



Roots of Attrition: Reflections of Teacher Candidates in Title I Schools

Cathy J. Pearman, Missouri State University & Shirley Lefever-Davis, Wichita State University

Introduction

As teacher educators, we know that, statistically, one-third of our current practicum students will leave the teaching field within their first five years of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Ingersoll, 2002). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF, 2003) offers more staggering numbers such as a 33% attrition rate within the first three years of teaching jumping to 46% attrition within five years of teaching. Some researchers feel these numbers may be skewed and argue the higher percentages of attrition rates may be due to questionable data or data derived from preliminary sources. These researchers believe attrition rates are closer to 14% to 17% per year as a national average and 20% to 21% per year for urban schools (Boe, Cook, and Sunderland, 2008; National Center for Education Statistics, 2008; Marvel, Lyter, Peltola, Strizek, & Morton, 2007). The fact remains that, regardless of which data are used, the numbers of qualified teachers leaving the profession are having a negative impact on the education of P-12 students. For instance, there is evidence to support that teacher knowledge and instructional actions make a critical difference in student success, and research shows teacher effectiveness increases after the first few years of teaching (Kain & Singleton, 1996; Reutzell & Cooter, 2008); however, as reported above, we are losing a substantial number of our new teachers after 3 to 5 years of teaching, just as they are reaching this increased level of effectiveness.

Factors cited for this high attrition rate of teachers may vary somewhat in their description and categorization, but they are very similar across researchers. For instance, Darling-Hammond (2003) lists broad categories of salaries, working conditions, teacher preparation, and mentoring support in the early years as reasons teachers cite for leaving the profession. In contrast, Anhorn (2008), in her study of first year teachers, cites orientation, time, isolation, classroom management, pay and benefits, preparation for teaching, the principal, fellow teachers, and parents as key reasons for departure. Using teacher interviews as a data source, Kopowski (2008) found No Child Left Behind, lack of support, student discipline, salaries, and lack of respect as issues that influence teacher satisfaction. In the 2004-2005 MetLife "Survey of the American Teacher," new teachers included the following issues as reasons for leaving the profession: administrative duties, classroom management, assessment responsibilities, and lack of parental relationships (Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2006).

This body of research has direct implications for teacher preparation. Indeed, both Darling-Hammond and Anhorn found inadequate teacher preparation as a factor in teacher attrition: "A growing body of evidence indicates that teachers who lack adequate initial preparation are more likely to leave the profession" (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p. 9). This sentiment is mirrored in the report of the NCTAF (2003) in which the teacher shortage problem is more specifically identified as a teacher retention problem exacerbated by makeshift solutions that place teachers into classrooms without adequate training or support. In fact, the National Center for Education

Statistics (2005) reports a 5-year attrition rate of 29% for teachers who did not have a student teaching experience as compared to 15% for those who had completed student teaching as part of a teacher education program. First year teachers often place premium value on student teaching and field experiences as an opportunity to bring university instruction and practical applications together (Anhorn, 2008). Some researchers suggest graduates from 5-year teaching programs are better prepared and thus inclined to stay in the teaching field longer than those from 4-year programs in part due to the longer student teaching experience (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Burstein, Kretschmer, Smith, & Gudoski, 1999; Andrew & Schwab, 1995). The study reported here is from a standard four-year baccalaureate program with a semester long student teaching experience.

Purpose of the Study

After several years of teaching a practicum course associated with a language arts methods course, it became obvious that students began their field experiences with enthusiasm and excitement only to end the semester holding negative impressions and doubting their ability to make an impact on students. We began to wonder if perhaps our teacher education program was not adequately preparing our teacher candidates to teach in today's classrooms. We wondered if they were being sent into practicum situations ill prepared and thus it was affecting their sense of efficacy and causing them to doubt their ability to be successful teachers in the future. We decided to look at the classroom through the eyes of practicum students and, through their reflections, evaluate whether there is more we can do to prepare them for this field experience in our universities' teacher education programs. The purpose of this study was to identify threads in teacher candidate journals and written reflections that are consistent or reflective of the reasons novice teachers report for leaving the profession. In other words, are roots of attrition found in our teacher education programs?

