

PRINCIPAL BEHAVIORS THAT SUPPORT FIRST-YEAR TEACHER RETENTION

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SIGNED Carolyn Dumler

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ABSTRACT

High attrition during the first few years of teaching is a long-standing dilemma. Research findings vary somewhat according to specific studies, but it is estimated that about 30% of new teachers do not teach beyond two years, and within the first five years of teaching 40–50% leave the profession.

Traditionally, discussions of new teacher induction have not considered the role of the school principal as significant (Carver, 2003). However, Brock & Grady (2001) found that beginning teachers identified the school principal as the most significant person in the school, as well as a key source of support and guidance. A recent exploratory case study of the supportive behaviors of four principals resulted in a structural framework of recommended practices (Carver, 2002); however, the importance of those behaviors in the retention of first-year teachers has not been studied.

This mixed methods research study examined the relationship between principal support behaviors and the likelihood of first-year teachers remaining in the teaching profession. Q sorts, detailed questionnaires, and follow-up interviews were conducted with first-year and fifth-year teachers.

Findings indicated that principal support was important to some first-year teachers in making retention decisions; additionally, specific principal behaviors that have the most influence on the likelihood of first-year teachers remaining in the profession were identified. Analysis resulted in the development of a list of 10 principal support behaviors that are most likely to influence first-year teachers to remain in teaching. These findings could prove beneficial in stemming the attrition rate of new teachers.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

This dissertation describes a mixed methods research study of the relationship between principal support behaviors and the likelihood of first-year teachers remaining in the teaching profession. The quantitative portion of the study was based on a Q sort, in which first-year teachers ranked statements about principal support behaviors according to their importance in influencing them to remain in teaching. The same Q sort was carried out with fifth-year teachers in order to validate the perceptions of first-year teachers. A detailed questionnaire provided information about additional factors that may have influenced teacher retention decisions.

In the qualitative portion of the study, pertinent findings from the Q sorts were selected to guide the shaping of interview questions. Volunteers for interviews were selected from the Q sort participants. Interviews were conducted with six first-year teachers who indicated a strong likelihood of remaining in the profession and three fifth-year teachers. The interviews clarified the nature of teachers' perceptions of the importance of principal support behaviors in their career decisions.

Background of the Study

The first years of teaching create various challenges for novices as they transition from student teachers to teachers with full responsibility for their own classrooms. Most new teachers are filled with enthusiasm, eager to create a community of learners within their classrooms. "Beginning teachers are generally high achievers, academically well

prepared, and keen to provide their students with stimulating and perfectly planned lessons and learning experiences” (Cole, 1994, p. 300).

Unfortunately, for far too many new teachers reality does not live up to their expectations. They are consumed with keeping their heads above water: struggling to learn a new curriculum, develop lesson plans, deal with behavioral issues, track down supplies, and respond to the various demands of students, parents, colleagues, and administrators (Brewster & Railsback, 2001). In addition, today’s teachers must have knowledge of how to teach particular subjects to increasingly diverse learners, many of whom have special needs, limited English proficiency, different learning styles, and a wide range of family and community circumstances (Berry, Hopkins-Thompson, & Hoke, 2002). Preservice teachers do not learn these skills by reading a textbook in a methodology class. They polish these teaching skills by trial and error, by contemplating successes and analyzing failures. The skills and behaviors that new teachers find most problematic are those that come with time and experience. Additionally, new teachers must devote extra time to becoming experts in their subject area or grade level, often learning material just a step ahead of their students (Renard, 2003).

The conditions under which novices carry out the first year determine the effectiveness, attitudes, and behaviors that the teachers will develop and sustain for an entire career; the first-year experience is also a frequent factor in the decision of whether or not to stay in the profession (Brock & Grady, 2001). According to Gold (1989), many new teachers become emotionally exhausted, are unable to develop a sense of

accomplishment, and begin to depersonalize from their students, which results in burnout and leaving the profession early in their career.

Statement of the Problem

High attrition during the first few years of teaching is a long-standing dilemma. It has been estimated that about 30% of beginning teachers do not teach beyond two years and that almost 40%, especially the most academically talented, leave the profession within their first five years of teaching (Schlechty & Vance, 1983). A more recent study by Ingersoll (2001), based on data from the National Center for Education Statistics, provided similar estimates of the cumulative attrition of beginning teachers. After one year, 11% of new teachers had left the profession, with another 10% leaving after their second year. After three years, 29% of the original cohort had left teaching altogether, and after five years, 39% were no longer teaching (Ingersoll, 2002). The data suggest a revolving door—an occupation in which there are relatively large flows of new teachers in, through, and out of schools.

Concern over the alarming attrition and retention rates of new teachers helped initiate the widespread implementation of formal induction programs in school districts across the nation over two decades ago. Huling-Austin, Odell, Ishler, Kay, and Edelfelt (1989) identified the retention of promising beginning teachers as one of five goals of a typical induction program. Numerous components may be incorporated into induction programs, including orientation meetings and visits, seminars and training sessions on curriculum and effective teaching topics, and the assignment of a master teacher as a mentor. Tasks assigned to a mentor may consist of acting as a helper or buddy,

conducting observations and follow-up conferences to provide feedback, consulting with the new teacher on any number of topics, and providing emotional support to the beginning teacher (Huling-Austin, 1986).

In many school districts, mentoring programs became the central feature of new teacher induction. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2002), beginning teachers who experienced intensive mentoring by expert colleagues were much less likely to leave the profession in the early years. School districts in Ohio and New York have reduced attrition rates of beginning teachers by as much as two-thirds by providing expert mentors. Similar results were reported as an outcome of California's Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program (Hendrick & Childress, 2002).

However, a recent study commissioned by the United States Department of Education (Glazerman et al., 2008) showed less promising results. Glazerman et al. found that although beginning teachers in a comprehensive induction program reported significantly more positive support than those in the control group, there was no significant impact on teacher practices, student test scores, or teacher retention after one year.

Similarly, a recent study (McCarthy & Guiney, 2004) of new teachers in Boston Public Schools found that the district mentoring program provided valuable support to novices. Conditions and opportunities at their own schools were the most powerful influence on whether teachers stayed in the profession. Retention plans were strongly associated with new teachers' overall perceptions of school-based support as well as the

particular support provided by principals, colleagues, and other administrators (McCarthy & Guiney, 2004). These findings reinforced Huling-Austin's (1986) caution that induction programs could not be expected to overcome major problems in the school context or improve working conditions at the school level.

According to Fredricks (2001), the solution to keeping teachers was more straightforward than one might think. Not overlooking other common reasons given for leaving, she claimed that the deciding factor for teachers was quite simply the principal because the principal sets the tone for the learning and work environment. There is a subtle difference between the normal challenges of teaching and unfair working conditions; once identified, it is the principal who has the positional authority to confront issues and remedy situations (Patterson, 2005). This theme is expanded by Minarik, Thornton, and Perreault (2003), who advocated for development of effective principal leadership at the school level as the first of five interrelated strategies in a systemic approach to retaining teachers. Moreover, the principal is instrumental in implementing the other strategies intended to reduce teacher attrition and ultimately enhance organizational outcomes. A recent study by the Charlotte Advocates for Education (2004) reinforced the key role the principal plays in teacher retention. This study examined the strategies and characteristics of 20 principals whose schools were notable for low attrition rates, high achievement scores, and large numbers of high-needs students. The study revealed that visionary leadership combined with a focus on teachers and their working conditions affected new teachers' attitudes and sense of efficacy.

Traditionally, considerations of teacher induction have not deemed the role of the school principal as noteworthy (Carver, 2003). Experts have generally limited their recommendations for principal involvement to program advocacy, beginning-of-the-year orientation, and assigning mentors. However, Brock and Grady (1998, 2001) found that beginning teachers identified the school principal as the most significant person in the school, as well as a key source of support and guidance. The expectations of these teachers demonstrated that principals were central to the successful socialization and induction of beginning teachers. Similarly, the Project on the Next Generation of Teachers (Johnson, 2004) found that the influence of the principal on new teachers could not be underestimated. In fact, the majority of the novices in the study were disappointed by principals who failed to meet their expectations. “A surprising number were, in these teachers’ views, ineffectual, demoralizing, or even destructive” (p. 99). Similar results were reported by Eggen (2002), whose study revealed that lack of support for beginning teachers, in particular from school administrators, was overwhelmingly the dominant factor in decisions to leave the profession.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine which principal behaviors first-year teachers identified as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession. A framework of core tasks for principals in supporting new teachers, developed by Carver (2002), served as the foundation of the study. Numerous principal behaviors were important in the support of first-year teachers, whereas the intent of this study was to define those behaviors that made the most difference in the potential

retention of beginning teachers in the profession. This knowledge will assist principals in allocating their time and energy to those behaviors that are likely to have the most impact.

Research Questions

The primary research question was “What principal behaviors do first-year teachers identify as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in teaching?” Sub-questions were (a) “What principal behaviors do fifth-year teachers identify as contributing to their remaining in the profession for the past five years?” and (b) “What are the similarities and differences in the principal behaviors identified by first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in the profession?”

Significance of the Study

Retention of new teachers is important for several reasons, including student performance and budgetary concerns (Theobald, 1990; Yee, 1990). Teacher turnover hinders the development of master teachers and prevents continuity of instructional practices that contribute to increased student achievement. Teacher turnover also has a financial impact on a school system and is considered a loss in terms of resources spent on hiring, inducting, and training beginning teachers. Greater knowledge of what principals can do to influence the retention rate of new teachers beyond their first year of teaching can have benefits for the teacher, for students, and for the school system.

The academic preparation of today’s principals paid little attention to new teacher induction programs and strategies for supporting beginning teachers (Ganser, 2002). In

addition, few principals had experienced in-service training on specific behaviors that supported first-year teachers and influenced their decisions to remain in the teaching professions. Brock and Grady (1997) found that principals acknowledged their need for assistance and advice in the induction of new teachers. Little research has specifically examined the principal's role in the retention of first-year teachers. Therefore, this study is significant for the following reasons:

- Support by the principal is important in influencing first-year teachers to remain in the profession.
- Once principals are aware of which actions and behaviors best support first-year teachers, they are more likely to provide the necessary support.
- The results of the study could assist in the placement of new teachers in schools with principals who can bridge the gap between student teaching and the demands of the first teaching experience.
- Principals who use the results of this study in their decision-making processes regarding new teachers may increase their rate of retention, thereby decreasing the cost of recruiting new teachers.
- Colleges and universities could use the information gained to make curriculum decisions regarding the professional preparation of future principals who will help teachers transition from college to the classroom.
- University partnership programs, school districts, and service centers could use the information to provide professional development for principals in specific behaviors that promote first-year teacher retention.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of this study were mainly related to the population studied and the geographic location from which the participants were drawn. The participants in the study all taught in the same suburban public school district in Southern Arizona. The district encompassed diverse neighborhoods, so variations in findings may be attributed to school demographics. The influence of principal behaviors may weigh more or less than other factors, depending on the school demographics. In general, the selected district enjoyed a solid reputation in the community; therefore, findings may not apply to teachers in districts/states that are different in terms of educational standards, school facilities, salaries, student behavior, and public opinion.

The core tasks for principals in supporting new teachers were based on Carver's (2002) framework, but the researcher acknowledged that the behaviors being surveyed were not the only supportive behaviors possible. The study did not measure the effectiveness of an induction or teacher mentor program, nor did it attempt to compare principal support behaviors with those of a mentor. Further limitations may include the following:

- The Q sort was done with first-year teachers near the end of the school year, a year of unprecedented economic uncertainty. A number of the first-year teachers in this specific district had received reduction-in-force notices. Many of these first-year teachers were uncertain whether they would be offered a contract for the following year. As a result, they may have elected not to participate in the study, thereby skewing results.

- First-year teachers may not have been prepared to make a final decision about plans for the following year until a contract for the upcoming year was signed and submitted.
- First-year teachers who were extremely competent may not have expected or wanted support from their principal.
- Struggling first-year teachers may have held unrealistic or exaggerated ideas about the role of the principal.
- First-year and fifth-year teachers may have had difficulty separating principal behaviors from other factors that influenced their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession.
- Fifth-year teachers may have had difficulty recalling their first year of teaching and their perceptions of principal support behaviors.
- Fifth-year teachers were contacted in the fall following completion of their fifth year of teaching. The district had just implemented a new student information and gradebook system, and district officials felt that teachers were very stressed and reluctant to give extra time for any task that was not required. This may have limited the number of participants among fifth-year teachers.
- Teacher interviews were limited to those participants who volunteered for that portion of the study. Those who volunteered may not be a representative sample of the entire group.

- No teachers who had left the profession were included in this study; therefore, only teachers' self-reported perceptions of the likelihood of remaining in the profession were used as a measure of retention. The researcher was unable to determine whether their responses to important questions would yield similar answers to those of teachers who taught for a few years and then left the profession. Involving actual leavers in the study might have led to other insights.
- Economic challenges may have influenced first-year teachers' likelihood of remaining in the profession.
- Teachers in the specific district had a variety of financial incentives, including performance-based pay, career ladder, and a Teacher Incentive Fund grant from the U.S. Department of Education (El-Bedawi, 2008). These financial incentives may have caused the percentage of teachers who decided to remain in the profession in this district to be higher than otherwise comparable districts.

This study was limited to first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers in a specific public school district in Southern Arizona. No non-certified teachers were included. Teachers who were in their first year with the district but not their first year of teaching were eliminated from the sample.

Basic Assumptions

It was assumed that first-year and fifth-year teachers would attempt to accurately rank their perceptions of the influence of principal behaviors on their likelihood of

remaining in the teaching profession. It was also assumed that teachers' perception of their likelihood of remaining in the profession was a valid proxy of their future career decision. Finally, it was assumed that teachers who agreed to be interviewed would be open and honest in their discussion of principal behaviors, the frequency of those behaviors, and their current and/or future career decisions.

Definition of Terms

The following terms used in this study are understood to have the meanings stated here:

Array. The graphical representation of the distribution of statements, also called the Q set sorting distribution. The array typically follows a quasi-normal distribution.

Attrition. The choice of teachers to leave the profession. In some studies, moving to another school system, another school in the same system, or into a different position in education was also considered to be attrition. For the purpose of this study, attrition was limited to the intention to leave the teaching profession.

Concourse. A sample of statements gleaned from the broad literature on a specific topic (Brown, 1993).

Condition of instruction. The directions given to participants in a Q sort to ensure that all participants follow the same procedures.

Consensus statement. A statement in which scores on the factors are either the same or one number apart.

Factor. In Q methodology, a factor represents a group of individual perspectives that are highly correlated with one another and not correlated with others.

Fifth-year teacher. An individual who is in the fifth year of teaching a group of students in pre-kindergarten through Grade 12. This study was limited to public school teachers in a specific district who had completed their fifth year of teaching, regardless of the number of years taught in the specific district.

First-year teacher/beginning teacher. An individual who is in the first year of teaching a group of students in pre-kindergarten through Grade 12. This study was limited to public school teachers in a specific district, but a teacher with previous teaching experience in a private or charter school who taught the first year of public school in 2008-2009 was not considered a first-year teacher.

Fully certified teacher. A teacher with an intern, provisional, reciprocal or standard certificate who was teaching in the content area approved on his/her certificate.

Highly qualified teacher. A teacher with a bachelor's degree and full state certification (intern, provisional, reciprocal or standard teaching certificate) who demonstrated subject matter competency in the academic subject assigned to teach (No Child Left Behind [NCLB], 2001).

Induction. A formal program designed to orient new teachers to the profession while providing support and encouragement (Brock & Grady, 1998). Formal induction programs were often carried out at the district level, and the bulk of support was provided by assigned mentor teachers.

Mentor. An experienced teacher who provided support to a novice teacher, either through formal assignment in a structured induction program or through informal assignment.

P set. The set of research participants, who are selected from a sample of respondents who are relevant to the problem under consideration.

Principal. A credentialed and state licensed individual who was responsible for management and leadership of a school and evaluation of teachers.

Q set. A subset of statements selected from the concourse to be presented to study participants.

Retention. The choice of teachers to remain in the profession. In some studies, teachers who remained in the classroom for the duration of their working careers are typically among retention statistics; in some studies, the term may be interpreted more narrowly as continued employment in a specific district or school. For the purpose of this study, retention was defined as the decision to remain in the teaching profession. Retention is the opposite of attrition.

Support. A broad term to encompass the interdependent functions of new teacher assistance, development, and assessment (Fieman-Nemser, Carver, Schwille, & Yusko, 1999).

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter 1 of this dissertation includes an introduction to the study, a statement of the problem and purpose, the research questions, and the significance of the study. Also included are limitations, basic assumptions, and definitions of terms used in the study. Chapter 2 supports the importance of this study by providing a review of the related literature on teacher attrition, retention, and principal support behaviors for beginning teachers. Chapter 3 describes the research design and methodology and provides

information about the population and sample, data collection, instrumentation, and data analysis procedures. Chapter 4 consists of the presentation and analysis of the data. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the results, discussion of the study's outcomes and meaning, implications, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The ability to educate all students at high levels is the key to our future domestically and internationally (Education Commission of the States, 2007). There is a growing consensus that the single most important factor in determining student academic success is the quality of the classroom teacher. Federal legislation (NCLB, 2002) stimulated a national effort to place a highly qualified teacher in every classroom. The failure of every state to reach the lofty goal of 100% of teachers being highly qualified by 2005-2006 has focused greater attention on the issues of teacher preparation, recruitment, and retention.

Over the past decade, education experts have centered their attention on a perceived teacher shortage. Pounder, as early as 1987, identified numerous contributors to the growing teacher shortage. Failure to attract sufficient numbers of students into teacher preparation programs is part of the problem, along with the declining academic ability of incoming teachers. This is particularly true in certain content areas, such as mathematics, science, and special education. Education has declined as a career choice for women, as other professional opportunities have opened up. The base pay of teachers is lower than other fields requiring a bachelor's degree (Pounder, 1987). In addition, the teacher shortage has been attributed to large numbers of baby boomers retiring, increases in student enrollment, and states reducing class sizes (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2007). However, according to some researchers, the problem is not a teacher shortage per se. Ingersoll (2003) asserted that an adequate supply of

teachers existed to meet the demand. Initiatives that seek to address the teacher shortage by increasing the supply of teacher candidates are not likely to be effective unless they are coupled with efforts to address the high turnover rate. The real challenge lies in keeping high-quality teachers who are already in the profession.

According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2007), nearly 6% of the teaching force leaves the profession nationally each year. It is estimated that approximately 50% of teachers leave the profession by the end of their fifth year and that every year one-third of the teaching force is in transition, either new on the job or in the process of leaving (Education Commission of the States, 2007). The percentage of teachers leaving the profession is higher nationally than any other career field (Ingersoll, 2002). Teacher attrition, particularly that of new teachers, is an issue that has gained a fair share of the policymaking focus since 2002, as states focus on staffing every classroom with a qualified teacher (Wynn, Carboni, & Patall, 2007). There is increasingly intense national dialogue taking place over how to attract and keep good teachers.

The Magnitude of New Teacher Attrition

Numerous researchers have documented the concern about the attrition rate of new teachers (Ax, Conderman, & Stephens, 2001; Gordon & Maxey, 2000; Grissmer & Kirby, 1987, 1997; Heyns, 1988; Ingersoll, 2001, 2002, 2003; Murnane, Singer, Willett, Kemple, & Olsen, 1991; Schlechty & Vance, 1983; Wynn et al., 2007). The Alliance for Excellent Education (2007) called the current rate of attrition among beginning teachers astronomical. Each year new teachers enter the profession, and each year new teachers

drop out, creating a “revolving door” (Hanushek, Kain, & Rivkin, 2004). New teachers who leave the profession tend to do so early in their career, with the first two years being the most hazardous (Murnane et al., 1991). Although findings vary somewhat according to specific studies, researchers suggest that about 30% of new teachers do not teach beyond two years, and within the first five years of teaching 40-50% will leave the profession.

A study of beginning teachers in Indiana by Grissmer and Kirby (1987) found that the largest number of new teachers (20%) left after their first year of teaching. Another 13% left by the end of the second year, while a little over half of the cohort left teaching by the end of the fourth year. Hanushek et al. (2004) had slightly different findings in Texas, where from 1993-1996, 14% of new teachers left the profession. A comprehensive 18-year study in North Carolina revealed that 15 to 18% of all new teachers left teaching by the end of their second year, and as many as one-third left by the end of their fifth year (Certo & Fox, 2002).

According to Black (2001), 9% of all new teachers do not even complete their first year, and 14% of first-time teachers leave after their first year (Ingersoll, 2002). Ingersoll’s research, based on national statistics, showed that within three years, 33% of teachers leave, and after five years—the average time it takes for teachers to maximize their students’ learning—half of all new teachers will have exited the profession. Similar findings were reported by Brewster and Railsback (2001). They reported that 9.3% of new teachers did not make it through the first year, 20 to 30% left within the first three years, and 50% left within five years.

Researchers agree that the number of beginning teachers who leave the profession before they can become the kind of high-quality teachers who consistently improve student learning constitutes a crisis in education. More disturbing, research showed that it was the most promising teachers who tended to leave teaching in the early years (Schlechty & Vance, 1983). Murnane, Singer, and Willett (1989) suggested that schools tend to lose promising teachers with skills valued by business and industry. This was confirmed by DeAngelis and Presley (2007), who found that new teachers with the strongest academic qualifications were most likely to leave the profession. Ingersoll (2003) used the analogy of a bucket with holes in the bottom. Recruiting more teachers—filling the bucket—will not solve our schools' staffing problems if new teachers continue to drop out at the alarming rate of 40 to 50% during the first five years.

The Cost of New Teacher Attrition

When teachers leave the profession, turnover can be costly, both financially and in terms of educational quality. It forces states, districts, and schools to devote time, attention, and financial resources to replace those leaving the profession, diverting large sums of money and time from instructional efforts to recruitment efforts (Voke, 2002). According to the Alliance for Excellent Education (2007), the estimated cost of recruiting, hiring, and training a new teacher is approximately 30% of the exiting teacher's salary, and the cost is not recoverable. Other estimates of money lost when a teacher leaves the profession vary from 25 to 50% of the teacher's salary because of the high cost of recruiting, hiring, substitutes, learning curve loss, and training.

The Alliance for Excellent Education (2007) estimated that American schools spend approximately \$2.6 billion every year as a result of teacher attrition. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (2007) conducted a study of the cost of teacher turnover in five specific school districts. The actual cost per teacher leaving the profession ranged from \$4,366 in rural New Mexico to \$17,872 in Chicago. The total cost of teacher turnover in Chicago Public Schools alone was over \$86 million per year. This study placed the cumulative costs for all schools and districts across the country at a staggering \$7.34 billion annually.

In addition to the expenses incurred as a result of the recruitment, hiring, and training processes, there are other negative costs associated with teachers leaving the profession. A largely hidden cost is that of the huge public investment that goes into tuition and tax support for new teacher preparation (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003). When beginning teachers leave before they become high-quality veterans, the investment in teacher professional development is lost. Districts with high levels of turnover continually pour money into professional development and induction programs for new teachers, many of whom leave the profession before the district has reaped the benefits of enhanced instructional skills or improved student achievement.

High teacher turnover also undermines the ability of schools to build and sustain a professional culture. Guin's (2004) study demonstrated that chronic teacher turnover negatively affected professional development, class size, scheduling, curriculum planning, collegiality and collaboration, and a variety of other factors, adding a

significant degree of chaos and complexity to schoolwide operations. Schools with high rates of attrition cannot develop a strong nucleus of stable faculty and fail to mature as a coherent professional learning community. Substantial investments of both time and money devoted to instructional improvement and curriculum development are wiped out by high attrition. Successful reform efforts require sustained and shared commitment by school staff; new teachers, unfamiliar with and uncommitted to these reforms, are constantly being brought on board (Voke, 2002). The loss of experience and expertise is typically most pronounced at the neediest schools, where too often teachers lack the leadership and collegial opportunities necessary to support and sustain schoolwide efforts to improve student achievement.

The most serious long-term consequence of high new teacher attrition is poorer teacher quality that negatively influences student achievement. Inexperienced teachers, particularly those with fewer than two or three years of experience, are often much less effective than veteran colleagues (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2003). The skills and understandings that produce high-quality teaching take time to acquire and perfect. The Alliance for Excellent Education (2007) cited research that new teachers require three to seven years of experience to become effective. Haycock (1998) stated that the difference between an excellent and a poor teacher can be as much as a full level of student achievement in a single year. Students in schools with high teacher attrition seldom have the opportunity to be taught by the kind of teacher who can deliver the highest achievement gains. If attrition rates of new teachers continue at

the current rate, schools will continue to struggle to develop a strong core of teachers who can positively impact student achievement.

Reasons for New Teacher Attrition

If the goal is to retain novice teachers in the profession, then it is important to understand why they are leaving teaching in record numbers. Explanations for new teachers' decisions to leave the profession include receiving little or no support, being assigned to teach the most difficult students, being assigned numerous extracurricular duties, being placed outside the field of expertise, and feeling isolated from colleagues (Darling-Hammond, 1997). Eberhard, Reinhardt-Mondragon, and Stottlemeyer (2000) identified nine aspects of teaching that were relevant to a new teacher's decision to leave the profession. These included salary, teaching assignment, paperwork, duties other than teaching, class size, student behavior, special education requirements, recognition from administrators, and support from administrators. Yee's (1990) study identified the following building-level factors related to teacher retention: discipline, course assignment, level of support during induction, class size, workload, professional stimulation, collegial interaction, opportunities for input, and organizational choices.

A report by the Southern Regional Education Board (2001) cited inadequate preparation, conditions in the school and classroom, and salaries and benefits as key factors influencing beginning teachers' decisions to leave teaching. Minarik et al. (2003) identified the following persistent and complex problems: Inadequate induction and lack of principal support, feelings of isolation and lack of community, major flaws in teacher preparation and lack of professional development, low level rewards for knowledge and

skills, unsafe work environments, and student discipline and motivation problems. (p. 230). Graziano (2005) cited poor administrative support, lack of influence within the organization, classroom interruptions, and inadequate time among the conditions mentioned by teachers leaving the profession.

Ingersoll (2001) examined data on the reasons teachers themselves gave for leaving the profession. The most prominent source of turnover directly related to the working and organizational conditions of teaching. Of all departing teachers, 42% listed either job dissatisfaction or the desire to pursue a better job or another career. Those who cited job dissatisfaction most often linked their decision to low salaries, lack of administrative support, student discipline and motivation problems, and lack of teacher influence in decision making.

