

PERCEPTIONS OF NEW TEACHERS FOR IMPROVING TEACHER RETENTION
IN A GEORGIA SUBURBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

by

STEPHANIE L. GORDY

(Under the direction of C. Thomas Holmes)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine which employee retention initiatives or incentives are preferred by employees in a Georgia suburban school system. If there was a preferred retention initiative/incentive, the study also sought to determine if the teachers' race, age, gender or school level taught affected the type of retention initiative/incentive preferred. The study also aimed to gather and analyze data to be useful in creating a comprehensive retention plan in order to attract and retain teachers.

Data used in this study were collected from a randomly selected sample of teachers who had five years or less experience in a the Cobb County School District, a Georgia suburban school system. The retention questionnaires, listing major retention initiatives and incentives identified in the research, were mailed in packets to each of the 350 randomly selected teachers with five years or less experience in the Cobb County School District (CCSD). There were 245 questionnaires returned by sampled participants.

The results obtained from data analysis indicated the following: (1) There is a statistically significant difference between the means scores for each retention initiative/incentive; (2) There is a statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers working in elementary, middle or high school; (3) There is a statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different age categories; (4) There is a statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different race categories; and (5) There is a statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different gender categories. Conclusions from this study indicate teachers' specific preferred retention initiatives/incentives are salary, a retention bonus, a tuition reimbursement program, involvement in the decision-making and increased benefits options. Furthermore, the study revealed teachers preferred the compensation category first, the benefits category second, the workplace enhancement category third, the scheduling category fourth, and the employee relations category fifth.

INDEX WORDS: Job Satisfaction, Motivation, Retention, Retention Incentive, Retention Initiative, Retention Strategies, Teacher Attrition, Teacher Motivation, Teacher Retention, Teacher Turnover

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my wonderful family for their encouragement, support, patience and unconditional love. It is also dedicated to both local and central office administrators who work hard everyday to ensure we attract and retain the most highly-qualified teachers for our students in order to give them the best chance to succeed.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The state of Georgia is facing a critical teacher shortage due to school-aged populations increasing, a large percent of the teaching force approaching retirement, the popularity of reduced class sizes, and increased attrition. As part of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, Congress issued another challenge to ensure that, by the end of the 2005-2006 school year, every classroom in America has a teacher who is highly qualified. Title IIA, a part of the NCLB Act, places major emphasis on teacher quality as a factor in improving student achievement. Given strong evidence that teacher effectiveness increases sharply after the first few years of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2003; Kain & Singleton, 1996), it is imperative that school districts develop a comprehensive retention plan consisting of effective retention strategies.

In FY02, 1,470,634 PreK-12 students were enrolled in Georgia public schools, 4,318 more than was projected (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2002, p.5). In addition, the number of new teachers produced by traditional Georgia teacher preparation programs continues to decline, thereby, exacerbating the problem (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2002).

Nationally, about 30% of new teachers leave the profession before the second year (Bullough, Knowles, & Crow, 1992). Additionally, as many as 60% of teachers leave

teaching after being in the classroom for only five years (Odell, 1990). In Georgia, the average three-year attrition rate during FY89-FY97 for new teachers with no experience was 25.55% and the average five-year attrition rate during FY89-FY95 was 33.43% (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2001a, p. 5).

One of the major drivers for employee retention is the cost of turnover. School districts understand that keeping good employees saves money which can be used for other needs. The ultimate method of alleviating the costs of turnover and high recruitment is to manage for retention (Fyock, 1998). In this day of accountability, our stakeholders demand results with optimum efficiency of resources.

Any problem as complex as teacher retention will not have a one-size-fits-all solution. School districts must develop and implement strategies to improve overall teacher retention rates. Retention initiatives will reduce the overall impact of teacher shortages. As the projected number of new teacher hires continues to increase, it becomes important to recruit teachers who are less likely to leave after three to five years and to retain teachers who are currently in the workforce (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2001a, p. 6). High turnover of teachers in schools not only causes staffing problems but also harms the school environment and student performance (Ingersoll & Smith, 2003, p. 31).

Since the early 1990s, the annual number of exits from teaching has surpassed the number of entrants by an increasing amount, putting pressure on the nation's hiring systems (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p. 8). Research focusing on the value-added connection between teaching and learning has found that teachers produce a strong cumulative effect on student achievement (Stronge & Hindman, 2003, p. 48).

School districts should be focused on developing a niche to differentiate itself from other districts to ensure it can obtain new teachers and satisfy the current ones. One way to develop a niche is to provide special incentives for teachers to remain in the district. Norton (1999) found that increasingly school districts must provide these special incentives above and beyond appropriate compensation and benefits if teachers are to be encouraged to remain in the system. According to Norton, traditional incentives, although costly, have not resulted in long-term employee motivation.

School districts use varying methods to attract and retain teachers. However, these methods are frequently not based on teacher needs, opinions, or suggestions (Engleking, 1988). In order to develop a long-term retention plan consisting of effective retention initiatives and incentives, it is important to survey teachers to gather their input.

This study will assist school districts in developing a package of initiatives and incentive options which may improve recruitment efforts and retention rates. These initiatives and incentives should also improve the classroom environment for teachers and support personnel by providing staff stability across the district.

Justification

A preliminary study of the literature indicates there is a shortage of research in the area of teacher retention. This study will be useful to school districts as they grapple with the current retention challenges brought on by the tight labor market. This research should provide a foundation from which additional studies in this area can be conducted. Quantitative data about teacher-preferred retention practices could assist school districts in designing future recruitment and retention strategies.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the principal theories of motivation and job satisfaction. According to Chung (1977), studying needs theories is important not only for understanding why people behave a certain way, but also for increasing the effectiveness of an incentive system. Although the models of Maslow, Alderfer, and Murray differ in some respects, they argue that human needs represent the primary driving force behind employee behavior in organizational settings (Steers & Porter, 1987). The effectiveness of an incentive system will increase when it relates to the need structure of employees (Chung, 1977).

Purpose of the Study

The problem of the study was to determine which employee retention initiatives or incentives are preferred by teachers in a Georgia suburban school district. It is important for school districts to gather and analyze data from teachers regarding their preferred retention initiatives and incentives to create a comprehensive retention plan in order to attract and retain teachers. Developing retention strategies to ensure teachers who are recruited stay is especially important for new teachers who leave at continuing high rates which are presently at more than 30% within the first five years (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2002, p.11).

Specifically, this study attempted to answer the following research questions:

1. Which employee retention initiatives and incentives are preferred by teachers who have five years or less experience in a large suburban school district in Atlanta, Georgia?
2. Does the teachers' school level (i.e., elementary, middle or high) affect the type of retention initiative/incentive preferred?
3. Does the teachers' age category affect the type of retention initiative/incentive preferred?
4. Does the teachers' race affect the type of retention initiative/incentive preferred?

5. Does the teachers' gender affect the type of retention initiative/incentive preferred?

Limitations

The following constraints were applicable to this study:

1. This study is limited to one large suburban school district in Atlanta, Georgia. It does not necessarily reflect results which could be obtained from a substantially larger or smaller population.
2. This study was limited to certificated, contracted teachers with one to five years experience in the district. In addition, differences between school levels such as elementary, middle and high preferred retention initiatives/incentives may be influenced by the difference in cultures or other factors not foreseen by the researcher.
3. This study was limited by the inherent problems associated with researcher-developed instruments, especially concerning content validity and reliability. The questionnaire for this study has not been used in other research. An analysis of the questions through research, expert review, and the field-test attempted to establish the content validity of the instrument.
4. Self-reporting questionnaire research has some inherent limitations. As Issac and Michael (1985) observe, risks including getting responses only from those that are accessible and cooperative; surveys make respondents feel special so the investigator may get an artificial response; and the instruments are susceptible to overrater and underrater bias. The extent of accuracy of the information reported by the teachers responding is unknown and a limitation.

Operational Definitions

Job Satisfaction – is “the general attitude of employees towards their jobs which is determined by the extent that their jobs fulfill their dominant needs and are consistent with their expectations and values” (Wexley & Yukl, 1975, p.1).

Migration – refers to teaches who leave a school or district for another.

Qualified Teacher – Teacher fully meeting standard credential and degree requirements.

Recruitment – refers to those activities in human resources designed to make available the numbers and quality of personnel needed to carry on the work of the school district (Castetter, 1986).

Suburban – refers to “any school district headquartered inside a Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area (SMSA) with more than 50% of its residents classified as urban and which does not serve the central city/cities of the SMSA is classified as a suburban school district” (Castetter, 1991).

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 presented an introduction to the study. The introduction included a justification of the study, conceptual framework, the purpose of the study, research questions used in the study, constraints of the study, operational definitions, and the organization of the study.

Chapter 2 consists of a review of the literature related to the problem which was organized around the following major topics: (1) principal theories of motivation and job satisfaction; (2) approaches to teacher retention and attrition; (3) factors affecting demand for entry-level teachers; (4) teacher turnover including types, impact and reasons; and (5) categories of retention strategies including teacher relations, compensation, benefits, scheduling and workplace enhancement.

Chapter 3 describes the research procedures. The null hypothesis, population sample, data collection, mean scores, instrumentation, and data analysis are given. Chapter 4 provides an analysis of the findings, conclusions of the study, and recommendations. Chapter 5 summarizes the study and provides a focus for future reflection on what incentives/modifications are required to enhance teacher recruitment and retention.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This study was designed to determine what incentives are required to enhance teacher recruitment and retention. A review of selected literature related to the problem is organized around the following major topics: (1) principal theories of motivation and job satisfaction; (2) approaches to teacher retention and attrition; (3) types of teacher turnover; (4) impact of teacher turnover; (5) reasons for teacher turnover; (6) categories of retention strategies including teacher relations, compensation, benefits, scheduling and workplace enhancement.

Principal Theories of Motivation and Job Satisfaction

Motivation research has a long history of considering employee motives and needs (Alderfer, 1969; Herzberg, Mausner, & Snyderman, 1967; Maslow, 1954; McClelland, 1961; Vroom, 1964). Interest in these two areas peaked in the 1970s and early 1980s; however, in the last 15 years, limited empirical or theoretical research has been conducted (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). The majority of work on motives and needs in the 1990s falls into three areas: an examination of job attributes that motivate individuals, research that examines need for achievement, and research on the protestant work ethic (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999).

Motivated workers ensure that the organization will survive and be productive and the most successful organizations are those that provide motivating environments (Smith, 1994). Seeking ways to motivate and build worker morale pays dividends to any organization (Smith). Although a tremendous amount of research has gone into the study of motivation, discovering

what motivates people is a complex and dynamic process (Smith). The major shortcoming of many theories is a simplistic approach to human behavior (Smith).

Studying need theories is important not only for understanding why people behave a certain way, but also for increasing the effectiveness of an incentive system (Chung, 1977). The effectiveness of an incentive system will increase when it relates to the need structure of employees (Chung). An understanding of employee motivation enables us to make revisions in human resources activities based on the responses and behaviors of employees (Schuler, 1998). Individuals are motivated to behave or perform in particular ways based on their perception of whether intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are being offered and the importance of their needs and values that are likely to be fulfilled (Schuler).

Employee performance is frequently described as a joint function of ability and motivation; one of the primary tasks facing an employer is motivating employees to perform to the best of their abilities (Moorhead & Griffin, 1998). Pinder (1998) described work motivation as the set of internal and external forces that initiate work-related behavior, and determine its form, direction, intensity, and duration. This definition recognized the influence of both environmental forces, such as organizational reward systems, and forces inherent in the person, such as the effect of individual needs and motives on work-related behavior (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). Advances made in the understanding of employee motivation have not kept pace with the rapid changes in employee attitudes and hence changes in those things that do motivate them (Kovach, 1980). Today's employer, when trying to improve worker motivation, should find out what will motivate his or her employees (Kovach, 1980).

Another important proposition about human motivation is that a satisfied need is no longer a motivator of behavior (Chung, 1977). This concept is significant, for it limits the frequent use of certain incentives that cannot be motivators beyond a certain level of satisfaction.

Work satisfaction and human motivation were primary topics in the research activities of behavioral scientists during the 1950s and the 1960s (Webb, Greer, Montello & Norton, 1987). During this period, Herzberg and McGregor set forth their now well-known theories which have significant implications for personnel administration (Webb et al., 1987).

The growing emphasis on maximizing human resources emanated from the realization that organizations progress to the extent that they are able to motivate and develop people (Webb, et al., 1987). It is essential, therefore, that the personnel administrator understand the basic concepts of human motivation as they relate to maximizing human resources. The personnel administrator can develop a better understanding of employee behavior by studying the various concepts and theories of human motivation (Webb, et al.) The models of Maslow, Alderfer, and Murray, while differing in some respects, argue that human needs represent the primary driving force behind employee behavior in organizational settings (Steers & Porter, 1987).

There are several traditional principal theories of motivation and job satisfaction including Motives and Needs Theory, Expectancy Theory, Equity and Justice Theory, Goal Setting Theory, Cognitive Evaluation Theory, Job Characteristics Theory (Work Design) and Reinforcement Theory.

Motives and Needs Theory

Maslow

One of the most widely published theories of work motivation is Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (Maslow, 1954). He determined people had an ascending order of needs progressing one step at a time, beginning with basic physiological needs and concluding at the top of the pyramid with self-actualization (Tracey, 1994). From the time he introduced it in the mid-1940s until the late 1950s, Maslow's theory remained primarily in the realm of clinical psychology, where he did most of his developmental work (Steers & Porter, 1987). As more attention began to be focused on the role of motivation at work, the need hierarchy theory emerged in the early 1960s as an appealing model of human behavior in organizations (Steers & Porter, 1987).

According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, a need is a potential motivator until it is realized or satisfied. As the need is satisfied, it becomes ineffective as a motivator and the next higher order need becomes the motivator (Montello, 1994). This theory predicts that lower order needs such as safety, security, and pay must be satisfied before higher order needs.

Waters and Roach factor-analyzed Maslow need categories and identified two factors: higher-order needs including esteem, autonomy, prestige, and self-actualization, and lower-level needs such as security, pressure, and friendship (Chung, 1977).

Alderfer

Alderfer proposed a modified need hierarchy theory, entitled ERG Theory, that essentially collapses Maslow's five hierarchical levels into three (Steers & Porter, 1987). Alderfer condensed the Maslow need hierarchy into existence, relatedness, and growth needs which he called the ERG theory (Chung, 1977). Existence needs includes Maslow's

physiological and safety needs; relatedness needs encompass socialization and self-esteem; and growth-oriented needs include the individual's desire to be self-confident, creative, and productive which is similar to Maslow's self-esteem and self-actualization (Chung).

Alderfer, like Maslow, arranged needs in a hierarchy in the order of their importance (Chung, 1977). The satisfaction of a need not only influences its own importance but also affects the importance of higher-order needs (Chung). He agreed with Maslow that the satisfaction of higher-order needs (growth) make them more important rather than less important (Chung). However, Alderfer differed from Maslow's theory in that the lack of higher-order need satisfaction made lower-order needs more important (Chung). He assumed that all needs can be simultaneously active; it is not necessary that lower-order needs have to be satisfied before higher-order needs emerge (Chung). Alderfer's three levels of needs including existence, relatedness, and growth become the basis for developing the theories and programs of extrinsic, interactive, and intrinsic motivation (Chung).

McClelland

McClelland indicated that many needs are not physiological and universal as Maslow suggested (Chung, 1977). Rather, these are socially acquired and vary from culture to culture (Chung). From his research, he identified three types of acquired needs: the need for achievement, the need for affiliation, and the need for power (Chung). The need for achievement reflects the desire for setting moderate task goals, taking responsibility, and receiving performance feedback (Chung). The need for affiliation reflects the desire for interaction with other people, a concern for the quality of interpersonal relationships, and a desire to be accepted by others (Chung). The need for power reflects the desire for influencing others, exercising control over others, and maintaining a superior-subordinate relationship (Chung). Most people

have some aspects of all of these needs, but seldom in the same strength (Chung). Depending on how these needs are structured in an individual, motivation will take different forms (Chung).

McGregor

McGregor pointed out that there are two distinct “theories” about what motivates people in the workplace (Tracey, 1994). Theory X presumes that people dislike work and must be forced to direct their energies toward the goals of the organization (Tracey). This theory assumes that people are basically unmotivated and that they avoid responsibility. Theory X people are interested only in their own self-centered goals (Tracey).

Theory Y assumes that people are intrinsically motivated and that they spontaneously work toward the organization’s goals (Tracey). The Theory Y People represent the ideal worker from management’s perspective as they need very little direction or guidance, and they seek responsibility and the good of the organization (Tracey).

Herzberg

Herzberg’s two-factor theory of organizational incentives coincided with the two-level theory of needs (Chung, 1977). The dichotomization of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation generally supports the position of the two-level theory (Chung). Herzberg concluded that there were two kinds of factors in any job: hygiene and motivation (Schuler, 1998). The motivation-hygiene model is based on the idea that one set of job characteristics determines the degree of worker dissatisfaction (hygiene), and another set determines the degree of positive satisfaction (motivation) (Schuler). To summarize Herzberg’s findings, what motivates employees toward effective work is a job that is challenging and that encourages feelings of achievement, growth, responsibility, advancement, earned recognition, and enjoyment of the work itself (Schuler). What dissatisfies employees are primarily factors that are not directly part of the job itself, such

as poor working conditions, bad lighting, insufficient coffee breaks, lack of opportunity to socialize, unpleasant work rules, unneeded titles, a rigid seniority system, low wages, and a lack of fringe benefits (Schuler).

Herzberg's distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic factors continues to have considerable intuitive appeal, particularly in organizational settings in which managers have limited access to financial motivators (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). Individuals consistently express preferences for intrinsic job attributes, and individuals' preference patterns may eventually contribute to our understanding of employees' occupational and organizational choices (Ambrose & Kulik).

Expectancy Theory

Vroom

The expectancy model of motivation, designed by Vroom, has been the subject of significant research and attention since its development (Schuler, 1998). The expectancy model suggests that people at work are motivated at work to choose among different behaviors or intensities of effort if they believe their efforts will be rewarded and if the rewards they expect to get are important to them (Schuler). The three primary factors in this model are choice, expectancy, and preference (Schuler). Choice is the freedom to select from among different possibilities or alternatives (Schuler). Expectancy is the belief, expressed as a subjective estimate or probability (odds), that a particular act will or will not be successful (Schuler). Preference is the extent to which a person believes an object will lead to desired consequences or prevent undesired consequences (Webb, et al., 1987, p. 162).

