the district to provide an induction program before the school year started. I also noticed these teachers did not think that the long days made it any easier for a first-year teacher. They wanted the district to focus the effectiveness of the program instead of focusing on the amount of time a new teacher was being trained. In my next section, these third and fourth-year teachers suggested some ways the school can assist with the induction of new teachers.

#### What the school can do to help with the induction of new teachers: Perspectives from third and fourth-year teachers

These teachers had some suggestions for improving the induction of teachers at the school level. Some of the areas that they believed needed to be addressed were: the mentor program, the personal relationships of the other teachers, and an orientation. This first teacher began talking about the mentors. More specifically, he wanted to have some measure of accountability for the mentors. He stated that his mentor was effective but he is aware of teachers who did not have assigned mentors fulfilling their obligations.

One of the things I have heard from talking to some of the new teachers is when we get assigned mentors, we must hold them accountable. I had a mentor who was my mentor. She would sit in the back of the class and tell the students little stories about me. Having a mentor who is actually there to mentor you instead of just popping in every three months is important. I have heard people say they have not seen their mentor in a year. Someone who can be there readily accessible to answer any questions that you have would serve a great purpose. That would have taken a load off of me. In my first year, I was wondering, ‘well should I go to the principal with this question or should I go to the assistant principal. If you have that mentor right there I think that would help ease a lot of our anxiety or new teachers’ anxiety.

Another teacher focused on the effectiveness of mentors. She was currently hearing new teachers complain of never seeing their mentors and the lack of feedback that these new teachers were receiving. She was concerned about some new teachers not having a mentor.

I do not know. It may be an issue of the number of mentors that we have here. I am not sure how many mentors we have for every beginning teacher. Something else that I heard from a beginning teacher last year is that, 'I have seen my mentor maybe once or twice throughout the year and I have had an evaluation but no one has given me feedback. I do not really know how I am doing.' To some extent, yes, you know the mentor needs to be put in place to meet with this person even if it is an email. I know that the person that I am with right now, even if I cannot get in the classroom, I send them an email to say, 'how is it going or I know that this is coming up soon, is there anything I can help you with.' I think that makes a difference. That is taking time out of everything that I am doing throughout the day but we have to have people that can set aside that time for them.

This math teacher spoke of paying the mentor. He thought this might encourage the mentor to be more effective. He also stated that having a veteran teacher assisting along the way would suffice in the place of a mentor.

The mentor issue is a good one. I honestly think that in some cases a mentor is a mentor because they want to help out. That seems to work out better but it would be nice to have everybody get paid. Sometimes it really nice just to have a teacher take you under their wing.

The next teacher did acknowledge the importance of having a mentor, but wanted to elaborate on some other areas he was concerned with. He stated that he wanted other teachers to make him feel welcome and acknowledge him in fashion. He still remembered, from his first year as a teacher, veteran teachers walking by him and not acknowledging him at all.

I do not wanna focus on the mentor but I will make my first comment about the mentors. It is a breath of fresh air for you to have somebody who has taken you under their wing or decides to be your guide. It is a breath of fresh air but my issue was not with my mentor. My issue was the problem I had with other teachers around the school who acted as if they did not see me or did not recognize that I was another teacher. I think when you get new teachers on the first day at a school; you need to make a big deal about it because you need to retain them. And for instance, I would walk down the hallway and see people I did not know. A lot of times I did not feel comfortable. I felt more comfortable around

my students than I did in the hallway. They [other teachers] knew I was a new teacher and they did not look at me, smile or say anything. I think that needs to be a school-wide initiative, that it is every teacher's responsibility to welcome the new teachers

This same teacher spoke about his first year and the way in which he found his room. It appeared to him that his books and resources in his class had been rummaged through and things were missing. He was not happy when arrived to find his room picked over by other teachers.

Also something else that I thought was kind of messed up my first year, when I got to my class it seems like everybody had been through all my books and all my resources and taken everything out of there. Why would you do that to a new teacher? I was fine but I had to make tons and tons of copies. I did not think that was the way to treat somebody that you expected to stay.

Something stood out right away after I observed what this focus group of teachers had said. They wanted to feel welcomed their first year. It did not matter if it was a mentor or another teacher; they wanted somebody to notice them.

#### Teacher with Five to Eight-Years of Experience

Within this focus group of teachers with five to eight years of experience, I emailed eight teachers to be interviewed. These eight teachers were the only teachers at Jordan High that fell within this level of teaching experience. Thankfully, six of the eight did participate in the study. Just as the third and fourth-year teachers, there was calmness about this focus group. They did not need any encouraging words before we began and this entire group exuded great confidence.

#### Duties of a first-year teacher: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

Not surprisingly, I discovered teachers with five to eight-years of teaching experience had similar duties to those of current first-year teachers. This group did not go into great detail about duties but chose to focus on how they felt during this first year. They still remembered feeling lost, isolated, and not supported during their first year of teaching. One teacher from this group briefly stated that she was just a teacher, but immediately began to focus on her first year in the classroom and remembered the lack of support she experienced.

My first year as a teacher I actually felt lost; I was kind of thrown in the fire so to speak, with no help.

Similar to the previous teacher, this teacher described her situation as being thrown into the classroom. She remembered being isolated from other adults and being unorganized.

They threw me in a room with no plans with a bunch of sixth graders. I never saw any people.

These teachers were not prepared and began to realize that teaching demanded much, even in the first year of teaching. Another teacher, with no other duties than teaching, remembered her lack of sleep within her first year.

It was so incredibly difficult and my sleeping went down to two hours a night and later one hour a night. I was so determined to meet all the expectations. I walked in and acted like I actually knew what I was doing.

Reflecting upon her duties as a first year teacher, this science teacher remembered all of her responsibilities. She was getting certified, attending graduate school and decorating the hallways.

I was not an education major so I had to get an educational certification. I went back to grad school to get my Masters degree. In addition, I had to decorate the hallways and attend a teacher induction program.

The fifth through eighth-year teachers had similar duties their first year of teaching as did the other two groups. Some were attending graduate school while others were only teaching. In the next section, I asked these teachers to talk with me about the amount of support they received from teachers during their first year.

#### Teachers supporting teachers: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

These teachers remembered receiving help from other veteran teachers. Most of these teachers received help from department heads while others explained they survived because there were other first-year teachers experiencing the same problems. They used these other first-year teachers as someone they could talk to and confide in. This fifth-year teacher attempted to compare the amount of support she received now to the amount of support she received as a new teacher.

I think the support I receive now from teachers is very good. I was at a school lacking companionship. It was very difficult not being able to run into your sponsor and tell them what did today.

A teacher commented about the help she received from her department chair,

My department chair, was very helpful – ideas, classroom management, subject, everything.

Again a teacher discussed how much the assistance from her department head and colleagues helped her be successful.

I have just had exceptional support from other teachers for my first year, department head, two or three of the other teachers, so basically held my hand and reassured me and, and I am still good friends with them today. We go on trips sometimes even, four or five of us.

Sometimes first-year teachers helped each other deal with the difficulties at school. This teacher remembered how she and two other teachers formed a bond and helped each other along.

I guess there were a couple other beginning teachers. There were three of us who leaned on each other, prayed and cried.

These fifth through eighth-year teachers talked about the amount of support they received from other teachers. Only one stated that she did not get much support from other teachers during her first year as a teacher. The rest of these teachers suggested that the support they received from other teachers, either a veteran or another first-year teacher, was above average. The next section discussed the amount of support this group of teachers received from administrators.

#### Administrators supporting teachers: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

After I concluded my discussion with these teachers, I realized that these teachers did not receive much support from administrators, but they did not perceive a need or expect any support from administrators. They might have needed more support in their first year as a teacher but now they are okay without it. This English teacher did not blame administrators for not providing support. She even suggested that they are busy. However, she really did not receive support from administrators.

I know that they are there. They structure things, but I do not generally have a whole lot of help from them. I know they are doing their job and I appreciate that they are doing their job, but off the top of my head, I cannot think of anything

Another teacher remembered, with great detail, her principal coming by her classroom and how positive the atmosphere was at school. She enjoyed receiving a note from her principal. She described this principal as a “hands-on” principal.

My principal at that time would stop by and peek in and observe the room through a window. You would not even know she was there. You would get a note highlighting the positive things she saw in your box. I mean it was just a very, very positive atmosphere. She was a very hands-on principal.

This teacher explained that the administrators were nice and approachable, but not supportive. She did not see an administrator very often during her first year as a teacher.

The first year, I had the man that hired me and he was nice to me and the principal was nice but never, I mean until like the last possible time, did one of the administrators come in my room to even see me. It was in a really far away portable so it was a little isolated but no, support, it was not there.

The next teacher stated that administrators have their own agenda. She did understand that she does not need to know everything that administrators know; however, she would like to know more than she does now. She did say that administrators did support her when she needed it.

The thing I feel about administration sometimes is they talk about supporting you but you realize from the start that they have their own agenda. I have felt that a lot with my first principal, sometimes this administration too. We do not really get the full picture. We are just a cog in a big machine and we do not need to know everything but I feel like honest efforts are being made, definitely. I have had extremely good luck when there is something I need or support for one of the activities that I help with outside of class. It may not be immediate but I know it is there. I feel totally confident that if I do need

something, it is gonna come around. I have never had a clash. So I am very appreciative of that, comfortable with it.

A teacher stated that she has never felt supported by administrators. However, she did understand to a degree that foreign language is not a comfort area for administrators. She has not had an administrator ask her about anything specifically about her class or her club.

I think it is hard for administration, especially with a foreign language class, because they do not know what to do. So you walk in class and cannot understand what is going on. Never have I had an administrator come up to me and say what are you doing with the so and so's right now or how is that one meeting going or are you guys traveling to the Spanish conference? So it has never felt like support.

Another teacher believed that the size of the school has much to do with the amount of support that he has received from administrators. He compared Jordan High to another school he had worked at.

What I have noticed with administrators is there is a lot more interaction with the administration – that is compared to the larger towns with the larger schools. In a way I guess there are a whole lot more responsibilities for administrators in the larger school setting than the smaller school setting.

This group of teachers did not need much support. Some teachers provided different reasons why administrators are not supportive of them. One mentioned that the subject matter may cause difficulty while another mentioned administrators have their own agendas. After careful analysis of this group, I have discovered that these teachers do not perceive a need for much support and are okay without it. It is not expected. In the next section, I discussed the relationships that these teachers have with administrators.

#### Relationships with administration: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

According to my findings from this focus group, this group of teachers acknowledged that administrators were visible and they were there if they were needed, but their relationships did not appear to be evident. Some of these teachers stated they were always in their classroom



so that did not allow time to build relationships with administrators. Other teachers believed veteran teachers should be there for support, and not administrators.

After I asked this French teacher a question, she stated that she was surprised when she saw an administrator. She explained that she was always in her room and that could probably explain why she did not have any contact with administrators.

I do not often see administrators and it is sometimes hard to tell. I do not leave my classroom that often so everybody thinks I try to put off coming all the way down here until before or after school. I had an administrator walk past me today and the fact that I was surprised to see him makes me think I probably do not see them that much. But, how often do I talk to one? If I have an issue that comes up I feel comfortable probably talking to them about it but I mostly just stay in my classroom.

Another teacher mentioned the visibility of administrators but she did not mention having a rapport with any administrators. She stated that she does not need to see them much during the day.

I guess it was a couple years ago when I first started noticing administrators standing outside in the morning, and with the kids who were driving and I started to notice, that they knew. Otherwise you would never see an administrator in the morning at all and then I guess I do not see them too much during the day.

This next reading teacher stated that she does have a relationship with administrators. She believed that her participation in extra-curricular activities, which contains multiple administrators, is the reason for this relationship.

I feel like I do see and talk to administrators. Probably some of that is because I am on some committees after school that administrators always participate in. They seem to appreciate the participation. They are open and easy to get along with and of course the meetings, I usually see them.

Even though this teacher did have a relationship with administrators, she still was nervous when they visited her classroom. She stated that she cleared the administrator a spot when they come to observe her.

It is rare one comes into my classroom. Rare enough that I always try to clear them a spot because I am like oh, no, it is not gonna be good enough for them. They are gonna think

my kids are talking too much or I am off track. I have conversations about things that I need and things that are going on with the extracurricular activities. I probably have more conversations than a lot of people. I feel comfortable with it. I do not really feel that I need more.

This teacher tried to rationalize the lack of support she received from administrators. She believed that administrators were doing more important things than visiting her classroom and that was fine with her.

I realize there is a huge emphasis on numbers, on dollars, on attendance and those kinds of issues. I expect that is what the administrators truly have to do. The teachers are the ones that support the teachers and the administrators are there in times of trouble or need. They are welcome to come in. If I see them or if I do not see them that much, that is okay.

This teacher has noticed administrators more recently than in past years and she stated that she sees one administrator more than others. She stated that she does not talk to administrators frequently unless she has an issue. She has realized that email was the best way to communicate with administrators.

I think this year I have seen an administrator more often. Maybe it is because of where my classroom is but I see one administrator as opposed to others. Regarding talking to administrators, I do not do that often. If I have a question, email is the way I have found to contact the administrators. Whenever, I have had an issue where I have needed something, I could almost always guarantee a quick response. It may not be face to face, but I contact them. I always go to email more than talking to them, instead of seeing them. I feel very comfortable that I can if I need to.

Another teacher stated that she sees administrators frequently. However, she did think that communication between the teachers and the administrators needed to improve.

I see a couple administrators more than others, maybe a few of the deans. I think more communication between administrators and teachers would be real positive. I do not have a problem. I find that every time that I need to I can see them, even if they just come

in briefly. I think it shows the students and the teachers that they are supported and they care, instead of just coming by when it is a formal evaluation.

I have learned that the visibility of the administrators at Jordan High was great, but simply being visible was not enough. These teachers did not really have a relationship with many administrators, but they did not care. They knew how to get things they needed and understood how Jordan worked. In the next section, I asked these teachers to tell me possible reasons that teachers might leave Jordan.