Low salary is linked to higher rates of attrition (Darling-Hammond, 2000). As early as 1989, Murnane et al. advocated for higher salaries for teachers in the first five years of teaching. They contended that retention decisions were more sensitive to salary during the first few years of teaching, before teachers have developed a love of and commitment to teaching. However, some studies indicated salary alone would not solve the teacher attrition problem. Hanushek et al. (2004) discovered that salary increases of 25 to 43% would be required to keep exiting teachers in high-needs urban schools. They concluded that a more cost-effective, realistic solution to teacher retention was to improve teacher working conditions, particularly safety, discipline, and principal leadership. Similarly, a study conducted by the Metropolitan Educational Research Consortium in Richmond, Virginia (2004) discovered that although novice teachers listed

salary and benefits first in importance for retention, lack of administrative support was a more important reason than salary for those teachers who left the profession. Similar responses were given by 400 National and State Teachers of the Year (Goldberg & Proctor, 2000), 89% of whom identified school administrator support as being of greatest importance in retaining beginning teachers—more important than raising beginning salaries.

In their study of the California Beginning Teachers Support Program, Hendrick and Childress (2002) found that inadequate principal support consistently ranked second, behind low salary, as the reason new teachers exited the profession. Quinn and Andrews (2004) stated that while beginning teachers listed many reasons for leaving the profession—salary, working conditions, lack of parent involvement, and bureaucratic school cultures—one of the most common reasons cited was lack of administrative support. Other studies have documented that the lack of principal support was a major factor in the decision of new teachers to leave the profession (Ax et al, 2001; Chapman, 1983; Deal & Chatman, 1989). In addition, some studies identified negative principal actions or behaviors as reasons to leave the profession. Palmer (2007) cited the crippling inflexibility of her administrator as the direct cause of her decision to leave teaching. A study of teacher supply and demand in North Carolina found that nearly two-thirds of teachers who left the profession said that the lack of administrative support was a determining factor (Starr, 2002). A similar survey of Cleveland-area teachers reported that those teachers who experienced little support from their principals were nearly three

times as likely to say they were considering leaving teaching as those teachers who experienced principal support (Starr, 2002).

Teachers in a recent California study (Futernick, 2007) most frequently cited inadequate system supports and bureaucratic impediments in their decisions to leave teaching. Similar results were found in the 2006 Arizona Teacher Working Conditions Survey (as cited in Hirsch, 2006), in which support from school administrators was listed as the most important influence on teachers' future employment plans. Wynn and Brown (2008) reported findings from a two-year study of novice teachers in which their satisfaction with principal leadership and school climate was related to their decision to remain at the school and school district. Clearly, the principal plays a crucial role in the decision of new teachers to remain in teaching or to exit the profession.

The Crucial Role of Principal Support

Beginning teachers depend on their principal for guidance and support during their first years of teaching (Applegate, Flora, & Lasley, 1980). New teachers express the need for the principal to introduce them to the culture of the school, provide critical constructive feedback and evaluation, and be accessible for guidance and support (Hope, 1999). Beginning teachers come to the profession with many needs and questions, and a principal's response to these needs may have a significant influence on the quality of the teacher's job satisfaction and, ultimately, the decision to remain or leave the teaching profession. A 2002 survey of Texas teachers (Stripling, 2004) identified specific principal competencies that were determined to be statistically significant in positively impacting the retention of new teachers. These included creating a campus culture that

sets high expectations and promotes learning, modeling and promoting the highest standards of ethical principles and integrity in decision making, facilitating the implementation sound research-based theories and techniques of classroom management and student discipline, and utilizing strategies to ensure the development of effective collaboration and collegial relationships on the campus.

The principal's involvement with beginning teachers influences the pace at which they adapt and develop, as well as their ultimate decision to stay or leave the profession (Gimbert & Fultz, 2008). This study explored the interactions between principals and novice teachers, focusing on the four themes of relationships, expectations, perceptions, and teacher development. The findings indicated that the principal had the ability to facilitate the transition of individuals from a university program or business career into the educational system through building relationships and had long-term implications for teacher retention.

School principals cannot directly influence the beginning salary of new teachers, restructure the teacher job description, or directly impact the quality of teacher education programs. However, they can do a great deal to improve the working conditions within their schools and the organizational structures and processes that are related to productivity, efficacy, and morale (Pounder, 1987). Stockard and Lehman (2004) reinforced the importance of job satisfaction in first-year teachers' intention to remain in teaching, and they suggested that the characteristics most important to new teachers were directly under the control of building administrators. Johnson (2006) described the principal as the broker of workplace conditions. "It is the principal who holds formal

authority in the school, supervises the work of teachers, and serves as a link between the school and the community as well as the district office” (p. 15). The principal is the key to the success of every school endeavor, including the induction and support of new teachers.

Richards (2004) conducted a qualitative study of 15 K-8 teachers, hoping to discover what type of support new teachers valued most in making the decision to stay or leave. Findings from this study indicated that teachers felt most supported by principals who respected and honored them as professionals; had an open-door policy; were fair, honest, and trustworthy; supported them in dealing with parents; and supported them in student discipline.

Not all principals know how to best support new teachers; in addition, many principals may not be aware of their responsibilities in supporting new teachers or of how much or what kind of support their teachers need. Based on an eight-year study of a teacher support system in California, Hendrick and Childress (2002) found that administrators’ perceptions of the amount of support they provided to novices was far greater than that described by beginning teachers. Research conducted by Powell (2004) confirmed that although principals thought they were providing frequent and sufficient support to new teachers, first-year teachers indicated that they were not. Administrators in Cole’s (1994) study articulated the need for guidance and support as they carried out responsibilities related to new teacher development. They expressed a desire to receive feedback from new teachers about the support offered them, expectations from the district on their role in supporting new teachers, and opportunities to meet with other

principals to discuss issues related to new teacher orientation and induction. Clearly, principals need information and training in the area of new teacher support to maximize the likelihood of first-year teachers remaining in the profession.

Principal Support Framework

Research regarding the principal's role in the support and retention of new teachers is lacking. In a qualitative case study, Carver (2002) explored the increasingly talked about but largely unexamined issue of principal support behaviors. She collected data from four elementary principals in interviews, phone calls, and e-mails over a period of three school years. She delved into the four principals' espoused beliefs about new teacher support, development, and assessment. Carver also conducted interviews with mentor and novice teachers, as well as district and program personnel. She reviewed evaluation records, as well as documents and other artifacts of practice. Drawing on their work, she identified a core set of tasks through which principals could support first-year teachers. Final results were translated into a conceptual framework of professional practice for the support of new teachers by all principals (Carver, 2003). This framework consisted of a continuum of seven categories of core support behaviors, with specific tasks within each category (see Table 1).

This framework identified a range of activities in which principals might engage to support new teachers, but Carver (2002) did not imply that any of the four principals in the study engaged in all the behaviors encompassed in the framework. Principals in the study selected strategies based on their understanding of the school context, their perceptions of the needs of their beginning teachers, and their own personal leadership

Table 1

Core Tasks for Principals in Supporting New Teachers

Recruiting, Hiring, and Placing New Teachers

- Recruit aggressively; streamline and facilitate the hiring process.
- Hire early so that novices can settle in.
- Assign novices to subject areas and grade levels for which they are qualified.
- Secure classroom placements that optimize the novices' chance for success.
- Distribute challenging students among classrooms.
- Protect novices' time by limiting extra duties and responsibilities.

Providing Site Orientation and Resource Assistance

- Facilitate introduction and welcome to the site.
- Offer site orientation to highlight available resources, procedures, and policies.
- Assign in-building mentors.
- Provide needed resources and supplies.

Managing the School Environment

- Clearly articulate expectations for teachers.
- Streamline state and district paperwork.
- Protect novices from the competing demands of state and district mandates.

Table 1 (continued)

- Maintain a disciplined school environment.

Building Relationships Between Principals and Teachers

- Maintain regular personal communication with the novice.
- Acknowledge and reward performance, as appropriate.
- Maintain an open door policy; ask how you can be helpful.

Fostering Instructional Development Through Formative Assessment

- Facilitate novices' participation in professional development opportunities.
- Provide opportunities and incentives for all teachers to work together.
- Provide opportunities for novices to gather and work together.
- Protect planning time for novices.
- Visit novices' classrooms and provide feedback; help novices set reasonable goals.
- Review lesson plans; offer instruction in teaching strategies.
- Facilitate novices' observation of other teachers.
- Engage in ongoing professional dialogue with novices.

Providing Formative and Summative Evaluation

- Explain expectations and procedures at the beginning of the year.

Table 1 (continued)

- Schedule observations in advance; provide novices with copies of evaluation records.
- Use standards to guide your assessment.
- Be positive but honest in your feedback; recognize novices as beginners.
- Help novices set reasonable goals for their learning and development.
- Balance formal observations and conferences with informal observations and feedback.
- Coordinate evaluation activities with induction and mentoring program.

Facilitating a Supportive School Context

- Foster a welcoming, nurturing, and collegial work environment that values critical inquiry, reflection, and risk taking.
 - Help other teachers understand and acknowledge novices' development and needs.
 - Set high expectations for teaching and learning and make them clear to all.
 - Use teaching standards to structure professional development opportunities.
 - Model collaborative working behavior.
-

style. They then incorporated selected strategies into their daily routines. These tasks or strategies are outlined and described in the sections that follow.

Recruiting, Hiring, and Placing New Teachers

The first step on the support continuum highlights decisions made regarding the recruiting, hiring, and placement of a new teacher. Included are such tasks as the teacher's placement at a grade level and/or in a department, their physical classroom space, the students assigned to them, and extra duties or assignments. These responsibilities are typically carried out by the principal or a site administrator. Jorissen (2002) suggested that principals screen applicants carefully, looking for those who have substantial experience working and building relationships with children and youth and those with experience in a similar community. Assessing whether there is a good match between the prospective new teacher and the open position is an important first step in the retention of new teachers. A recent study by Brown and Wynn (2009) reinforced the importance of a good fit between the new teacher, the school, and the existing staff.

Finding positions that closely fit new teachers' particular skills, knowledge, and interests is important, because it influences their prospects for achieving success and the personal rewards for which they entered teaching (Johnson, 2004). No Child Left Behind, perhaps the most ambitious federal reform legislation in American history, places extraordinary importance on the role of the principal in recruiting, hiring, and placing new teachers. An effective principal is a bold and aggressive recruiter who streamlines the hiring process so that novices are quickly brought on board and have a chance to settle in before the school year begins (Carver, 2003). However, despite recent calls for changes in this area, there is little evidence that recruitment and hiring practices

have changed (Fideler & Haselkorn, 1999). Liu and Johnson (2006) found that although most new teachers in their study were hired through a decentralized process, they had limited interactions with school-based personnel and received very little information about the position. In addition, the majority of new teachers were not hired until summer, with approximately one-third being hired after the school year had already started.

The effective principal ensures placement in teachers' area of expertise and certification, provides them with adequate resources to meet their needs, and assigns them only limited extra duties to optimize their chance of success. The principal protects the novice's time by limiting the number of new teacher assignments to committees and other responsibilities. One suggestion is to hold new teachers accountable for an extra planning period rather than assign a school duty period. The principal makes every effort to keep first-year teachers in the same courses or grade levels for two or three years, allowing them to gain confidence before changing their teaching assignments (Renard, 2003).

No Child Left Behind (2001) also placed extraordinary pressure on teachers to be accountable for student learning. Today's new teachers face unprecedented demands to teach all students—rich and poor, immigrant and native-born, white and minority, special needs and mainstream—so that they achieve high standards and to take on additional functions beyond the traditional extent of the schools' responsibility (Johnson, 2004). Brock and Grady (2001) stated that whereas many professions ordinarily increase the amount and difficulty of work assigned to novices in a gradual progression, this is not applicable in teaching. In fact, many beginning teachers are challenged by being

assigned the most difficult classes in the school. They may be assigned to classes of low abilities—at-risk students who experienced teachers with seniority are able to avoid. Beginning teachers are more likely than veterans to be inappropriately matched with diverse populations of students. Learning to teach is difficult, complicated work; learning to teach students from markedly different backgrounds is even more complex. New teachers need support and guidance to succeed, yet that support is often hardest to come by in low-income rural and urban schools, which very often have few organizational resources and low levels of student achievement (Johnson, 2004).

In addition, Johnson (2004) asserted that low-income schools, already burdened by the inability to attract and retain strong teachers, suffered repeated disruptions as new teachers came and went. This could lead to schools having two distinct generations of teachers, causing the principal's job of creating collaboration for schoolwide change and reform to be nearly impossible (Johnson & Kardos, 2005). Given the strong evidence that teacher effectiveness increased sharply after the first few years of teaching, this kind of churning in the beginning teaching forces reduced productivity in education overall (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Minarik et al. (2003) maintained that the attrition of new teachers was a major barrier to continuous school improvement and will create ceiling effects for student achievement.

Providing Site Orientation and Resource Assistance

New teachers need to understand the structure and context of the school environment, and the principal is instrumental in acquainting them with the way the school operates. The principal can help meet this need by providing a building-level

orientation at the opening of the school year to review key policies and procedures (Carver, 2003). The principal could share demographic information about the student population, as well as information about the neighborhood and surrounding community. The principal may also assign mentors or buddy teachers to establish a formal network of support for novices. The mentor should be a consistent source of support and day-to-day assurance of help (Jorissen, 2002).

In addition, the principal should provide assistance to new teachers in obtaining needed materials and supplies. Although it is important to share specific policies and procedures, perhaps in the form of the handbook, it is also important to understand how overwhelmed novices may be with the amount of information presented at the beginning of the year. As the year progresses, an effective principal will schedule regular meetings to review key procedures and tailor certain actions to meet the individual needs of new teachers.

Parent interaction is another area in which beginning teachers may need extra backing. Although many parents are supportive and welcoming, some might be skeptical about the ability of a beginning teacher, especially if the teacher is young. Novices are sometimes treated disrespectfully, and their actions and decisions may be scrutinized and challenged by parents, particularly with regard to student discipline (Brock & Grady, 2001). Providing information about the parents of their students is one way a principal can assist beginning teachers. Clarifying school procedures regarding parent communication and expectations is also essential.

Other fundamental pressures on new teachers have little to do with teaching but are critical to the beginning of a career. There are the financial choices that novices need to make, and many of them are financially independent from their parents for the first time in their lives. Real issues such as finding a place to live, buying a car, and securing insurance are compounded by the confusing choices often contained in a district's benefits menu. Even the teaching contract is a foreign document. The principal should be knowledgeable about the employee benefits and assistance programs offered by the district and provide help to new teachers in dealing with these aspects of starting a career. The principal should also caution new teachers about the inevitable stress associated with the first year of teaching and present information about the importance of good nutrition, exercise, adequate rest, and an appropriate social life as preventive measures (Brock & Grady, 2001). A hard-working new teacher in Woods' (2005) study noticed an improvement in her teaching performance after following her principal's advice regarding the importance of balance in her life.

Many mentoring programs are established and coordinated at the district level; however, the principal must be intimately involved in matching mentors with entry-year teachers. If the mentorship is to be successful, it is essential that a trusting relationship be developed. The principal should consider mutual interests, teaching philosophies, gender, age, and teaching assignment. Generally, the most effective matches are made between mentors and beginners who are of the same gender, teach the same grade or subject matter, and have an age difference of 8 to 15 years (Brock & Grady, 2001). The principal should make sure that new teachers and their mentors have mutual planning

periods and occasionally provide substitute teachers so that novices can meet with their mentors for extended periods or observe in mentors' classrooms (Renard, 2003). The principal should directly encourage mentors to focus on new teachers' instruction rather than on merely providing moral support (Wayne, Youngs, & Fleischman, 2005). The principal must monitor the quality and effectiveness of the mentoring relationship because the ultimate goal of mentoring is to develop teachers who learn effective teaching strategies (Wynn & Brown, 2008).

Novices often bemoan the lack of adequate resources, such as materials, textbooks, furniture, and supplies. A school that supports new teachers must have sufficient supplies and equipment for teachers to do their job without having to search for basic resources or fund them out of pocket. Occasionally beginning teachers have no assigned classroom, are forced to move from room to room every period, or are assigned to a classroom that is isolated from the mainstream of the school. In such cases, the novices are not easily socialized into the school's daily activities. They have few opportunities to observe master teachers and tend to display slower success rates. A classroom that is close to the mainstream of school activities provides information about what is happening in the school as well as opportunities for interaction with experienced master teachers (Kurtz, 1983). In an ideal situation, time and space are organized in a way that connects new teachers with regular opportunities to exchange ideas and information; experienced colleagues in the school are readily available so that new teachers can observe and consult with them in a meaningful way (Johnson, 2004).

Managing the School Environment

Brock and Grady (2001) found that one of the most difficult challenges for first-year teachers was understanding the expectations of their principals. Novices were typically unclear about roles, expectations, and reactions. New teachers wanted to know about the principal's philosophy and values for education and students. They wanted to know what the principal considered to be quality teaching. Principals must also clearly articulate their expectations for novice teachers in terms of responsibilities to students and parents, including discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, and mandatory parent conferences (Powell, 2004).

Classroom discipline is a recurring challenge for novice teachers, who struggle to develop a style of discipline that is responsive to student needs and still consistent with the discipline policy of the school. New teachers may have difficulty establishing an appropriate social distance, and their desire to be liked and establish rapport with students often result in mixed messages and confusion. "A lack of understanding of human nature, a strong desire for student approval, and a lack of behavior management skills collectively thwart their efforts to control their classrooms" (Brock & Grady, 2001, p. 22). A key role for the principal, then, is to assist beginning teachers in integrating discipline and teaching, thereby helping them to capitalize and direct student energy into productive learning. The principal can provide staff development forums for new teachers throughout the first year, focusing specifically on the school discipline plan and procedures and strategies to combat discipline issues (Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002).

The principal can ensure that new teachers focus on legislated requirements such as standards, assessments, and accountability by minimizing the impact of other distractions on novices. A new teacher is better able to concentrate on teaching students, rather than simply managing them, when the principal facilitates a disciplined and orderly school environment and holds students accountable for actions and behavior (Carver, 2003). A school that supports new teachers has schoolwide expectations for student behavior and upholds the same approach to discipline throughout, allowing new teachers to manage their classes effectively from the first day. Some teachers in Johnson and Birkeland's (2003) study left schools with chaotic environments in search of order and predictability. "As they strove to create consistent behavior policies and a focus on learning in their first classrooms, they found that the schoolwide norms could either support or undermine their efforts" (p. 22). The principal should also oversee an organized set of student support services, which new teachers can count on to address the various needs of students.

Many new teachers expressed frustration with state standards and accountability, especially if they lacked sufficient resources and explicit curriculum. They also had difficulty if books and other materials were not aligned to state standards. New teachers interviewed by Johnson (2004) expressed despair over the vast number of topics covered by the state standards; they resented "being asked to do the impossible" (p. 135). Teachers need assistance in determining which of the multitude of standards should be prioritized or emphasized in their teaching. The environment of standards and accountability intensifies new teachers' need to find out what to teach and how to do it

right. They look to the principal for assistance and guidance in this challenging task. In contrast, novices feel threatened by a principal who appears to be more focused on test scores and district mandates to the perceived detriment of teaching and learning (Eggen, 2002).

The principal can also help keep the novice's focus on teaching by streamlining such administrative tasks as the completion of state and district reports and documentation. One strategy for accomplishing this is to pass on to teachers only those administrative tasks that cannot be accomplished by office staff or instructional aides. The principal should consider the impact of new programs, stringent evaluations, additional paperwork, and the stress of standardized testing on the beginning teacher and reduce or eliminate these burdens wherever possible while the novice becomes oriented to the profession (Eggen, 2002).

Building Relationships between the Principal and New Teachers

For beginning teachers, the climate created by the principal is a major factor in their success or failure and reinforces that the principal is central in shaping how, and how well, a school works. Jorissen (2002) found that teachers who had a positive personal relationship with their principals were more likely to remain in teaching. The principal has the influence to make the workplace enjoyable or unbearable. "The principal has the power to praise or criticize, offer or withhold resources, determine schedules and assignments, provide or refuse support, and recommend or not recommend continuing employment" (Brock & Grady, 2001, p. 41). Establishing positive working relationships with new teachers is a crucial first step in principal support, regardless of

the leader's preferred style. Key strategies in this arena include welcoming new teachers to the site, maintaining an open-door policy, being available for individual conferences, and meeting new teachers' real and perceived needs (Carver, 2003).

It is essential for the principal to establish frequent and open communication and visit new teachers' classrooms regularly. Kurtz (1983) cited a lack of interaction with the building administrator as a major factor in the lack of success of beginning teachers. Wynn and Brown (2008) referred to a recent survey in which novice teachers gave high marks to principals who were accessible, made it easy for them to ask questions and discuss problems, and provided them with guidance and assistance in problem solving. New teachers also expressed appreciation for principals who recognized the ways in which they were making a difference for students (Jorissen, 2002). Wood (2005) described teachers who credited the encouragement of their principal with helping them through difficult times.

The principal should also facilitate the professional relationships between the novice and peers throughout the school for the purpose of developing instructional skills. Establishing a healthy working relationship is especially critical when there are concerns about a new teacher's performance. With a comfortable working relationship already established, the new teacher is more likely to respond to coaching and feedback. The principal should also connect new teachers to external sources of professional development that address their individual challenges, such as setting consistent expectations for students or integrating assessment into instruction (Wayne et al., 2005).

Fostering Instructional Development Through Formative Assessment

Although many schools utilize mentors to provide formative assessment, the principal also plays a significant role in promoting new teachers' development in the areas of curriculum and instruction. Unlike those in professions in which colleagues and supervisors provide feedback on a daily basis, new teachers often rely solely on students to provide feedback and acknowledge their successes. Because new teachers typically struggle with the connection between teaching and learning, the teacher may never know if learning is taking place. This lack of adult contact and support can be frightening and confusing, causing novices to lose confidence in the adequacy of their teaching abilities (Brock & Grady, 2001). A clearly established definition of quality teaching should be provided to clarify an understanding of expectations (Minarik et al., 2003). Beginning teachers also reported needing help with writing lesson plans, evaluation scales, assessment options, record-keeping policies, grading, modifying lessons, and coordinating with special education teachers (Brock & Grady, 1998).

Novices often conveyed uncertainty and apprehension about the actual curriculum to be taught, particularly if it were a new grade level or content area. They may receive copies of the curriculum frameworks but no advice on how to implement them. Many spend long hours converting state curriculum frameworks into lessons and creating teaching materials from scratch (Johnson, 2004). Curricula differ greatly in how much detail they provide about content and pedagogy and the degree to which teachers are expected to follow precisely what is outlined in the materials (Johnson, 2004). A complete curriculum can assist new teachers with the essential and challenging work of

designing instruction by identifying key content, skills, and topics and describing how they are related to each other. It facilitates long-range planning by suggesting a scope and sequence of units a teacher might follow, as well as reasonable amounts of time to allot for each. It can ease the burden of daily preparation and give new teachers insights into how students make sense of key concepts. Nearly all 50 teachers in Johnson's study expressed appreciation for what curricular guidance they had and most wished for more; they would have welcomed a clear, focused, and detailed curriculum. Therefore, the principal should ensure that new teachers have access to all applicable curriculum materials necessary to effectively teach the expected content.

An effective principal regularly visits classrooms, reviews lesson plans, and offers immediate feedback to new teachers. The principal expresses clear performance expectations, helps novices set realistic goals, and engages in pedagogical dialogue with new teachers (Carver, 2003). The principal facilitates novices' participation in professional development activities and provides opportunities for novices to gather, discuss, and work together. The principal also promotes instructional development by providing time for novices to collaborate with other teachers to develop their teaching through team planning and other teaming opportunities (Greenberg & Erly, 1989). Ingersoll and Smith (2004) cited the importance of common planning time with other teachers in the same subject and having regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers as important supports associated with reduced turnover of beginning teachers. Howard (2003) suggested that principals provide opportunities for professional development, support teacher innovation, and cultivate a collegial working environment.

Brock and Grady (2001) recommended that the principal orchestrate opportunities for first-year teachers to observe master teachers in the building. The principal should also protect planning time for new teachers, because research shows new teachers average several additional hours daily in individual planning.

Providing Formative and Summative Evaluation

Carver (2002) admitted that traditional evaluation did not appear in the literature on new teacher support; however, principals in her study considered evaluation an important means for promoting teacher growth and development. It is in the evaluation cycle that novices are either fully assimilated into the existing school culture or guided out of the profession. The evaluation cycle also provides the opportunity to clarify expectations regarding professional teaching standards. Cole (1994) described the challenging dilemma faced by school administrators as they carried out the dual role of supporter and evaluator of beginning teachers.

Traditional wisdom dictates that the principal is an adversary to new teachers as a result of his/her evaluation responsibilities (Hendrick, 2001). Hope (1999) contended that the evaluation process is the fear of every new teacher; therefore, an effective principal communicates clear expectations for the summative assessment process. The principal should explain the purposes of evaluation, review the evaluation instrument, relate the manner in which evaluation procedures unfold in the school, and the frequency of evaluative visits. The principal should focus observations on the new teachers' explicit strengths and weaknesses and approach the evaluation process as a trusted colleague. Colley (2002) suggested focusing the observation and feedback on a limited

number of critical skills, in order to assist novices in setting reasonable goals for their improvement and development. The principal should use the evaluation process in a holistic and growth-oriented fashion for optimum success for new teachers (Cole, 1994). Formal observations and conferences should be balanced with informal observations and feedback. An effective principal coordinates evaluation activities with mentoring and induction programs to prevent redundancy or contradictory expectations (Carver, 2003).

Facilitating a Supportive School Culture

New teachers often experience social isolation. Many faculties are close-knit groups with a shared history and close friendships (Brock & Grady, 2001). Beginning teachers enter the profession with a desire to become a contributing member of a professional learning community (Wynn & Brown, 2008). New teachers yearn for professional colleagues who can help acclimate them to their school's unique culture, help them solve the complex daily dilemmas of classroom teaching, and guide their ongoing learning (Johnson, 2004). Sometimes beginners are not assisted by veterans, even when it is known that they are struggling; some veterans regard this trial by fire as an experience that all teachers must go through. Experienced teachers may want to help but without seeming to interfere, and the beginners may be afraid to ask for fear of being regarded as incompetent. Sometimes there is simply no structure in place to facilitate the collaboration between newcomers and expert teachers.

The principal may need to provide training to assist in the development of skills needed to collaborate and communicate with other teachers (Walsdorf & Lynn, 2002). In other instances, newcomers become victims of existing morale problems within a faculty.