The expectancy model of behavior suggests that people will work (behave) to accomplish goals that satisfy certain needs (Schuler, 1998). It can be summarized as follows: performance at work is a function of the expectation that a desired outcome will be achieved and of a

preference for that particular outcome over other desired outcomes (Schuler). The outcome toward which the performance is directed is also a function of an expectation that it can be indeed achieved (Schuler).

Expectancy Theory suggests that motivation is a multiplicative function of three constructs: Valence, instrumentality, and expectancy and is sometimes referred to as VIE theory (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). People's behavior results from conscious choices among alternatives, and these choices (behaviors) are systematically related to psychological processes, particularly perception and the formation of beliefs and attitudes (Steers & Porter, 1987). The purpose of the choices is to maximize pleasure and minimize pain (Steers & Porter).

In Vroom's theory, understanding the strength of the connection in the mind of the employee between his effort and the performance level he achieves is very important (Steers & Porter, 1987). Further, the degree to which the employee believes that his performance will be connected to other outcomes (such as pay, for example) is also critical (Steers & Porter). Work effort results in a variety of outcomes, some of them directly, others indirectly (Steers & Porter). The level of job performance is the most important outcome for understanding work motivation from a VIE Theory perspective (Steers & Porter). People attribute either positive or negative preferences (or indifference) to outcomes according to the satisfaction or dissatisfaction they expect to receive from them (Steers & Porter). It is often the case that the true value of an outcome (such as a diploma) is either greater than or lesser than the valence (expected value) that outcome once held for the individual who was motivated to either pursue it or avoid it (Steers & Porter).

If an employee believes that a high level of performance is instrumental for the acquisition of other outcomes that he expects will be gratifying (such as a promotion, for example), and/or if

he believes that a high performance level will be instrumental for avoiding other outcomes he wishes to avoid (such as being fired), then that employee will place a high valence upon performing the job well (Steers & Porter, 1987). If management wants high performance levels, it must tie positive valent outcomes to high performance and be sure that the employees understand the connection (Steers & Porter). Likewise, low performance must be seen as connected to consequences that are of either zero or negative valence (Steers & Porter).

The third major component of VIE Theory is referred to as expectancy (Steers & Porter, 1987). Expectancy is the strength of a person's belief about whether a particular outcome is possible (Steers & Porter). If a person believes that he can achieve an outcome, he will be more motivated to try for it, assuming that other things are equal (Steers & Porter, 1987). Vroom suggested that a person's beliefs about valences, instrumentalities, and expectancies interact psychologically to create a motivational force to act in those ways that seem most likely to bring pleasure or avoid pain (Steers & Porter). In the context of work motivation, Vroom's suggestion means that people select to pursue that level of performance that they believe will maximize their overall best interest (or subjective expected utility) (Steers & Porter). Vroom pointed out that workers who have greater opportunities for socialization tend to show lower absenteeism and turnover rates than those that do not (Chung, 1977).

Steers, Porter and Lawler

Employee effort is jointly determined by two key factors: the value placed on certain outcomes by the individual, and the degree to which the person believes that his or her effort will lead to the attainment of these rewards (Steers & Porter, 1987). However, effort may or may not result in job performance, which they defined as the accomplishment of those tasks that comprise a person's job (Steers & Porter). Thus, a person may be highly motivated (putting out a lot of

effort), but that effort will not necessarily result in what can be considered performance, unless he has both the ability to perform the job as well as a clear understanding of the ways in which it is appropriate to direct that effort (Steers & Porter).

Porter and Lawler argued that the relationship between performance and satisfaction may or may not be related to one another depending upon a number of factors (Steers & Porter). Satisfaction was defined in Porter and Lawler's research as "the extent to which rewards actually received meet or exceed the perceived equitable level of rewards" (Steers & Porter). The level of satisfaction or dissatisfaction experienced by the person as a result of his treatment by the organization helps determine the value he places in the future on the rewards in question (Steers & Porter). The strength of a person's belief that effort will result in rewards is also determined through experience (Steers & Porter). Porter and Lawler have provided a useful elaboration of the fundamental concepts of VIE Theory as presented only a few years earlier by Vroom (Steers & Porter). The dynamic features of their model indicate the ongoing nature of the motivation process, and shed some light on why some employees are more productive than others, why some employees are more satisfied with their work than others, and when we can expect to find a relationship between employee attitudes and performance (Steers & Porter).

VIE Theory offered a number of implications for managerial practices aimed at generating and sustaining high levels of employee motivation (Steers & Porter). But putting these implications into practice can be difficult, because managers are often quite limited in the degree of control they have over the practical factors that must be manipulated in order to totally determine their employees' expectancy, valence, and instrumentality beliefs, and thereby influencing their intentions to perform well (Steers & Porter).

Equity and Justice Theory

Adams

Equity theory has experienced its ups and downs since Adams first proposed it as a way of understanding how employees respond to situations in which they are treated more or less favorably in comparison to a referent “other” (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). According to the theory, inequitable comparisons result in a state of dissonance or tension that motivates the person to engage in behavior designed to relieve the tension (e.g., raise or lower work efforts to reestablish equity, leave the situation that is causing inequity) (Ambrose & Kulik). Research on equity theory has examined the effect of inequitable comparisons on employee attitudes expected to reflect the dissonance (e.g., job satisfaction), as well as behavior intended to adjust or compensate for the inequity (e.g., theft, organizational citizenship behavior) (Ambrose & Kulik).

Goal Setting Theory

Locke & Latham

Multiple reviews and meta-analyses of the goal-setting literature have concluded that there is substantial support for the basic principles of goal-setting theory (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). First, specific difficult goals consistently lead to better performance than specific easy goals, general goals such as “do your best,” or no goals (Ambrose & Kulik). Second, goal-setting is most effective when there is feedback showing progress toward the goal (Ambrose & Kulik).

Cognitive Evaluation Theory

Deci

Deci developed Cognitive Evaluation Theory (CET) and suggested that there are two motivational subsystems: an extrinsic and an intrinsic subsystem (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). He hypothesized that intrinsically motivated persons have an “internal locus of causality” (Ambrose & Kulik). That is, intrinsically motivated individuals attribute their cause of behavior to internal

needs and perform behaviors for intrinsic rewards and satisfaction (Ambrose & Kulik). However, aspects of the situation (e.g., the reward system, the feedback system) in which the behavior is performed may lead the individual to question the true causes of his or her behavior (Ambrose & Kulik). If these individuals attribute their behavior to the situational factors, the shift from internal causes to external causes results in a decrease in intrinsic motivation (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999).

CET emphasized that situational variables are only problematic if they are perceived by the person as “controlling” his or her behavior (Ambrose & Kulik). Feedback from an external source is expected to lower intrinsic motivation if it is perceived by the individual as “controlling,” but not if it is perceived to be “competence” feedback (Ambrose & Kulik). Further, Deci and Ryan emphasized that the shift between motivational subsystems operates in both directions, and creating situations that encourage people to see themselves as competent (e.g. by providing praise and positive feedback) will increase intrinsic motivation (Ambrose & Kulik).

Job Characteristics Theory (Work Design)

McCann & Buckner

There was substantial interest from researchers and practitioners in work design during the 1990s (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). A survey of 181 senior human resource professionals reported that work design in the United States is perceived as having scale, scope, and commitment and experiencing success (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999; McCann & Buckner, 1994). Empirical research on work design has primarily focused on Hackman and Oldman’s Job Characteristics Theory (JCT) (Ambrose & Kulik). JCT emphasized the importance of five job characteristics (skill variety, task identity, task significance, feedback, and autonomy) in evoking psychological states

that result in positive individual and organizational outcomes (e.g., job satisfaction) (Ambrose & Kulik).

Reinforcement Theory

Skinner

Reinforcement theory emphasized the relationship between behavior and its consequences (Ambrose & Kulik, 1999). Within the field of organizational behavior, the most systematic efforts to apply reinforcement theory principles have used the OBMod paradigm (Ambrose & Kulik). The OBMod paradigm described a systematic framework within which employee behaviors are identified, measured, and analyzed in terms of their functional consequences (i.e., existing reinforcements) (Ambrose & Kulik). Then, an intervention is developed and applied, and post-intervention behaviors are measured (Ambrose & Kulik).

Since human nature is far too complicated for the exclusive use of one theory, no one motivational theory is applicable in all circumstances (Tracey, 1994). A job provides people with self-esteem, status, social contact, self-worth, and other intangible benefits (Tracey). Understanding the intangible benefits gives an indication of how motivation may rest with understanding people's needs (Tracey). Management plays an important role in creating motivating workplaces and it can create two types of workplaces, motivating or demotivating workplaces (Tracey). Applying motivational theories fails many times because such theories focus only on making workers change without also requiring managers to change (Tracey).

Individuals in an organization have a variety of needs that they want to satisfy through organizational endeavors (Chung, 1977). Growth needs are said to be the most powerful in arousing intrinsic motivation, while existence needs are the sources of extrinsic motivation (Chung). People join and work in organizations to satisfy their needs (Chung). A school

district's task is to identify a set of dominant needs of employees and create a work environment in which these can be satisfied (Chung).

Approaches to Teacher Retention and Attrition

Multivariate Approach

The multivariate approach to studying teacher retention and attrition is a theoretical approach that is general in nature. This approach seeks to explain teacher retention and attrition by inquiring into a set of variables simultaneously to test theories explaining why teachers choose to stay in or leave the teaching profession (Shen, 1997). The theories tested include the human capital theory, the social learning theory, and the theory of teachers as economically rational decision makers.

The human capital theory of occupational choice, as applied by Kirby and Grissmer (1993), posits that individuals systematically assess the benefits and costs of entering and staying in a profession. The greater the benefits of entering the teaching profession and the fewer the costs of staying, results in a lower the probability of attrition (Shen, 1997). Therefore, teachers with less experience are more likely to leave than teachers with more experience.

Chapman and Green studied four groups of University of Michigan graduates with teaching certificates: (a) taught continuously, (b) intermittent teaching, (c) left teaching, and (d) never taught. These researchers found that the groups differed in personal characteristics, educational experience/initial commitment, professional integration into teaching, external influences, and career satisfaction. They concluded that teacher retention/attrition is a result of the social learning process (Shen).

Theobald studied teachers in the state of Washington between the 1984-85 to 1986-87 school years. He found that a decision to continue teaching in the same school district the following

year was negatively related to property wealth of the community and positively related to salary (Shen, 1997).

Bivariate Approach

The bivariate approach to studying teacher retention and attrition is a relational approach that explains teacher retention and attrition from relationships between retention/attrition and another variable. This approach inquires into specific variables. Murnane and his colleagues studied the respective roles of salary, gender, ethnicity and subject specialization in teacher retention (Shen, 1997). Singer and Willett (1991) found that women leave teaching earlier than men. Dworkin (1980) surveyed teachers and reported that an individual's class background and ethnicity were influential in determining whether or not a teacher planned to leave teaching. Teachers from a middle-class background were more likely to quit than were those from a lower class background (Adams, 1996). In a 1988 study, Dworkin found that although Hispanics and Whites were more likely than African Americans to quit, ethnic differences were overshadowed by class differences. Murnane, Singer and Willett (1989) reported that black teachers were more likely to stay in teaching than were their white colleagues. Additional academic degrees are considered one of the investments that retard burnout, quitting, and intentions to quit teaching (Dworkin, 1988). Houston, McDavid, and Marshall (1990) studied a large number of teachers over a 5-year period and found no differences between traditionally certified and alternatively certified teachers.

The bivariate approach enables one to compare retention with a list of modifications or incentives that could entice teachers to remain in a school district.

Types of Teacher Turnover

There are several types of turnover including attrition, migration, planned and unplanned. Attrition occurs when teachers leave the teaching profession. Migration occurs when teachers leave a specific school or district for another. Planned turnover includes attrition due to a desire to learn a new skill, job offer or a change in family situation. Unplanned turnover includes attrition due to termination, death or health reasons.

Impact of Teacher Turnover

Teacher attrition has long been a concern because it signifies instability in the teaching force and raises the prospect of shortages of qualified replacement teachers (Boe & Bobbitt, 1997). The impact of teacher quality and teacher stability on learning in the classroom can not be underestimated (Evans, 2001). An understanding of factors contributing to teacher turnover can assist education policymakers and administrators in designing strategies to minimize the turnover of qualified teachers; however, there is a paucity of research-based information (Boe & Bobbitt, 1997).

According to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission's 2002 Status Report which presents a profile of Georgia's educator workforce, the teaching workforce grew by 5 percent to 99,470 in FY02 from 94,689 in FY01. It is estimated that Georgia will need to employ more than 115,000 teachers in FY07 and more than 136,000 teachers in FY12 (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2002, p.3). Only one teacher out of four remains in teaching after fifteen years of employment (Haggart, 1990; Weller & Weller, 2000). Efforts to retain more trained teachers in the classroom, to increase the number of teachers trained within the state, and to recruit more teachers who have been trained outside of Georgia will need to be considered to avoid the predicted shortfall (Bugler, Henry & Brackett, 2000). Since teacher turnover is costly

to school districts, local and state governments, the retention of teachers in Georgia schools should be an ongoing priority.

Over the next decade, the United States will need to hire 2 million teachers due to rising enrollments, growing retirements, and high rates of attrition for beginning teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Lewis (1998) noted that the demand for additional teachers will reach about 200,000 per year for the next 10 years, and one-half to two-thirds of those will be new teachers. Although only one-half to two-thirds of these hires are expected to be newly prepared teachers (with the remainder from a reserve pool of teachers who are returning to the classroom), this period represents one of the largest periods of increase in teacher demand in the last century (Darling-Hammond). By 2005, America's schools will be serving more children (54 million) than ever before, and the total number of teachers will grow to over 3.5 million (up from 2.5 million in 1980).

Filling large numbers of openings for so many thousands of entering teachers every year poses several problems: (a) the annual recruitment and placement of entering teachers is a time-consuming and costly burden on public school administrators, (b) teachers hired to replace the teachers who have left often are not as qualified in terms of teaching experience (Rollefson, 1993), (c) the induction of entering teachers tends to be disruptive to instructional programs until the new teachers are assimilated as fully functioning members of school staffs (Boe & Bobbitt, 1997). In some communities, especially in high-poverty urban and rural locations, schools already report difficulties in recruiting qualified teachers in critical subject areas such as physical science, mathematics, bilingual education, and special education. Teachers supplied from out-of-state sources and alternative routes continue to be an important addition to Georgia's supply of teachers (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2001b, p.12).

Across the nation there is a need for far more teachers of color to meet schools' desires for a teaching force that reflects the growing diversity of America (Darling-Hammond, 1994). Staffing and professional development activities will need to be redefined as the ethnic diversity of Georgia's student enrollment continues to grow and create a demand for specialized teachers (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2001b, p.12).

This great demand for teachers also leads to the use of noncertified teachers or teachers teaching out of their subject area (Evans, Stewart, Mangin, & Bagley, 2001). According to Lewis (1998), in 1994, almost 25% of new teachers hired had no license or a substandard one in the subject in which they were hired to teach, which caused teachers to feel ill-prepared. According to Barlow (1999), 80% of public school teachers felt unprepared to do their jobs. Henderson, (1994) found that teachers are more likely to quit or be fired when they are forced to teach outside their subject area of certification.

One of the major variables for employee retention is the cost of turnover as the high cost of recruiting and replacing valued employees is a direct drain on financial resources (Fyock, 1998). School districts understand that keeping good employees saves money that can be used for other needs.

One of the first and most important steps in controlling teacher turnover is to better understand what it cost school districts. Thompson (2001) observes that a widely accepted rule of thumb gauges the cost of replacing a defecting employee at about half of his or her annual compensation. However, these costs can be much higher. For example, a recent study in Texas estimated that the state's annual turnover rate of 15%, which includes a 40% turnover rate for public school teachers in their first three years, costs the state a conservative \$329 million a year or at least \$8000 per recruit who leaves in the first few years of teaching (Darling-Hammond,

2003, p.8). There are many different types of costs, including: (1) direct costs such as recruiting, interviewing and training; (2) indirect costs such as effects on workload, employee morale and stakeholder satisfaction and (3) opportunity costs such as the loss of intellectual capital (Mitchell, Holtom & Lee, 2001; Thompson, 2001). The ultimate method of alleviating the costs of turnover and high recruitment is to manage for retention (Fyock, 1998).

Reasons for Teacher Turnover

There are several factors that contribute to the talent loss in education. These factors include: (1) increased accountability; (2) teacher dissatisfaction; (3) poor communication; (4) unskilled supervisors; (5) unsatisfying job responsibilities; (6) problems with working conditions; (7) pay below market levels; (8) inadequate benefits; (9) insufficient recognition; (10) lack of advancement opportunities; (11) interpersonal conflicts; (12) personal problems such as family or health; (13) wealth of external opportunities; and (14) hiring errors (Haggart, 1990; Mitchell, et al., 2001). Most of these factors show a stronger relationship between job satisfaction than salary and benefits.

Although a 1997 report from the National Center for Educational Statistics found that retirement topped the list as a reason to leave teaching, other explanations include having to deal with discipline problems, poor student motivation, inadequate support from administration, low salary, and lack of influence over school policies (Southworth, 2000, p.3). Even though most individuals are attracted to teaching because they want to work with children and youth, when they encounter intolerable working conditions, find themselves embedded in a profession with a poor image, do not receive the parental and administrative support needed to be successful as a

teacher, or are assigned to teach subjects outside their areas of strength and interest, many teachers leave education for work in other fields (Norton, 1999). It is ironic teachers, who carry out studies of at-risk students and create plans to stem the tide of dropouts, are dropping out of school themselves (Haggart, 1990).

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future found that the hiring of unqualified teachers in many communities was less a function of labor shortages than of cumbersome hiring procedures that chase away good candidates (Darling-Hammond, 2001). Prominent education reformers are calling for nationwide reassessment of the teacher-hiring system (Southworth, 2000). Many states enforce redundant requirements for fully qualified and credentialed candidates from other states. Other barriers to the hiring process include late budget decisions and teacher-transfer provisions that push new hiring decisions into August or September, a lack of pension portability across states, and a loss of salary credit for teachers who move (Darling-Hammond, 2001).

