ABSTRACT

Donna Lynch, THE EFFECT OF INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING ON TEACHER RETENTION (Under the direction of James McDowelle) Department of Educational Leadership, July 2010.

Retaining teachers continues to be an ongoing challenge for administrators. For a school, when teachers migrate from one school to another to teach or leave the profession all together, the school looses a teacher. A review of selected literature revealed the most frequently cited working conditions that impact teacher retention include: (a) administrative support, (b) compensation, (c) shared decision making, (d) beginning teacher support, (e) school climate, and (f) work load and resources. While research addresses decision making and teachers leaving the profession, few studies address teachers known as movers in a district and their involvement in decision making. This study addresses the impact of the working condition decision making on movers. In addition the study examines the perceptions of movers and administrators in regards to teacher involvement in decision making. A series of Fisher's exact tests revealed there were significant associations between movers and administrators perceptions of teacher involvement in decision making. The results from this study provide administrators and educational leaders with valuable and usable information in regards to decision making and teacher retention.

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THE EFFECT OF INVOLVEMENT IN DECISION MAKING ON TEACHER RETENTION

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Donna V. Lynch

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

This dissertation describes the issue of teacher retention and how the teacher working condition decision making impacts a teacher's decision to move to another school within the school system. The study was undertaken to help educational leaders gain a better understanding of teacher working conditions and the connection to teacher retention. This study utilizes data gathered from North Carolina teachers employed in one Southeastern North Carolina School System. The first chapter of this study provides (a) an overview of the study, (b) statement of the problem, (c) the significance of the study, (d) theoretical framework, and (e) an overview of the methodology. The chapter concludes with the limitations of the study and defines terms utilized throughout the study.

Background of the Study

A student's achievement rate is dependent on the effectiveness of a teacher (Darling Hammond 2003; Hirsch, Emerick, Church, & Fuller, 2006a; Ingersoll, 2003a). "A teacher workforce that is well trained, engaged in continuing professional development, and committed to staying in the state, district and school will result in all students receiving appropriate instruction and increasing their achievement" (New York State Department of Education, 2005, p. 1.4). A critical factor in student learning is teacher retention and the conditions under which teachers work (Hirsch et al., 2006a). Many of our schools are not designed to support today's educational goals. We expect our children and teachers to be successful when we are operating our schools using teaching and learning methods designed for the industrial economy. "Initiatives that make it easier for teachers to do their work the best way they know how typically pay off for students' learning" (Leithwood, 2006, p. 7). If school leaders want to retain

teachers in our schools, schools need to be professional workplaces (National Commission on Teaching and America's Future, 2002).

Teacher retention is a concern for educational leaders nationally (NCES, 1996; 2007a; Ingersoll 2006; Weiss 1999). At the close of each school year principals find themselves struggling to recruit new teachers for the upcoming school year. As school leaders and education researchers have long realized, hiring new teachers is only part of the initial challenge, retention of both new and experienced teachers remains a grave concern for schools and school systems (Buckley, Schneider, & Yi Shang, 2004). Principals and school districts have given little thought on how they plan to retain the teachers once they have hired them (Peske, 2001). The challenge is not recruiting people to the profession, but keeping them there.

Teacher attrition is defined by Richard Ingersoll as "those who leave the occupation of teaching altogether" (Ingersoll, 2003a, p. 6). Teaching is one of the largest occupations in our nation. It represents four percent of the civilian workforce. When considering teacher retention we must understand teacher attrition. Teachers have one of the highest attrition rates when compared to other professions, especially attrition of new teachers. Yet, a study conducted by Ingersoll found the average yearly turn-over rate in education is 13.2% compared to 11% in other professions (Ingersoll, 2001a). Even more alarming, between forty and fifty percent of beginning teachers leave the profession by the end of their fifth year (Ingersoll, 2003a).

Statement of the Problem

A review of the data for a Southeastern North Carolina Public School system reveals a turnover rate of 15.25% (North Carolina Department of Education, 2007). Furthermore, The North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey assessed whether working conditions standards developed by the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards were being met in

each of the LEAs in North Carolina (Hirsch et al., 2006a). Data from the 2006 and the 2008 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions surveys have indicated that teachers identified as movers employed in this Southeastern North Carolina Public School system were dissatisfied with their working conditions. The surveys indicated teachers were dissatisfied with their involvement in decision making at the school level. The purpose of this research is to further examine the teacher working condition decision making and its impact on movers in one Southeastern North Carolina Public School System.

Significance of the Study

Teacher turnover can have a negative impact on student achievement, financial resources, professional development, time and energy spent on recruiting, training and hiring new teachers. The cost of teacher attrition is $8000.00 per teacher per year (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Funds and time spent on professional development, recruiting and retaining teachers could have been spent on student learning. For principals, teacher turnover has become a vicious cycle at their schools (Ingersoll, 2003a).

The most frequent explanation provided for not staffing classrooms with qualified teachers is that schools are suffering from a shortage of teachers (Ingersoll, 2001a). The common belief is that the teacher shortage is caused by large numbers of teachers retiring or the graying of our teachers. Recent research disputes the belief that there is a national teacher shortage. Ingersoll (2003a) disputes the teacher supply and demand theory. He believes there is an ample supply of teachers. His revolving door theory provides the explanation of teachers in transition into, between, or out of schools. This transition is the primary reason why schools are having staffing problems (Ingersoll, 2003a). For a school, teachers migrating from one school to another to teach, or teacher attrition, teachers leaving the profession all together is the same. Regardless

if a teacher moves from one school to another, or if the teacher leaves the profession, the school looses a teacher. Teacher transfers and teacher attrition result in schools experiencing a teacher shortage.

The significance of this research is to identify the effect of the working condition decision making as related to movers in a school system. Determining the impact of teacher working conditions may encourage principals to examine their leadership styles. Furthermore, knowing the effects of working conditions on a teacher's decision to remain in the teaching field or to continue teaching at their school could assist policy makers in developing policies and procedures to retain teachers.

Theoretical Framework

This study is a result of the researcher examining factors related to teacher retention. The study was derived from researching working conditions that impact a teacher's decision to move to another school or leave the teaching profession. The most frequently cited working conditions that impact teacher retention that emerged from the literature include: (a) administrative support, (b) compensation, (c) shared decision making, (d) beginning teacher support, (e) school climate, and (f) work load and resources.

Researchers such as Richard Ingersoll (2001a), Susanna Loeb (2004), Linda Darling-Hammond (2006) and Cochran (2000) have consistently cited working conditions as a reason for teachers leaving a school or leaving the teaching profession. While research regarding the factors impacting teacher retention is extensive the research specifically related to decision making and the impact on movers is lacking (Ingersoll, 2001a). For the purpose of this study, the researcher will address the effect of the working condition decision making on movers as reported on a

researcher developed survey completed by teachers and administrators employed in one LEA in Southeastern North Carolina.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to test a theoretical framework for understanding the effect of the teacher working condition decision making on teacher retention. The focus of this study is the result of school leaders needing to address the teacher retention problems in one LEA in Southeastern North Carolina. A review of the data from a Southeastern LEA in North Carolina presents a challenge for the system due to a reported turnover rate of 15.25% (North Carolina Department of Education, 2007). In addition to teachers leaving the district, at the close of every school year teachers have the opportunity to submit their names for a move to another school for the upcoming school year. A total of 128 teachers requested to move to another school for the 2006-2007 school year. The school district's data indicated 129 teachers requested to move to another school for the 2007-2008 school year. Furthermore, data reported 168 teachers requested to move to another school for the 2008-2009 school year (Onslow County Schools, 2006; 2007; 2008). This study has been designed to determine the effect of the working condition decision making on teachers known as movers in a one LEA in Southeastern North Carolina.

Research Questions

In general an individual's reason to leave their profession or to transfer to another position is related to his or her job satisfaction. The purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of the teacher working condition decision making on teacher retention in a Southeastern North Carolina School System. The research questions for this study include the following:

1. How do movers rate their involvement in the decision making process at the school level?

2. How do administrators rate teacher involvement in the decision making process at the school level?
3. Do administrators have the same perception as movers in regards to teacher involvement in the decision making process?

Overview of Methodology

The research design for this study used two researcher developed surveys. In the first phase of this study the researcher surveyed teachers identified as movers as reported on the Onslow County Schools Personnel Request Roster (Onslow County Schools 2006; 2007; 2008). The survey questioned the movers and administrators regarding fourteen decision making factors. The agree/disagree response questions were analyzed using Fisher's Exact Tests to determine how the movers and the administrators rated their involvement in decision making at the school level. Movers were also asked a yes/no question in regards to teacher involvement in decision making and their request to transfer to another school in the district. The yes/no responses were reported as percentages. Administrators were asked to respond to an open ended question inquiring how they involved teachers in the decision making process at the school level. The narrative responses were analyzed for recurrent themes that would provide strategies for administrators to implement to involve their teacher in the decision making process.

Delimitations

The data in this study will be limited to that collected from teachers and administrators employed in one Southeastern North Carolina Public School System. This area may not be a representative of other geographic locations in the United States. The system employees a large number of teachers which are connected to a local military base. These teachers are very transient due to the nature of their spouses' tour of duty aboard the military base. Due to the

employment of military connected teachers, the study results may not be generalized to school systems that do not employ teachers with connections to the military. Furthermore, for this study it is important to know that the data collected for this study was confined to the preschool, elementary, middle and high school teachers and administrators from one school system. Since the participants were employed in one North Carolina Local Education Agency (LEA) results from the study may not be generalized to other education systems.

Definitions of Key Terms

Center for Teaching Quality (CTQ) - A research based advocacy institute that focuses on the conditions of teaching and student achievement. Formerly known as the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality.

Highly Qualified Teachers **-** According to NCLB a highly qualified teacher must meet the requirements of full certification and demonstrate competency in all subject areas they teach. Teachers must be fully licensed and certified in the subject area they teach.

Local Education Agency (LEA) - is synonymous with the local school system. LEA indicates that a public board of education or other public authority maintains administrative control of the public schools in as city or county.

Leavers **-** Teachers that leave the teaching profession.

Mentor **-** a knowledgeable experienced teacher that supports and encourages the novice teacher. A mentor is a coach, role model, guide and a friend to the novice teacher. A mentor shares knowledge, skills and information regarding teaching with the mentee. The mentor meets regularly with the novice teacher.

Movers - Teachers that move from one school to another school, but remain in the school district.

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) - the NC Department of Public Instruction administers the public school laws and the policies adopted by the State Board of Education and offers instructional, financial, technological, and personnel support to all public school systems in the state.

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) - the center collects and reports data, statistics, and information on American education. The center promotes the improvement of American education.

North Carolina Teacher Working Condition Survey (NCTWC) - the NCTWC was developed in 2002 under the leadership of Governor Mike Easley. The purpose of the survey is to improve the understanding of teacher retention and the conditions under which they work.

Participatory Decision Making (PDM) - the decentralization of educational decision making and sharing of power.

School and Staffing Survey Surveys (SASS) - America's K-12 teachers employed in public and private schools. Data is collected from four sectors: (a) Public schools which include traditional public schools, (b) public charter public schools, (c) private schools, (d) and Indian tribal schools. SASS has four core components: the School Questionnaire, the Teacher Questionnaire, the Principal Questionnaire and the School District Questionnaire. This survey is conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics.

Shared Decision Making (SDM) - Teachers involvement in the process by which school decisions are made.

State Board of Education (SBE) - the State Board of Education is charged with supervising and administering "the free public school system and the education funds provided

for its support." The Board consists of the Lieutenant Governor, the Treasurer, and 11 members appointed by the Governor and confirmed by General Assembly in Joint Session.

School Climate - the characteristics of the total environment in a school building; also, known as organizational climate.

School Environment - the total environment includes the physical and material factors in the organization; the social dimension in the organization; the organizational and administrative structure of the organization and the culture or the values and belief systems of the organization.

Stayers - Teachers that stay at their school.

Teacher Attrition - Teachers who leave the occupation of teaching altogether; also known as "leavers" (Ingersoll, 2003a).

Teacher Migration - Teachers who transfer or move to different teaching positions in other schools, also known as "movers" (Ingersoll, 2003a).

Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) - the Teacher Follow-up Survey is administered to the Same group of teachers who completed the School Staffing Survey the previous year. This survey is administered to determine how many teachers have remained in the same school, move to another school or left the teaching profession following the administration of the School and Staffing Survey. This survey is conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics.

Working Conditions - the conditions in which an employee works which determines job satisfaction. Conditions may include: (a) the level of administrative support, (b) teacher empowerment, (c) the resources and facilities provided, (d) availability of professional development, (e) the time allotted to perform their duties, and (e) the compensation structure for the employees.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of literature and research on teacher retention. An examination of research conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCEC) and research conducted by experts in the field of teacher retention is essential to establishing a foundation for this study. The second chapter includes a review of the research on teacher attrition, working conditions that impact a teacher's decision to leave the profession or transfer to another school, and decision making. Chapter 2 is divided into three sections: (a) Teacher Attrition, (b) Teacher Working Conditions that Affect Teacher Retention and (c) Decision Making.