Brock and Grady (2001) pointed out that school cultures did not make adaptations for newcomers; therefore, success of beginners depended on how well they could identify the nuances of the school's culture and adapt to them. Novices need to exert intense effort to understand the school's culture—its underlying values and the unwritten expectations, behaviors, and routines.

One of the most crucial efforts a principal undertakes to support new teachers is building and sustaining a supportive school culture. "Principals communicate what they value and deem important by what they pay attention to, comment on, ask about, praise, and criticize" (Brock & Grady, 2001, pp. 35-36). The principal's values are communicated through responses and decisions made during crises or unusual situations. Additionally, the principal expresses values by modeling and acting on his/her beliefs. The principal should develop a profile of "how things are done here" for new teachers. All of the school's personnel could contribute to this portrait; developing the profile would reinforce the school's culture and provide a means of passing it on to the new organizational members. "All teachers benefit from pleasant and collegial work environments, professional standards, and the development of a shared language around a common mission" (Carver, 2003, p. 39)

Above all, the principal needs to set high expectations for both student and teacher learning. A study by Angelle (2006) revealed that when new teachers experienced the socialization process in an ineffective school, they were likely to develop ineffective practices or become frustrated and leave the profession. It is the principal's role to hold high expectations for the professional practice of all teachers to promulgate

the vision of quality teaching (Brown & Wynn, 2009). Teachers need to feel they are in a safe, risk-free environment for teaching and learning. When the principal and faculty treat new teachers as competent professionals and are supportive of new ideas, novices engage in self-discovery and growth. Improved connectedness, relationships, and collaborative professional interaction create meaning and improve intrinsic rewards, leading to increased teacher retention (Minarik et al., 2003). Johnson and Birkeland (2003) found that beginning teachers who chose to stay in the profession were more typically employed in schools characterized by integrated professional cultures organized to engage teachers at all levels of experience in collaborative and collegial efforts.

Heller (2004) reinforced the concept that matching new hires to the current school culture improved the retention rate of new teachers. He urged the principal to consider the school's vision and philosophy, as well as the collective attitude toward children, teaching, learning, professional development, and discipline. If the school complemented the personal style and beliefs of new teachers, those teachers were likely to feel comfortable and productive, increasing the probability that their professional needs would be satisfied by the school's climate, practices, and beliefs. Such teachers were more likely to remain in the profession and in that particular school than those who did not fit in with the school's value system and felt out of place, disillusioned, or frustrated. The principal had opportunities to influence culture not only through the hiring process but also through the criteria used for rewards, censure, and dismissal of employees.

Influences on Teacher Retention

The empirical research on the topic of teacher retention has been inconsistent and sometimes contradictory. One reason is the relative absence of models to guide inquiry in this area (Chapman & Greene, 1986). Some of the most extensive early research into the attrition and retention of teachers was conducted by Chapman (1983), who developed a comprehensive model to study the factors related to teacher retention based on a synthesis of the literature. Chapman's model applied Krumboltz's (1979) theory of social learning to the teaching profession. Krumboltz argued that social learning theory could be used to determine the interaction of genetic factors, environmental conditions, learning experiences, cognitive and emotional responses, and performance skills that resulted in movement along one career path or another.

Chapman's (1983) conceptual model suggested that to understand teachers' decisions to remain in or leave teaching, it was necessary to consider the following variables: the teacher's personal characteristics, the nature of teacher training, initial commitment to teaching, quality of first teaching experiences, professional and social integration into teaching, and external influences. These factors influenced the satisfaction teachers derived from their careers, which in turn affected teachers' decisions to remain in or leave the teaching profession.

To test his model, Chapman (1984) studied 1,282 University of Michigan graduates with teaching certificates from the previous 34 years. Participants were classified into three groups: current teachers, former teachers, and those who prepared for but never actually entered teaching. Differences among the groups were measured

according to the factors summarized in the model. In general, the model developed earlier was supported by the study findings.

Chapman's (1983) model included several basic personal characteristics related to teacher retention. Specific variables included gender, age, ethnicity, and the socioeconomic status of the individual and his or her family. In the test of the model, Chapman found that these personal characteristics were not predictors of teacher retention.

The second category of variables included educational preparation, which pertained to the training individuals received in teacher preparation programs and the level of education completed. The factors considered to be contributors to teacher retention were the level of education attained by the teacher, the type of preparation program, the person's performance in the educational program, and the teacher's satisfaction with the adequacy of the program. In terms of educational preparation, teachers who remained in the profession for more than five years did not differ significantly from those who left (Chapman, 1984).

An individual's initial commitment to teaching, encompassing motivation and reasons for entering the profession as well as commitment shown during the teacher training process was found to be a significant factor in the attrition or retention of teachers. Teachers who reported high initial commitment to teaching tended to remain steadfast in that decision through their teaching career (Chapman, 1984).

Chapman (1983) remarked that there were often gaps between what students were prepared for and what they actually experienced as beginning teachers. This category

included characteristics of the school and students, support from and relationships with colleagues, and a sense of belonging and collaboration. The quality and frequency of support from the principal was also included in this category. Chapman's (1984) test of his model found that those participants who remained in teaching reported little difference in the quality of their first employment experience.

In the category of external influences, Chapman (1983) included such factors as salary, the teacher's perception of the value the public placed on education, and the opportunity for upward mobility. These external factors could infringe on the teacher's job satisfaction and, ultimately, to success and retention in the profession. Chapman (1984) found that those who stayed in teaching were less likely to believe they had other career options with comparable salary than those who left teaching or never taught.

Teachers who were integrated and involved in the profession were more likely to remain in teaching. Some factors related to professional integration included the values, skills, and accomplishments of the teacher, as well as the extent to which teachers believed they achieved goals that were valued by society (Chapman, 1983). Some factors related to social integration involved the prestige associated with the profession, the degree to which the teacher had friends or family in the profession, and the degree to which the teacher was oriented toward the recognition provided by family, friends, and supervisors. Although teachers who remained in the profession were more likely to be married and have a spouse who was a teacher, other professional and social integration variables were not related to teacher retention in this study (Chapman, 1984).

In the category of career satisfaction, Chapman (1984) discovered that teachers who remained in the profession were not as satisfied with their careers or lives in general as individuals who left teaching or prepared to teach but never taught. He speculated that those teachers persisted in the profession because they did not think they could find similar employment with the same salary or benefits.

Chapman (1984) found that many of the factors related to teacher attrition were not easily influenced by school administrators. For example, the single strongest predictor of retention was initial commitment to teaching, which is typically solidified prior to principal involvement with a teacher. Salary and the availability of other jobs were often not within the principal's control. Professional integration variables that were within the principal's ability to influence showed the least relationship to attrition and retention.

Chapman (1984) suggested that one area of focus for the principal was in shaping the quality of the first teaching experience. Career teachers in this study rated their first employment experience more positively than those participants who moved directly into other careers. In addition, the quality of the first teaching experience was a strong indicator of subsequent attrition for those who left the profession. Therefore, for a principal concerned with beginning teacher retention, work with first-year teachers may be a key intervention.

A further examination of the model (Chapman & Greene, 1986) confirmed that the strongest factors predicting teacher attrition were initial commitment to teaching and the quality of the first teaching experience. In addition, results of this study emphasized

the importance of current working conditions for teacher retention that could be influenced by the school administrator. Chapman and Greene advised that the support provided by the principal to new teachers could have long-term impact on the career development of those teachers.

New Teacher Retention

Several recent studies have used Chapman's (1983) model to explore the relationship between principal behaviors and the retention of new teachers. Certo and Fox (2002) investigated teacher attrition and retention in seven Virginia school divisions representing urban, suburban, and rural localities. Researchers conducted focus group interviews with current teachers and phone interviews with teachers who had exited the profession. One finding from the focus groups revealed that teacher attrition and retention variables were highly interrelated. "For example, a teacher may leave because of poor administration or stay because of quality administration" (p. 60). Many focus group participants stated their decision to stay in teaching was due to the level of administrative support at their individual school sites; many teachers believed such support was rare.

Aside from salary, the most common reason given by teachers in this study for leaving their school or leaving teaching was a lack of administrative support. Six sub-themes related to building-level support emerged from the data: spending time in classrooms/visibility, listening to teachers' needs and positions, professional development, resources and supplies, understanding special needs children, and teacher placement practices. This study supported previous research on the importance of

principal support in shaping teachers' attitudes toward teaching. Focus group participants who were strongly committed to staying in teaching reported strong administrative support, collegial interactions, professional autonomy, and opportunities for involvement in decision-making (Certo & Fox, 2002).

Certo and Fox (2002) concluded with a number of recommendations for principals' interactions with new teachers. Principals should communicate clear expectations, enforce student rules of conduct consistently, and support teachers in student discipline issues. They should provide professional development and resources when necessary and evaluate new teachers fairly based on strengths and accomplishments. The researchers advocated for increased administrative and school support for new teachers, including ending the practice of assigning the most difficult teaching assignments to new teachers. New teacher induction should include a strong mentoring program and training on classroom management skills and student discipline.

Spinella (2003) adapted Chapman's (19983) model to add emphasis to the quality of the first employment experience, seeking to determine the relative influence of the principal on new teacher retention. She explored three dimensions of the first teaching experience: principal support, support from colleagues, and school characteristics. A random sample of 640 Louisiana teachers in their first or second year of teaching was asked to complete questionnaires assessing their perception of each variable of the adapted model. The work of Blasé and Kirby (1992) formed the basis of the survey section on principal support behaviors. Six categories of principal support behaviors were identified: treating teachers with respect, involvement in decision-making,

autonomy, backing teacher up in discipline, concern for teaching and learning, and protection from bureaucracy.

Results of this study (Spinella, 2003) confirmed that support from the principal and other teaching colleagues were significant predictors of the likelihood of beginning teachers remaining in the profession, even after effects of school and personal variables were removed. Spinella (2003) found that four of the six categories of principal behavior seemed to be the best predictors of new teacher retention: support, respect, concern, and protection from bureaucracy. Support included assigning a mentor, providing for common planning time, and encouraging the regular sharing of strategies and ideas. Respect comprised such actions as giving sincere praise, giving non-verbal feedback, communicating clear expectations, and using effective modeling. Concern for teaching and learning was shown by giving corrective feedback, exhibiting high levels of caring, and meeting regularly with new teachers. Protection from bureaucracy was identified as minimizing bureaucratic procedures and demonstrating doing the “right thing” rather than abiding by the rules.

Integrating Influences on Teacher Retention and Principal Support Framework

A proposed model for studying the principal behaviors that supported first-year teacher retention combined Chapman’s (1983) model of the influences on teacher retention with Carver’s (2002) principal support framework (see Figure 1). The model considered personal characteristics, educational experiences, initial commitment to teaching, professional and social integration into teaching, and external factors as predictors of first-year teacher retention. The quality of the first employment experience

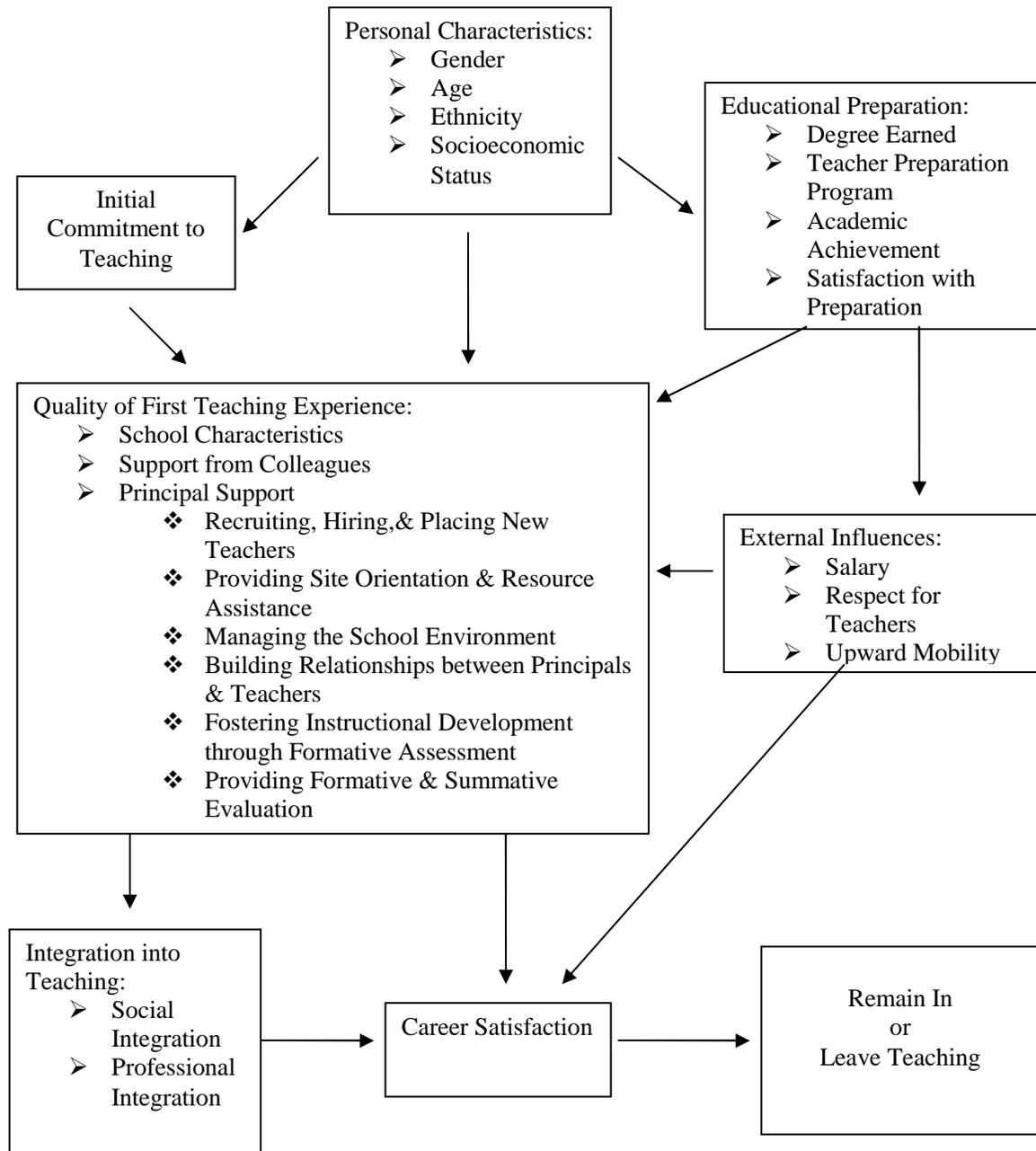


Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Model of Principal Support Behaviors and First-Year Teacher Retention. Adapted from Chapman, 1983; Carver, 2003.

was expanded to incorporate Carver's core tasks for principals in supporting new teachers. A major purpose of this study was to prioritize the numerous tasks identified by Carver, distilling them to those key principal support behaviors that were identified by first-year teachers as the most critical to their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession.

Summary

A review of the literature demonstrated the importance of addressing the issue of new teacher attrition. Numerous studies alluded to the importance of principal support for the success of first-year teachers. Many of the factors that influenced teacher retention could be influenced by principal strategies. The principal is key to socializing beginning teachers and is responsible for their professional growth and development. Colbert and Wolff (1992) recommended that principals establish a supportive and collaborative environment in their schools to enhance the job satisfaction and, ultimately, the retention of new teachers.

This study provided an intersection of the research on new teacher attrition with that on principal support behaviors. Research focused on distinguishing those principal support behaviors identified by first-year teachers as most critical in influencing their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain which principal behaviors first-year teachers identified as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession. A framework of core tasks for principals in supporting new teachers, developed by Carver (2002), served as the foundation of the study. Numerous principal behaviors are important in the support of first-year teachers, but this study endeavored to delineate those behaviors that made the most difference in the potential retention of beginning teachers in the profession. The perceptions of first-year teachers were correlated with the perceptions of fifth-year teachers to validate that first-year teachers' perceptions are accurate predictors of future decisions. Fifth-year teachers were selected as the comparison group because many studies on the topic of new teacher attrition track such attrition through the first five years of teaching (Brewster & Railsback, 2001; Certo & Fox, 2002; Ingersoll, 2002; Schlechty & Vance, 1983). Findings can assist principals in allocating their time and energy to those supportive behaviors that are likely to have the greatest impact on the retention of first-year teachers.

This chapter outlined the study's design and methodology. Sections included research design, details on development of the instrument and interview protocol, and population and sample information. The chapter concluded with a description of the procedures used for data collection and data analysis.

Research Design

The researcher used a mixed-methods research design to explore first-year teachers' perceptions of principal support behaviors. This design provided the opportunity to collect data from groups of participants in several different ways. The study included data from first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers' Q sorts, along with data from first-year teachers' and fifth-year teachers' questionnaires and individual interviews. Q methodology was uniquely suitable for this study, because it forced teachers to make decisions, ranking behaviors in order to identify those that were most salient. Q methodology was used to systematically explore the shared perceptions of participants, allowing for "intelligible and rigorous study of participant subjectivity" (McKeown & Thomas, 1988, p. 12). In-depth, semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to probe the inner experience of the participants, to determine how meaning is formed through and in culture, and to develop a richer understanding of the intensity of participant perceptions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). The combination of methodologies resulted in rich, meaningful findings.

The research stages were conducted sequentially. First, the quantitative stage of the study addressed the research question by having first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers complete a Q sort. Participants' Q sorts were then submitted to factor analysis and rotation to identify what Brown (1993) referred to as *shared perspectives*. The shared perspectives that emerged from the analysis guided the qualitative stage by informing the content of interview questions as well as the selection of interview participants. Semi-structured interviews, following the qualitative methods described by

Marshall and Rossman (1999), were conducted with persons representative—as well as those considered to be unique—of the shared perspectives that emerged from the data analysis. Finally, both quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed to examine descriptive results and identify themes and patterns. The combined results informed the data interpretation.

The study examined the following research question: What principal behaviors do first-year teachers identify as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in teaching? Sub-questions were (a) What principal behaviors do fifth-year teachers identify as contributing to their remaining in the profession for the past five years? and (b) What are the similarities and differences in the principal behaviors identified by first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in the profession?

Q Methodology

Q methodology was introduced by psychologist/physicist William Stephenson (as cited in Brown, 1993) more than a half century ago and refers to a conceptual framework and set of measurement procedures specialized to the systematic study of subjectivity. Subjectivity refers to a person's thoughts, perceptions, viewpoints, beliefs, attitudes, and the like. Q is a rigorous methodology that is both similar to, and distinct from more commonly employed qualitative and quantitative methodologies. It is similar to qualitative interpretive research in sharing the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed, but differs in its reliance on a statistical phase (Kramer, 2004). Q methodology, like quantitative research such as R methodologies (e.g., Pearson's R), relies on multivariate analysis techniques. However, it presents an inversion of

conventional correlational research by correlating persons instead of tests or traits (Van Exel & de Graaf, 2005). Correlation between personal perceptions indicates similar viewpoints, which can then be factored and analyzed. “The results of a Q methodological study can be used to describe a population of viewpoints and not, like in R, a population of people” (p. 2). Q methodology involves five steps: definition of the concourse, development of the Q sample, selection of the P set, the Q sorting, and analysis and interpretation. A review of definitions and a description of each step follow.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are useful in understanding Q methodology:

Array. The graphical representation of the distribution of statements, also called the Q set sorting distribution. The array typically follows a quasi-normal distribution.

Concourse. A sample of statements gleaned from the broad literature on a specific topic (Brown, 1993).

Condition of instruction. The directions given to participants in a Q sort to ensure that all participants follow the same procedures.

Consensus statement. A statement in which scores on the factors are either the same or one number apart.

Factor. In Q methodology, a factor represents a group of individual perspectives that are highly correlated with one another and not correlated with others.

P set. The set of research participants, who are selected from a sample of respondents who are relevant to the problem under consideration.

Q set. A subset of statements selected from the concourse to be presented to study participants.

Definition of the Concourse

According to Brown (1993), a concourse is a sample of statements gleaned from the broad literature on a specific topic. The concourse should contain all of the relevant aspects of the topic, and it is the responsibility of the researcher to develop a representative sample from all available resources. These statements are subject to opinion, as opposed to statements that are non-controversial and factual. The statements do not mean anything in and of themselves—items are infused with meaning and significance through individual Q sorting and factor interpretation (McKeown & Thomas, 1988). Study participants construct meaning as they place statements into patterns in their Q sorts (Kramer, 2004).

Development of the Q Sample

A subset of statements is selected from the concourse to be presented to study participants. This is called the Q set (or Q sample). The researcher should select statements that represent the wide range of existing opinions about a topic, but the Q sample must be manageable in terms of size. A Q set often consists of 40 to 50 statements, which are randomly assigned a number. The statements and corresponding numbers are printed on separate cards for sorting. Research participants then follow a specific procedure for sorting the cards.

Selection of the P Set

Research participants, called the P set, are selected. One of the advantages of Q methodology is that a relatively small number of participants can provide significant correlations; in fact, the P set can be smaller than the Q set. Participants are selected from a sample of respondents who are relevant to the problem under consideration. Persons associated with a specific topic are assumed to share a common perspective and have something meaningful to say in relation to the research question. According to Brown (1993), the number of persons associated with a factor is less important than who they are.

Q Sorting

The Q set is administered to participants in the form of a Q sort (Brown, 1993). Participants are given a deck of randomly numbered cards containing the selected statements and instructed to rank them according to a specific “condition of instruction.” “The condition of instruction is important in many ways for it not only serves to orient the respondent to the specific context under study, but it also sets the experimental bounds to the study” (Kramer, 2004, p. 65). The condition of instruction supports the reliability of the study because all members of the P set must follow the same procedure in sorting the cards. The Q sorter would rank the statements along a continuum ranging from “most disagree” to “most agree” or “most important” to “least important.” The participant is provided with a score sheet and a suggested distribution to assist with the Q sorting task. Each space on the Q array represents one statement card. The Q sort array (see Figure 2) is a bit flatter than a normal distribution, forcing participants to

Analysis and Interpretation

The next step involves the analysis of the Q sorts. According to McKeown and Thomas (1988), data analysis in Q methodology typically consists of the sequential application of three statistical procedures: correlation, factor analysis, and the computation of factor scores. First, the correlation matrix of all Q sorts is calculated. This represents the level of agreement or disagreement between the individual sorts. The correlation matrix is then subjected to factor analysis to identify the number of natural groupings of Q sorts (Brown, 1993). The principles and processes of factor analysis in Q studies are virtually identical to the steps followed in R methodology. The factors will indicate different viewpoints on the topic, with those participants sharing a common viewpoint loading on the same factor. Factor loadings are essentially correlation coefficients, indicating the extent to which each Q sort is analogous or dissimilar to the composite factor array (McKeown & Thomas, 1988). The number of factors in the final set will depend on the outcome of the factor rotation.

After factors are calculated, they are then rotated to arrive at a final set of factors. Rotation provides the opportunity to shift the perspective from which the Q sorts are observed. Theoretical rotation will be used to change the reference points of the data. In an optimal case, the Q sort will have high loadings on one factor with near-zero loadings on the others. Each resulting final factor represents a group of individual points of view that are highly correlated with each other and minimally correlated with others (Van Exel & de Graaf, 2005). The result of the statistical procedure is a set of factors that condense

the data to a few viewpoints that are held in common and identifies statements whose ranks in the arrays are statistically different.

Instrumentation Development

Two models were used to develop the instruments that were used in the quantitative stage of this study. Chapman's (1983) Model of the Influences on Teacher Retention was used to develop the questionnaire (Appendix A) that participants were asked to complete along with their Q sorts. The questionnaire collected basic information in these areas identified by Chapman: personal characteristics, initial commitment to teaching, educational preparation, quality of first teaching experience, external influences, integration into teaching, and career satisfaction. The questionnaire also provided the opportunity for participants to indicate their willingness to take part in a follow-up interview.

The statements for the Q set were adapted, with permission, from the Core Tasks for Principals in Supporting New Teachers (Carver, 2003). Carver identified 37 specific principal behaviors within seven categories that were key to supporting first-year teachers: recruiting, hiring, and placing new teachers; providing site orientation and resource assistance; managing the school environment; building relationships between principals and teachers; fostering instructional development through formative assessment; providing formative and summative evaluation; and facilitating a supportive school context. These items were discussed with a first-year teacher to ensure clarity of language. Some statements were reworded and/or expanded into teacher-friendly terms.

In addition, all items were rewritten into statements that personalized the behavior toward the first-year teacher.

Four additional principal support behaviors were identified through the review of literature: (a) communicating the school's vision and priorities (Dunklee, 2000; Powell, 2004); (b) providing support to novices in parent conferences and parent involvement (Brock & Grady, 1997; Powell, 2004); (c) granting professional autonomy (Blasé & Kirby, 1992; Spinella, 2003); and (d) providing opportunities for input and a voice in decision making (Billingsley & Cross, 1992; Greenberg & Erly, 1989; Ingersoll, 2002; Jorissen, 2002; Woods & Weasmer, 2002; Yee, 1990). These four items were added to the 37 items in Carver's framework for a total of 41 items. These statements became the initial Q set for the Q sorting process (see Table 2).

The Q set was further refined through use of a pilot administration. First- and fifth-year teachers in the researcher's own district were invited to participate in a Q sorting activity. The purpose of the pilot was twofold: (1) to ensure that the instructions for the activity were clear and (2) to reduce the number of statements in the Q set to a more manageable number. Eighteen fifth-year teachers and 16 fifth-year teachers responded to the invitation to participate in the Q sort. It appeared that none of the participants had difficulty interpreting the statements, although several commented that it was difficult to sort so many statements. This reinforced the decision to decrease the number of items in the final Q set.

The correlation matrix was calculated and subjected to factor analysis. Factors were rotated to increase the correlation. Of the 34 teachers, 23 loaded on one factor, with

Table 2

Initial Q Set of Principal Support Behaviors

1. Explained the hiring process to me and assisted me upon request.
2. Hired me with enough time prior to the beginning of school for me to settle in and be well prepared.
3. Assigned me to a subject area and grade level for which I am qualified.
4. Assigned me to a classroom placement that optimized my chance for success.
5. Made sure I was not assigned the most challenging students.
6. Protected my time by limiting extra duties and responsibilities (e.g. committee/club assignments, coaching, extracurricular).
7. Facilitated an introduction and welcome to the campus.
8. Provided a campus orientation to highlight available resources, procedures, and policies.
9. Communicated the school's vision and priorities.
10. Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship.
11. Provided sufficient resources and supplies to meet needs and expectations.
12. Clearly articulated expectations for me, including my responsibilities to students and parents (e.g. discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, mandatory parent conferences).