#### Reasons for leaving Jordan High: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

When I began this discussion about teachers leaving Jordan High, they, just as the third and fourth-year teachers, did not understand why someone would want to leave. They were surprised and could not give any reasons why a teacher might leave, other than retirement. I challenged them to provide me with some possible suggestions. They did but they were educated guesses not based on personal desire.

The first teacher explained that retirement could be the only explanation. She admitted to having no idea why someone would leave.

I must be really naive about all this so I will just get mine out of the way because I really do not see teachers wanting to leave here except to retire. Maybe I am just blind to it so this surprises me.

This teacher reiterated that she has no desire to be anywhere other than here. She did not even attempt to provide any rationale for why a teacher would leave this school.

I would not work at any other school in this district. When I first started here, I was a little bit nervous. Now that I can see how conditions work, I would much rather be here.

This question did not cause much discussion between these teachers with five to eight years of experience. They would not even offer suggestions. Not because they refused, but they simply could not provide a guess as to why someone would leave Jordan High. In the next section, I asked these same teachers to provide me with suggestions that would encourage teachers to stay.

### Keeping teachers at Jordan: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

Just as the third and fourth-year teachers stated, these teachers were not aware of other teachers leaving this school. Only one from this group made any guess as to why someone would leave. So for these same teachers to recommend what can be done to keep teachers at Jordan High, the answers were limited again. However, the overarching reason that most of these teachers remain at Jordan High was the relationships they have built with their students. This math teacher explained his attachment with his students.

When I first got here, there was no math curriculum in the ESE department. The kids were just thrown in with higher up kids, with low level kids, and we finally reached the point at where we got a separate, really, really low level math even though they are all ESE there's different levels within ESE. We got, I have gotten attached to my kids that I teach each year. That is probably why.

Another teacher does not want to leave because of the familial connection she has developed at Jordan. She explained of teaching brothers and sisters from previous years and how she liked being a part of that.

It is a very deep mixture I guess. It is the students, the ones that I am teaching the same classes for the third year. I taught their sisters and brothers years ago. There is a real sense of being part of that.

Teaching brothers and sisters of former students, combined with a sense of appreciation, is what kept this English teacher at Jordan.

I would have to say mostly the relationship with the kids, like another teacher says. We get the same kids sometimes two or three times and, and there is just a sense of continuity but from a different perspective. I feel valued here. I feel like what we do is appreciated.

This English teacher stated that her relationships with her students were one reason she stayed at Jordan, but she also believed she was making a difference in the lives of some of the students. She explained to me that she felt like she was the only opportunity that some of her students had to be exposed to anything in the world.

Yeah, relationship with the students, and I like feeling like I am making a difference is why I stay. Because of life experiences of the students, I might be their only opportunity to get exposed to what is going on in the world and I like that.

This same English teacher hypothesized the only way she would leave would be based on her family. She stated she might move if she could be closer to her children. Leaving Jordan had nothing to do with the school or another possible school.

I think for me if I ever chose to leave it probably would have nothing to do with the school. I have a twelve year old and a two year old. To be closer to them, I might leave and go somewhere else, but I am happy here. I have had a good experience here, and I am very attached to my students. They come back to see me every year and that is good, because you build relationships there, even with other teachers in the English department. I like that. I like people. I like being a part of something.

After analyzing this data, it was obvious to me that these teachers in this focus group have remained at Jordan because of the relationships they have developed with their students. According to their comments, Jordan provided a familial environment and they enjoyed being a part of that. Next, I provided these teachers an opportunity to tell me what new teachers needed from veteran teachers.

#### What first-year teachers need from veteran teachers: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

This group of teachers, not being long removed from their first-year of teaching, immediately began listing specifics tools and needs from veteran teachers that would have made their first-year of teaching much easier. I did not have to provide any examples and I just let them take off. They mentioned simple things that veteran teachers might have overlooked and new teachers definitely needed. According to this group, it almost appeared that a basic orientation was needed by new teachers. One teacher needed assistance, from a veteran teacher, with lesson plans and curriculum. She needed someone she could ask questions about simple things.

Specifically, maybe being able to look at their lesson plans or how they are structured. Maybe having someone where they could say if, “I am doing this in my classroom. Is this right? Does this sound right?” I know, as a first-year teacher, I was really baffled about how to structure my curriculum and my lessons to make sure I was getting everything in that I needed to get in.

Another teacher stated that the basics, just averaging grades, were what first-year teachers’ needed. She remembered not knowing what her grade book should look like or how much things should count.

The first couple of years, [teachers need] really basic stuff, like setting up the grade book and how to work the math of the grades in Social Studies. So how do people do this, 40 percent for this, 30 percent for that?

This same teacher explained that simple things such as averaging grades were something new teachers needed help with. She still seemed a little confused on the grading to me.

I mean, sometimes, just a few points makes a difference, you know what I mean? Or it works both ways, but I found that just trying to get the grading system so that I felt like the kids were earning what they deserved, and then doing the math on the report card. I know they have computers, but you still have to know how to set it up, so your input equals your expected outcome, and I thought that was a real struggle.

This history teacher listed classroom management and receiving constructive criticism from veteran teachers as something that she needed. She thought that she could have used some more positive feedback.

The biggest concern seems to be classroom management, and then the things you do not think of, like how to structure your class, curriculum, grade, and everything. I have also heard from new teachers, but if teachers with experience would avoid non-constructive criticism of new teachers. Non-constructive feedback maybe would be a better word than criticism.

Teachers with five to eight years of experience gave me many suggestions for veteran teachers helping first-year teachers. Most of the teachers from this group needed help with the basics: grading, classroom management, and other things that new teachers need to know. In the next section, I asked these teachers about the amount of support they needed from administrators.

#### What teachers need from administrators: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

When speaking with these teachers, most of them had the same needs regarding support from administrators as did the third and fourth-year teachers. They did not perceive a need of much support. Most of these teachers wanted support from a distance and wanted to be allowed to do their jobs. However, they did want an occasional acknowledgement of a good job and more open communication. One teacher requested support when he needed it and maybe a compliment on occasion. He wanted administrators to let teachers who are doing a good job that are appreciated.

I would just like the support of the administration if you needed help in any other areas. It does not hurt for your administrator to come by and say, 'Hey, you are doing a great job,' rather than just coming by and seeking out the people that are struggling. Go see those teachers that are doing a good job and let them know.

This science teacher wanted the truth instead of what she called a "political agenda." She gave an example of this agenda when she discussed the teachers that were not re-hired last year. She stated that she did understand administrators are concerned with other things but she wanted it straight.

Sometimes, I do wish that I felt like all of the political agenda was either open to us or was not going on, but I know that is not gonna happen. It is always administrators that have to concern themselves with other things, money, etc., but sometimes, I do not feel like we are getting the straight story. For example, last year, they had to let 13 teachers go because of their 'staffing plan,' and then they turned around and hired 17 – some of the same areas. Now, to me, something is not right. I do not know.

This teacher desired positive feedback, advanced notice and better communication from the administration. She did not elaborate any further and did not respond to any more of my prompts. She stated repeatedly that was all she needed.

Positive feedback, advance notice, and communication in general is what I feel is needed more so.

This English teacher wanted administrators to allow her to do her job. She did not want someone in her classroom every day. She did not want to be “micro-managed.” Just as others in this group, she mentioned that she would like to be told that she was doing a good job on occasion.

I do not wanna be micro-managed, the idea of someone peeking in on you every day. It is really intimidating, to get uptight. Yeah, positive feedback, that is something. It would be nice to know if you are doing something right or if you are doing a good job.

Teachers with five to eight-years of teaching experience did not want much support from administrators, but rather other things. They wanted to be told the truth instead of a partial truth. They wanted better communication between teachers and administrators. They wanted to be allowed to do their jobs and did not want an administrator in the classroom every day. Although their desires of administrators were different, one idea snuck through each response. They did say they needed an occasional “good job.” Next, I asked this group of teachers to tell me the kind of relationship they desired with other teachers.

#### Desired relationships with other teachers: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

This group of teachers provided a combination of responses regarding their desired relationships with other teachers. Some teachers still craved a friendship type of relationship, but admitted that the professional aspect still had to remain in place. Here again a boundary line became evident. The boundaries of professionalism and of a personal relationship were blurry in this discussion. Some teachers’ ideas of a personal relationship was saying “hello” to each other in the hallways, while other ideas meant eating lunch together and meeting outside of school. This history teacher wanted both, but she realized that a high school setting was very



departmentalized and busy. The speed of a high school, combined with the isolation that the classroom provided, did not allow for much more than hello and good bye.

I very much would like both – but high school is hard. We are all in our individual classrooms, and I would love a relationship. When we see each other in the hallway, it is always a friendly, collegial atmosphere, but that is two seconds of “Hi and how are you doing?” That is about the extent of it. I wish there was more of that, but only to an extent that this is also our workplace. So there needs to be some professionalism about it as well.

Another teacher stated that he did not desire to have an obligated friendship or a place of socialization. He would like to have a friendly environment to work, but he did not leave any doubt as to what he is here for...to work.

I do not want a forced friendship, but at the same time you want to feel like you have a friendly atmosphere. You must know what you are here for and it is not just socializing.

Another teacher wanted a combination of the two. He did want a personal relationship with people in his department, but a more professional relationship with the other teachers outside of his department.

I like the personal relationships I have developed within my department and with other coaches, so I am fine with the collegial relationships. [I want] a more professional relationship maybe with the teachers I am not in contact with as much, but being cordial, in passing, ‘Hey, how you doing?’

This history teacher wanted both as well, and recommended a common planning time within teams or departments to build these relationships.

I, of course, want both because I think that you understand each other and you are more sympathetic if you have a more personal understanding of what is going on. I sometimes wish that some of us had lunch together. Maybe some common planning time, either in teams or by departments or even half the department or something so that there’s an opportunity for more collegial interaction than just the randomness with which we do it. So I think maybe some more attention to planning our time together would be good.

These teachers wanted both professional and personal relationships with other teachers. The extent to which they thought these relationships should be carried out did vary, but all of these teachers in this group, did want a combination. I asked these same teachers to tell me about the kind of relationships they want with administrators in the next section.

Desired relationships with administrators: Perceptions from fifth through eighth-year teachers

Again, this same group of teachers desired both a professional and a personal relationship with administrators. However, each teacher made sure to emphasize the importance of having clear definitions of roles. They wanted to consider the administrator a friend in the day but they did not want to have ties beyond the work day. This history teacher wanted both, but she did still consider the position that administrators hold.

I have got to say both. I think having a professional relationship is good, but there is sometimes that tendency, especially when you are a new teacher, they [administrators] seem kind of distant and lofty. Sometimes, it is helpful when you do need something; you are more likely to go talk to someone if you feel like, ‘hey, I know him, he is a nice guy’ versus, ‘oh, that’s the AP, or that is the principal.’

This math teacher remembered his first year as a teacher and explained the personal relationship he had with his administrators. He did enjoy those relationships at that time. However, he was fine having a totally professional relationship with administrators.

When I was a beginning teacher, I had a really good collegial relationship with my principal and the assistant principal. I thought that was good at that time in my life, but right now, I am fine with a professional relationship and going to my administrators about job situations and on-school sites situations rather than discussing personal issues.

Another teacher did not want a strict professional relationship. She wanted to truly know the administrators and wanted them to know her as well. She had a difficult time determining what a professional relationship was.

I am not sure I know the parameters of a professional relationship, per se, but I know that from my own personality. I feel like I need to know – I need to have people know me as a

person, not just as a professional. That is just a small part of who I am. I like to know that about people too because it just lends a sense of compassion and humanity when that is needed. I am just not that much of a professional person. I would rather have the personal relationships. I am not a corporate person at all; I am definitely a people person.

The final teacher answered this question similarly as the others, but she tended to desire the professional side more than the personal. She wanted a combination of the two.

I would like a good combination. I think I lean with administrators more on the professional and less of the collegial, but the collegial still needs to be there.

Having a personal relationship was not important to most of these teachers. They did want to be able to speak with administrators in a personal manner at work and in the community, but they did not want loose the professional element that came with the job title. Next, I asked these teachers with five to eight-years of experience to tell me what the district can do to help first-year teachers.

#### What the district can do to help with the induction of new teachers: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

After I began asking these teachers for suggestions about the new teacher induction process, I realized that these teachers still remembered the induction program that this district does. It was not a good memory for any of these teachers in this group. They can recount tireless hours and undue meetings that they attended and offered these recommendations to the district. This math teacher briefly offered a suggestion of eliminating some of the paper work.

Maybe take some of the paperwork off of them because they have enough going on in the classroom.

A history teacher remembered her days of induction and offered some more suggestions. She did not think the induction program was effective. In fact, she called it “cruel.” She remembered detailed trainings from eight years ago that she still has not used as a teacher. She thought the induction program took up too much time and should be simplified to a “cliff note” format.

They do not need all that extra stuff their first year. Your first year, [you] have no idea how long everything is gonna take. You need sleep; you do not need to sit in there and listen to all those required things about blood pathogens and reading. It is all you can do to keep from snoring and embarrassing yourself because you need sleep. You should not have to do that, period. The first year that you are in classroom, you should be in a classroom with a teacher or a guide, and then go all through that the next year. Get it in a cliff note, and then go back. I think the whole thing should be separate. I think it is cruel.

One teacher told of what she heard from a new teacher this year. She questioned why they were doing this and when did the teaching piece take place. She did not think they had time to do their teaching responsibilities because of all of the other undue responsibilities they were doing.

They go straight from school, straight into a four or five-hour meeting; five or six days a week and on Saturdays. When are they supposed to do lesson plans or grading papers?

Finally, a teacher told what she remembered from the teacher induction programs she attended seven years ago.

I only did this seven years ago. I do not remember one thing from that program that has helped me. They did not tell me about anything about TEC, which I guess you are supposed to know all this stuff. They did not talk about filling out substitute forms. The stuff that I needed was not there. I have no clue what they taught me except that I have not had any use or recollection of it since then. So I think it was pointless. It was just paperwork. It was just protecting them [the district] more than it was helping the teachers. I resented that.