Overview

According to Richard Ingersoll (2001b) researchers in the 1980s began predicting the possibility of a teacher shortage. This prediction received national coverage which resulted in policy and reform initiatives to address teacher recruitment and retention. Education initiatives to recruit and retain teachers in the profession will not solve the problem (Ingersoll, 2003a). Predictions of shortfalls are not only due to a combination of increasing student enrollment and teacher retirement, but are the results of a "revolving door" (Ingersoll, 2001a). The revolving door as defined by Ingersoll describes teachers departing their jobs for reasons other than retirement. Teachers literally move in and out of educational systems through a "revolving door." This revolving door creates a demand for replacing teachers. Ingersoll and other researchers have conducted research to study the organizational causes of teacher attrition, teacher turnover, and teacher retention (Ingersoll, 2001a).

A growing body of literature indicates organizational causes such as teacher working conditions impact a teacher's decision to transfer to a different school or leave the teaching field (Alliance for Education, 2008; Darling Hammond, 2003; Hirsch 2006a; Ingersoll, 2003a; NCES, 2006). When analyzing teacher turnover, the data indicates turnover can be linked to job dissatisfaction as the result of working conditions such as (a) low salaries, (b) lack of teacher involvement in decision making, (c) lack of administrative support, (d) heavy workload and lack of resources, (e) poor school climate, and (f) lack of beginning teacher support (Alliance for Education, 2008; Darling Hammond, 2003; Hirsch 2006a; Ingersoll, 2003a; NCES, 2006). Research indicates there is not a teacher shortage, but a retention problem related to teacher working conditions (Ingersoll, 2003a). It is imperative that educational leaders fully understand the underlying impact of working conditions on teacher retention.

Teacher Attrition

Teacher attrition is defined by Ingersoll as "those who leave the occupation altogether" (Ingersoll, 2001a, p. 6). Over the past decade a growing body of literature on teacher attrition and teacher retention has indicated teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs. Ingersoll noted that 29% of teachers surveyed listed job dissatisfaction as a reason for leaving. Teachers indicated that one of the following working conditions played a factor in their decision to leave the profession (a) student discipline, (b) lack of administrative support, (c) poor student motivation, and (d) lack of teacher input into decision making (Ingersoll, 2003b).

Early research on teacher turnover identified factors that predict teacher attrition. Researchers have identified that the attrition rate resembles a U-shaped curve (Ingersoll, 2001a). The U-shape curve demonstrates that teacher attrition is high for the young teachers early in their career, low for the teachers in the middle of their careers, and high again for the teachers near

retirement. Although researchers use the U-shaped curve to identify the attrition rate, research also indicates school working conditions, teacher autonomy, administrative support, and teacher involvement have been proven to improve teacher commitment (Ingersoll, 2001a; Weiss, 1999).

Review of the National Center for Education Surveys

Ingersoll defines teachers that transfer from one public school to another public school as "movers." Furthermore, he defines teachers that leave the profession as "leavers" (Ingersoll, 2003a, p. 9). When considering why teachers transfer or leave the profession, the results of research suggest the reason teachers transfer or move to another school are very similar to the reasons why teachers leave the profession. Information provided by the Teacher Follow Up Surveys and the School Staffing Surveys assist educators and policy makers in developing strategies that may minimize teacher turnover (NCES, 1996).

Teacher Follow-up Surveys for the years 1988-1999, 1999-2000, and 2004-2005 have been examined to provide context for this study. This survey is a follow up of a sample of elementary and secondary teachers who participated in the previous year's Schools and Staffing Survey (NCES, 2007a). The objective of the Teacher Follow-up Survey is to provide information about teacher mobility, teacher attrition, and teachers remaining in their current teaching positions.

An analysis of the 1988-1989 Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS) the longitudinal component of Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) of 1987-1988 administered by The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) revealed there was no single predictor alone that would improve teacher retention but, improving a combination of variables relevant to working conditions would improve teacher retention (NCES 1996).

The survey indicated that 173,000 Kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers transferred schools between 1987-88 and 1988-89.

Data from the 1999-2000 School Staffing Survey (SASS) and its longitudinal study the Teacher Follow Up Survey (TFS) 2000-2001 indicated that teachers varied in their degree of job satisfaction. Teachers were least satisfied with work conditions and salaries (NCES, 2000). Teachers were dissatisfied because of (a) lack of planning time, (b) heavy workload, (c) lack of instructional support, and (d) compensation. This study suggested that increasing salaries may not improve teacher satisfaction with their working conditions. The data from this study indicated that as teachers become more experienced in their profession they were satisfied with their jobs with one exception, their working conditions.

The 2004-2005 Teacher Follow-up Survey was completed by 7429 teachers. Findings from the 2004-2005 Teacher Follow-up Survey indicated 84% of the teachers teaching during the 2003-2004 school year remained at their same school, 8% moved to a different school and 8% left the profession (NCES, 2007a). Thirty eight percent of the movers transferred to another school for a better teaching assignment. Twenty five percent of the leavers left the profession to pursue another career. While fifty-five percent of those who left but continued to work in the field of education reported they had more control over their work than when they were teaching in the classroom (NCES, 2007).

Principals having a better understanding of why teachers are requesting to move to another school or why teachers are leaving the field can be proactive in retaining teachers. Boe, Barkanic, and Leow (1993), analyzed the Schools and Staffing Surveys and the Teacher Follow-up Survey for a period of six school years (1987-1989, 1990-1992, and 1993-1995). From the data it was possible to define school attrition in four components:

1. Teachers who voluntarily moved to a different school,
2. Teachers who moved to a different school through involuntarily assignment,
3. Teachers who voluntarily left teaching all together, and
4. Teachers who left teaching involuntarily through personnel action, or who retired.

Their study defined the national trend and predictor data for the attrition of public school teachers. Boe et al. (1993) determined there were variables in predicting teacher attrition (p. 14). These variables include the following:

1. Teacher Characteristics-Voluntary moving and voluntary leaving were both a sharply declining function of increasing teacher age and experience (p. 15).
2. Working Conditions- Voluntary leaving and involuntary moving occurred more often for teachers employed in irregular/part time positions (p. 15).
3. Teacher Judgment- There is not a close correspondence between teacher's plan to move to a different school or to leave teaching and what they actually do (p. 16).
4. Situational-Voluntary leavers were more than four times likely to have changed from a condition of no dependents to at least one dependent (p. 22).
5. Administrative Support- Voluntary moving by teachers to a different school was clearly associated with less perceived administrative support as was voluntary leaving and involuntary moving (p. 22).

Principals familiar with predictive variables, such as working conditions, may use their knowledge of these variables to make an impact on whether or not a teacher remains at their school or in the teaching profession.

Teacher Shortage

Based on Ingersoll's research using the Teacher Follow Up Survey data from 1988-89, 1991-92, 1994-95, and 2000-2001, the movers and leavers result in a decrease in staff (Ingersoll, 2003a, p. 9). The data indicated teacher turnover is a problem for schools. The challenges schools face staffing their classrooms are a result of teacher transfers and teacher attrition.

> The data show that a demand for new teachers is not primarily due to student enrollment increases, nor to teacher retirement increases, but to pre-retirement teacher turnover. That is, most of the hiring of new teachers is simply to fill the spots vacated by teachers who just departed (Ingersoll 2003a, p. 10).

Ingersoll indicated that those that move or leave the profession are dissatisfied with their jobs. He noted reasons provided for their dissatisfaction were: (a) lack of administrative support, (b) poor student discipline, (c) poor student motivation, and (d) lack of teacher involvement in decision making (Ingersoll, 2003a, p. 16).

Findings Related to Teacher Attrition

Previous research has been conducted to explain teacher attrition. Ingersoll (2001a) has examined whether the role of the school's characteristics and organizational conditions impact teacher attrition. His analysis focused on four organizational conditions in schools: (a) the compensation structure for new employees, (b) the level of administrative support, especially for new employees, (c) the degree of conflict and strife within an organization, and (d) the degree of employee input into and influence over organizational policies. The results from Ingersoll's 2001 study concluded the following:

1. Teachers in schools with higher salaries are less likely to depart the profession.

2. Schools that provide more support from administrators have lower teacher attrition rates.
3. Schools with higher level of decision making influence and autonomy have lower teacher attrition rates (Ingersoll, 2001a, p. 18).

Loeb (2004) described the results from a series of surveys that focused on working conditions in the state of Washington during the 2003-2004 school year. Loeb's study also includes analytical data from the Center for Strengthening the Teaching Profession. The first survey researched the working conditions teachers encountered daily. The results of the first survey indicated teachers had several concerns which included: (a) their workload, (b) school policies and practices, (c) and the number of students in their classrooms. The second survey administered to the same sample of teachers who responded to the first survey probed other issues such as the quality of support for teachers' work.

Loeb (2004) identified factors associated with joining, remaining in, and exiting the teaching profession. Teachers indicated the reasons for choosing the teaching profession were for altruistic. Sixty-seven percent of the teachers listed their reasons for wanting to become a teacher included their desire to work with children. While 32% indicated their reason for becoming a teacher was the value of education in society. Reasons for staying in the profession matched reasons for becoming a teacher. Even though teachers in this survey were satisfied with becoming a teacher, 75% reported workload as a reason for wanting to leave the teaching profession. Additional reasons cited by teachers for wanting to leave the profession included (a) 63% of the teachers reported they were frustrated with policies, (b) 62% of the teachers reported lack of time to do their job and, (c) 57% of the teachers indicated salaries (p. 3).

Understanding why teachers leave the profession plays an important role in retaining teachers (New York State Education Department, 2005). According to Darling-Hammond (2003), there are four major factors impacting decisions to leave the teaching profession or specific schools:

1. *Working Conditions*-Surveys indicate working conditions play a major role in a teacher's decision to leave the profession. Teachers' feelings regarding administrative support, lack of resources, and teacher input concerning decision making are all areas related to teacher retention.
2. *Salaries*-Teachers are more likely to leave a district that offers lower wages. The teaching profession needs to provide competitive salaries in comparison to other occupations.
3. *Teacher Preparation*- Initially licensed teachers are inadequately prepared for their initial classroom experience and are more likely to leave the profession. The more training the prospective teacher receives, the more likely he or she will remain in education.
4. *Mentoring Support*- Mentoring programs increase the retention rate for new teachers. Newly hired teachers become more competent than those not in a mentoring program (p. 9).

Teachers look for schools with working conditions that provide: (a) sufficient curriculum resources, (b) administrative support, (c) collegiality among staff members and (d) opportunities to learn (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

Teacher Working Conditions that Affect Teacher Retention

Considering the importance of retaining teachers, a number of researchers have studied reasons teachers give for leaving the profession. Leithwood (2006) reviewed empirical research on teachers' working conditions. Teachers' perceptions of working conditions have been shown to influence their decision to stay, move, or leave the profession. This section provides an overview of the working conditions teachers have provided as reasons they may stay, move to another school, or leave the teaching profession all together.

School Climate

Robert Owens (2001) defines climate as "the characteristics of the total environment in a school building" (p. 139). Teachers will do their best work in a healthy, pleasant environment (New York State Education Department, 2005). It is important that teachers work in a climate where they feel comfortable with school administrators and their peers. Principals need to ensure a positive school climate that is inviting to all stakeholders, especially those that work in the school daily. The New York State Education Department (2005) has implied school leaders need to recognize a certain school climate must be established in order to retain quality teachers. Research findings concluded four factors contribute to a supporting school climate:

1. Teaching is possible when the climate is orderly and consistent behavior policies focus on student learning.
2. Successful schools are learner and assessment-centered. Teachers must utilize tools that continuously monitor student learning.
3. Environments must be safe for students and staff.
4. Schools must cultivate a professional environment in which teachers receive respect (New York State Department, 2005).

Furthermore, Ingersoll's 2003 study determined "school staffing problems are rooted in the way schools are organized and the way the teaching occupation is treated Ingersoll (2003a, p. 18)." Principals must recognize the power of a school's climate in retaining the very best teachers. In order to improve the teaching workforce, the quality of the teaching profession must be improved (Ingersoll, 2003a).

Loeb's (2004) second section of his study, *Teachers' Views of School Leadership and Work Environment,* he surveyed the importance of collegiality and the quality of working conditions. More than three-fourths of the teachers surveyed reported their schools as being collaborative, professional working environments. Ninety-three percent of the teachers surveyed indicated a positive school climate was important to them, while 82% felt a collaborative work environment were equally important. Weiss (1999) found that school culture and school leadership were main factors in predicting a teacher's intention to remain in teaching. Knowing the effects of school climate factors can lead to the development of policies and programs to address teacher retention.