Table 2 (continued)

13. Assisted me with required state and district paperwork.
14. Assisted me in understanding the competing demands of state and district mandates.
15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.
16. Provided support to me in parent conferences and parent involvement.
17. Maintained regular personal communication with me to build our relationship.
18. Provided written or oral praise to me when I did well.
19. Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.
20. Facilitated my participation in professional development activities that targeted my professional growth needs.
21. Provided opportunities and incentives for me to work with other teachers in collaborative teams.
22. Provided opportunities for me to gather and work together with other first-year teachers.
23. Protected my planning time.
24. Granted me professional autonomy and trusted my judgment.
25. Visited my classroom and provided feedback not related to formal evaluation.
26. Reviewed my lesson plans and offered instruction in teaching strategies.

Table 2 (continued)

27. Facilitated my observation of other teachers.
28. Engaged in ongoing professional dialogue with me.
29. Explained expectations and procedures for evaluation at the beginning of the year.
30. Scheduled formal observations in advance and provided me with copies of evaluation records.
31. Used professional teaching standards to guide his/her evaluation of me.
32. Provided positive but honest feedback, appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.
33. Helped me set reasonable goals for my learning and development
34. Balanced formal observations and conferences with informal observations and feedback.
35. Coordinated evaluation activities with the induction and mentoring program to prevent unnecessary overlap and conflicting expectations.
36. Fostered a welcoming, nurturing, and collegial work environment that values critical inquiry, reflection, and risk taking.
37. Encouraged teachers on staff understand and acknowledge my development and needs.
38. Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff.
39. Provided opportunities for me to give input and have a voice in decision making.

Table 2 (continued)

40. Used teaching standards to structure professional development opportunities for me and all teachers.

41. Modeled collaborative working behavior and promoted a positive, friendly school climate.

Adapted with permission from Carver (2003)

two loading on a second factor, one confounded, and the remaining eight loading not significant on any factor. After analyzing the loading and layout of both factors, preference was given to the first factor. Keeping in mind that it is critical in Q methodology to include statements in the Q set that portray a wide range of opinions about a topic, the seven statements from the middle column were eliminated. These statements represented the most neutral ideas presented to the participants.

- Provided support to me in parent conferences and parent involvement.
- Protected my planning time.
- Engaged in ongoing professional dialogue with me.
- Scheduled formal observations in advance and provided me with copies of evaluation records.
- Used professional teaching standards to guide his/her evaluation of me.

- Balanced formal observations and conferences with informal observations and feedback.
- Provided opportunities for me to give input and have a voice in decision making.

With the elimination of seven sentences, the final Q set was established with 34 statements (see Table 3), and a corresponding Q set sorting distribution was created (see Figure 3).

Table 3

Final Q Set of Principal Support Behaviors

1. Explained the hiring process to me and assisted me upon request.
2. Hired me with enough time prior to the beginning of school for me to settle in and be well prepared.
3. Assigned me to a subject area and grade level for which I am qualified.
4. Assigned me to a classroom placement that optimized my chance for success.
5. Made sure I was not assigned the most challenging students.
6. Protected my time by limiting extra duties and responsibilities (e.g. committee/club assignments, coaching, extracurricular).
7. Facilitated an introduction and welcome to the campus.
8. Provided a campus orientation to highlight available resources, procedures, and policies.
9. Communicated the school's vision and priorities.
10. Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship.
11. Provided sufficient resources and supplies to meet needs and expectations.
12. Clearly articulated expectations for me, including my responsibilities to students and parents (e.g. discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, mandatory parent conferences).
13. Assisted me with required state and district paperwork.

Table 3 (continued)

14. Assisted me in understanding the competing demands of state and district mandates.
15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.
16. Maintained regular personal communication with me to build our relationship.
17. Provided written or oral praise to me when I did well.
18. Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.
19. Facilitated my participation in professional development activities that targeted my professional growth needs.
20. Provided opportunities and incentives for me to work with other teachers in collaborative teams.
21. Provided opportunities for me to gather and work together with other first-year teachers.
22. Granted me professional autonomy and trusted my judgment.
23. Visited my classroom and provided feedback not related to formal evaluation.
24. Reviewed my lesson plans and offered instruction in teaching strategies.
25. Facilitated my observation of other teachers.
26. Explained expectations and procedures for evaluation at the beginning of the year.

Table 3 (continued)

27. Provided positive but honest feedback, appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.
 28. Helped me set reasonable goals for my learning and development.
 29. Coordinated evaluation activities with the induction and mentoring program to prevent unnecessary overlap and conflicting expectations.
 30. Fostered a welcoming, nurturing, and collegial work environment that values critical inquiry, reflection, and risk taking.
 31. Encouraged teachers on staff understand and acknowledge my development and needs.
 32. Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff.
 33. Used teaching standards to structure professional development opportunities for me and all teachers.
 34. Modeled collaborative working behavior and promoted a positive, friendly school climate.
-

Adapted with permission from Carver (2003)

Interview Protocol

Following data analysis, first-year and fifth-year teachers were selected from volunteers for participation in semi-structured interviews. The original intent was to select some participants who indicated a strong likelihood of remaining in the profession and some participants who indicated they were unlikely to remain in the profession. However, of the first-year teachers who indicated a willingness to participate in an interview, all indicated a likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession in the 7-10 range. Therefore, the participants were selected for interviews based on which factor they represented through their Q sorts. The researcher attempted to contact all those who volunteered to be interviewed in order to ensure that each viewpoint was represented. Ultimately, all but one perspective (first-year factor B) was represented in the interview data.

The in-depth, semi-structured interviews were guided by questions regarding the relevant aspects of the participant's Q array. The explanations given by Q sorters in the follow-up interview helped interpret the factor and expanded on their points of view (Van Exel & de Graaf, 2005). The interviewer had a prepared list of questions or issues to be explored, but neither the exact wording nor order of the questions was pre-determined (see Appendices B and C). This allowed the researcher to respond to the emerging views of the participant and the introduction of new ideas on the topic (Merriam, 1998).

Population and Sample

Research study participants were solicited from a K-12 public school district in Southern Arizona. The selected district boasted a student population of approximately

16,000 students in twenty-two schools. The size of the district ensured a sufficient population of first-year teachers for the study. The district hired nearly 130 new teachers each year, and it was estimated that 40 to 45 of those new teachers were first-year teachers to the profession. In addition, because each new teacher in the district was assigned an instructional coach, the researcher was able to address beginning teachers through their coaches to request participation in the study. The researcher met with the group of instructional coaches and trained them to administer the Q sort. Instructional coaches then presented the research study during a regular meeting of their first-year teachers. All first-year teachers were asked to complete the Q-sorting process and the accompanying questionnaire, and 25 elected to participate. Those teachers were also asked to indicate their willingness to contribute additional information in a follow-up interview.

The district Human Resources Department was contacted for assistance in identifying teachers in the district who were in their fifth year of teaching, and 38 fifth-year teachers were identified. The researcher initially contacted those teachers through email to request participation in the Q-sorting process. Following that invitation, the instructional coaches arranged a meeting at each school site to assist with the administration of the Q sort. Fourteen of the 38 fifth-year teachers agreed to participate in the Q sort. As with the first-year teachers, those who participated in the Q-sort were asked to indicate their willingness to contribute additional information in a follow-up interview.

Nine teachers were selected for follow-up interviews. Interviews were conducted with six first-year teachers, all of whom indicated a strong likelihood of remaining in the profession. Three fifth-year teachers were also interviewed.

Data Collection Procedures

The assistant superintendent of the selected district was contacted to invite participation in the study. The assistant superintendent requested a two-page summary explaining the purpose of the study. After a follow-up meeting to discuss specifics, permission was granted (see Appendix D). Participants were contacted, initially through their principals and instructional coaches, to invite their participation in the research study. Potential participants were given a recruitment letter explaining the purpose of the study (see Appendix E) and asking for voluntary completion of the questionnaire, Q sort, and follow-up interview. Prior to their participation, respondents completed the informed consent form, which detailed the process and the confidentiality of their participation in the study (see Appendix F). The participants then completed the questionnaire (see Appendix A) and the Q sort. Completion of the questionnaire and Q sort took approximately 20-30 minutes. Each participant sorted the same principal support behaviors (see Table 3).

First-year teachers sorted the statements according to the condition of instruction (Appendix G) focusing on this statement: “Which support behaviors on the part of your principal would be most important or least important in influencing your likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession?” Fifth-year teachers sorted the statements according to the same condition of instruction with a slightly different statement:

“Which support behaviors on the part of your principal have had the most influence or the least influence on your decision to remain in the teaching profession?”

Questionnaires and Q sorts were returned to the researcher upon completion.

Analysis of Questionnaire Data

A detailed questionnaire was administered, focusing on a conceptual model of variables related to teacher retention developed by Chapman (1983). Questions represented the following categories: personal characteristics, educational preparation, initial commitment to teaching, external influences, integration into teaching, and quality of first teaching experience. Final questions pertained to career satisfaction and intention to remain in teaching.

Personal Characteristics

In this study, personal characteristics included gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age. Table 4 depicts participant responses to items in this category. The majority of both first-year and fifth-year teachers responding were female, Caucasian, and reported the neighborhood in which they grew up as middle class. Most of the new teachers were under the age of 35, with only one over the age of 45. Whereas 50% of fifth-year teachers were in the 26–35 age range, the remainder was evenly divided between the 36–45 and over-45 age ranges.

Table 4

Personal Characteristics of First/Fifth-Year Teachers

Characteristic	Codes	Frequency (First-year)	Percentage (First-year)	Frequency (Fifth-year)	Percentage (Fifth-year)
Gender	Male	5	20%	4	29%
	Female	20	80%	10	71%
Ethnicity	Caucasian	19	76%	11	79%
	Hispanic	5	20%	2	14%
	Asian	1	4%	0	0%
	Other	0	0%	1	7%
Childhood Socio- economic Status	Wealthy	0	0%	0	0%
	Upper Middle	3	12%	5	38%
	Middle	16	64%	6	46%
	Lower	6	24%	2	15%
	Poor	0	0%	0	0%
Age	< 26	11	44%	0	0%
	26 – 35	8	32%	7	50%
	36 – 45	4	16%	3	21%
	> 45	1	4%	3	21%
	Undesignated	1	4%	1	7%

Educational Preparation

In the area of educational preparation, questions were designed to ascertain the highest degree earned by each teacher, the type of preparation program, and the grade point average upon graduation. Participants were asked to determine how well prepared they felt for their first teaching assignment. Finally, participants reported on their certification and highly qualified status. Table 5 shows the participant responses in this category.

The majority of first-year teachers and all fifth-year teachers completed a traditional preparation program, with 24% of first-year teachers involved in an alternative program. Although 84% of first-year teachers had completed only a bachelor's degree, 12% had completed masters and 4% had accumulated units beyond a master's degree. Among fifth-year teachers, 64% held bachelors degrees, with 36% having completed a master's degree. All participants in the study carried a grade point average of 3.0 or higher.

Slightly over half of first-year and fifth-year teachers felt that their coursework, field experiences, and student teaching prepared them well for teaching. Roughly a third of first-year and fifth-year teachers felt somewhat prepared, whereas the percentage who felt not well prepared was fairly low—4% for first-year teachers and 14% for fifth-year teachers. All fifth-year teachers reported being appropriately state certified for their teaching assignment, compared to 88% of first-year teachers with appropriate certification. In the area of highly qualified, all but a few teachers reported highly qualified status (8% and 7% respectively).

Table 5

Educational Preparation of First/Fifth-Year Teachers

Characteristic Codes		Frequency (First-year)	Percentage (First-year)	Frequency (Fifth-year)	Percentage (Fifth-year)
Type of prep Program	University	19	76%	14	100%
	Alternative	6	24%	0	0%
Degree	Bachelors	21	84%	9	64%
	Masters	3	12%	5	36%
	Masters plus	1	4%	0	0%
Approximate GPA	2.0–2.9	0	0%	0	0%
	3.0–3.4	7	30%	6	46%
	3.5–4.0	16	70%	7	54%
Well Prepared	Yes	14	58%	8	57%
	Somewhat	9	38%	4	29%
	Not very well	1	4%	2	14%
	No	0	0%	0	0%
Fully Certified	Yes	22	88%	14	100%
	No	3	12%	0	0%
Highly Qualified	Yes	23	92%	13	93%
	No	2	8%	1	7%

Initial Commitment to Teaching

Chapman (1984) found that an individual's initial commitment to teaching was a significant factor in the decision to remain in the profession. In addition to determining whether teaching was the first career for participants, the questions in this category probed both when and why individuals decided to become a teacher. Table 6 depicts the range of participant responses to these items.

Teaching was the first career for 64% of the first-year teachers but only 43% of the fifth-year teachers. A surprisingly low number of respondents in both groups—36% for first-year teachers and 29% for fifth-year teachers—indicated that they always wanted to be a teacher. Among first-year teachers, 28% decided on teaching while employed in another career field, 16% decided while in high school, 16% decided while attending college, and 4% after moving and deciding it was time for a change. Among fifth-year teachers, 43% decided on teaching while in college, 14% while employed in another career, 7% while in high school, and 7% after moving to the area.

In response to the question of why they decided to become a teacher, participants were able to choose multiple responses. Both groups identified the desire to work with children as the most important factor—76% for first-year teachers and 64% for fifth-year teachers. Among first-year teachers, this reason was followed closely by the desire to contribute and be of service to others at 72%, while 43% of fifth-year teachers indicated this attribute. The belief that they would be good at teaching was an aspect listed for approximately half of both groups. 56% of first-year teachers were inspired or encouraged by former teachers, as compared to 43% of fifth-year teachers. Employment

conditions such as vacations, working hours, and job security were a motivator for 24% of first-year teachers and 36% of fifth-year teachers, while about one-fifth of each group had relatives who were teachers. Participants were allowed a write-in answer to this question. One described himself as college tutor who fell in love with teaching, another indicated the desirability of being on the same schedule as her children, and a third identified her Downs Syndrome sister as the motivation for her to become a Special Education teacher.

Table 6

Initial Commitment to Teaching Among First/Fifth-Year Teachers

Characteristic	Codes	Frequency (First-year)	Percentage (First-year)	Frequency (Fifth-year)	Percentage (Fifth-year)
First Career	Yes	16	64%	6	43%
	No	9	36%	8	57%
When decided	Always	9	36%	4	29%
	High school	4	16%	1	7%
	College	4	16%	6	43%
	Other career	7	28%	2	14%
	Other	1	4%	1	7%
Why decided	Good at it	13	52%	7	50%
	Benefits	6	24%	5	36%
	Children	19	76%	9	64%
	Contribute	18	72%	6	43%
	Inspired	14	56%	6	43%
	Family	5	20%	3	21%
	Other	2	8%	1	7%

External Influences

External factors identified by Chapman (1983) included satisfaction with salary received, respect given to teachers, and the potential of upward mobility. As shown in Table 7, fifth-year teachers generally expressed less satisfaction with these issues than first-year teachers did.

Over 80% of first-year teachers were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the salary they received, yet only 36% of fifth-year teachers responded accordingly. Not a single first year teachers responded with an absolute negative regarding salary, but 36% of fifth-year teachers were not satisfied with the salary they received.

Similar responses were noted regarding the respect given to teachers. 88% of first-year teachers were satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the respect accorded to teachers, only 43% of fifth-year teachers responded positively. 29% of fifth-year teachers were not satisfied with the respect they received.

Fifth-year teachers responded somewhat more positively to the issue of upward mobility, with 58% either satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the upward mobility available to teachers. Among first-year teachers, 80% responded positively on the topic of upward mobility.

Table 7

External Influences Among First/Fifth-Year Teachers

Characteristic Codes		Frequency (First-year)	Percentage (First-year)	Frequency (Fifth-year)	Percentage (Fifth-year)
Salary	Yes	9	36%	1	7%
	Somewhat	12	48%	4	29%
	Not really	4	16%	4	29%
	No	0	0%	5	36%
Respect	Yes	5	20%	0	0%
	Somewhat	17	68%	6	43%
	Not really	4	16%	4	29%
	No	0	0%	4	29%
Mobility	Yes	5	20%	2	17%
	Somewhat	15	60%	5	42%
	Not really	4	16%	2	17%
	No	1	4%	3	25%

Integration into Teaching

Chapman (1983) predicted that a teacher who was integrated and involved in the profession was more likely to remain in teaching. The factors related to such integration were the support received from colleagues, family, and friends.

Table 8 demonstrates that approximately three-fourths of first-year and fifth-year teachers in this study reported receiving professional support from colleagues. 20% of first-year teachers were somewhat less positive about that collegial support, and 29% of fifth-year teachers reported receiving little professional support from colleagues.

All teachers responded positively to receiving social support from family and friends, with no responses from either first-year or fifth-year teachers in the negative range.

Table 8

Integration into Teaching Among First/Fifth-Year Teachers

Characteristic Codes		Frequency (First-year)	Percentage (First-year)	Frequency (Fifth-year)	Percentage (Fifth-year)
Collegial Support	Yes	19	76%	10	71%
	Somewhat	5	20%	0	0%
	Not very much	1	4%	4	29%
	No	0	0%	0	0%
Family Support	Yes	21	84%	13	93%
	Somewhat	4	16%	1	7%
	Not very much	0	0%	0	0%
	No	0	0%	0	0%

Quality of First Teaching Experience

The quality of the first teaching experience was measured by questions about the characteristics of the school and students, previous experience at the school, and whether or not the teacher was teaching in the school they most wanted to teach.

First-year and fifth-year respondents were split fairly evenly between elementary, middle, and high school levels. For both groups, just under half of the participants taught in schools in which the average socioeconomic level of students was low; just under half taught in schools in which the average socioeconomic level of students was in the middle range. A relatively small number of respondents—4% for first-year teachers and 14% for fifth-year teachers—taught in schools in which the students socioeconomic status was classified as high.

Every first-year teacher and 92% of fifth-year teachers responded that the school in which they were teaching was one in which they really wanted to teach. A distinct difference was noted regarding whether the teacher had previous experience at the school—either as a student, for a practicum, or as a student teacher. Just under half of first year teachers reported previous experience at the school in which they taught, while none of the fifth-year teachers had previous experience at their current school.

Table 9

Quality of First Teaching Experience Among First/Fifth-Year Teachers

Characteristic Codes		Frequency (First-year)	Percentage (First-year)	Frequency (Fifth-year)	Percentage (Fifth-year)
Level	Elementary	10	40%	4	29%
	Middle	7	28%	5	36%
	High	8	32%	5	36%
Average SES	Low	12	48%	6	43%
	Middle	12	48%	6	43%
	High	1	4%	2	14%
School Wanted	Yes	24	100%	12	92%
	No	0	0%	1	8%
Previous Experience	Yes	12	48%	0	0%
	No	13	52%	14	100%

Career Satisfaction and Intent to Remain in Teaching

The last set of items on the questionnaire related to career satisfaction and the teacher's intention to remain in the teaching profession. The statement to assess career satisfaction was "I am satisfied with my current teaching experience as compared to my expectations of the teaching profession." First-year teachers all responded positively, with 64% an unequivocal yes and 36% somewhat satisfied. 64% of fifth-year teachers also answered yes, 21% responding somewhat, and 7% each for "not really" or "no" regarding career satisfaction.

All first-year teachers responded that they intended to teach the following year, provided there were positions available, whereas 93% of fifth-year teachers responded positively. One fifth-year teacher reported that she would not be returning to teaching next year due to personal health and financial concerns.

Teachers were then asked to rank from 1–10 the likelihood that they would remain in the teaching profession for the next five years. All but one first-year teacher responded in the range between 7 and 10, while all but two fifth-year teachers responded in that range. One first-year teacher responded that she would be starting a family soon, but expected to return to teaching when her children were in school. One fifth-year teacher (referenced above) stated that she would not return due to personal health and financial concerns. The fifth-year teacher with a rank of 5 stated “I would like to have some support in my job. As a teacher at this school, I am only acknowledged—as an individual—when something goes wrong. The #1 factor for me is the treatment I’ve received as a teacher. . .I’ve been most disappointed here. I’m here for my students—that’s the key for staying.”

Some teachers indicated a strong likelihood of remaining in the job, but offered possible factors for leaving, such as “writing the great American novel,” “winning the lottery,” or “marrying a rich husband.” More sobering reasons related to the availability of positions, continued budget cuts at the state level, lack of job security, and “the ridiculous post-degree certification process.” A fifth-year teacher stated that it might be difficult to “prioritize life outside of school with other aspects of life changing.” One

first-year teacher was adamant about staying in the profession, writing “I’ll have to be fired before I leave.”

Table 10

Career Satisfaction and Intent to Remain in Teaching Among First/Fifth-Year Teachers

Characteristic	Codes	Frequency (First-year)	Percentage (First-year)	Frequency (Fifth-year)	Percentage (Fifth-year)
Satisfied	Yes	16	64%	9	64%
	Somewhat	9	36%	3	21%
	Not really	0	0%	1	7%
	No	0	0%	1	7%
Teach next Year	Yes	19	76%	13	93%
	Yes, if available	6	24%	0	0%
	No	0	0%	1	7%
Likelihood of Remaining 5 Years	10	13	52%	4	29%
	9	5	20%	3	21%
	8	3	12%	4	29%
	7	3	12%	1	7%
	6	0	0%	0	0%
	5	0	0%	1	7%
	4	0	0%	0	0%
	3	1	4%	0	0%
	2	0	0%	0	0%
	1	0	0%	1	0%

Data Analysis Procedures

Following completion of all Q sorts, the data were entered into PCQ for Windows, Academic Version 1.4 (Stricklin & Almeida, 2000). The Q sorts for each group were first correlated into an N x N matrix. Once correlation was completed, factor analysis took place. Eight unrotated factors were extracted using centroid factor analysis, a common approach in Q methodology for extracting factors (Brown, 1993). The factors were then rotated to further analyze the data. Theoretical rotation was used to shift the reference point to the data, which resulted in a factor solution. Rotation attempted to load as many participants as possible on a single factor. Based on the factor solution, the researcher selected first-year and fifth-year teachers from among those who volunteered for interviews. The intent was to interview at least one teacher representing each factor; however, one factor of first-year teachers was not represented because the researcher was unsuccessful in reaching any participants who loaded on the factor.

The teachers selected to be interviewed were contacted by the researcher. They were notified both in writing and in person that the interview would be confidential. They were asked to consent to having the interviews audiotaped for the purpose of ensuring the accuracy of participant responses. Participants were informed that the audiotapes would be maintained in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office until the study was complete and the dissertation was accepted, at which time the tapes would be physically destroyed. The researcher interviewed six first-year teachers (see Appendix B) and three fifth-year teachers (see Appendix C). All consented to have the interviews

audiotaped to ensure accuracy. One fifth-year teacher was only available by phone, but the interview was audiotaped.

The researcher transcribed the interviews. Following transcription, the researcher coded and analyzed the transcripts according to qualitative methods described by Marshall and Rossman (1999). The researcher highlighted themes, patterns, categories, and concepts of teachers' perceptions of principal support behaviors. These were sorted, reviewed, and combined with results from the Q sorts to provide findings and recommendations.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1

What principal behaviors do first-year teachers identify as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in teaching?

Factor analysis of first-year teachers' Q sorts was computed to analyze their perceptions of principal support behaviors. Individual semi-structured interviews with selected first-year teachers confirmed perceptions and added depth to the analysis.

Sub-question 1. What principal behaviors do fifth-year teachers identify as contributing to their remaining in the profession for the past five years?

Factor analysis of fifth-year teachers' Q sorts was computed to analyze their perceptions of principal support behaviors. Individual semi-structured interviews with selected first-year teachers confirmed perceptions and added depth to the analysis.

Sub-question 2. What are the similarities and differences in the principal behaviors identified by first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in the profession?

An analysis of the factors resulting from first-year and fifth-year teachers Q sorts looked for similarities and differences in the results of the two groups. Interview responses served to reinforce the comparison.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine principal behaviors that support first-year teachers' retention in the profession and to identify those behaviors that are most likely to influence them to remain in teaching. While the role of the principal has not traditionally been considered crucial in induction programs intended to bolster new teacher retention, recent research has demonstrated that the principal plays a key role in the support of first-year teachers and in their decision to continue in the teaching profession (Brock & Grady, 1998, 2001; Gimbert & Fultz, 2008; Johnson, 2004; Stripling, 2004). Principal support behaviors were adapted from a framework of core tasks for principals in supporting new teachers, developed by Carver (2002). This study extended Carver's work by asking first-year teachers to prioritize the numerous tasks identified, in order that principals might focus on those support behaviors most likely to make a difference in first-year teacher retention. Fifth-year teachers were included in the study in order to validate the perceptions of first-year teachers.

This study's findings were based on mixed methods, using Q methodology (Brown, 1993) and individual semi-structured interviews. A detailed questionnaire provided information about additional factors identified by Chapman (1983) that may influence the retention of first-year teachers. This chapter describes the findings as they pertain to first-year and fifth-year teachers. This will lead to comparison and discussion of these findings in Chapter 5.

Sample Description

A school district in Southern Arizona was selected as the site for the study, due to the number of first-year teachers hired annually by the district. Permission was obtained from district leadership, and approval was granted by the University of Arizona's Institutional Review Board. The sample included 25 first-year teachers and 14 fifth-year teachers. This sample represented 56% and 37%, respectively, of the potential participants.

Analysis of the Q Sort Data

First-Year Teachers

The Q sort was introduced to approximately 45 first-year teachers during a regular session with their instructional coaches, and a total of 25 participated in the study. Some first-year teachers elected not to participate, and some began the task but did not complete it, saying that it was too difficult to sort and prioritize. During the Q sort, several teachers commented that some of support tasks on the cards were provided by their instructional coach rather than their principal. Q sort data were entered into PCQ for Windows, Academic Version 1.4 (Stricklin & Almeida, 2000). First, all Q sorts were correlated with one another, because correlation must be completed prior to factor analysis.

Following correlation with one another, the Q sorts were submitted to factor analysis, using centroid factor analysis methodology (Brown, 1993). Centroid factor analysis uses accepted mathematical protocols to reduce the data and find patterns among them. The result of the factor analysis was eight unrotated factors. The data showed that

14 first-year teachers loaded onto Factor A, 2 first-year teachers loaded onto Factor B, 2 first-year teachers' loadings were confounded (loading onto more than one factor), and 7 first-year teachers' loadings were not significant (see Table 11).

The eight factors were then rotated to further analyze the data. Theoretical factor rotation was used, rather than the more common varimax rotation. While varimax rotation is determined by a mathematical property and provides a single set of statistically accurate results, theoretical rotation provides greater flexibility in manipulation and interpretation. Theoretical rotation allowed for changing the reference points, continuing to rotate factors in an effort to load the perspectives of as many first-year teachers as possible on a single factor (see Table 12). This was critical to the purpose of this study.

