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AUTHOR   Eberhard, Joseph; Reinhardt-Mondragon, Patricia;
                  Stottlemyer, Bobbi
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ABSTRACT
        This study investigated problematic aspects of teaching that
influenced beginning teachers' decisions to continue teaching or leave the
profession. Participants were new teachers with 3 or less years of experience
from 25 south Texas districts. Surveys were mailed to each campus for
distribution. The survey instrument asked teachers about demographics;
certification/career choice; campus support systems; satisfaction in various
problem areas; future plans for teaching; and suggestions. Overall, the
teachers most at risk of leaving were male secondary teachers over age 35
years who made the decision to teach while employed in different careers.
Teachers with emergency certification were more likely to leave than were
fully certified teachers. Making the decision to teach in high school or
sooner was a strong indicator of persistence through the early teaching
years. Opportunities to observe model teachers and the use of effective
mentors also increased the likelihood of retention, especially when programs
were extended into the second and third teaching years. Factors receiving
dissatisfied ratings and indications of leaving the profession included (in
order of concern) student behavior, administrative recognition, duties other
than teaching, salary, administrative support, teaching assignment,
paperwork, special education requirements, and class size. (Contains 49
references.) (SM)

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Prepared by

Joseph Eberhard

Patricia Reinhardt-Mondragon

Bobbi Stottlemyer

The South Texas Research and Development Center
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi
Texas A&M University-Kingsville

Thomas H. Linton, Ph.D.
Executive Director

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Strategies for New Teacher Retention: Creating a Climate of Authentic Professional Development for Teachers With Three or Less Years of Experience

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Bobbi Stottlemyer

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strategies for New Teacher Retention: Creating a Climate of Authentic Professional

Development for Teachers With Three or Less Years of Experience

Joseph Eberhard, Patricia Reinhardt-Mondragon, & Bobbi Stottlemyer

The purpose of this study of teachers in their first three years of teaching experience was to determine the problematic aspects of teaching that influence the beginning teacher's decision to continue in teaching or leave the profession. As part of this study there was an examination of the pre-service training available in Region 2 of South Texas, the availability of university-based induction programs, and the effectiveness of campus-based mentor programs.

Teacher attrition is a problem because it has a direct effect on student achievement. To facilitate the growth of a teacher toward effectiveness, the 'impact stage', requires a district to invest time and money into professional development experiences that address the needs of the teacher and district. Therefore, a high turnover rate of teachers affects the financial efficiency of a district as well as student achievement.

Literature related to teacher attrition rates indicates that there are nine aspects of teaching that are relevant to a novice teacher's decision to leave teaching: salary, teaching assignment, paperwork, duties other than teaching, class size, student behavior, special education requirements, recognition from administrators, and support from administrators. Facilitating a teacher's progression toward effectiveness can be accomplished through an induction oriented pre-service program, and a campus induction program with an effective mentor component. The success of cooperating university pre-service programs and mentor programs on teacher attrition is dependent on the administrative leadership of the district and campus.

The target population was new teachers in South Texas with three or less years of experience. The accessible population was 42 school districts in Region 2. Of the 35 districts serving K-12, 25 participated in the survey. The sample was non-random since the researchers wanted feedback specifically from teachers with three or less years of experience.

A survey instrument was created based on current research and included biographical questions, certification / career choice questions, campus support system questions, satisfaction ratings of the problem areas listed above, a question about the teacher's future plans for teaching, and an open-ended question for written suggestions. Surveys were mailed to each campus for dissemination and returned anonymously to the researchers.

Descriptive statistics included frequency distributions for the 228 participants, and cross-tabulations between the teachers plans for continuing or discontinuing teaching with the biographical, career, campus support, and satisfaction rating questions.

The results indicate that causes of attrition among new teachers in Region 2 are consistent with the current literature. The teachers most at risk of leaving are male secondary teachers over the age of 35 who made the decision to teach while employed in a different career. Teachers with emergency certification are more likely to leave then fully certified teachers. Making the decision to become a teacher in high school or sooner was a much stronger indication of persistence through the early years of teaching. Opportunities to observe model teachers and the use of effective mentor programs also increased the likelihood of retention, especially when the programs are extended into the second and third years of teaching. Factors receiving dissatisfied ratings and indications of leaving the profession include (in order of concern): student behavior, administrative recognition, duties other than teaching, salary, administrative support, teaching assignment, paperwork, special education requirements, and class size.

Recommendations to address the problem of teacher attrition are as follows: 1) direct emergency certification employees to a university with an induction program, 2) implement a campus-based induction program for new teachers to cover a minimum of two years, 3) provide and reward campus mentors for new teachers, 4) design the campus-based induction program to deal specifically with factors receiving high percentages of dissatisfaction ratings, 5) have clearly defined roles for the mentor teacher and establish a program evaluation, and 6) conduct exit interviews to collect data for future policy decisions.

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CHAPTER ONE

New Teacher Attrition in Region 2 of South Texas

Introduction

Teacher attrition is an issue that impacts student achievement and fiscal management as well as teacher effectiveness. Recent studies indicate that retention of new teachers in the education profession continues to pose a problem for school districts across the nation (Brock and Grady, 1996). Problems with teacher retention are predicted for the first decade of the twenty-first century on regional, state, and national levels. According to the Texas Education Agency, attrition rates in South Texas average 25% for teachers in their first three years of teaching (T.E.A., 1999). Within this time period, teachers develop from a survival state to an adjustment state to, hopefully, the impact stage of effective teaching (Huling, 1999). Therefore, for teachers to reach an impact, or mastery state, it is critical to prevent the loss of teachers in the early years of their development.

Even teachers who are at the mature/impact level digress when reassigned, therefore teacher replacement means that students are in a classroom in which the teacher is in survival mode. In the state of Texas, student achievement is a part of the teacher evaluation system and school report card through performance on the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills.

Several factors contribute to teacher attrition including inadequate training, lack of feedback, the multitask nature of teaching, insufficient salaries, and work environment (Terry, 1997). Individual intrinsic qualities also influence the ability of teachers to cope

and adapt to the external stresses of the profession. Recruiting and retaining highly qualified teachers is dependent on the quality of candidates seeking a career in teaching, the quality of pre-service preparation programs, and the quality of on-campus professional development opportunities.

The quality of pre-service programs and campus based support systems are very critical to the retention of new teachers (Yukl, 1998; Borich, 1996; Huling, 1998; Kirby and Grissmer, 1993; Marso and Pigge, 1996; Konanc, 1996). It is essential to know the factors that contribute to local attrition rates in order to reverse the loss of teachers from the district or the profession before they reach the impact stage. The development of the South Texas region is dependent upon the quality of its educational systems.

The Problem

Teacher attrition rates are particularly high in South Texas. As many as fifty percent of new teachers leave the profession or move into other districts within the first five years of teaching (TEA, 1999). Factors that have been identified as contributing to the teacher attrition rates nationwide are present in South Texas. A high turnover of teachers in a school district affects student achievement and yields a low return for money invested by the districts in their employees and training programs. In order to prevent the departure of teachers before, or when, they have reached the impact stage of development, research is needed to identify what factors contribute to the attrition problem in Region 2 of South Texas. Programs can then be developed to address the problem.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to identify factors that contribute to the attrition rate of beginning teachers in their first, second, or third year of teaching in Region 2 of South Texas. Information obtained from the study can be used to develop policies and programs that divert the flow of teachers from districts in the region. The goal is to increase teacher effectiveness, which in turn impacts student achievement.

Research Questions

Based on the problem and purpose, the following research questions were devised for this study:

1. Is there a difference in the percentage of females and males who continue or discontinue the teaching profession in Region 2 of South Texas?

2. Is there a difference in the persistence of teachers in the first three years of teaching according to the age of the teacher?

3. Is there a difference in the percentage of elementary teachers and secondary teachers who leave the teaching profession in the first three years of teaching?

4. Is there a difference in the percentage of beginning teachers who continue or discontinue the teaching profession in Region 2 of South Texas according to the size of the school district?

5. What is the effectiveness of teacher pre-service programs in Region 2 of South Texas?

6. Does the time a person makes a career decision to become a teacher make a difference in the percentage of teachers who decide to continue or discontinue teaching in the first three years?

7. Is there a difference in the retention rate of teachers in their first three years of teaching between those who have a model teacher and those who do not?

8. What is the effectiveness of mentor teacher programs in Region 2 of South Texas?

9. What is the impact of the beginning teachers' expectations compared to actual teaching experiences on the decision to continue or discontinue teaching in the first three years?

10. What aspects of the teaching profession have the most impact on the decision of beginning teachers in Region 2 of South Texas to continue or discontinue teaching?

11. What is the profile of a teacher of South Texas who is most likely to leave the profession?

Importance of the Study

This study can contribute important information to Region 2 and similar areas of South Texas to help in the planning of programs which will assist in the development of effective teachers in the region. Teacher effectiveness has an impact on student achievement and on the investment of money in the educational system at all levels, from the teacher education programs at the colleges and universities to the districts that depend on these programs to supply their classrooms with teachers.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation of the study is the relatively short period of time in which the study was conducted. Because of the time factor, the inability to follow-up on those who did not complete the survey may have skewed the results. The respondents of the survey may not be representative of the region. Factors that influenced the respondents to return the survey may have been intrinsic or extrinsic. For example, the method of distribution of the surveys by the principal may have influenced the way the respondent answered the survey. Results of the study are limited to Region 2 of South Texas and similar areas.

Definition of Terms

Attrition. The reduction of the numbers of workers in an organization due to resignation, retirement or death.

Impact Stage. The stage of teaching in which the teacher has achieved a level of making an impact on the students' achievement, typically, the fifth year of teaching career.

Induction. The initial experience, specifically in this study, of the teaching career.

Induction Year Program. A program conducted by Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi to train and support beginning teachers.

Maintenance Stage. The stage of teaching, when a teacher has internalized the critical lessons learned in the survival stage and has begun to adapt and apply what has been learned, typically the third and fourth year of the teaching career

Persistence. The willingness to continue, specifically to remain in the teaching profession.

Pre-service Training. The college/university teacher education programs which prepare students to become teachers.

Pivotal Year. The stage of teaching, when a teacher is influenced to by successful or unsuccessful experiences, and likely to decide to whether to continue or discontinue in the teaching profession, typically the second year of teaching.