Description of Participants

The participants in this study were 12 teacher candidates in their junior year attending a midwestern university with a main campus population of 17, 703. These teacher candidates were enrolled in a practicum course requiring 20 hours of field experience in Title I schools. Primary placements consisted of one participant in kindergarten, three in first grade, two in second grade, and one in third grade. Intermediate grade placements included two participants in 4th grade, two in 5th grade, and one in 6th grade. The practicum course was a co-requisite for a required reading methods course taken during their second semester as teacher education candidates. It was one of the first practicum experiences in which the participants were required to engage in teaching lessons to the public school students. In other words, the only prior field experience course required of participants was an observational type practicum, no teaching was expected nor had they taken any classroom management courses. All participants were white females and were comprised of eleven elementary education majors and one special education major.

Description of Schools

Two elementary schools, pseudonyms Bennett and Randle, hosted the teacher candidates. Bennett Elementary had an enrollment of 292 comprised of .7% Asian, 15.4% Black, .7% His-

panic, 1% Indian, and 82.2% white. Over 85% of students received free/reduced lunch. Bennett had a student to staff ratio of 19 students per teacher. Teachers had an average of 11.8 years experience and 55% of teachers held a Master's Degree or higher. Randle Elementary had an enrollment of 245 comprised of 5.7% Asian, 13.1% Black, 3.3% Hispanic, .8% Indian, and 77.1% White. Over 67% of students received free/reduced lunch. Randle had a student to staff ratio of 20 students per teacher. Teachers had an average of 8.9 years experience and 76% of teachers held a Master's Degree or higher. Table A below shows a comparison between the host schools and their home state.

Table A
Comparison Between Host Schools and Home State

Comparison Data	Bennett	Randle	State
Asian	.7%	5.7%	1.7%
Black	15.4%	13.1%	18.1%
Hispanic	.7%	3.3%	3.4%
Indian	1%	.8%	.4%
White	82.2%	77.1%	76.4%
Free/Reduced Lunch	85.8%	67.3%	41.8%
Student/Teacher Ratio	19	20	18
Years of Teacher Experience	11.8	8.9	12.6
Teacher Pay	\$39,163	\$39,596	\$43,524
Teachers with a Master Degree or Higher	55.3%	76.4%	50.6%

Methodology

A qualitative research design was used to determine how the teacher candidates reacted to and made sense of their practicum experiences because qualitative methods lean toward exploration, discovery, and inductive logic. The use of grounded theory allows categories to emerge from the data based on participant reflections, interactions, and observations. This method allowed an analysis of teacher candidates' thoughts, feelings, and conveyance of their practicum experience with specific observations building toward general patterns (Patton, 1990).

Data Collection

Participants took part in a 20-hour practicum experience spaced over a period of ten weeks in a school identified as having a diverse population and Title I status. Participants, with the approval of their mentor teacher, could attend the practicum twice a week for one hour or attend in a two hour block each week for a period of ten weeks. All 12 participants voluntarily completed additional hours beyond the required 20 hours with an average attendance rate of 28 hours over the duration of the ten weeks. Requiring students to remain in the practicum for 10 weeks regardless of the number of hours accrued gave participants the opportunity to become participant observers in the classroom context. Examples of tasks performed by participants while in the public school classroom included large and small group reading instruction, guided reading groups, writing workshop, literature circles, author studies, etc. From these types of ac-

tivities, participants were required to submit two formal lesson plans for evaluation. In addition, they kept journals of their daily experiences and, upon course completion, wrote a reflection of their overall experience. No prompts or leading questions were provided. The participants were simply asked to record their daily reflections of their experiences. These reflections and journals were marked as submitted/unsubmitted and not graded. To help ensure journal entries and reflections were not biased, participants were not aware of this study until after the close of the semester when they were contacted for possible participation. At the close of the study, each participant was invited to participate in the study by allowing their journal entries and reflections papers to be used as data. They were informed that participation in the study was voluntary and 12 of 15 practicum students agreed to participate resulting in an 80% participation rate.