Administrative Support

Support from the school leader has been found to be a working condition that affects teachers' decision to stay, move, or leave the profession. A study by an independent nonprofit organization, Charlotte Advocates for Education (2004), suggests the school principal plays a major role in retaining teachers. Annually between 15% and 20% of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg teachers leave the classroom. The study found that high teacher turnover rates resulted in:

1. Deficit of quality teachers for every classroom and thus lower quality of instruction.
2. Loss of continuity within the school. School reforms require sustained and

shared commitment by a school's staff. This is difficult to achieve with continual staff turnover.

3. Time, attention, and funds being devoted to attracting new teachers and not to the classrooms. It is estimated each teacher turnover cost the system $11,500 (p. 1).

The Charlotte Mecklenburg researchers studied traits and strategies of successful principals. Their goal was to understand the relationship between principals, culture and teacher retention. Research data gathered by the West Mecklenburg Collaborating for Educational Reform Initiative and North Carolina's Teacher Working Conditions Initiative was used in this study. The study was designed to discover the following:

1. What specific skills, training, experiences, and characteristics affect a principal's ability to be an effective leader who creates a supportive environment?
2. What specific strategies do principals implement to impact the shaping of the working and learning environment in their schools?
3. What support can be provided to principals in becoming more effective; including training and professional development? (p. 1).

One of the key findings of the study was that principals must "create an environment where teachers will want to remain" (p. 15). To impact teacher retention, the study suggested several strategies successful principals believe are important in retaining teachers. Among those strategies are: (a) demonstrate strong leadership, (b) support staff, (c) include teachers in decision making, (d) empower staff, (e) be accessible to teachers, (f) provide opportunities for teachers to grow in their profession, and (g) provide both individual and team planning time for

teachers. Principals implementing the suggested strategies can create an environment in which teachers will want to remain in the teaching field.

Keeping Quality Teachers: The Art of Retaining General and Special Education Teachers (New York State Education Department, 2005), a guidebook developed by the Northeast Regional Resource Center (NERC) in collaboration with the New York State Education department was designed to assist school leaders in developing and implementing support for teacher retention initiatives in the state of New York. The information and data used to generate this document was developed using data gathered from New York State's public schools. District level leadership and building level leadership play an important role in improving teacher working conditions. School leaders must first recognize the important role teachers play in academic performance and provide the leadership for retaining effective teachers. Schools and school districts that believe teacher retention is a problem need to examine factors that impact teacher retention. This study suggests data on teacher retention and teacher attrition should be analyzed by school leaders to determine why teachers are moving from school to school or leaving the profession altogether. School and district leaders can use the teacher retention data and student achievement data to identify reason why schools are not meeting their educational goals (New York State Education Department, 2005).

Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, and Meisels (2005) conducted a survey of teachers who left teaching in 2002-2003 and 2003-2004. The teachers surveyed were from two large Florida school districts. Of the six factors that influenced teacher retention, lack of administrative support was the second important reason teachers revealed why they had left the profession. Teachers indicated that the lack of administrative support played a role in their decision to leave the profession. Administrative support was more important to female teachers than male

teachers. While, high school teachers considered administrative support more important than elementary teachers. There was no significant difference between stayers and leavers with respect to school level, social economic status of the school, school grade, school location and the teachers' years of experience.

Furthermore, a majority of teachers, eighty seven percent, indicated the support of their administrator as an important reason for them to stay at their school (Loeb, 2004). Teachers appear to get less instructional leadership than they would like or need from principals. Fifty-eight percent of the teachers reported they received support, and guidance from other teachers on their staff. This study suggests that a little more than half of the teachers receive support or guidance from their administrators and as a result teachers turn to their colleagues (Loeb, 2004).

Work Load and Resources

Kersaint and Lewis (2005) found that paperwork and assessments was an issue for teachers that have stayed and left the profession. They concluded the high-stakes testing and paperwork plays a role in stress for all teachers. Additionally, Loeb contends "An excessive workload, frustration with state education reform policies and lack of time to do the job well are particularly troubling to the majority of the state's teaching force" (Loeb, 2004, p. 11). When considering key resources such as planning time, only 61% felt that planning time was sufficient to meet their needs. The North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey reported that 51% of North Carolina's teachers receive less than three hours of planning time per week and more than 77% receive five hours or less per week.

Moreover, teachers felt resources for students to be inadequate. The level of schooling made a difference on the adequacy of resources provided for students. Forty-five percent of elementary teachers felt they had inadequate resources for their students. While 28% of middle

school teachers and 29% of high school teachers felt student resources were inadequate (Loeb, 2004).

Loeb and Darling-Hammond (2005) analyzed teacher turnover and how working conditions impact teacher turnover. “Among the strongest predictors of these outcomes is a factor representing teacher ratings of their school conditions including on one hand tangible supports for teaching in the form of teacher’s working conditions, physical facilities, and availability of textbooks ” (p. 65). The North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey Interim Report (Hirsch et al., 2006a) found that more than 73% of teachers responding to the survey indicated teachers did not have sufficient instructional materials.

Compensation

Compensation has been identified as a factor that may influence teacher’s decision to move to another school or leave the profession. Hanushek, Kain, and Rivikin, (2004) studied teacher data from Texas public schools to gain an understanding of how salary and other factors affect teacher retention. Their study found that higher salaries significantly reduced the probability of male teachers leaving the profession or moving to another school. In contrast salary, for the female teachers with more than six years of teaching experience, did not have an effect on their decision to stay or leave the profession. The authors contend that because women are more than likely the secondary earners in the family they may be less sensitive to salaries. A key finding of the study was that additional compensation would be required to keep a teacher from transferring from a disadvantaged school to another school within the system. The authors suggested an alternative to raising salaries would be to address specific working conditions. The authors concluded by stating “Any salary adjustments designed to reduce teacher turnover will affect both high quality and low quality teachers, tending to increase the retention of both” (p.

352). Once other school working conditions are considered, the impact of salary becomes less influential on teacher retention (Hanushek, 2004).

Shen and Jianping (1997) reiterated that the attrition rate is higher for young teachers during their early professional life, low for the middle aged teacher and high again for the older teacher reaching retirement thus following the U-shaped curve over the cycle of life. The number of years a teacher has been teaching, the mean salary for all teachers, and the salaries for senior teachers are associated with teacher retention. This study suggests the more years a teacher has invested in teaching, the more he or she will remain in the teaching profession. Weiss (1999) found when using data from the Schools Staffing Survey 1987-1988 and 1990-1991 salary did not affect first year teachers' morale. Salary did influence their plans to continue to remain in the teaching field. Overall the literature suggests that higher salaries are associated with lower teacher attrition (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

Beginning Teacher Support

Beginning teachers join the profession for one of two reasons; 67% reported their desire to work with young people, while 32% reported the value of education in society. Their reasons for staying in the profession are aligned with their reasons for joining the profession. Beginning teachers considering leaving the profession provided the following reasons for considering leaving the profession: (a) workload, (b) frustration with state and education reform policies, (c) lack of time to do the job well and (d) salary. The workplace conditions also play a role in their decision to remain in their school. Beginning teachers identified the (a) school's climate, (b) availability of professional support, (c) the school's collaborative work environment, and (d) teaching assignments as determining factors for staying or leaving a school (Loeb, Elfers, Knapp & Plecki, 2004).

Furthermore, Inman's (2004) research reported that 58% of new teachers met regularly with other teachers for guidance, to discuss subject matter, common classroom problems and challenges. This equates to 42% of new teachers do not receive any support from other teachers. Teachers reported that the leadership staff provided little or no guidance. It is apparent new teachers appear to receive less instructional leadership than they would like or need. Adverse working conditions may affect the new teachers' decision to stay or leave the teaching profession.

Over the last several years school systems have realized the importance of teacher induction. Induction programs that support the beginning teacher make a profound difference in a teacher's ability to understand and work in the school community, in the quality of teachers, and the retention of teachers (New York State Education Department, 2005). A teacher induction program should be a phase of teacher development that provides a period of socialization and enculturalization, providing a formal program for beginning teachers (Mior, 2006). According to Ingersoll (2006) the 1999-2000 school year 83% of beginning teachers participated in an induction program. Ingersoll's research indicated that 41% of beginning teachers that did not receive an induction moved from their current school or left the profession altogether. While only 18% of beginning teachers moved to another school or left the profession when they received a basic induction, collaboration time, teacher networks, and extra resources (Ingersoll, 2006). Induction programs are costly. School systems must consider the cost of induction programs compared to the cost with teacher turnover.

Mentoring is a crucial component of successful induction processes. It is only one component of a successful induction process.

"In mentoring, more experienced teachers make a commitment to work with a

> new teacher for a specific time, usually at least one year, for the purposes of helping the new teachers acculturate into the district and reflect on and improve their practice (New York State Education Department, 2005, p. 4.3)."

Systems that provide an expert mentor have teachers that stay in the profession and are more competent than the beginning teacher that must learn by trial and error (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

Administrator Perceptions of Teacher Working Conditions

Teacher working condition surveys conducted by the Center for Teaching Quality (CTQ) in four states and one school district have concluded that administrators and teachers consistently have different perceptions of working conditions. During the last three years teachers and administrators in North Carolina, Arizona, Clark County, Las Vegas Nevada, Ohio, and Mississippi participated in a teacher working conditions survey administered by the Center for Teaching Quality. The Center for Teaching Quality survey questions focused on five broad factors or domains: (a) time, (b) professional development, (c) leadership, (d) empowerment, (e) facilities and resources (Hirsch, Emerick, Church & Fuller, 2006b; Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Berry, Fuller, Williams, & Lobacz, 2007). Administrators responding to the surveys had a more positive perception of working conditions than teachers. Data from Arizona, Mississippi and Clark County, Las Vegas 2007 Center for Teaching Quality surveys demonstrated "teachers and administrators view teaching and learning conditions differently and often quite dramatically" (Improving Student learning by advancing the Teaching Profession, 2008). When considering the working conditions surveys, the biggest gap in perception exists between teachers and principals regarding teacher involvement in decision making. The studies in North Carolina, Arizona, Clark County, Ohio and Mississippi discovered that principals

believe they are engaging teachers in the decision making process at their schools (Hirsch, Emerick, Church, & Fuller 2006b; Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Berry, Fuller, Williams, & Lobacz, 2007). Each of the surveys indicated there were additional disparities between principals and teachers when reviewing working condition domains of each state and district surveyed. For example, the North Carolina and Ohio state surveys indicated there were major disparities between principals and teachers perceptions in the areas of leadership and time (Hirsch, Emerick, Church, & Fuller 2006b; Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007). The Arizona and Clark County surveys revealed leadership to be a major concern for teachers (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007a, 2007b). When reviewing the surveys conducted by the Center for Teaching Quality, it was evident that principal and teacher perceptions of teaching working conditions vary (Hirsch et al., 2006b; Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Berry, Fuller, Williams, & Lobacz, 2007).

While the teacher working conditions of Ohio, Mississippi, North Carolina, Arizona, and Clark County, Las Vegas demonstrated differences in administrators and teachers perceptions of working conditions, the South Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey only indicated minimal differences. In the previously mentioned state Center for Teaching Quality Surveys, administrators believed that teachers were integrally involved in the school decision making process, while teachers believed otherwise. The administrators' and teachers' perceptions of working conditions in South Carolina were more aligned. Findings in South Carolina showed administrators and teachers were in considerable agreement in regard to teacher involvement in the decision making process at the school level. "The fact that school leaders and teachers are in synch regarding the extent to which conditions of work are more problematic makes achieving some consensus around, and impetus for reforming these issues, much more likely" (Southeast

Center for Teaching Quality 2004, p. 14). The Southeast Center for Teaching Quality does acknowledge that these findings maybe the result of low principal response to the survey.

In general, with only the South Carolina Survey being the exception, administrators and teachers have disparities in their perceptions of teacher working conditions. When considering the working conditions, teacher decision making was the working condition factor that surfaced in all states surveyed by the Center for Teaching Quality (Hirsch, Emerick, Church, & Fuller 2006b; Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Berry, Fuller, Williams, & Lobacz, 2007). "Until all educators are able to understand each other's perceptions of teaching and learning conditions, sustained reforms to improve school climate will not be prioritized" (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007a p. 48).

Decision Making

What is Shared Decision Making?

Throughout the country schools are continuously restructuring to improve student learning and the process of teaching (Johnson & Pajares, 1996). One of the major focuses of school reform has been the decentralization of power at the school level. Since the 1980's school systems have been moving towards decentralization of the decision making authority at the school level (Stevenson, 2001). Shared decision making has led many schools to involve their teachers in the decisions that affect their lives (Somech, 2002). Stevenson defines shared decision making as "a horizontal devolution of authority within the school from the principal to a collective of members of the school community" (p. 1). Furthermore, Johnson and Pajares (1996) describe shared decision making as "the process of extending the base of the decision making through a governance structure to include groups traditionally omitted from the decision making process" (p. 600). Decisions at the school level may encompass the following areas:

instructional coordination, curriculum development, staff development, evaluation, general school administration, personnel, rules and discipline, school improvement, and policymaking (Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1980). Although the term shared decision making is most often used when involving teachers in the decision making process, other terms that are synonymous with shared decision making are teacher input, participatory decision management, and participatory decision making.