I was surprised to discover that these teachers still remembered the teacher induction program which for most occurred almost seven year ago. Their hostility towards the program became evident immediately. They believed the induction program required too much time of these first-year teachers and it was irrelevant. They suggested making it more simplistic and

effective. In the next section, I asked these teachers to tell me what can be done at the school level to help first-year teachers.

What the school can do to help with the induction of new teachers: Perspectives from fifth through eighth-year teachers

At the school level, these teachers offered me some recommendations as well. They did understand that some things were currently being done, but they did not think it was the most effective. They suggested an orientation similar to the orientation college freshmen attended. In that orientation, someone should explain the lay-out of the campus, how to do simple tasks and basic survival functions. This math teacher began by discussing the mentor program we were doing at Jordan High.

Well, I am not sure that our teacher mentoring program is that efficient. I think things like ordering supplies, setting up textbook inventories, decorating your classroom, finding out where to get the poster paper could be addressed to take a lot of the pressure off the new teachers. I also think contributions of lesson plans from former teachers. Just use someone else's until you find your own way because that is very, very intimidating. You do not want to cheat, you do not want to copy, you do not want to beg, but good Lord, you would just like a night's sleep. So if somebody would just hand you something and say, 'here do this or here, I made sure all your supplies came in.' I think some hands-on stuff to relieve these teachers. Five days a week is just a lot.

Another teacher stated that he did think the mentor program was effective to a point. He wanted the mentor chosen to be within the same subject area. He did not think a mentor in another subject area would be as effective, especially in the high school environment.

To follow up on the mentor teacher program, I would try to make sure the mentor was at least within that teacher's department or in that teacher's subject area, and not someone out of that realm

This same teacher did agree with having mentors as well but also suggested introducing the new teachers to things they will need to survive during the first days of pre-planning.

Maybe during the first day of preplanning, get them in a group and introduce various administrative type things with the school that nobody really thinks of. Like, here is the copy room. This is what you need to do. Here is the paper. Here is this. Here is everything else. Maybe even take them on a mini-tour of the school showing them where Student Affairs is or where the gym is. I was halfway through my first year before I knew where the gym was.

Another teacher explains that new teachers need to know what happens if students are written up for discipline reasons and other “cause and effect” ideas. She suggested that new teachers do not realize the ramifications of a referral and need to be informed.

They do not really know stuff either. If you give a kid a referral, what is gonna happen to them? You do not realize that you are sentencing them to a day out of class. Some of the cause and effect stuff; what can I do and if I do this, then what? [They need] some practical situations.

Another teacher speaks of the orientation of new teachers during pre-planning. She suggested that an orientation would make their first days of teaching run much smoother. The amount of wasted time would be reduced if an orientation took place.

And, again, with the time, maybe use an hour or two hours on that first day in the afternoon to orient them. That would make things so much smoother. You would not waste time wondering, ‘If I have to be out, who do I give my leave form or where do I get the leave form from? Who needs to sign it?’

Lesson plans were a concern for this teacher. She thought the department should be able to help with this. She stated that a department wide binder could be used for lesson plans of previous semesters. She stated that this would help the new teachers because they would not have to go beg another teacher for some assistance.

I know in my department right now, we have a scope and sequence in place which has been helpful for the new teachers. Even if by department you could get a few people saying, ‘Here is some really good lesson plans or ideas or here is what I have done before.’ Even collect that in a binder at one location where you would not have to go and

embarrass yourself and beg and say, 'I am desperate.' You could just go and say, 'All right, it is here. I can grab it and use it.'

Teachers from this focus group offered several recommendations for the school that might help first-year teachers. Some discussed the effectiveness of mentors and others mentioned a department-wide binder filled with lesson plans. The most overlapping suggestion from this group was the orientation. These fifth through eighth-year teachers thought that first-year teachers need an orientation that would help explain the basic on goings within the school.

#### Teachers with at least Twenty-five Years of Teaching Experience

There were more than ten teachers at Jordan High with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience. I sent every teacher within this range an email that asked if they would be interested. Only four replied. These four teachers were not intimidated by my questions and gave honest feedback.

#### Duties of a first year teacher: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of experience

In this group of teachers with more than twenty-five years of teaching experience, they shared similar duties and responsibilities as the other three groups. They remembered specific details of their first year and how they felt. They remembered what was like to be a first-year teacher all over again. One teacher told of her first year teaching and she did not think she could have done anything else other than teaching. She was a co-sponsor and a teacher.

I co-sponsored a fine arts club with another teacher and I was not going to school at the time. I had finished and I do not think I could have gone to school and taught at the same time.

The next teacher was attempting to receive her certification since she was not a College of Education graduate. She remembered completing a portfolio and a teacher induction program. She was not required to do any extra service because her principal took care of first-year teachers.

I did the beginning teacher program and had to make a portfolio because I did not have a degree in education. I do not remember whether I was going to school or not. I did not

do any extracurricular activities. Our principal thought that new and first year teachers really needed time to get their feet on the ground with their curriculum and so he let people like us off the hook and as far as community periods and things like that. I think that they rotated through to where you had to work in the student affairs office.

This history teacher remarked that he did nothing more than teach. However, a part of his job was to fulfill his hall duty responsibilities. He began teaching with his Masters degree so he was not attending any additional college classes.

I had no extracurricular activities. We had hall duty. I was not in graduate school and I had my Masters and I was just, just a teacher.

These teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience did share similar duties to the other three focus groups. I was surprised to discover how detailed these teachers remembered their first year of teaching. Some remembered their administrator, but all remembered their duties. In the next section, I asked these teachers to tell me about the amount of support they received from veteran teachers during their first-year of teaching.

#### Teachers supporting new teachers: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience

After we discussed the amount of support that this group received as new teachers, we were immediately redirected to the support that these teachers gave new teachers. Not one of these teachers discussed the support they received as a new teacher. I did attempt to refocus the group but they continued to circle back to what kind of support they gave new teachers. These teachers stated they provided the support for new teachers. They were the teachers that were expected to give the support. Because of that, they did not receive much support from anyone. I think that it would be a mistake not to mention the titles of these teachers with at least twenty-five years of experience. Three of the four were department heads and the other teacher was someone that other teachers ask for help.

The first department chair stated that she did provide the support for new teachers. She never mentioned someone else, past or present, giving her support.

Being the department chair, I think that I provide the support to them.



This ESE department chair spoke of departments not being supportive to each other in previous years. She stated that departments had become more supportive of each other lately. According to her, the department she was in had to support each other.

Being in the ESE department we are kind of a whole school in ourselves. Up until a few years ago, our departments were not real supportive to each other. Change has been good for the past few years. But we have always supported each other because we had to.

These teachers did not speak about the support they received from veteran teachers their first-year of teaching. The chose to focus on the support they gave to first-year teachers. With three of these teachers being heads of the department, I would think that the support they were giving was what these first-year teachers needed. In the next section, I asked these teachers about the perceived amount of support they receive from administrators at Jordan.

#### Administrators supporting teachers: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five year of experience

I was not surprised to discover that these teachers did not receive much support from administrators, but they did not desire their support. They felt comfortable having them in the background as resources. They understood what is expected of them. Three of these teachers had been at Jordan longer than all of the administrators. Some explained what they needed from administrators. One teacher stated that administrators told her what she needed to do and how to get what she needed. She made it appear that administrators told her what she was going to do and then she did what she was told.

With administrators, it is more like they are the people who are gonna tell me what I am gonna teach and what things I need to turn in who, through whom I have to go and get supplies rather than them being support. I do not know.

This history teacher did not want support from administrators but did want some explanations. He wanted to know why an administrator did not order textbooks.

I do not get a lot of support from them but I am not looking for that. Administratively, supporting things, it is the big stuff that gets me. Like why an administrator could not order text books, why an administrator would intentionally not purchase teaching

materials for three teachers knowing that three people would teach a course, and they applied two.

Another veteran English teacher believed that administrators do more now than they did when she began teaching. She might have made this comment to understand why she did not receive much support from administrators.

I think administrators have a lot more that they are contending with now than the first year I taught.

The ESE department head stated that she did receive all the support she needed. She alluded to her subject area, ESE, as to why she received the support.

As far as administrative support, because of what I am doing, when I need support I usually get it. It is usually a very positive response when I need support.

This group of teachers stated that they did not receive much support from administrators. They did not want any more support from administrators other than what they were already receiving. They wanted some more explanations but not support. This next section, I asked these teachers with twenty-five or more years of experience to tell me about the relationships that they had with administrators.

#### Relationships with administration: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience

I asked these teachers to describe their relationships with administrators. I noticed that most of these teachers described their relationships with the administrators as formal. They differentiated between the formal and personal relationships when they spoke of certain administrators. Some teachers were more comfortable with a few administrators as opposed to others. Some teachers did not desire a relationship with any administrator. This teacher explained her relationship with administrators as formal and suggested that she was ignored by administrators at times.

In many ways the relationships are formal, especially with one administrator who is rather formal. I am very opinionated person and I put my opinions out there. Some just

ignore me and some listen. It is important to be heard. I do not always feel like I am heard.

Another English teacher described her relationship as professional. She stated that when she wanted something done, she found an administrator.

Yeah, it is just very professional. I think that my main relationship is when I need things done, I go to the administrators.

One teacher did mention that she talked with the principal quite often but did not seem to be concerned about having a personal relationship. She suggested that they take care of school issues and that was all.

I talk to the principal fairly regularly, mostly about issues, teachers' supplies and things like that rather than about you know, establishing any kind of a relationship.

One teacher discussed the visibility of the administration. He did state that he saw administrators but he did not agree with what they were doing. Later he explained his primary communication was through email.

I see some administrators every day, mostly while they are not doing what I think they should be doing that is standing there for publicity reasons instead of walking the halls and actually administrating the school. I see people when I have a question or a problem or a concern or email them and that is pretty much my contact. Sometimes an administrator comes to ask me about something and so it is fairly professional.

The ESE department head stated that she saw an administrator daily and felt comfortable addressing an administrator when she has a problem. She mentioned asking for assistance when something was "getting bad."

I see somebody daily, not everybody daily, maybe not principal. I feel very comfortable with the assistant principals this year asking any of them for advice, or to do something or whatever when things are getting bad.

This English teacher explained the visibility of the administration was good, but she would like to see all administrators and not a select few. She did address the relationship that she had with the administrators. She suggested that she had a formal relationship with the principal and that she did not go to the principal unless she needed something.

I probably see an administrator every day in some form or fashion. I think a few of the assistant principals are more visible than others and I would like to see more visibility for the entire team out. As another teacher said, not necessarily all out there, five people waiting for parent pick up drop off, but at other places in the school. With the principal, I have a more formal relationship. I do not go unless I need something. I always believe in giving someone a heads up and generally my dealings are with either getting for a leave, or with the field trips, the Omni Plus days I do and, and that sort of thing.

These teachers with at least twenty-five years of experience did not have a personal relationship with administrators. They discussed how they did see administrators frequently but they still did not have a personal relationship. In the next section, I asked these teachers to offer possible reasons why teachers leave Jordan High.

Reasons for leaving Jordan High: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience.

Teachers from this focus group did list possible reasons for leaving Jordan High. Some were similar to what the other teachers had stated, but they did not believe that teachers were going to other schools in the county. They believed that these teachers were leaving the county entirely. This history teacher believed that other teachers have left Jordan because of the mobility. He also suggested that teachers might leave the profession entirely.

I do not think teachers leaving us leave to work in the county. I think it is a mobile population and that is why they leave. Or they have decided they are no longer going to be teachers.

This ESE teacher listed several possible reasons why a teacher would leave her specific content area. She did stress duties that came directly with being an ESE teacher like stress and

paperwork, but she mentioned some items that came directly from Jordan High such as, the administration and discipline. She gave me reasons why former ESE teachers have left Jordan.

The friends that I have that are at other schools, he is at another school now. Lots of people from here are at different schools. I have had some really good teachers who have left teaching completely because of ... Well there is so much involved with ESE, the paperwork accountability. The stress, you do not get a lot of pats on the back for doing that. And I have had several really, really good teachers leave here to go to other places. Not that they are necessarily interested in making more money, which they are doing, but sometimes the, the administration, the discipline and that has sent them away. I think some of the people that did leave, left when the schools started being graded and more money was given to other schools.

Again this English teacher reiterated teachers moving for something other than what has taken place at Jordan High School. She believed that they were not leaving to go another school within the county. She thought they were leaving for personal reasons.

I know we had someone leave because her fiancé was moving down south, so she moved down south. Somebody was moving to Atlanta because they just wanted to go to grad school and meet more people.

This chemistry teacher stated that she could not handle the discipline that was entailed in classes outside of the IB program. If she was not in the IB program, she would leave.

If it were not for the IB program I think it would be a stepping stone to me. Because what I see in some of the classes I do not wanna deal with it. I would leave. It is hard here. It is a smaller school. You have to teach more preps and I could teach at a bigger school. I could teach one prep and it would be a lot easier. There are some discipline things I am not sure I could really handle if I was put in different classes. I think that is true for some other teachers. They may have left teaching, where maybe they would not have left if they had been at a different school.

These teachers provided several reasons that a teacher might leave Jordan High. Among those listed, factors having nothing to with Jordan High School or teaching were the most noted.

These teachers felt that teachers left for personal reasons rather than school related issues. I asked these teachers to inform me what teachers needed to stay at Jordan in the next section.

Keeping teachers at Jordan: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience

After we discussed possible ways to keep teachers at this school, the veteran teachers listed several different possible solutions. Most teachers discussed having an effective mentor but some teachers listed ideas such as geographic locations, teachers getting together after school, and reducing work loads. The teacher induction program was an issue for a few.

The first teacher, literally, gave me a laundry list of ideas. He suggested multiple remedies to aid new teachers. The most revealing suggestion was the belongingness that he remembered as a new teacher. He played basketball with other new teachers and that helped him make it.