Seeking out and hiring better-prepared teachers has many payoffs and savings in the long run in terms of both lower attrition and higher levels of competence (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Certain prerequisites such as content knowledge and pedagogical preparation should become a vital part of the teacher selection process (Stronge & Hindman, 2003). Substantial research evidence suggests that well-prepared, capable teachers have the largest impact on student learning (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p.7). A well-constructed selection process helps schools hire teachers who have the qualities that enhance student achievement (Stronge & Hindman, 2003).

The percentage of teachers leaving the profession has been a great concern for a number of years nation-wide (Evans, 2001). Almost 20 years ago, Schelechty and Vance (1983) found that 40-50% of beginning teachers leave the profession during the first seven years. Approximately

one-third of new teachers leave the profession within five years (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p.7). Summers (1987) found that 62 percent of new teachers quit during the first five years. There is strong evidence that teacher demand will continue to increase over the next decade (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Retention Strategies

A number of strategies and options are available for creating a retention plan. These strategies can be categorized as employee relations, compensation, benefits, scheduling, and workplace enhancements (Glube, 1998). School districts may benefit from analyzing each category to assess which areas need improvement in order to remain competitive with other school districts. Although school districts have different populations, retaining strong teachers is a need all districts share. Historically, the search for teachers ended once they were hired; however, in the current environment, the mission of finding and keeping the best employees only begins with hiring (Glube). Since teachers have a powerful and long-lasting influence over their students, we can greatly improve student achievement if we come to an understanding of what constitutes an effective teacher and then seek out desired qualities and behaviors along with what motivates these teachers to remain in the classroom (Stronge & Hindman, 2003, p.49).

Norton (1999) found that increasingly school districts must provide special incentives above and beyond appropriate compensation and benefits if teachers are to be encouraged to remain in the system. Traditional incentives, although costly, have not resulted in long-term employee motivation (Norton).

School districts use various methods to attract and retain teachers. However, these methods are frequently not based on teacher needs or suggestions (Engleking, 1988). Instead, they are

linked to one or more of the following considerations: the proven ability of the incentive to attract and retain teachers, the reasonableness of the cost of the incentive, the ability of the incentive to motivate teachers, the potential impact of likely level of change that can be expected from the use of the incentive, the ease with which the incentive can be administered, and the likely acceptance of the incentive by teachers, administrators, and members of the community.

No one incentive or system of incentives is a panacea for attracting and retaining teachers in every district, nor is it intended to be. Rather, incentives are an essential feature in a process that focuses on the enhancement of the teaching profession and the values and attitudes held toward teachers. Incentives used by administrators can help teachers feel better about themselves and to recognize the professional job that they are doing. Teachers and teaching are unique at all levels, and should be recognized as such and incentives are a step in that direction (Engleking, 1988).

There are several broad categories of retention tools including (a) employee relations; (b) compensation; (c) benefits; (d) scheduling and (e) workplace enhancement. Within each broad category there are several smaller ones.

Employee Relations Strategies

There are several types of employee relations' strategies and they include (1) new-hire orientations; (2) surveys; (3) communication; and (4) leadership. Employee relations strategies focus on communicating, leading and working interpersonally with employees to increase retention.

New-hire orientations

Increasing the retention rate of promising new teachers would help to ease the teacher shortage (Clement, 2000). New employee orientation programs are commonplace in business, education, and the military (Wanous & Reichers, 2000). Just the implementation of a quality

staff orientation program appears to have great promise for reducing turnover. Creating a system that provides all new teachers orientation, support and mentoring during their beginning years in the profession is one approach to retention (Clement, 2000b). The first year of teaching is the most critical one because it determines to a significant degree if a person will remain in teaching and what type of teacher that person will become (Hope, 1999).

Lemke (1995) found that “carefully planned programs of personnel orientation have been known to raise the retention rates from 50 to 85 percent” (p.25). School-based orientation programs can be conceptualized as a way to address new teachers’ retention in the profession (Hope, 1999). An earlier study by Berglas (1973) revealed that orientation practices that focused on providing personal assistance were the best single factor of all morale factors for personnel new to the teaching profession. In addition, some districts have underscored the importance of the orientation process in that participation is mandatory for teachers during the first three years of employment (Norton, 1999). For the new employee, who is often inundated with information in his or her first days, orientation that is spread over several weeks or months will yield more lasting results (Messmer, 2000).

Norton (1999) found that the primary purpose of an effective orientation program is to achieve congruence between the school system’s objectives and employee needs. She suggested that orientation begins with the job application, continues through job applicancy, and is provided as long as the employee and the system view it as necessary. Specific information and personal assistance given to teachers must focus on: (a) the specific setting of the school-facilities, resources, student data, community make-up, district policies and regulations; (b) roles, responsibilities and relationships-job description, performance evaluation procedures, formal and informal relationships surrounding the position, channels of communication, and personal

counseling services; and (c) the development of skills and understandings-instructional program objectives; student testing and grading information; technological services and support; and conditions of work including teacher workload (Norton).

Wanous and Reichers (2000) believe the typical orientation program has been too narrow in focus. They found that an orientation program should stress teaching newcomers skills, rather than simply presenting information. These skills typically fall into two categories: (a) stress coping and (b) interpersonal skills related to context performance (Wanous & Reichers). Klein & Weaver (2000), conducted a study on the socialization of new hires, when the adjustment issues are most intense and problematic and when employees are most susceptible to the organization's influence. Their study found that having an organizational-level orientation training program covering topics such as traditions and workplace principles can help employees become more socialized on the history and goals/values dimension. Employees' becoming more socialized on these dimensions, in turn, related to effective organizational commitment (Klein & Weaver).

Messmer (2000) found that retention rates can be raised by investing in a solid employee orientation program. An effective teacher orientation program should improve teaching performance, increase the retention of new teachers, and promote the personal confidence and well-being of new teachers, while satisfying state mandates for induction and certification (Huling-Austin, 1989a; Clement, 2000b).

Surveys

Among employee relations strategies, the use of employee surveys is a constant (Pardue, 2000). There are many types of surveys including climate, attitudinal, exit interviews and exit surveys.

A positive school climate is important in maintaining an effective educational environment characterized by excellence, productivity and cooperation (Rojewski & Wendel, 1990). Because of its relationship to successful educational experiences, administrators should attempt to objectively measure climate rather than rely on feelings or intuition to estimate it (Rojewski & Wendel). Climate surveys are available in two forms, including a standardized, commercial version or an individualized site-specific version. According to Rojewski & Wendel, individualized surveys offer a flexible method of addressing specific school needs and concerns. They described a systematic process for individualizing a climate survey that includes: (a) planning, (b) preparation, (c) survey development, (d) administration, (e) analysis of results, and (f) dissemination. Administrators can use a tailored climate survey to assess the current climate, evaluate programs designed to enhance the climate, and periodically monitor the climate for signs of change (Rojewski & Wendel, 1990). Although more time and effort are required to individualize a survey, the process can yield results that will help administrators achieve and maintain a positive school climate (Rojewski & Wendel).

Hodson (1991) argued that attitudinal measures are severely flawed and urged researchers to move away from this emphasis. Scott' (1994) work countered Hodson's position on attitudinal measures. Scott examined the effects of subjectively measuring two aspects of the work environment, job satisfaction and organizational commitment, which are often thought to be related to turnover (Scott). Organizational commitment was found to be a significant predictor

of turnover, an organizationally relevant behavior. As a planning or strategy tool, the quantifying of organizational climate will help identify those management practices that fit into the organizational milieu (Shadur, 1999). Organizational survey of climate can also be used as a diagnostic tool to identify those areas that require alteration or fine-tuning to improve the fit between work organization and employee affective attitudes (Shadur). The results from Shadur's study showed that organizational climate should be considered when implementing new programs or management systems in organizations. A similar case can be made for types of organizational climate by identifying those areas of organizational climate that could demotivate employees and produce negative attitudes toward various programs and systems in place in the organization (Shadur).

An organizational assessment is helpful in determining the level of morale and motivation within any organization (Tracey, 1994). Some organizations have built into their questionnaires a stem item that probes employees about their plans for the future, including whether they plan to stay with their organization or leave in the future. Responses to this item and other survey questions provide information on factors impacting employee attrition and retention (Pardue, 2000).

The high cost of employee turnover has increased organizational interest in systematic methods for reducing attrition rates (Lefkowitz & Katz, 1969). One feature in a systematic approach to the problem has been the use of some form of exit interview (Lefkowitz & Katz). Exit interviews are in-person surveys that produce responses that can help an organization identify and correct problems, improve the work environment, reduce turnover, and motivate the work force (Zarandona & Camuso, 1985).

The exit interview is a discussion between a representative of an organization and a person whose employment with that organization has ended, conducted during one of the employee's last working days (Giacalone, 1991). Topics covered during the exit interviews vary and may include the reason for departure, rating of the job, supervision, working conditions, advancement opportunities, training, pay, and positive/negative things about the job (Giacalone). Such debriefings can provide objective feedback on the conditions or patterns of management behavior that may have contributed to an employee's decision to leave. This information can then be used for reducing turnover; detecting unfair employment practices; establishing a competitive compensation structure; and improving supervision practices, appraisal systems, training programs, working conditions (Drost, O'Brien, & Marsh, 1987).

Giacalone (1991) conducted a study which investigated the exit interview as a tool to uncover organizational characteristics that may contribute to employee turnover. School districts seeking to determine the reasons for teacher turnover should include exit interviews as part of a comprehensive retention plan (McGehean, 1999). Conducting an exit interview can also provide information to improve the recruiting effort (Brewer, 1998). According to McGehean, for the process to work smoothly, the departing teacher should be given adequate notice about the interview and what it entails. In order to improve the odds for gathering truthful information, those conducting the interviews should put employees at ease by confirming that there will be no fallout for negative comments made during the interview and that the meeting will remain confidential (McGehen). Districts should also create working groups to analyze the resulting exit interview data and then use the information to recommend policies that will increase the district's competitiveness in the job market over time (McGehen).

Exit interviews can be a useful strategy for improving employee relations and for reducing attrition rates when administrators summarize and quantify results over time, identify trends and issue recommendations (Glube, 1998). Given their potential for revealing hidden organizational problems, concerns and sources of stress, exit interviews may be a powerful human resources tool (Zarandona & Camuso, 1985). Harris (2000) found that exit interviews are opportunities to improve the rate of employee retention and can be used to discover five key issues that attract and keep employees. According to Harris, exit interviews should be conducted with the following guidelines in mind: Be clear about your purpose; select a neutral location; allow sufficient time; have an open and honest attitude; and cover specific points and events.

Brewer (1998) noted that organizations should demonstrate that information gleaned from exit interviews is used for making improvements. In order to encourage the employee to speak with complete candor, the interviewer should neither attempt to persuade a departing employee to change his or her mind about leaving nor discuss the organization's willingness to provide an employment reference for the departing worker. (Drake and Robb, 1999)

A helpful companion to the exit interview is the exit survey, completed by the former employee, confidentially if desired, a few weeks after leaving (McKee, 1993). Exit interviews and surveys provide organizations unique opportunities to collect diagnostic information (Giacalone & Knouse, 1997). The exit interview and survey are used not only to obtain feedback to improve the organization but also to show that employee opinions are valued (Lilienthal, 2000). Exit survey questions should focus on reasons for leaving, a rating of central office services, administrative support, working conditions, training and development, recognition, compensation, benefits, opportunities for advancement and communication. Approximately 70 percent of the information received from exit interviews and surveys can be helpful for

identifying improvements including streamlined processes, new ideas for school improvement, and suggestions for enhancing management effectiveness (Lilienthal, 2000). According to McKee (1993), exit interviews and surveys should supplement ongoing employee climate surveys to probe satisfaction levels.

Communication

Another important employee relations strategy is planned communication. Engleking (1988) recommended that school districts spend more time and energy on development of staff communications and interpersonal relations. The Families and Work Institute created a survey entitled, "The National Study of the Changing Workplace." This survey asked a representative group of 3,400 employees to identify what factors they considered "very important" in deciding to take their current job. The highest rated reason was communication. Sharing important information with employees can result in increased motivation and a sense of partnership. Communicating successes can make workers feel a sense of accomplishment while communication problems have the potential to encourage them to go the extra mile.

All forms of oral and written communication can be used to improve employee understanding (Tracey, 1994). An employee handbook can be an effective method of communication. A handbook provides a basis for treating employees consistently and fairly (Perkins & Terman, 1999). Every handbook should have an acknowledgement for receipt and disclaimer for the employee to sign (Perkins & Terman). According to Forbes magazine, the form of communication that is most likely to improve productivity is regular meetings with employees (Tracey, 1994). Topics at these regular meetings can be selected from feedback from climate, attitudinal, satisfaction and exit surveys. Successful organizations build listening programs that

encourage authentic communications and that celebrate problems as well as innovative solutions (Kerfoot, 2000).

Administrators may also communicate by practicing networking with their staff members. One type of networking is to practice 'management by wandering around', the Tom Peters principle of getting out amongst employees to discuss important day-to-day issues. He found that managers getting out of the office is another contributor to informal exchanges (Peters & Waterman, 1982).

Leadership

Providing excellent leadership is another employee relations strategy. The ability to recruit and retain is one of the most important facets of a leader's responsibility (Kerfoot, 2000). Without the proper human capital, the best strategic and tactical plans are doomed for failure (Kerfoot). Effective leadership is the tie that binds together an effective school. One of the major responsibilities of a leader is to create a positive working environment, provide motivating leadership, and train workers to do their job (Tracey, 1994). Effective leaders know their success depends on identifying potential conflicts and bringing those conflicts into open dialogue (Kerfoot). Research has consistently documented that effective leadership exerts a positive effect on individual employee satisfaction, and more satisfied employees perform better (Komives, 1991). When there is meaningful dialogue, the leader knows far in advance the issues surrounding retention and can be proactive in solving the problems long before they become a crisis (Kerfoot). Many organizations have not provided the kind of leadership that motivates employees for superior performance (Tracey, 1994).

Taunton and Boyle (1997) pinpointed manager leadership behaviors as a dimension having strong influence on employee retention. Principals can be visionaries, strategists, or risktakers,

but unless they motivate their staff toward the organization's goals and link the mission to organizational routines, they will accomplish little (Ornstein & Levine, 2000). The leader is responsible for setting the climate, pointing in the right direction, and building a motivational environmental that makes the overall business successful (Tracey, 1994).

Leadership is responsible for creating a motivational environment (Tracey). Ornstein and Levine (2000) found that in working with teachers, principals must understand the human dimension. Leaders must provide for employees' needs, recognize their efforts, involve them in all aspects of the business, develop them, and evaluate continuously (Tracey).

It has also been hypothesized that the supervisor's expectation of excellence from his or her subordinates, and the subordinates' desire to meet that expectation, motivate employees to strive for high levels of performance (Chung, 1977). Because employees depend on their supervisors for promotional opportunities, they are willing to comply with supervisor's wishes; thus, work motivation becomes the responsibility of supervisors (Chung). The quality of a good leader lies in his ability to develop, encourage, and motivate other people to achieve (Chung).

Compensation Strategies

Compensation strategies are defined as: (1) salary; (2) sign-on bonuses; (3) retention bonuses; (4) merit pay; and (5) incentive pay. Compensation is generally considered to be of strategic importance to the extent that it affects employee attraction, retention, and performance; in turn, these factors have consequences for organizational performance (Gerhart & Milkovich, 1990; Gerhart, Trevor & Graham, 1996; Gomez-Mejia & Wellbourne, 1988; Milkovich, 1988;). Compensation strategies use money to entice employees to remain with an organization.

Previous research has indicated a correlation between salary levels and the likelihood of teachers moving out of public education (Theobald & Gritz, 1996). Boe and Bobbitt (1997)

found that school transfer and attrition declined systematically and substantially with increasing salary levels. Their results, which reported the consistent association between teacher salary and rates of both school transfer and teacher attrition, are the first to be based on national data. Their work showed that there are higher levels of attrition for teachers who earn low salaries and that teaching positions can be made more attractive by offering full-time employment at as high a salary as possible (Boe & Bobbitt, 1997).

Given these operating assumptions, that an organization depends upon a motivated, informed and involved work force; and that reward systems play a significant role in sustaining that work force, it is reasonable to expect experimentation with reward systems (Carter, 1994). Research on pay satisfaction has spanned decades and assumes even greater importance with changing workforce demographics and increasing scarcity of human resources (Shaw & Duffy, 1999).

Salary

Understanding teacher turnover and retention is important for the efficiency of educational administration (Dolton & Van der Klaauw, 1999). The extent to which relative earning may influence this turnover is of considerable importance and constitutes the primary issue in this research (Dolton & Van der Klaauw). Dolton and Van der Klaauw found that the higher the opportunity wage outside teaching the more likely teachers are to leave teaching for an alternative career. In addition, the higher the wage in teaching, the less likely the teacher is to quit a teaching job for career or family reasons (Dolton & Van der Klaauw). Steinbricker (2001) found that wage increases would be successful if the goal is to increase the pool of applicants. He stated that the simulations in his research suggested that a substantial increase in wages would significantly slow the rate at which current teachers leave.

Since the United States is predicted to face a shortage of qualified teachers, one possible way of dealing with such a shortage is by raising starting teacher salaries (Henderson, 1994). A knowledge and skills-based compensation structure offers teachers increases in pay when they demonstrate the acquisition and application of specific knowledge and skills (Odden, 2000). According to Odden, direct measures of knowledge and skills replace (or augment) such proxies as years of experience and credit/degrees.

The American Compensation Association's research report on "Capitalizing on Human Assets" reviewed over 2200 employee compensation plans that were designed with a clear link between organizational performance and rewards. That report showed that variable pay systems provide satisfaction for such organization objectives as: improving the organization's performance; fostering teamwork; improving performance-reward linkage; improving morale; improving communications; and creating an empowered environment (Carter, 1994).

In their book, Paying Teachers For What They Know and Do: New and Smarter Compensation Strategies to Improve Schools, Odden and Kelley (1997) raise the issue of teacher compensation in the context of school improvement efforts, but recognize that policymakers put teacher compensation on the agenda as a set of anti-teacher and anti-union initiatives. They suggest that changes in teacher compensation, as one of a number of interlinking strategies can improve U. S. schools. In addition, they believe that changes in the compensation process bode well for encouraging teachers who assume primary local leadership roles for accomplishing current education reforms.

Sign-on Bonuses

Sign-on bonuses, which are granted upon hire, provide extra compensation without affecting the salary structure. (Glube, 1998). These bonuses are typically given at the signing of a

contract or after an employee has worked a short time, usually long enough to recoup the bonus should the employee leave the job soon after the start date.