Somech (2002) has defined dimensions of shared decision making. He has examined five specific dimensions of decision making: decision, degree of participation, structure, target of participation and rationale. The decision domain involves teachers dealing with students, instruction, managerial issues, school operations, and administration. The decision domain is known as the technical domain. Somech's second domain, degree of participation, is described by the degree of involvement teachers have in the decision making process. The third domain, participatory management structure, establishes a participatory structure for decision making with in a school. Some principals prefer a participatory structure that is informal in which there are very few rules determining who participates and how participation occurs. While other principals establish a more formal participatory management structure in which teachers are more directly involved in making decisions. The fourth dimension, participation target, suggests that when a principal has developed a level of trust and loyalty, teachers are provided more responsibility. Within this dimension, Somech describes the degree to which the principal involves his or her staff members in decision making. The principal's participation target may depend on the relationship the principal has with certain teachers. The fifth dimension, rationale, justifies why a school has embraced participatory management. This dimension suggests that the rationale for participatory management represents the principal's leadership philosophy and his

or her rationale for employing participatory management. Principals may vary their level of involving subordinates in the decision making.

The Benefits of Shared Decision Making

According to Duke, Showers, and Imber (1980) the benefits of shared decision making are related to intrinsic factors more than student achievement. The benefits of teachers involved in the decision making at their school include: (a) teachers feeling of self efficacy, (b) ownership, and (c) workplace democracy (Duke, Showers, & Imber, 1980). In their study, teachers rated the benefits at the high end of the scale while rating the costs of shared decision making at the low end of the scale. Duke, Showers and Imber's findings indicated that teachers are more likely to comply with decisions if they are involved in the decision making process. Furthermore, 40% of the teachers felt that involvement in school decision making could enhance their school careers. Finally, being involved helped teachers gain an appreciation of the running of a school.

Johnson and Pajres (1996) study found evidence that changes in attitudes and patterns of behavior are benefits of shared decision making. Shared decision making can change attitudes and patterns of behavior within a school. Shared decision making allows more teachers the ability to participate causing power shifts within a school to occur. Barriers of authority and isolation are broken down when shared decision making is the norm permitting teachers to collaborate and discuss school issues with each other. Faculty and administration gain a better understanding of each other (Johnson & Pajares, 1996). Furthermore, shared decision making can change the culture of a school. Johnson and Parjes (1996) noted:

> We found indications that shared decision making can alter the culture of a school. Specifically, we noted new voices speaking up, and being heard, the breaking down of barriers of authority and isolation, and the changes in teacher beliefs and attitudes. In

general, SDM helped alter traditional conceptions of leadership within the school community (p. 623).

Participation in decision making encourages teacher involvement and teacher commitment to the organization. Teacher participation in decision making promotes commitment to the decisions being made and increases a teacher's willingness to carry out the decision. Teachers begin to take ownership of their decisions by initiating their own ideas (Somech, 2005). Somech suggests principals need to influence their teachers to be skillful in the pursuit of the organization's objectives. He describes organizational commitment as having three components: "a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization's goals and values (identification), a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization (involvement) and a strong intent or desire to remain with the organization (loyalty)" (p. 782).

Shared decision making is a process of teacher empowerment (Perry, Brown, & McIntire, 1994). It is through shared decision making that teachers are empowered (Lampe, 1997). This process enhances the teachers' autonomy and validates their professionalism. Somech's (2005) research findings indicated that principals need to invest in the enhancing of the motivational factors of organizational commitment and teacher empowerment. His study suggests "that school effectiveness could be managed by fostering intrinsic task motivation among teachers, as well as, by promoting teacher's organizational commitment" (p. 794). Teacher empowerment permits teachers to work together to meet the organization's goals. Principals are encouraged to empower teachers to be decision makers. If schools are to be successful in transforming education, teachers must be involved in making decisions (Reep & Greer, 1992). Lampe's (1997) meta analysis of significant studies implies that teachers' beliefs and attitudes regarding their role in the decision making process play a key role in the restructuring of schools.

Teacher Motivation and Job Satisfaction

Bogler's (2001) research on teacher job satisfaction reported that a teacher's perception of occupational prestige, self-esteem, autonomy at work and professional self development contribute to job satisfaction. His study suggests teachers that are satisfied with their work had a "sense of self esteem, provided them with opportunities of self development, gave them feelings of success and allowed them to participate in determining school practices" (p. 676). These expressions of job satisfaction can be related to Herzberg's research on human motivation. Herzberg's study identified job satisfiers such as work itself, achievement, growth possibility, responsibility, and advancement as job satisfiers (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2004). Shared decision making offers teachers the opportunity to be responsible employees by participating in determining school practices. "When teachers have more opportunities for autonomy and discretion, they are able to make decisions about what they teach, which means that they take an active role in school leadership" (Weiss, 199 p. 865).

Researchers have studied motivation and job satisfaction. "Motivation deals with the explanation of why people do the things they do" (Owens, 2001 p. 330). Motivation emphasizes the nurturing a human being to continue growing, developing and becoming enriched by experiences (Owens, 2001). Research on motivation has been conducted by Fredrick Herzberg and Abraham Maslow.

Herzberg's Motivation Hygiene Theory

Frederick Herzberg (2003) has studied human motivation since the 1960s. Herzberg's research has indicated that factors affecting job satisfaction were different from factors relating to job dissatisfaction. Herzberg termed his job satisfiers as motivators and hygiene factors as the

cause of unhappiness in the job or job dissatisfaction. According to Herzberg the opposite of job satisfaction is not dissatisfaction, but rather, no job satisfaction.

Herzberg (2003) developed a theory known as the Two-Factor Motivation-Hygiene theory based on a study of employee's job satisfaction and dissatisfaction. His motivation-hygiene theory suggests the motivating factors that are intrinsic to the job are: (a) achievement, (b) recognition for achievement, (c) the work itself, (d) responsibility, and (e) growth or advancement. Conversely, indicators for job dissatisfaction or hygiene factors include extrinsic entities such as: (a) company policy, (b) salary, (c) status, (d) job security, (e) fringe benefits, (f) the type of supervision, (g) working conditions, (h) climate of the work group, and (i) attitudes and policies of the administration.

The difference between the motivators and hygiene factors is the level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction within each factor. Since motivation includes those factors that occur over time, then the motivating factors are the factors that promote lasting satisfaction. Motivating factors cause positive job attitudes that satisfy the employee's need for self actualization. Likewise, hygiene factors cause dissatisfaction (Tietjen & Myers, 1998).

Owens (2001) noted that people usually relate motivational characteristics to themselves and attribute dissatisfaction to the characteristics of the organization. Herzberg suggested three main ideas when practicing the Motivation-Hygiene theory:

1. *Enrich the job,* which involves redesigning the work that people do in ways that will tap the motivation potential.
2. *Increase autonomy on the job*. This suggests more participation in making decisions as to how the work should be done.

3. *Expand personnel administration* beyond its traditional emphasis on maintenance factors. The focus of personnel administration should be on increasing the motivational factors present in the work. This is the view that, for many, underlies the concept of "human resources administration" in contrast to more traditional views of personnel administration (Owens, 2001, p. 361).

Dinham and Scott's 1998 study, *A Three Domain Model of Teacher and School Executive Career Satisfaction,* confirmed Herzberg's Two Factor theory of Motivation as related to teacher job satisfaction. The study identified eight factors from three domains of teacher job satisfaction. The eight factors were determined to be either a job satisfier or a job dissatisfier. The eight factors included: (a) school leadership, (b) merit and local hiring, (c) school infrastructure, (d) school reputation, (e) status and image of teachers, (f) student achievement, (g) workload and the impact of change, and (h) professional growth. The scores from the respondents participating in the study fell in three domains: (a) core business of teaching domain which included student achievement and professional growth; (b) school level domain which included school leadership, school climate, decision making, school infrastructure, and school reputation; (c) system and societal domain which included workload and the impact of change; the status and image of teachers and merit promotion (Dinham & Scott, 1998).

In the core business domain the intrinsic rewards of student achievement and professional growth were associated with job satisfiers. While in the school level domain the factors could either be satisfiers or dissatisfiers depending on the school in which the teacher was employed. When considering the system and societal domain these extrinsic factors were job dissatisfiers. The results of this study suggested teachers were satisfied with intrinsic rewards of self growth and facilitating student achievement. Furthermore, the study indicated teachers were most

dissatisfied with extrinsic factors such as status and image, workload and educational change (Dinham & Scott, 1998). This study confirmed Herzberg's Two Factor Hygiene theory in which the major job dissatisfiers were extrinsic, while the job satisfiers were intrinsic motivating factors.

Motivating people that work in schools can be a challenge. The administrators of a school must consider both intrinsic and extrinsic factors when trying to motivate people. Herzberg discovered that the elimination of dissatisfies did not improve an employee's performance. For example, if a person is dissatisfied with their working conditions, the person may not work very hard. If the working conditions were improved the person may not be dissatisfied but, the improvement in working conditions may not improve his productivity. Satisfiers motivate the individual to work harder. For example, if a teacher were involved in making decisions about instructional materials, he may put more time and energy in his job to see that he is successful. Therefore, Herzberg's satisfiers are the key motivators to improving an individual's work performance (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2004).

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Fredrick Herzberg's Two-Factor theory of Motivation was influenced by Abraham Maslow. Maslow believed that people are motivated from within to realize their full potential. Maslow developed a hierarchal framework for understanding human motivation. Maslow's hierarchy of needs that motivate human action are in the following order:

1. *Physiological needs:* The initial motivation for humans is to satisfy biological demands for food, oxygen, water, sleep, and exercise.

2. *Safety:* After physiological needs are satisfied and the individual is motivated to attend the niceties of human life. He or she seeks a comfortable, regulated environment.
3. *Belonging and love:* After safety needs are satisfied and the individual has established a home in the broad-sense, he or she begins to seek involvement with other as a group member and as a partner.
4. *Esteem:* Once needs for belonging and love have been satisfied, the individual's motivation changes from gaining acceptance within a group to becoming a contributing and leading member of the group.
5. *Self Actualization:* The culminating human need comes after the acquisition of self-esteem and confidence in one's ability to be successful in the eyes of others. (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2004, p. 89)

Maslow believed that a person can not be motivated by a higher need until his lower needs are met first. The four lower needs are known as deficiency needs. The deficiency needs must be met in order for an individual to respond to a higher need. The higher order needs are the growth needs. According to Maslow, growth needs are never met, but are expanded. People are motivated by their growth needs therefore; the cycle of personal growth is endless. Maslow contends that the higher order needs are closely related to job performance (Owens, 2001).

It is apparent that Herzberg's research and Maslow's hierarchy of needs are compatible. Herzberg's hygiene factors and Maslow's can be linked to Maslow's physiological needs, safety needs, and belongingness and love. Herzberg's motivating factors can correspond to Maslow's higher order of needs esteem and self actualization (see Table 1).

Table 1

Interacting Areas of Herzberg's Factors with Maslow's Stages

Herzberg's Factors		Maslow's Stages
Motivating Factors	Achievement	Self Actualization
	Responsibility	
	Recognition	Esteem
	Advancement	
	Possibility of Growth	
Hygiene Factors	Status	Belongingness
	Interpersonal Relations	Love
	Supervision	
	School Policy and Administration	Safety Needs
	Personal Life	
	Job Security	
	Working Conditions	Physiological Needs
	Salary	

Note. (Glickman, Gordon, & Ross-Gordon, 2004, p. 91).

Schools that provide staff collegiality, trust, support, and professional interaction meet both the higher and lower order of human needs and help to develop intrinsic motivation. Schools that are hierarchical, isolate their staff, and have mistrust do not provide for the lower or higher order of needs of a teacher (Owens, 2001).

Decision Making and Teacher Retention

Administrators need to consider the factors in teaching which motivate teachers to stay in their job. When considering why teachers stay, move, or leave the profession one would have to determine the type of a school that attracts teachers. In choosing schools teachers look for the basic conditions that allow them to teach: (a) appropriate course assignments, (b) sufficient curriculum guidelines, (c) efficient systems for discipline, (d) accessible leadership opportunities to learn and grow, and (e) communication with parents (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003, p. 20). Teachers are satisfied at schools where they can feel like a professional and are treated like a professional. Teachers remain at schools that have staff members that share ideas and resources with colleagues, as well as, have administrators that respect teachers (Johnson and Birkeland, 2003). Teachers afforded the time to meet with other staff members to problem solve and make decisions experience greater work satisfaction (Goodlad, 1984). Bogler's research findings indicated teachers reported feeling satisfied when their work gave them a "sense of self esteem," and provided them with "opportunities for self development," provided "a feeling of success," and "allowed them to participate in determining school practices (Bogler, 2001, p. 676).