Survival Stage. A term applied to the initial teaching experience when beginning teachers are learning first-hand what is involved in the teaching profession, typically, the first year of teaching career.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Literature

The attrition rate of teachers in their first three years of teaching in Region 2 of South Texas is a problem in terms of student achievement, as stated in Chapter One. However, before investigating the reasons teachers in Region 2 might leave the profession, a review of the research and literature available is needed to determine what types of questions to ask new teacher.

Introduction

Traditionally, corporate America conducts exit interviews for employees who are leaving the company. The purpose of these interviews is to collect data regarding the companies' current compensation levels and working conditions. Corporate America understands the value of investing in employees, especially those employees that require significant amounts of college and professional training to be effective because of the time investment required. Companies do not want to become "training grounds" for their competitors due to a lack of competitive wages and benefits or because of poor working conditions. Such inefficient use of 'human resources' certainly effects the bottom line. In this age of reform, school districts have looked to business for examples of fiscal efficiency and bottom line approaches to educating students. Attrition in any profession is expected, but unusually high attrition rates need to be examined more closely. As the review of literature that follows will analyze, attrition rates for teachers in South Texas average approximately 25% for teachers in their first three years, sometimes higher

(TEA, 1999). Like elsewhere in the nation, research is needed on why teachers in Region

2 leave the teaching profession.

Corporate America understands the value of investing in authentic development

of employee skills and knowledge to an employee's overall satisfaction and willingness

to buy into the company's vision. When an employee buys-in, or identifies, with the

company vision, he/she remains an employee out of loyalty and commitment (Yukl,

1998).

In the case of beginning teachers, a common form of development the first year is

'baptism by fire' in which the teacher must work on the edge of physical and emotional

exhaustion in his/her attempt to adjust to the campus and classroom environments

(Huling, 1999). Without 'authentic' development, the new teacher is at risk of burnout or

disillusionment before buying in to the district vision (Kirby and Grissmer, 1993).

New teacher development can be identified by the three stages: survival state,

adjustment state, and mature state (Huling, 1999). The four primary professional

characteristics that determine the length of time moving along the development

continuum are knowledge of teaching activities, teaching environment, curriculum, and

insight / perception. The survival-state has been typically described as the first year of

teaching, the adjustment-state as the third and fourth years of teaching, and the mature

state as the fifth year of teaching. This leaves the second year as a pivotal year in the

growth of a teacher developing in a positive direction. The three stages have also been

referred to as the survival, mastery, and impact stages (Borich, 1996). Fuller's 1969

Concerns Theory is a classic theoretical foundation for modern frameworks of teacher

development programs. He argues that teachers progress through the three stages, but at

different times and with different levels of intensity. The most effective teachers are those who reach the 'impact' level of concern. The key elements to a rapid and intense progression through the three stages are adequate knowledge and emotional support through the pre-service experience. At the impact stage, teachers experience greater job satisfaction and are less likely to leave the profession because of work-related issues (Borich, 1996).

Although retention rates in teaching may or may not be comparable to other industries, the high rate is significant to our society because it concerns the achievement and growth of students (Konanc, 1996). Every time a teacher has to be replaced, or receives a new assignment, the 'concerns' level of that the teacher digresses. Even when teachers at the mature/impact stage are transferred, they must start the process over. Needless to say, they are likely to progress back to the mature/impact stage at a much faster rate because of their prior knowledge and experience. Digression through the stages is especially true in the case of having to continually hire new teachers to replace the ones that recently quit. This cycle of teacher replacement means that students are in a classroom in which the teacher is in survival mode, which in turn affects the levels of student achievement (Ruling, 1998). High turnover rates and reassignments are a problem because of student achievement issues, not just personnel.

Education has become a multi-billion dollar business in this country as the most recent reform movement has spurred the development of numerous programs for student achievement in the areas of content, behavior, and campus organization. However, a program is only as good as the abilities of the people who will implement it, meaning that if a high percentage of a district's teachers are in survival state, or mastery stage at best,

then the money being spent on programs is not being used efficiently. Retention of new teachers and assisting them through the stages of development should be a high priority of a district because it not only impacts the level of student achievement, but it is an issue of bottom-line financial management. According to the Texas State Board for Educator Certification Panel on Novice Teacher Induction Support System: Final Report, "each teacher that leaves the profession during the induction years likely costs taxpayers in excess of $50,000" (Huling, 1998, p. 3).

The purpose of this study of Region 2 beginning teachers is to determine the difference in biographical data, pre-service training, and satisfaction levels of teachers in the first three years of teaching. Teachers who currently see themselves as continuing in the profession will be compared to those who see themselves as planning on leaving the profession. The reasons for new teachers leaving the profession should be compared to the environment in which they work and the quality of the pre-service training. District leaders will then have relevant information for the development of policy in regards to new teacher retention. These policies may include adjustments at the campus level to generate authentic support systems for new teachers or having personnel guide teachers on emergency certification toward a pre-service program that will increase the likelihood of a quicker, more intense transition to the third developmental stage of impact.

Why Beginning Teachers Leave

Kirby and Grissmer (1993) conducted a twenty-year study of approximately 50,000 public school teachers across the country to examine attrition by age, gender, subject area, and starting salaries while emphasizing the difference between new and veteran teachers and offering median survival times for various groups of teachers. Kirby

and Grissmer argue the relevance of studying attrition rates as important because they "provide good indicators of the relative adequacy of compensation levels and working conditions" (1993, p. 3). One theory the authors proposed for attrition was the Human Capital Theory in which a teacher will leave if the experience of teaching is below a critical level of what is necessary for job satisfaction. Therefore, attrition is likely to occur early in a teacher's career, before the impact stage, when experiences are compared to expectations (Kirby, 1993, p. 6). Based on their study, Kirby and Grissmer predicted that the median lifetime of a typical new teacher is 3.9 years (1993, p. 13). A study of beginning teacher retention, therefore, would be more relevant if restricted to teachers in their first three years of experience.

Teacher Burnout

Terry (1997) addresses 'teacher burnout' as a cause of attrition that should he dealt with to prolong the number of years that a teacher can participate in the profession with a level of enthusiasm necessary to be effective. Teaching is a stressful occupation, and teachers should therefore implement strategies to deal with that mess. Terry writes that those teachers "most susceptible are teachers that don't react positively under stress and those that become disenchanted when their enthusiasm gets stifled by the system" (1997, p. 5).

Terry notes six causes for burnout that are inherent in the teaching profession. The first cause for stress is "inadequate training leading to unrealistic expectations" (1997, p. 6). In other words, a pre-service teacher's expectations of teaching may result in high levels of stress if he/she is not adequately prepared for the reality of teaching.

The second cause is a lack of feedback and clear objective standards used for the evaluation of the teacher's performance. Although the PDAS has clear objectives, the evaluation system can be overwhelming for a novice teacher, especially if the results of the evaluation do not coincide with the teacher's perception of his/her efforts to do a good job. The third cause of burnout is the expanding responsibilities placed on teachers. These physical demands include classroom management, lesson-planning, and actual instruction. Terry notes that larger class sizes can effect the teacher's ability to deal with the physical demands of teaching, and cause emotional stress. The fourth cause is the multi-task nature of teaching which requires teachers to attend "conferences, curriculum meetings, fund raising, new technology, and program planning" in addition to sponsoring a student club or organization. The fifth cause listed by Terry is "insufficient salaries and benefits". The sixth cause, a more recent development, is the teacher's perception that he/she is in an unsafe work environment, especially teachers in large urban cities where teachers are regularly threatened "physically and verbally" (1997, pp3- 8). All of these causes are external forces that challenge the symbolic 'health' of the teacher's career and the literal health of the teacher's body.

Not only are there factors inherent in the profession that contribute to burnout, but there are intrinsic qualities of an individual that will either allow, or not allow, that person to deal with the stress. Items included in the list of factors on the ability of an individual to deal with stress are "marriage, divorce, pregnancy, death of a loved one, change of residence, recreation, sleeping habits, or eating habits" (Terry, 1997, p. 8). The second area of intrinsic factors is the individual's ability to cope and adapt to the external stresses of the profession. Terry explains that the ability to adapt can develop quickly or

gradually over time and has a lot to do with the individual's perception of stressful events (1991, p. 10). Terry cites Bradfield & Fones' 1985 research that reveals "Burnout rates are lower for those professionals who actively express, analyze, and share personal feelings" (1997, p. 18). This line of argument suggests the need for training new teachers to be reflective practitioners, and using peer groups and mentors for expressing concerns and needs. Terry cites Hoversten (1992) with suggestions for campus administrators to decrease stress levels among teachers. Methods a principal can use to inspire teachers are: "give positive feedback often, maintain high standards, encourage professional growth, formulate support groups, share decision making, and involve parents and community (1997, p. 20). In other words, the principal has a critical role in reducing teacher stress through recognition and support, which in turn can effect a teacher's perceptions of their results in relation to expectations, reducing the burnout rate and attrition.

Biographical Sketch of a New Teacher At Risk

Superintendents, personnel directors, and campus principals usually consider teacher replacement as one of their more immediate concerns in the months before the beginning of the school year. Some districts, because of remote location, have fewer applicants from which to choose, while larger districts may have to consider several applicants for one position. Research on teacher attrition indicates that depending on the grade level and position being filled, certain trends, based on simple biographical data, do exist.

Gender, Grade Level, Age at Time of Career Choice

Because teacher attrition has been recognized as a significant student achievement issue, research around the country, and world, has been dedicated to discovering the reasons for attrition. Press (1997) conducted a national survey in Canada to gather information that would be relevant to future teacher demands. The results indicated that despite the outlook of a teacher surplus in the future for Canada, there was still a problem recruiting highly qualified teachers to rural areas. This tends to be a similar problem in South Texas (Wicker, 2000). Retaining teachers in South Texas, therefore, has an additional element of importance because of the difficulty of attracting new teachers to the rural areas.

Marso and Pigge (1996) completed a longitudinal study to compare academic, personal, and family characteristics of teachers who continued to teach beyond the early developmental years and those who left teaching. A total of 551 beginning teachers from the same large university in the Midwest were involved in the study from the time they left pre-service preparation until seven years later. Of the subjects involved, 86% responded that they were sure they wanted to be teachers. At the end of the seven years, the respondents were divided into four categories: not certified as teachers (21%), certified but not teaching (22%), part-time teachers (22%), and certified full-time teachers (29%). The purpose of the study was to learn which characteristics allowed 29% of the teachers to persist toward certified full-time teaching positions (Marso, 1996, pp. 3-4).