Three factors were produced as a result of the theoretical rotation, Factors A, B, and C (see Figures 4, 5, and 6). Each figure depicts in graphical space the degree to which each person loaded on a particular factor. Each number in the figure represents a participant. Factor analysis in Q methodology proceeds along person correlation rather than trait correlation. Each factor represents a viewpoint, or perspective, that is shared by the group members. These three factors account for 22 of the 25 Q sorts and 41% of the variance in the initial 25 x 25 correlation matrix. Factor A loaded 18 of the 25 first-year teachers and accounted for 27% of the variability. Factor B loaded two first-year teachers and accounted for 5% of the variability. Factor C loaded two first-year teachers and accounted for 9% of the variability. Three first-year teachers loaded as not significant. The meaning of the factor solutions is discussed in the data analysis section through the research questions.

Table 11

First-Year Teacher Unrotated Factor Loadings

Factor	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Sort 1	.62	-.27	-.11	.04	-.19	.20	-.03	.14
2	.81	-.09	-.16	.29	.09	.03	.28	.07
3	.39	.50	.50	-.03	.20	.23	.09	0
4	.50	-.16	-.05	-.17	-.32	-.08	.31	-.02
5	.53	.12	-.20	-.04	.28	-.14	-.25	.14
6	.41	-.37	-.40	-.11	-.35	.11	-.29	.11
7	.59	-.01	.38	.12	.11	.13	-.28	-.13
8	.50	-.23	.38	.22	.26	.06	.16	.14
9	.69	.35	.23	-.10	-.15	-.30	-.13	.10
10	.28	-.17	.14	-.33	.38	-.26	.26	.17
11	.31	-.13	-.29	.15	.09	-.12	.03	-.14
12	.30	.61	.25	-.31	-.02	.16	.17	.27
13	.45	-.56	.01	.41	.30	.18	0	.28
14	.66	.06	-.11	.42	.13	-.20	-.18	.08
15	.33	.46	-.17	.24	.02	.17	.17	-.11
16	.52	.19	.13	-.07	-.28	.23	.25	-.25
17	.10	.34	-.37	-.19	.20	.15	-.10	-.14
18	.30	.06	.14	.16	-.40	.16	-.21	.17
19	.64	.10	-.38	-.30	.20	-.11	.18	.19
20	.43	-.11	-.02	-.22	.02	-.22	-.18	.12
21	.60	-.28	.08	-.22	-.11	-.02	-.03	-.19
22	.82	.17	.08	.07	.02	-.10	.03	-.10
23	.66	-.09	-.18	-.18	.03	.43	-.07	-.14
24	.78	-.13	.16	-.33	.13	.04	-.19	.04
25	.42	-.31	.13	.33	-.26	-.20	-.03	.13

Table 12

First-Year Teacher Rotated Factor Loadings

Factor	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	h2
Sort 1	.66*	0	-.10	-.02	-.08	.28	-.14	.17	58
2	.77*	.16	.02	.25	.17	.25	.20	.11	83
3	.22	-.05	.80*	.19	.05	0	-.05	-.13	75
4	.54*	-.04	-.01	-.20	-.23	.20	.29	.01	52
5	.47*	.19	.08	-.02	.32	-.27	-.11	.20	50
6	.52*	.11	-.41	-.26	-.17	.13	-.29	.22	71
7	.56*	-.20	.26	.20	.07	-.08	-.29	-.22	61
8	.50*	-.39	.20	.28	.26	.17	.08	.01	62
9	.65*	.04	.40	.02	-.20	-.41	.07	.07	82
10	.27	-.25	.17	-.28	.39	-.05	.35	.08	53
11	.34	.20	-.23	.08	.17	0	.08	-.02	26
12	.13	.11	.78*	-.13	-.13	-.02	.04	.20	72
13	.50*	-.34	-.25	.33	.40	.34	-.11	.23	89
14	.65*	.14	-.04	.41	.17	-.22	-.02	.14	72
15	.20	.47*	.30	.30	-.01	.11	.04	-.02	48
16	.45*	.17	.34	-.01	-.28	.28	.07	-.23	57
17	.01	.51*	.17	-.17	.20	-.05	-.17	-.02	39
18	.28	-.04	.08	.17	-.40	.02	-.26	.17	38
19	.56*	.34	.14	-.30	.28	.01	.20	.28	75
20	.46*	-.08	0	-.23	.07	-.23	-.02	.11	35
21	.65*	-.10	-.02	-.23	-.04	.07	-.01	-.20	53
22	.77*	.14	.29	.14	.02	-.10	.08	-.08	74
23	.61*	.22	.11	-.19	.11	.34	-.30	-.08	71
24	.78*	-.14	.25	-.28	.17	-.05	-.17	.01	83
25	.51*	-.23	-.23	.27	-.20	-.02	.08	.11	51

Table 12 (continued)

# significant	18	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	22
eigen values	6.86	1.35	2.37	1.28	1.21	0.94	0.81	0.58	15.40
% variance	27	5	9	5	5	4	3	2	60

Note: * denotes significance at .44; h2 is the degree of commonality.

Figure 4. First-Year Teacher Rotated Factors A and B in Space

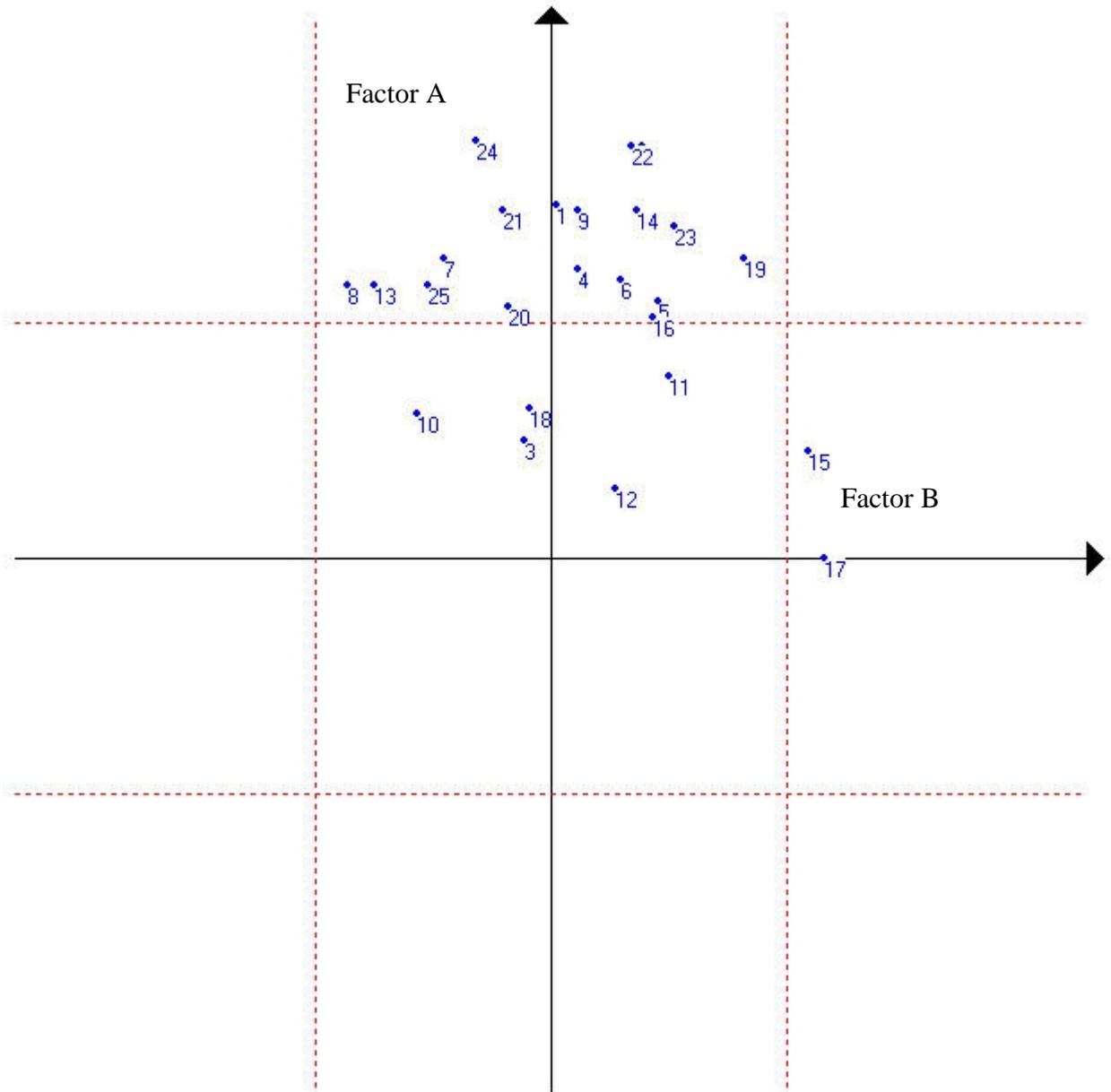


Figure 5. First-Year Teacher Rotated Factors A and C in Space

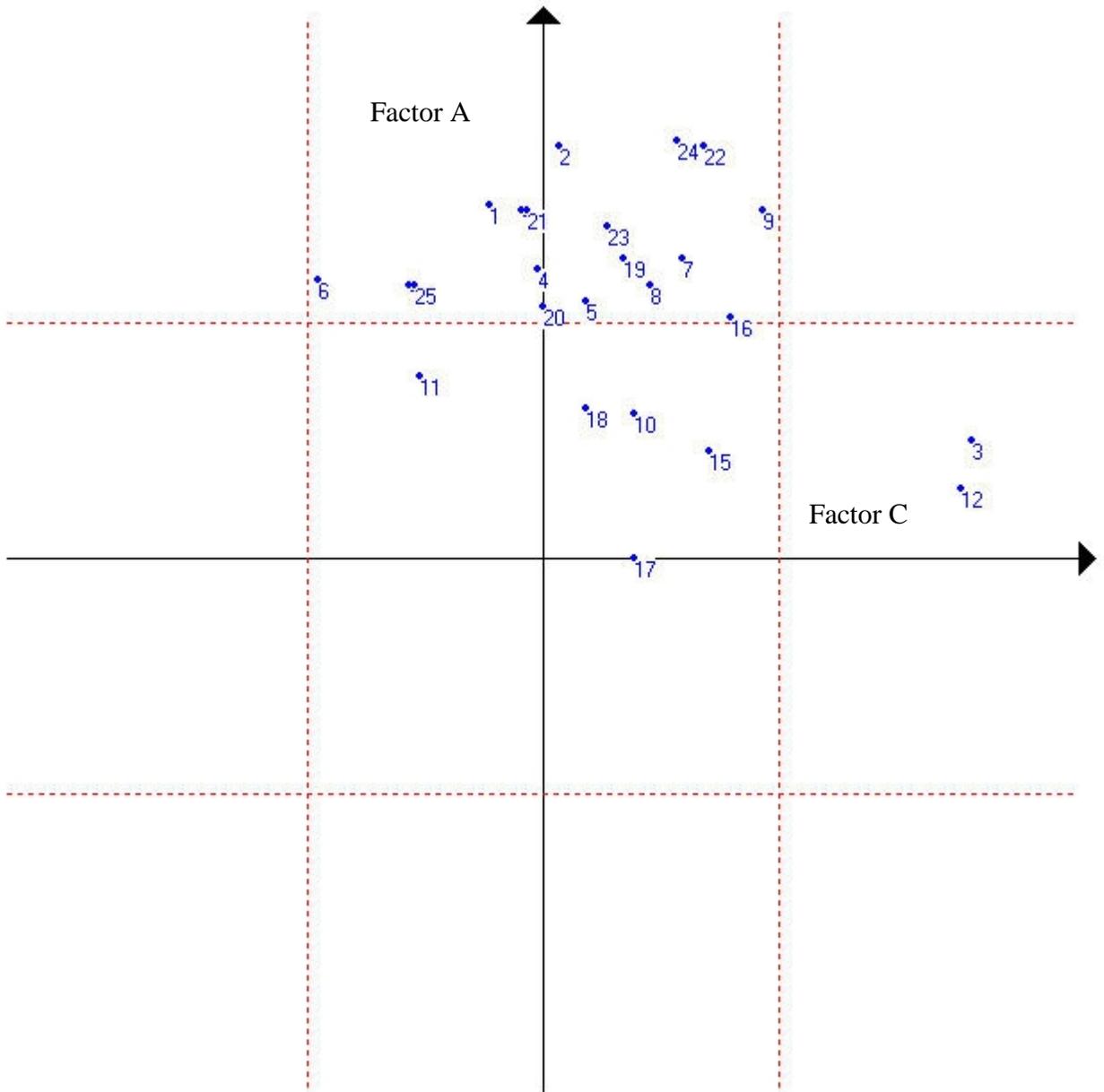
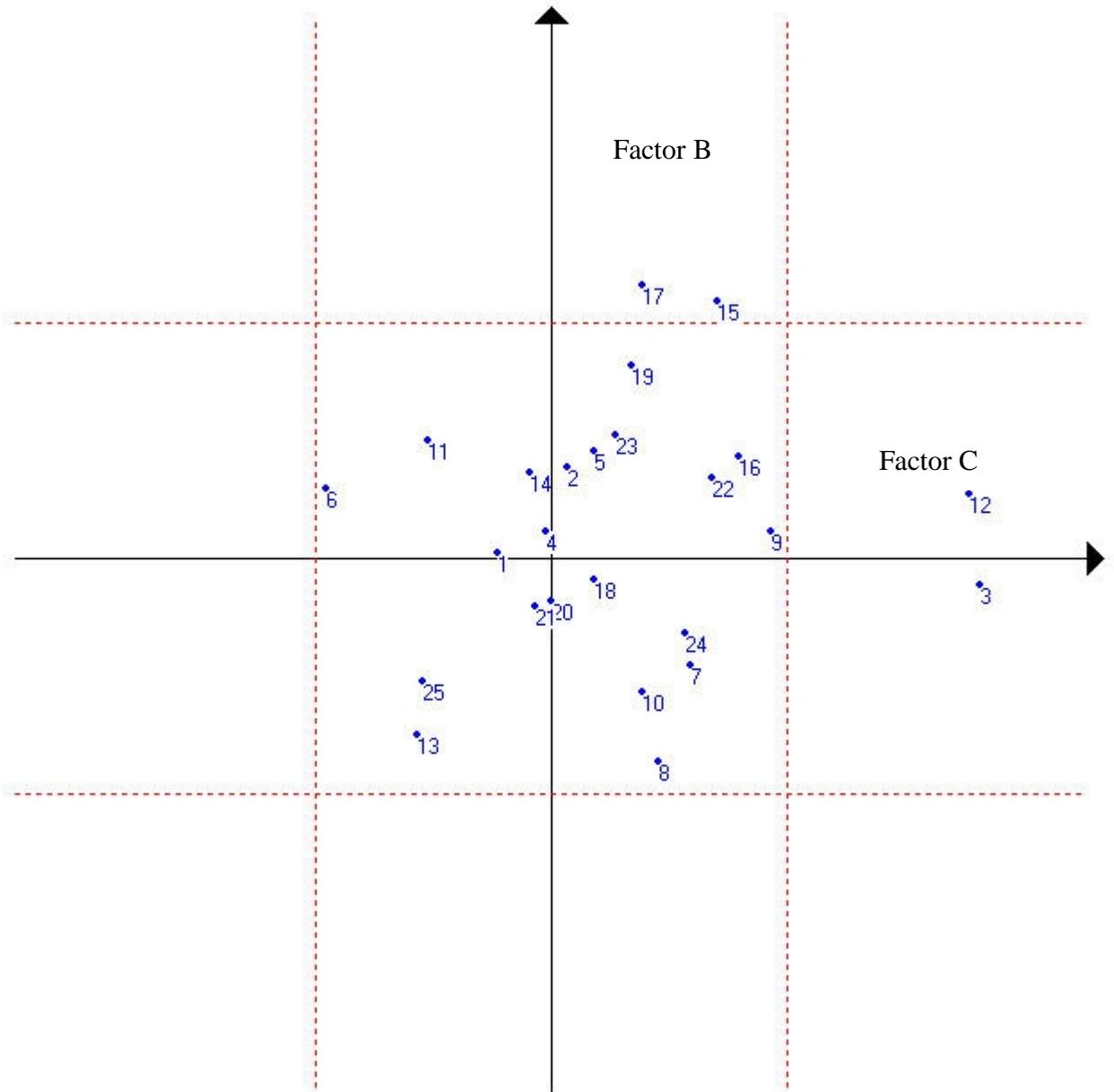


Figure 6. First-Year Teacher Rotated Factors B and C in Space



Fifth-Year Teachers

The questionnaire and Q sort were introduced to 38 fifth-year teachers through an introductory letter by the researcher, and a total of 14 participated in the study. Q sort data were entered into PCQ for Windows, Academic Version 1.4 (Stricklin & Almeida, 2000). First, all Q sorts were correlated with one another, because correlation must be completed prior to factor analysis.

Following correlation with one another, the Q sorts were submitted for factor analysis, using centroid factor analysis methodology (Brown, 1993). Centroid factor analysis uses accepted mathematical protocols to reduce the data and find patterns among them. The result of the factor analysis was eight unrotated factors. The data showed that four fifth-year teachers loaded onto Factor A, one fifth-year teacher loaded onto Factor C, two fifth-year teachers' loadings were confounded (loading onto more than one factor), and seven fifth-year teachers' loadings were not significant (see Table 13).

The eight factors were then rotated to further analyze the data. Theoretical factor rotation was used, rather than the more common varimax rotation. While varimax rotation is determined by a mathematical property and provides a single set of statistically accurate results, theoretical rotation provides greater flexibility in manipulation and interpretation. Theoretical rotation allowed for changing the reference points, continuing to rotate factors in an effort to load the perspectives of as many fifth-year teachers as possible on a single factor (see Table 14). This was critical to the purpose of this study.

Table 13

Fifth-Year Teacher Unrotated Factor Loadings

Factor	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
Sort 1	.61	.05	.46	.02	.22	-.06	.12	-.18
2	.49	-.40	.15	.20	-.32	-.05	.18	.23
3	.65	.22	.26	.09	-.13	.44	.08	-.29
4	.38	-.28	.42	.27	.24	.07	.14	.04
5	.43	-.06	-.21	-.34	.24	.34	.14	.07
6	.40	.39	-.32	-.03	-.23	.03	.20	-.19
7	.35	.10	.08	-.37	.26	-.20	.22	-.13
8	.31	.33	0	-.11	.11	.09	.06	.07
9	.30	.28	-.23	.25	-.19	.15	.10	.07
10	.43	-.21	-.16	-.27	-.17	-.15	.18	.11
11	.68	.01	-.31	.14	.13	-.15	.11	.12
12	.72	.21	.08	.12	-.16	-.30	.17	-.14
13	.75	-.33	.09	-.14	-.17	.07	.10	.08
14	.40	-.34	-.23	.34	.25	.10	.14	.10

Two factors were produced as a result of the theoretical rotation, Factors A and B (see Figure 7). The figure depicts in graphical space the degree to which each person loaded on a particular factor. Each number in the figure represents a participant. Factor analysis in Q methodology proceeds along person correlation rather than trait correlation. Each factor represents a viewpoint, or perspective, that is shared by the group members. These two factors account for 11 of the 14 Q sorts and 33% of the variance in the initial 14 x 14 correlation matrix. Factor A loaded 5 of the 14 fifth-year teachers and accounted for 16% of the variability. Factor B loaded six fifth-year teachers and accounted for 17%

of the variability. Three fifth-year teachers loaded as not significant. The meaning of the factor solutions is discussed in the data analysis section through the research questions.

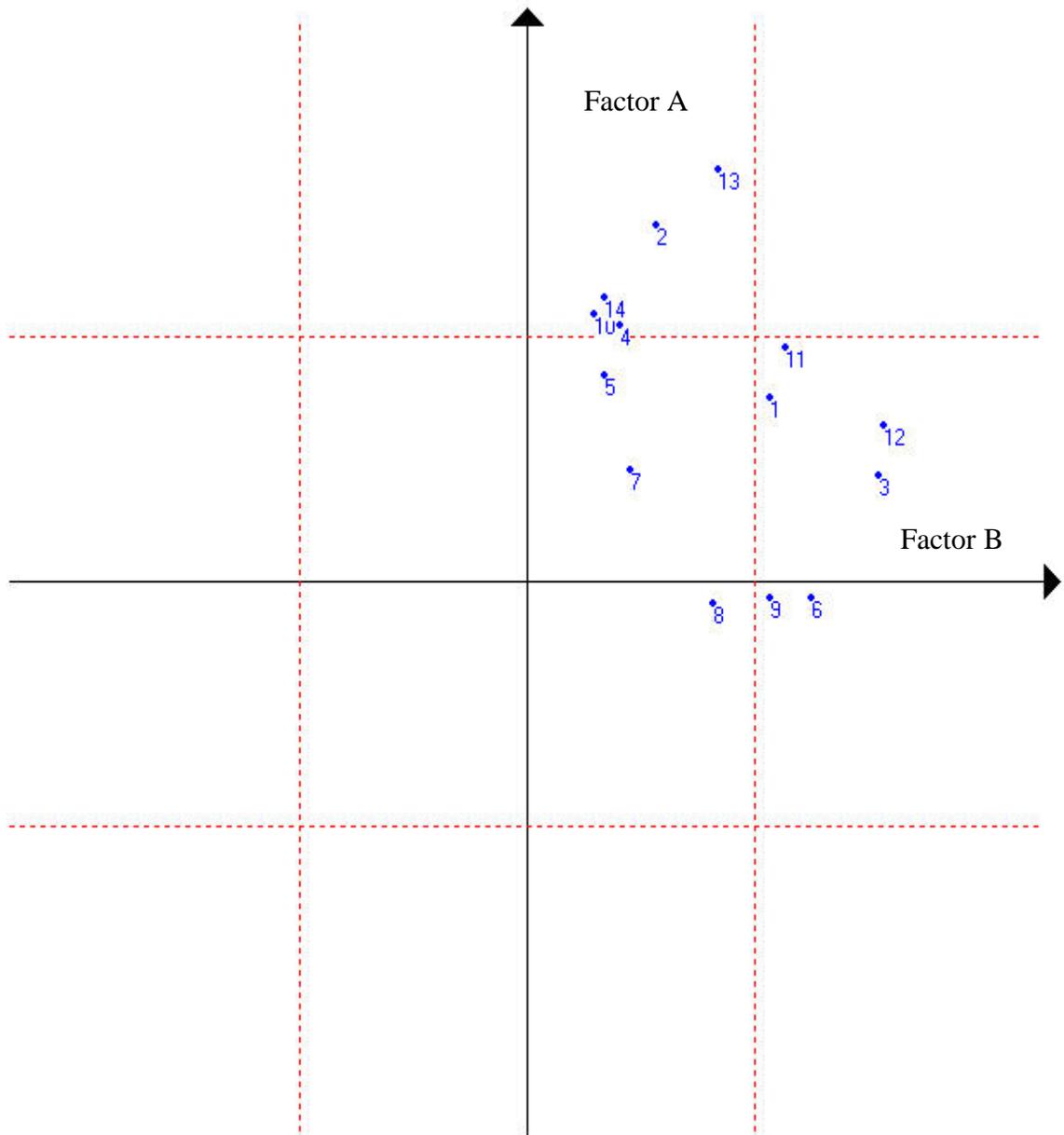
Table 14

Fifth-Year Teacher Rotated Factor Loadings

Factor	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	h2
Sort 1	.33	.46*	.41	-.10	.32	-.08	-.05	-.23	68
2	.64*	.25	.13	.22	-.28	-.05	-.02	.11	63
3	.19	.68*	.20	-.08	0	.39	-.08	-.32	81
4	.46*	.17	.39	.26	.27	.05	-.02	-.04	54
5	.36	.14	-.23	-.38	.26	.32	.02	.01	52
6	-.02	.55*	-.25	-.17	-.13	-.02	.13	-.19	53
7	.20	.20	.05	-.40	.29	-.22	.13	-.17	43
8	-.04	.35	-.02	-.23	.17	.05	.02	.08	22
9	-.02	.46*	-.25	.13	-.11	.11	.05	.08	33
10	.47*	.13	-.19	-.27	-.14	-.14	.02	.02	40
11	.41	.50*	-.32	.04	.23	-.17	-.07	.04	62
12	.28	.68*	.02	-.04	-.02	-.33	-.01	-.19	70
13	.73*	.36	.04	-.17	-.10	.04	-.16	-.05	75
14	.51*	.14	-.23	.34	.28	.08	-.02	.01	54
# significant	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	11
eigen values	2.25	2.40	0.84	0.77	0.64	0.51	0.08	0.29	7.77
% variance	16	17	6	6	5	4	1	2	57

Note: * denotes significance at .44; h2 is the degree of commonality.

Figure 7. Fifth-Year Teacher Rotated Factors A and B in Space



Analysis of Interview Data

Following completion of the Q sort data analysis, the researcher conducted six semi-structured interviews with first-year teachers, which were audio taped and transcribed. The researcher intended to interview at least one first-year teacher representing each factor, but there were no participants who loaded on Factor B who were available to be interviewed. The researcher interviewed three first-year teachers who loaded on Factor A, two participants who loaded on Factor C, and one first-year teacher whose loading was not significant (see Appendix B).

The researcher conducted three semi-structured interviews with fifth-year teachers, which were audio taped and transcribed. The intent was to interview at least one fifth-year teacher representing each factor. The researcher interviewed one fifth-year teacher who loaded on Factor A, one participant who loaded on Factor B, and one fifth-year teacher whose loading was not significant (see Appendix C).

The interviews focused on principal behaviors that supported first-year teachers and may have influenced their decision to remain in the teaching profession. The interviews, along with free responses from the questionnaire, provided additional insight into the Q sort data and helped to confirm the behaviors that emerged as most critical to first-year teacher retention.

The data from the interviews were categorized in text segments, each of which represented one idea. From this information, concepts, themes, and patterns of teachers' perceptions of principal support behaviors emerged. They were then matched with the 34 principal support behaviors (see Table 15). The table shows the total number of text

segments, as well as the number of interviews in which each behavior was mentioned by first-year teachers and/or fifth-year teachers. Some principal support behaviors were not mentioned in any interviews; these have been omitted from the table. As the researcher analyzed the interview data, several concepts emerged that did not seem to accurately correspond to any of the support behaviors in the Q set. These items have been added to the list of behaviors in Table 15.