Teachers participating in the decisions made at the school are more satisfied with their jobs than teachers that had less autonomy. "The degree of staff cohesiveness and the nature of the problem-solving and decision-making climates at schools were factors related to teachers' satisfaction" (Goodlad, 1984, p. 179). The more the teacher is involved in the decision making

process at the school level the more satisfied the teacher is with her job (Bogler, 2001). Cochran-Smith (2004) concludes:

> "To stay in teaching, today's and tomorrow's teachers need school conditions where they are successful and supported, opportunities to work with other educators in professional learning communities rather than in isolation, differentiated leadership and advancement prospects during the course of the career, and good pay for what they do" (p. 391).

Teachers that view their job as a source of self esteem will consider their job as a central part of their life and gain satisfaction. Teachers' feelings and thoughts about their working conditions determine their decisions about whether to continue working in their current school, move to another school, or leave the profession (Leithwood, 2006). Principals need to be cognizant of how they can develop and foster positive feelings of teachers toward their jobs.

Principals perceive teachers being more involved in making decisions than the teachers perceived themselves to be (Goodlad, 1984). Teacher job satisfaction can be associated with the principal's decision making style. Teachers working with a principal who involves teachers in decision making feel more involved and are more committed to their jobs (Bogler, 2001). Teachers are more satisfied with their jobs when they work with a principal that shares information, delegates, and communicates with teachers (Bogler, 2001). Teachers attribute everything to the leadership of a school. Goodlad (1984) states, " Our data in fact show that the degree for staff cohesiveness and the nature of the problem-solving and decision making climates at schools were factors also highly related to teachers' satisfaction" (p. 179). In addition, Goodlad suggests that teachers consider a principal that treats the staff as professionally independent is a good principal.

Teachers are satisfied with the schools in which the principal considers the staff as competent professionals and involves them in making school decisions (Goodlad, 1984). The Center for Comprehensive School Reform and Improvement (2007) has suggested the following strategies for involving teachers in the decision making process:

1. Develop differentiated instructional roles in schools, such as assistants, mentors, coaches, and supervisors.
2. Establish formal and informal opportunities to garner teacher input on the design and implementation of school and district policies and procedures.
3. Engage school improvement teams in substantive and collaborative decision making (p. 3).

Teachers that are included in the school decision making processes feel involved and committed to their jobs. Furthermore, teacher commitment to the organization is related to teacher job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001). An organization that promotes opportunities for participation in decision making will have teachers commit to their teaching career (Weiss, 1999).

Summary

The review of literature has outlined the factors that affect teacher retention. The research consistently found that working conditions have played a major role in a teacher staying at a school, moving to another school or leaving the profession. The research identified the following working conditions that affect teacher retention: (a) school climate, (b) administrative support, (c) workload and resources, (d) compensation, (e) beginning teacher support, and (f) decision making. In addition to identifying working conditions that impact a teacher's decision to remain at a school, the literature review included a comprehensive overview of the working condition

teacher involvement in decision making, job satisfaction, and teacher retention. In this study the researcher addresses the effect of the teacher working condition decision making on teacher retention in regard to teachers who move from one school to another school within the school system.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the design and methodology used in this study. The chapter includes the research questions, research design, population and setting, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analysis, and summary of methodology.

Research Questions

The research questions in this study concern one area of teacher retention; teacher involvement in the decision making process and teachers that request to move from one school to another school within the school district (movers). The study addresses the following research questions:

1. How do movers rate their involvement in the decision making process at the school level?
2. How do administrators rate teacher involvement in the decision making process at the school level?
3. Do administrators have the same perception as teachers in regards to teacher involvement in the decision making process?

Research Design

Existing research suggests teacher involvement in the decision making process influences a teacher's decision to stay at his or her school. The research articles presented in chapter 2 outlined the working conditions that impacted a teacher's decision to stay, move, or leave the profession all together. Although there were six working conditions that surfaced in the review of research, the effect of decision making on teacher retention was evident in all the major studies. Throughout the research articles, teacher involvement in decision making and its effect on teacher retention was evident. Schools in which teachers are involved in the decision

making have lower levels of teacher turnover (Ingersoll, 2001a). Ingersoll's research indicates a 17.5% decrease in the likelihood of a teacher leaving their school if the teacher is involved in decision making (Ingersoll, 2001). Bogler (2001), contends the more involved teachers are in making decisions, the more satisfied they are with their school. Teachers satisfied with their job will remain teaching in their school. Findings from Shen (1997), suggest empowering teachers by involving them in making decisions regarding school policies and teaching policies impacted a teacher's decision to remain at their current school. While research addresses decision making and teachers leaving the profession, few studies address movers in a school district and their involvement within the decision making process.

This study is based on the need for additional research on the topic of teacher retention and how teacher involvement in decision making at the school level affect movers. The researcher used data from the NCTWC surveys to provide a basis for this study and to show the need for additional research. While the 2006 NCTWC survey did not report a district's average score on decision making, the 2008 NCTWC survey reported the average of the eight questions that described decision making. Teachers from one Southeastern North Carolina Local Education Agency (LEA) responded to the 2008 NCTWC survey rating the decision making factor as the lowest factor in comparison to the other four factors time, facilities and resources, leadership and professional development. The LEA's district average score for the decision making factor was 2.90. While the average scores for the other individual factors were: Time 3.23; Facilities and Resources 3.91; Leadership 3.6 and Professional Development 3.62.

For the basis of this study, the researcher analyzed movers and their involvement in the decision making process at the school level. The researcher identified the survey question on the 2006 and the 2008 NCTWC surveys that indicated teachers wanted to remain in their school

district, but move to another school. An analysis of identically worded survey items on the 2006 and 2008 NCTWC Surveys for the LEA indicated movers were dissatisfied with their involvement in the decision making process at their schools. Using the NCTWC survey items that identify movers and the decision making survey items on the 2006 and 2008 NCTWC Surveys, the researcher was able to validate the need to further research movers and their involvement in the decision making process.

Tables 2 and Table 3 summarize the movers' responses to decision making statements on the NCTWC 2006 and the NCTWC 2008 surveys. Data from the surveys indicated movers responded more positively to leadership items on the 2008 survey than on the empowerment items on the 2006 survey. Furthermore, when analyzing how movers responded to their role in making decisions, between 50% and 86 % of the movers indicated they had no role or a small role in making decisions in the following areas: (a) professional development, (b) hiring teachers, (c) establishing and implementing student discipline policies, (d) deciding how the budget is spent, and (e) school improvement planning (see Table 3). One of the areas with most concerns on both the 2006 and the 2008 NCTWC surveys revealed less than 26% of the movers were involved in school improvement planning (see Table 3). Although schools and school administrators have made improvement in involving teachers in decision making, the data from both surveys imply there are questions that have not been answered in regards to the relationship between decision making and a teacher requesting a transfer to another school.

In addition to reviewing the NCTWC surveys to build a framework for this study, the researcher reviewed teachers' request to transfer. Based on an analysis of teacher transfer data the researcher identified movers in one Southeastern North Carolina LEA. Teachers whom requested a transfer to move to another school for one of the following school years: 2006-2007,

Table 2

2006 Empowerment and 2008 Leadership Survey Questions

Questions	2006 Disagree	2008 Disagree	2006 Agree	2008 Agree
Teachers are centrally involved in decision making about educational issues.	75.36%	41.94%	10.91%	46.23%
Teachers are trusted to make sound professional decisions about instruction.	52.73%	28.49%	34.55%	60.22%
The faculty have an effective process for making group decisions and solving problems.	69.09%	41.40%	12.73%	42.47%
In this school we take steps to solve problems.	52.73%	38.17%	20.00%	45.39%
Opportunities for advancement within the teaching profession other than administration to me.	50.91%	24.73%	23.64%	51.51%

Table 3

2006 Empowerment and 2008 Leadership Survey Questions – Teachers Indicate How Large a Role At Their School They Have in These Areas

Questions	2006 No Role or Small Roll	2008 No Role or Small Roll	2006 Large Role or Primary Role	2008 Large Role or Primary Role
Selecting instructional materials and resources	41.82%	25.26%	18.18%	41.94%
Devising teaching techniques	38.18%	12.36%	34.54%	59.67%
Setting grading and student assessment practices	43.64%	35.49%	23.63%	39.79%
Determining the content of in service professional development	76.36%	54.84%	3.64%	16.37%
Hiring new teachers	92.73%	86.02%	1.82%	2.69%
Establishing and implementing policies about student discipline	80.00%	54.30%	3.64%	20.97%
Deciding how the school budget will be spent	96.07%	83.33%	0.00%	2.69%
School improvement planning	60.00%	37.63%	12.73%	26.35%

2007-2008, and or the 2008-2009 school years were identified as movers in the school system. Administrators serving as principals during one of the following school years: 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and the 2008-2009 school years were surveyed.

In examining decision making and movers, a quantitative analysis of survey data gathered from two researcher developed surveys was utilized. Data was gathered from the teachers identified as movers and administrators in one southeastern North Carolina LEA. The data gathered by the researcher developed surveys included two sections on each survey: (a) Demographics and (b) Decision making. The two surveys were identical with the exception of the Demographic Section. An additional decision making question was included on the teacher survey and an open ended question was included on the administrator survey (see Appendices A and B).

Population and Setting

The population for this study was the teachers employed in the eleventh largest local education agency (LEA) in North Carolina located on the southeast coast near the largest military amphibious base in the world. A major factor influencing the employment of teachers in the system is the transient student and staff population connected to the military community. The LEA is one of the fastest growing systems in southeastern North Carolina. The system grows approximately 300-500 students per year which is equivalent to the need for an addition of a school annually. The system has 37 public schools which include 20 elementary schools, 8 middle schools, 7 high schools, an early childhood center and an alternative center. Student enrollment for the 2008-2009 school year was approximately 23,500 students.

The school system hires approximately 375 teachers annually. During the 2005-2006 school year the system employed 1,613 teachers. The total number of teachers leaving the school

system was 246 teachers by July 1, 2006 (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2006). The total number of teachers whom requested a transfer to another school for the 2006-2007 school year was 128 teachers (Onslow County Schools, 2006). One hundred and twenty nine teachers requested a transfer to another school for the 2007-2008 school year (Onslow County Schools, 2007). For the 2008-2009, 168 teachers requested to move to another school (Onslow County Schools, 2008).

Teacher attrition and retention has been a challenge for the school system. During the 1999-2000 school year the system's attrition rate was high as 18.8% (Onslow County Schools Strategic Plan, 2007-2010). During the 2005-2006 school year the attrition rate was 15.2% (North Carolina Annual Turnover Summary, 2006). During the 2006-2007 school year the attrition rate was reported as 14.3% (North Carolina Department of Education, 2007) for the school district. The average North Carolina turnover rate is 12.5% (Hirsch, Emerick, Church & Fuller, 2006a) this school district has a higher teacher attrition rate than the state average for school years 2005-2006 and 2006-2007 (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2006; North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2007). Even though the attrition rate has decreased over the past few years, school administrators in the district continue to face the challenge of retaining teachers.

Instrumentation

Based on an extensive review of literature on teacher working conditions and teacher retention, the researcher developed the surveys used for this study. There was not a single survey instrument available to the researcher to address the research questions of this study. Therefore, the researcher reviewed several survey instruments (Center for Teaching Quality 2008; National Center for Educational Statistics 2007b; Southeast Center for Teaching Quality 2005; 2006a;

Fairfax County Public Schools Teacher Working Conditions Survey, 2008) that addressed working conditions such as decision making and teacher retention. The school district policy requires surveys administered to staff must be meaningful and relevant to the districts needs and interests. The teacher and administrator surveys developed by the researcher for this study consisted of two sections: (a) Demographics and (b) Decision Making. Section one of the teacher survey required participants to identify the level of school in which they were employed, their gender, and how many total years have they been in the education field as a teacher. Each of these items was in a multiple choice format. Section one of the administrator survey required the participants to identify how many years they have been employed in administration. Section two of the administrator and teacher surveys, Decision Making, required the participants respond to each of the survey items on a dichotomous scale (Agree or Disagree). An additional question on the movers' survey inquired if teacher involvement in decision making played a role in the mover's decision to request a transfer to another school. The administrator survey included an open ended question which solicited input from administrators on how they had involved teachers in decision making.

Validation of Instrument

The teacher and administrator surveys were reviewed by a pilot group for content validity and clarity. The pilot group was ask to review the survey instruments and provide feedback to whether or not the survey measures the impact of decision making on a teacher's decision to remain at their current school.