The results of the Marso and Pigge study indicate that while 79% of the students went on to be certified, only 51% were employed as either a full or part-time teachers

after the seven years, of which only 29% were the full-time certified teachers. While the gender of the full-time certified teachers was relatively even, males were less likely to teach part-time. Additionally, Marso and Pigge found that those who had decided to become a teacher while in high school doubled the number of those who decided in, or after, college. The authors summarized that teacher recruitment would be more effective by recruiting students in high school (1996, p. 8). The grade level of the teaching assignment also revealed a noticeable difference. Of those who completed certification but were no longer teaching at all, secondary teachers nearly doubled the number of elementary teachers (1995, p. 5). Finally, Marso and Pigge found that teachers in math, science, and special education left in greater percentages than teachers in the liberal arts (1996, p. 5).

Another paper by Pigge and Marso (1996) used the same longitudinal study but focused on 388 of the subjects regarding their academic aptitude and ability characteristics. This paper explains why attrition in math and science are attributed to marketability theory, which states that these teachers have degrees that can generate larger incomes from business and industry. The research also revealed that teachers who were certain about becoming a teacher and had high academic skills were more likely to be full-time certified teachers (1996, p. 8). Thus, the time in one's life that the decision to be a teacher is made can effect the 'health' of the career.

Konanc (1996) conducted a longitudinal study of teacher attrition in North Carolina that included over 81,000 teachers over a sixteen-year period. Konanc found that by the second year 15-18% of teachers had quit, with relatively similar numbers for all subject areas. At the end of the second year, 20% of the men had left as compared to

15% of the women. At the end of five years approximately one-third of the teachers had left teaching activities altogether. Also, at the end of five years, secondary teachers left at a higher rate than elementary teachers, 35% compared to 2.8% (Konanc, 1996, pp. 1-3). Konanc's study indicates a loss of over 16,000 teachers who would have to be replaced the next year. At $50,000 per teacher (according to Huling's estimate), those teachers in Konanc's study not reaching the impact stage could cost taxpayers $800 billion.

District Size

Rollefson (1993) collected data through the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), which is designed to measure aspects of teacher supply and demand, to determine the patterns of attrition. She concluded that attrition rates increase as the size of the school district increases, and when the percentage of minority students increases.

Konanc (1996) asks the important question: are the attrition levels for teachers a natural part of the profession as in other professions? As mentioned earlier in this chapter, attrition is an issue for all organizations, business and educational. However, the issue of student achievement in relation to high levels of attrition makes educational attrition an issue of economic, political, and social stability.

Experiences That Fall Below Expectations

According to the Human Capital Theory discussed earlier, a new employee will quit when his/her experiences on the job fall below a critical expectation. A review of the literature on teacher attrition reveals nine areas that consistently fall below a new teacher's expectations: salary, teaching assignment, paperwork, class size, student behavior, special education requirements, recognition from administrators, and

support from administrators.

<u>Salary</u>

Income has been an issue for teachers and teachers unions for the past few decades as advocates have sought pay to be equitable with the level of education and skills needed to teach. Kirby and Grissmer (1996) found that of the approximately 50,000 teachers they studied, the average teaching lifetime of teachers whose monthly gross salary was below $2,000 was 4.5 years and the average lifetime of teachers with an monthly gross salary over $2,000 was 8.8 years. The authors did note that salary as an issue about whether or not to continue teaching practically disappears by the eighth year of teaching. An increase in salary also indicated that there would be a 10% reduction in attrition of male teachers and 4% reduction among females. Kirby and Grissmer offered monetary strategies for increasing the retention rates of teachers. They suggested increasing salaries overall, with an emphasis on a higher starting salary for new teachers. Additionally, districts should invest in their teachers by offering scholarships or loans for a teacher's continued education. Stipends should also be offered for teaching in certain areas and 'problem' schools (1996, p. 27).

<u>Teaching Assignment</u>

According to Huling-Austin (1989) the beginning teacher is often given the 'worst' teaching assignments which can seriously effect his/her ability to feel successful in the first years of teaching. Huling-Austin writes that:

"beginning teachers are often placed in teaching assignments that would challenge even the most skillful veteran teachers. These difficult assignments can take several forms, including teaching in a subject area for which the teacher is not certified, having numerous class preparations, 'floating' from classroom to classroom, working with low-ability or unmotivated/disruptive students, or being responsible for demanding or time-consuming extracurricular activities" (p. 28).

Other duties may include lunch detention, lunch duty, monitoring halls immediately after school, or sponsoring a club/organization that administrators have had trouble convincing a veteran teacher to sponsor. Like many new employees, the beginning teacher usually agrees to the assignment out of his/her ambition to make a favorable impression. As a result, the physical demands of the assignment overpower the teacher's ability to adequately cope with the related stress, resulting in a downward slide into disillusionment before the first December break (Moir, 1990).

Paperwork

In a 1990 study of 300 first year teachers in Houston, novice teachers and their mentors ranked 14 perceived problems of teaching from 1 to 14 with 1 being the most significant problem and 14 the least significant problem. Both novice and mentor teachers ranked paperwork as the greatest problem of teachers (Houston, 1990). In more recent years, special education requirements have added to the overwhelming paperwork.

Class Size

Class size was determined to be a considerable issue among most teachers, regardless of their experience level. Smaller class size, as perceived by teachers, would lead to a lower attrition level (Kirby and Grissmer, 1993). In studies of high school dropout rates, research has made the connection to early childhood literacy levels that influence absenteeism rates and eventually dropout rates. Part of the effort to improve literacy and deal with the reduction of dropouts is to limit the class size to 15 ("Small classes", 1998). As will be discussed later, larger class sizes also add to the beginning teacher's inability to deal with the physical demands of day to day instruction.

Student Behavior

Experienced educators understand that student behavior has become a major concern on campuses throughout the nation. The pervasiveness of discipline problems almost places the issue in the realm of 'generally acceptable' beliefs. Nevertheless, there is ample research to support the perception of educators that student behavior has become an issue of student achievement. The National Education Association releases a yearly opinion poll requesting educators to respond to the top issues facing them. Between 1969 and 1984, student discipline was consistently the number one answer. In the years since, discipline has maintained a rating that has not fallen below number two, currently 'sharing time' with school finance (Heavside, 1998). Within this climate of declining student behavior, teachers increasingly perceive themselves as working in an unsafe environment. A teacher's perception of physical and verbal attacks is a major reason for leaving the profession (Terry, 1997).

Special Education

Sultana (1996) studied 98 special education teachers in an investigation into the high attrition rate among special education teachers in Kentucky. The study asked participants to list three reasons why special education teachers leave. The most common response was paperwork (80% of respondents). The second highest response was lack of respect from regular education personnel. The third highest response was lack of administrative support and respect. Sultana also noted that regular education teachers consistently complain about the paperwork involved with special education students, as well as the rules and regulations that accompany the due process of special education students.

Role of Administrators

Robinson (1998) discussed the importance of the role of the campus administrators to the effectiveness of a successful induction program for a beginning teacher (induction programs are reviewed below). He argues that the teacher's success in the classroom is directly dependent on the "successes he/she fosters with students, especially during initial classroom experiences". Additionally, "school administrators must be cognizant of these dynamics and must foster and develop programs that maximize all of the schools personnel resources for the benefit of all the students who are served" (1998, p, 5). In essence, the principal must facilitate the integration of the beginning teacher into the "culture, climate, and values" of the school: the district and campus vision (1998, p. 5). Robinson also argues that "in order for principals to maximize teachers' effectiveness, it is imperative that they be adequately trained and be gradually immersed into the schools' climate and cultures" (1992, p. 4). In other words, an administrator that allows 'baptism by fire', and does not provide authentic mentors, will likely be perceived by the beginning teacher as not being supportive.

Administrators can also boost the morale of disillusioned beginning teachers and serve us a safety net for those teachers whose experiences have fallen below the critical level of their expectations. The Canadian Education Association recommends several ways to provide recognition and appreciation for new teachers. One way is to have a "First Year Teacher Award". New teachers would also feel appreciated and included into the community of the district if they were recognized at the annual recognition night that most districts host (Canadian Education Association, 1992).

<u>Expectations</u>

Kirby and Grissmer (1993) argued that there is a critical point for each teacher where his/her experiences are not consistent with his/her expectations of what teaching would be like. Therefore, teacher expectations as compared to experiences would be important to monitor. Freppon and MacGillivary (1996) wrote that pre-service programs serve an important role in determining the expectations of new teachers by using journals. Journals become profiles through which to determine the 'critical point' for individual teachers. Reflection within a journal also helps develop the internal locus of control for new teachers. The discussion on pre-service programs will need to address whether or not journals are being used as part of the new teacher development.

One of the expectations that many new teachers have is that they are adequately prepared by their pre-service experiences to become effective teachers very quickly. A qualitative study by Corley (1999) revealed that of those teachers interviewed most were surprised by the things they were expected to know that they had not been told about. In other words, there are many things that happen at the campus and district level that pre-service programs can not completely prepare teachers for, especially programs that consist primarily of classroom experiences.

Bowman, Bright, and Vacc (1998) studied the beliefs of twenty elementary teachers about teaching and learning during the first two years of implementing a new mathematics instruction program. The study is relevant to the issue of new teacher development because implementing a new instruction program can make a teacher at the 'impact' stage move back into 'maintenance' or even 'survival' stage if the program conflicts too much with the teacher's philosophies and abilities. This study measured the

teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning before the implementation of the program, and measured them again periodically throughout the course of the next two years. According to the study, it took two years of implementation for teachers' beliefs to recover to the same level. During those two years, those teachers whose beliefs had been altered were at high risk of leaving the profession had they not had other characteristics that anchored them through the two years. For a new teacher without the other characteristics as an anchor, the beliefs about teaching and learning (their expectations) when challenged in the first few years could be enough to push him/her to the critical point of disillusionment with the profession and a chronic case of "teacher burnout'. Thus, any assistance offered a new teacher should extend to a minimum of two years.

Balancing Expectations and Experiences

The nine problematic areas of teaching experiences that often fall below a new teacher's expectations, as discussed above, can be addressed through pre-service and in-service programs. The pre-service programs available in Region 2 are university-based coursework (some with induction programs) and an alternative program through the regional service center. As will be discussed, the on-campus induction programs with mentor components are not as visible.