Okay, laundry list. They need more preparation. They need a room, not floating, I think that is gone. They need no beginning teacher for a ramp, which is not an option because it takes up time, they do not have any. They need a peer teacher or mentor or someone to work with. I do not see any benefit in the beginning teacher program. They need to feel like they belong. One of the first year teachers is, via email, inviting first year teachers and mean, old codgers that wanted to go, to meet after school. That is exactly what they need. There were several of us that were first year teachers and we played basketball after school. We were out there in the rain and it was great for belonging. It was great for stress management. It was a little exercise. They need them all. And that is I think a failure overall of the, this school, I do not mean this administration right now. It has been a long time. This was a very close knit faculty that did things not all together but in groups and clumps. We shared things together whether it was our story or whatever, but if you are not brought in as part of a group, then they are outsiders. They do not work and so many of them are treated like stepchildren and on the outside, in my opinion.

The ESE department head remembered surviving because of other teachers. A group of teachers, who were friends, would slip out on a Friday afternoon. They would go to a restaurant and have appetizers and drinks. This environment provided a safe-haven for them to relax and discuss disasters and successes.

When I first came here, we went out Friday afternoons. We went out and just being able to share in a non-threatening situation what went on that day. We talked about what was good and what was bad. It was just a session where you could be honest and open. I did have a friend tell me that there is a beginning teacher here now who had relayed to her that she felt really alone here because she did not have friends.

Something this Chemistry teacher said that has been a reoccurring comment was the sense of belonging. She felt like she belonged to Jordan High School. This teacher believed that being welcomed is what is needed by new teachers.

I think being welcomed; the sense of belonging, no matter what program you come from is needed. I also think you need the room, the one prep and materials, and if your department can give you some kind of scope and sequence, classroom management and really nipping any behavior problems immediately.

When I came here the wonderful thing was the department chair. It was so different from the other school where everybody was out for themselves. It was a year that I could do a lot of crying and he would listen. That is what people need is someone who will listen, will not judge them, and will just help them. I think these young teachers come in very idealistic and want things to be perfect and they do not know how to handle things in a way that will help them. I know I learned a lot by going in and seeing other teachers and how they handled their students; just dropping in or passing through. It was so eye opening and he was so respectful to his teachers, to his students. That is what helped me the most.

This same teacher also believed that administration does not embrace different cultures. She provided examples of two teachers who were not re-hired after their first year of teaching. She stated that she understood why one teacher was not asked to return but she did not believe that the administration gave the second teacher enough time or support.

One of the things that has really bothered me in the past couple years is the intolerance of the administration for people of different cultural backgrounds. We have had two people from the Middle East. One of them probably was not cut out to be a teacher but the other one was. There was no acceptance of their culture, or working with them, or helping them see things different in an American way so that they could cope. It was like just getting rid of you. I would have been kicked out of this school my first year.

This same Chemistry teacher thought that administrators need to help our teacher develop into becoming more effective in the classroom. She believed that veteran teachers can teach simple tools that might be taken for granted.

I think that we need to grow our teachers and work with them and help them to learn how to do it. Teach them to be kind if they need to be kind, stricter if they need to be stricter, but help their perspective. Even in my department meeting, I was saying how to respond to parents at open house, and one of the new teachers said, you are a real conflict avoider, aren't you? And I did not say anything but then I thought, as a teacher you do learn when it is important to stir up conflict.

These teachers with at least twenty-five years of experience offered several suggestions in how to keep teachers at Jordan. One teacher listed being more culturally aware of teachers, while another teacher provided a laundry list of needs. The need for the sense of belonging to some group or organization was what I noticed throughout their responses. In the next section, I asked teachers in this group to tell me what new teacher needed from veteran teachers.

#### What new teachers need from veteran teachers: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of experience

These veteran teachers of more than twenty-five years had many suggestions about what new teachers needed from veteran teachers. Not surprising at all, the veteran teachers and the first-year teachers had the same ideas. These veteran teachers did know what the new teachers needed. This history teacher explained that writing lesson plans in college and writing them for a real high school class was not the same. He believed that the new teachers did not know how to differentiate instruction among learning levels.

Trying to write lesson plans that are not written for a college class and trying to match the level of instruction with the level of the kids they get is much more difficult. They have no experience on which to base that. Sometimes they need encouragement when things are not going so well. They are not sure whether it is them or the students. What they were trying, they do not know. So they need to talk with somebody who knows.



An English teacher stated that first-year teachers needed help defining roles. She believed that a first-year teacher should not worry about being a member of any group. She thought the first-year teacher needed to focus on being a teacher first.

Not in all cases, but I think they need specific guidance in terms of being a teacher first and a friend second. I have seen teachers get caught up in being one of the groups. It can lead to severe consequences.

This same teacher also talked about preparing enough material so that instruction will last the entire class time. She thought that most first-year teachers did not have enough prepared and veteran teachers should demonstrate what fifty minutes looks like.

The other thing would be timing. How much do you need to have for a period of fifty minutes? You can never have too much, you can always bump something back but there is nothing worse than being a beginning teacher, you have done your lesson plans, and you have got ten or fifteen minutes left.

These teachers did offer ideas that were similar to the first-year teachers as to what veteran teachers should be doing. Their comments consisted of many similar suggestions. These teachers with twenty-five and more years of experience focused on providing some support through lesson plans and simple items that first-year teachers come in contact. In the next section, I asked these teachers what teachers need from administrators.

#### What teachers need from administrators: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience

These teachers in this group did not need much help. They did not even expect support from an administrator. They have been teaching longer than three of the administrators have been alive and stated that they would ask for support when they needed it. This history teacher did not need or expect support from administrators. He was secure in what he was doing and just wanted to be allowed to teach. He only wanted support when he requested it from administrators.

Just support me when I need help.

He still desired help when it was needed, but this teacher just asked that administrators let them do their jobs. He did not want someone telling him what or how to teach. His quote was one that I thought was the most powerful finding in the entire research. It said,

Let us do what we do. We are micromanaged sometimes and that does not work very well at least for high school teachers, is what I observe. And then support when it is necessary.

This English teacher made the same comments when she stated that she only wanted support when it was needed. She gave me specific examples as to when she needed it.

I would say support when I need it, especially with discipline and parents.

These teachers with at least twenty-five years of experience did not need much support from administrators. They wanted to be allowed to “do what they do.” They did not want to “micro-managed.” They stated that they would let an administrator know when support was needed. In the next section, I asked these teachers to tell me what kind of relationship they would like to have with other teachers.

#### Desired relationships with other teachers: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience

Most of these veteran teachers made the same comments about relationships with other teachers. They wanted a personal relationship early in their career. They wanted someone to go get a drink with or play basketball with after school, but now they have families and did not need friendships. They were comfortable with a professional relationship only. This teacher explained that he had a personal relationship at the beginning of his career but now that did not happen so much. He stated that time changed these relationships.

That has changed. In the beginning, it was more collegial and I said we played basketball and did things after school. There is less and less of that that goes on over time and while my focus when I am here is the five classes that I have. Beyond dealing with people professionally, I have no real interest now.

The ESE Department Head echoed with a similar response. She stated that having a friend at school may be nice at times, but she thought that high school activities did not allow for “chit chat.” She suggested that she was too busy to get caught up in having a personal relationship.

I agree. The older I get the younger everybody else gets. You lose a little bit of the social thing and it would be kind of nice sometimes to let down and talk. If somebody comes by, I will start getting nervous because I am thinking I have got stuff to do. I do not have time to chit chat.

This chemistry teacher had mixed emotions about personal relationships at school. She thought it had both good and bad attributes. She was okay with a professional relationship at this point in her career but she still believed there can be “medium.”

I tend to think that, the old days of the teachers’ lounge was a mix of a good and a bad thing. You did see other teachers but then you would get into how awful somebody was. If you were not careful when you left, you would be totally depressed. It is kind of sad that when you are so busy and so stressed that we can get here at seven in the morning and leave at four, and work during our planning period and not have time to have a conversation with someone except when we are signing in. I have seen a lot more of that. At this point [I prefer] more professional but it would be nice to maybe have a few more opportunities, a medium.

Having a personal relationship with other teachers was not a priority for this group of teachers anymore. In the early stages of their careers, they did have personal relationships but now they are content with having a strictly professional relationship. They did not have time or the desire to have a friendship with another teacher outside of the school day. In the next section, I asked these teachers to tell me about the kind of relationships they would want with administrators.

#### Desired relationships with administrators: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience

After these teachers told me about their desired relationships with teachers, I assumed that the same would be true for the administrators. These veteran teachers leaned toward a more professional relationship with administration sprinkled with a touch of a personal relationship. They wanted to be respected as professionals and limited friendships to a minimal. This English teacher wanted respect professionally. She would like to have both but being professional was more important to her.

I think it is nice to be able to have both. The professional is more important because I want that support and I want you to respect me as a professional.

This chemistry teacher wanted professionalism from administration but she wanted to feel comfortable while dealing with an administrator.

I think professionalism more important but I think it is important to be able to feel that comfortable in going in and talking with an administrator about anything.

This history teacher believed that administrators should be used as resources and should be in the “background.” He suggested that they should make sure that teachers have what they need to be effective. He also believed that administrators should employ a combination of personal relationships and professionalism. He did not like the idea of a dictatorship.

The ideal administration in a school should hire good teachers, provide support and then sort of acknowledge along the way that it is the teaching, the classroom, that is the most important thing. Administrators, in the perfect world, are the background. They are the support staff. They do the paperwork, they do the ordering, and they make everything move smoothly. They knock the corners off the problems but they let us do what we do. It works better if it is a mixed collegial, professional but if it is gonna be a dictatorial system, then it is reduced only to professional and that is it.

The majority of these teachers wanted to keep their relationships with administrators on a professional level. They talked about respect as professional and administrators being in the background supporting teachers. The next section I asked these teachers to give me suggestions for what the district could do to help new teachers.

#### What the district can do to help with the induction of new teachers: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience

I realized right away that these teachers were not certain what were being done at the district level regarding new teachers. They did hear rumors from the new teachers but were not totally aware of the situation. I did notice that some of the veteran teachers did not believe that our induction of new teachers, at the district level, was effective. They explained the problems with what they have been told of the induction program and offered these suggestions to the district office.

Pairing them up with any mentor was not effective, according to our history teacher. He believed that a mentor must be chosen selectively to be effective. He also mentioned that the district needed to be leery of mentors that were doing it strictly for the money.

I think very careful selection of the teacher that they are going to be paired with would be helpful. You cannot just pair them with anybody. You cannot pair them with people that are gonna do it for the money and you cannot pair them with people who are just trying to mark the days off until their sentence is up.

This same teacher suggested that if a new teacher had someone who they can truly use a sounding board then mentors would be more effective. He also mentioned placing some measure of accountability with the mentors.

But if they have somebody they can go to and complain to and ask questions of, that would be more helpful than anything else the district could do. The district has to have some kind of accountability where the teachers are documenting that they are doing certain things and someone is doing secretarial stuff, maybe critiquing those things. Having someone that they could talk with, work with, would be the most helpful thing which is not the way the system is set up.

This history teacher mentioned his time he spent as a mentor. He did not think it was effective.

I have been the peer teacher, the second place person for a social studies teacher and an English teacher. I get to see them three times or four times a year and they are in a different place. That is not a real effective system.

A chemistry teacher recommended that the district provide some additional funding for release time of new teacher. She thought that this additional time would give the new teachers more opportunities for observation.

I wish there was funding made available so that the new teachers had some release time to do all of the things that they are required to do. They might go do some observations or you know just do something with other teachers.

These teachers did make some suggestions in regards to the district induction program. I am not certain that these teachers knew how the induction process currently works, but they still

offered their thoughts. In this next section, I asked these teachers what can be done at the school level to help with the induction of new teachers.

What the school can do to help with the induction of new teachers: Perspectives from teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience

These teachers have been at Jordan for a long time. Three of the four have been at Jordan for over 20 years. They did have some suggestions, at the school level, to help with the induction of first-year teachers. Some suggestions that were mentioned were fewer preps, limiting extracurricular activities, and hire teachers based on teaching ability instead of what they could possibly coach. This English teacher briefly discussed budget considerations for release time and limiting the number of preparation periods a new teacher has.

If there was some way in the budget for some release time or if there was a way when you were doing the master schedule that there are fewer preps, that would help.

This same teacher believed that new teachers oftentimes take on too many things beyond the school day. She stated that the number of extracurricular activities should be limited.

The extracurricular things that new teachers are involved in sometimes take much time than their classes. It is not an easy thing. I know that the money, the extra supplements and stuff are enticing but that might not be a good thing to even give them the option to have those.

This chemistry teacher believed that administrators use the leverage of not being a contracted teacher. She suggested that new teachers are taken advantage of because of the vulnerability of their current teaching position.

That is one of the biggest things I think. In a school where people have been doing things for years and years, you are always looking to pass it on at some point. I think the new teachers get taken advantage of. I think sometimes they have the perception that if they do not take it, they will not be rehired or they will not get the job in the first place.

After a teacher is hired, this history teacher suggested that is the time when administrators should ask if they are willing to coach or do anything extracurricular. They should not be considered for a teaching job based on their qualifications as a coach.

If, in the course of an interview I ask a prospective employee if they are willing to coach softball, I clearly imply that is important here, so that cannot come up. Now after

the fact, after they are hired as a teacher, which would be a revolutionary concept, ‘okay, this has nothing to do with your job. Obviously I have hired you because I think you are the right person for this job.

Are you able, or are you willing to be an assistant in this or do you want to do that?’

This English teacher suggested that administrators “dump” all of the extracurricular things on them. They get what is left from the classes that have been picked over by the veterans, which are oftentimes, the more difficult classes.

Often they [new teachers] get the leftovers. We dump all the other stuff on them. We pick the classes that we want to teach and they get the leftovers. That means they get two of the three preparations and they get the classes that no one else wanted to teach.

These teachers did provide some valuable information in assisting the induction program at the school level. I noted that these teachers felt that first-year teachers are given too many responsibilities, the least amount of resources and the most difficult classes.