The superintendent of the district granted the researcher permission to survey the participants (see Appendix M). The East Carolina Institutional Review Board approved the study and the survey prior to distribution (see Appendix O).

Data Collection Procedures

The study utilized two researcher developed surveys to gather data. Participants in the study included teachers requesting to move to another school and administrators in the school district. The study was divided into three phases. During the first phase the researcher surveyed and recorded data from the teachers and administrators. The researcher calculated the percent of the participants that agreed and disagreed with each decision making factors. In addition to calculating the decision making items, the researcher analyzed teacher and administrator demographics. In the study's second phase the researcher compared the level of agreement and disagreement between the movers and the administrators on decision making factors. The third phase of the study involved analyzing the data collected from the survey question answered by mover's which indicated if the mover requested to move because of teacher involvement in decision making. The narrative responses to the open ended question on the administrator survey were analyzed for recurrent themes that may provide specific suggestions for school administrators.

A pre- survey letter (see Appendix K) was emailed to all teachers identified as movers using the Onslow County Schools Personnel Request Roster (Onslow County Schools, 2006, 2007, 2008) and administrators whom served in an administrator role during the 2006-2007, 2007-2008; 2008-2009 school years. The pre-survey letter was sent to the participants to provide information regarding the upcoming survey. The survey was conducted during the month of March. Participants were asked to complete the survey within a two week period. A consent form explaining the purpose of the research study and the survey was mailed to all participants (see Appendix N). The consent form assured confidentiality, anonymity, and encouraged participation in the survey. In addition to the consent form, survey directions for return of the

surveys to ensure confidentiality were mailed to the participants. Ten days following the delivery of the surveys a follow up letter was emailed to the participants. The follow up letter thanked the participants for their participation and encouraged those that had not returned their survey to return it (see Appendix L).

Data Analysis

Teacher retention literature suggests there are three different categories of teacher retention (a) stayers: teachers that stayed in the same school, (b) movers: teachers that move to another school within the same system, and (c) leavers: teachers that leave the profession (Ingersoll, 2003a). Regardless if a teacher moves from one school to another or leaves the profession, the school loses a teacher. In this study movers were analyzed using demographic data and survey items related to decision making.

Teacher demographics analyzed included: (a) school level of employment (elementary, middle or high school); (b) years of experience as a teacher; and (c) gender. Administrator demographics analyzed included years experience as an administrator. The researcher examined the relationship between teacher demographics and how teachers rated their level of involvement in decision making. In addition, the researcher examined the relationship between administrator demographics and how administrators rated teacher involvement in decision making. Frequencies of responses to the demographic questions on the survey were included in the data analysis. The researcher discussed the patterns among the variables and frequencies by categories.

Teachers' and administrators' responses to decision making factors were analyzed, grouped according to categories of similar responses and then compared. The data was reported by the percentage of movers and administrators agreeing or disagreeing to the decision making

survey items. The researcher discussed the patterns among the variables and their frequencies by categories. A Fisher's Exact Test for statistical independence was used to examine the relationships between movers and administrators level of agreement regarding decision making. A Fishers Exact Test computes the exact probability of outcomes. A series of two by two contingency tables were constructed to express the relationship among variables. In this research study the level of significance was set at .05.

The final set of analyses on the teacher survey focused on a survey statement which movers indicated if their request to move to another school within the district was the result of teacher involvement in decision making at their school. Movers responded by answering yes/no to the statement. The researcher reported the percentage of movers noting yes and no to the statement.

The final analysis on the administrator survey focused on an open ended question inquiring how administrators involved their teachers in the decision making process. The narrative responses were reviewed, coded, and analyzed for emergent themes. The themes that emerged from the narratives could assist principals in developing strategies to involve teachers in the decision making process at the school level.

Summary of Methodology

The research design for this study used two researcher developed surveys. In the first phase of this study the researcher surveyed teachers identified as "movers" as reported on the Personnel Request Roster (Onslow County Schools 2006, 2007, 2008). The survey questioned the "movers" and administrators on fourteen decision making factors. The agree/disagree response questions were analyzed using a Fisher's Exact Test to determine how the movers and the administrators perceived involvement in decision making at the school level. Movers were

also asked a yes/no statement in regards to teacher involvement in decision making and their request to transfer to another school in the district. The researcher reported the percentages of movers noting yes and no to the statement. Administrators were asked to respond to an open ended question inquiring how they involved teachers in the decision making process at the school level. The administrators' narrative responses were analyzed for recurrent themes that would provide recommendations to involve their teachers in the decision making process.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

This study was designed to examine the effect of teacher involvement in decision making on teachers identified on the LEA's annual transfer list as movers. First, the chapter includes a description of the data collection procedures, data analysis and the participants' response to the surveys. Next, the chapter details an analysis of the relationship between the participants' demographics and how participants rated their level of decision making. Finally, the three research questions are addressed.

Data Analysis

During the first phase of the analysis the teacher surveys were coded according to the participants' responses to the survey items. Following the coding of the surveys, the researcher analyzed teacher and administrator demographics. The researcher examined teacher demographics and how teachers rated teacher involvement in decision making. In addition the researcher analyzed administrator demographics and how administrators rated teacher involvement in decision making. Then the researcher examined the relationship between teachers identified as movers' and administrators' level of agreement regarding decision making.

Survey Response

The participants consisted of 108 teachers and 34 administrators that were employed in a southeastern North Carolina school district. The participants were employed in the school district during the 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 school years. Teachers participating in the survey had requested to move to another school for one of the following school years: 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009. Teachers requesting to transfer were identified as movers in this study. Two hundred and forty surveys were sent to teachers in the southeastern school district. One hundred and eight teachers responded to the surveys which resulted in a 45%

(n=108) overall return rate. Forty four administrator surveys were sent to administrators employed in the school district during one of the following school years: 2006-2007, 2007-2008, and 2008-2009 school years. Thirty four administrators responded to the survey which resulted in a 77% (n=34) overall return rate. A total of 284 surveys were distributed with an overall return rate of 61%. Table 4 summarizes the survey distribution and collection data.

Participant's Demographics

The teacher surveys collected the following demographics: (a) school level of employment (elementary, middle, or high school); (b) years of experience as a teacher (<1 to 1 year, 2-5 years, 6-12 years, 13-20 years and 20 + years); and (c) gender (male, female). Of the 108 respondents, 105 participants indicated their grade level: (a) 57 (53%) teach preschool or elementary grades, (b) 26 (24%) teach middle school and (c) 22 (20%) teach high school. Of the 108 surveys 105 respondents indicated their years of teaching experience. Years of teaching experience data indicated: (a) <1 to 1 year 0% (n=0), (b) 2-5 years 17% (n=18), 6-12 years 30% (n=32), 13-20 years 37 % (n=29), and 20 + years 25 % (n=27). Only 81 of the 108 participants indicated their gender on the survey: (a) males 13% (n=11) and females 87% (n=70). Of the 44 administrator surveys 34 surveys were returned with an overall 77% return rate. All thirty four administrators responded indicated their years of experience as a school level administrator: (a) <1 to 1 year 0% (n=0), (b) 2-5 years 18% (n=6), (c) 6-12 years 44% (n=15), (d) 13-20 years 12% (n=4), and 20+ years 26% (n=9). Table 5 presents participants demographics.

Teachers Identified as Movers: School Level Demographics

Teacher responses between school level (preschool and elementary, middle and high school) and the teacher's perceptions of decision making were examined. Findings indicated that teachers teaching preschool and elementary school teachers (75%) indicated more positive

Table 4

Survey Distribution and Collection Rates

Survey Type	# Distributed	# Returned	%
Movers	240	108	45.0
Administrators	44	34	77.0
Total	284	142	61.0

Table 5

Participants Demographics – Years of Experience

Survey Type	2-5 Years	6-12 Years	13-20 Years	20+ Years
Movers	18	32	29	27
Administration	6	15	4	9
Total	34	47	33	36

responses regarding their involvement in making decisions than middle school (58%) and high school teachers (54%). The overall data indicated middle school teachers agreed they were more involved in making decisions than high school teachers. While teachers at all school levels agreed they were not the decision makers at their school, teachers from all school levels indicated they were satisfied with the autonomy they had in their classroom, setting standards for their student's work in their classroom and selecting materials and equipment. When examining teacher responses to their involvement in the development of the school strategic plan, teachers' responses revealed middle school teachers felt they were less involved than the elementary and high school teachers. Furthermore, teachers from all school levels were not satisfied with their involvement in the employment process of new staff, involvement in budget decisions, developing student discipline standards and procedures, and setting standards for student promotion. Table 6 presents the school level data for movers.

Teachers Identified as Movers: Years of Experience Demographics

The number of years of teaching experience a teacher has often been explored when considering teacher retention. In this study the researcher examined the number of years of experience and how teachers rated their decision making. When examining the data more teachers between 6-12 years (30%, n=29) experience responded to the survey. The overall data indicated teachers with 20+ years of teaching (25%, n=27) were more involved in developing the school goals and the strategic plan. Teachers with less experience responded they were not as involved in the development of the school goals and the strategic plan. Regardless of years of teaching experience, teachers were in agreement they were not the decision makers at the school. Furthermore, teachers were not in agreement in rating their level of involvement in decision making at their school. For example, 77% of the teachers with 2-5 years of experience agreed

Table 6

Survey Data Collection for Teachers Identified as Movers

	Pre K-Elem		Middle		High	
Survey Item	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
1. Policies, Practices, and Procedures	40 (70%)	17 (30%)	16 (61%)	10 (39%)	11 (50%)	11 (50%)
2. Curriculum Decisions	39 (68%)	18 (32%)	14 (54%)	12 (46%)	12 (54%)	10 (46%)
3. Employment Process of Staff Members	11 (19%)	46 (81%)	7 (27%)	19 (73%)	5 (23%)	17 (77%)
4. School Budgeting Decisions	20 (35%)	37 (65%)	6 (23%)	20 (77%)	1 (5%)	21 (95%)
5. Autonomy and Control You Had in Your Class	54 (95%)	3 (5%)	22 (85%)	4 (15%)	18 (82%)	4 (18%)
6. Decision Making Process at Your School	43 (75%)	14 (25%)	15 (58%)	11 (42%)	12 (54%)	10 (46%)
7. Decision Maker at Your School	34 (60%)	23 (40%)	11 (42%)	15 (58%)	10 (45%)	12 (55%)
8. Goal Setting Process	44 (77%)	13 (23%)	18 (69%)	8 (31%)	17 (77%)	5 (23%)
9. Strategic Planning	42 (74%)	15 (26%)	18 (69%)	8 (32%)	19 (86%)	3 (14%)
10.Evaluating the School Goals	43 (75%)	14 (25%)	16 (62%)	10 (38%)	15 (68%)	7 (32%)
11.School Budget Process	18 (32%)	39 (68%)	5 (19%)	21 (81%)	3 (14%)	19 (86%)
12.Discipline Standards and Procedures	29 (51%)	28 (49%)	11 (42%)	15 (58%)	10 (45%)	12 (55%)
13.Setting Standards for Student Promotion	15 (26%)	42 (74%)	5 (19%)	21 (81%)	2 (9%)	20 (91%)

Table 6

Survey Data Collection for Teachers Identified as Movers (continued)

	Pre K-Elem		Middle		High	
Survey Item	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
14.Setting Standards for Student Work	56 (98%)	1 (2%)	23 (88%)	3 (12%)	18 (82%)	4 (18%)
15.Selecting Curriculum Materials/Equip	48 (84%)	9 (16%)	48 (84%)	9 (16%)	18 (82%)	4 (18%)

they were involved in decision making, while only 55% of the teachers with 13-20 years indicated they were involved in decision making. Furthermore, 81% of the teachers with 20+ years experience agreed they were involved in the decision making process at their school. Regardless of the teachers' years of experience, teachers positively rated their autonomy in the classroom, their involvement in setting standards for the students in their classroom, and their involvement in selecting curriculum. Overall, teachers of all years of experience were dissatisfied with not being able to have input in the hiring of new staff, school budgeting decisions, developing discipline standards and procedures, and setting standards for student promotion. Appendices C-F presents year of teaching experience data.

Administrator Demographics

The only administrator demographic question included on the survey asked the respondents to identify the number of years of administrator experience. Administrators with the least amount of experience (2-5 years, n=16) had the greatest response rate on the survey. While administrators with the most number of years experience (20+ years, n=9) responded the least. The data collected revealed 70% or more of the administrators in all categories of years experience rated all of items positively except the following: (a) teacher involvement in the hiring of new staff (13-20 years, 50% agreed), (b) teacher satisfaction with their level of involvement in the decision making (20+ years, 56% agreed), (c) teachers are the decision makers in the school (6-12 years, 67% agreed; 20 + years, 22% agreed), and (d) teacher involvement in setting standards for student promotion (6-12 years, 60% agreed; 20+ years only 67% agreed). Overall the data indicated regardless of the number of years experience administrators agreed teachers were involved in the majority of decisions made at the school level. Appendices G-J presents administrator demographics.