Data Analysis

NVivo™, a qualitative computer software package, was used in the analysis of the data. The teacher candidates' reflections were searched for common terms and patterns through the use of text, string, and Boolean searches. The coding of data and the use of programmed searches allowed for the accurate and efficient location of significant data in context. The retrieval of this data led to an understanding of the relationships contained within the reflections.

Open Codes: The participants' written reflections were thoroughly read to ascertain the content of the documents and to get a better understanding of what the research data meant. Following that reading, the written reflections were open-coded. Open coding helped organize the data while also keeping the analysis grounded in the data. Patterns of recurring words and phrases gave rise to axial codes.

Axial Codes: As a result of the open-coding process, categories began to emerge from the data. These categories were organized into lower-level axial codes. The constant comparative method was instrumental in the analysis and refinement of the open codes into axial codes and, eventually, into higher-level axial codes. Nine higher-level axial codes that emerged from the data were student dispositions/behaviors, teacher dispositions/behaviors, classroom management, instruction, attendance, expectations, parents, feelings of doubt by mentor teachers, and feelings of doubt about future teaching ability.

Selective Codes: Upon careful examination and reflection on the axial codes that had emerged from the open codes, six main relationships between concepts became apparent. Student Dispositions/Behaviors emerged as a selective code because these behaviors were a major theme in the journals and reflections. Another category, Academic Performance, is related to student behaviors but contains specific information pertaining to academic achievement. Comments regarding Teacher Dispositions/Behaviors Related to Classroom Management were also a prevalent theme in the journals and reflections. In addition, the topic of parental support was a part of participant comments. The code of Teacher Comments Regarding Parental Support reflects the viewpoints of classroom teachers. The concerns of mentor teachers and participants gave rise to the last two selective codes. Self-Efficacy of Mentor Teachers and Self-Efficacy of Teacher candidates explores the doubts both groups felt about classroom experiences. These six selective codes, Student Dispositions and Behaviors, Academic Performance, Teacher Dispositions Regarding Classroom Management, Teacher Comments Regarding Parental Support, Self-Efficacy of Mentor Teachers, and Self-Efficacy of Teacher candidates, contributed to the results reported in this study about teacher candidates' reflections on their classroom experiences.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is that all journal entries and reflections were those of white, female students. There were no males or minorities enrolled in the practicum course for the particular semester data was gathered. Data collection over one semester is also a limitation since a study duration of an entire year or longer may have revealed additional findings and would have included a larger set of participants due to new course attendees each semester. A larger sample size would have decreased variability and increased the ability to generalize in the study. In addition, this data was gathered from two schools within the same school district and with the same operational policies in use.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to identify threads in teacher candidate journal entries and written reflections that are consistent or reflective of the reasons novice teachers report for leaving the profession. Specifically relevant to teacher preparation programs, the question to be investigated was whether the roots of attrition begin in the very teacher preparation programs intended to instill the confidence and competence in teacher candidates that will result in successful teaching careers. To gain insight into this question, researchers analyzed teacher candidate journal entries and written reflections. Several categories of responses from teacher candidate's written reflections were identified including Student Dispositions/Behaviors, Academic Performance, Teacher Dispositions/Behaviors Regarding Classroom Management, Teacher Comments Regarding Parental Support, Self-Efficacy of Mentor Teachers, and Self-Efficacy of Teacher Candidates.

Student Dispositions/Behaviors: An analysis of written reflections indicated that all participants identified student behavior as a source of concern at least once in their written reflections. All 12 participants commented on the behavior of students and perceived that lower socioeconomic status (SES) students acted out more frequently. Classroom teachers had shared information on who received free and reduced lunches with teacher candidates since they often took role and accounted for lunch, snack, and milk money. Student behaviors reported included talking when the teacher was talking, throwing chairs and objects, and cursing at the teacher and classmates. Ten of the twelve participants across grade levels referred to defiant behavior, which they defined as talking back to the teacher when asked to do something and refusing to stay in their seat or do assignments. All ten expressed concerns about handling these behaviors in their future classrooms. In addition, the five participants placed in a primary grade setting reported, at least once in their written reflections, that primary age students in their classrooms had hit or threatened violence toward their classmates.