### Chapter Summary

In this chapter, interviews from four different groups of teachers have been presented. Each group was asked exactly the same questions and their responses were recorded. After each group’s findings were documented, the groups were then combined together. After this combining of groups, percentages were calculated so that interpretation of the findings would be easily observable for practitioners.

## CHAPTER 5

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Introduction

The intent of this research was to discover why teachers leave high minority, low-socio-economic high schools. My hopes were to identify factors that contribute to the retention of novice teachers. My research demonstrated some ideas that were parallel with the review of literature, but findings that were not mentioned in the review of literature were discovered as well.

I have discovered that teachers do need much support in the first-year of teaching and it decreases drastically after that first year. I hope that this study will change the way researchers think about teacher attrition and retention in high-minority high schools.

In this chapter, each group was briefly summarized individually and compared to the literature. An individual graph for each group was provided followed by a graph that represented the group as a whole. I concluded this chapter with recommendations at the school and district level, followed by a section that addressed areas for future research.

#### Perceptions from First-Year Teachers

According to my findings, first-year teachers were perceived to require the greatest amount of support. They sought assistance from multiple sources: administrators, veteran teachers, mentor teachers, and other first-year teachers. In order to make the induction process more effective, new teachers explained that they need: differentiated instruction between college of education majors and non-college of education majors, instruction from teachers with similar backgrounds, attending induction program before school begins, a limited amount of meetings during the school week, no weekend meetings, and more usable information for classroom.

These new teachers also suggested that the role of mentors should change, they wanted: constructive criticism, someone who is available if needed, and encouragement. First-year teachers wanted both personal and professional relationships from teachers and administrators alike. One suggestion that every new teacher acknowledged was that they needed an orientation of the school. They needed to know: how to fill out a leave slip, where the gym was, where to



park, how to write a referral, how to grade papers, and other things that are taken for granted by veterans at the school.



Figure 1: *First-year Teachers' Perceptions of Needs*

Much of the literature review provided an accurate picture of the support teachers needed in their first year of teaching. The review of literature discussed peer support and administrator support. In the next section, I compared my findings with those of the literature in terms of peer support.

#### Peer support for new teachers: Revisiting the literature in light of the findings

Literature on teacher retention and attrition discussed first-year teachers needing peer support to remain in the profession (Hertzog, 2002; Hope, 1999; Schemp, et.al, 1999; Worthy, 2005). I did find this to be among the new teachers in my focus group. They did perceive a need for assistance from other teachers. These first-year teachers also perceived a need for both a personal and professional relationship with other teachers. Although some first-year teachers wanted a relationship with another teacher for different reasons all stated that they could not had made it without the assistance and conversation with either another first-year teacher or a veteran teacher.

The literature surrounding peer support discussed mentors (Matthews & Crow, 2003; McPartland, 1985; Tickle, 1994) and induction programs (Ingersoll, et al, 2004; Menchaca, 2003; Seyfarth, 2005; Smylie, 1995) as a way to help new teachers through their first year in the profession. My findings did not suggest the same as the literature review with either the induction program or mentors.

These first-year teachers believed that the induction program demanded too much. It was not effective because: 1) items were not addressed in a timely manner conducive to school (for example, classroom management should not be taught in January), 2) the college of education majors should not be in the same group as the non-college of education majors (for example, college of education majors have probably already had an ethics class and should not be required to attend), 3) the amount of time that is required during the week and weekends was too much (for example, focus groups meet for three hours during the week and some meetings take place on Saturday), and 4) the added duties the extra meetings require are not needed as a first-year teacher (for example, teachers should be given only basic survival skills in the first year and any unnecessary meetings, such as blood pathogen trainings, should be eliminated).

These first-year teachers did not think that the way mentor teachers were being used was effective either. They did not see their mentors regularly and they did not feel that their mentor

really wanted to help. They believed that their mentor did their job because they felt obligated since they were receiving a pay check. They would much rather receive help from a veteran teacher in the same subject area that was genuinely interested in their well-being.

I have compared the review of literature to my findings and have realized that first-year teachers' perceptions are similar to the literature in that they did want a personal and professional relationship with another teacher. However, I did find some inconsistencies in the literature and my findings. These first-year teachers in my study did not agree with the use of mentors and did not think the induction program was as effective as it could be. In this next section, I have compared my findings regarding the support given by an administrator to the literature review.

#### Administrative support for new teachers: Revisiting the literature in light of the findings

Within the literature, administrative support is believed to be an important part of a first-year teacher's success (Colley, 2002; Hope, 1999; Worthy, 2005). After conducting my research, findings suggested that first-year teachers do need support from administrators. These first-year teachers, remaining consistent with the literature (Eggens, 2002; Grady, 1997; Matthews, et.al, 2003), did expect administrators to be supportive of them. New teachers wanted an administrator to at least appear to be concerned with what is happening in their classroom. These first-year teachers wanted an administrator to stop by their classroom and check on them. They wanted to feel appreciated by administrators.

The teachers at Jordan High wanted an administrator to explain the effectiveness and expectations of evaluations, as Hope (1999) suggested. They wanted an administrator to inform them of what an evaluation is used for. They wanted to know how often they would be evaluated and what to expect from the administrator giving the evaluations.

Finally, teachers suggested that administrators need to eliminate the unnecessary projects that teachers are required to do (Stansbury, 2000) and teachers at Jordan agreed. They did not want to attend countless faculty meetings or trainings after school. They did not want to be involved in something that would not help them become more effective in the classroom.

Some inconsistencies did arise between the literature review and the findings. The literature suggested that principals should develop some type of personal relationship with new teachers (Hope, 1999; Ingersoll, 2003; Matthews & Crow, 2003; Stansbury, 2000). Interestingly, I did find that was not the case at Jordan High. These new teachers did not want to

have more than a professional relationship with any administrators. Having a personal relationship with an administrator was not a priority for these first-year teachers.

### Perceptions from Third and Fourth-Year Teachers

These third and fourth year teachers' perceptions of what they needed were much lower than first-year teachers. They did not need an orientation or an induction program. They did not need someone to show them how to take a day off. They already knew the physical lay-out of the campus and understand the happenings surrounding the school. These teachers did not need as much as the first-year teachers.

The teachers from this focus group needed support from other teachers. Third and fourth-year teachers stated that they wanted someone to notice them when they were doing a good job and not only make comments when they were doing something incorrect. They asked for other teachers to notice them when they were doing a good job. They also wanted an administrator to acknowledge them when they were doing something well. They wanted an administrator to occasionally stop by and tell them that they enjoyed their lesson and give some positive feedback when things were going well.

These third and fourth-year teachers wanted administrators to "have their backs" when things got difficult. They wanted to know that when an angry parent or unhappy student went to an administrator, that the administrator would support the teacher. They did want both personal and professional relationships with teachers and administrators. They did believe that being sociable at work would make the day go by much faster.

The table below (Table 2) was a representation of the third and fourth-year teachers perceived needs. These third and fourth-year teachers suggested that there were seven things that they needed in order to survive the first year of teaching. They were: support from administration when needed, support from veteran teachers occasionally, support from other third and fourth-year teachers, personal relationships with teachers, professional relationships with teachers, personal relationships with administrators, and professional relationships with administrators. In the next section, I compared my findings to the literature review regarding third and fourth-year teachers' perceptions about peer support.



Figure 2: *Third and Fourth-Year Teachers' Perceptions of Needs*

Perceptions of peer support for third and fourth-year teachers: Revisiting the literature in light of the findings

The literature suggested that third and fourth-year teachers do need support from other teachers (Hertzog, 2002; Hope, 1999; Schemp, et.al, 1999; Worthy, 2005). According to my findings, they did not perceive that they needed as much support from peers as they did when they were first year teachers. In fact, these third and fourth-year teachers stated that there is a huge drop-off in the amount of support they perceived to need between their first and second year of teaching. They suggested that they needed very little support from their peers after their first year of teaching.

These third and fourth-year teachers stated that they did not need a mentor teacher as the literature suggested (Matthews & Crow, 2003; McPartland, 1985; Tickle, 1994). They also did

not need assistance from veteran teachers with grading or curriculum and did not to be instructed how to take a day off work or an orientation of the campus. They did understand these duties since they have been a teacher for a few years. The perceived support needed from peers, according the third and fourth-year teachers, was not needed as much after the first year. In the next section, I compared my findings on third and fourth-year teachers' perceptions to the literature on peer support.

#### Perceptions of administrative support for third and fourth-year teachers: Revisiting the literature in light of the findings

The literature stated that administrative support was important to the success of teachers within the first five years of teaching (Colley, 2002; Hope, 1999; Worthy, 2005). However, according to these third and fourth year teachers, they did not need any administrative support except on occasion. They stated that they wanted the administrator to stop by their classrooms and let them know that they are doing a good job. They did not want to see an administrator every day. They did divulge that they needed much support from administrators during their first year of teaching but they only wanted support when times became difficult. They wanted an administrator to be there for them in a time of need. They stated that they did not need as much encouragement from administration as new teachers but they would like some positive words at times.

Another issue arose when these teachers discussed the desired relationships between administrators and teachers. The literature suggested administrators should develop a relationship with teachers (Hope, 1999; Ingersoll, 2003; Stansburry, 2000). These third and fourth year teachers did not share those ideas. They were not concerned with the relationship between teachers and administrators but focused more so on the professional relationship. They stated that they did not want a personal relationship to negatively impact their professional relationship, so to prevent that, they preferred to keep their relationships professional.

#### Perceptions from Fifth through Eighth-Year Teachers

Just as the third and fourth-year teachers had stated, the fifth through eighth-year teachers did not need much support from other teachers or administrators. These fifth through eighth-year teachers also stated that needed much support during their first year of teaching but they did not need as much now since they had been in the teaching profession for a few years. The teachers in

this group were content with little interaction from teachers and administrators. They did not think that administrators should be the ones providing the support to first-year teachers. They believed that support should come from other teachers and not administrators.

They wanted, just as the third and fourth year teachers, to have administrators occasionally notice the good job they are doing and support them when they need it. They did not expect much more from administrators. They did want a collegial and a professional relationship with both administrators and teachers.



Figure 3: *Fifth through Eighth-Year Teachers' Perceptions of Needs*

### Perceptions of peer support from fifth through eighth-year teachers: Revisiting the literature in light of the findings

In my findings, teachers within this group articulated the same needs as peers from the third and fourth-year teachers. The literature surrounding retention suggested that teachers need support the first five years of teaching (Hertzog, 2002; Hope, 1999; Schemp, et al, 1999; Worthy, 2005). However, these teachers with five to eight years of experience in my focus groups did not agree. They stated that they did need support in their first-year of teaching but they did not need that support anymore.

These teachers already understand what it takes to be a teacher and the amount of assistance they need from other teachers is minimal. Teachers with five to eight-years of experience are familiar with the campus and understand the logistics within the school. They did not need a mentor or an induction program. They did not need another teacher to assist them with grading. They really did not need much from other teachers. Since most of these teachers have families, they actually began to search for personal relationships even less. They stated that they have limited these personal relationships and placed a stronger emphasis on professionalism.

### Perceptions of administrative support from fifth through eighth-year teachers: Revisiting the literature in light of the findings

Researcher has suggested that administrative support is important in the success of teachers during their first five years of teaching experience (Colley, 2002; Hope, 1999; Worthy, 2005). Again, just as the third and fourth-year teachers suggested, the teachers in this focus group did not need assistance from administration as often as they did during their first-year of teaching. They stated that they wanted support from the administrators in their first-year of teaching, but not now.

These teachers with five to eight-years of experience did not need an administrator to explain the importance of an evaluation or constantly tell them that they were doing a good job. These teachers needed support from administrators when conflict arose. I would be careless not to mention that these teachers did state that they needed an occasional compliment and an administrator to be concerned with what they are doing. Although, these teachers stated that having a personal relationship with administration is not important to them.



### Perceptions from Teachers with at least Twenty-five Years of Experience

After I interviewed teachers with twenty-five years or more years of experience, I discovered that they did not ask for much from any individual at Jordan High. They did not want help from other teachers or any of the administrators. They wanted to be supported when they ask for it and be allowed to “do what they do.”

These teachers with at least twenty-five years of teaching experience suggested that they were okay with being left alone. They appeared to be satisfied with being disconnected from the rest of the staff at Jordan High. They did not really desire a friendship with either teachers or administrators. They proposed to me that they would be happy to come teach their five periods each day and go home. They were the ones giving the support to the first-year teachers. They expected nothing from administrators or teachers but to be treated as a professional.



Figure 4: *Teachers with at least Twenty-five Years of Experience: Perceptions of Needs*

Perceptions of peer support from teachers with at least twenty-five year of teaching experience: Revisiting the literature in light of the findings

Research has suggested that teachers, regardless of the number of years teaching, need support from other teachers (Feinman-Nemser, 2003; Hertzog, 2002). That was not the case for the teachers in my study. In my focus group containing teachers with twenty-five or more years of teaching experience, they did not perceive a need for assistance from other teachers. After teaching for this long of time, they did not need any other teacher telling them how to teach.

Because of the amount of time these teachers have taught, they became steadfast in what they were doing in the classroom. They have been teaching for almost three decades and should understand how to teach by now. They might be interested in observing what another teacher is doing in their classroom to keep their instruction new and fresh, but they were self sufficient and suggested that they need little support. They stated that if they needed support from another teacher, they would go and ask for it.

The amount of support that teachers in this group received from other teachers is minimal at best. In fact, these teachers were the ones giving the support to other teachers and rarely received any support from other teachers. They were content with having professional relationships with other teachers. They have seen many teachers come and go through Jordan High and were not seeking friendships anymore. Since most of these teachers were more interested in their own families, they were happy to go home to their families when school is over.

Perceptions of Administrative support from teachers with at least twenty-five year of experience: Revisiting the literature in light of the findings

Researchers suggested that teachers remain in the profession partially because of support from administrators (Eggens, 2002; Grady, 1997, Worthy, 2005). Once more, that was not the case for these teachers with at least twenty-five years of experience in my research. Nevertheless, these teachers with twenty-five or more years of experience disagreed with needing support from administrators.