Certification

Since certification is a requirement in most states to teach, as it certainly is in Texas, the quality of pre-service education can influence the length of time it will take for a new teacher to make the transition to effectiveness. According to Fuller's "concerns theory" of new teacher development, the most important element to progression from

survival stage to impact stage is the knowledge and emotional support developed at the pre-service level. As Patricia Gonzalez (1995) wrote, the environment of the school is also important to the development of the new teacher because pre-service programs can not realistically prepare each teaching candidate for every possible scenario. The pre-service program must somehow combine the theory of the university classroom with the practice of the elementary or secondary classroom.

Although some teachers in Region 2 may have been certified elsewhere in the state, or out-of-state, certification locally can be accomplished through Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi (TAMUCC), Texas A&M University - Kingsville (TAMUK), or the regional Education Service Center's Alternative Certification Program. Certification programs are historically classroom-based and theoretical in nature. Locally, however, TAMUK has participated in the initiative known as Centers for Professional Development and Technology (CPDT). TAMUCC offers an Induction Year Program for teaching candidates seeking certification to accompany an undergraduate degree, as a component of a Masters in Education, or as professional development for an employed teacher. CPDT assists professional development through five components: "collaboration, restructuring educator preparation, staff development, technology, and multicultural education" (Bowen, 1996, p. 4). The Induction Year is designed to integrate the theory of the university classroom with the practice of the elementary and secondary classrooms (Merchant, 1999). Before evaluating the offerings of the local programs, induction programs from other parts of the nation should be looked at as a point of reference for comparison.

The Alternative Certification Program offered by the Region 2 Educational

Service Center is an intensive one year program for teaching candidates with high levels

of commitment, many of whom are working under an emergency certificate. The

program consists of a total of 315 classroom hours, 215 completed between May and

August and 100 as part of an Induction component. Classes begin in May of each year

with meetings Monday through Thursday, 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., after work. During the

summer months students meet from 8:30 to 4:00 each weekday. Beginning with the start

of the public school year, teaching candidates meet only on Wednesday nights as part of

an induction program. The cost of the one-year intensive certification program is $3,500.

The Alternative Certification Program requires both time and financial commitment with

applicants being screened to ensure that neither time nor money is wasted (Education

Service Center, Region 2, 1999).

Centers for Professional Development and Technology & The Induction Year

The Texas Centers for Professional Development and Technology (CPDT) are

collaborative, field-based programs that include 21 centers in Texas and effect about

12,000 pre-service teachers. The goal of CPDT is a systematic change in teacher

preparation. A major component of the program is collaboration with on-campus

mentors for the new teachers. This collaboration includes professional development for

the mentors, and mentor input into the university instruction and evaluation of the pre-

service teachers (Macy Research Associates, 1996). The mentors are also given a

stipend by CPDT.

The CPDT initiative associated with TAMUK emphasizes "preparation of

teachers for the increasingly demographically diverse and low SES population of the

state" (Bowen, 1996, p. 10). Since university students involved in the program are

treated as faculty in the school and are involved with children, "interns should go through the same screening as regular faculty" (Bowen, 1996, p. 25). The university students, or interns, are assigned a mentor with whom to work. Some reformers advocate that for the professional development schools (PDS) to become a model for teacher preparation, the model must be institutionalized. Such institutionalization "posits that the local administrator is crucial to the successful implementation" and that the "administrator maintains pressure on teachers to use the innovation" (Bowen, 1996, p. 25). Advocates of CPDT argue that the principal is the key to the success or failure of the program on that campus.

At one school where the campus principal did not fully support PDS, mentor teachers "worked harder and experienced burnout from having an intern and resident per mentor every semester . . . . As a result, the school decided to reduce the number of interns assigned to their school" (Bowen, 1996, p. 21). At other schools where mentors enjoyed support from the principal, there were no threats to the perceived institutionalization of the program (Bowen, 1996, p. 23). The PDS can work, apparently, but the locus of control is still with the campus principal which limits the empowerment of the teachers. Only through bottom-up strategies can a reform such as PDS earn the 'identification' needed for 'buy-in' to the program's vision (Yukl, 1998).

Induction Programs

In the professional literature, the word 'induction' has been used to refer to a university-based component of pre-service education, as well as a first year on-campus program developed by a district. Clarification between the two types of induction is needed before evaluating whether one or the other, or both, is the most effective type of

induction to facilitate the retention of beginning teachers. Induction for a first year

teacher should also not be confused with 'orientation'. Induction is defined as "an

exposure to something unknown, an act or process of inciting; an initial experience"

(Robinson. 1998, p.3). Orientation is defined as "the direction . . . or introduction to an

unfamiliar situation, an activity of a new kind; a program set up for the benefit of new

employees" (Robinson, 1998, p. 3). Unfortunately, on a 'baptism by fire' campus

orientation often inappropriately serves as an induction.

Canadian educators have been quite active in researching the use of university-

based induction programs as part of the pre-service preparation for teachers. Duquette's

(1996) three-year study of pre-service cohorts that participated in a pre-service

practicuum learned more from connecting the coursework theories with the practice of

the practicuum than through the traditional model of pre-service education. Edwards

(1997) examined strategies developed at Missouri Western State College to "blend

content and pedagogy in teacher education programs" using principal evaluations and

National Teachers Exam scores as measures of effectiveness of the strategies (p. 44).

Edwards concluded that both measures improved significantly as a result of the strategies

to blend theory and pedagogy.

Ochoa (1992), director of the New Teacher Retention Title VII Project conducted

at San Diego State University, designed a program to improve the retention rates of

bilingual and E.S.L. teachers. The results are equally applicable to the experiences and

needs of new teachers. The three major assistance components of the project were

professional development, psychological and collegial support, and scholarships and

materials stipends (Cooper and Morey, 1989). Cooper (1989) noted that since new

teachers are preoccupied with immediate and practical tasks, they need personal support, encouragement, and reliance on peers. Ochoa listed the primary benefits of the program as: 1) teachers have the opportunity to share ideas, 2) teachers are given time to meet and bond with other new and experienced teachers, 3) teachers benefit from meeting people with similar situations and concerns, and 4) teachers benefit from peer support. This gives new teachers the opportunity to "actively express, analyze, and share personal feelings" (Terry, 1997, p. 18). Thus, peer interaction is an important component of a university-based induction program.

Student surveys from the New Teacher Retention Project revealed the top three benefits that the new teachers received from the program were 1) they were made more 'reflective' about lessons and management, 2) they were more aware of methodologies, and 3) they were able to share their concerns with others. The development of reflective practice is an important component of progressing toward the impact stage. The new teachers involved in the program also made suggestions about how the program could be improved. The top three responses were: 1) emphasize classroom management more, 2) use mentor teachers to demonstrate model lessons, and 3) the program should use less lecture and more student participation to model effective teaching strategies (Ochoa, 1992). These suggestions will need to be considered when evaluating local university-based induction programs.

A study by Norton (1997) examined 42 first year teachers to determine which pre-service activities helped develop characteristics of an effective teacher. The participants identified the pre-service activities they believe maximized their growth in teaching artistry and reflective thinking. The activities were 1) clinical field experiences during

methods and foundation courses, 2) video analysis of their teaching performances, 3)

weekly seminars, 4) reflective journals, and 5) professor-modeled reflective thinking.

Teacher Induction Partnerships was developed by the University of Northern

Colorado in conjunction with several Colorado school districts. This induction program

offered teaching experience while students earned graduate credits in education.

Macisaac and Brookhart (1994) stated that the new teaching candidate "gets experience

of a staff member while receiving support and assistance, feedback on teaching practices,

and graduate level course work in education" (1994, p. 1). The program also involves a

mentoring component within the context of a three-person partnership between the

university field consultant, a school-based mentor, and the building principal. The

program offers training for the school-based mentor and release time for partner teachers

to observe other teachers. The authors concluded that the purpose of teacher induction is

to bring "together theory and practice and crosses the bridge between university teacher

preparation and professional teacher practice" (Macsiaac, 1994, p. 13).

Robinson (1998) discussed the importance of a new teacher induction with the use

of a peer coach (mentor) as part of the goal of familiarizing new staff "with the school's

culture, climate, and values" (p. 7). Robinson argues that "improved schooling for youth

will result only when schools are deemed to be better places for teachers to learn about

teaching, and where more support of teachers' efforts exists to improve their professional

practices and to enrich their overall lives (1998, p. 4). For Robinson, the induction

process includes several categories: pre-service experience, orientation, getting started,

mentoring, and review and evaluation. He also writes that the pre-service experience is

often the "determining factor influencing longevity in the teaching profession" (1998, p.

5). Robinson summarizes that induction is a "cyclical process within the school's culture . . . the culture serves to induct incoming members in a manner that is perpetuated and is returned back into the culture" (1998, p. 12). Essentially, the induction process that bridges from pre-service induction to on-campus induction serves to socially integrate the new teacher into the community of the campus.

The Induction Year Program at TAMUCC is designed for students who have completed the required coursework for certification (the theoretical training). As part of the program, students seek employment in an area district, usually on an emergency certificate, with the employing district understanding that this student will be eligible for certification at the end of the Induction Year. The induction Year is structured to allow the students, or new teachers, to meet weekly and discuss the practice of education within the context of theory. The Induction Year instructors serve as mentors for Induction students. The difference between the Induction Year and PDS is that the participants are typically in the role of a first year teacher with all the responsibilities, stresses, and 'levels of concern'.

The Induction Year Program covers two semesters with students meeting once a week. Elementary and secondary teachers meet at different times. The first half-hour of class is used for grade level groups to discuss events that happened over the course of the previous week. Members respond with advice from their own experiences, as well as with suggestions from the university teacher/mentor. This allows for the peer support that the students in the San Diego State study found to be important and Terry recommended as a strategy for dealing with stress.

The Masters and Certification (MAC) program at Texas A&M University-Corpus

Christi requires journals in many of the required courses that serve as prerequisites to the Induction Year. The goal is to help the pre-service teacher develop reflective skills, an important component of moving quickly along the continuum from survival stage to impact stage. The use of journals is continued into the Induction Year Program. The Induction Year Program offers other elements of a pre-service program considered effective by the literature. The elements are as follows:

- the university professor observes the student 5 times (1 of the 5 is audio taped, 2 are videotaped),

- student observe "Master" teachers,

- university professors model strategies through their own teaching,

- clinical field experience,

- university instructors serve as mentors,

- an emphasis on problematic aspects of teaching such as classroom management, paperwork, gaining administrative support, coping with stress, special education requirements,

- conflicts between experiences and expectations are dealt with through peer support.