Table 15

Text Segments Identifying Important Principal Support Behaviors (from Interviews)

Support Behavior	Text Segments	Freq. (1 st yr.)	Freq. (5 th yr.)
2. Hired me with enough time prior to the beginning of school for me to settle in and be well prepared.	2	2	0
7. Facilitated an introduction and welcome to the campus.	3	2	1
8. Provided a campus orientation to highlight available resources, procedures, and policies.	8	2	1
9. Communicated the school's vision and priorities.	2	1	1
10. Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship.	11	3	3
12. Clearly articulated expectations for me, including my responsibilities to students and parents (e.g. discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, mandatory parent conferences).	16	5	1
15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/ discipline and development of classroom routines.	8	3	2
16. Maintained regular personal communication with me to build our relationship.	5	2	1

Table 15 (continued)

17. Provided written or oral praise to me when I did well.	2	1	0
18. Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.	11	4	2
19. Facilitated my participation in professional development activities that targeted my professional growth needs.	4	1	1
20. Provided opportunities and incentives for me to work with other teachers in collaborative teams.	1	1	0
21. Provided opportunities for me to gather and work together with other first-year teachers.	3	2	0
22. Granted me professional autonomy and trusted my judgment.	1	0	1
23. Visited my classroom and provided feedback not related to formal evaluation.	4	1	2
24. Reviewed my lesson plans and offered instruction in teaching strategies.	2	0	1
27. Provided positive but honest feedback, appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.	16	5	2
30. Fostered a welcoming, nurturing, and collegial work environment that values critical inquiry, reflection, and risk taking.	6	3	0

Table 15 (continued)

32. Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff.	8	4	1
34. Modeled collaborative working behavior and promoted a positive, friendly school climate.	6	2	1
• Encouraged me and made me feel welcomed, valued, and appreciated.	31	6	3
• Communicated key information in a timely manner.	21	6	2

Analysis of Questionnaire Free Responses

Teachers were invited to respond to a final open-ended item on the questionnaire: “What ways could your principal have helped support you in your first year of teaching?” Of the 39 total participants, 32 provided a written response. The data from the responses were categorized in text segments, which were matched with the 34 principal support behaviors and the 2 behaviors added as a result of the interview data analysis (see Table 16). The table shows the total number of text segments, as well as the number of responses in which each behavior was mentioned by first-year teachers and/or fifth-year teachers. Some principal support behaviors were not mentioned in any responses; these have been omitted from the table.

Table 16

Text Segments Identifying Important Principal Support Behaviors (from Free Responses)

Support Behavior	Text Segments	Freq. (1 st yr.)	Freq. (5 th yr.)
8. Provided a campus orientation to highlight available resources, procedures, and policies.	1	1	0
10. Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship.	4	3	1
12. Clearly articulated expectations for me, including my responsibilities to students and parents (e.g. discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, mandatory parent conferences).	8	6	1
15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/ discipline and development of classroom routines.	2	1	1
18. Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.	2	1	1
19. Facilitated my participation in professional development activities that targeted my professional growth needs.	1	0	1
23. Visited my classroom and provided feedback not related to formal evaluation.	3	1	2

Table 16 (continued)

25. Facilitated my observation of other teachers.	1	1	0
27. Provided positive but honest feedback, appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.	8	4	4
34. Modeled collaborative working behavior and promoted a positive, friendly school climate.	1	1	0
• Encouraged me and made me feel welcomed, valued, and appreciated.	8	3	4
• Communicated key information in a timely manner.	9	6	1

Descriptive Findings

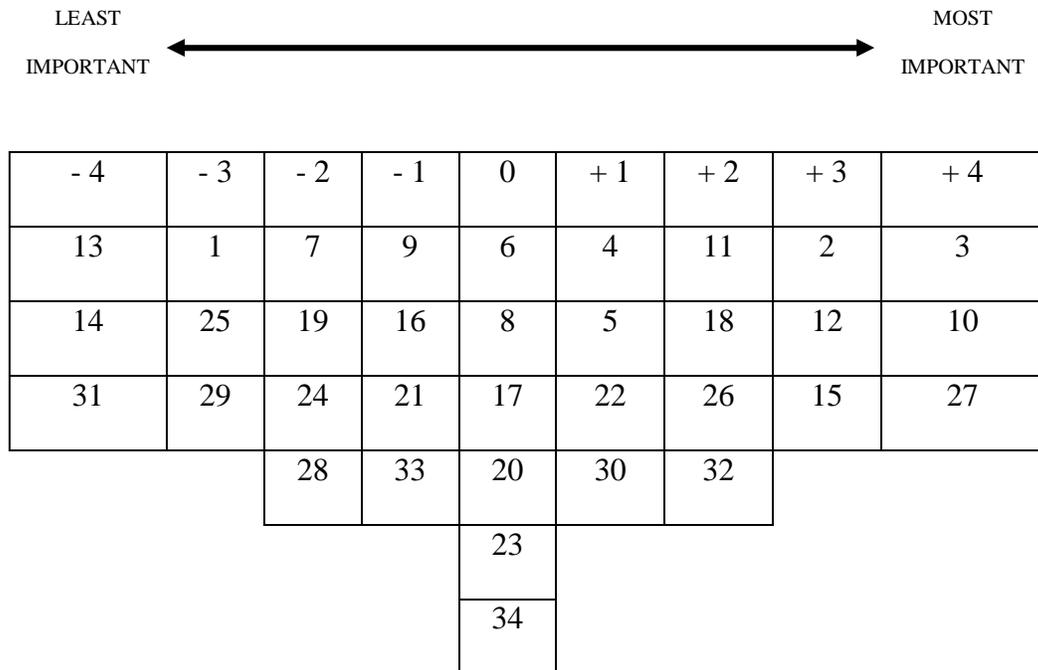
This section answered the study's primary research question and two sub-questions. These questions were about first-year and fifth-year teachers' perceptions of principal behaviors that contributed to their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession. The questions were answered using the study's Q sort data and enhanced by the richness of the semi-structured interview data and comments from the questionnaire. Interview data pertaining to each principal behavior has been included the first time that item was mentioned in this section. Therefore, most of the interview data was described in the section on First-Year Factor A.

Research Question 1

What principal behaviors do first-year teachers identify as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in teaching?

First-Year Factor A. Of the 25 first-year teachers, 18 loaded onto one factor through significant loadings ranging from .45 to .78. The composite array for Factor A (see Figure 8) showed the representative perspective of first-year teachers regarding principal support behaviors.

Figure 8. First-Year Composite Q sort for Factor A (Principal Support Behaviors)



This perspective was characterized by these statements describing principal behaviors identified as most important in influencing first-year teachers to remain in teaching:

(+ 4) 3. Assigned me to a subject area and grade level for which I am qualified.

(+ 4) 10. Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship.

(+ 4) 27. Provided positive but honest feedback appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.

The importance of a *suitable mentor* was reinforced during interviews with teachers. This district provided instructional coaches to assist beginning teachers, and interviews with first-year teachers attested to their value in providing practical guidance and feedback. However, one first-year teacher relied heavily on her mentor for specific information and assistance, due to the specialized content area that she taught. It was noted that two of the fifth-year teachers interviewed, who had not had the advantage of instructional coaches, felt that the guidance and encouragement of their mentors was crucial to their early success. One of them noted, “She was a great resource, and we were working in the same office, so I could always bounce things off of her.” On the other hand, a fifth-year teacher who had not had a mentor felt the lack of that support, as she felt left alone to figure things out on her own. She stated that she worked so hard to “keep from drowning” that it was a miracle she was still teaching today. She believed a mentor may have prevented her from developing some bad habits.

Interviews with first-year teachers also reinforced the importance of *providing positive but honest feedback*. One teacher commented that a key principal behavior that would influence her to stay in teaching would be encouragement through honest feedback that would give her the opportunity to learn and grow. Another said that the most important thing for a principal to do would be going out into classrooms to watch, see what's happening, and give feedback. A fifth-year teacher stated, "My first year could have been more successful with more specific feedback from my principal and a more positive approach." One first-year teacher who was evaluated by an assistant principal said the principal never came into her classroom once all year, whereas she would have appreciated honest feedback from the principal. Another stated that she received absolutely no feedback from her principal and "would have lost her mind" had it not been for the positive feedback she received from her instructional coach.

This behavior was mentioned in free responses by both first-year and fifth-year teachers, who expressed a desire to have had more support through observations and feedback. Several mentioned that their principal made only the minimum number of required observations, whereas they were hoping for more frequent visits with both positive and negative comments. One teacher wrote, "I did not feel like I grew very much because he never offered specific advice to change."

On the other hand, some first-year teachers remarked on the positive support they received because their principals visited their classrooms frequently, not just for evaluations, and provided them with positive feedback. One admitted that he would sometimes "do crazy things" in class, and the principal was open and honest with him

about what was and was not appropriate. A fifth-year teacher described her first principal as someone who provided positive and honest feedback, enabling her to look at things from a different perspective even when she did not agree with him.

The following statements described principal behaviors identified by Factor A as very important in influencing first-year teachers to remain in teaching:

(+ 3) 2. Hired me with enough time prior to the beginning of school for me to settle in and be well prepared.

(+ 3) 12. Clearly articulated expectations for me, including my responsibilities to students and parents (e.g., discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, mandatory parent conferences).

(+ 3) 15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.

Six of the nine teachers interviewed brought up the importance of understanding the *principal's expectations* regarding all manner of required tasks and deadlines. One first-year teacher wrote, "Principals need to remember that first-year teachers do not know the acronyms, the routines, and what happens when in a school year. They need to make sure that the teachers have the info they need with enough time to get things done." Another asked for more help with the routines of the school, stating that veteran teachers knew them by heart and everyone forgot to tell the new teachers. One first-year teacher expressed that she wished the principal would have "explained more about school routines/ processes (how things are done) and required paperwork (what I should be recording)." Another discussed the multitude of requirements outside the classroom,

including school improvement plans, new teacher training, and committee meetings and wished the principal would have summarized all those requirements and helped him make sense of them, instead of getting piecemeal bits of information from various people.

One new teacher stated that the single most important behavior her principal could have exhibited was to make sure new teachers were informed about procedures and expectations regarding “the grade book, procedures for behavior, management, and sending kids to the principal, and underlying expectations that veteran teachers already knew about.” She described a particularly frustrating experience that happened at the end of the year, as she was in the office prepared to check out and turn in her keys. She was asked for a computer printout of all her grades. She had to go back to her classroom and hook up her computer again in order to produce the required list. Another first-year teacher wished that the principal had compiled a master calendar of all the required meetings, deadlines, and other expectations. He described his frustration with hearing bits and pieces of information from various individuals on the campus.

One new teacher remarked that the most important principal support behavior that she would have liked to have experienced was being told about all the underlying things. She said she found out about those things by trial and error and felt foolish when she did not know about things ahead of time. She described situations in which a veteran teacher would come up and tell her “that’s not how we do it here” and how foolish it made her feel.

Six first-year teachers commented on this behavior on the free response section of the questionnaire, noting that they would like to have had more information about

policies and procedures. Explanations of acronyms, rules and routines, and notice of major school activities throughout the year would have been helpful. One teacher explained that new teachers need more advance warning than others of critical requirements in order to get things done. This concern was reinforced by a fifth-year teacher, who said she relied on other staff members to provide this kind of information, since it was not forthcoming from the principal.

Classroom management was another area in which beginning teachers expressed a need for support. One new teacher admitted that management was her weakest point, but that she hesitated to ask her principal for assistance. She stated that at her school, “there’s a kind of stigma that teachers should be able to handle stuff on their own—it’s kind of almost bad if you can’t handle it on your own.” She did, however, feel comfortable working with her instructional coach on classroom management strategies. A fifth-year teacher who struggled with classroom management as a novice teacher observed that she has gotten better, but with no help or guidance from anyone.

Another first-year teacher had a different experience, though, as he described the difficult class he had and how critical it was that he could go to his principal for help and advice. A fifth-year teacher described a similar experience, stating that he was “a blunt instrument” his first year and had to be guided in tact by his principal as he learned to effectively manage high school students.

Other principal behaviors that were considered important by Factor A in influencing first-year teachers to remain in teaching were represented by the following statements:

- (+ 2) 11. Provided sufficient resources and supplies to meet needs and expectations.
- (+ 2) 18. Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.
- (+ 2) 26. Explained expectations and procedures for evaluation at the beginning of the year.
- (+ 2) 32. Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff.

Interviews with first-year teachers emphasized the importance of the principal having an *open door policy*. One teacher reported the significance of knowing the principal was always there for support: “You could walk into her office anytime and she would finish up her phone call and talk to you about stuff. She was always there to talk if I needed to talk or ask questions about something.” Another, when asked what one piece of advice she would give principals regarding the support of first-year teachers, said, “Being available for questions. You need someone you can go and ask. The open door policy.”

One new teacher felt his principal offered him a place to go, with an ear to listen. This was confirmed by another first-year teacher, who said he always felt welcome when he “showed up at her door.” A fifth-year teacher reported being sustained by knowing she could go to her principal when she needed to. Several first-year teachers observed that while they knew the door was open, they were reluctant to go to the principal, because there was a feeling that new teachers should be able to handle things on their own.

Interviews also emphasized the importance of *setting high expectations* for teaching and learning. One first-year teacher felt the lack of this behavior from the principal, saying that school goals and student learning were mentioned briefly at the beginning of the year but there was no follow-through from the principal. She saw the interest and initiative for helping students come from her grade-level team, which met weekly to identify students who were struggling and made plans for how to best help them. One fifth-year teacher credited his first principal with inspiring him to engage students and hold high expectations for them.

This perspective (Factor A) demonstrated agreement regarding principal support behaviors that were least important in influencing first-year teachers to remain in teaching:

- (- 4) 13. Assisted me with required state and district paperwork.
- (- 4) 14. Assisted me in understanding the competing demands of state and district mandates.
- (- 4) 31. Encouraged teachers on staff to understand and acknowledge my development and needs.

Likewise, these statements describe principal behaviors that had relatively little influence on first-year teachers' decisions to remain in teaching:

- (- 3) 1. Explained the hiring process to me and assisted me upon request.
- (- 3) 25. Facilitated my observation of other teachers.
- (- 3) 29. Coordinated evaluation activities with the induction and mentoring program to prevent unnecessary overlap and conflicting expectations.

First-Year Factor B. Factor B represented the perspective of two first-year teachers. Because of the small number of participants loading on this factor, no table has been provided. These teachers perceived the following principal behaviors as most important in influencing them to remain in teaching:

- (+ 4) 18. Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.
- (+ 4) 21. Provided opportunities for me to gather and work together with other first-year teachers.
- (+ 4) 27. Provided positive but honest feedback, appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.

The following statements were also descriptive of principal behaviors deemed very important in influencing these first-year teachers to remain in teaching:

- (+ 3) 9. Communicated the school's vision and priorities.
- (+ 3) 20. Provided opportunities and incentives for me to work with other teachers in collaborative teams.
- (+ 3) 32. Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff.

These principal behaviors were deemed least important in influencing first-year teachers to remain in teaching:

- (- 4) 13. Assisted me with required state and district paperwork.
- (- 4) 26. Explained expectations and procedures for evaluation at the beginning of the year.

(- 4) 31. Encouraged teachers on staff to understand and acknowledge my development and needs.

First-Year Factor C. Two first-year teachers loaded on Factor C; due the small number of participants loading on this factor, no table has been provided. These teachers determined the following principal behaviors as most important in influencing them to remain in the teaching profession:

(+ 4) 10. Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship.

(+ 4) 27. Provided positive but honest feedback appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.

(+ 4) 32. Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff.

The following statements describe principal behaviors that were also considered very important in influencing first-year teachers to remain in teaching:

(+ 3) 15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.

(+ 3) 18. Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.

(+ 3) 34. Modeled collaborative working behavior and promoted a positive, friendly school climate.

These statements depicted principal behaviors that were seen as least important in influencing first-year teachers to remain in teaching:

- (- 4) 3. Assigned me to a subject area and grade level for which I am qualified.
- (- 4) 5. Made sure I was not assigned the most challenging students.
- (- 4) 6. Protected my time by limiting extra duties and responsibilities (e.g., committee/club assignments, coaching, extracurricular).

Sub-question 1. What principal behaviors do fifth-year teachers identify as contributing to their remaining in the profession for the past five years?

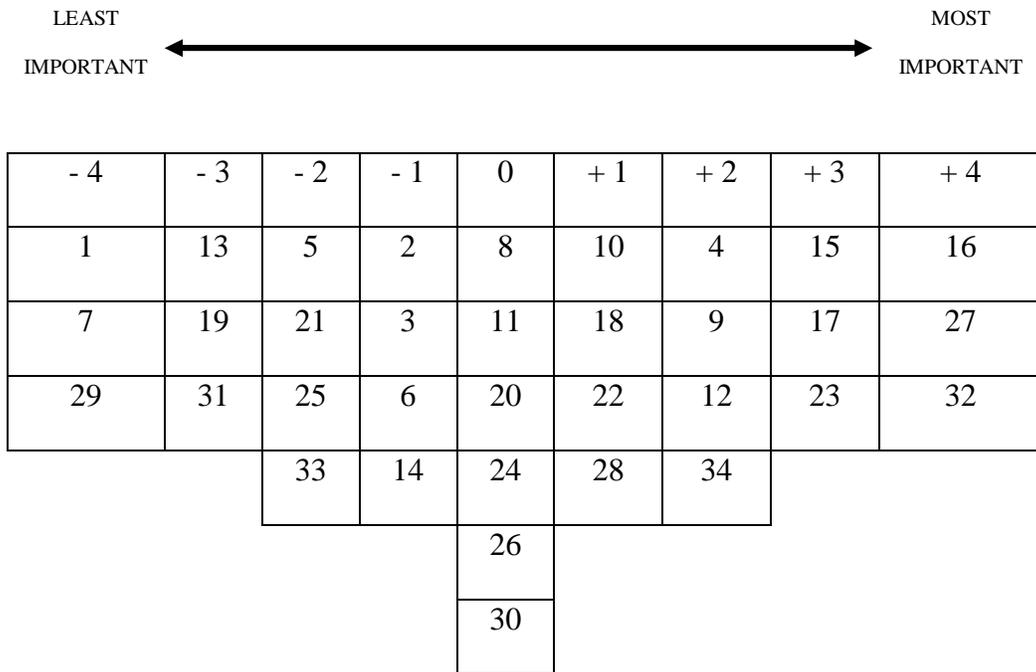
Fifth-Year Factor A. Five of the fourteen fifth-year teachers loaded onto Factor A through significant loadings ranging from .46 to .73. The composite array for Factor A (see Figure 9) showed the representative perspective of fifth-year teachers regarding principal support behaviors.

This perspective was characterized by these statements describing principal behaviors as most important in influencing them to remain in teaching:

- (+ 4) 16. Maintained regular personal communication with me to build our relationship.
- (+ 4) 27. Provided positive but honest feedback, appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.
- (+ 4) 32. Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff.

During the interview, the fifth-year teacher from Factor A discussed the importance of the *personal relationship* his first principal built with teachers. He described his principal as “personable, professional, committed, and inspiring—someone who had been a successful teacher himself and understood teacher’s needs.” The

Figure 9. Fifth-Year Composite Q Sort for Factor A (Principal Support Behaviors)



principal took time to talk to him as a person and get to know him as an individual.

Another fifth-year teacher described a very different experience on the questionnaire.

She wrote that the principal had associated with a specific group of teacher friends, and that being left out of the group made her feel “like a ghost on campus.”

The following statements also described principal behaviors identified as very important in influencing fifth-year teachers to remain in teaching:

- (+ 3) 15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.
- (+ 3) 17. Provided written or oral praise to me when I did well.
- (+ 3) 23. Visited my classroom and provided feedback not related to formal evaluation.

This perspective identified the following behaviors as least important in influencing fifth-year teachers to remain in teaching:

- (- 4) 1. Explained the hiring process to me and assisted me upon request.
- (- 4) 7. Facilitated and introduction and welcome to the campus.
- (- 4) 29. Coordinated evaluation activities with the induction and mentoring program to prevent unnecessary overlap and conflicting expectations.

Fifth-Year Factor B. Six of the fourteen fifth-year teachers loaded onto Factor B through significant loadings ranging from .46 to .68. The composite array for Factor B (see Figure 10) showed the representative perspective of these fifth-year teachers regarding principal support behaviors.

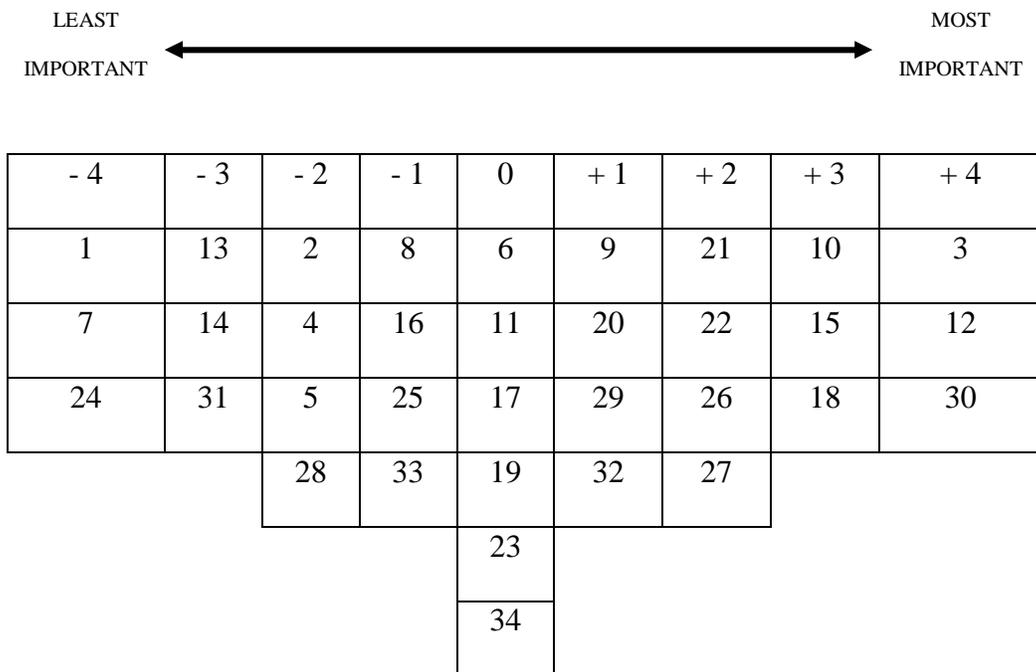
This perspective was characterized by these statements describing principal behaviors that were most important in influencing fifth-year teachers to remain in teaching:

- (+ 4) 3. Assigned me to a subject area and grade level for which I am qualified.
- (+ 4) 12. Clearly articulated expectations for me, including my responsibilities to students and parents (e.g., discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, mandatory parent conferences).

(+ 4) 30. Fostered a welcoming, nurturing, and collegial work environment that valued critical inquiry, reflection, and risk taking.

During the interview, the fifth-year teacher from Factor B provided an example of the importance of the principal fostering a *welcoming, nurturing, and collegial work environment*. She described a fellow new teacher who left because she did not feel part of the school faculty—she did not fit in. The teacher was out in a portable by herself, teaching a curriculum that no one else taught, so she had no mentor or colleagues with

Figure 10. Fifth-Year Composite Q Sort for Factor B (Principal Support Behaviors)



whom to discuss issues. She felt that no one understood or supported her and left teaching at the end of the year.

The following statements also described principal behaviors identified as very important in influencing fifth-year teachers to remain in teaching:

- (+ 3) 10. Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship.
- (+ 3) 15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.
- (+ 3) 18. Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.

This perspective identified the following behaviors as least important in influencing fifth-year teachers to remain in teaching:

- (- 4) 1. Explained the hiring process to me and assisted me upon request.
- (- 4) 7. Facilitated an introduction and welcome to the campus.
- (- 4) 24. Reviewed my lesson plans and offered instruction in teaching strategies.

Sub-question 2. What are the similarities and differences in the principal behaviors identified by first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in the profession?

Overall, there were many more differences than similarities in the principal behaviors identified by first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession. This is evidenced by the number of factors representing the teacher groups—three factors for first-year teachers and two

factors for fifth-year teachers. While the two fifth-year factors shared fifteen consensus statements, the three first-year factors shared only four consensus statements. When comparing first-year and fifth-year factors, only two consensus statements emerged. A consensus statement was a statement in which scores on the factors were either the same or one number apart. Table 17 depicts the principal support behaviors among which there was consensus or near-consensus. It also shows behaviors that were viewed as predominantly positive, as well as those that elicited the greatest variation in rankings.

The following principal support behaviors were the consensus statements of all first-year and fifth-year factors, one viewed as important, the other as not important:

15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.

33. Used teaching standards to structure professional development opportunities for me and all teachers.

The following principal support behavior was a consensus statement among the three first-year teacher factors and fifth-year Factor A, and was ranked only slightly lower by fifth-year Factor B:

27. Provided positive but honest feedback, appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.

The purpose of the study was to identify those principal behaviors considered by first-year teachers as most importance in influencing a decision to remain in teaching, with the expectation that fifth-year teachers' perceptions would confirm those of first-year teachers. Therefore, the researcher identified three additional statements that were

Table 17

Similarities and Differences Among First/Fifth-Year Teachers (Q Sorts)

Behavior	First Factor A	First Factor B	First Factor C	Fifth Factor A	Fifth Factor B
Discipline (15)	+ 3	+ 2	+ 2	+ 3	+ 3
Teaching standards (33)	- 2	- 2	- 1	- 2	- 1
Feedback (27)	+ 4	+ 4	+ 3	+ 4	+ 2
Mentor (10)	+ 4	0	+ 4	+ 1	+ 3
Open door (18)	+ 2	+ 4	+ 3	+ 1	+ 3
High expectations (32)	+ 2	+ 3	+ 4	+ 4	+ 1
Praise (17)	+ 1	0	+ 3	+ 3	0
Classroom visits (23)	+ 1	0	+ 2	+ 3	0
Collegial work Environment (30)	+ 1	+ 2	0	0	+ 4
Hire early (2)	+ 3	- 3	0	- 1	- 2
Appropriate assignment (3)	+ 4	- 3	- 4	- 1	+ 4
Classroom placement (4)	+ 1	- 3	- 4	+ 2	- 2
First-year meetings (21)	- 1	+ 4	- 3	- 2	+ 2
Evaluation procedures (26)	+ 2	- 4	- 2	0	+ 2

viewed as very important by at least two of the first-year factors and confirmed by at least one of the fifth-year factors:

10. Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship.

18. Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.

32. Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff.