These teachers suggested that the reason they made it was because of another teacher supporting them along the way and not the administrator. In fact, these teachers have seen many administrators, both which they have classified as poor and strong leaders, come in for a brief

period of time and then leave Jordan High. These teachers with twenty-five or more years of experience were still at Jordan and administrators were not a direct result of that.

Administrative support was not expected most from these teachers in my study. They, in agreement with every group but the new teachers, only wanted assistance from administration when it is needed. For example, they wanted administrators to assist them when dealing with an angry parent or a difficult student. Other than that, they wanted to be left alone to do their jobs. They did not want a personal relationship with administrators and were happy keeping it professional.

### Discussion

My findings have suggested that perceptions of support needed decreases as the years of teaching experience increase. For example, first-year teachers perceived that they need support from almost every available being. They suggested that they need assistance from both the district and the school. They suggested they needed a mentor and an orientation of the school. They also wanted to have a veteran teacher that would share their lesson plans with them. They would like to have another teacher to talk with. An administrator that supported them through the first-year was another wish that they had as a first-year teacher. They required some additional assistance learning the intricacies within the school as an organization.

However after the first-year of teaching, the perceptions of kind of support needed had a tendency to diminish with time. The perceived needs and support appeared to remain the same between the third and fourth-year teachers and the fifth through eighth-year teachers. These two groups needed identical things. The teachers with twenty-five or more years of experience needed the least support of all. They wanted to be allowed to their jobs. These veterans did admit to needing support at times, but only when it is something they could not handle alone. In conclusion, my findings suggested that as the number of years experience of a teacher increase, the perceived amount of support needed drops drastically. This level of needs, based from years of teaching experience, is represented below.

Figure 5: *Teachers Perceptions of Needs for All Groups*

Years of Teaching Experience	Induction Program	Support from Mentor	Orientation of School	Help with Grading	Help with Lesson Plans	Collegial Relationships with Administrators	Collegial Relationships with Administrators	Support from Veteran Teachers	Professional Relationships from Teachers	Professional Relationships from Administrators	Support from Peers	Support from Administrators
First Year Teachers	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Third and Fourth Year Teachers						X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Fifth through Eighth Year Teachers						X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Twenty-five or more Year Teachers									X	X	X	X

## Recommendations

My recommendations are based from the findings of my study and what the literature had to say about teacher retention and attrition in high schools. I revisited and critiqued what the literature said about teacher retention and attrition to my findings. I made recommendations for the school and the district level using this research as my guide.

### Recommendations to assist the school in retaining teachers

Veteran teachers should support first-year teachers to be certain that these first-year teachers remain in the profession. First-year teachers in my study stated that they needed help from veteran teachers. Veteran teachers should:

1. welcome new teachers the first day of school. Each new teacher should feel like they are a part of the school the very first day. Veteran teachers should aggressively introduce themselves to new teachers and offer any assistance possible.
2. offer and provide assistance concerning lesson plans, grading and other curriculum matters. Veteran teachers should give new teachers copies of old lesson plans and tell them how they calculate their grades. Multiple teachers should seek out new teachers and offer their assistance with any curriculum or grading issues.
3. be certain that new teachers are receiving support from teachers within the department. The department head should introduce the new teacher to the entire department, set up a weekly meeting with new teacher and offer assistance often.
4. give new teachers a tour of the school facility. Several teachers should offer to show the new teacher around the school and explain where things are located. Giving more than one tour of the facility is acceptable.
5. demonstrate how to use copy machines, check email, input grades, take attendance, and any other duty that a new teacher must do. This process will not happen in one day and will require more than one veteran teacher to accomplish. A new teacher needs all other that have been there before to help with explaining the way things are run around the school.

6. demonstrate for new teachers how to fill out a leave slip and other items that must follow protocol. Within a school, there are certain protocols that must be followed and without the assistance of a veteran teacher, the new teacher will not understand. At least one veteran teacher needs to explain: what to do when a teacher is absent, how to find a substitute, how to discover how many sick days and personal days are available and more.
7. provide an opportunity for new teachers to talk. At least one veteran teacher needs to stop by the new teacher's classroom frequently and check on the new teacher. This teacher needs to be someone that the new teacher can talk to and more importantly, trusts.
8. provide an opportunity for new teachers to observe similar classrooms. New teachers need to see how other teachers teach. They need to learn from the veteran teachers and implement effective strategies into their own classroom.

Administrators should support first-year teachers and encourage those teachers to remain in the profession. The first-year teachers in my study stated that needed and expected support from administrators. Because of these expectations from these first-year teachers, administrators should:

1. give each teacher an orientation of the school facility. One administrator should give a tour of the campus to every teacher that arrives. This should take place one-on-one so that specific questions may be asked by the new teacher and answered by the administrator.
2. limit the number of preps for each new teacher. Administrators should carefully consider the amount of different preps that are given to first-year teachers. If possible, administrators should limit the number to no more than two preps per new teacher.
3. limit the number of extra-curricular activities for each new teacher.

Administrators should not allow first-year teacher to do too much outside of the school day. They should limit the amount of extra-curricular activities that a teacher is responsible for to no more than two per teacher.

4. meet with each new teacher once a week. One administrator should schedule a brief meeting with each new teacher weekly. The administrator must be available to let the teacher talk or answer any questions that may have arisen.
5. informally observe each new teacher once a week. An administrator should be in a new teacher's classroom as often as possible to offer suggestions regarding instruction and dispel the myth of evaluation being negative.
6. give substantive feedback to each new teacher about instruction. More important than visiting a classroom is for the administrator to offer assistance after observing the classroom. The administrator should inform the new teacher what is going well and what needs to be improved upon.
7. be certain that new teachers are given an opportunity to talk with other new teachers. It is also crucial that the administrator provide the time needed for new teachers to talk with veteran teachers.
8. be certain that at least one veteran teacher is providing support. Administrators should check with department heads to make sure that each new teacher is receiving more than adequate support from one veteran teacher.

#### Recommendations to assist the district in retaining first-year teachers

The following recommendations are intended to assist with retaining new teacher within this district specifically. These recommendations are based off my findings from focus groups at Jordan High School combined with my review of literature. They are suggestions that may improve the effectiveness of current programs that are happening in this district.

This District should support new teachers by:

1. differentiate instruction between college of education majors and non-college of education majors in the induction program. The district needs to account for the college of education majors that have already been trained with such topics as, effective classroom management and teaching ethics. In contrast, the teachers who do not have any education training might need more basic explanation than they are currently receiving because of the intermingling of teachers from both.

Separating the two groups will make the program more efficient for these teachers.

2. attempt to provide training before the school year starts. If possible, the district needs to make a pre-school training so that all teachers who have been hired can attend the induction program before school begins. Understanding that all teachers are not hired until right before school starts, the district should provide training for the new teachers as soon as possible. The teachers in my study need more time to teach during their first year.
3. attempt to provide essential skills training early in school year. Assuming that training cannot take place before school begins, the more essential survival skills need to be taught earlier in the school. For example, classroom management and discipline should be taught before the second semester of school. This is an essential tool that will make teaching more effective if given early.
4. provide mentor teachers that are in the same subject area as new teachers. The district should be certain that assigned mentors are in the same subject area. A math teacher cannot be as effective with assisting a history teacher because of the limited content knowledge that exists.
5. provide mentor teachers that are in the educational setting as new teachers. To be effective, a mentor needs to understand what is like in a high school. Taking nothing away from mentors in elementary, the experiences and discussions are not the same and new teachers need someone who has been where they are now.
6. limit the amount of meetings that take place during school week. The district currently has too many meetings for new teachers to attend. A new teacher should not attend a three-hour focus group meeting after teaching at a high school all day. These meetings should be limited to an hour if they must occur during the school week.
7. eliminate weekend meetings. There should be no meetings on the weekends for teachers. They need some personal time to relax and reflect on the job they are doing as a teacher.
8. continue to stay in touch with teachers after their first year is complete. An induction program with out follow-up is not effective for teachers in this study.



They need an email or a phone call after the second or third year of teaching.

They need to be questioned on the effectiveness of the program and if they are using what they have learned.

9. eliminate non-essential materials from curriculum. The topics that are discussed in the induction program are not what first-year teachers need to remain in the profession. They need applicable tools that will help them be better instructors. They did not need a two-hour discussion about “blood pathogens.” The district needs to give relevant information to new teacher so that they may become better more effective teachers.

### Reflection and Extension: Areas of Future Research

This study’s findings far surpassed my expectations. The genuine responses I received from the teachers that I interviewed were remarkable. I now have a better understanding regarding the needs of new teachers and veteran teachers also. I have learned some valuable information that can benefit both schools and districts in the retention of more teachers within high schools.

The following are possible ideas for future research regarding teacher retention:

1. conduct another qualitative study using one-on-one interviews. An individual interview might provide some in-depth findings that are not provided by focus groups;
2. conduct another qualitative study that will take a more longitudinal approach at a particular high school. For example, collect data for a two year period to provide more of a portrait of this particular high school instead of a snap-shot;
3. conduct another qualitative study with reverse demographics that focuses on why teachers are staying. For example, conduct research at a high school with high socio-economics, low-minority high school that has a low rate of teacher attrition;
4. conduct another study in a different geographic location other than in southeast United States. Carry out a research project at a high school with similar demographics in Washington State.

5. conduct a study that focuses on the teachers who have left Jordan High School.

For example, interview former teachers that are no longer teaching at Jordan and discover why they have are no longer there.

### Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine what can be done at the school and district level to decrease the rate of teacher attrition at the high school level. A great deal of research was placed on the literature surrounding teacher attrition and retention as well as the interviews within the focus groups. After combining the two, I have concluded that new teachers need a great deal of support early in their careers, but not much after the first year of teaching experience as the literature noted. The literature suggested that support is needed throughout the first five years of teaching and my findings do not match that at all. I found that teachers need an enormous amount of support during the first year and not much beyond the first year of teaching.

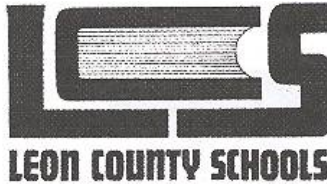
Another finding was veteran teachers need support as well, so the encouragement and support can never totally stop. They needed a brief complement and occasional pat on the back. The administrators should allow the veteran teachers to their jobs. No matter the years of experience or the number of triumphant victories a teacher has, they still need to feel like they are appreciated and what they are doing does matter to someone.

## APPENDIX A: LEON COUNTY SCHOOLS APPROVAL

**BOARD CHAIR**  
H. Fred Varn

**BOARD VICE-CHAIR**  
Maggie B. Lewis

**DIRECTOR, PROGRAM  
MONITORING & EVALUATION**  
Margarida Southard, Ph.D.



**SUPERINTENDENT**  
James M. Croteau, Ph.D.

**BOARD MEMBERS**  
Georgia "Joy" Bowen  
Sheila Costigan  
Dee Crumpler

September 15, 2006

Mr. Jonathan H. Grantham  
2545 Twain Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32311

*Topic: Administrative Support Regarding Teacher Retention*

Dear Mr. Grantham,

The Leon County Schools Research Review Board has approved your request for research.

Your research request is approved for the period of September 2006 through September 2007. Should you desire to extend your research efforts after this period of time, you must submit (a) a progress report, (b) preliminary results of your research, and (c) a request for renewed approval for continuation. Any significant changes or amendments to the procedures or design of this study must be approved by resubmitting the request for research to the Research Review Board.

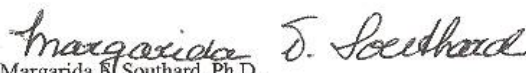
Approval by the Research Review Board does not in itself constitute permission to carry out the research. You may now contact the principals of the school in your study. The principal has the final decision relative to research at each school. It is your responsibility to return the enclosed "Principal's Consent for Research Participation," signed by the principal of the school to be involved, prior to the start of any research. Receipt of this form by this office will complete the approval process.

If the research study involves direct contact with students, the background check policy requires the research applicant(s) to be fingerprinted for clearance. It is the responsibility of the applicant(s) to complete all required documentation prior to the beginning the study. The LCS web site has the details and necessary forms.

Leon County Schools is approving your research partly due to the potential benefit of information to the district; therefore, it is important that you send this office one copy of your results and discussion when your study is complete. We will place information from your study in our research library and annotated listing of conducted research. We look forward to receiving your results.

Please feel free to phone me (850.488.7007) if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

  
Margarida J. Southard, Ph.D.  
Program Monitoring and Evaluation  
Chairperson, Research Review Board

C: Merry Ortega, Terri Smith, Malinda Jackson, John Green, Marvin Henderson, Dr. Pink Hightower

2757 West Pensacola Street • Tallahassee, Florida 32304-2998 • Phone (850) 487-7100 • [www.leon.k12.fl.us](http://www.leon.k12.fl.us)

**Building the Future Together**

Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity Employer • (850) 487-7105

## APPENDIX B: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL



Office of the Vice President For Research  
Human Subjects Committee  
Tallahassee, Florida 32306-2742  
(850) 644-8673 · FAX (850) 644-4392

### APPROVAL MEMORANDUM

Date: 8/9/2006

To:

**Jonathan Grantham**  
2545 Twain Drive  
Tallahassee, FL 32311

Dept.: **EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES**

From: **Thomas L. Jacobson, Chair**

Re: **Use of Human Subjects in Research**  
**Exploring the Bucket Full of Holes: Administrative Support and Teacher Retention**

The forms that you submitted to this office in regard to the use of human subjects in the proposal referenced above have been reviewed by the Secretary, the Chair, and two members of the Human Subjects Committee. Your project is determined to be Exempt per 45 CFR § 46.101(b) 2 and has been approved by an accelerated review process.