Moon-Merchant (2000), director of the Induction Year Program at TAMUCC, documents a retention rate of Induction graduates after 5 years of teaching as 100% for 1991-92, 94% for 1992-93, 100% for 1993-94, 91% for 1994-95, and 96% for 1995-96.

Mentors

Kirby and Grissmer's (1993) research on teacher attrition, as discussed earlier, concluded that as part of teacher retention programs school districts should implement a

teacher induction program like Indiana's Beginning Teacher Internship Program. In the

Beginning Teacher Internship Program teachers are required to serve one year under a

mentor teacher to support the development of the new teacher (pp. 37-45). Currently in

Texas, a mentor program has been legislated as mandatory for first year teachers. In 1995

the Texas Education Agency (TEA) published the guidelines for implementing a

mentoring program in *Mentoring Frameworks for Texas Teachers*. The manual includes

the collective philosophy and procedures for districts implementing a mentoring or

campus-based induction program (Holden, 1995). Texas is one of many states

implementing a mentoring program. There are examples from other areas in the United

States of the success of mentor programs.

One example of a mentor program is the Performance Enhancement Model

(PEM), a school program designed to meet the special needs of first year teachers. The

program includes a series of in-service sessions for new teacher training in which peer

supervisors who have demonstrated teaching and organizational ability, train new

teachers in areas such as getting started, classroom management, instruction, diagnosis

and assessment, and parental involvement (Cram and Young, 1998).

Gratch (1996) completed a study during the 1994-95 school year about beginning

teacher-mentor relationships in North Carolina. The study included interviews in which

participants expressed concern about the problems faced in the first two months of school

related to classroom discipline, time management, getting sufficient materials, organizing

the classroom, dealing with parents, daily scheduling and planning, paperwork,

motivating students, and meeting individual students' needs.

Baptiste and Sheeter (1997) argue that the key to assisting new teachers through

the 'survival' phase of the first year of teaching is to create on-site mentors to support the development of reflective practice as well as creating a mentor as colleague, coach, and friend. In a study by Breeding and Whitworth (1999), scheduled talk sessions recorded on audio tape revealed that there were four primary concerns of the new teachers involved: strategy sharing, facilities, classroom discipline, and fear of appearing incompetent. The opportunity to discuss concerns with a mentor is a clear advantage for helping new teachers cope with the stress of the occupation. A qualitative study by Corley (1999) used interviews of three first year teachers at the same high school in an effort to determine the factors contributing to their success and failure during the first year of teaching. They believed that the campus mentor program began too late to help them during the initial weeks of the school year.

The NSTEP Information Brief (Gonzalez, 1995) notes that between 1983 and 1992, 34 of the 50 states initiated a beginning teacher program, 16 of those states using pilot programs or allowing individual districts to design their own program. Gonzalez completed an analysis of the major components of the 34 programs created, and concluded that there were three main themes: "support for beginning teachers provided by mentors and/or support teams, training programs for staff development, and formative and/or summative evaluation purposes for the program" (p. 2). Gonzalez reported that by 1992 thirteen states required summative evaluation of new teachers "as part of these programs and used the evaluation results for continuing employment and/or certification" (p. 2). The state of Texas is currently piloting a summative evaluation program through pre-service induction programs, the Beginning Teacher Activity Profile in Texas (BTAPT).

The NSTEP Information Brief offered direct intervention strategies that could be used at the state and local levels to deal with teacher attrition. The factors under most direct control are "professional qualifications, work conditions, and work rewards" (Gonzalez, 1995, p. 3). Gonzalez argued that before developing and implementing a retention program "districts should pinpoint the rate of and reasons for attrition" because "causes of attrition are more a local question than a statistical one". Additionally, "it is desirable to compare the various costs of attrition (dollars, time spent rehiring, loss of expertise and experience) with the costs associated with retention incentives" (1995, p. 3-1). Determining the causes of attrition in Region 2 is the purpose of the Beginning Teacher Survey Study.

Because of local differences, individual school districts should design a mentoring program that suits the needs of the district. The University of Wisconsin-Whitewater Beginning Teacher Assistance Program is the "longest operating mentoring program for teachers in the United States", directed by Tom Gasner (p. 1). Gasner (1995) offers suggestions for developing a mentoring program based on the experiences at UW-Whitewater. Gasner argues that it is important for the entire faculty to welcome the beginning teacher, not just the principal or the mentor. In effect, Gasner is arguing for social integration into the school community. He suggests that a principal must make new teachers aware that they can share their problems (1995, p. 3). Once again, support from administrators is critical to the success of the program. Gasner emphasizes the need for a mentor that a new teacher can turn to, eliminating the 'baptism by fire' approach many new teachers experience. The mentor program can improve "beginning teachers understanding of the unique history, customs, and culture of the school in which they

work, charting a course for their long-term professional development, and meeting state mandates" (1995. p. 3). Gasner also notes that the most important resource for a beginning teacher and mentor is "time together, both to be in one another's classroom and to meet together" (1995, p. 3). Finally, Gasner argues that the mentoring program must have some form of evaluation to measure the success of the program. The mentor program should have clearly defined roles and responsibilities for the mentor and the beginning teacher, but not too rigid of a structure. Activities that the mentor and beginning teacher must consider are how often to meet, arranging visits to one another's classrooms, attending similar or different professional development workshops, and whether or not the beginning teacher should be required to keep a journal. Essentially, for Gasner, the mentor facilitates the social integration of the new teacher into the community of the school, much as Robinson argued to be the role of an induction program.

Taylor and Wilson (1997) studied teacher education practices and student characteristics that contribute to successful teachers of minority students. The study was conducted over a two year period of time using cohorts from "a reflective teacher education program" (p. 2). Problems these new teachers encountered were associated with inconsistencies between their pre-service programs and their campus mentors. Taylor and Wilson argue that this problem would be solved with the university professors training the on-campus mentors. Also, the study reported many of the same problems during the cohort's second year of teaching, indicating that a mentor program could realistically extend beyond the first year. Thus, a new element of a successful program is to have campus mentors trained by the university induction staff through scheduled staff

development.

Staff Development and In-Service

Gasner notes that one of the problems with many staff development programs for beginning teachers and mentor training is that they are "front-loaded" as "information, skills, and strategies are presented at the beginning, with little opportunity for systematic application, practice, and follow-up" (1995, p. 9). Heinicke, Henrie, and Gronewold (1998) presented an overview of The Entry Year Assistance Program of Educational Service Unit #11 in Nebraska, designed to train mentor teachers, beginning teachers, and administrators in small, rural districts. The district combines a beginning teacher, mentor, and administrator into a team that participates in four, one-day training sessions over a four month period of time. Topics include "classroom management skills, knowledge of content, child growth and development, knowledge and use of materials, planning skills, instructional skills, human relations skills, and best practices of effective schools research" (Heinicke, 1998, p. 2). By spreading the training out over a longer period of time, the novice teacher and mentor are able to apply reflective strategies to classroom practice.

Adams (1996) describes the efforts of two elementary schools in White Plains, New York to create a caring school community through involvement in the Child Development Project. The goal of the program was to enable faculty and staff members of each school to make the connection between "building community and advancing the academic, social, and ethical development of students" (Adams, 1996, p. 16). An important aspect of the program was a new teacher orientation that begins the process of social integration into the school climate, and the vision of creating a caring community.

Conclusion

Although personnel turnover is a factor of most businesses, corporate America understands the financial inefficiency inherent in working with new employees only to lose them to another company. Education requires several years of college preparation in addition to the hands-on learning in the first years of teaching, yet turnover effects more than tight school budgets. High attrition rates are counterproductive to the rising demands of student achievement, especially in the area of standardized testing. In fact, an urban school district's study of TAAS scores correlated to teaching experience found a significant correlation between the two variables. The more experience a teacher had, the higher the TAAS scores. Teaching experience was second only to prior reading achievement in influencing higher TAAS scores (Huling, 1998).

As important as the survival of new teachers is, many beginning teachers experience a 'baptism by fire' during the first year of teaching, and often the second year as well. The Human Capital Theory indicates that when the experiences are no longer countered by the rewards, the person will quit (expectations versus experiences). A review of the literature related to the retention of new teachers indicates trends in biographical information of new teachers and a variety of stresses that are placed on new teachers that result in high turnover rates. According to the literature, new teachers that are most likely to leave during the survival stage of their development are male, secondary teachers from large school districts who made the decision to be a teacher late in life (usually while in a different career).

The problematic aspects of teaching that tend to cause new teachers to leave vary

from region to region, and even district to district based on local needs and school environments. Within those differing needs, however, have emerged nine aspects that influence the decision to leave teaching: salary, teaching assignment, duties other than teaching, paperwork, class size, student behavior, special education requirements; recognition from administrators, and support from administrators.

Teacher pre-service at the university level has traditionally been theoretical in nature. However, recent trends toward university-based induction programs, campus-based induction, and mentor programs represents an attempt to bridge the gap between theory and practice. The local universities of Region 2 in South Texas offer different ways in which to bridge that gap. TAMUK has a Center for Professional Development and Technology, which places pre-service teachers in a campus. A CPDT coordinator then works with the campus principal to develop the student. TAMUCC bridges the gap using an Induction Year Program in which the new teacher has the support of a peer group and a place to reflect about the application of theory to practice. Individual campuses also offer induction programs that are designed to integrate the new teacher into the community of the school. What pre-service preparations these induction programs focus on should be based on the needs of the local districts.

A critical component of the induction programs, whether university-based or campus-based, is the use of mentor teachers for the novice teachers. The research indicates that mentors are important to facilitating the integration of the new teacher into the school culture as well as developing coping strategies in response to the stresses related to the problematic aspects of teaching. Mentor programs have become increasingly popular around the country, but they should be tailored to the needs of each

local district.

Finally, induction and mentor programs that are designed to develop a 'reflective teacher' will enhance a more rapid movement along the learning continuum from survival, to maintenance, to impact stage for the teacher. A 'reflective teacher' can be encouraged through the use of journals at the pre-service level and in the early years of teaching. Reflection can also be encouraged by spreading out the in-service training over a longer period of time, and by extending the mentor program and induction programs into the second, sometimes third, year of teaching.

CHAPTER THREE

Procedures for Collection and Treatment of Data

Introduction

This chapter is divided into five sections. The first section is concerned with the design of the research. The second section describes the participants of the study. The third section is a description of the instruments. The fourth section is an explanation of the procedures used to collect the data, and the last section is an explanation of the procedures used for the analysis of data.