Several other statements were viewed as predominantly positive, with no ranking lower than 0 (neutral) among all first-year and fifth-year factors. These included:

17. Provided written or oral praise to me when I did well.

23. Visited my classroom and provided feedback not related to formal evaluation.

30. Fostered a welcoming, nurturing, and collegial work environment that valued critical inquiry, reflection, and risk taking.

Some principal support behaviors were viewed very differently among the first-year and fifth-year teachers. The following statements represented the greatest amount of variation in responses, with differences of six, seven, or eight:

2. Hired me with enough time prior to the beginning of school for me to settle in and be well prepared.

3. Assigned me to a subject area and grade level for which I am qualified.

4. Assigned me to a classroom placement that optimized my chance for success.

21. Provided opportunities for me to gather and work together with other first-year teachers.

26. Explained expectations and procedures for evaluation at the beginning of the year.

The researcher analyzed both the similarities and differences exhibited by the perspectives of first-year and fifth-year teachers resulting from the Q sorts. Also considered were the findings from the semi-structured interviews and the free response section of the questionnaire. The researcher synthesized all data in preparation for the discussion of findings presented in Chapter 5.

Further Descriptive Findings from Interviews

Additional Important Principal Support Behaviors

As the researcher analyzed the interview data, several concepts emerged that did not seem to correspond to any of the support behaviors in the Q set. These items were carefully considered and were included due to the emphasis placed on these behaviors by many first-year and fifth-year teachers.

Encouraged me and made me feel welcomed, valued, and appreciated. While the distinction may be subtle, it was clear from comments and interview discussions that the teachers in this study considered this behavior separately from maintaining an open door policy. The difference lies in who initiates the interaction, the sense that the principal specifically takes time or goes out of his/her way to provide personal encouragement to the beginning teacher. This behavior also differs from providing positive feedback in that

the connotation is of personal encouragement rather than positive feedback on performance or work habits.

A first-year teacher appreciated the encouragement her principal provided throughout the year, especially when she was feeling discouraged. She said that feeling welcomed by the principal would be a major factor in deciding whether to stay at a school or leave. Another new teacher described his principal as leading the way by saying, “I’m glad to be here, and I’m glad that you’re here.” Another related how his principal went out of her way to tell him he was doing a good job. One new teacher described her principal as positive, welcoming, and appreciative of her hard work and efforts. Another beginning teacher said the principal did a really good job of making him feel valued and that he did a good job.

A fifth-year teacher shared his astonishment and appreciation as a beginning teacher when his principal took the time to talk to him as a person. Another fifth-year teacher identified the encouragement from her principal as the single most influential behavior in keeping her in teaching through her first year. She felt a personal connection and appreciated that he went out of his way to say hi and to ask how she was doing—not just coming in for work-related stuff. He showed that he cared about his employees, not just making sure they were following his standards.

For some teachers, this support behavior was noticeably lacking. One first-year teacher was discouraged by the lack of any personal encouragement from the principal. She had no sense of welcome or warmth, and when she learned that her position was being eliminated she sensed no sympathy from her principal. When asked what advice

she would give a principal on how best to support first-year teachers, a fifth-year teacher replied, “Make them feel appreciated—that is probably the biggest one. If you are appreciated, you work harder. They don’t get that.”

Communicated key information in a timely manner. Comments and interview discussions indicated that the teachers in this study considered this behavior as distinct from communicating to build relationships. While perhaps related to the item on articulating expectations, the essence of this support behavior has to do with ongoing communication about various issues, as well as timely response.

A first-year teacher who felt very supported attributed much of that feeling to the effective communication from the principal. Similarly, another new teacher remarked that while he did not see his principal often, he appreciated her effort to email important information to new teachers and keep them updated frequently.

Several first-year teachers expressed concern about the lack of communication from their principals. One stated, “I didn’t feel that communication was as clear and effective as it should have been,” while another said, “Better communication would have been helpful.” Another comment was specific to email communication, lamenting the lack of response to emails from the teacher. A first-year teacher was frustrated by the lack of information and follow-up to concerns she expressed, a concern that was echoed by a fifth-year teacher who had a similar experience. Another new teacher said that while his principal communicated immediately if he made a mistake, she was not so great at “the stuff that should be communicated all the time.” The amount of time it took to get responses resulted in stress and frustration for him.

Some first-year teachers expressed their frustration with the lack of communication relating to the uncertainty of their job status. In two cases, the teacher had to go to the principal to ask whether they would have a position the following year. One teacher complained, “There was a lot of stress that was kind of unnecessary. It could have been resolved with better communication.”

The Principal’s Influence on First-Year Teacher Retention

This study was based on the premise that the principal played an important role in the decisions of new teachers to leave the profession or remain in teaching. One of the final questions asked in the interviews was “What support behaviors could your principal have exhibited that might have influenced your decision to stay in teaching or leave teaching?”

One first-year teacher stated that the most important thing the principal could do would be to make her feel welcome at the school. She said that if she felt comfortable in a position, she would be more likely to stay, particularly if the principal was encouraging and provided constructive feedback. Another first-year teacher said that principal support and congruence with the principal’s vision were critical, but that if principal support were lacking he would not leave teaching—he would simply move to another school. A third new teacher expressed a similar view, saying, “If I didn’t get principal support, maybe not leave the profession, but I would leave the school.” Another first-year teacher said that if she had not experienced strong support from her principal in her first year, she would have left teaching—“it just wouldn’t have been worth it.”

One beginning teacher stated that if he left teaching, his decision would not be influenced by the principal, but rather factors outside of the principal's control. He cited financial concerns as well as the time commitment required of teachers. According to this teacher, "The amount of stuff you have to do outside the classroom is just crazy, and that wasn't what I was expecting. I have to take more classes, and all the out-of-pocket expenses cut into your salary even more."

A fifth-year teacher stated that her decision to stay in teaching had more to do with her family and the desire to have the same schedule as her children. She said, "It really doesn't have much to do with the principal or the leadership." She did, however, relate the story of a first-year teacher at her school that did leave the profession due to a lack of understanding and support from her principal. Another fifth-year teacher said she stayed in teaching in spite of the lack of support from her principal, simply "because every once in a while I make a difference in a kid's life. Just often enough to get me through, and that's truly it."

One fifth-year teacher expressed strong opinions about the importance of the principal building personal relationships with beginning teachers. In describing how he sorted the principal support behaviors, he said:

What I recall was I focused on principal behaviors that were more interactive and personal rather than bureaucratic or paperwork issues. They were not as important to me as the interpersonal connections I was making with the principal I was working with.

This teacher was now teaching at a different school and observed that the environment was so cold and indifferent that had he been there as a first-year teacher, he would probably not have stayed in teaching. He attributed the unwelcoming and uncaring culture to the principal's failure to build and foster personal relationships with and among staff.

Finally, the researcher interviewed a first-year teacher who had indicated a strong likelihood of remaining in teaching, but had since left the profession. This teacher had had a very negative experience during her first year of teaching. She described a total lack of leadership and support from the principal. She said she received absolutely no feedback from the principal, who was also her evaluator, and in fact did not believe the principal even knew her name. She mentioned that she received no welcome or orientation to the campus and had no idea what expectations the principal had for her. She also experienced a lack of communication, stating that as the year neared an end, she finally approached the principal to inquire about the status of her job for the following year and found that she would not be rehired. Overall, she experienced no feeling of being wanted or valued; rather, she felt like she "was being batted around by different impersonal forces." Although this teacher really enjoyed the students and initially indicated a desire to return to teaching, she has since found work in another career field. She observed that she did not want to go to another school and do over what she experienced that first year. The lack of support from her principal was a direct cause of her decision to leave teaching.

Summary

Chapter 4 described the research context and the research findings for first-year and fifth-year teachers. The Q sort data, interview data, and data from the free response item on the questionnaire were presented. Findings by research question were explained, utilizing all data sources. Finally, additional findings from the interview data were described. Chapter 5 includes a summary of the findings, a discussion of the findings, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 5
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS,
IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

High attrition rates of beginning teachers have been a long-standing dilemma across the country. Various researchers have estimated that up to 30% of new teachers do not teach beyond their first year in the profession, while up to 50% of beginning teachers leave the profession within their first five years. High teacher turnover affects school stability, student performance, and school and district budgets.

Mentoring and induction programs have been developed in an effort to support beginning teachers and retain them in the profession. More recently, attention has shifted to the role of the principal in the retention of novice teachers. Brock and Grady (1998, 2001) found that beginning teachers identified the principal as the most significant person in the school, as well as a key source of support. Johnson (2004) reinforced the importance of the principal's influence on the retention of new teachers. Carver (2003) developed a framework of core tasks for principals in supporting new teachers. This study explored first-year teachers' perceptions of those principal behaviors most likely to influence them to remain in the teaching profession.

This chapter includes an overview of the study, a summary of findings, a discussion of findings, implications for practice, and recommendations for future research.

Overview of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine which principal behaviors first-year teachers identified as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession. Carver's (2002) framework of core tasks for principals in supporting new teachers served as the foundation of the study. The study's findings were based on data gathered from questionnaires and Q sorts administered to first-year and fifth-year teachers in a school district in Southern Arizona. The study included 25 first-year teachers and 14 fifth-year teachers. Data gathered through follow-up interviews with first-year and fifth-year teachers provided additional supporting evidence.

Research Questions

The research study examined the research question "What principal behaviors do first-year teachers identify as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in teaching?" Two sub-questions were also examined: (a) "What principal behaviors do fifth-year teachers identify as contributing to their remaining in the profession for the past five years?" and (b) "What are the similarities and differences in the principal behaviors identified by first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in the profession?"

Summary of Findings

The findings are summarized in three categories: perceptions of first-year teachers, perceptions of fifth-year teachers, and similarities and differences regarding principal behaviors that contribute to beginning teachers remaining in the profession. To

follow is a summary of the perceptions of each group as it relates to principal support behaviors.

Perceptions of First-Year Teachers

Perceptions of 25 first-year teachers were provided through a Q sort of 34 principal support behaviors, which were identified through literature. The quantitative analysis of these perceptions was enhanced with individual, semi-structured interviews with six first-year teachers.

Factor analysis attempted to load as many first-year teachers as possible onto one factor. Theoretical factor rotation resulted in three factors, which accounted for 22 of the 25 Q sorts. Factor A loaded 18 first-year teachers, Factor B loaded two first-year teachers, and Factor C loaded two first-year teachers. Three first-year teachers loaded as not significant.

While the majority of first-year teachers (72%) shared a common perspective, two other unique perspectives also emerged. The fact that there were only four consensus statements among the three factors demonstrated how disparate the perceptions were. A consensus statement was a statement in which item scores on the three factors were either the same or one number apart. Thus, there was close agreement on only 4 of the 34 statements.

The only principal behavior about which there was complete agreement among Factors A, B, and C was “provided positive but honest feedback, appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.” This statement was placed in the most important column by first-year teachers represented by all factors. During the open-ended

interviews, this topic was mentioned by every first-year teacher. Two first-year teachers were appreciative of the amount of feedback they received, but the others lamented the lack of feedback from the principal and expressed the desire for more.

There was also consensus among Factors A, B, and C regarding the statement “maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.” This behavior was viewed as important by all factors. Interviews reinforced that first-year teachers generally struggled with classroom management and appreciated the backing of the principal when difficult situations arose.

A consensus statement on the positive side was “fostered a welcoming, nurturing, and collegial work environment that valued critical inquiry, reflection, and risk taking.” There was also consensus that “used teaching standards to structure professional development opportunities for me and all teachers” was one of the less important principal support behaviors.

In summary, first-year teachers agreed on the high importance of two principal support behaviors. These were the items regarding providing positive but honest feedback and providing support to teacher in discipline/classroom management issues.

Perceptions of Fifth-Year Teachers

Perceptions of 14 fifth-year teachers were provided through a Q sort of 34 principal support behaviors. The quantitative analysis of these perceptions was enhanced with individual, semi-structured interviews with three fifth-year teachers.

Factor analysis attempted to load as many fifth-year teachers as possible onto one factor. Theoretical factor rotation resulted in two factors, which accounted for 11 of the 14 Q sorts. Factor A loaded five fifth-year teachers and Factor B loaded six fifth-year teachers. Three fifth-year teachers loaded as not significant.

The two factors resulted in 15 consensus items. A consensus statement was a statement in which item scores on the two factors were either the same or one number apart. Thus, there was close agreement on 15 of the 34 statements. However, only three consensus statements appeared on the positive side of the array.

Complete agreement was shared on the statement “maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.” This statement was deemed very important by both factors. However, the topic was mentioned only briefly in follow-up interviews. Other consensus statements considered somewhat important were “communicated the school’s vision and priorities” and “granted me professional autonomy and trusted my judgment.” One fifth-year teacher expressed amazement that the principal would have placed such trust in him as a new teacher.

In summary, only those consensus statements on the positive side of the array were considered to be included in the final list of principal support behaviors.

Perceptions of First-Year and Fifth-Year Teachers: Similarities and Differences

A comparison of the three first-year factors and two fifth-year factors yielded many more differences than similarities. There were only two consensus statements

shared among all five factors, one on the positive side of the array and one on the negative side of the array.

All five groups considered “maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines” as a very important support behavior on the part of principals. On the other hand, these groups of teachers deemed that “used teaching standards to structure professional development opportunities for me and all teachers” was not very important. There were five statements that produced great divergence among the factors, with differences of six, seven, or eight. These statements were not given consideration to be included in the final list of principal support behaviors.

Discussion of Findings

This study examined the role of the principal in providing support behaviors that influence first-year teachers to remain in teaching. The findings of this study supported the assertions of Brock and Grady (1998, 2001), who found that beginning teachers viewed the principal as a significant source of support and guidance. A number of teachers in this study appreciated the supportive behaviors demonstrated by their principals. On the other hand, the findings also reinforced those of Johnson (2004), who discovered that many new teachers were disappointed in the amount and types of support provided by their principals. For one first-year teacher in this study, the words of Fredricks (2001) rang true—the lack of leadership and encouragement from the principal was the deciding factor in her decision to leave teaching.

This study used Carver's (2002) framework of core tasks in supporting new teachers as the foundation to ascertain which principal behaviors are most critical in influencing first-year teachers to remain in the teaching profession. Carver identified a continuum of seven categories of core support behaviors, with a total of 37 tasks; however, she clearly stated that no principal in her study exhibited all of the supportive behaviors. The intent of this research, then, was to delineate a finite number of behaviors—perhaps no more than 10—identified by first-year teachers as most important in influencing them to remain in the profession. These behaviors can then serve as a focus for principals as they seek avenues to support beginning teachers.

Most Important Principal Support Behaviors

The data from the Q sorts resulted in little consensus among three first-year factors and two fifth-year factors. Therefore, the researcher determined to preference first-year Factor A, which represented a clear majority (72%) of the perceptions of first-year teachers in the study. Following is a review of the top ten principal support behaviors identified by first-year Factor A, along with a review of the two additional support behaviors identified by the researcher based on the interview and free response data. Table 18 depicts a synthesis of all data, including each factor score, and whether or not the behavior emerged in interviews and free responses.

Provided positive but honest feedback, appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding. Carver (2003) suggested that effective principals regularly visit classrooms and provide immediate, positive, but honest feedback to new teachers. Four

Table 18

Synthesis of Data on Most Important Principal Behaviors

Behavior	First A	First B	First C	Fifth A	Fifth B	Free Resp.	Int.
Feedback (27)	+ 4	+ 4	+ 3	+ 4	+ 2	Yes	Yes
Mentor (10)	+ 4	0	+ 4	+ 1	+ 3	Yes	Yes
Appropriate assignment (3)	+ 4	- 3	- 4	- 1	+ 4	No	No
Discipline (15)	+ 3	+ 2	+ 2	+ 3	+ 3	Yes	Yes
Responsibilities (12)	+ 3	0	0	+ 2	+ 4	Yes	Yes
Hire early (2)	+ 3	- 3	0	- 1	- 2	No	Yes
Open door (18)	+ 2	+ 4	+ 3	+ 1	+ 3	Yes	Yes
High expectations (32)	+ 2	+ 3	+ 4	+ 4	+ 1	No	Yes
Evaluation procedures (26)	+ 2	- 4	- 2	0	+ 2	No	No
Resources (11)	+ 2	+ 1	0	0	0	No	No
Encouragement						Yes	Yes
Communication						Yes	Yes

of the five factors ranked this behavior in the most important range. This concept was emphasized in numerous comments by both first-year and fifth-year teachers during interviews and on the free response section of the questionnaire. Teachers expressed a desire for more frequent, specific feedback that would let them know how they were doing. Based on the high ranking of this behavior among all factors, as well as the many voluntary comments pertaining to it, it seems evident that “providing positive but honest feedback” is one of the most critical behaviors necessary for a principal in influencing a beginning teacher to remain in the teaching profession.

Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship. An effective mentor can be instrumental to the success of a beginning teacher (Brock & Grady, 2001) and the principal should ensure that the relationship is beneficial to the novice (Wynn & Brown, 2008). Two of the three first-year factors ranked this behavior in the most important range, and one of the fifth-year factors also ranked it as important. In response to the open-ended item on the questionnaire asking how the principal could have better supported them in the first-year of teaching, both first-year and fifth-year teachers cited the desire to be paired with a master teacher as a mentor.

Assigned me to a subject area and grade level for which I am qualified. Johnson (2004) espoused placing beginning teachers in positions that match their skills, knowledge, and qualifications in order to maximize their prospects of success and personal reward. In addition, No Child Left Behind (2001) required that teachers be highly qualified for their content and level. First-year Factor A and fifth-year Factor B

assigned this behavior to the most important column; however, the other three groups placed it on the negative side of the array. The researcher noted that this behavior was not mentioned by any participants, either in the questionnaire or in the interviews. This may indicate that while some teachers consider it very important, they take for granted that it will happen due to federal requirements.

Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines. Walsdorf and Lynn (2002) recommended that principals assist new teachers with classroom management plans, procedures, and strategies. All five factors ranked this behavior as very important. Support with classroom management was also brought up in both interviews and free responses.

Clearly articulated expectations for me, including my responsibilities to students and parents (e.g., discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, mandatory parent conferences). Brock and Grady (2001) found that one of the most difficult challenges for novice teachers was understanding the expectations of their principal. According to Powell (2004), principals must clearly articulate their expectations for beginning teachers. First-year Factor A ranked this behavior as important, as did fifth-year Factor B. While it may have seemed less important to other groups who ranked it in the neutral area, that placement was belied by the comments that abounded regarding this topic.

Hired me with enough time prior to the beginning of school for me to settle in and be well-prepared. Carver (2003) described an effective principal as one who streamlines the hiring process so that novices are quickly brought on board and have a chance to

settle in before the school year begins. Although first-year Factor A ranked this item as very important, only one other group placed it on the positive side of the array, with three groups placing it on the negative side. One first-year teacher mentioned this item briefly in the interview, simply stating that once she was hired, the principal had very little interaction with her.

Maintained an open door policy so that I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary. Wynn and Brown (2008) described a recent survey in which novice teachers praised principals who were accessible, made it easy for them to ask questions and discuss problems, and provided them with guidance in problem solving. First-year Factor A ranked this item as important, but it was ranked higher by both other first-year factors, as well as fifth-year Factor B. This behavior was frequently mentioned in interviews with first-year and fifth-year teachers.

Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff. Brown and Wynn (2009) emphasized the key role the principal should play in holding high expectations for the professional practice of all teachers in order to benefit students. This item was rated important by first-year Factor A, but was placed even higher by both other first-year factors and fifth-year Factor A. While not frequently mentioned in interviews, discussion by some first-year and fifth-year teachers indicated that the principal is viewed as critical to facilitating the kind of school culture that holds high expectations for all.

Explained expectations and procedures for evaluation at the beginning of the year. Carver (2003) acknowledged that evaluation did not appear in the literature on new

teacher support; however, the principals in her study identified it as an opportunity to clarify expectations and she included it on her list of core tasks for principals. Although first-year Factor A, as well as fifth-year Factor B identified it as important, it was rated neutral or in the negative range by the other three groups. No mention was made of this behavior either in the questionnaire or during follow-up interviews.

Provided sufficient resources and supplies to meet needs and expectations.

Carver (2003) included this item on her list of core tasks for principals. First-year Factor A identified this behavior as important, whereas it was ranked in the neutral zone by all other groups. No mention was made of this topic either in the questionnaire or during follow-up interviews.

Encouraged me and made me feel welcomed, valued, and appreciated.

Comments and interview discussion convinced the researcher that this behavior merits consideration as one of the ten most important principal support behaviors. With 31 text segments identified in interview transcripts and 8 text segments in the free responses, this behavior was highly valued by both first-year and fifth-year teachers.

Communicated key information in a timely manner. Comments and interview discussion persuaded the researcher that this behavior merits consideration as one of the ten most important principal support behaviors. The interviews transcriptions contained 21 text segments and the free responses contained 9 text segments, attesting to the value of this behavior by both first-year and fifth-year teachers.

Principal Behaviors That Support First-year Teacher Retention

The lack of consensus among the Q sorts of first-year and fifth-year teachers demonstrated that novice teachers have various needs and challenges as they begin the teaching profession. An effective principal should be aware of the range of behaviors that support new teachers, ultimately contributing to their decision to remain in teaching. However, careful analysis and consideration of the data identified specific behaviors with the potential to have the greatest influence on the retention of novice teachers.

The researcher reviewed the top ten principal support behaviors identified by Factor A, along with the two additional behaviors that emerged from comments and interviews, and finalized a list of the ten behaviors believed to be most important in contributing to the retention of first-year teachers. These behaviors seemed to naturally divide into two broad categories—organizational support and interpersonal support.

This natural division was strengthened by the researcher's insights into two very disparate fifth-year teachers. One teacher described the principal support behaviors that were important to her as those that dealt with management, organization, and functional issues. The second teacher focused solely on interpersonal support behaviors as those that would influence him to remain in the teaching profession. These two teachers needed very different kinds of support. It is anticipated that by focusing on these two broad categories, a principal will be able to meet the needs of a variety of teachers.

The behaviors, presented in Table 19, were listed in a logical order rather than being ranked by frequency. These ten behaviors, then, provide the answer to the research

Table 19

Principal Behaviors That Support First-Year Teacher Retention

Organizational Support

- Hire novice teachers with enough time prior to the beginning of the school year for them to settle in and be well prepared.
- Assign first-year teachers to a subject area and grade level for which they are qualified.
- Clearly articulate expectations for new teachers, including their responsibilities to students and parents (e.g., discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, mandatory parent conferences).
- Communicate key information in a timely manner.
- Maintain a disciplined school environment and provide support to new teachers in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.

Interpersonal Support

- Encourage new teachers and make them feel welcomed, valued, and appreciated.
- Match the first-year teacher with a suitable mentor and monitor the effectiveness of the relationship.
- Set high expectations for teaching and learning and make them clear to all staff.
- Provide positive but honest feedback appropriate to the new teacher's level of readiness and support.

Table 19 (continued)

- Maintain an open door policy so that first-year teachers can ask questions and seek advice when necessary.
-

question “What principal behaviors do first-year teachers identify as contributing to their likelihood of remaining in teaching?”

Implications for Practice

This study confirmed the role played by the principal in the retention of some first-year teachers. First-year teachers validated support behaviors exhibited by principals that influenced their decisions to stay in teaching or to leave the profession. Fifth-year teachers corroborated the perceptions of first-year teachers. This study supported and extended the work of Carver (2002, 2003), who developed a framework of core tasks for principals in supporting new teachers. Through data analysis of Q sorts and interview transcriptions, the researcher developed a discrete list of ten principal support behaviors that are most likely to contribute to the likelihood of first-year teachers remaining in the profession.

Day-to-Day Practice of Principals

The findings have numerous implications for practice, particularly for the day-to-day behaviors of principals as they go about the task of providing support to new

teachers. A study by Brock and Grady (1997) found that principals had little knowledge of what kinds of support new teachers needed. Similarly, Ganser (2002) observed that few principal preparation programs included any mention of new teacher induction programs or strategies for assisting beginning teachers. Carver (2002) identified 37 core tasks for principals in supporting new teachers, but remembering and implementing them all would be a daunting undertaking for any principal. This study narrows that expansive list to ten behaviors perceived by first-year teachers to be the most critical in assisting them in a positive way.

Organizational Support. The list of principal support behaviors has been arranged in a logical order for ease of implementation. Principals should make every effort to hire teachers as early as possible prior to the beginning of the school year. First-year teachers should be informed of their specific grade level or discrete content area assignment and provided with textbooks and materials, so that they can begin to prepare long-range and short-term lesson plans. Beginning teachers could be given access to their classrooms at least several weeks prior to the opening of school to allow sufficient time for furniture arrangement, preparations of materials and displays, and addition of other items to make the room more welcoming and comfortable.

The principal should take the time to prepare specific written information that clearly articulates expectations for first-year teachers. This should contain policies and procedures, as well as deadlines for reports or other information teachers are required to submit to the principal throughout the year. In addition to discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, and mandatory parent conferences, principals should include

information about school and district requirements for professional development, mandatory faculty meetings, and extracurricular obligations. It is evident from the results of this study that no item is too trivial or inconsequential to be included. Principals should also reflect on the “unwritten rules” or expectations of the school community and make sure that new teachers are made aware of them. In addition to providing this information at the beginning of the year, it is suggested that principals schedule meetings with first-year teachers regularly throughout the course of the year. This will allow for the review of each of these critical items at the time when it is most pertinent. For example, a week or two before the first scheduled parent conferences, principals could meet with new teachers to provide tips for parent conferencing, articulate expectations for topics to be discussed, and role-play conference scenarios.

Knowing that classroom management is an area of difficulty for many first-year teachers, principals should be particularly mindful of this subject. In addition to making certain that new teachers are familiar with the schoolwide discipline policy and procedures, the principal should take the time to review each new teacher’s individual classroom management plan prior to the beginning of the school year. The principal can make sure that classroom rules are stated clearly and are appropriate to the age level of the students. He or she can also ascertain whether or not appropriate incentives and consequences are in place. Teachers in this study confirmed the desire for principals to be “hands-on” and involved in assisting with effective discipline. Proactive attention to classroom management and routines can help ensure a smooth beginning of the year for new teachers. The principal should also periodically monitor the behavior referrals,

notices, and documentation of first-year teachers to ensure that management continues to be effective throughout the year.

Interpersonal Support. The principal should set the tone of encouragement, welcome, and support for first-year teachers. Whether the principal is involved in the initial hiring process or not, he or she should be available to welcome beginning teachers at their first official campus visit. The principal should make it a point to visit new teachers informally on a regular basis, getting to know them personally and expressing appreciation for their time and efforts.