**The Human Subjects Committee has not evaluated your proposal for scientific merit, except to weigh the risk to the human participants and the aspects of the proposal related to potential risk and benefit. This approval does not replace any departmental or other approvals, which may be required.**

If the project has not been completed by **8/8/2007** you must request renewed approval for continuation of the project.

You are advised that any change in protocol in this project must be approved by resubmission of the project to the Committee for approval. Also, the principal investigator must promptly report, in writing, any unexpected problems causing risks to research subjects or others.


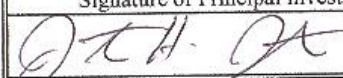
By copy of this memorandum, the chairman of your department and/or your major professor is reminded that he/she is responsible for being informed concerning research projects involving human subjects in the department, and should review protocols of such investigations as often as needed to insure that the project is being conducted in compliance with our institution and with DHHS regulations.

This institution has an Assurance on file with the Office for Protection from Research Risks. The Assurance Number is IRB00000446.

Cc: Dr. Jeffrey Brooks  
HSC No. 2006.0662



# APPENDIX C: PRINCIPAL APPROVAL

<b>Leon County Schools</b>		<i>Forms Control No: LCS-9382-0003</i>
<b>Principal's Consent for Research</b>		<i>Approved: REM 9/94 Expiration Date: As Needed</i>
<b>Principal Investigator</b> JONATHAN GRANTHAM		<b>Topic of Study</b> TEACHER RETENTION
I have met with the above-named researcher and we have discussed the research proposal as stated by the LCS Research Board. I hereby give my permission to conduct the research as proposed in my school.		
Participating School(s)	Signature of Principal(s)	Date
1. RICKARDS HIGH		9/25/06
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
TO COMPLETE THE APPROVAL PROCESS, THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE CHAIRPERSON, RESEARCH REVIEW BOARD, PROGRAM MONITORING & EVALUATION SERVICES ( 3955 WEST PENSACOLA ST., TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32304) PRIOR TO THE START OF ANY RESEARCH.		
I verify this list is complete and that any significant amendments to this research will be first approved by the Research Advisory Board Chairperson and the principal(s) at the above school site(s).		
Signature of Principal Investigator	Date	Program Monitoring & Evaluation 3955 West Pensacola Street Tallahassee, Florida 32304
	9/25/06	

<b>Leon County Schools</b>		<i>Forms Control No: LCS-9382-0003</i>
<b>Principal's Consent for Research</b>		<i>Approved: REM 9/94 Expiration Date: As Needed</i>
<b>Principal Investigator</b>		<b>Topic of Study</b>
I have met with the above-named researcher and we have discussed the research proposal as stated by the LCS Research Board. I hereby give my permission to conduct the research as proposed in my school.		
Participating School(s)	Signature of Principal(s)	Date
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
5.		
TO COMPLETE THE APPROVAL PROCESS, THIS FORM MUST BE RETURNED TO THE CHAIRPERSON, RESEARCH REVIEW BOARD, PROGRAM MONITORING & EVALUATION SERVICES ( 3955 WEST PENSACOLA ST., TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA 32304) PRIOR TO THE START OF ANY RESEARCH.		
I verify this list is complete and that any significant amendments to this research will be first approved by the Research Advisory Board Chairperson and the principal(s) at the above school site(s).		
Signature of Principal Investigator	Date	Program Monitoring & Evaluation 3955 West Pensacola Street Tallahassee, Florida 32304

#### APPENDIX D: SEMI STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS (#1)

1. Tell me a little about yourself.
  - a. Can you tell me how you became a teacher?
  - b. Can you tell me how you started working at this school?
2. Can you describe to me what you remember about your first year as a teacher?
  - a. Where you nervous?
  - b. Where you prepared?
  - c. Was it what you expected?
3. What were your duties your first year of teaching?
  - a. Did you complete teacher induction programs?
  - b. Were you taking college classes for certification or going to graduate school?
  - c. Were you in charge of any extra curricular programs at school?
4. How much support do teachers receive from:
  - a. Other teachers
  - b. Administrators
5. What kind of relationship do you have with your administrators at this school?
  - a. How often do you see an administrator?
  - b. How often do you talk with an administrator?
6. Why do teachers leave this school?
  - a. Do they go to another school in the district?
  - b. Does the population of students have anything to do with it?
  - c. How about the lack of resources?
7. What do you need in order to continue teaching at this school?
  - a. Do you need more time?
  - b. Do you need more support from administration?
  - c. Do you need more resources available?

## APPENDIX E: SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS #2

1. What specific forms of support do you think new teachers need from other teachers?
2. What kind of support would you like from administrators?
  - a. Do you want instructional assistance?
  - b. Would you like more feedback?
  - c. Do you just want to have them there to support you if you need them?
3. After teachers have experience, do they need a different type of support than new teachers?
4. What kind of relationships do you want to have with other teachers? Do you want a collegial relationship? Do you want a strictly professional relationship?
5. What kind of relationships do you want to have with administrators? Do you want collegial relationship? Do you want a strictly professional relationship?
6. What can be done, by the district, to make the teacher induction process for new teachers more effective?
7. What can be done, by the school, to make the teacher induction process for the new teachers more effective?
8. What do think about an administrator being a mentor?

## APPENDIX F: INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I am a doctoral student under the supervision of Professor Jeffrey S. Brooks in the Department of Educational Leadership & Policy Studies, College of Education, Florida State University. I am conducting a research project entitled *Exploring the Bucket Full of Holes: Administrative Support and Teacher Attrition* to determine what can be done to help retain teachers at high-minority, low socio-economic high schools.

Your participation in this study will consist of two interviews throughout the year. Interviews will consist of 15 questions and may last up to 45 minutes each. Your participation is voluntary. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, there will be no penalty. The results of the research study may be published, but your name and location will not be used. Your interview will be tape-recorded by one of two researchers. These researchers will keep the tapes in a locked filing cabinet. These researchers will have access to these tapes as well as to their transcriptions. The information you provide may be used for additional research at a future time. All of your answers to the questions will be kept confidential to the full extent allowed by law and identified only by a participant code name; your true name will not appear on any of the results. The results of the research study may be published, but your name and location will not be used.

Observations will occur at the high school that may include faculty meetings, departmental meetings, pre and post planning days, day-to-day on-goings, and other occurrences that may take place at the school site.

Documents will be collected which will include letters, memos, emails, photos, videos, meetings, and any other physical object that may lend information will only be used with participant permission in this case study. These documents will be collected to help me identify possible factors for teachers leaving the profession at high-minority, low socio-economic high schools.

There are no risks if you agree to participate in the study. If you choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time, you may do so and receive no penalty. There are no risks to you for participating or not participating in this study. Only the researchers and the supervising professor will have access to all interview tapes and observation notes. All names and the school name will be changed and pseudonyms will be used. All identifiers will be removed. Furthermore, the tapes, documents, and any other data collected will be destroyed no later than December 2007. I will follow all procedures for qualitative ethnographic research as approved by the Florida State University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects.

Although there may be no direct benefit to you, the possible benefit of your participation is contribution to the general knowledge in the field of leadership especially at the high school level.

If you have any questions concerning this research study, please call me at 850/414-5028 or via email at jhg02d@fsu.edu or Dr. Jeffrey S. Brooks at (850) 644-6777 or via email at jsbrooks@coe.fsu.edu. If you have any questions or concerns about your rights as a participant, you can contact the Chair of Human Subjects Committee, Institutional Review Board, through the Vice President for the Office of Research at (850) 644-8633.

Sincerely,

Jonathan H. Grantham

\* \* \* \* \*

I give my consent to participate in the above study. I understand that I will be tape recorded by the researcher. The researcher will keep these tapes in a locked filing cabinet. I understand that only the researcher and directing professor will have access to these tapes.

\_\_\_\_\_ (signature) \_\_\_\_\_ (date)



## REFERENCES

- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2004). *Tapping the potential: Retaining and developing high-quality novice teacher*. Washington DC: Author.
- Babbie, E. (2004) *The practice of social research*. Wadsworth/Thomson Learning. Belmont, CA.
- Bartell, C. (2004). *Cultivating high-quality teaching through induction and mentoring*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Boe, E., Bobbitt, S., & Cook, L. (1997). *Whither didst thou go? Retention, reassignment, migration, and attrition of special and general education teachers from a national perspective*. The Journal of Special Education. Winter 1997. 371-389.
- Brock, B., & Grady, M. (1997). *Improving schools from within: Teachers, parents, and principals can make a difference*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Brown, S. (2003). *Working models: Why mentoring programs may be the key to the teacher retention*. 78(5) 18-21.
- Brooks, J. (2006). *The dark side of school reform: Teaching in the space between reality and utopia*. Toronto.
- Certo, J., & Fox, J. (2002). *Retaining quality teachers*. High School Journal. 57-75.
- Colley, A. (2002). *What can principals do about new teacher attrition?* Teaching the Teachers. 22-24.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2001). *How do states and districts attract, train, and retain high-quality teachers without ignoring shortage areas or student needs?* Educational Leadership; May 2001. 12-17.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (1999). *Solving the dilemmas of teacher supply, demand, and standards*. Quality Teaching. 9 (1), 3-4.
- Eggen, B., (2002). *Administrative accountability and the novice teacher*. Presented 2002 American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, New York.
- Eisner, E. (1998). *The enlightened eye: Qualitative inquiry and the enhancement of educational practice*. Prentice Hall. Upper Saddle River, NJ.
- Feinman-Nemser, S. (1986). *The cultures of teaching*. In M. Wittrock (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teaching*. New York. Macmillan.

- Fideler, E., & Haselkorn, D. (1999). *Learning the ropes: Urban teacher induction programs and practices in the United States*. A national study conducted by Recruiting New Teachers. Belmont MA: Recruiting New Teachers.
- Futrell, M. (2000). *The challenge of the 21<sup>st</sup> century: Developing a highly qualified cadre of teachers to teach our nation's diverse student population*. Journal of Negro Education, 68(3), 318-334.
- Gaede, O. (1978). *Reality shock: A problem among first year teachers*. Clearing House. 405-409.
- Gonzalez, P. (1995). *Factors that influence teacher attrition*. National Association of State Directors of Special Education. U.S.; Virginia.
- Halford, J. (1998). *Easing the way for new teachers*. Educational Leadership, 55, 33-36.
- Hammond, O., & Onikama, D. (1997). *At risk teachers*. Resources for Education and Learning. U.S.; Hawaii.
- Hare, D., Nathan, J., Darland, J. & Laine, S. (2000). *Teacher shortages in the Midwest: Current trends and future issues*. U.S.; Illinois.
- Herzog, H. (2002). *When, how, and who do I ask for help?* Teacher Education Quarterly, 29(3), 25-41.
- Heyns, B. (1988). *Educational defectors: A first look at teacher attrition in the NLS-72*. Educational Researcher. 24-32.
- Hope, W. (1999). *Principals' orientation and induction activities as factors in teacher retention*. The Clearing House; Sept/Oct. 1999. 54-56.
- Ingersoll, R. (1999). *Teacher turnover, teacher shortages, and the organization of schools*. A CTP working paper No. CTPW991. U.S.; Washington.
- Ingersoll, R. (1999). *The problem of under qualified teachers in American secondary schools*. Educational Researcher. 28(2), 26-37.
- Ingersoll, R. (2003). *The teacher shortage: Myth or reality*. Educational Horizons, Spring Edition, 146-152.
- Ingersoll, R. & Smith, T., (2004). *Do teacher induction and mentoring matter?* NASSP Bulletin, 88, 28-40.
- Kauchak, D., & Eggen, P. (2005). *Introduction to teaching: Becoming a professional*. New Jersey. U.S.

- Kurtz, W. (1983). *How the principal can help beginning teachers*. NASSP Bulletin, 67, 42-45.
- Krathwohl, D. & Smith, N. (2005). *How to prepare a dissertation proposal: Suggestions for students in education and the social and behavioral sciences*. Syracuse, NY.
- Krueger, R. (1988). *Focus groups*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Latham, A., Gitomer, D. & Ziomek, R. (1999). *What the tests tell us about new teachers*. Educational Leadership. 23-26.
- Little, J., (1999). *Organizing schools for teacher learning*. In G. Sykes and L. Darling Hammonds (Eds.), *Teaching as the learning profession: Handbook of policy and practice*. San Francisco: CA. Jossey-Bass.
- Loeb, S. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2005). *How teaching conditions predict teachers turnover in California schools*. Peabody Journal of Education. 44-70.
- Lortie, D. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. The University of Chicago, U.S.
- Lucksinger, L. (2000). *Teachers: Can we get them and keep them?* The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin. 11-15.
- Mason, J. (1996) *Qualitative Research*. Sage Publications. London.
- McCreight, C. (2000) *Teacher attrition, shortage, and strategies for teacher retention*. U.S.; Texas.
- Menchaca, V. (2003). *A wake-up call for principals: Are your novice teachers leaving?* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Merriam, S. (1998) *The case study research in education*. San Francisco. Jossey-Bass.
- Morrow, J. (1999). *The teacher shortage: Wrong diagnosis, phony cures*. Education Week, 44-48.
- National Commission of Excellence Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform*. Governmental Printing Office. U.S.; Washington.
- National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2003). *No dream denied: A pledge to America's children*. New York: Author.
- Olson, L., (2000). Quality counts 2000: Finding and keeping competent teachers. Education Week. Retrieved from [www.edweek.org/sreports](http://www.edweek.org/sreports) on February 28, 2005.