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that contribute to the attrition of new teachers from the teaching profession. Subjects of the study were teachers in their first, second, or third year of their teaching career in the Region 2 Educational Service Center of South Texas. A survey was developed by the researchers to obtain biographical data and information pertaining to certification, career decisions, preservice training, teacher models, campus support and ratings of various aspects of teaching. A cross-sectional survey was conducted due to time limitations.

The advantage of using the cross-sectional survey, one that is collected at one point in time, was that it allowed the research project to be completed in the spring semester. The disadvantage of the cross-sectional survey was that the accuracy of the results of the survey could be validated if the respondents could be studied over a period of time. Also, factors that motivate respondents who chose to complete the survey as

opposed to those who did not return the survey could provide valuable information concerning whether the results can be generalized over the target population.

Sample

The target population was new teachers in South Texas with three or less years of teaching experience. The accessible population was 42 school districts in Region 2. Region 2 is a 10 county area in South Texas with 43 school districts and a total enrollment of 110, 600 students. Of the 35 districts serving K-12, 25 participated in the survey. The sample was non-random since the researchers wanted feedback specifically from teachers with three or less years of experience. Two hundred twenty-eight teachers participated in the study.

Description of the Instrument

The "Survey of Beginning Teachers" was developed by the researchers after a review of the literature on teacher attrition rates. The instrument contains five sections:

- Biographical Data

  1. Gender

  2. Age

  3. Grade Level Assignment

  4. Years in Teaching (1, 2, or 3)

- Certification and Career Decisions

  1. Certification Status

  2. Route to Standard Certification

  3. Time of Decision to enter the teaching profession

4. When career was begun

- Campus Support Systems

    1. Master or Model Teacher availability

    2. Mentor Teacher Program

- Ratings of the Expectations and Aspects of Teaching

    1. Perceived effectiveness of mentor program

    2. Expectations compared to actual teaching experiences

    3. Ratings of Aspects of teaching

- Future Plans and open-ended comments

A cross-sectional survey which contained eleven multiple choice questions, three Likert scale questions, and one open-ended question was used. Question 14 of the survey asked teachers whether they planned to continue or leave the teaching profession. All other responses were compared to this question.

The surveys were coded numerically by district to keep track of the percentage of responses from specific sizes of districts and to assist in follow-ups for those district with low or no responses.

Data Collection

Data on the forty-three school districts in Region 2 of the South Texas Education Service Center was obtained from its website at http://www.esc2.net. The first mailing was to the district superintendents requesting permission to do research in the districts. A metered envelope addressed to the researchers was included to facilitate the return of the permission form. A two-week window was allowed for return of the permission

responses, however during that period, several of the districts were on spring break at least one of the weeks. A follow-up phone call was made to all district superintendents who had not returned the request by the specified date. A copy of the letter granting permission was faxed to any superintendent who did not have it readily available. As soon as permission was obtained, calls were made to campus principals to obtain the number of surveys that would be needed at each campus within the districts. Next, a mailing was sent to the campus principals that contained the surveys to be distributed to the appropriate teachers. When the number of new teachers was not ascertained in a timely manner, five surveys were mailed to the campus. Cover letters were included for both the principal and with the survey for each teacher. Additionally, the surveys were mailed directly to the researchers to encourage teachers to respond. A metered postcard was included with the survey that was to be mailed separately from the survey, to maintain anonymity, and enter the respondent in a drawing for a "teacher survival kit", conducted from all returned postcards.

Data Analysis

Of the 39 districts that granted permission to conduct the research, 35 were K-12 districts. Surveys were returned from 228 respondents that represented 25 of the 35 K-12 districts. Twenty-eight respondents, or 12.3% were from 1A-2A schools; 141 respondents, or 61.8% represented 3A-4A schools; and 59 respondents, or 25.9% represented 5A schools. Data from the returned surveys was input in the SPSS Student Version 8.0 for Windows. Frequencies, including percentages, and cross-tabulations were obtained.

CHAPTER FOUR

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Results

Question #1: Is there a difference in the percentage of females and males who continue or discontinue the teaching profession in Region 2 of South Texas?

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE OF FEMALE AND MALE BEGINNING TEACHERS WHO PLAN TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING		
	Continue	Discontinue
Females (n=184)	78%	22%
Males (n=44)	61%	39%
Total for Females and Males (n=228)	75%	25%

As shown in Table 1, 78% of the females and 61% of the males plan to continue teaching while 22% of the females and 39% of the males plan to discontinue teaching. Of the 228 respondents to the survey, 184 (81%) were female, and 44 (19%) were male. Question 14 on the "Survey of Beginning Teachers" asked respondents to identify whether they planned to continue teaching, continue teaching unless something better comes along, or if they definitely planned to discontinue teaching. The researchers interpreted the second response as discontinuing the profession because they felt that if one is thinking about leaving, they are likely to leave. Therefore, the results of the first response were considered to be those who would continue in the teaching profession. The results of the second and third response were considered to be those who planned to discontinue the teaching profession. A correlation of gender and the decision to continue or leave the teaching profession was made.

Question #2: Is there a difference in the persistence of teachers in the first three years of teaching according to the age of the teacher?

TABLE 2

PERCENTAGE OF BEGINNING TEACHERS WHO PLAN TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING AS A CAREER		
	Continue	Discontinue
Under 25 (n=57)	88%	12%
26-30 (n=69)	70%	30%
31-35 (n=29)	79%	21%
Over 35 (n=73)	69%	31%

Table 2 shows the percentage of respondents in each age category that indicated that they would continue or discontinue the teaching profession. Persistence has been defined as the intention to continue a career in the teaching profession. Age categories were identified as under 25, 26-30, 31-35, or over 35. The largest percentage of beginning teachers who plan to discontinue teaching is in the age category of over 35. Since these teachers are likely to have entered the profession as a career change, there may be influences other than the teaching profession itself that impact the decision of members of this age category to discontinue. The highest percentage of beginning teachers who plan to continue are in the under 25 age category. There appears to be a significant drop in the percentage of teachers who plan to continue teaching in the second age category. This percentage is similar to the over 35 category. Several factors may impact the decline of the percentage of teachers who plan to continue teaching. There may be a tendency to assume that the older a person is, there is less need for support, or factors such as salary or student behavior may impact the older person more than the younger person. It is interesting to note that the largest number of respondents were in

the over 35 age category. A similar percentage was noted in the 26-30 age group, the

second largest respondent group regarding the decision to discontinue teaching.

Question #3: Is there a difference in the percentage of elementary teachers and secondary
teachers who leave the teaching profession in the first three years of teaching?

TABLE 3

PERCENTAGE OF FEMALES AND MALES WHO PLAN TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING IN THE ELEMENTARY, MIDDLE, AND HIGH SCHOOL GRADES		
	Continue	Discontinue
Elementary Females (n = 99)	82%	18%
Elementary Males (n=7)	71%	29%
Middle School Females (n= 35)	80%	20%
Middle School Males (n = 15)	67%	33%
High School Females (n = 22)	67%	33%
High School Males (n = 30)	47%	53%

Table 3 shows a comparison of the percentages of females and males at the

elementary, middle, and high school levels who choose to continue or discontinue

teaching during the first three years. To answer this question, the researchers identified

teachers of grades k-5 as elementary teachers, grades 6-8 as middle school teachers, and

grades 9-12 as high school teachers. The data indicates a trend for teacher attrition to

steadily increase in the upper grades. Also, males are more likely than females to

discontinue teaching at all levels. The trends are consistent with national trends. The

largest number of male respondents is from the high school level. It is noteworthy that

more than half of this group plans to discontinue teaching. The percentage of females

who plan to continue teaching has a large decrease at the high school level, from 82% at

the elementary level to 80% at the middle school level to 67% at the high school level. In

the study by Marso and Pigge, the grade level of the teaching assignment revealed a

noticeable difference in the retention rates of teachers.

Question #4: Is there a difference in the percentage of beginning teachers who continue or discontinue the teaching profession in Region 2 of South Texas according to the size of the school district?

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE OF BEGINNING TEACHERS WHO PLAN TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING COMPARED TO THE SCHOOL DISTRICT SIZE		
School District Size	Continue	Discontinue
1A-2A (n = 28)	75%	25%
3A-4A (n = 141)	79%	21%
5A (n = 59)	64%	36%

Table 4 shows that 75% of the beginning teachers in the 1A-2A ISDs plan to continue teaching, 79% of the beginning teachers in the 3A-4A ISDs plan to continue teaching while only 64% of the beginning teachers in the 5A ISDs plan to continue teaching. The smaller number of respondents from the 1A-2A ISDs may not be as representative as the other school districts that had a larger response to the surveys. Also, factors other than school size may account for the lower percentage of teachers who plan to continue from the smaller districts.

Question #5: What is the effectiveness of teacher pre-service programs in Region 2 of South Texas?

TABLE 5

A COMPARISON OF THE ROUTE TO STANDARD CERTIFICATION AND THE DECISION TO REMAIN OR LEAVE THE TEACHING PROFESSION		
Route to Certification	Continue	Discontinue
Texas A&M – Corpus Christi	64%	36%
Texas A&M – Kingsville	62%	38%
ESC 2	100%	0%

(n = 60)

Table 5 shows a comparison of those teachers who are obtaining their standard certification through Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi; Texas A&M University – Kingsville; and the Region 2 Education Service Center. Certification data from the

"Survey of Beginning Teachers" was compared to beginning teachers' decision to

continue or to leave the teaching profession. Question 5 on the survey asked respondents

to identify whether their certification status was standard or emergency. Respondents

who had emergency certification were asked to identify their route to standard

certification. 60 of the 224 respondents, or 27%, have temporary certification. None of

the respondents who are obtaining their certification through the Service Center plan to

leave the profession, while the percentages who plan to leave are similar if the route to

certification is through Texas A&M University – Corpus Christi or Texas A&M

University-Kingsville. Results of this question cannot be generalized to the programs as

a whole because it does not include the fully certified teachers, many of who were likely

to have been participants in one of the university programs. Due to the financial and time

commitments of the ESC Alternative Certification Program, as discussed earlier in

Chapter Two, the 100% response of continuing to teach may be more reflective of the

type of pre-service student who would sign up for such an intensive one year program.

The responses by the pre-service students at TAMUCC do not offer relevant data

regarding the effectiveness of the Induction Year Program because the Induction Year is

only available at the end of the certification program. Induction graduates would not

have responded to this question.

Question #6: Does the time that a person makes a career decision to become a teacher make a difference in the percentage of teachers who decide to continue or discontinue teaching in the first three years?