General Survey Results

Research Question One

How do movers rate their involvement in the decision making process at the school level? Teachers responded agree or disagree to 15 decision making items on a researcher developed survey. As shown in Table 7, nine of the fifteen survey items received an agreement rating of less than 70% by the respondents. The nine items which received a rating of less than 70% agreement included: (a) involvement in decisions regarding school policies, practices and procedures (65%), (b) involvement in curriculum decisions (64%), (c) involvement in hiring staff (38%), (d) involvement in budget decisions (25%), (e) satisfaction with the level of decision making (68%), (f) teachers being the decision makers at the school (54%), (g) involvement in the budget process (25%), (h) involvement in student discipline standards and procedures (49%), and (i) involvement in setting standards for student promotion (21%). While the remaining six survey items received higher ratings, only two were at or above 90% agreement: (a) satisfaction with the autonomy and control in the classroom (90%) and (b) involved in setting standards for student's work in the classroom (92%).

According to the data, teachers agree they are more involved in making decisions at the classroom level than making decisions that impact the entire school. The data indicated teachers perceive they are not involved in making school wide decisions such as (a) setting school polices, practices and procedures, (b) curriculum decisions (c) budgeting, (d) hiring new staff, (e)student discipline standards and procedures, and (f) setting standards for student promotion. Teachers revealed they have more control of the decisions made in their classroom such as setting standards for their students work in the classroom, selecting the curriculum materials and equipment.

Table 7

Survey Data Collection Teacher Participants

Question	Agree	Disagree
1. Policies, practices and procedures	70 (65%)	38 (35%)
2. Curriculum decisions	69 (64%)	39 (36%)
3. Employment procedures of staff members	41 (38%)	67 (62%)
4. School budgeting decisions	27 (25%)	81 (75%)
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	97 (90%)	11 (10%)
6. Decision making process at your school	73 (68%)	35 (32%)
7. Decision maker at your school	58 (54%)	50 (46%)
8. Goal setting process	82 (76%)	26 (24%)
9. Strategic planning process	82 (76%)	26 (24%)
10.Evaluating the school goals	77 (71%)	31 (29%)
11.School budget process	27 (25%)	81 (75%)
12.Discipline standards and procedures	53 (49%)	55 (51%)
13.Setting the standards for student promotion	23 (21%)	85 (79%)
14.Setting standards for student's work	100 (92%)	8 (8%)
15.Selecting curriculum materials and equipment	9 (100%)	0 (0%)

Research Question Two

How do administrators rate teacher involvement in the decision making process at the school level? Administrators responded agree or disagree to 14 decision making items on a researcher developed survey. As shown in Table 8 only two survey items received an agreement rating of less than 70%. The two items included: (a) teachers are the decision makers in the school (59%) and (b) teacher involvement in setting standards for student promotion (25%). One hundred percent (n=34) of the principals agreed that the teachers were involved in making decisions regarding: (a) school policies, practices and procedures, (b) goal setting, (c) the strategic planning process, and (d) evaluating school goals. Ninety seven percent (n=33) of the administrators responding were in agreement that teachers were involved in making decisions regarding setting standards for students' work in the classroom and selecting curriculum materials and equipment. While 94% (n=32) of the respondents agreed teachers were involved in: (a) curriculum decisions and (b) developing student discipline standards and procedures. In addition, 70% or more of the administrators agreed with the following: (a) teachers are involved in hiring new staff (79%, n=27), (b) teachers are involved in school budgeting decisions (79%, n=27), (c) teachers are satisfied with the amount of autonomy and control in their classroom (82%, n=28), and (d) satisfied with the level of involvement in the decision making process in the school.

According to the data, administrators agree teachers are involved in making school wide decisions that impact the school. Data indicated administrators perceive teachers are actively involved in (a) setting school policies and procedures, (b) goal setting, (c) strategic planning, (c) evaluating school goals, (d) curriculum decisions, (e) developing student discipline standards and procedures. In addition administrators perceive they involve teachers in hiring staff and the

Table 8

Survey Data Collection – Principal Participants

Question	Agree	Disagree
1. Policies, practices and procedures	34 (100%)	0 (0%)
2. Curriculum decisions	32 (94%)	2 (6%)
3. Employment procedures of staff members	27 (79%)	7 (21%)
4. School budgeting decisions	27 (79%)	7 (21%)
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	28 (82%)	6 (18%)
6. Decision making progress at your school	25 (74%)	9 (26%)
7. Decision maker at your school	20 (59%)	14 (41%)
8. Goal setting process	34 (100%)	0 (0%)
9. Strategic planning process	34 (100%)	0 (0%)
10.Evaluating the school goals	34 (100%)	0 (0%)
11.School budget process	32 (94%)	2 (6%)
12.Discipline standards and procedures	21 (62%)	13 (38%)
13.Setting the standards for student promotion	33 (97%)	1 (3%)
14.Setting standards for student's work	33 (97%)	1 (3%)

making budget decisions. While administrators indicated teachers were involved in school wide decisions, overwhelmingly administrators indicated teachers were involved in making decisions regarding setting standards for students' work in the classroom and selecting curriculum materials and equipment.

Research Question 3

Due to the small sample sizes, the Fisher's Exact Test for statistical independence was used to examine the relationship between the movers and the administrators' perceptions of teacher involvement in decision making. The Fisher's exact test calculates an exact probability for the relationship between two dichotomous variables in a two by two cross table. A two-way contingency table was constructed for each survey item. The two variables were staff (movers, administrators) and rating of teacher involvement (agree, disagree). Each survey item was analyzed using the Fisher's exact test to examine the significance of the association between the movers' rating and the administrators' rating of teacher involvement in decision making. The data set included 108 teachers identified as movers and 34 administrators.

Survey Item 1

Teachers are involved in making decisions regarding school policies, practices, and procedures. All of the administrators (n=34) surveyed agreed that teachers were involved in making decisions regarding school policies, practices and procedures. A majority of the movers (n= 70, 67.3%) also agreed they were involved in making decisions regarding school policies, practices and procedures. A Fisher's Exact test indicated a significant association between teacher and administrator perceptions of teacher's involvement in making school policy, practices and procedures decisions (p=0.000, two-tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 9).

Table 9

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are Involved in Making Decisions Regarding School Policies, Practices, and Procedures

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	70	38
Principal (n=34)	34	0

Note. *p<.000.

Survey Item 2

Teachers are involved in curriculum decisions. The majority of the administrators (N=32, 94.1%) agreed teachers are involved in making curriculum decisions. While movers (n=69, 63.9%) agreed teachers are involved in making curriculum decisions. A Fisher's exact test indicated there is a significant association between teacher and administrator perceptions of teacher involvement in curriculum decisions (p=0.000, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 10).

Survey Item 3

Teachers are involved in the employment process of new staff members. Administrators (n=27, 79.4%) agreed teachers are involved in the hiring of new staff. Movers (n=41, 38.0%) agreed teachers are involved in the hiring of new staff. A Fisher's exact test indicated there is significant association between teacher and administrator perception of teacher involvement in hiring new staff decisions (p=0.000, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 11).

Survey Item 4

Teachers are involved in school budgeting decisions. Administrators (n=27, 79%) disagreed teachers are involved in school budget decisions. Movers (n=27, 25%) disagreed teachers are involved in school budget decisions. A Fisher's exact test indicated a significant association between administrator and teacher perception of teacher involvement in school budget decisions (p=0.000, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 12).

Survey Item 5

Teachers are satisfied with the autonomy and control teachers have in the classroom. The majority of administrators (n=28, 82.4%) agreed teachers are satisfied with the amount of

Table 10

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are Involved in Curriculum Decisions

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	69	39
Principal (n=34)	32	2

Note. *p<.000.

Table 11

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are Involved in the Employment Process of New Staff Members

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	41	67
Principal (n=34)	27	7

Note. *p<.000.

Table 12

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are Involved in School Budgeting Decisions

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	27	81
Principal (n=34)	27	7

Note. *p<.000.

autonomy and control they have in the classroom. The majority of movers (n=97, 89.8%) also agreed teachers are satisfied with the autonomy and control they have in the classroom. A Fisher's exact indicated there is not a significant association between administrator and teacher perception of teacher satisfaction with autonomy and control in the classroom (p=0.240, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 13).

Survey Item 6

Teachers are satisfied with the level of involvement in the decision making process in the school. Administrators (n=25, 73.5%) agreed teachers are satisfied with their level of involvement in the decision making process at their school. Movers (n=73, 67.6%) also agreed teachers are satisfied with their involvement in the decision making process at their school. A Fisher's exact test indicated there is not a significant association between administrator and teacher perception of teacher satisfaction with their level of involvement in the decision making process at the school level (p=0.671, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 14).

Survey Item 7

Teachers are the decision makers in the school. Administrators (n=20, 58.8%) agreed teachers are the decision makers in the school. Movers (n=58, 53.7%) also agreed teachers are the decision makers in the school. A Fisher exact test indicated there is not a significant association between administrator and mover perception of teachers as the decision makers in the school (p=0.694, two tailed Fishers exact test) (see Table 15).

Survey Item 8

Teachers participate in goal setting. All administrators (n=34, 100%) agreed teachers participate in goal setting. The majority of the movers (n=82, 75.9%) agreed teachers participate in goal setting. A Fischer's exact test indicated a significant association between administrator

Table 13

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are Satisfied with the Autonomy and Control Teachers Have in the Classroom

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	97	11
Principal (n=34)	28	6

Note. *p>.240.

Table 14

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are Satisfied with the Level of Involvement in the Decision Making Process in the School

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=109)	73	35
Principal (n=34)	25	9

Note. *p>.671.

Table 15

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are the Decision Makers in the School

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	58	50
Principal (n=34)	20	14

Note. *p>.694.

and mover perception of teacher involvement in goal setting decisions (p=0.001, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 16).

Survey Item 9

Teachers are involved in the strategic planning process. All administrators (n=34, 100%) agreed teachers are involved in the strategic planning process. The majority of movers (n=82, 75.9%) agreed teachers are involved in the strategic planning process. A Fisher's exact test indicated there is a significant association between administrator and mover perception of teacher involvement in the strategic planning process decisions (p=0.001, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 17).

Survey Item 10

Teachers play a role in evaluating the school goals. All administrators (n=34, 100%) agreed teachers play a role in evaluating the school goals. The majority movers (n=77, 71.3%) agreed teachers play a role in evaluating the school goals. A Fisher's exact test indicated there is a significant association between administrator and mover perception of involvement in teachers evaluating school goals decisions (p=0.000, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 18).

Survey Item 11

Teachers are involved in developing student discipline standards and procedures. The majority of administrators (n=32, 94.1%) agreed teachers are involved in developing student discipline standards and procedures. Movers (n=53, 49.1%) agreed teachers are involved in developing student discipline standards and procedures. A Fisher's exact test indicated there is a significant association between administrator and mover perception of teacher involvement in developing student discipline standards and procedures (p=0.000, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 19).

Table 16

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers Participate in Goal Setting

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	82	26
Principal (n=34)	34	0

Note. *p<.000.

Table 17

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are Involved in the Strategic Planning Process

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	82	26
Principal (n=34)	34	0

Note. *p<.000.

Table 18

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers Play a Role in Evaluating the School Goals

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	77	31
Principal (n=34)	34	0

Note. *p<.000.

Table 19

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are Involved in Developing Student Discipline Standards and Procedures

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	53	55
Principal (n=34)	32	2

Note. *p<.000.

Survey Item 12

Teachers set standards for student promotion. Administrators disagreed (n=13, 38%) teachers are involved in setting standards for student promotion. Movers (n= 85, 81.7%) disagreed teachers are involved in setting standards for student promotion. A Fisher's exact test indicated a significant association between administrator and mover perception of teacher involvement in setting standards for student promotion (p=0.000, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 20).

Survey Item 13

Teachers set standards for students' work in the classroom. The majority of Administrators (n= 33, 97.1%) agreed teachers set standards for students' work in the classroom. The majority of movers (n=100, 92.6%) agreed teachers set standards for student's work in the classroom. A Fisher's exact test indicated there is not a significant association between administrators and movers perceptions of teacher involvement in setting standards for students' work in the classroom (p=0.687, two tailed Fisher exact test) (see Table 21).

Survey Item 14

Teachers are involved in selecting curriculum materials and equipment. The majority of Administrators (n=33, 97.1%) agreed teachers are involved in selecting curriculum materials and equipment. The majority of movers (n=89, 82.4%) agreed teachers are involved in selecting curriculum materials and equipment. A Fisher's exact test indicated there is a significant association between administrator and mover perception of teacher involvement in selecting curriculum materials and equipment decisions (p=0.044, two tailed Fisher's exact test) (see Table 22).