Participants also remarked on the number of absences and tardiness in elementary age students. Nine teacher candidates commented as a concern, in at least one written reflection, that prior to this practicum experience, their belief was that student absences and tardiness was primarily a high school problem. These nine participants' written observations discussed conversations with their mentor teachers regarding the occurrences of student absences for periods of 3 to 10 days at a time without parents contacting the school or without any explanation given. Three of the teacher candidates remarked on students being absent for extended periods and then finding out through their mentor teachers the students had enrolled at other schools in the district.

These three teacher candidates remarked that they had never thought of this occurrence or that it would happen on a common basis.

Absenteeism and tardiness were expressed as areas of frustration by the teacher candidates who had to plan early morning lessons for their practicum experience. This was the first time they had encountered students who were not only tardy but had to begin lessons late because they needed to go to the cafeteria for breakfast upon arrival at school. The participants expressed sympathy for the students needing breakfast but also expressed worry about the wasted instructional time and how they could adjust their lesson schedules to meet the needs of the tardy students while keeping the students who were present on task. Participants' written reflections seemed to reveal a new realization for this element of classroom life.

Academic Performance: Participants also commented, in their journal entries and written reflections, on the academic behavior of students including reading levels, diversity of student achievement levels, and student participation in homework. On this aspect of classroom experience, most of the participants (8 of 12) made connections to their own experiences as high school and elementary aged students. They reported the academic behaviors they observed were not very different from when they were in school, except they did not remember some of these behaviors being so prevalent in their elementary school. For example, participants reported on the low reading ability of the intermediate grade students and wondered how teachers dealt with such a range of achievement levels in one classroom. Journal entries from all 12 participants contained comments reflecting that homework was rarely completed by all the students. Three participants labeled this problem as pervasive in their classrooms. The majority of teacher candidates, 8 out of 12 across all grades except one 5th grade class and one 6th grade class, commented on student behavior during computer time. Their written reflections indicated surprise to observe students hiding behind computer monitors and not engaging in the instructional activities. The participants wrote in their journals they had originally thought the students would be excited and on task during computer time since it is interactive and entertaining. In fact, lack of learner engagement was a topic reported in all 12 participants' journals. They also wrote about the problems they had as they attempted to use manipulatives in math indicating students abused, ate or stole them. While this was a reading practicum, all 12 teacher candidates reported being asked to teach additional lessons, such as math, to small groups of struggling students. This was viewed by all as extra practice since they hoped to be future elementary or special education teachers.

Teacher Dispositions/Behaviors Regarding Classroom Management: The teacher candidates wrote about their observations of their mentor teachers', and other teacher and administrator, behaviors. In every case, these observations dealt entirely with matters of classroom management. Ten of 12 participants reported that mentor teachers immediately sent students to the principal if they acted out without first attempting to deal with the behavior in the classroom. Two participants in primary placements described incidents of teachers breaking down and crying in front of their students when dealing with particularly intense behavioral interactions such as students throwing chairs and cursing at the teacher. Three out of 12 participants had journal entries describing comments from mentor teachers cautioning them against disciplining minority children in case they were accused of being racist. These participants reported feeling anxious about this sentiment and unsure what they should do in the future.

The teacher candidates also remarked on their perceptions of their mentor teachers' expectations for their students' academic achievement. The teacher candidates reported feeling as if mentor teachers spent most of their instructional focus on those students who were well behaved and completed their work. Eleven of 12 participants wrote that mentor teachers blamed low SES

as the factor behind poor academic performance of students. Four of the 12 went on to state they did not feel their mentor teacher attempted to academically engage students who were behavior problems. Behavior, to some degree, was also an influence on the type and quality of instruction in the classroom. All 12 participants observed basals in use the majority of time they were in the classroom, and 8 of 12 reported mentors stating they did not use manipulatives or activities to reinforce lessons because the students could not handle them. Ten of 12 participants relayed that teachers said behavior was so bad some days; they simply went through the basal and tried to keep everyone on task. This is not to imply the use of basals equates to unengaging instructional methods, but the teacher candidates perceived this was the case in their assigned classrooms.