TABLE 6

A COMPARISON OF THE PERCENTAGE OF BEGINNING TEACHERS WHO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING AND THE TIME OF THEIR DECISION TO ENTER THE TEACHING PROFESSION		
Time of Decision	Continue	Discontinue
Always (n = 63)	83%	17%
High School (n = 21)	81%	19%
College (n = 65)	69%	31%
Employed in other Career (n = 75)	72%	28%

Table 6 shows that beginning teachers who made the decision to teach during high school or earlier have a much higher likelihood of retention than those who made the decision during their college years or those who entered teaching following another career. This data is consistent with the data obtained from the age groupings in question 2. It suggests that teacher recruitment during the high school years may have an impact on the retention rate of teachers in their first three years of teaching. This data also is consistent with a study by Marso and Pigge who found that those who had decided to become a teacher while in high school doubled the number of those who decided in, or after, college.

Question #7: Is there a difference in the retention rate of teachers in their first three years of teaching between those who have a model teacher to observe and those who do not?

TABLE 7

PERCENTAGE OF BEGINNING TEACHERS WHO PLAN TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING COMPARED TO THOSE WHO HAVE A MODEL TEACHER TO OBSERVE AND THOSE WHO DO NOT		
Model Teacher	Continue	Discontinue
Yes (n = 155)	81%	19%
No (n = 71)	63%	37%

Table 7 shows that, of those who have a model teacher to observe, 81% plan to continue teaching while 19% do not. Of those who do not have a model teacher to observe, 63% plan to continue teaching while 37% do not. This suggests that observing a successful model has a powerful impact on a beginning teacher's decision to continue teaching.

TABLE 8

PERCENTAGE OF BEGINNING TEACHERS WHO HAVE MODEL TEACHERS DURING THE FIRST THREE YEARS OF TEACHING COMPARED TO THEIR PLANS TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING		
Model Teacher	Continue	Discontinue
First Year: Yes (n = 67)	88%	12%
First Year: No (n = 31)	58%	42%
Second Year: Yes (n = 40)	73%	27%
Second Year: No (n = 14)	57%	43%
Third Year: Yes (n = 40)	75%	25%
Third Year: No (n = 24)	71%	29%

Table 8 shows that 88% of beginning teachers in their first year of teaching who have a model teacher to observe plan to continue teaching while only 58% of those who do not have a model teacher plan to continue. The data suggests that a model teacher during the second year of teaching is also critical. As shown in Table 8, 73% of those who have a model teacher plan to continue teaching while only 57% of those who not have a model teacher plan to continue. In the third year of teaching, there was little difference between those who had a model teacher and those who did not. 75% of those with a model teacher planned to continue teaching while 71% of those who did not have a model teacher planned to continue.

Question #8: What is the effectiveness of the mentor programs in Region 2 of South Texas?

TABLE 9

PERCENTAGE OF BEGINNING TEACHERS WITH MENTORS AND WITHOUT MENTORS IN THE FIRST, SECOND, AND THIRD YEAR OF TEACHING AND THEIR PLANS TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING		
Experience	Continue	Discontinue
First Year of Teaching with Mentor (n = 60)	90%	10%
First Year of Teaching – no Mentor (n = 38)	61%	39%
Second Year of Teaching with Mentor (n = 23)	78%	22%
Second Year of Teaching – no Mentor (n = 32)	63%	37%
Third Year of Teaching with Mentor (n = 32)	72%	28%
Third Year of Teaching – no Mentor (n = 33)	73%	27%

TABLE 10

PERCENTAGE OF BEGINNING TEACHERS WHO HAVE MENTORS COMPARED TO THE DECISION TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING		
Mentor Teacher Program / Hours Per Week	Continue	Discontinue
Yes / Less than 1 (n = 62)	76%	24%
Yes / 1 – 3 (n = 39)	90%	10%
Yes / More than 3 (n = 20)	90%	10%
Total with Mentor Program (n = 121)	83%	17%
No (n = 107)	66%	34%

TABLE 11

BEGINNING TEACHERS' RATINGS OF MENTOR TEACHER PROGRAMS COMPARED TO PLANS TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING		
Mentor Teacher Rating	Continue	Discontinue
Dissatisfied (n = 29)	79%	21%
Satisfied (n = 92)	85%	15%

Tables 9, 10, and 11 show that beginning teachers who have a mentor teacher are more likely to continue teaching than those who did not have a mentor. 90% of teachers in their first year of teaching who have a mentor plan to continue teaching while only 61% of those without a mentor plan to continue. 78% of teachers in their second year of teaching who have a mentor plan to continue teaching while 63% of those who do not have a mentor plan to continue. During the third year, there is almost no difference between those who have a mentor and those who do not have a mentor and their plans to continue teaching. 72% of those teachers who have a mentor in their third year of teaching plan to continue while 73% of those without a mentor plan to continue. As shown in Table 10, 83% of all beginning teachers with a mentor teacher plan to continue teaching. Also, Table 10 shows that the percentage of beginning teachers who plan to continue was higher when the time spent with the mentor was at least one hour per week. Of the beginning teachers who spent less than one hour per week with a mentor, 76% planned to continue teacher compared to 90% who spent one hour or more. Of those beginning teachers who did not have a mentor, only 66% planned to continue teaching. The data suggests that the mentor teacher program is effective even when beginning teachers report that they are dissatisfied with the program. Table 11 shows that 79% of beginning teachers who report that they are dissatisfied with the mentor program plan to continue teaching while 85% of those who report that they are satisfied plan to continue.

Question #9: What is the impact of the beginning teachers' expectations compared to actual teaching experiences on the decision to continue or discontinue teaching during the first three years?

TABLE 12

A COMPARISON OF BEGINNING TEACHERS' EXPECTATIONS AND ACTUAL EXPERIENCES AND THEIR DECISION TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING		
Rating	Continue	Discontinue
Dissatisfied (n = 38)	34%	66%
Satisfied (n = 185)	84%	16%

Table 12 shows that only 34% of beginning teachers who are dissatisfied with their actual teaching experiences compared to their expectations plan to continue teaching while 84% of those who are satisfied plan to continue.

Question # 10: What aspects of the teaching profession have the most impact on the decision of beginning teachers in Region 2 of South Texas to continue or discontinue teaching?

TABLE 13

BEGINNING TEACHERS' SATISFACTION LEVEL OF ASPECTS OF TEACHING COMPARED TO THEIR DECISION TO CONTINUE OR DISCONTINUE TEACHING		
Aspect of Teaching / Rating	Continue	Discontinue
Salary / Dissatisfied (n = 98)	58%	42%
Salary / Satisfied (n = 128)	88%	12%
Assignment / Dissatisfied (n = 12)	50%	50%
Assignment / Satisfied (n = 216)	76%	24%
Paperwork / Dissatisfied (n = 102)	67%	33%
Paperwork / Satisfied (n = 125)	82%	18%
Extra Duties / Dissatisfied (n = 48)	50%	50%
Extra Duties / Satisfied (n = 180)	82%	18%
Class Size / Dissatisfied (n = 39)	64%	36%
Class Size / Satisfied (n = 189)	77%	23%
Student Behavior / Dissatisfied (n = 98)	52%	48%
Student Behavior / Satisfied (n = 130)	85%	15%
Special Ed Requirements / Dissatisfied (n = 63)	65%	35%
Special Ed Requirements / Satisfied (n = 161)	80%	20%
Recognition from Admin / Dissatisfied (n = 49)	53%	47%
Recognition from Admin / Satisfied (n = 178)	81%	19%
Support from Admin / Dissatisfied (n = 51)	55%	45%
Support from Admin / Satisfied (n = 176)	81%	19%
Overall Job Satisfaction / Dissatisfied (n = 20)	20%	80%
Overall Job Satisfaction / Satisfied (n = 207)	81%	19%

Table 13 shows the nine aspects of teaching rated by beginning teachers in

Region 2 of South Texas. The five which have the greatest number of negative ratings

are, from greatest to least, 1) paperwork, 2) student behavior, 3) salary, 4) special

education requirements, and 5) support from administrators. Of these aspects, 48% of

beginning teachers who were dissatisfied with student behavior plan to discontinue

teaching, 45% of beginning teachers who were dissatisfied with administrative support

plan to discontinue teaching, 42% of beginning teachers who were dissatisfied with

salary plan to discontinue teaching, 35% of beginning teachers who were dissatisfied

with special education requirements plan to discontinue teaching, and 33% of beginning

teachers who were dissatisfied with paperwork plan to discontinue teaching.

The percentage of those teachers who rated themselves as dissatisfied in the

remaining aspects of teaching who plan to discontinue teaching include: Extra Duties –

50%; Recognition from Administrators – 53%; Class Size – 64%; and Overall Job

Satisfaction – 20%. Although only 20% of the respondents were dissatisfied with overall

job satisfaction, 25% of the respondents indicated that they did not plan to continue

teaching in question 1.

Question #11: What is the profile of a teacher in Region 2 of South Texas who is most

likely to leave the profession?

The profile of a Region 2 teacher most likely to leave the teaching profession is

an over 35 male secondary teacher who entered the teaching profession from another

career, has no master teacher to observe as a model, no mentor teacher, and lacks

recognition and support from administrators.

CHAPTER FIVE

Strategies for New Teacher Retention

The results of the Beginning Teacher Survey within Region 2 are consistent with much of the literature about biographical data, problematic aspects of teaching, and attrition rates for South Texas. This chapter offers a brief summary of the data analysis, conclusions based on the data analysis, and recommendations by the researchers to reduce the rate of new teacher attrition in Region 2 of South Texas.

Summary

Of the 228 respondents, responses in areas of biographical information, certification and career decisions, model teacher and mentor programs, satisfaction levels for expectations of teaching compared to actual experiences, satisfaction levels in the problematic aspects of teaching for new teachers, and the likelihood of leaving the profession. First, certain biographical trends emerged for Region 2:

- Males are more likely to leave teaching than females, especially at the secondary level.

- The higher the grade level the higher the attrition rate with the lowest percentage among new elementary teachers and the highest among high school teachers with three or less years experience.

- The largest district in Region II had the highest percentage of possible attrition, which was consistent with the literature regarding school district size and attrition rates. Small and medium sized schools had similar attrition rates.

- New teachers under 25 are more satisfied then new teachers over the age of 35.

- Teachers in their second year, not the first year, of teaching had the highest percentages of those who plan on leaving the profession.