According to Todak (2000), the negative effects exceed the positive when sign-on bonuses are offered. Many staff members hired before the bonuses were offered reported ill feeling (Todak). Some long-term employees feel angry about the situation and those with long-term commitments to the organization view the new-hires as opportunists who will sell themselves to the highest bidder (Bohl, 1999). Todak's (2000) research found that sign-on bonuses initially yielded positive results. However, those positive results were often short-term and subject to bidding wars between larger employers.

Retention Bonuses

Organizations sometimes offer retention bonuses in the form of lump sum payments to all employees in a group, class or location; or varying amounts of compensation, based upon longevity. The employee usually promises to remain at the company for a contracted period of time. Employee misconduct, poor performance, or litigation against the organization can nullify the contract. Facing fierce competition for certain "difficult to fill" positions, organizations are piling retention bonuses on top of hiring bonuses in order to lure and keep talented employees (Bohl, 1999).

According to Todak (2000), offering retention bonuses instead of sign-on bonuses is a better way to stay competitive. He likened sign-on bonuses to the game of musical chairs and stated that retention bonuses can help employers fend off strong efforts to lure away their employees. According to WorldatWork in Scottsdale, Arizona, the number of companies offering a cash retention bonus increased from 24% in 2000 to 34% in 2001 and was usually linked to length of service or some other type of milestone. (Handel, 2001b).

Merit Pay

Merit pay allows school districts and other organizations to reward their employees for their performance and efforts. According to numerous surveys, employees do not find their reward systems “rewarding” and they see little relationship between pay and performance (Carter, 1994). Failure to find a fair way to differentially compensate higher quality teachers robs the profession of an enlarged pool of high-quality entrants, the opportunity for a more rigorous course of study, a higher proportion of high quality teachers with-in the profession, and a more equitable distribution of high-quality teachers across the school districts (Kirby & Grissmer, 1997).

Several tools exist today that can support the implementation of merit-based pay systems and these tools differentiate among beginning, midcareer, veteran accomplished teachers (Odden, 2000). Conventional wisdom suggest that teachers oppose such plans because they believe performance evaluations will be unfair (Ballou & Podgursky 1993); they expect competition for awards to create dissention and demoralize the losers; and they see their base pay as being too low and believe it should be raised before merit pay is installed (Ballou & Podgursky). However, the research of Ballou and Podgursky found that teachers in districts that use merit pay do not seem demoralized by the system or hostile to it, and teachers of disadvantaged and low-achieving students are generally supportive of merit pay. They also found that private school teachers favor merit pay more than do public school teachers, a difference that may reflect differences in management in the two sectors and a more entrepreneurial spirit among staff in private schools (Ballou & Podgursky).

The critical elements of a merit-based pay program include obtaining sufficiently careful ratings from supervisors and of convincing the workers that these ratings should be taken

seriously (Brown, 1990). The literature reveals that the most successful merit pay are found in school systems that have adequate base salary schedules, that operate effective evaluation systems, and that involve teachers are involved in planning and implementing the merit pay system (Middleton, 1990).

Incentive Pay

Incentive compensation is defined as a portion of an employee's pay that is directly linked to performance, usually output (Carter, 1994). There are three factors critical to the success of the incentive pay programs including having a well-tested measurement system, performance expectations must be explicit and highly quantified, and employers must communicate results openly and regularly (Story, 2001).

Incentive pay or compensation can be used a recruitment and retention strategy. For example, in a relocation payback agreement, an employee agrees to pay back relocation benefits received if he leaves the organization voluntarily before a contracted period of time. The employee signs prior to receiving these benefits (Glube, 1998). Using pay-for-knowledge programs in school districts would allow employees to receive monetary incentives for newly acquired knowledge and/or skills (Champion-Hughes, 2001). This type of compensation approach grants employees pay increases for acquiring new job-related skills (Champion-Hughes). The use of skill-based pay is based on the assumption that workers who acquire additional skills can make a greater contribution to the organization, and consequently, should be paid more (Champion-Hughes).

When beginning an incentive program, school leadership should focus on short-term incentives. Younger workers want short-term incentives such as performance-based monetary incentives, increased freedom in the workplace, and other programs where they can reap the benefits immediately. Long-term, "big picture" incentives, such as a 401k plan, are less effective

in recruiting or retaining younger workers due to deferred gratification. Previous research has indicated a correlation between salary levels and the likelihood of instructors moving out of public education (Theobald & Gritz, 1996).

One obstacle to implementing incentives is the increase in the administrative paperwork necessary to track performance measures (Carter, 1994). For incentive pay, there are costs of measuring output and setting up the relationship between that output and pay (Brown, 1990). In addition, incentive pay is less likely in jobs with a variety of duties than in jobs with a narrow set of routines (Brown, 1990).

Benefits Strategies

There are several types of benefits strategies including: (1) expanded benefits; (2) employee assistance programs; (3) employee wellness programs; (4) unique services; and (5) tuition reimbursements. Studies over the years have found that most of those that rank high on profitability are also highly committed to meaningful employee benefits (Lizotte, 2001). The evolution of employee benefits has contributed to job satisfaction and, ultimately, employee retention (Reimers, 2001). In terms of practice, the findings provide evidence of a link between the value lower-level workers place on a benefit package that includes work-life supports and their participation in efforts to improve their organizations (Lambert, 2000). Results suggest that benefits may also contribute to job performance (Lambert). Employee benefits, or that part of the total compensation package other than pay for time worked, provided to employees in whole or in part by employer payment (Milkovich & Newman, 1990), are playing an ever greater role in compensation packages (Williams, 1995). The average percentage of total payroll devoted to employee benefits has increased from 24.7% in 1959 to 39% in 1987 (U.S. Chamber of Commerce). This percentage represented an expenditure of over \$813 billion in 1987

(Williams). Despite this staggering cost, evidence suggests that employee satisfaction with their benefits defined as the amount of overall positive affect that individuals have toward those benefits has been on the decline (Williams).

Williams & MacDermid's (1994) empirical research examined the impact of benefit program features and levels on employee attitudes and behaviors important to the firm. They found relationships between employee benefits and the following attitudinal and behavioral outcomes: applicant attraction, employee benefit satisfaction, organizational commitment, employee performance, employee absenteeism and employee turnover (Williams & MacDermid).

Often, employee benefits programs simply evolve rather than develop from a carefully thought-out, proactive strategy (Cook, 1992). Employers should pause periodically to consider their philosophy for providing benefits in order to better position their organizations for the coming years (Cook). As part of this consideration process, planners should examine the role and purpose of benefits, responsibility for providing benefits, funding options, and current and desired employee and employer perceptions of benefits (Cook). Based on the employer's objectives, the following programs may be part of the benefits package: medical coverage, dental coverage, life insurance (including dependent life insurance), accidental death and dismemberment (AD&D) insurance, disability insurance (short term and/or long term), vision and hearing care, prescription drug coverage, health promotion and wellness, retirement (defined contribution savings vehicle and/or defined benefit pension plan), vacation time and holidays, sick pay, educational assistance, and relocation (Cook).

Expanded Benefits

One way to enhance benefits is to base the amount of a school district's paid premiums on tenure. After the employee complete a set number of years, the district pays the entire premium. Other expanded benefits' options include higher copays, preventive services, spending accounts for health care and child care expenses (Glube, 1998). Assigning parking spaces to faculty members based on tenure at the school is another expanded benefits' strategy; thus the most tenured teacher is assigned the closest space to the school. Other expanded benefits include providing secretaries for clusters of or groups of teachers to utilize and offering adequate out-of-classroom storage for personal items, books, writings, etc. Urdang (2001) predicts that everything from on-site day-care centers to a concierge who picks up dry-cleaning for employees working late will become important in the future. Reimers (2001) found that offering free broadband service is a perk offered to some employees.

A totally integrated benefits system permits the employee to strike a proper balance between work and family life. Having such an integrated system is definitely becoming the wave of the future in both the private and public sector (Champion-Hughes, 2001). The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power found that its work and family program reduced turnover and improved recruitment, yielding a return of \$10 for each dollar invested (Champion-Hughes).

In their book, Issues in Employee Leave, Allen Weitzman and Xan Raskin explain why leave is an important recruitment and retention tool. They state in their introduction, "As quality of life issues percolate within the workplace, employee leave policies have assumed greater importance. In fact, employees and applicants often judge employers by their leave policies". It is no secret that the most frequently read section of an employee handbook is the one describing time off (Segal, 2000).

In challenging economic times, hiring and retaining the best candidate for positions becomes even more important (Baiamonte, 2001). One way to attract and retain employees is to offer a menu of benefits. For example, a new hire who has exceptional insurance through a spouse, could choose another more personally attractive benefit option, such as additional time off (Baiamonte).

Employee Assistance Programs

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) help employees cope with concerns ranging from personal or family problems to financial concerns (Champion-Hughes, 2001). These programs are remedial in nature as they try to help employees overcome their problems (Noe, et al, 1997). EAP experts estimate that 20 percent of any work force is affected by personal problems that can have an impact on job performance (Masi, 1992). Employee Assistance Programs are designed to help employees with a wide variety of problems that ultimately interfere with job performance (Champion-Hughes). This broader interest in employee health has resulted in two general types of programs: Employee Assistance and Employee Wellness programs (Noe, et al, 1997). These programs are related to stress, personal, emotional or financial concerns, or family difficulties (Champion-Hughes). EAPs are designed to help employees resolve their problems, at least to the extent that those problems are affecting the employees in the workplace environment (Champion-Hughes). EAPs often provide professional assessment and referral and/or short-term counseling service for employees with alcohol, drug, or emotional problems that may be affecting them on the job (Masi, 1992). Treatment may come in the form of in-house assistance, counseling, or referrals outside the company (Champion-Hughes, 2001).

Employee Assistance Programs represent an expansion of traditional work in occupational alcoholism treatment programs and all the published studies indicate that EAPs are cost-effective

(Cascio, 1998). By offering assistance to troubled employees, organizations promote positive employee relations climates, contribute to their employees' well-being, and enhance their ability to function productively at work, at home, and in the community (Cascio).

Many employers are expanding their focus to employee health in general for several reasons (Noe, et al, 1997). These reasons include: (a) employees who have emotional or physical health problems often experience difficulties on the job and create difficulties for those who work with them; (b) many employers are currently responsible for employee health-care costs (not just the cost of work accidents) so it is fiscally wise to do whatever is possible to hold such costs down; (c) many organizations believe that these kinds of programs create goodwill among employees, which translates into increased job satisfaction and higher retention rates; (d) employee goodwill also contributes to an organizational image that makes the company more competitive when trying to recruit or retain the best in personnel (Noe et al). Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) attempt to ameliorate problems encountered by workers who are drug dependent, alcoholic, or psychologically troubled (Noe et al). Employers are finding that in order to keep their most valuable asset, their employees, it is becoming necessary to identify troubled employees and assist them in their needs, while maintaining a productive, cost-effective work force (Masi, 1992).

Employee Wellness Programs

Employee wellness programs (EWPs) which are preventative in nature, attempt to promote good health among employees who are not necessarily having current health problems (Noe, et al, 1997). The National Wellness Institute's model for wellness has six dimensions: physical, spiritual, emotional, social, intellectual, and aesthetic (Davies, Davies & Heacock, 2003, p.68).

The EWP's are another example of generic efforts to raise the overall health levels of all employees (Noe, et al, 1997).

Programs, such as employee wellness programs, focus on changing behaviors in and out of the workplace that could eventually lead to future health problems (Noe et al). Stress not only affects teacher retention but also contributes to such ailments as ulcers, coronary heart disease, anxiety, loss of self-esteem, and nervous exhaustion (Davies, Davies, & Heacock, 2003, p.68). EWP programs aim at specific health risks such as high blood pressure, high cholesterol levels, smoking, and obesity and they also try to promote positive health influences such as physical exercise and good nutrition (Noe et al). One independent school K-12 school, grappling with teacher retention, set out to improve teachers' physical and mental health by offering a diversified program based on the National Wellness Institutes' model. The Miami County Day School offered various programs including Weight Watchers and fitness activities for the physical dimension and yoga for the spiritual dimension of the program (Davies, Davies, & Heacock, 2003, p.68).

Unique Services

School districts should consider unique services such as offering dry-cleaning services to employees at their worksite and a monetary allowance for items such as uniforms. These unique services show recognition and appreciation for the employee's hard work and dedication. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power instituted unique programs such as reduced cost for child care, parenting support groups and a beeper-alert program in which employees are loaned beepers when they have an immediate family emergency (Champion-Hughes, 2001).

Child care is a relatively new non-health benefit some employers are offering in an provide in an effort to create employee satisfaction (Champion-Hughes). The most common features

include on-site day care facilities, discount vouchers or financial subsidies, and sick-childcare (Champion-Hughes).

According to Diane Piktialis, Chair of the Business Forum of the American Society on Aging, elder care is likely to become as prevalent as child care (Fletcher, 2001). As the average age of the U.S. population continues to rise, employers are increasing their support for elder care services (Fletcher). The segment of the population that is 50 to 69 years old will increase by 69.1 million by 2010 and 54% of Americans indicate that they expect to provide care for an elderly relative in the next 10 years (Fletcher, 2001).

An annual benefits statement is a benefits tool that is issued to each employee annually. Annual benefits statements state the value of all benefits and compensation plans. One Metro Atlanta school district issues employees annual benefits statements that reflect yearly compensation, employee costs for benefits and the average 28-32 percent cost of the employer's contribution. Such statements arm employees with the knowledge of the dollar cost the district support. Many times, employees have no idea of the financial investment school districts have in them.

Tuition Reimbursement Programs

Tuition reimbursement programs compensate employees for completing job-related coursework (Champion-Hughes, 2001). Normally, the amount of reimbursement is contingent upon the grade actually received by the employee (Champion-Hughes). The employer benefits because the employee is utilizing new knowledge and skills in the working environment (Champion-Hughes). Tuition reimbursement agreements appear in many forms such as offering onsite courses given by local colleges and universities; reimbursing costs of books and fees; and

matching funds for tuition expenditures. Some organizations pay part of the college tuition for children of employees who have been with the company for a set number of years. Another form of tuition reimbursement is through mini-grants awarded for conferences or workshops.

Scheduling Strategies

There are several types of scheduling strategies including: (1) flexible scheduling; (2) sabbaticals; and (3) virtual classrooms.

Flexible Scheduling

Flexible scheduling includes part-time options, job sharing, phased and rehearsal retirements which offer attractive choices to balance today's hectic demands for additional workers. Many organizations now offer nontraditional work arrangements such as flextime and job sharing to help workers cope with their personal and family-related responsibilities (Champion-Hughes, 2001). The 2000 Randstad North American Employee Review shows that 51 percent of employees would stay in their current job if their employer offered flexible working hours (Cohen, 2000). A poll of 660 working Americans, conducted by the management search firm Bridgegate LLC, examined workers' reasons for choosing to continue working for their current employers. They found that women value flexible schedules more than men do. Women make up the largest portion of the educational workforce so flexible scheduling may be a powerful strategy for recruiting and retaining workers.

Job sharing is a flexible scheduling approach used to attract qualified applicants who prefer to work less than 40 hours per week (Champion-Hughes). The job sharing system usually allows two people to split the duties of one full-time job with each employee receiving commensurate compensation (Champion-Hughes 2001; Foegen, 1994). Many employees, if given the

opportunity to modify their work schedules, would not be forced to make a choice between career and family (Champion-Hughes). Enthusiastic job sharers describe this schedule as a panacea: Not only does it alleviate burnout and stress but it gives longer-lasting relief than part-time arrangements that are often prone to backlogged tasks (Watson, 1995). A unique job-sharing benefit comes from pairing pros and amateurs in a full-time equivalency system (Watson). The veteran employee can train the newer one save informally, saving training dollars and the district gains financially because it can pay the inexperienced employee a lower rate (Watson).

One flexible scheduling strategy allows teachers to come to school an hour earlier or later, an arrangement that provides extended staff coverage while providing flexibility in room and class scheduling (Engleking, 1988). Other flexible scheduling strategies include longer breaks (running one or two weeks) at the end of each nine-week period and released time to observe and work with peers in one's own school as well as in other districts (Engleking). Flexible scheduling is among the most appreciated benefits because employers actually "own" employees' time (Lizotte, 2001).

Sabbaticals

Some school districts offer staff members sabbatical leave for educational or family reasons, while maintaining those employees right to work. These districts may establish pools of contingent workers to provide job coverage. These short-term sabbatical leaves may last from one week up to one month in duration (Engleking, 1988). While the number of organizations that offer sabbaticals remains low, those that do offer such leave find that employees return with a deeper commitment to their jobs as well as increased morale and productivity (Bradford, 2001).

Virtual Classrooms

Another type of scheduling strategy is the use of virtual classrooms utilizing school technology. Husu (2000) reported the results of a Finnish project which linked two lower secondary classrooms to one virtual classroom. He listed several advantages including: (a) instead of the technology acting as a barrier, it simultaneously seemed to force the users to be pragmatic in their actions and to alter their behavior accordingly by requiring them to patiently wait their turn, speak more clearly, and plan more carefully what they were going to present; (b) the intellectual and social partnership created by the technology of the virtual classroom forced the students to engage in additional social skills when they spontaneously took leadership roles in relation to other pupils.

Husu (2000) reported the following limiting factors: the pupils' need for more intimate face-to-face contact as the pupils were not willing to tolerate the electronic lack of intimacy that was characteristic to the mediated access of human contacts and content knowledge delivered; and the difficulty some pupils had with self-discipline and self-monitoring in the face of learning tasks as teachers reported that pupils had to develop the ability to learn more independently if they were to be successful in the virtual classroom.

Wiesenberg (1999) concluded that while the approach to teaching is fundamentally the same in both media, the instructional roles played and specific instructional strategies used differ in important ways. The most frequently cited distinctions between the traditional face-to-face and new virtual classroom are structural; speaking and listening in the traditional classroom versus typing and reading in the virtual classroom; everyone moving at the same speed versus self-paced; a set time and place versus anytime and anyplace; social interaction as inappropriate versus social interaction as appropriate at the discretion of the participants; recording responsibly

being the students' versus the system's; and utilization of advanced technologies in learning a luxury versus a necessity (Hiltz, 1998).