Along with the above comments, there were many positive statements made about the classroom environments established by the mentor teachers. Four out of 12 participants expressed admiration for their mentors for the control they showed in the classroom even under adverse circumstances. Additionally, 10 of 12 participants said they never noticed their teachers making any difference between students based on race, gender, or ethnicity. Behavior appeared to be a main deciding factor in teacher-student relationships. In fact, 10 of 12 participants reported their mentor teacher made various statements conveying their belief that lower SES students could be more successful in the classroom if their behavior didn't hinder their learning. All participant accounts reported that teachers tried to talk to students about appropriate school behaviors.

Teacher Comments Regarding Parental Support: All participants reported in their written reflections, at least once, that mentor teachers had made statements to the effect that their students' parents did not care about education. Participant journals included observations regarding the abundance of unfinished or no homework returned, unsigned forms, no response to calls or other attempts at contact, low to no attendance at parent/teacher conferences, and no response to offers of tutoring or extra help for their child.

Self-Efficacy of Mentor Teachers: As stated earlier, participants discussed two incidents of teachers breaking down and crying in reaction to student behaviors and 10 of 12 participants gave reports of teachers sending students to the office immediately without attempting classroom interventions. All participants reported their mentor teachers making the statement, at least once, that the parents of their students did not care about education, and 10 of the 12 participants reported their mentors said, on some days, student behavior was so bad they simply went through the basal and tried to keep everyone on task. They did not use manipulatives or develop additional activities due to student behavior. Finally, six of the participants wrote about conversations with mentor teachers in which the teachers made comments about being "fed up with their classes". One of these entries was dated as early as September. One participant wrote in her journal about a conversation she had with her mentor. The mentor told her that every year she returned to school determined to make a difference in her students' lives, but it was only November, and she now had no hope for this group of students.

Self-Efficacy of Teacher Candidates: Upon completion of the practicum course, participants wrote a reflective paper about their classroom experiences that was coded along with their journal entries. The reflective papers revealed beliefs and/or insights made by teacher candidates that may ultimately impact their decisions to remain in the teaching profession. At the end of the semester, all 12 participants expressed doubts they could control a classroom. In fact, 11 expressed doubts they could be effective teachers in a public school. Examples of their comments convey the doubts they were experiencing:

I don't see how a classroom teacher can even make it through the day. I'm scared. My teacher is probably just in her 20s but she looks so worn down. I don't want that to happen to me so maybe I can teach in one of the Catholic schools.

I wanted to be a teacher so I could teach, not deal with this. Do you know what else I could use my education classes for?

After seeing what goes on in a classroom first hand, I don't know if I will be able to do it. I've always wanted to be a teacher but school wasn't like this when I grew up.

I don't think I can handle these kids, even the little ones. They're terrible.

I don't want to teach anymore but my parents will kill me if I change majors. Why do these teachers stay? I'm not sure I'll be able to put up with.

Research shows that student discipline and classroom management are often cited by practicing teachers as areas of stress and dissatisfaction (Anhorn, 2008; Kopowski, 2008; Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, 2006; Alliance for Excellent Education, 2005). These two findings have a direct bearing on this study. When the assignment was made to journal and reflect about the reading practicum experience, the assumption was the journal entries would primarily contain information on reading instruction and, perhaps, behaviors of students and teachers during reading instruction. However, every journal entry, and the majority of the content of the reflection papers, was about classroom management. This was obviously an essential element in the experience of this group of 12 teacher candidates that they did not have the knowledge base or experience to act on in a successful manner.