The new teachers with three or less years of experience also responded to the surveys consistently with the literature regarding certification and on-campus support programs, and the opportunities to observe 'model' teachers and/or have a mentor:

- Teachers on temporary certification were more likely to leave then those with full certification.

- Observation of 'model' or 'master' teachers resulted in a higher percentage of responses that the new teacher would continue teaching.

- Teachers deciding to become a teacher in high school or earlier, and entered teaching immediately after college, had a higher percentage responding that they would stay in teaching.

- Only 45% of new teachers responding that a mentor was available to them, despite a state mandate for such programs, and of those with mentors, were satisfied with the quality of the mentor interactions.

- Teachers with a negative mentor experience were more likely to quit teaching then those teachers in a positive mentor program.

Satisfaction ratings by the survey respondents were collected for teaching expectations versus teaching experiences, and the nine problematic aspects of teaching that include salary, teaching assignment, paperwork, duties other than teaching, class size, student behavior, special education requirements, recognition from administrators, and support from administrators. The satisfaction ratings for teachers with three or less years of experience in Region 2 were consistent with the literature. The highest single

indicator of a teacher wanting to leave the profession was that their experiences of teaching do not meet with their expectations. Satisfaction ratings for the problematic aspects of teaching revealed some areas to be of more concern, and therefore, in more need than other areas. The six areas that demonstrate the most need are (in order) student behavior, duties other than teaching, administrative recognition, salary, administrative support, and teaching assignment. The three areas that do not seem to be of as much concern, according to this study, are paperwork, special education requirements, and class size. Although these last three still have high levels of concern, the first six had percentages of dissatisfaction that doubled the last three.

Finally, the overall percentage of teachers from this study with three or less years of experience that plan on leaving the teaching profession was 25%. This percentage is consistent with the T.E.A. reports of 25% teacher attrition in Region 2.

Conclusions

Based on the data from the Beginning Teacher Survey, teacher burnout in Region 2 of South Texas is a critical problem. While much of the data collected was consistent with the professional literature, the results related to the implementation of campus mentors is the area most needing attention for school districts in this region. Since pre-service preparation and on-campus induction have the most impact on a teacher's professional development, educational leaders in this region should consider 'building a bridge' between the pre-service induction programs and sorely needed on-campus induction programs. The development of an authentic and effective mentor program should be the foundation of that bridge.

The percentage of teachers being offered a mentor beyond the first year, as the

literature suggests should happen, drops to 23% in Region 2 school districts. A mentor beyond the first year can help a new teacher progress through the first year survival stage to maintenance stage the second year and the impact/effectiveness stage the third year. However, if the mentor program ends after the first year, the second year teacher at the maintenance level does not have a guide for reaching the impact stage by the third or fourth year. If the teacher does not reach the impact stage by the fifth year, he or she only has a 50% statistical chance of remaining in the profession (TEA, 1999).

The state of Texas requires that school districts offer a mentor program for first year teachers. However, according to the results of the Beginning Teacher Survey, only 45% of first year teachers responded that their campus / district even offered a mentor program. This low response rate indicates that many districts do not do a very good job implementing a mentor program. While districts may be offering mentor programs 'on paper', the administrative support needed to make them successful is clearly lacking, especially if so many first year teachers are not even aware that they are supposed to have a mentor, as was the case with first year teachers in this study. Reducing new teacher attrition requires the campus principal to facilitate the assimilation of the new teacher into the community of the campus. A campus-based induction program, with a mentor program as the central component to promote the integration, needs the 'buy-in' of the principal before the faculty will 'buy-in'. Implementing an effective mentor program is clearly an issue of administrative leadership.

When a local district begins to plan on-campus induction to help new teachers develop professionally, the results of the Beginning Teacher Survey reveal higher levels of dissatisfaction in certain areas that should be given priority in a teacher retention plan.

By addressing the needs identified in this study, the district will be addressing the experiences that have been shown to fall too far below the new teacher's preconceived expectations.

This leads to the question of what is being done during pre-service education and the first years of teaching to prepare teaching candidates for the experiences. The Education Service Center Alternative Certification Program can be suggested to new teachers on emergency certification who are willing to make the necessary time and financial commitments. The Induction Year Program at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has also documented that it is successfully addressing many of the needs of Region 2 teachers, as well as offering graduate level credit enroute to certification. The program at TAMUCC might serve as a model for pre-service induction within the A&M system. Balancing the expectations and experiences during pre-service and on the campus should he the focus of induction programs and mentor programs.

Recommendations

Recommendations for reducing new teacher attrition in Region 2 of South Texas are divided into three areas: cooperation with local universities, on-campus induction programs with mentors, and personnel incentives and decisions. These three areas can be structured to deal with the specific problematic aspects of teaching evident in Region 2.

University Cooperation

- For teachers being hired on emergency certification, direct himlher to a certification program that includes an induction component and emphasizes developing aspects of a reflective teacher.

- Arrange for the university-based induction instructors to train the mentors sad administrators of the new teachers. This allows those helping the new teacher to understand the reflective training received at the university and creates consistency in the transition from theory to practice.

Campus-based Induction

- The campus-based induction program should be, at least, a two-year program, preferably three years.

- The program should center on a mentor component.

- Mentors should be provided for three years to provide support through each stage of a teacher's development from survival stage to effectiveness.

- The staff development associated with the program should be staggered throughout the year to allow for reflection. Front loading the staff development at the beginning of the year will only reduce it's effectiveness.

- Provide more time for mentors and novice teachers to spend together, including numerous mutual observations.

- Establish clearly defined roles and responsibilities of mentors and new teachers.

- The mentor component should be a highly visible 'selling' point for the campus.

- Develop an evaluation instrument for the effectiveness of the program.

- Evaluation of the first year teacher should be based on professional growth rather than compared to the standards of a master teacher. This allows for a sense of accomplishment rather than failure. The Beginning Teacher Activity

Profile in Texas is an example of such an evaluation.

- Journals should be used within the program to develop reflective practices.

- Pay mentors a minimum $500 stipend.

- Recognize mentors and new teachers at the annual teacher recognition ceremonies.

- Mentor programs should target student behavior, duties other than teaching, paperwork, and special education requirements.

- Extend 'model' and 'master' teacher programs into the third year of experience.

Personnel Incentives and Decisions

- Salary dissatisfaction can be addressed in ways other than direct raises. Employ the assistance of local business by compiling coupons and discounts for things that teachers use regularly like dry cleaning, restaurants, clothing, car service, etc. Make this a visible part of the recruiting process.

- Offer tuition reimbursements or continuing education scholarships in exchange for longer contracts to highly qualified teachers.

- Offer reimbursement for teacher relocation costs.

- Begin recruiting high school students and keep in touch with them periodically while they are in college. These are the teachers that the research reveals to be the most persistent in the transition horn survival to impact stage.

- Conduct exit interview to gather data for future policy decisions.

Clearly, the above recommendations require up front investments of time and money. However, when compared to the long term costs of continually hiring and

training new teachers to replace 'victims of attrition' in district finances and student

achievement, it is an investment that will pay solid dividends for student achievement in

Region 2.

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Appendix

SOUTH TEXAS EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT CENTER
Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi
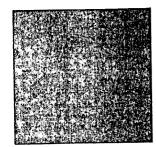Texas A&M University - Kingsville

SURVEY OF BEGINNING TEACHERS   013

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION: Please mark the appropriate box.

1. Sex: ☐ Female   ☐ Male
2. Age: ☐ Under 25   ☐ 26-30   ☐ 31-35   ☐ Over 35
3. Grade Level Assignment: ☐ Grades K-5   ☐ Grades 6-8   ☐ Grades 9-12
4. Number of Years in Teaching: ☐ 1   ☐ 2   ☐ 3

CERTIFICATION & CAREER CHOICE: Please mark the appropriate box.

5. Which best identifies your certification status?
   - ☐ Full standard state certification for subject / grade level you are teaching
     · (if you checked this box, skip question 6)
   - ☐ Emergency or temporary state certification in subject you are teaching
     (if you checked this box, continue with question 6)

6. Which best describes your present route to standard certification?
   - ☐ Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi College of Education with Induction Year
   - ☐ Texas A&M University - Corpus Christi Masters and Certification Program with Induction Year
   - ☐ Texas A&M University - Kingsville College of Education
   - ☐ Education Service Center Alternative Certification
   - ☐ Other: Please specify _____

7. Which best describes when you decided to enter the teaching profession?
   - ☐ Always wanted to be a teacher
   - ☐ While attending high school
   - ☐ While attending college
   - ☐ While employed in a career other than teaching

8. Which best describes the your time of entry into the teaching profession?
   - ☐ Immediately following college graduation
   - ☐ Career change from another occupation: Specify occupation _____

CAMPUS SUPPORT SYSTEMS: Please mark the appropriate box.

9. Do you have opportunities to observe "Master" or "Model" teachers on your campus?
   - ☐ Yes
   - ☐ No

10. Does your campus provide some type of "Mentor Teacher" program?
    - ☐ Yes . . . if yes, how often do you meet with your mentor?
      - ☐ less than 1 hour per week
      - ☐ 1 to 3 hours per week
      - ☐ more than 3 hours per week
    - ☐ No . . . (go to question 12)

NEW TEACHER SATISFACTION RATINGS: Please check the appropriate box.

	Very Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Very Satisfied
11. How satisfied are you with the "Mentor Teacher" program's effectiveness?	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. How satisfied are you with your current teaching experiences as compared to your expectations of the teaching profession?	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the teaching profession?				
Salary	☐	☐	☐	☐
Teaching Assignment	☐	☐	☐	☐
Paperwork	☐	☐	☐	☐
Duties other than teaching	☐	☐	☐	☐
Class Size	☐	☐	☐	☐
Student Behavior	☐	☐	☐	☐
Special Education Requirements	☐	☐	☐	☐
Recognition from Administrators	☐	☐	☐	☐
Support from Administrators	☐	☐	☐	☐
Overall Job Satisfaction	☐	☐	☐	☐

TEACHER INPUT: Please check the appropriate box (Note: question 14 is important to the evaluation of information from the previous thirteen questions).

14. How long do you plan to remain in teaching?
  ☐ I plan to continue teaching
  ☐ I will probably continue teaching unless something better comes along
  ☐ I definitely plan to leave teaching as soon as I can

15. How could your school district assist you with your effectiveness as a teacher?

_____

_____

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Author(s): JOSEPH EBERHARD, PATRICIA REINHARDT-MONDRAGON, AND BOBBI STOTTLEMYER

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