Principals should be actively involved in the pairing of each new teacher with a master teacher as a mentor. Mentors must have good communication skills, be able to build trust and rapport, and be able to model best instructional practices. Ideally, the mentor will be close in physical proximity to the first-year teacher and will teach the same grade level or content area. Regardless of whether or not the induction program is implemented by a district level administrator, the principal must be involved in selecting the most suitable teachers as mentors. The principal is also in the best position to monitor the ongoing effectiveness of the relationship between new teachers and their mentors.

The principal should set a tone of high expectations for teaching and learning, both for first-year teachers and for all staff. New teachers should be included in discussions of school improvement goals and grade-level/department improvement goals, so they can identify specific areas of focus for their continued professional learning. Principals could have regular dialogue with new teachers regarding progress on their

goals. Principals may also need to assist new teachers in integrating new learning into their daily routines and in understanding how various strategies and techniques fit together in daily practice.

The principal should schedule regular visits to first-year teachers' classrooms to provide honest feedback, separate from the evaluation process. Results of this study substantiated new teachers' desire for more frequent feedback, regardless of whether it was positive or negative. Offering frequent comments can not only prevent the continuation of unsuccessful habits or strategies but also reinforce and strengthen successful techniques. Principals should take advantage of the openness of beginning teachers to constructive criticism and avail themselves of every opportunity to improve the professional practice of first-year teachers. Finally, the principal should invite new teachers to seek him or her out as a resource. The importance of maintaining an open door policy so that first-year teachers can ask questions and seek advice cannot be underestimated. Whether the principal maintains an open door at all times or posts specific hours for informal chats, it is incumbent upon the principal to ensure that new teachers feel comfortable walking through that open door.

Armed with the knowledge of these ten support behaviors, principals can focus their energy on a finite nucleus of behaviors expected to produce the greatest results. By implementing a few specific behaviors that first-year teachers have identified as most critical—some very simple—principals could increase the sense of belonging and effectiveness of those teachers. The long-term benefits could be a more stable teaching force, which in turn is more likely to positively impact student achievement.

District Leadership Development Programs

School districts must recognize that in the past, few principal preparation programs included any mention of new teacher induction programs or strategies for assisting beginning teachers (Ganser, 2002). Therefore, districts could expand leadership development to include specific training for principals on behaviors that support new teachers. Such training could incorporate book studies (e.g., From First-Year to First-Rate, Finders and Keepers), Carver's (2003) framework, and specific information about the 10 principal behaviors that are most likely to support first-year teacher retention. Consideration could also be given to the broader spectrum of new teacher induction (Huling-Austin, 1986), the role of the mentor (Huling-Austin, et al., 1989), and the concept of principal and mentor collaboration for maximum support of new teachers (Carver, 2002).

In addition to specific topics of study, each principal could develop an action plan that outlines how they would provide ongoing support to first-year teachers in each of the ten behaviors. Principals could also identify strategies they would use to ensure continuing focus on the strategies. The group could meet regularly over the course of the school year, with each principal reporting progress, successes, and challenges. Participants could bring specific scenarios for discussion, dialogue, and role-play. This type of leadership development would provide the opportunity for principals to share ideas, learn from one another, and build a stronger repertoire of techniques to help implement behaviors that support new teachers.

District Attention to Teacher Attrition/Retention

A recent study by the Charlotte Advocates for Education (2004) revealed that principals who focused on teachers and their working conditions had the lowest attrition rates in the district. School districts concerned with high attrition rates of first-year teachers could focus on schools that have the highest retention rates and explore the leadership capacity of those principals. District leaders could observe and dialogue with those principals about specific behaviors that seem to make a difference in first-year teacher retention. Those principals could be tapped to lead district leadership development courses on how to support first-year teachers (as described above). As districts hire and place new teachers, greater consideration could be given to matching first-year teachers with principals who have demonstrated the capacity to fully support new teachers.

At the same time, districts should work to improve the leadership capacity of all principals. Districts could track attrition/retention rates at all schools. They could institute exit interviews with teachers to ascertain whether or not principal support (or lack thereof) influenced decisions to leave. An alternative to an exit interview could be an anonymous survey, which could increase the potential for honest responses. Districts could require those principals with consistently low retention rates for beginning teachers to participate in mandatory training and coursework. Ultimately, district leadership should communicate high expectations in the area of principal support for first-year teachers. Regardless of what other sources of support are available to beginning teachers,

such as mentors and instructional coaches, principals bear the responsibility of providing emotional leadership and positive culture at the school level.

Principal Preparation Programs

Recent research (Brock & Grady, 1997; Ganser, 2002) indicates that principal preparation programs have not typically addressed the topic of new teacher support in their coursework. Within this researcher's experience of reviewing principal preparation programs statewide, it has been observed that the lack of attention to this topic continues to date. While most programs include a course about supervision and evaluation of teachers, the topics tend to be generic and focused on the formal process of clinical supervision, collegial coaching, and evaluation requirements. Little consideration is given to the emotional challenges of teaching, the potential for burnout, and the interpersonal support necessary to bolster new teachers in an increasingly difficult and challenging profession. Most programs also include a course about personnel, but this is likely to focus on the laws and policies pertaining to supervision of personnel.

Colleges and universities could incorporate the findings of this study and others on the support of new teachers into appropriate coursework within principal preparation programs, perhaps in the area of supervision of teachers. An area of focus should be increasing the awareness, understanding, and sensitivity to the needs of first-year teachers, followed by strategies to address those needs. A component of the principal internship could be participating in the development and implementation of an action plan to assist new teachers. Aspiring principals should be made aware of the dire

consequences of failing to adequately support beginning teachers, in terms of lost potential, instability in the teaching force, and financial cost of replacing teachers.

Summary

This study has contributed to the scarce body of research on the topic of principal behaviors that support first-year teachers and increase their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession. These findings can be applied by individual principals in their day-to-day practice, by school district personnel who develop administrator training programs, by district personnel who supervise principals, and by colleges and universities with principal preparation programs. School districts that deliberately focus on the systematic practice of these principal support behaviors could reap the benefits of increased retention of beginning teachers. These include financial savings associated with decreased teacher turnover, the development of skilled teachers, and most importantly, the likelihood of a positive impact on student performance.

Recommendations for Further Research

Within this researcher's own experience, the findings of this study suggest the following recommendations for further research.

1. This research was limited to one K-12 school district in Southern Arizona.

The sample size was limited to 25 first-year teachers and 14 fifth-year teachers. A recommendation for a larger sample size is warranted. Additional insight might be gained from conducting similar research in other school districts with varying demographics.

2. This research study was conducted in a school district that assigned instructional coaches to provide support to first-year teachers. Further research in a school district that does not utilize instructional coaches is recommended, as the findings may be significantly different.
3. This research study included only fifth-year teachers who had remained in the teaching profession for five years. Further research involving individuals who exited the profession between their first and fifth years of teaching could provide a richer understanding of the role of the principal in influencing decisions of teachers to leave the profession.
4. This research study involved a group of first-year teachers and a group of fifth-year teachers. The Q sort could be conducted annually with a cohort of teachers for the first five years in teaching, in order to determine whether perceptions changed over time.
5. This study analyzed all first-year teachers as a group and all fifth-year teachers as a group. A larger sample would allow for analysis by level, in order to determine if there are significant differences in the perceptions of elementary, middle, and high school teachers.
6. The study could be conducted with principals, in order to determine whether there were significant differences in the perception of first-year teachers and their principals. Results could prove enlightening to principals and school districts. Such information could also provide a richer context for principal

professional development and university coursework in principal preparation programs.

7. The study could be expanded by incorporating the influence of school culture on the retention decisions of first-year teachers.
8. In this study, the data from interviews with six first-year teachers and three fifth-year teachers provided supporting evidence for the findings. Additional insight could be gained from a study using purely qualitative methods.

Conclusion

As attrition rates of beginning teachers have been a concern for over three decades, various strategies have been implemented to increase the retention of promising new teachers, including mentoring and induction programs. More recently, attention has shifted to the role of the principal in contributing to the retention of first-year teachers. Research has shown that principals are key to the successful socialization and induction of beginning teachers (Brock & Grady, 2001). Stripling (2004) identified specific principal competencies that are significant in positively impacting the retention of new teachers. The principal's involvement with beginning teachers influences the growth and development of their skills, as well as their ultimate career decision (Gimbert & Fultz, 2008).

This study has added to the body of research on principal behaviors that support first-year teachers and contribute to their likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession. It has extended the groundbreaking work of Carver (2002, 2003), who through literature and qualitative methods identified 37 core tasks of principals in

supporting new teachers. This study asked first-year teachers to prioritize behaviors in order to determine which were most crucial to the support of new teachers. In addition, this study related these principal behaviors not only to the support of beginning teachers, but also to their retention decisions.

Although there were certainly different perspectives represented in the findings, there were also key areas of agreement and consensus. The 10 most critical principal support behaviors were identified through analysis of Q sorts, questionnaire responses, and follow-up interviews. Results reinforced the essential role of the principal in supporting new teachers and contributing to the likelihood of them remaining in the teaching profession. In the words of a fifth-year teacher, “The principal has everything to do with it. He is the touchstone—the guide.”

APPENDIX A
QUESTIONNAIRE

Gender: Male Female
 Ethnicity: Caucasian African American Hispanic Asian American
 Native American Other

Description of the neighborhood you grew up in: Wealthy Upper Middle Class
 Middle Class Lower Middle Class Poor

Age: _____

Teaching is my first career. Yes No

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
 Other—please describe: _____

Why did you decide to become a teacher? Please mark all that apply;

- I always wanted to or always thought I would be good at it.
 I like the vacations, working hours, and/or job security.
 I like working with children or young people.
 I wanted to contribute to society/be of service to others.
 I was inspired by or encouraged by my former teachers.
 My relatives were teachers.
 Other—please describe: _____

Type of teacher preparation program: university-based alternative certification

Degree earned: Bachelors Masters Masters plus units

Approximate college GPA: 2.0-2.4 2.5-2.9 3.0-3.4 3.5-4.0

My coursework, field experiences, and student teaching prepared me well for teaching.

- Yes Somewhat Not very well No

I am fully certified for the content I teach. Yes No

I am highly qualified for the content I teach. Yes No

Level of School I teach: Elementary School Middle School High School

Average socioeconomic level of my students: Low Middle High

School in which I teach is one I really wanted to teach in. Yes No

I had previous experience(s) at this school as a student, for a practicum, or for student teaching.

- Yes No

My colleagues offer me professional support. Yes Somewhat Not very much No

My family and friends offer me social support. Yes Somewhat Not very much No

I am satisfied with the salary I receive. ___ Yes ___ Somewhat ___ Not really ___ No

I am satisfied with the respect given to teachers. ___ Yes ___ Somewhat ___ Not really ___ No

I am satisfied with the upward mobility available to teachers. ___ Yes ___ Somewhat ___ Not really ___ No

I am satisfied with my current teaching experiences as compared to my expectations of the teaching profession.

 ___ Yes ___ Somewhat ___ Not really ___ No

I plan on teaching again next year. ___ Yes ___ No

On a scale of 1–10, with 1 being not likely and 10 being highly likely, how likely is it that you will remain in the teaching profession for the next five years? _____

If you are considering leaving the profession, what are the key factors that will help you make your decision?

What other ways could your principal have helped support you in your first year of teaching?

If you would be willing to participate in a follow-up interview, please print your contact information below:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

E-mail: _____

APPENDIX B

FIRST-YEAR TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introductory disclosure: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Before we begin, I would like to remind you that your participation is voluntary and that you can withdraw at any time. There are minimal risks to participate, and there is no personal benefit or cost to you, aside from your time. You will not be personally identified, and measures will be taken to ensure that others do not learn your identity. No names will be used in transcribing from the audiotape or writing up notes, and the audiotapes will be reviewed only in my home or in the office of my dissertation advisor. Information shared during the interview will be kept confidential by me and not shared with district administration. Signed consent forms will be kept in a locked cabinet at the university. After the study is complete and the dissertation is accepted, the questionnaires, Q sorts, and transcripts will be shredded and the audiotapes physically destroyed.

Introduction: The purpose of this interview is to understand how your perceptions of the principal's support behaviors influence your job satisfaction and, ultimately, your decision to remain in or leave the teaching profession. The interview is organized around the key themes for this study. Please respond to the questions by sharing your thoughts and giving examples.

Theme: Teachers' perceptions of principal support behaviors

- As you reflect on how you placed statements on your grid, give examples of the principal's support behaviors.
- Is there anything else you would like to share about how you sorted the principal support behaviors?

Theme: Teachers' perceptions of frequency of key principal support behaviors

- Tell me about the support behaviors your principal exhibited most frequently.
- Give examples of behaviors you wish your principal would have exhibited more frequently.

Theme: The influence of principals' support behaviors on decisions regarding remaining in the teaching profession

- As you reflect on your decision to stay in teaching or leave teaching, what factors would influence you to stay? What factors would influence you to leave?

- What other support behaviors could your principal have exhibited that might have influenced your decision?
- Was there a career moment—a specific incident or instant when you realized your decision was made? When was your decision made?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX C

FIFTH-YEAR TEACHER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Introductory disclosure: Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Before we begin, I would like to remind you that your participation is voluntary and that you can withdraw at any time. There are minimal risks to participate, and there is no personal benefit or cost to you, aside from your time. You will not be personally identified, and measures will be taken to ensure that others do not learn your identity. No names will be used in transcribing from the audiotape or writing up notes, and the audiotapes will be reviewed only in my home or in the office of my dissertation advisor. Information shared during the interview will be kept confidential by me and not shared with district administration. Signed consent forms will be kept in a locked cabinet at the university. After the study is complete and the dissertation is accepted, the questionnaires, Q sorts, and transcripts will be shredded and the audiotapes physically destroyed.

Introduction: The purpose of this interview is to understand how your perceptions of the principal's support behaviors during your first year of teaching influenced your job satisfaction and, ultimately, your decision to remain in the teaching profession. The interview is organized around the key themes for this study. Please respond to the questions by sharing your thoughts and giving examples.

Theme: Teachers' perceptions of principal support behaviors

- As you reflect on how you placed statements on your grid, give examples of the principal's support behaviors.
- Is there anything else you would like to share about how you sorted the principal support behaviors?

Theme: Teachers' perceptions of frequency of key principal support behaviors

- Tell me about the support behaviors your principal exhibited most frequently.
- Give examples of behaviors you wish your principal would have exhibited more frequently.

Theme: The influence of principals' support behaviors on decisions regarding remaining in the teaching profession

- As you reflect on your decision to stay in teaching, what factors influenced you to stay?

- What other support behaviors could your principal have exhibited that might have influenced your decision?
- Was there a career moment—a specific incident or instant when you realized your decision was made? When was your decision made?
- What advice would you give to first-year teachers? What advice would you give principals in supporting first-year teachers?
- Is there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX D

SITE AUTHORIZATION LETTER (SAMPLE)

Date

Carolyn Dumler
5025 West Lambert Lane
Tucson, AZ 85742

Dear Ms. Dumler,

I have reviewed your request regarding your study and am pleased to support your research project entitled "Principal Behaviors That Support First-Year Teacher Retention." Your request to use <<name of district>> as a research site is granted. The research will include the administration of questionnaires, a prioritizing activity, and follow-up interviews with first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers. This authorization covers the time period of March 2009 through December 2009. We look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Name
Title

APPENDIX E

RECRUITMENT MATERIALS

Phone and Personal Visit Protocol

To seek a school district's permission for involvement in this dissertation study, I contacted the superintendent's office to introduce myself and explain the purpose for my appointment with the superintendent.

The script of this conversation was as follows:

"I am a researcher who is conducting a dissertation study in order to fulfill the requirements for a doctoral degree in Educational Leadership at the University of Arizona. The purpose of this dissertation study is to investigate the perceptions of first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers regarding principal behaviors that support first-year teacher retention. I would like to meet with the superintendent in order to explain this dissertation study and seek approval for this district's participation."

If the superintendent was unavailable or not willing to meet with me, I will seek another district for participation in this dissertation study.

When I met with the superintendent, I explained this dissertation study and answered any questions. I shared the written information (below) and sought approval for the district's involvement. I presented the superintendent with the site authorization form (see Appendix D). Upon approval from the superintendent to conduct this dissertation study in the school district, I contacted other administrators and teachers, as explained in the Project Review Form. I also forwarded the written school district authorization to the University's Human Subjects Protection.

E-mails and Letters Requesting Participation

Title of Study: *Principal Behaviors That Support First-Year Teacher Retention*

Dear Educator:

Thank you for allowing me the time to discuss with you a research study that I am conducting as part of my doctoral studies in Educational Leadership at the University of Arizona. You are being invited to participate voluntarily in the above-titled research

study. The purpose of this study is to learn your views of principal support behaviors that influence first-year teachers' likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession.

The [Name] School District in conjunction with the University of Arizona has granted approval for me to conduct this research study. If you agree to participate, your participation will involve a brief questionnaire and a prioritizing activity of your perceptions of principal support behaviors. This questionnaire and activity would take approximately 30 minutes of your time. At a later date, some of you will be asked to participate in an individual interview. The interview would take approximately 20-30 minutes of your time.

I am seeking volunteers from first-year teachers and fifth-year teachers in your school district. The study will provide participants with the opportunity to describe the principal behaviors that support first-year teachers and influence their likelihood of remaining in teaching. This study is not intended to be an evaluation of your principal or his/her supportive behaviors. The teacher's name, the principal's name, or school name will not be used or identified in this study. This study is voluntary, and participants can withdraw from the study at any time. The benefit that participants may reasonably expect is the sense of helping a doctoral student with research that informs ways to improve practice in schools.

Participants will be asked to fill out a brief questionnaire with biographical information, as well as information about educational preparation, employment experience, and job satisfaction. Then you will be asked to complete a prioritizing activity of principal support behaviors. There are no right or wrong answers, so

participants are asked not to hesitate to respond honestly. Participants will not be personally identified, and participants are not to place your names on the prioritizing grid.

After completion of the activity, participants are asked to place the questionnaire, cards, and other documents in a manila envelope, seal the envelope, and return it to the researcher. At a later date, participants may be contacted for a one-on-one interview. The following measures will ensure that others do not learn your identity or what you share in the interview.

1. No names will be used in transcribing from the audiotape or in writing up notes.
2. Signed consent forms will be kept in a locked cabinet in Room EDUC 218 at the University of Arizona, College of Education.
3. The audiotapes will be reviewed only in my home or in the office of my dissertation adviser.
4. After the study is complete and the dissertation is accepted, the questionnaires, Q sorts, and transcripts will be shredded and the audiotapes physically destroyed.
5. What is discussed by individual participants during our interview will be kept confidential by me. Information revealed in the interview will not be shared with district administration. In the process, trust and rapport are developed, and participants will agree to keep information confidential as well.

If you are interested in voluntarily participating in a follow-up interview, please provide your contact information as requested on the questionnaire. I will contact you with a time, date, and location for the interview.

Thank you in advance for considering my invitation to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Dumler, M.Ed.

APPENDIX F

INFORMED CONSENT

Principal Behaviors that Support First-Year Teacher Retention

Introduction

You are being invited to take part in a research study. The information in this form is provided to help you decide whether or not to take part. Study personnel will be available to answer your questions and provide additional information. If you decide to take part in the study, you will be asked to sign this consent form. A copy of this form will be given to you.

What is the purpose of this research study?

The purpose of this project is to learn your views of principal support behaviors that influence first-year teachers' likelihood of remaining in the teaching profession.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are being invited to participate in this study because you are a first-year teacher with views on principal support behaviors, or you are a fifth-year teacher who has made the decision to remain in the profession.

How many people will be asked to participate in this study?

Approximately 60-70 people will be asked to participate in this study.

What will happen during this study?

1. You will be asked to complete a brief questionnaire requesting biographical information and information regarding your educational preparation, employment experience, and job satisfaction.

2. You will be asked to complete an activity prioritizing principal support behaviors.

3. Following the prioritizing activity, you may be asked to participate in a one-on-one audiotaped interview regarding your perceptions of principal behaviors that support first-year teachers.

I am willing to participate in an interview.

I am not willing to participate in an interview.

How long will I be in this study?

It will take approximately 10 minutes for the questionnaire, 20 minutes for the prioritizing activity, and 20–30 minutes for the audiotaped one-on-one interview.

Are there any risks to me?

There is minimal risk which means the probability and magnitude of harm or discomfort anticipated in the research is not greater in and of itself than what is ordinarily encountered in daily life or during the performance of routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. [45 CFR 46.102 (i).]

Are there any benefits to me?

You will not receive any benefit from taking part in this study. The broader benefit to your participation is that the results will provide greater depth of knowledge regarding the principal behaviors that best support first-year teachers and influence them to remain in the teaching profession.

What are the alternatives for participating in this study?

You can participate without being audiotaped. The other alternative is not to participate in this study.

Will there be any costs to me?

Aside from your time, there are no costs for taking part in the study.

Will I be paid to participate in the study?

You will not be paid for your participation.

Will video or audio recordings be made of me during the study?

I will make an audio recording during the study so that I can be certain that your responses are recorded accurately only if you check the first box below:

- I give my permission for an audio recording to be made of me during my participation in this research study.
- I do not give my permission for an audio recording to be made of me during my participation in this research study.

Will the information that is obtained from me be kept confidential?

The only persons who will know that you participated in this study will be the principal researcher, Carolyn Dumler, and her University advisor, Dr. J. Robert Hendricks. Your records will be confidential. You will not be identified in any reports or publications resulting from the study. Representatives of regulatory agencies including The University of Arizona Human Subjects Protection Program may access your records.

May I change my mind about participating?

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may decide not to begin or to stop the study at any time. Your refusing to participate will have no effect on you. You can discontinue your participation with no effect on you. Also any new information discovered about the research will be provided to you. This information could affect your willingness to continue your participation.

Whom can I contact for additional information?

You can obtain further information about the research or voice concerns or complaints about the research by calling the Principal Investigator, Carolyn Dumler, M.Ed. at 520-820-0760. If you have questions concerning your rights as a research participant, have general questions, concerns, or complaints or would like to give input about the research and can't reach the research team, or want to talk to someone other than the research team, you may call the University of Arizona Institutional Review Board office at (520) 626-6721. (If out of state, use the toll-free number, 1-866-278-1455.) If you would like to contact the Human Subjects Protection Program via the web (this can be anonymous), please visit <http://www.irb.arizona.edu/contact/>.

Your Signature

By signing this form, I affirm that I have read the information contained in the form, that the study has been explained to me, that my questions have been answered and that I agree to take part in this study. I do not give up any of my legal rights by signing this form.

 Name (Printed)

 Participant's Signature

 Date signed
Statement by person obtaining consent

I certify that I have explained the research study to the person who has agreed to participate and that he or she has been informed of the purpose, the procedures, the possible risks, and the potential benefits associated with participation in this study. Any questions raised have been answered to the participant's satisfaction.

Carolyn Dumler, M.Ed.
Name of study personnel

 Study personnel signature

 Date signed

APPENDIX G

Q SORT PROTOCOL

The Q sort was conducted either individually or in small groups. Participants were given a deck of 34 cards with a principal support behavior printed on each one.

1. Explained the hiring process to me and assisted me upon request.
2. Hired me with enough time prior to the beginning of school for me to settle in and be well prepared.
3. Assigned me to a subject area and grade level for which I am qualified.
4. Assigned me to a classroom placement that optimized my chance for success.
5. Made sure I was not assigned the most challenging students.
6. Protected my time by limiting extra duties and responsibilities (e.g., committee/club assignments, coaching, extracurricular).
7. Facilitated an introduction and welcome to the campus.
8. Provided a campus orientation to highlight available resources, procedures, and policies.
9. Communicated the school's vision and priorities.
10. Matched me with a suitable mentor and monitored the effectiveness of our relationship.
11. Provided sufficient resources and supplies to meet needs and expectations.
12. Clearly articulated expectations for me, including my responsibilities to students and parents (e.g., discipline and grading policies, reporting periods, mandatory parent conferences).
13. Assisted me with required state and district paperwork.
14. Assisted me in understanding the competing demands of state and district mandates.
15. Maintained a disciplined school environment and provided support to me in classroom management/discipline and development of classroom routines.
16. Maintained regular personal communication with me to build our relationship.
17. Provided written or oral praise to me when I did well.
18. Maintained an open door policy so I could ask questions and seek advice when necessary.
19. Facilitated my participation in professional development activities that targeted my professional growth needs.
20. Provided opportunities and incentives for me to work with other teachers in collaborative teams.
21. Provided opportunities for me to gather and work together with other first-year teachers.
22. Granted me professional autonomy and trusted my judgment.
23. Visited my classroom and provided feedback not related to formal evaluation.
24. Reviewed my lesson plans and offered instruction in teaching strategies.
25. Facilitated my observation of other teachers.

26. Explained expectations and procedures for evaluation at the beginning of the year.
27. Provided positive but honest feedback appropriate to my level of readiness and understanding.
28. Helped me set reasonable goals for my learning and development.
29. Coordinated evaluation activities with the induction and mentoring program to prevent unnecessary overlap and conflicting expectations.
30. Fostered a welcoming, nurturing, and collegial work environment that valued critical inquiry, reflection, and risk taking.
31. Encouraged teachers on staff to understand and acknowledge my development and needs.
32. Set high expectations for teaching and learning and made them clear to me and all staff.
33. Used teaching standards to structure professional development opportunities for me and all teachers.
34. Modeled collaborative working behavior and promoted a positive, friendly school climate.

Participants were given the following condition of instruction to facilitate their completion of the Q sort. Participants were also given a prioritizing grid (see below) to record their responses.

Instructions for Prioritizing Activity

1. You have a deck of cards—on each one is printed a principal behavior intended to support first-year teachers. Please read through all of them one time.
2. After doing so, please re-read them, this time sorting them into one of three piles. Place those which are most important to the right, those which are least important to the left, and in the middle those about which you are either neutral, ambivalent, or uncertain.
3. Please keep in mind that you are sorting the cards according to importance. You are NOT making a judgment that a behavior is exhibited or not exhibited by your principal.
4. Read the pile on the left and select THREE statements describing principal behaviors that are LEAST important in influencing first-year teachers to remain in teaching. Place those three cards on the three boxes at the far left of the grid.
5. Now read the pile on the right and select THREE statements describing principal behaviors that are MOST important in influencing first-year teachers to remain in teaching. Place those three cards on the three boxes at the far right of the grid.
6. Read through the rest of the statements in each pile and work back and forth across the distribution to construct your perspective, following the structure of the model on the prioritizing grid. Items placed under the middle marker (0) often are the ones left over after all of the positive and negative positions have been filled.

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