Darling-Hammond (2003) suggests some teacher education programs place candidates into classrooms with insufficient support and inadequate training in managing today's classrooms composed of diverse populations and large class sizes while maintaining accountability to educational standards. As mentioned earlier, the participants in this study had no classroom management courses prior to this practicum experience. In fact, elementary education majors at this university do not have a dedicated classroom management course in their program at all. Rather, classroom management is, theoretically, embedded into each course in the elementary education program. Classroom management is frequently included in methods courses as it relates to the particular discipline area. This was the case in this study. The participants in the teacher preparation program described in this study had classroom management integrated into methods courses. Therefore, typically, reading methods courses and practicum experiences such as the one in this study includes classroom management instruction as it relates to managing reading groups, organizing for student groupings, orchestrating literature circles, setting up classroom library norms, rotating students through literacy centers, etc. What appears to be lacking at this institution and, perhaps others as well, is an opportunity for teacher candidates to gain an overall view of how to manage students outside the engagement of instructional time.

All 12 of the participants in this study voiced doubts they would be able to manage a public school classroom and many expressed dread, and even fear, when contemplating the possible behaviors of their future students based on this practicum experience. Perhaps this doubt of their own self-efficacy was shaped by the behaviors and classroom management styles of the mentor

teachers who served as role models during their practicum experiences. Self-efficacy can be created and strengthened through experiences provided by social models (Bandura, 1994), therefore, it is reasonable to assume it can be destroyed or weakened by social models. This emphasizes how vital it is for teacher education programs to carefully select and train mentor teachers since vicarious experiences obtained from these role models can either create and strengthen self-belief in efficacy or can foster self-doubts of being effective (Bandura). However, the difficulty of mentor teacher selection becomes compounded when teacher education programs have large numbers of teacher candidates to place and a limited number of placements.

Future Implications

The selective codes of Student Dispositions and Behaviors, Academic Performance, Teacher Dispositions Regarding Classroom Management, Teacher Comments Regarding Parental Support, Self-Efficacy of Mentor Teachers, and Self-Efficacy of Teacher Candidates reflect the perceptions the study participants formed during their first active practicum experience. Classroom management was the main topic of discussion in the participants' journal entries and reflection papers with all 12 participants expressing doubts they will be able to manage their future classrooms. These teacher candidates entered the practicum without a prior classroom management course and, at this stage in their educational program, very little experience with the embedded model of classroom management in place at their university. The National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality (2007) suggests changes in teacher preparation programs in order to improve instruction in classroom management. Their recommendations include 1) providing teacher candidates with instructional approaches for classroom management through coursework and guided practice with feedback, and 2) addressing the challenges facing teacher candidates and new teachers in creating a positive classroom context. Instruction and feedback through coursework on how to handle disruptive behaviors and effectively manage a classroom prior to participation in a hands-on practicum may have given the participants confidence to deal with inappropriate behaviors or, at the minimum, given them a knowledge base to put in perspective the behaviors they were seeing. In addition to improving coursework and addressing the authentic challenges found in classrooms, research needs to be undertaken to aid teacher education programs in determining the most advantageous sequencing of classroom management instruction. The above ideas would not only benefit teachers while at the preservice stage of their training but would also increase their ability to manage a classroom once they became practicing teachers. This may act to alleviate some of the frustration practicing teachers feel with regard to student behavior and classroom management that are such prevalent factors in teacher dissatisfaction and attrition.

Conclusion

The self-efficacy of the 12 teacher candidates in this study was negatively impacted by student discipline and classroom management as evidenced by their concern they will not be able to manage a public school classroom. Pre-practicum conversations and planning sessions showed enthusiasm and excitement at the opportunity to teach lessons and become actively engaged in the public schools but this was replaced by self-doubt and anxiety about classroom management as the semester progressed. Even though this was a reading course practicum, journal entries and reflections focused on classroom management, which emphasizes the impact these experiences

in the classroom and these interactions with students had on this group of teacher candidates. Research has shown that student discipline and classroom management are cited as attrition factors in practicing teachers and some researchers suggest teacher education programs are not preparing teacher candidates to manage classrooms in today's educational climate (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., 2006; Kopowski, 2008; Anhorn, 2008). As seen in this study, it appears the roots of attrition may be planted as early as the first interactions in public school classrooms when teacher candidates enter the experience with little or no training and without sufficient background knowledge to effectively evaluate and process what they are observing.