Wiesenberg (1999) found several benefits of virtual classrooms including: the elimination of space, time, and geographical restraints; increased peer interaction arising from a collaborative rather than competitive learning environment; increased interaction with more teachers with decreased time for feedback; increased quality of learning with deeper critical reflection and systematic scaffolding of ideas taking place; and increased access to databases and other resources not normally available to distance learners (Wiesenberg, 1999). As a result of Wiesenberg's research, on-line technology is viewed as a medium with particular instructional strengths and weaknesses, as opposed to a driver of the teaching-learning process that requires a whole new approach to teaching.

Workplace Enhancement Strategies

Workplace conditions are key factors affecting teachers' job satisfaction (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1996); the more favorable the conditions, the higher the satisfaction scores (Norton, 1999). Several types of workplace enhancement strategies may be used including: (1) casual dress; (2) career pathing; (3) timely performance appraisals; (4) employee recognition programs; (5) training and development; (6) decision-making responsibilities; and (7) balanced lifestyle/meaning in work. To make retaining employees a top priority, it is important to utilize workplace enhancement strategies.

Casual Dress

Casual dress is one way to enhance the workplace. A relaxed dress code on selected days or times of the year can be used as a team award or incentive. Organizations adopt less restrictive dress codes because they believe it will enhance employee satisfaction and morale (Morand,

1998). Proponents of casual dress claim that such a climate can boost employee morale, creativity, and even overall performance (Morand). Casual dress day might be likened to an extra perk, something designed to make the work environment more pleasing and raise morale, yet having a limited impact on the actual performance of work (Morand). According to a survey of work/life initiatives conducted by Bright Horizons Family Solutions and the William M. Mercer Company in 2000, casual dress was a favorite fringe benefit.

When relaxing the dress code, administrators need to define expectations (Glube, 1998). Casual business-wear allows the person to feel comfortable at work yet always look neat and professional (Biecher, Keaton, & Pollum, 1999). Creating an atmosphere in which people want to work typically includes dress standards (Story, 2001).

Casual dressing at work may be the result of two distinct trends: a return to elegance as a way of conveying professionalism, and a loosening up of formal dress codes, as demonstrated by casual Fridays and dress-down days (Biecher, Keaton, & Pollum, 1999). Dressing casually, when done appropriately, has positive consequences for both the employer's and the employee's attitudes (Biecher, Keaton, & Pollum).

An informal dress code and relaxed style are most successful when used in an environment characterized by high employee commitment to organizational goals (Morand, 1998). In another setting, an informal style can result in too much laxness or a breakdown of order (Morand).

Career Pathing

Effective career pathing is another workplace enhancement tool. Teaching remains one of the few professions where novices have the same responsibilities as 25-year veterans (Keiffer-Barone & Ware, 2001). Many teachers leave the profession when they reach a plateau and begin

looking for new challenges. Classroom instructional duties remain the same throughout their careers, mid-career and experienced teachers may seek out teacher leadership opportunities that offer new challenges and some salary differential (Lavelly & Berger, 1990). Few opportunities for advancement are available in most jobs in the education field. Prospective and beginning teachers are often overwhelmed by the challenges of working with students. More experienced teachers have only one option if they want broader professional responsibilities and substantially higher salaries: to leave the classroom for administrative positions (Keiffer-Barone & Ware, 2001). One way to address this issue is to offer career counseling to employees and to establish a career path.

The Cincinnati School District created a career path by placing teachers into categories such as intern, apprentice, novice, career, advanced and accomplished (Keiffer-Barone & Ware). Norton (1988) identified career counseling related to growth opportunities in the system and/or within the present teaching role as one of the top priorities for new faculty.

Career ladders represent past and present goals to improve teacher skills, enhance education production, and upgrade teaching as a profession, thus attracting and retaining high-caliber teachers (Chance, Malo, & Pickett, 1988). Career ladders are designed to generate rewards such as recognition, challenge, and opportunity for growth (Luce, 1998). Generally, career ladders have three to four steps, with extra pay for extra contributions and responsibilities such as curriculum development, or functional assignments such as supporting novices or conducting inservice programs (Luce). Issues such as equity, evaluation procedures and instruments, cost, due process and appeals, availability to and acceptability by the intended participants, and amount and/or kind of incentives offer challenges to, and generate controversy among, members of the education communities (Chance, Malo & Pickett, 1988). A career ladder can be used to

structure teachers' work to promote teaching effectiveness and provide professional growth (Luce, 1998).

Johns (1988) conducted a study on Tennessee's Master Teacher Plan, which was based on a career ladder program with five career stages: Probationary, Apprentice, and Career Levels I, II and III. He concluded that the teachers believed the career ladder program to be ineffective in providing teachers with strong incentives to become better teachers. According to a study by Chance, Malo & Pickett (1988), the growth of Tennessee's Career Ladder Program from infancy to adolescence has been a painful struggle at times. However, these researchers found that parents and educators alike now admit that the program has had many positive results.

In 1987, the state of Iowa adopted legislation that made it possible for school districts to design career ladder programs and to develop strategies for attracting the academically talented, retaining qualified teachers, and recognizing outstanding teachers (Matthes & Tollerud, 1990). According to a study by Matthes & Tollerud, classroom teachers do not embrace the concept of career ladders with the same vigor as policy makers and education leaders.

Middleton (1990) reported the findings of a study conducted to determine if teacher attitudes differ significantly toward the feasibility of a proposed Teacher Career Ladder Program. According to Middleton, because of Georgia teachers' negative attitude toward the Teacher Career Ladder Program, Georgia administrators were urged to concentrate their efforts on projects to enhance the levels of gratification teachers gain from performing the job of teaching. It was also recommended that these projects focus on duplicating conditions in the school district were shown by the effective schools research to be associated with enduring levels of job satisfaction (Middleton, 1990). A comparative case study of school staff revealed divergent emerging judgments of a teacher career ladder (Hart, 1994). One school group described the

career ladder as a positive strategy to increase student achievement whereas another school staff found there was no impact on instruction and student learning.

The Los Angeles Unified School District developed and implemented the largest paraeducator career ladder program in the nation to provide financial, academic, and social support for paraeducators pursuing careers as teachers (McGowan & Brandick, 1998). Forty percent of new teachers leave the profession in the first five years, but 99.5% of the teachers from the Paraeducators Career Ladder are still teaching (Zacarias, 1998). Since there are 500,000 paraeducators in the nation's schools, they are seen as a viable source of future teachers (McGowan & Brandick, 1998).

Research on Generation X suggests that horizontal growth is important due to limited vertical opportunities. While one must be careful about creating stereotypes, certain factors have shaped the Generation X-factors to which other generations cannot often relate (Adams, 2000). To hire and retain Generation X-ers, school districts need to understand their perspective, figure out what drives them, and learn to design a program that will help retain them (Lamperes, 2001). They want immediate authority, independence and a voice in major decisions including their career path (Jennings, 2000).

Timely and Accurate Performance Appraisals

Timely and accurate performance appraisals are so important to retention that administrators' raises should be tied to them (Glube, 1998). Just about every important decision about teacher utilization such as whether the teacher is certified as competent, hired, receives tenure, is recognized as meritorious, depends on someone's judgment of how well that teacher performs in the classroom (Medley, 1987). A review of the performance appraisal literature reveals that

researchers have sought many avenues to increase the usefulness of traditional performance appraisal systems and in the process have identified many criteria to measure its success (Williams & Lueke, 1999).

Although it is true that many organizations are questioning their appraisal practices, it is also true that constant pressure exists to increase productivity (Bowman, 1994). Job descriptions need to be re-scripted to show what the employee does. One way a school district can accomplish a review of their appraisal practices is to define superior performance in each position. To encourage employee performance improvements, the supervisor must identify both strengths and weaknesses in current performance and provide the motivational reinforcement to encourage improvements (Allender, 1995). For each position, the most important six to eight tasks necessary for job success should be identified; these should form the basis for performance objectives that could address problems to solve, identify changes to introduce, and management issues, or technological objectives (Avery, 2000).

In the arena of personnel appraisal, most problems that an organization confronts, are frequently self-inflicted and usually created by management practices (Bowman, 1994). In an effort to minimize job dissatisfaction and lower high turnover rates, employers must guard against poorly conceived appraisal systems (Champion-Hughes, 2001). School system efforts to improve the teaching force, whether by better recruitment and selection, upgraded inservice training, or more efficient teacher utilization are directly affected by administrators' ability to detect differences in teacher performance on demand, promptly, economically, and accurately (Medley, 1987). Employees can get discouraged if they receive ratings that they perceive as being inaccurate and unfair (Champion-Hughes).

The most important finding of a study conducted by Medley (1987), is the low accuracy of principal's judgments on their teachers' performance. An effective appraisal system can help employers retain their employees by giving the impression that the work atmosphere is fair, progressive and dynamic (Champion-Hughes, 2001). Many employees want and need feedback, and when advised that they are delivering sub-par performance, most will remedy the problem (Champion-Hughes). This feedback needs to be given immediately. It is an outdated management style to attend the annual performance evaluation meeting to tell an employee that he or she performed great or poorly during the year (Allender, 1995). Administrators should openly and regularly give feedback to teachers about their overall performance and discuss performance issues when they arise (McCarthy, 2000). According to McCarthy, the teacher should be fully aware of his or her performance, and the appraisal should just recap the discussions that have taken place throughout the year. Frequent feedback is especially important with Generation Xers who are looking for clear expectations about job performance and feedback that is frequent, timely, accurate and specific (Thiedke, 1998).

Evaluation is a never-ending cycle as it must lead to continuous improvement (Tracey, 1994). In a growing number of organizations, 360-degree feedback is gaining popularity. Since their conception about 30 years ago, 360 degree systems have become more prevalent at more organizations as personal development tools, although their use for performance and compensation appraisals continues to draw criticism (Wells, 1999). According to Wells, a 360-degree evaluation collects anonymous reviews about employees from peers, subordinates and supervisors and then compiles those reviews in a feedback report. An Internet-based 360-degree feedback system can produce the information needed for coaching and individual development plans much faster than the typical paper and pencil evaluation (Huet-Cox, Nielson, & Sundstrom,

1999). As 360-degree feedback processes become more common, organizations adopting this practice are choosing to use feedback results in vastly different ways (Antonioni, 2000).

The concept of 360-degree feedback or multi-source feedback rests on the assumption that performance information about a focal individual collected from different perspectives and fed back to that same individual will lead to individual development (Brutus & London, 1999). Efforts toward continuous improvement should concentrate on improving the quality of work life for the individual employee (Tracey, 1994). The two main purposes of feedback from 360-degree feedback are development and evaluation (Antonioni, 2000). Evaluation is worthless unless a plan of action follows (Tracey). All staff members should receive reviews that are relevant and constructive (Thiedke, 1998). Unless the organization has an open, participative, trusting culture prior to adopting the process, 360-degree feedback is unlikely to be successful (Atwater & Waldman, 1998).

Employee Recognition Programs

Employee recognition is any display that acknowledges, approves of, or shows appreciation for a person's or a team's actions and can be small, simple efforts or elaborate formal programs (Carter, 1994). According to Carter, by creating an environment that maximizes the important contributions of people, the Human Resource professional can improve the organization's ability to meet world-class standards and competitive challenges. There are many forms of employee recognition programs including: letters of commendation or appreciation for outstanding work or service; noncompetitive awards such as business cards for teachers or birthdays off; recognition in the news media for outstanding service or contributions; employee of the month, term, and year awards; faculty and department lunches once a month paid for by businesses; and increased status through title such as master teacher, senior teacher, or mentor teacher (Engleking, 1988).

Other types of recognition include having coffee and bagels waiting for employees on a random workday since it is the sort of thing that separates one school or worksite from another. An achievement box can generate positive feelings and improve morale in the organization. Encourage employees to contribute their own positive news to the box by drawing one employee note at random for a small prize such as a gift certificate to a local restaurant, theatre, or store. Small blue satin ribbons, printed with “I had a bright idea,” presented by senior leadership in informal ceremonies is one recognition initiative used by a large organization (Carter, 1994).

An administrator may feel overwhelmed by the challenge of trying to remember all the employees in a large department or school. One way to counter this difficulty is to develop a grid and have the supervisor check off names as he or she writes positive notes, sends a birthday card, thank you card or has a friendly conversation. Supervisors should actively work to improve morale by holding administrators accountable for treating employees with respect. Showing respect can include thanking employees or acknowledging when a worker is sick or has a sick child (Thompson, 2001). Because many employees seek opportunities for recognition, management must carefully consider what performance or results it wants to reward, because a well-designed motivational program will influence behavior (Carter, 1994).

Job titles are a critical recognition factor in recruitment and retention efforts. Job titles can provide status and self-esteem because they can convey prestige and provide recognition. Job title recognition ties in with the career ladders for teachers when different titles are listed such as Intern Teacher, Apprentice Teacher, Mentor Teacher, Senior teacher, and Master teacher.

Recognizing only a few top performers rather than calling attention to the accomplishments of the majority of the employees is one of the greatest reasons why managers fail to create a motivating environment (Tracey, 1994). Effective recognition does not have to be monetary but

must be timely and sincere (Tracey). Positive reinforcement must be continuous in order to maintain positive behavior as it serves no purpose to start a new program with great fanfare and then to replace it with another program at a later time (Tracey).

Training and Development

Research data clearly reflects a growing concern about regarding the role of training in the retention of teachers (Wrobel, 1993). Although a great deal has been written about how stress affects teachers, few researchers have used experimental designs to examine the relationship among factors of training, workplace stressors, and subsequent job retention (Wrobel). Individual coping strategies and skills for managing stress and avoiding burnout are important and should be taught as part of teacher training (Wrobel). Research evidence suggests that the more training prospective teachers receive, the more likely they are to stay (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p.10).

Carl A. J. Wright in the Baltimore Business Journal surveyed more than 1000 U. S. workers and asked employees to identify factors that would make them more likely to remain with their current employers. The primary response was training and development. Training and development can be funded by monies made available for purposes of teacher induction, program development, or conference registration. Computers and computer training could also be made available at district cost. To increase retention in school districts, learning should be made easier and more enjoyable (Messmer, 2001).

In a review of the literature regarding the relationship between stress and teacher retention, Wrobel (1993) described implications for teacher training. In his search, he found that over one fifth of the citations contained in the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database with the descriptor stress also contained the descriptor teacher.

The Horn Group, a San Francisco-based public relations firm, retains employees by offering them cash that they can spend on any type of training they feel would help them do their jobs better. This personal development fund can be used in a variety of ways such as time management seminars, writing courses, or technology classes. With the assistance of a coach, every worker could design his or her own “personal development plan”. If school districts give employees the chance to develop their own skills within the organization, they’ll be less likely to leave in search of other opportunities (Pine, 2001).

Teacher Induction

According to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (2001a) Georgia Retention Study, results indicated that the lack of preparation was a highly ranked negative aspect of teaching and was rated as a cause for teacher burnout. In a study conducted by the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (2003), the top seven skill areas for which teachers stated they needed additional preparation were: managing student behavior; strategies for motivating students; accommodating and dealing with diverse instructional needs in the classroom; adequately meeting the instructional needs of diverse learners; use of standardized test results to adjust instruction; solving problems in classroom management; and fulfilling administrative duties. Ornstein and Levine (2000) noted that the teaching profession now recognizes the need for induction and transition into teaching.

Large concentrations of under-prepared teachers create a drain on schools’ financial and human resources (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p.8). When there are not enough qualified and certified candidates, many districts are certain to hire minimally prepared, unlicensed teachers (Peske et al, 2001). School improvement efforts, which often take years before reaching fruition,

require a stable group of teachers who are aware of and are consistently working toward the improvement goals (Hope, 1999).

A growing body of evidence indicates that teachers who lack initial preparation are more likely to leave the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p.10). At the Novice Teacher Support Project, at the University of Illinois, university educators offer feedback, encouragement, and advice to teachers from nearby school districts which appears to increase the odds for teacher retention (Southworth, 2000, p.26). Although the number of state induction programs has increased from 7 states in 1997 to 33 states in 2002, only 22 states provide funding for these programs, and not all of the programs provide on-site mentors (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p.11).

Mentoring

Mentoring can be a valuable retention strategy and a critical element in employee development (Segal, 2000). Mentoring provides a risk-free environment for fostering creativity since the mentor is a co-worker and not a supervisor. Practices such as assigning the new teacher to an expert mentor, scheduling meetings with project administrators who provide personal assistance as needed, assigning new members to work with a cluster of peers, or assigning a variety of resources personnel to support new teachers exemplify systematic retention efforts (Norton, 1999). After the relationship has been established, the mentor should establish a goal of regular, honest, specific, and timely feedback (Peterson, William, Dick, & Dunham, 1998). Communication is needed at many levels and at various times during mentoring (Wakins & Whalley, 1993).

Strong support for beginning teachers, in the form of mentoring, is one way to ease the pressures on them and allow them an easier transition into their profession (Peterson, Williams, Dick & Dunham, 1998). The allocation of funds for formal mentoring and induction programs are needed to ensure the retention of new teacher hires (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2001b). One goal of teacher induction is to provide ongoing assistance to teachers entering the profession through mentoring programs (Blair-Larsen, 1998). In the field of higher education, an American Association of Teacher Educators survey of teacher educators, school teachers and university and school administrators identified the introduction of mentoring as the most critical issue confronting American teacher educators this decade (Ballantyne & Hansford, 1995). The goal of a mentoring program, whether implemented at the state or local level, is to offer intervention that orients new teachers to the school community and to provide instructional and interpersonal support that fosters professional development (Blair-Larsen, 1998).

Programs like Kentucky's internship program have the potential to reduce the current rate of attrition for early childhood special educators during the critical first years of their professional careers and to support their competence and confidence throughout their professional lives (McCormick & Brennan, 2001). Legislation passed in 1984 in Kentucky established the Kentucky Teacher Internship Program (KTIP), a support and assistance program designed to help every new teacher develop a strong foundation for lifelong practice. The program mandates the appointment of a team of resource teachers, principals, and teacher educators to support, assist, and assess new teachers during a year-long supervised internship. Measures aimed at recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers will contribute to the improvement of schools and the provision of quality educational services to young children (McCormick & Brennan).