- Quinn, R. & Andrews, D. (2004). *The struggles of first-year teacher: Investigating support mechanisms*. The Clearing House: Mar/Apr 2004. 164-168.
- Recruiting New Teachers, Inc. (1998). *The essential profession: A national survey of public attitudes toward teaching, educational opportunity, and school reform*. Belmont, MA: Author.
- Rubin, H. & Rubin, I. (1995). *Qualitative interviewing*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Sagor, R. (1992). *How to conduct collaborative action research*. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. VA.
- Schlichte, J., Yssel, N. & Merbler, J. (2005). *Pathways to burnout: Case studies in teacher isolation and alienation*. Preventing School Failure. 50 (1), 35-40.
- Shanker, A. (1990). *Restructuring the teaching profession in our schools*. In D. Dill (Ed.) *What teachers need to know: The knowledge, skills, and values essential to good teaching*. San Francisco, CA. Jossey-Bass.
- Shen, J. (1997). *Teacher retention and attrition in public schools: Evidence from SASS'91*. Journal of Educational Research. 91, 81-88.
- Silverman, D. (2001). *Interpreting qualitative research: Methods for analyzing talk, text, and interaction*. Sage Publications. Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Silverman, D. (2005). *Doing Qualitative Research*. Sage Publications. Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Smith, L. (1978). *An evolving logic of participant observation, educational ethnography and other case studies*. Review of Research in Education. Itasca, IL.
- Smylie, J. (1995). *Teacher learning in the workplace: Implications for school reform*. Teachers College Press. New York, NY.
- Stake, R. (1994). Case studies. Handbook of qualitative research. Thousand Oaks, CA. (236-246).
- Stansbury, K. & Zimmerman, J. (2000). Lifelines to the classroom: Designing support for beginning teachers. West Ed. 1-17.
- Texas Center for Educational Research. (2000). *The cost of teacher turnover*. Austin, TX: Texas State Board for Teacher Certification.
- Tickle, L. (1994). *The induction of new teachers*. London: Caswell.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2006). *No child left behind act of 2001*.

- Wagner, L. (1985). *Ambiguities and possibilities in California's mentor teacher program*. Educational Leadership, 43, 23-29.
- Wood, A. (2005). The Importance of Principals: Site administrators' roles in novice teacher induction. American Secondary Education, 39-62.
- Wolcott, H. (1994). *Transforming qualitative data: Description, analysis, and interpretation*. Sage Publications. Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Wolcott, H. (2003). *The man in the principal's office*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. Lanham, MD.
- Worthen, B., Sanders, J., & Fitzpatrick, J. (1997). *Program Evaluation: Alternative approaches and practical guidelines*. Addison Wesley Longman, NY.
- Worthy, J. (2005). 'It didn't have to be so hard': The first years of teaching in an urban school. International of Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education. 18(3), 379-398.
- Yin, R. (1994). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Thousand Oaks. CA.

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jonathan Grantham was born in Tallahassee, Florida. He completed his K-12 education in Calhoun County Schools, graduating from Blountstown High School in 1994. He attended Chipola College located in Marianna, Florida and received an Associates of Arts Degree in 1996. In 1998, he graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the Florida State University located in Tallahassee, Florida.

After graduating from college, he began working for Bay District Schools at Mosley High School in Panama City, Florida as a part-time math teacher. Still in Panama City, in 1999, he became a full-time math teacher at Rosenwald Middle School. After two years at Rosenwald, he accepted a position at a new facility, Deane Bozeman Learning Center. As a teacher, Jonathan experienced many different positions. He was a coach for several sports, a team leader, an after-school coordinator, a department head, a volunteer, a member of the school improvement team, a member of the SACS team, and assumed many more duties within the school.

After four years at Bozeman and recently graduating with a Masters Degree in Educational Leadership and Administration from the Florida State University, in 2004, Jonathan moved to Tallahassee to work for Florida State University and pursue a doctoral degree. He worked for the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Department, taught undergraduate classes, mentored graduate level classes and was still a full-time student in the doctoral program.

After one year of experience with the department, in 2004, Jonathan completed his Educational Specialists Degree and was offered a position with Leon County Schools as an Assistant Principal at Rickards High School. He accepted and became immediately in charge of discipline and attendance. In 2006, he is in charge of Discipline and Facilities and being trained by Leon Schools to be a principal. Jonathan Grantham will graduate with an Ed. D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies in December 2006. His career ambitions are to be a principal and later a Superintendent of a school system.

# JONATHAN HIRES GRANTHAM

2545 Twain Drive  
Tallahassee, Florida 32311  
Phone: (850) 510-7993  
E-mail: [grantbamj@mail.rickards.leon.k12.fl.us](mailto:grantbamj@mail.rickards.leon.k12.fl.us)

## EDUCATION

<i>Degree</i>	<b>Ed.D. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies</b>	December 2006
	The Florida State University	
<i>Specializations</i>	Improving Student Achievement; Teacher Leadership; Teacher Attrition and Retention; Leadership for Equity and Excellence	
<i>Degree</i>	<b>Ed.S. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies</b>	August 2005
	The Florida State University	
<i>Specializations</i>	Improving Student Achievement; Teacher Leadership; Teacher Attrition and Retention; Leadership for Equity and Excellence	
<i>Degree</i>	<b>M.S. in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies</b>	August 2004
	The Florida State University	
<i>Specializations</i>	School Leadership; School Finance; School Law; Personnel Management; Instructional and Administrative Technology	
<i>Degree</i>	<b>B.S. in Criminology and Criminal Justice</b>	May 1998
	The Florida State University	
<i>Specializations</i>	Interview Techniques; Crime Scene Analysis	
<i>Degree</i>	<b>Associate of Arts</b>	July 1996
	Chipola Junior College	
<i>Specializations</i>	Pre-Architecture and Engineering	

## TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE LICENSURE

<i>Certificate</i>	<b>State of Florida Teaching Certificate</b>	June 2000
	Middle Grade Math, Grades 5-9	
<i>Certificate</i>	<b>State of Florida Educational Leadership Certificate</b>	August 2004
	All Levels	

## HIGHER EDUCATION AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

**Course Developer** August 2006-December 2006  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Provided assistance to Dr. Lynn Wicker in the development of an online model of *EDA 5242: School Finance* that will be used to train future Florida administrators.

**Instructor** August 2006-December 2006  
Department of Middle and Secondary Education, The Florida State University

Taught *LAE 4930: General Methods: Teaching in Secondary Schools*.

**Teaching Assistant** August 2006-December 2006  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Provided assistance for Dr. Jeff Brooks and Graduate students regarding *EDA 5192: Educational Leadership*.

**Teaching Assistant** August 2006-December 2006  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Provided assistance for Dr. Lynn Wicker and Graduate students regarding *EDA 5250: Curriculum and Instruction*.

**Instructor** May 2006-August 2006  
Department of Middle and Secondary Education, The Florida State University

Taught *LAE 5932: Specific Methods of Content Area Instruction* for the Middle and Secondary Education Department.

**Instructor** May 2006-August 2006  
Department of Middle and Secondary Education, The Florida State University

Taught *LAE 5932: General Methods of Planning, Assessing, and Managing Instruction*.

**Teaching Assistant** May 2006-August 2006  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Provided assistance for Dr. Lynn Wicker and Graduate students regarding *EDA 5192: Educational Leadership*.

**Teaching Assistant** May 2006-August 2006  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University



Provided assistance for Dr. Jeff Brooks and Graduate students regarding *EDA 5218: Applications of Leadership Theory*

**Instructor** January 2006-May 2006  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Taught *EDF 1005: Introduction to Education*.

**Presenter** November 2005  
University Council for Educational Administration Annual Convention

Represented the Florida State University Department of Educational Leadership at the nation's largest research conference devoted to educational administration.  
Participated in the session, *Promoting Social Justice in K-12 Schools*.

**Teaching Assistant** August 2005-December 2005  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Provided assistance for Dr. Jeffrey Brooks and Graduate students regarding *EDA 5192: Educational Leadership*.

**Graduate Research Assistant** August 2004-August 2005  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Assisted Dr. Michael Biance with Educational Leadership and Policy Studies faculty meetings and administrative duties. Recruited minority students for Educational Leadership and Policy Studies department.

**Teaching Assistant** May 2005-August 2005  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Provided assistance for Dr. Lynn Wicker and Graduate students regarding *EDA 5503: The Principalship*.

**Instructor** August 2004-April 2005  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Taught *EDF 1005: Introduction to Education*.

**Teaching Assistant** August 2004-April 2005  
Department of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies, The Florida State University

Provided assistance to Dr. Michael Biance and Graduate students regarding *EDA 5242: School Finance*.

**Presenter**

November 2004

University Council for Educational Administration Annual Convention

Represented the Florida State University Department of Educational Leadership at the nation's largest research conference devoted to educational administration. Participated in the session, *What are we doing to increase diversity in educational leadership and what should we be doing?*

**K-12 TEACHING AND ADMINISTRATIVE EXPERIENCE**

---

**High School Administrator**

July 2006-Present

Rickards High School, Tallahassee, Florida

Assistant Principal in charge of Discipline and Facilities, other duties are scheduling, attendance, developing and implementing School Improvement Plan, evaluating teachers and non-instructional staff, hiring custodial staff, and assuring that students are receiving optimal learning environment

**High School Administrator**

July 2005-July 2006

Rickards High School, Tallahassee, Florida

Assistant Principal in charge of Discipline and Attendance, other duties are scheduling, facilities, developing and implementing School Improvement Plan, evaluating teachers and non-instructional staff, and assuring that students are receiving optimal learning environment

**Middle School Teacher**

2000-2004

Deane Bozeman Learning Center; Panama City, Florida

Taught Pre-Algebra and Algebra to both seventh and eighth grades in a Title I school. School grade was "A" as calculated by the state of Florida each year.

**Math Department Chairperson**

2000-2003

Deane Bozeman Learning Center; Panama City, Florida

Created a school-wide curriculum map for math students attending grades six through eight. Created math piece for School Improvement Plan each year.

**Member of School Leadership Team**

2000-2004

Deane Bozeman Learning Center; Panama City, Florida

Developed School Improvement Plan to promote student achievement, Voted on FCAT money distribution, and Made recommendations for hiring.

**Member of School Advisory Council (SAC) Committee** 2000-2004  
Deane Bozeman Learning Center, Panama City, Florida

Made recommendations to the principal regarding budgetary concerns. Analyzed and evaluated school improvement plan monthly. Informed teaching staff of decisions made. Guided parent involvement.

**Member of Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SAC)** 2000-2004  
Deane Bozeman Learning Center, Panama City, Florida

Worked on various committees for school accreditation.

**Member of Social Committee** 2000-2001  
Deane Bozeman Learning Center; Panama City, Florida

Provided money for special events for faculty. Decided meeting places and times for school-wide meetings.

**Member of School Safety Committee** 2001-2003  
Deane Bozeman Learning Center; Panama City, Florida

Developed safety plan for entire school K-12.

**Extracurricular Responsibilities** 2000-2004  
Deane Bozeman Learning Center; Panama City, Florida

Coached boys' basketball, boys' baseball, girls' basketball, and girls' softball. Tutored mathematics before and after school. Provided discipline under supervision of principal for selected middle school students.

**Middle School Teacher** 1999-2000  
Rosenwald Middle School; Panama City, Florida

Taught Pre-Algebra and Algebra to both seventh and eighth grades in a Title I school. School grade was "A" as calculated by the state of Florida each year.

**Extracurricular Responsibilities** 1998-2000  
Rosenwald Middle School; Panama City, Florida

Coached girls' softball team. Coached Intra-mural sports for all sixth grade students. Tutored mathematics before and after school. Nominated as Teacher Leader of

After-School Conflict Resolution Class. Provided discipline under supervision of principal for selected middle school students.

**High School Teacher**

1998-1999

Mosley High School; Panama City, Florida

Taught Pre-Algebra, Explorations in Math and Business Math grades nine through twelve.

**Substitute High School Teacher**

1998-1999

Mosley High School; Panama City, Florida

Taught emotionally handicapped students grades nine through twelve.

**INVITED SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS**

---

Grantham, J. (2006, September). *Being an administrator at a Title I School?* Lecture delivered to EDA 4060: Organization and Control of Education; Instructor: Diane Hodgins

Grantham, J. (2006, April). *Being an administrator at a Title I School?* Lecture delivered to EDA 4060: Organization and Control of Education; Instructor: Diane Hodgins

Grantham, J. (2005, March). *What is it really like to be a teacher?* Lecture delivered to EDF 1005: Introduction to Education; Instructor: Amy Albee

Grantham, J. (2005, March). *Teaching math in the middle school setting.* Lecture delivered to EDF 1005: Introduction to Education; Instructor: Shana Goldwyn

Grantham, J. (2004, November). *What is it really like to be a teacher?* Lecture delivered to EDF 1005: Introduction to Education; Instructor: Amy Albee

**PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

---

**Ruby Payne Training**

July 2006

Leon County Schools; Tallahassee, Florida

This workshop emphasized the importance of understanding poverty and how it impacts all stakeholders.

**District Training for Master Schedule Building**

April 2006

Leon County Schools; Tallahassee, Florida

This workshop demonstrated how to effectively build a Master schedule for both middle school and high school settings.

**District Training for Evaluation of Teachers**

August 2005

Leon County Schools; Tallahassee, Florida

This workshop demonstrated how to effectively evaluate teachers by using the county-developed instrument.

**Classroom Walk Through Training for Evaluation of Teachers**

July 2005

Leon County Schools; Tallahassee, Florida

This workshop demonstrated how to effectively evaluate teachers by using Bloom's Taxonomy, Sunshine State Standards, and technology to represent a snapshot of teaching within each classroom.

**Clinical Education Training for Evaluation of Teachers (FPMS)**

August 2003

Bay County District Schools; Panama City, Florida

This workshop demonstrated how to effectively evaluate teachers by using the FPMS instrument.

**Building Math Understanding Workshop**

July 1999

Bay County District Schools; Panama City, Florida

This workshop demonstrated different strategies for teaching middle-grade mathematics for at-risk children.

**AFFILIATIONS AND MEMBERSHIPS**

---

**Member of Bay County Teachers' Union**

1999-2004

Bay County District Schools; Panama City, Florida

This Union represented teachers and support personnel in Bay County, Florida

**EDUCATIONAL SERVICE**

---

**Math Tutor**

2000-Present

Bay County District Schools; Panama City, Florida  
The Florida State University; Tallahassee, Florida

Tutored both college students and K-12 students in mathematics.

**Before and After School Tutor**

2000-2004

Bay County District Schools; Panama City, Florida

Tutored students K-12 in mathematics.