References

- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2005). *Teacher attrition: A costly loss to the nation and to the states*. Issue Brief (August, 2005). Retrieved May 20, 2010 from <http://www.all4ed.org>
- Andrew, M., & Schwab, R. L. (1995). Has reform in teacher education influenced teacher performance? An outcome assessment of graduates of eleven teacher education programs. *Action in Teacher Education, 17*, 43-53.
- Anhorn, R. (2008). The profession that eats its young. *The Delta Kappa Gamma Bulletin, 15-26*.
- Bandura, A. (1994). Self-efficacy. In V. S. Ramachandran (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of human behavior* (Vol. 4, pp. 71-81). NY: Academic Press.
- Boe, E. E., Cook, L. H., & Sunderland, R. J. (2008). Teacher turnover: Examining exit attrition, teaching area transfer, and school migration. *Exceptional Children, 75*(1), 7-31.
- Burstein, N., Kretschmer, D., Smith, C., & Gudoski, P. (1999). Redesigning teacher education as a shared responsibility of schools and universities. *Journal of Teacher Education, 50*(2), 106-118.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2003). Keeping good teachers: Why it matters, what leaders can do. *Educational Leadership, 60*(8), 6-13.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (1999). America's future: Educating teachers. *The Education Digest, 64*(9), 18-23.
- Ingersoll, R. M. (2002). The teacher shortage: A case of wrong diagnosis and wrong prescription. *NASSP Bulletin, 86*(631), 16-31.
- Kain, J. F., & Singleton, K. (1996). Equality of educational opportunity revisited. *New England Economic Review, 87-111*.
- Kapowski, C. (2008). Why they leave. *NEA Today, 21-25*.
- Marvel, J., Lyter, D. M., Peltola, P., Strizek, G. A., & Morton, B. A. (2007). *Teacher attrition and mobility: Results from the 2004-2005 teacher follow-up survey* (NCES Publication No. 2007307). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, U. S. Dept. of Education.
- Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. (2006). *The Metlife survey of the American teacher: expectations and experiences*. A survey of teachers, principals and leaders of college education programs. NY: Author.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2005). *The condition of education 2005* (NCES Publication No. 2005-094). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Dept. of Education.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2008). *The condition of education 2008* (NCES Publication No. 2008-031). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, U.S.

- Dept. of Education. National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF). (2003). *No dream denied: A pledge to America's children*. NY: Author.
- National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality. (2007). *Effective classroom management: Teacher preparation and professional development*. (Agreement No. S283B050051). Washington, DC: Author.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.
- Reutzel, D. R., & Cooter, R. B. (2008). *Teaching children to read: The teacher makes the difference*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Educational, Inc.

Cathy Pearman received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from the University of Arkansas in 2003 and is currently an Associate Professor and Interim Department Head at Missouri State University. Her current research focus is on the self-efficacy of educators and teacher candidates, and she is currently working on research linking this topic with a conceptual model regarding the resiliency of people undergoing change. This interest co-exists with her long-term research agenda of exploring effects of technology on literacy skill development and comprehension.

Shirley Lefever-Davis received her Ph.D. in Curriculum and Instruction from Kansas State University in 1991. She is currently Associate Dean and Professor of Curriculum and Instruction at Wichita State University (WSU). Since arriving at WSU, Dr. Lefever-Davis has worked with Curriculum and Instruction faculty to promote school-university collaborations with the goal of preparing teacher candidates to work effectively in urban settings. Dr. Lefever-Davis' previous experiences in higher education include fourteen years at the University of Arkansas where she served as the Graduate Coordinator for the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. She has presented and published on a range of topics including early literacy and strategies to promote the literacy development of English Language Learners as well as struggling readers.