Chapman argues that the quality of a first teaching experience is more important in retaining a new teacher than either the quality of a teacher-preparation program or the new teacher's prior academic performance (Peterson, William, Dick, & Dunham, 1998). The Santa Cruz New Teacher Project, which began in 1988, provides new teachers with an induction program delivered by trained mentors recruited from the ranks of the districts' best teachers (Moir & Bloom, 2003). This initiative gave new teachers the same sort of job-specific training and support, beyond their internships as students, which medical residents receive as new doctors (Basinger, 2000). The project was so successful that a New Teacher Center was created in 1998 to build on and disseminate the work of the project (Moir & Bloom). Less than 10 percent of new teachers who have gone through the Santa Cruz program during its dozen years have left the profession and studies of similar programs have shown comparable retention rates (Basinger, 2000, p.19). Now, in its 15th year, the project has served more than 9,000 beginning teachers and trained more than 90 teachers as full-time mentors (Moir & Bloom, 2003, p.58).

Odell and Ferraro (1992, p.200) suggest that good mentoring reduces the high attrition rate usually associated with new teachers, so that it is at least comparable to that for more experienced teachers. Our society can no longer accept the hit-and-miss hiring, sink and swim induction, trial and error teaching, take-it-or-leave-it professional development it has tolerated in the past (Tetzlaff & Wagstaff, 1999).

Mentoring programs can also contribute to employee morale, and serve as a means of identifying and promoting teachers with high potential for leadership. Mentors offer encouragement, emotional support, resources, and technical knowledge to their protégés (Peterson, William, Dick, & Dunham, 1998). New teachers are not the only group who can gain

from mentor support and assistance: teachers returning from long-term absences, teachers who change grade levels, and many experienced teachers may also benefit (Tetzlaff & Wagstaff).

Research strongly suggests that the development of consistent and focused contact is a critical component of mentoring (Meyers & Smith, 1999). The idea of a meaningful approach to mentoring new teachers has moved from the edges of the policy arena; it is now being recognized as a critical element of a comprehensive approach to teacher development (Danielson, 1999). As the education community develops better understanding of the life cycle of a teaching career and of the best ways to support professional learning by teachers, the first few years of practice are being widely acknowledged as critical steps in the development of expertise (Danielson). Since experienced teachers know the political landscape of the school better, they can often run interference for a new teacher, keeping distractions to a minimum and allowing the new teacher to focus on students and teaching (Peterson, William, Dick & Dunham, 1998).

State legislatures, including New Jersey's, have mandated mentoring programs as part of the teacher certification and licensing process in order to provide excellent teachers for educating their constituents (Blair-Larsen, 1998). Districts such as Rochester, New York, and Cincinnati, Columbus, and Toledo, Ohio, have reduced attrition rates of beginning teachers by more than two-thirds by providing expert mentors with release time to coach beginning teachers in their first year on the job (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p.11). The goal of a mentoring program whether implemented at the state or local level is to offer intervention that orient new and returning teachers to the school and community and to provide instructional support that fosters professional development and retention as teachers (Blair-Larsen).

Mentoring development in any school will be affected by several factors, among them the ethos or culture of the organization, the style of management in the school, which may be through teams, political or hierarchical, the degree of connectedness and communication in the organization which may be open and wide, well supported and resourced or closed, the view of professional development and teachers' learning which may be seen as an essential aspect of school life, a luxury or simply a nuisance, and the view of initial training and trainees, which may be one of processing and socializing people into old ways and maintaining the status quo of the organization, rather than recognizing new and regenerative ideas (Wakins & Whalley, 1993, p.3).

In efforts to meet education reform initiatives in 1995, 18 states mandated mentor support for beginning teachers and another 16 had already begun pilot programs (Furtwengler, 1995; McCormick & Brennan, 2001). According to McCormick and Brennan (2001, p.3), the use of mentors has been reported in the early childhood special education literature to describe professional development programs for early intervention personnel, early childhood teachers, special education teachers, early care and education providers, and home-based family educators.

Individuals who have mentors are more likely to be successful in overcoming obstacles and, therefore, more productive (Segal, 2000). Marlow, Inman and Betancourt-Meyers and Smith (1999) found that when beginning teachers are mentored, they gain knowledge, feel less isolated, and develop a greater sense of self-esteem and efficiency. Conversely, teachers without the support of colleagues and administrators are likely to feel isolated and even ridiculed when their ideas are not supported by individuals within their school (Marlow, Inman & Betancourt-Smith, 1997). Mentoring programs are increasingly being used as a recruitment strategy since they demonstrate to potential hires that a school district is committed to its employees. Even though

most of the teachers will enter the ranks with enthusiasm, statistics indicate that teachers tend to leave the profession at a rate of almost 50% after 5 years and 80% after 10 (Boreen & Niday, 2000; Heyns, 1988; Huling-Austin, 1986b; Morey & Murphy, 1990). These daunting numbers make it imperative that educators work toward not only welcoming but retaining new teachers (Boreen & Niday). Measures aimed at recruiting, preparing, and retaining good teachers will contribute to the improvement of schools and the provision of quality educational services to young children (Darling-Hammond, 1998; McCormick & Brennan, 2001; Miller & Stayton, 2000).

Several research findings highlight the importance of providing support to beginning teachers of young children, including a high teacher turnover rate (Darling-Hammond, 1998), teacher shortages (Whitaker, 2000), a high rate of attrition during the first three years of teaching (Boe, Bobbit, & Cook, 1997), and unique problems faced by beginning teachers (Brendekamp & Willer, 1992) in school systems (McCormick & Brennan, 2001, p.2).

Although the frequency of mentoring in education ranks about the same as in nursing and law enforcement, the quality of the relationships is not as good (Fagan & Walter, 1982). What is evident from the data is that schools are finding it difficult to provide positive experiences of mentor support and that this difficulty, in turn, is putting the responsibility for their survival onto the newly qualified teachers themselves (Brown, 2001). According to Brown, the inadequate provision of mentoring support may explain the drop-out of some of the teachers, and conversely strong mentor support may help teachers at the margins to stay to stay on in the profession. One way to improve mentor quality is to ensure the role of mentor, either by assignment or by choice, is removed from the role of evaluator if possible (Peterson, William, Dick & Dunham, 1998).

A public school-university partnership to train and develop teachers is an employee relations strategy that is developing momentum. The literature of school-university partnerships clearly revolves around teacher education programs (Hallmark, 1998). Perry (2000) describes and discusses a process of mentoring that involved educators in schools and educators in universities. Feistritzer (2000) suggested that schools could share exceptional teachers, and that college professors and people outside the educational system could teach in their field of expertise.

Decision-Making Responsibilities

The literature on teacher work life identifies significant problems with teachers' work in traditional American schools: teachers are isolated from colleagues in most of their work; and teachers have not been significantly involved in many of the decisions that affect the nature of their work, particularly in decisions made outside the classroom or the school (Short, 1994, p. 488). Teachers are traditionally not given much decision-making power (Shen, 1997). Teacher empowerment in many schools has expanded the role and involvement of teachers in planning and decision making regarding school goals and policies (Davis & Wilson, 2000, p.349). Empowering teachers may be one of the ways to improve teacher retention since teachers who feel that they have influence over school and teaching policies are more likely to stay (Shen, 1997) Teachers have been typically left out of the decision-making process in schools (Whitaker & Moses, 1990). It is more important to involve all teachers in the decision-making process as it provides them an opportunity to gain ownership in the overall mission and vision of an organization.

Empowerment has been defined as a process whereby school participants develop the competence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems (Short, 1998, p.488). Teacher empowerment is a cornerstone of most educational restructuring reform efforts

(Gonzales & Short, 1996; Klecker & Loadman, 1998). Research supports the assumption that teacher empowerment relates to greater organizational effectiveness (Short & Rinehart, 1993, p. 593). Empowered teachers have the rights, responsibilities and resources to make sensible decisions and informed professional judgments (Quaglia & Marion, 1991, p. 208). Empowered individuals believe in their knowledge, skills and abilities and believe they can solve or improve situations (Short, 1994).

The more current term for teacher involvement is teacher empowerment, however, other buzzwords have been used to connote greater teacher involvement in school decision making including power equalization, restructured schools, school-site management, shared decision making, shared governance, and workplace democracy (Duke & Gansneder, 1990). Teacher empowerment may be defined as giving teachers more power to shape the decisions affecting their work and their profession (Whitaker & Moses, 1990).

Teachers can provide intellectual leadership in the identification and solution of school-wide problems (Vaquez-Levy & Timmerman, 2000). New teacher leadership roles are emerging as educators and policymakers seek to improve the three major phases of the teaching career continuum: teacher preparation, induction, and ongoing professional development (Sherrill, 1999, p. 56). In addition to instructing students, teachers are beginning to assume leadership roles to advance their profession and to improve teacher and student learning (Urbanski & Nickolaou, 1997). Effective decision making actively involves those who will be responsible for implementation (Whitaker & Moses, 1990). Although research on empowerment seems to emphasize teacher involvement in decision making, the construct is more complex including dimensions of teacher perceptions of status, self-efficacy, autonomy, impact, and opportunities for professional growth in the organization (Short & Rinehart, 1992; Wu & Short, 1996).

The focus of a study conducted by Davis & Wilson (2000), were principal empowering behaviors as they relate to teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and job stress. They found that the more principals engaged in behaviors that were personally empowering, the more teachers saw that they had choices they could make in completing their work and the greater the impact they perceived they were making through their efforts. Empowered schools are organizations that showcase the development of competence (Short, 1994).

Balanced Lifestyle/Meaning in Work

A balanced lifestyle and finding meaning in one's work may well become the most sought after employer retention tool of the twenty-first century. According to a Coopers and Lybrand survey of Generation X attitudes, this generation is chiefly concerned with a balanced lifestyle, valuing it more than money (Fyock, 1998). In an attempt to improve education quality, much focus has been placed on teachers and organizational factors that influence teacher work life (Wu & Short, 1996). Researchers believe that teachers' quality of work life can be improved if their level of psychological distress can be reduced (Hart, 1994). Researchers have invested considerable effort to understand the dynamics of teacher stress (Hart, 1994, p.122). Organizations must understand and respond to their employees' need for greater opportunities and balance since employees develop loyalty for organizations that respect them as individuals, not just as workers (Fyock, 1998).

Balancing work and life is a challenge for employees, one that many employers have recognized by introducing work/life programs and policies such as child care, elder care, family leave, or flexible work schedules. Organizations are beginning to recognize and respond to signs of employee burnout and are realizing that unless people can have balance in their lives, their productivity will suffer (Berman, 1999). One way to provide balance is to establish exercise

fitness or wellness programs that can take place before or after school. These programs also go a long way in reducing employee absenteeism as well as providing employee loyalty.

Summary

The current teacher shortage and its predicted continuation over the next decade, require retention efforts that have more of a marketing mindset. School districts would be wise to develop a strategic plan for recruiting and retaining highly qualified employees. Part of this retention plan should examine the types and causes of employee turnover.

A wide array of retention strategies have been identified within five broad categories: (1) employee relations; (2) compensation; (3) benefits; (4) scheduling and (5) workplace enhancement. The retention of teaching talent in the school system must be viewed as a district priority. A collaborative approach involving school districts, community members, state and local government, and institutions of higher education is required to develop a package of incentive options which will enhance retention. This staff stability is needed to improve the classroom environment for students to increase achievement as we begin the twentieth-first century. With the large cohort of teachers who were born during the baby boom 1950s and 1960s now reaching retirement age and fewer people entering the teaching profession, school districts will have to come up with incentives to attract and retain teachers (Henderson, 1994). When the high costs of attrition are calculated, many of the strategic investments needed to keep good teachers actually pay for themselves (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p.12).

Chapter III describes the research design of this study and the methodology used to determine which employee retention initiatives teachers in a Georgia suburban school district prefer.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH PROCEDURES

The foundation of any school district's future is keeping the great teachers they already have and finding more like them. It is important to gather information on what motivates teachers to join the school district and what motivates them to stay.

In FY02, Georgia hired 13,084 new teachers, 8,304 of whom replaced teachers who exited the classroom (Georgia Professional Standards Commission, 2002). Constant turnover is too expensive and too disruptive for school districts striving to increase student achievement. In their 2001 report on teacher retention, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission found significant increases in student performance could be created by higher retention rates of qualified teachers since it results in the establishment of a more stable, satisfied, and highly competent workforce (Fetler, 1997).

So much attention has been focused on entry and access that few policy makers and school officials have thought systematically about how to retain teachers once they are hired (Peske et al., 2001). School districts need to be more flexible in their recruitment and retention methods including creating initiatives and incentives to attract and retain teachers (Cook, 1992; Henderson, 1994). Many factors must be considered when developing a retention plan. Ultimately, a school district must survey these factors and select those that are of the most benefit in keeping teachers in their positions (Mitchell, Holtom, & Lee, 2001).

The procedures utilized in this research study are detailed in this chapter. Headings within the chapter are: Study Design, Null Hypotheses, Sampling Procedures, Data Collection, Instrumentation, Definition of Variables, and Levels of Significance.

Study Design

This study was undertaken to determine if there were statistically significant differences in employee retention initiatives and incentives preferred by teachers in a Georgia suburban school district. The questionnaire results were tabulated and means calculated on each survey question. Differences based on the demographic variables of race, age, gender and years of experience were examined with ANOVA for five null hypotheses.

This study is quantitative research. Quantitative research is characterized by the use of deductive analysis to test the hypothesis in contrast to the qualitative method that utilizes inductive logic to generate possible hypotheses. The quantitative method typically uses large random samples from the identified population in contrast to the qualitative studies that use small select samples. One major advantage of a quantitative study is the ability of the researcher to generalize from the findings (Gay, 1987).

Null Hypotheses

Five null hypotheses were developed for this research. All five of the null hypotheses are stated below.

Ho: 1

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers for each retention initiative/incentive.

Ho:2

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers

working in elementary, middle, or high school for the preferred retention initiative/incentive.

Ho:3

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different age categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive.

Ho:4

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in two different race categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive

Ho:5

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in two different gender categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive

Population and Sampling Procedures

Population

Teachers selected for this study were new to the Cobb County School District, a suburban district in Georgia. The decisive factor for the definition of teachers new to the Cobb County School District (CCSD) was teachers with five years or less experience in the CCSD.

Samples

There were approximately 3500 teachers with five years or less experience in the Cobb County School District. Borg and Gall (1989) found that random sampling in their research design provided the most scientific results for education researchers. Therefore, to strengthen the research design, random sampling of new teachers in the CCSD was utilized. There were 350 teachers who were asked to participate in the study.

Data Collection

The retention questionnaires, designed by the researcher listing major retention initiatives and incentives identified in the research, were mailed in packets to each of the 350 randomly selected teachers with five years of experience or less in the Cobb County School District (CCSD), a suburban school district in Atlanta, Georgia. The packets were mailed to each participant's school. A principals' packet was mailed to each Principal in the CCSD that employed teachers who were randomly selected for the survey. The principals' packet included a cover letter for the principal and a list of teachers at their school receiving a survey. The teachers' packets included a cover letter, instructions, retention questionnaire, scantron form and a postage-paid return addressed envelope. To accurately track the response rates of the questionnaires, each teacher's retention questionnaires were coded with a number. No additional information was placed on the retention questionnaires in order to ensure anonymity.

Instrumentation

Retention Questionnaire

The retention questionnaire was designed by the researcher listing major retention initiatives and incentives identified in the research. Teachers, who have five years or less in the Cobb County School District and were randomly selected for the sample, were asked to rate each initiative/incentive using a Likert-type scale to the degree the initiative/incentive will influence their continued employment in the district. In addition, an open-ended section at the end of the survey allowed for any other comments the respondents wished to make. Items on the instrument were obtained from the most frequently mentioned incentives in the literature as depicted in Figure 1.

Figure 1
Validity of Instrument

Incentive	Citation
Comprehensive New Hire Orientation	Wanous & Reichers, 2000
Climate Surveys to Gather Input	Rojewski & Wendel, 1990
Increased Communication	Tracey, 1994
District Employee Handbook	Perkins & Terman, 1999
Higher Salary	Theobald & Gritz, 1996
Retention Bonus	Today, 2000
Merit Pay	Odden, 2000
Incentive Pay	Champion-Hughes, 2001
Increased Benefit Options	Williams & MacDermid, 1994
Employee Assistance Program	Masi, 1992
Employee Wellness Program	Noe et al, 1997
Tuition Reimbursement Program	Champion-Hughes, 2001
Flexible Scheduling/Job Sharing	Watson, 1995; Lizotte, 2001
Sabbatical	Bradford, 2001
Virtual Classroom	Wiesenberg, 1999; Husu, 2000
Teacher Career Path	Chance, Malo & Pickett, 1988
Increased Chances for Promotion	McGowan & Brandick, 1998
Timely, Fair & Accurate Evaluation	Williams & Lueke, 1999
Increased Chances for Recognition	Carter, 1994
Increased Staff Development/Training	Wrobel, 1993
Comprehensive Induction Program	Darling-Hammond, 2003
Mentoring	Segal, 2000
Involvement in the Decision-making	Short, 1998
Increase in Administrative Support	Davis & Wilson, 2000
Increase in Meaning in Work	Berman, 1999

Definition of Variables

Dependent Variables

Dependent variables in this study were the responses to the retention questionnaire given by the teachers who participated in this study. The researcher used these responses in the data analysis to compare the statistical significance of the preferred retention initiative/incentive.

Independent Variables

Independent variables in this study consist of the teachers with five years or less of experience in a large suburban school district of Atlanta, Georgia who responded to the questionnaire sent by the researcher.

Levels of Significance

Statistical treatment of data from the research for this study involved the use of descriptive statistics including measures of central tendency, variability and correlations. The .05 threshold level of significance was used to determine significance in this study. This level of significance is the accepted traditional level in education and social scientific studies.

Summary

This chapter includes a description of the research procedures utilized in this study. Included in this chapter are the research design, null hypotheses, sampling procedures, data collection, survey instrument, definition of variables, and levels of significance. The results of the study are presented in Chapter 4. Chapter 5 presents a summary, conclusions, and recommendations for further study.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine which employee retention initiatives or incentives are preferred by employees in a Georgia suburban school system. If there was a preferred retention initiative/incentive, the study also sought to determine if the teachers' race, age, gender or school level taught affected the type of retention initiative/incentive preferred.

Procedure

Data used in this study were collected from a randomly selected sample of teachers who had five years or less experience in a the Cobb County School District (CCSD), a suburban school district in Atlanta, Georgia. The retention questionnaires, listing major retention initiatives and incentives identified in the research, were mailed in packets to each of the 350 randomly selected teachers with five years or less experience in the (CCSD). The packets were mailed to each participant's school. A principal's packet was mailed to each principal in the CCSD that employed teachers randomly selected for the survey. The principal's packet included a cover letter for the principal and a list of teachers at their school receiving a survey. The teachers were asked to complete the questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed envelope. No additional information was placed on the retention questionnaires in order to ensure anonymity.

Return Rate of Questionnaire

There were 350 questionnaires mailed out and 245 questionnaires returned by sampled

participants--a 70% response rate. Of the sampled participants: 41 (17%) responses were received from teachers with one year of experience; 31 (13%) responses were received from teachers with two years of experience; 46 (19%) responses were received from teachers with three years of experience; 44 (18%) responses were received from teachers with 4 years of experience; and 81 (33%) responses were received from teachers with five years of experience. There were two responses that did not indicate the number of years of teaching experience.

Statistical Treatment

Statistical treatment of data from the research for this study involved the use of descriptive statistics, analysis of variance (ANOVA), and the Scheffé post hoc test. The .05 level of confidence was used to determine significance in this study. The independent variables for this study were the teachers from the district that were surveyed. The dependent variables were the responses to the retention questionnaire.

Null Hypotheses

Five null hypotheses were selected for the study. The mean scores for each null hypothesis was calculated. ANOVA was used to explain differences based on the demographic variables of race, age, gender and years of experience. A subsequent Scheffé post hoc test indicated significance at the .05 level of confidence between the demographic variables. The null hypotheses were accepted or rejected using a .05 level of significance.

Ho: 1

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores for each retention initiative/incentive. In Table 1, means and standard deviations for the retention initiatives, prioritized by the most preferred, are presented. The mean scores range from

Table 1
Means and Standard Deviations for Teacher Retention Incentives

	Mean	Number	Std. Deviation
Higher Salary	1.29	245	.786
Retention Bonus	1.50	245	1.050
Incentive Pay	1.76	245	1.374
Tuition Reimbursement Program	1.79	245	1.398
Increased Benefit Options	1.80	245	1.222
Merit Pay	1.96	245	1.466
Increase in Administrative Support	1.97	243	1.206
Involvement in the Decision-making	2.00	242	1.257
Timely, Fair & Accurate Evaluation	2.02	244	1.169
Increase in Meaning in Work	2.11	244	1.283
Flexible Scheduling/Job Sharing	2.37	245	1.595
Increased Chances for Promotion	2.43	244	1.394
Employee Assistance Program	2.60	245	1.421
Increased Chances for Recognition	2.64	243	1.551
Employee Wellness Program	2.65	244	1.413
Teacher Career Path	2.66	240	1.257
Increased Communication	2.75	244	1.571
Sabbatical	2.82	244	1.668
Increased Staff Development/Training	3.26	244	1.698
Mentoring	3.35	243	1.555
Comprehensive Induction Program	3.62	238	1.359
Virtual Classroom	3.73	244	1.801
Climate Surveys to Gather Input	3.88	243	1.765
District Employee Handbook	3.92	243	1.731
Comprehensive New Hire Orientation	4.19	243	1.808

1.29 for the most preferred retention initiative, to 4.19 for the least preferred retention initiative/incentive which is statistically significant. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 1 is rejected.

Ho:2

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers working in elementary, middle or high school for the preferred retention initiative/incentive. Table 2 shows the group means by school level categories for each retention initiative/incentive. As indicated in Table 3, ANOVA showed a F-Ratio of 6.50 for the retention initiative/incentive of Flexible Scheduling/Job Sharing. This F-Ratio is statistically significant at the .05 level. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 2 is rejected.

Ho:3

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different age categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive. Table 4 shows the group means by age categories for each retention initiative/incentive. As indicated in Table 5, ANOVA showed a F-Ratio of 2.90 for the retention initiative/incentive of a higher salary and a F-Ratio of 5.26 for the retention initiative/incentive of a tuition reimbursement program. These F-Ratios are statistically significant at the .05 level. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 3 is rejected.

Ho: 4

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different race categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive. Table 6 shows the group means by race categories for each retention initiative/incentive. As indicated in Table 7, ANOVA showed a F-Ratio of 6.10 for the retention

Table 2
Group Means by School Level Categories

Incentives	Elementary		Middle		High	
	N	X(SD)	N	X(SD)	N	X(SD)
Orientation	113	4.0(1.7)	55	4.3(1.9)	75	4.3(1.9)
Climate	113	3.7(1.6)	55	3.8(1.9)	75	4.3(1.9)
Communication	114	2.8(1.5)	55	2.4(1.3)	75	3.0(1.8)
Handbook	113	4.0(1.7)	55	3.8(1.7)	75	3.9(1.8)
Salary	114	1.3(0.8)	55	1.4(0.7)	76	1.3(0.9)
Retention Bonus	114	1.4(1.1)	55	1.4(0.8)	76	1.7(1.2)
Merit Pay	114	2.0(1.5)	55	1.9(1.3)	76	2.0(1.5)
Incentive Pay	114	1.8(1.4)	55	1.6(1.1)	76	1.9(1.6)
Benefit Options	114	1.8(1.2)	55	1.9(1.5)	76	1.8(1.1)
Assistance Prog	114	2.5(1.4)	55	2.8(1.4)	76	2.6(1.5)
Wellness Prog	114	2.5(1.5)	55	2.8(1.4)	75	2.7(1.3)
Tuition	114	1.8(1.4)	55	2.0(1.8)	76	1.7(1.1)
Job Sharing	114	2.0(1.3)	55	2.7(1.9)	76	2.7(1.7)
Sabbatical	113	2.5(1.6)	55	3.0(1.9)	76	3.0(1.7)
Virtual Classrm	114	4.0(1.8)	54	3.5(1.9)	76	3.6(1.7)
Career Path	114	2.6(1.2)	55	2.7(1.4)	74	2.7(1.3)
Promotion	114	2.5(1.4)	55	2.2(1.4)	75	2.6(1.4)
Evaluation	114	2.0(1.2)	55	2.0(1.1)	75	2.1(1.2)
Recognition	114	2.6(1.6)	54	2.4(1.4)	75	2.8(1.6)
SD/Training	114	3.0(1.7)	55	3.4(1.8)	75	3.6(1.7)
Induction Prog	112	3.5(1.1)	55	3.7(1.7)	71	3.8(1.4)
Mentoring	113	3.1(1.3)	55	3.4(1.8)	75	3.6(1.6)
Decision-making	113	1.8(1.1)	55	2.2(1.5)	74	2.0(1.2)
Admin Support	113	2.0(1.1)	55	1.9(1.2)	75	2.0(1.3)
Meaning in Work	114	2.2(1.2)	55	2.0(1.4)	75	2.2(1.3)

Table 3
Differences in Mean Response Among School Level Groups

Incentives	F	df	p
Comprehensive New Hire Orientation	.53	2, 240	.59
Climate Surveys to Gather Input	2.60	2, 240	.08
Increased Communication	1.90	2, 241	.18
District Employee Handbook	.28	2, 240	.76
Higher Salary	1.70	2, 242	.18
Retention Bonus	1.20	2, 242	.58
Merit Pay	.11	2, 242	.90
Incentive Pay	.74	2, 242	.48
Increased Benefit Options	.20	2, 242	.82
Employee Assistance Program	.44	2, 242	.65
Employee Wellness Program	.29	2, 241	.75
Tuition Reimbursement Program	1.01	2, 242	.37
Flexible Scheduling/Job Sharing	6.50	2, 242	.00 *
Sabbatical	2.41	2, 241	.10
Virtual Classroom	3.22	2, 241	.17
Teacher Career Path	.08	2, 237	.93
Increased Chances for Promotion	1.04	2, 241	.36
Timely, Fair & Accurate Evaluation	.52	2, 241	.60
Increased Chances for Recognition	1.38	2, 240	.25
Increased Staff Development/Training	2.43	2, 241	.09
Comprehensive Induction Program	1.76	2, 235	.17
Mentoring	1.76	2, 240	.17
Involvement in the Decision-making	1.96	2, 239	.14
Increase in Administrative Support	.58	2, 240	.17
Increase in Meaning in Work	.47	2, 241	.63

* Indicates F-Ratio was found to be statistically significant at .05 level.

Table 4
Group Means by Age Categories

Incentives	0-29		30-39		40-49		50-59		60+	
	N	X(SD)	N	X(SD)	N	X(SD)	N	X(SD)	N	X(SD)
Orientation	88	4.1(1.7)	72	4.3(1.7)	47	4.4(2.0)	32	4.0(2.1)	4	3.0(1.2)
Climate	88	4.0(1.7)	72	3.8(1.7)	47	4.2(1.9)	32	3.5(2.0)	4	2.8(1.0)
Communication	88	2.6(1.4)	73	2.8(1.6)	47	2.8(1.6)	32	2.9(2.0)	4	2.3(1.0)
Handbook	88	4.1(1.7)	72	4.0(1.6)	47	3.9(1.9)	32	3.5(1.9)	4	1.3(0.5)
Salary	88	1.2(0.7)	73	1.2(0.5)	47	1.6(1.3)	33	1.2(0.4)	4	1.3(0.5)
Retention Bonus	88	1.4(0.9)	73	1.4(0.9)	47	1.8(1.4)	33	1.4(0.9)	4	2.5(1.3)
Merit Pay	88	2.0(1.7)	73	1.7(1.0)	47	2.3(1.7)	33	2.0(1.3)	4	1.5(1.0)
Incentive Pay	88	1.7(1.5)	73	1.7(1.0)	47	2.0(1.6)	33	1.8(1.3)	4	1.3(0.5)
Benefit Options	88	1.9(1.2)	73	1.6(1.0)	47	1.9(1.5)	33	1.9(1.3)	4	1.4(0.5)
Assistance Prog	88	2.5(1.3)	73	2.6(1.3)	47	2.9(1.8)	33	2.7(1.4)	4	2.3(1.3)
Wellness Prog	88	2.4(1.2)	73	2.6(1.4)	46	3.0(1.8)	33	2.9(1.4)	4	3.3(1.0)
Tuition	88	1.4(0.9)	73	1.7(1.3)	47	2.1(1.6)	33	2.5(2.0)	4	1.8(1.4)
Job Sharing	88	2.4(1.5)	73	2.2(1.6)	47	2.5(1.8)	33	2.5(1.9)	4	3.0(1.2)
Sabbatical	88	2.6(1.5)	73	2.8(1.8)	46	3.2(1.8)	33	2.9(1.8)	4	3.5(1.0)
Virtual Classrm	88	3.3(1.7)	73	3.7(1.8)	47	4.1(1.9)	32	4.1(2.0)	4	4.3(1.3)
Career Path	86	2.5(1.1)	71	2.9(1.4)	46	2.8(1.4)	33	2.7(1.2)	4	2.0(0.0)
Promotion	88	2.1(1.3)	72	2.4(1.4)	47	2.8(1.5)	33	2.7(1.5)	4	2.5(1.0)
Evaluation	88	2.0(1.0)	72	2.0(1.3)	47	2.1(1.4)	33	2.0(1.0)	4	1.3(0.5)
Recognition	87	2.4(1.4)	72	2.8(1.7)	47	2.8(1.8)	33	2.9(1.5)	4	2.8(1.0)
SD/Training	88	3.3(1.6)	72	3.0(1.8)	47	3.5(2.0)	33	3.3(1.7)	4	3.3(1.9)
Induction Prog	87	3.6(1.3)	71	3.5(1.2)	46	3.7(1.6)	30	3.9(1.5)	4	3.0(0.8)
Mentoring	88	3.3(1.6)	71	3.2(1.5)	47	3.8(1.8)	33	3.3(1.5)	4	2.8(0.5)
Decision-making	87	2.0(1.0)	71	1.9(1.2)	47	2.0(1.6)	33	2.2(1.5)	4	1.8(1.0)
Admin Support	88	1.9(1.0)	71	2.0(1.2)	47	2.0(1.4)	33	2.2(1.3)	4	1.5(0.6)
Meaning in Work	88	2.2(1.3)	72	2.0(1.3)	47	2.1(1.4)	33	2.2(1.3)	4	1.3(0.5)

Table 5
Differences in Mean Response Among Age Groups

Incentives	F	df	p
Comprehensive New Hire Orientation	.85	4, 238	.50
Climate Surveys to Gather Input	1.41	4, 238	.23
Increased Communication	.36	4, 239	.83
District Employee Handbook	.88	4, 238	.48
Higher Salary	2.90	4, 240	.02 *
Retention Bonus	2.04	4, 240	.09
Merit Pay	1.06	4, 240	.38
Incentive Pay	.60	4, 240	.67
Increased Benefit Options	.72	4, 240	.58
Employee Assistance Program	.82	4, 240	.51
Employee Wellness Program	1.82	4, 239	.13
Tuition Reimbursement Program	5.26	4, 240	.00 *
Flexible Scheduling/Job Sharing	.43	4, 240	.79
Sabbatical	1.09	4, 240	.36
Virtual Classroom	2.26	4, 239	.06
Teacher Career Path	1.02	4, 235	.40
Increased Chances for Promotion	1.46	4, 239	.21
Timely, Fair & Accurate Evaluation	.57	4, 239	.68
Increased Chances for Recognition	.98	4, 238	.42
Increased Staff Development/Training	.52	4, 239	.72
Comprehensive Induction Program	.58	4, 233	.68
Mentoring	1.20	4, 238	.31
Involvement in the Decision-making	.46	4, 237	.76
Increase in Administrative Support	.73	4, 238	.57
Increase in Meaning in Work	.58	4, 239	.68

* Indicates F-Ratio was found to be statistically significant at the .05 level.

Table 6
Group Means by Race Categories

Incentives	White		Black/African-American	
	N	X(SD)	N	X(SD)
Orientation	209	4.2(1.8)	26	4.0(2.0)
Climate	209	3.8(1.7)	26	4.0(2.0)
Communication	210	2.8(1.6)	26	2.3(1.2)
Handbook	209	4.0(1.8)	26	3.2(1.6)
Salary	211	1.3(0.8)	26	1.2(0.4)
Retention Bonus	211	1.5(1.0)	26	1.6(1.3)
Merit Pay	211	2.0(1.5)	26	1.6(1.2)
Incentive Pay	211	1.8(1.4)	26	1.4(1.2)
Benefit Options	211	1.8(1.3)	26	1.8(1.1)
Assistance Prog	211	2.7(1.5)	26	2.1(1.1)
Wellness Prog	210	2.8(1.4)	26	2.1(1.3)
Tuition	211	2.0(1.7)	26	2.0(1.7)
Job Sharing	211	2.4(1.6)	26	2.2(1.4)
Sabbatical	210	2.8(1.7)	26	3.0(1.5)
Virtual Classrm	211	3.8(1.8)	26	3.2(1.5)
Career Path	207	2.7(1.2)	26	2.5(1.5)
Promotion	211	2.5(1.4)	26	1.8(1.0)
Evaluation	211	2.1(1.2)	26	1.8(1.0)
Recognition	210	2.7(1.6)	25	2.3(1.5)
SD/Training	211	3.3(1.7)	25	2.8(1.8)
Induction Prog	205	3.7(1.3)	25	3.2(1.2)
Mentoring	210	3.4(1.5)	25	2.7(1.4)
Decision-making	209	2.0(1.2)	25	1.9(1.4)
Admin Support	210	2.0(1.2)	25	1.6(1.1)
Meaning in Work	211	2.1(1.3)	25	1.8(1.1)

Table 7
Differences in Mean Response Among Racial Groups

Incentives	F	df	p
Comprehensive New Hire Orientation	.40	1, 233	.53
Climate Surveys to Gather Input	.40	1, 233	.53
Increased Communication	2.37	1, 234	.13
District Employee Handbook	6.10	1, 233	.01 *
Higher Salary	.40	1, 235	.53
Retention Bonus	.33	1, 235	.57
Merit Pay	2.16	1, 235	.14
Incentive Pay	1.87	1, 235	.17
Increased Benefit Options	.00	1, 235	.95
Employee Assistance Program	3.82	1, 235	.05 *
Employee Wellness Program	4.81	1, 234	.03 *
Tuition Reimbursement Program	.25	1, 235	.62
Flexible Scheduling/Job Sharing	.38	1, 235	.54
Sabbatical	.07	1, 234	.80
Virtual Classroom	2.96	1, 234	.09
Teacher Career Path	.60	1, 230	.44
Increased Chances for Promotion	5.62	1, 234	.02 *
Timely, Fair & Accurate Evaluation	.71	1, 234	.40
Increased Chances for Recognition	1.37	1, 233	.24
Increased Staff Development/Training	2.32	1, 234	.13
Comprehensive Induction Program	2.39	1, 228	.12
Mentoring	4.77	1, 233	.03 *
Involvement in the Decision-making	.24	1, 232	.62
Increase in Administrative Support	2.15	1, 233	.14
Increase in Meaning in Work	2.23	1, 234	.14

* Indicates F-Ratio was found to be statistically significant at .05 level.

initiative/incentive of a district employee handbook, a F-Ratio of 3.82 for the retention initiative/incentive of an employee assistance program, a F-Ratio of 4.81 for the retention initiative/incentive of an employee wellness program and a F-Ratio of 4.77 for retention initiative/incentive of mentoring. These F-Ratios are statistically significant at the .05 level. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 4 is rejected.

Ho:5

There is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different gender categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive. Table 8 shows the group means by gender categories for each retention initiative/incentive. As indicated in Table 9, ANOVA showed F-Ratios for the following retention initiatives/incentives: 4.60 for a retention bonus; 18.05 for flexible scheduling/job sharing; 7.24 for a sabbatical; 9.26 for a timely, fair and accurate evaluation; 10.92 for increased chances for recognition; 4.85 for increased staff development/training; 5.16 for involvement in the decision-making; and 6.56 for an increase in administrative support. These F-Ratios are statistically significant at the .05 level. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 5 is rejected.

The weighted rankings of the five initiatives/incentives most likely to influence continued employment is illustrated in Table 11. The weighted rankings were determined by giving five points for a 1st place rank, four points for a 2nd place rank, three points for a 3rd place rank, points for a 4th place rank and one point for a 5th place rank. The weighted rankings of the five categories of teacher retention initiatives/incentives most likely to influence continued employment is illustrated in Table 12. The weighted rankings were determined by giving five points for a 1st place rank, four points for a 2nd place rank, three points for a 3rd place rank, two

points for a 4th place rank, and one point for a 5th place rank. The conclusion taken from this data was teachers preferred the compensation category first, the benefits category second, the workplace enhancement category third, the scheduling category fourth, and the employee relations category fifth.

Table 8
Group Means by Gender Categories

Incentives	Male		Female	
	N	X(SD)	N	X(SD)
Orientation	55	4.2(1.8)	188	4.1(1.8)
Climate	55	3.8(1.8)	189	3.9(1.8)
Communication	55	3.0(1.6)	188	2.7(1.6)
Handbook	55	4.1(1.7)	190	3.9(1.7)
Salary	55	1.5(1.0)	190	1.3(0.7)
Retention Bonus	55	1.8(1.2)	190	1.4(1.0)
Merit Pay	55	1.9(1.7)	190	2.0(1.5)
Incentive Pay	55	2.0(1.5)	190	1.7(1.3)
Benefit Options	55	1.8(1.1)	190	1.8(1.3)
Assistance Prog	55	2.8(1.6)	190	2.5(1.4)
Wellness Prog	54	3.0(1.5)	190	2.6(1.4)
Tuition	55	1.8(1.4)	190	1.8(1.4)
Job Sharing	55	3.1(1.6)	190	2.1(1.5)
Sabbatical	55	3.4(1.7)	189	2.7(1.6)
Virtual Classrm	55	3.8(1.7)	189	3.7(1.8)
Career Path	54	2.8(1.3)	190	2.4(1.4)
Promotion	54	2.5(1.5)	190	2.4(1.4)
Evaluation	54	2.4(1.3)	190	2.0(1.1)
Recognition	54	3.2(1.7)	189	2.5(1.5)
SD/Training	54	3.7(1.8)	190	3.1(1.7)
Induction Prog	52	3.7(1.3)	186	3.6(1.4)
Mentoring	54	3.6(1.5)	189	3.3(1.6)
Decision-making	53	2.3(1.3)	189	1.9(1.2)
Admin Support	54	2.3(1.4)	189	1.9(1.1)
Meaning in Work	54	2.3(1.3)	190	2.0(1.3)

Table 9
Differences in Mean Response Among Gender Groups

Incentives	F	df	p
Comprehensive New Hire Orientation	.00	1, 241	.96
Climate Surveys to Gather Input	.04	1, 241	.85
Increased Communication	.73	1, 242	.40
District Employee Handbook	.83	1, 241	.36
Higher Salary	2.99	1, 243	.09
Retention Bonus	4.60	1, 243	.03 *
Merit Pay	.14	1, 243	.71
Incentive Pay	1.57	1, 243	.21
Increased Benefit Options	.05	1, 243	.82
Employee Assistance Program	1.97	1, 243	.16
Employee Wellness Program	3.40	1, 242	.07
Tuition Reimbursement Program	.09	1, 243	.77
Flexible Scheduling/Job Sharing	18.05	1, 243	.00 *
Sabbatical	7.24	1, 242	.01 *
Virtual Classroom	.25	1, 242	.62
Teacher Career Path	.79	1, 238	.38
Increased Chances for Promotion	.03	1, 242	.87
Timely, Fair & Accurate Evaluation	9.26	1, 242	.00 *
Increased Chances for Recognition	10.92	1, 241	.00 *
Increased Staff Development/Training	4.85	1, 242	.03 *
Comprehensive Induction Program	.29	1, 236	.59
Mentoring	1.97	1, 241	.16
Involvement in the Decision-making	5.16	1, 240	.02 *
Increase in Administrative Support	6.56	1, 241	.01 *
Increase in Meaning in Work	1.18	1, 242	.28

* Indicates F-Ratio was found to be statistically significant at the .05 level.

Table 10
Weighted Rankings of the 5 Incentives/Initiatives/Modifications
Most Likely to Influence Continued Employment

Incentives	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	Weighted Total
Salary	730	92	51	20	8	901
Retention Bonus	10	224	51	36	11	332
Tuition	55	96	96	22	19	288
Decision-making	85	40	63	44	26	258
Benefit Options	15	88	75	48	15	241
Admin Support	70	60	36	36	21	223
Incentive Pay	40	44	69	34	16	203
Promotion	50	48	36	40	12	186
Job Sharing	45	52	48	22	16	183
Merit Pay	5	48	45	24	12	134
Evaluation	30	20	42	24	9	127
Meaning in Work	25	44	30	12	16	127
Recognition	5	32	12	16	5	70
Career Path	5	16	21	6	8	56
Sabbatical	10	12	6	18	7	53
SD/Training	10	8	9	14	8	49
Communication	10	12	9	12	4	47
Wellness Prog	0	4	6	18	5	33
Mentoring	0	12	3	10	5	30
Virtual Classrm	5	0	6	6	3	20
Orientation	5	4	0	2	3	14
Handbook	0	4	3	0	1	8
Induction Prog	0	0	3	2	2	7
Climate	0	0	0	4	2	6
Assistance Prog	0	0	0	2	0	2

Table 11
Weighted Rankings of the 5 Categories of Teacher Retention Incentives/Initiatives/Modifications
Most Likely to Influence Continued Employment

Incentive Categories	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	Weighted Total
Compensation	835	160	48	20	4	1067
Benefits	80	404	156	86	26	752
Workplace Enhancement	125	164	171	130	48	638
Scheduling	70	140	168	96	84	558
Employee Relations	80	76	168	142	75	541

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary of the Study

The review of the literature of this study presented and discussed research on teacher retention organized around the following major topics: (1) principal theories of motivation and job satisfaction; (2) approaches to teacher retention and attrition; (3) types of teacher turnover; (4) impact of teacher turnover; (5) reasons for teacher turnover; and (6) categories of retention strategies including teacher relations, compensation, benefits, scheduling and workplace enhancement. Based on this literature, this study examined 25 retention initiatives/incentives/modifications that would influence teachers' continued employment in the school district.

The Teacher Retention Questionnaire was designed to measure the degree retention initiatives and incentives would influence teachers' continued employment in a school district. In addition, the Teacher Retention Questionnaire measured the rankings of the five highest rated initiatives/incentives/modifications and the rankings of the five categories of initiatives/incentives/modifications.

The purpose of the study was to determine which teacher retention initiatives or incentives were preferred by teachers in a Georgia suburban school district. The study sought to gather and analyze data from teachers regarding their preferred retention initiatives and incentives to create a comprehensive retention plan to attract and retain teachers.

Conclusions of the Study

Five null hypotheses were developed for this study. All five of the null hypotheses were rejected. The null hypotheses found to be rejected were: there is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores for each retention initiative/incentive; there is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers working in elementary, middle or high schools for the preferred retention initiatives/incentives; there is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different age categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive; there is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different race categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive; and there is no statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different gender categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive. As a result of this study, the following seven conclusions are offered.

1. There was a significant difference between the means scores for each retention initiative/incentive. It is concluded from these findings that teachers prefer certain retention initiatives and incentives more than others. The ten highest preferred retention initiatives/incentives were: higher salary; retention bonus; incentive pay; tuition reimbursement program; increased benefits options; merit pay; increase in administrative support; involvement in the decision-making; timely, fair and accurate evaluation; and increase in meaning in work. The five least preferred retention initiatives/incentives were: comprehensive new hire orientation; district employee handbook; climate surveys to gather input; virtual classroom; and a comprehensive induction program.
2. There was a statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers working in elementary, middle or high school for the preferred retention initiative/incentive. It is concluded

from this finding that elementary school teachers preferred flexible scheduling/job sharing more than middle and high school teachers.

3. There was a statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different age categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive. It is concluded from this finding that teachers ages 30 to 39 preferred a higher salary more than the other age categories and teachers ages 40 to 49 preferred a higher salary less than the other age categories. In addition, it is concluded from the finding that teachers ages 20 to 29 preferred a tuition reimbursement program more than the other age categories and the teachers ages 40 to 49 preferred a tuition reimbursement program less than the other age categories.

4. There was a statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different race categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive. It is concluded from this finding that Black/African American teachers preferred the following retention initiatives/incentives more than White/Caucasian teachers: a district employee handbook; an employee assistance program; an employee wellness program; increased chances for promotion; and mentoring.

5. There was a statistically significant difference among the mean scores of teachers in different gender categories for the preferred retention initiative/incentive. It is concluded from this finding that female teachers preferred the following retention initiatives/incentives more than male teachers: a retention bonus; flexible scheduling/job sharing; a sabbatical; timely, fair and accurate evaluation; increased chances for recognition; increase staff development/training; involvement in the decision-making; and an increase in administrative support.

6. The conclusion taken from the weighted rankings of retention incentives was teachers preferred salary first; a retention bonus second; a tuition reimbursement program third; involvement in the decision-making fourth; and increased benefits options fifth.

7. The conclusion taken from the weighted rankings of retention categories was teachers preferred the compensation category first, the benefits category second, the workplace enhancement category third, the scheduling category fourth, and the employee relations category fifth.

Final Thoughts of the Study

In view of the foregoing findings and conclusions, the following final thoughts are suggested for action:

1. Districts should develop a well-defined, comprehensive teacher retention plan in writing, detailing the critical components. These plans would address all the essential elements identified in the literature with particular emphasis on a clear policy from the board. Written plans should include specific initiatives, adequate budgets for teacher retention initiatives/incentives reflected in line item accounts and a well-defined, written implementation and evaluation plan that includes formative and summative strategies.
2. Districts should consider utilizing a wider variety of teacher retention plans to retain highly-qualified teachers. The most current literature strongly recommends using various methods to attract and retain teachers as no one incentive or system of incentives is a panacea for attracting and retaining teachers in every district. It found that increasingly, school districts must provide special incentives above and beyond appropriate compensation and benefits if teachers are to remain in the district.
3. Districts should assess their hiring procedures to reduce the cumbersome hiring procedures that chase away highly-qualified candidates. As the literature revealed, seeking out and hiring better-prepared teachers has many payoffs and savings in the long run in terms of both lower attrition and higher levels of competence.

4. Districts should consider becoming partners in teacher preparation and professional learning programs with colleges and universities, sharing the governance of the programs. Further, the districts should compensate teachers for completing job-related coursework through tuition reimbursement programs.
5. Districts should focus on long-term retention efforts. They should encourage convening statewide panels to review national policy reports and examine statewide teacher retention strategies.
6. Districts should hire master teachers to work exclusively with new teachers to the profession and new teachers to the district. Districts should also train principals on retention strategies. They should also work to increase salaries for teachers who have been in the profession for several years.
7. Districts should use the political process to identify and secure funding for the recommended and preferred initiatives.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following recommendations for further research on this topic include:

1. Duplicate this study to determine the preferred teacher retention initiatives/incentives in rural, inner-city, and urban school districts to see if there is a significant difference between these and suburban school districts.
2. Design a similar study to examine the use and effectiveness of teacher retention strategies from a variety of school districts which have implemented a comprehensive teacher retention plan.

3. Conduct a longitudinal case study of districts using non-traditional teacher retention initiatives such as unique services to determine the effectiveness of such strategies in retaining highly-qualified teachers.
4. Investigate legislative reforms for long-term solutions to teacher shortages. Examine reform efforts on a national and international level and research efforts effective practices in other states and abroad.
5. Conduct a study to survey teachers with more than five years experience to determine what retention initiatives/incentives they prefer and to see if there is a significant difference between them and teachers with less than five years of experience.

It is hoped that this study will be of benefit to school districts who aim to increase retention of highly-qualified teachers. The review of literature and data gathered in this research point to possible strategies for the improvement of retention efforts which could result in better educational experiences for students thereby increasing student achievement.

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Appendix 1

RETENTION QUESTIONNAIRE

RETENTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions:

Indicate your response to items A-E by bubbling the appropriate number for your response.

A. AGE	(1) 20-29	(2) 30-39	(3) 40-49	(4) 50-59	(5) 60 & above
B. GENDER	(1) Male	(2) Female			
C. RACE/ETHNICITY	(1) White	(2) Black/African American	(3) Hispanic/Latino		
	(4) Asian	(5) Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	(6) Other		
D. YRS EXPERIENCE in Cobb	(1) 1 year	(2) 2 years	(3) 3 years	(4) 4 years	(5) 5 years
E. SCHOOL LEVEL	(1) Elementary	(2) Middle	(3) High		

Directions:

In items 1-25, please circle the number which indicates the degree the initiative/incentive/modification will influence your continued employment with the Cobb County School District. Please circle only one number for each item.

EMPLOYEE RELATIONS	Highly Likely		Neutral			Highly Unlikely	
1. Comprehensive New Hire Orientation Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. Climate Surveys to gather your input	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. Increased Communication	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. District Employee Handbook	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

COMPENSATION	Highly Likely		Neutral			Highly Unlikely	
5. Higher Salary	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. Opportunity for Retention Bonus	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Opportunity for Merit Pay	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. Opportunity for Incentive Pay	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

OVER

RETENTION QUESTIONNAIRE

BENEFITS	Highly Likely		Neutral			Highly Unlikely	
9. Increased Benefit Options	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. Employee Assistance Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. Employee Wellness Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. Tuition Reimbursement Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

SCHEDULING	Highly Likely		Neutral			Highly Unlikely	
13. Flexible Scheduling Options/Job Sharing	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. Opportunity for Sabbatical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. Opportunity to conduct a Virtual Classroom	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

WORKPLACE ENHANCEMENT	Highly Likely		Neutral			Highly Unlikely	
16. Teacher Career Path	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. Increased Chances for Promotion	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. Timely, Fair & Accurate Evaluation	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. Increased Chances for Recognition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. Increase in Staff Development/Training	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
21. Comprehensive Induction Program	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. Opportunities for Mentoring	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. Involve Teachers in the Decision Making	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. Increase in Administrative Support	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. Increase in Meaning in Work	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

RETENTION QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions:

Of the above initiatives/incentives/modifications, select the five (5) most likely to influence your continued employment with the Cobb County School District and rank order them.

	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Item #</u> (From items 1-25 above)
26.	First (1 st)	_____
27.	Second (2 nd)	_____
28.	Third (3 rd)	_____
29.	Fourth (4 th)	_____
30.	Fifth (5 th)	_____

Directions:

Of the categories of initiatives/incentives/modifications listed above, rank order them from First (1st) to Fifth (5th)

Note:

First (1st) = the category that would MOST likely influence your continued employment with the Cobb County School District
 Fifth (5th) = the category that would LEAST likely influence your continued employment with the Cobb County School District

	<u>Category</u>	<u>Rank</u>
31.	Employee Relations	_____
32.	Compensation	_____
33.	Benefits	_____
34.	Scheduling	_____
35.	Workplace Enhancement	_____

PLEASE LIST ANY ADDITIONAL COMMENTS YOU HAVE BELOW:

Thank you for completing this survey. This information will be given to the Cobb County School District in aggregate form to assist in meeting the needs of staff members in order to retain quality certified personnel.

Appendix 2

TEACHERS' LETTER

October, 2003

Dear Teacher,

I am conducting research for a doctoral study entitled, "An Organizational Assessment of Improving Teacher Retention in a Georgia Suburban School District", to determine which employee retention initiatives and incentives are preferred by teachers who have five years or less experience in our district. Teachers were randomly selected for this survey.

Please complete the enclosed Retention Questionnaire for me. I anticipate your time for completion of this survey should take no more than five minutes. I have selected only 350 teachers so your participation is very important.

I foresee no risks to you if you complete this questionnaire. **ALL RESPONSES ON THIS QUESTIONNAIRE WILL BE ANONYMOUS.** If you prefer to not complete the survey, please return the survey back blank. **NO** individual responses will be identified and no scores will be reported for individual schools.

If you have any questions about the research being conducted, please feel free to contact me via email at Steph0920@aol.com. Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Please let me know if you would like to receive a copy of the results of my study.

Please return the completed scantron form in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope by October 31, 2003. I greatly appreciate your cooperation in the completion of this study.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Gordy

Note: This study is conducted under the leadership of Dr. C. Thomas Holmes, Department of Educational Leadership at the University of Georgia. (706) 542-3343.

For questions or problems about your rights, please call or write: Chris A. Joseph, PhD, Human Subjects Office, University of Georgia, 606A Boyd Graduate Studies Research Center, Athens, Georgia 30602-7411; Telephone (706) 542-3199; Email Address IRB@uga.edu.

Appendix 3

TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONS

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS FOR ANSWERING RETENTION QUESTIONNAIRE

- EACH TEACHER WHO WAS RANDOMLY SELECTED WILL RECEIVE AN IDENTICAL PACKET
- EACH PACKET CONTAINS:

TEACHER INSTRUCTIONS
RETENTION QUESTIONNAIRE
SCANTRON FORM
SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE
- PLEASE INDICATE YOUR RESPONSE TO THE QUESTIONS BY BUBBLING IN THE CIRCLE THAT BEST REPRESENTS YOUR OPINION ON THE ENCLOSED SCANTRON FORM. YOUR OPINION IS VALUABLE FOR EACH QUESTION!

PLEASE DO NOT SIGN OR IDENTIFY YOURSELF

- UPON COMPLETION:
 - PLACE RETENTION QUESTIONNAIRE IN THE PROVIDED SELF-ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE
 - PLACE IN THE U.S. MAIL BY OCTOBER 31ST, 2003

THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR ASSISTANCE.

YOU HAVE BEEN AN ASSET TO THIS RESEARCH!

Appendix 4

PRINCIPALS' LETTER

October, 2003

Dear Principal,

I am conducting research for a doctoral study to determine which employee retention initiatives and incentives are preferred by teachers who have five years or less experience in our district. Teachers were randomly selected for this survey.

Retention Questionnaires have been sent to teachers at your school who are listed on the attached sheet. I anticipate their time for completion of this survey should take no more than five minutes. I have selected only 350 teachers so their participation is very important.

I foresee no risks to you or your teachers if your teachers complete this questionnaire. **ALL RESPONSES ON THIS QUESTIONNAIRE WILL BE ANONYMOUS.** Each questionnaire contains a number for tracking rate of return. **NO** individual responses will be identified and no scores will be reported for individual schools.

If you have any questions about the research being conducted, please feel free to contact me at Steph0920@aol.com. Thank you very much for your time and consideration. Please let me know if you would like to receive a copy of the results of my study.

The teachers should return the completed scantron form in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope they received in their packet by October 31, 2003. I greatly appreciate their cooperation in the completion of this study.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Gordy

Thanks,

Dr. C. Thomas Holmes
Department of Educational Leadership