Table 20

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers Set Standards for Student Promotion

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	23	85
Principal (n=34)	21	13

Note. *p<.000.

Table 21

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers Set Standards for Student's Work in the Classroom

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	100	8
Principal (n=34)	33	1

Note. *p>.687.

Table 22

Movers' and Administrators' Rating of Teacher Involvement – Teachers are Involved in Selecting Curriculum Materials and Equipment

	Agree	Disagree
Mover (n=108)	89	19
Principal (n=34)	33	1

Note. *p<.004.

Ten of the 14 survey items produced significant associations between administrator and teacher perceptions of teacher involvement in decision making. While four of the survey items revealed there was not a significant association between administrator and teacher perceptions of teacher involvement. Statistics revealed that there was a significant association in the perception of movers and administrators in the following: (a) making decisions regarding policies, practices, and procedures, (b) involved in curriculum decisions, (c) employment of new staff, (d) involvement in the school budget, (c) goal setting, (d) strategic planning, (e) evaluating school goals, (f) developing student discipline standards and procedures, (g) standards for student promotion, and (h) selecting curriculum materials and equipment. In addition, the research indicated, there was not a significant association in the perception of movers and administrators in the following: (a) teacher satisfaction with autonomy and control in the classroom, (b) teacher satisfaction with the level of involvement in the decision making process, (c) teachers are the decision makers in the school, and (d) setting standards for students' work in the classroom.

The final analysis on the teacher survey focused on a survey statement. Teachers were ask to respond yes or no to a statement in regards to their involvement in decision making and their request to transfer to another school in the district. Nineteen percent (n=21) of the movers responded yes they transferred to another school because they were not involved in decision making. While, 74% (n=80) responded no indicating their request to transfer was not impacted by their involvement in decision making. Six percent (7) of the respondents did not reply to the statement.

The final analysis on the administrator survey focused on an open ended question inquiring how administrators involved teachers in the decision making process. Thirty administrators (88%) responded to the open ended question. One hundred percent (n=34) of the

administrators indicated teachers are involved in decision making through the strategic planning process at their school.

Summary

This chapter presented the surveys' response rates, participants' demographics, analyses of the three research questions, responses from the yes and/or no statement regarding teacher involvement in decision making and administrator responses to an open-ended question. The study results highlighted the demographics of the movers and administrators participating in the surveys. In addition, the study details the movers' and administrators' perceptions of teacher involvement indecision making. Percentages were computed for the demographic items in Section 1 of each survey. The Fisher Exact Test of Significance was used to determine if administrators' and movers' perceptions of teacher involvement in decision making were statistically significant. Ten of the 14 survey items produced significant associations between administrator and teacher perceptions of teacher involvement in decision making. Four of the survey items revealed there was not a significant association between administrator and teacher perceptions of teacher involvement. Mover responses to the yes and/or no statement inquiring if their decision to request a transfer was impacted by involvement in decision making at their school indicated the majority of teachers did not request a transfer due to their involvement or lack of involvement in decisions at their school. Administrator responses to the open ended questions were grouped accordingly. These responses provided activities and procedures in which administrators involved their teachers in the decision making process. A detailed discussion of the findings and recommendations are presented in the subsequent chapter.

CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION

The final chapter provides a summary of the statement of the problem, a review of the methodology, and summarizes the findings. The researcher drew conclusions and made connections between the current research and prior research. In addition, recommendations for school administrators, as well as, recommendations for further research were provided.

Statement of the Problem

The North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey assessed whether working conditions standards developed by the North Carolina Professional Teaching Standards were being met in each of the LEAs in North Carolina (Hirsch et al., 2006a). Data from the 2008 North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions survey reported teachers in this Southeastern North Carolina LEA rated the decision making factor as the lowest factor in comparison to the other four factors time, facilities and resources, leadership and professional development. The LEA's district average scores for decision making were reported as 2.90. The average scores for individual factors were: Time 3.23; Facilities and Resources 3.91; Leadership 3.6 and Professional Development 3.62 (North Carolina Teachers Working Condition Survey, 2008). When analyzing how movers responded to their role in decision making on the 2006 and 2008 North Carolina Teacher Working Condition Surveys the majority of the movers agreed they had no role or a small role in the following decisions: (a) professional development (2006, 76.3%; 2008, 54.8%), (b) establishing and implementing student discipline policies (2006, 80%; 2008, 54.3%), (c) hiring teachers (2006, 92.7%; 2008, 86%), (d) school budget (2006, 96%; 2008, 83.3%) and (e) school improvement planning (2006, 60%; 2008, 37.6%) (see Table 3). The purpose of this research was to further examine the teacher working condition decision making and its effect on movers in one Southeastern North Carolina Public School System.

Review of the Methodology

The research design for this study used two researcher developed surveys. During the first phase of this study the researcher surveyed teachers identified as movers as reported on the Personnel Request Roster (Onslow County Schools 2006, 2007, 2008). The survey questioned the movers and administrators on fourteen decision making factors. The agree/disagree response questions were analyzed using Fisher's Exact Test to determine how the movers and the administrators rated teacher involvement in decision making at the school level. Movers were also asked a yes/ no statement in regards to teacher involvement in decision making and their request to transfer to another school in the district. The researcher reported the percentages of movers noting yes and no to the statement. Administrators were asked to respond to an open ended question inquiring how they involved teachers in the decision making process at the school level. The administrators' narrative responses were analyzed for recurrent themes that would provide recommendations to involve their teachers in the decision making process.

Summary of the Results

A total of 14 agree/disagree responses were analyzed using a Fisher's Exact Test to evaluate how movers and administrators rated the involvement of teachers in decision making at the school level. Ten of the fourteen analyses indicated there was a significant association between movers' and administrators' perceptions of teacher decision making, while four of the analyses indicated there was a significant difference. The analysis indicated there were significant associations in which administrators and movers perceived teacher involvement in decision making in regard to: (a) making decisions regarding policies, practices, and procedures, (b) involved in curriculum decisions, (c) employment of new staff, (d) involvement in the school budget, (c) goal setting, (d) strategic planning, (e) evaluating school goals, (f) developing

student discipline standards and procedures, (g) standards for student promotion, and (h) selecting curriculum materials and equipment. In addition, the data indicated was not a significant association between movers' and administrators' perceptions of: (a) teacher satisfaction with autonomy and control in the classroom, (b) teacher satisfaction with the level of involvement in the decision making process, (c) teachers are the decision makers in the school, and (d) setting standards for students' work in the classroom. While the results of the Fisher's exact tests indicated movers and administrators have similar perceptions of teacher involvement in decision making, the results from this study also found the movers and administrators had different perceptions of teacher involvement in decision making. Administrators and teachers had similar perceptions of teacher involvement in (a) making decisions regarding policies, practices, and procedures, (b) goal setting, (c) strategic planning, (d) evaluating school goals, and (e) selecting curriculum materials and equipment. Additionally, administrators and teachers had different perceptions of teacher involvement in (a) curriculum decisions, (b) budget process, (c) employment of new staff, (d) developing student discipline standards and procedures, (e) standards for student promotion,

The analysis of the yes/no response statement on the mover survey reported the percent of movers indicating they requested a transfer to another school due to of their involvement in the decision making process at their current school. Only 19% (n=21) of the 108 movers responding indicated they had requested a transfer based on their involvement or noninvolvement in decision making. While 74% (n=80) movers indicated their request to move was not related to their involvement in decision making. Six percent (n=7) of the respondents did not reply to the yes/no survey statement on the mover survey. The results of the yes/no question

indicated teachers requesting to move to another school did not request to move because of their lack of participation in the decision making process.

The final analysis of the administrator survey asked how administrators involved teachers in decision making. All administrators (n=34) responding reported they utilized the strategic planning process to involve teachers in making decisions regarding: (a) developing school policies and procedures, (b) purchasing materials, textbooks and resources, (c) deciding how to spend school funds, (d) analyzing data and setting school goals, (e) developing safe and civil policy and procedures, and (f) scheduling. Administrators in this LEA used the strategic planning process to designate task forces or committees as a method of involving teachers in making decisions. Administrators noted teachers were involved in the following task forces or committees: (a) Safe and Civil Team to develop discipline standards and procedures (b) Instructional Intervention Team to make decisions regarding the exceptional needs referral process and at risk students, (c) Strategic Planning Team to address school planning, goal setting, goal evaluation, and budget (d) Interview teams to hire teachers, and (e) Title 1 teams to develop the Title 1 plan. In addition to providing staff members the opportunity to serve on task forces and committees, 94% (n=32) of the administrators responded they received input from teachers at regularly scheduled meetings such as: (a) grade level meetings, (b) departmental meetings, (c) staff meetings, (d) individual teacher conferences, (e) goal team meetings, (f) horizontal and vertical team planning, (g) academy meetings, and (h) during professional learning communities. Administrators reported they were able to receive input during these informal and formal meetings that occur within the school.

Conclusions

There are five major conclusions drawn based on the results.

1. *In this LEA movers agree they are more involved in making certain school level decisions than others.* For example, movers positively rated their involvement in making decisions regarding (a) goal setting (76%), (b) the strategic planning process (76%), (c) evaluating school goals (71%), (e) setting standards for student's work in the classroom (92%), and (f) selecting curriculum materials and equipment (82%). Furthermore, 90% of the movers agree they are satisfied with the autonomy and control in their classroom.

Movers indicated they are not as involved in school level decisions such as: (a) decisions regarding school policies, practices and procedures (65%), (b) curriculum decisions (64%), (c) hiring staff (38%), (d) budget decisions (25%), (e) the budget process (25%), (f) student discipline standards and procedures (49%), and (g) setting standards for student promotion (21%). Additionally, movers (54%) reported teachers were not the decision maker at their school. Not surprisingly, this feeling of not being a decision maker has led movers to feel they have less input into school level decisions.

2. *Administrators in this LEA perceive movers are actively involved in decision making at the school level.* Overwhelmingly administrators agreed movers are involved in making decisions regarding: (a) school policies, practices and procedures (100%), (b) goal setting (100%), (c) the strategic planning process (100%), and (d) evaluating school goals (100%). Ninety seven percent of the administrators responding were in agreement that teachers were involved in making decisions regarding setting standards for students' work in the classroom and selecting curriculum materials and equipment. Ninety four percent of the respondents agreed

teachers were involved in: (a) curriculum decisions and (b) developing student discipline standards and procedures.

3. *Administrators in this LEA have similar perceptions as teachers in regards to teacher involvement in decision making.* Research produced significant associations between administrators' and movers' perception of teacher involvement in school level decision making. Administrators and movers had similar perceptions on the level of teacher involvement in the following: (a) teacher involvement in making decisions regarding school policies, practices, and procedures (P=.000), (b) teacher involvement in goal setting (P=.001), (c) teacher involvement in strategic planning (P=.001), (d) teacher involvement in evaluating the school goals (P=.000), and (e) teacher involvement in selecting materials and equipment (.044).

4. *Administrators in this LEA have different perceptions as movers in regards to teacher involvement in decision making.* Research produced significant associations between administrators' and movers' perception of teacher involvement in school level decision making. Administrators and movers did not agree on the level of teacher involvement in the following: (a) making curriculum decisions (P=.000), (b) teacher involvement in hiring new staff (P=.000), (c) budget process (P=.000), (d) teacher involvement in student discipline standards and procedures (P=.000), and (e) teacher involvement in setting student promotion standards (P=.000).

5. *A small percentage of movers requested to transfer to another school in the district because of their lack of involvement in decision making*. Only 19 % of the movers responded they transferred to another school because they were not involved in decision making. While, 74% responded their request to transfer to another school was not related to their involvement in decision making.

Relationship of the Current Study to Prior Research

Previous studies of teacher retention and decision making have concluded the more the teacher is involved in the decision making process at the school level the more satisfied and committed the teacher is with his/ her job, therefore the teacher will continue working in their current school (Bogler, 2001; Ingersoll, 2001a; Leithwood, 2006; Weiss, 1999). The findings from this current study have indicated movers agree they are involved in certain decisions at the school level. Only 19% of the movers indicated they requested a transfer due to their lack of involvement in decision making. While, 74% indicated their request to transfer was not related to their involvement in decision making. Based on the current study, it can be concluded movers requesting a transfer did not request a transfer because of their lack of involvement in decision making.

Previous studies have concluded administrators perceive teachers are involved in decision making, but teachers overwhelmingly disagree with administrators (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007a, 2007b, 2008; Berry, Fuller, Lobacz, & Williams, 2007; Center for quality Teaching, 2008; Goodlad, 1984; Hirsch et al., 2006b). The wide disparities between administrator perception and teacher perception are not unusual. Major gaps in teacher and principal perceptions have surfaced in Arizona, Clark County Nevada, Mississippi, North Carolina, and Ohio. In Arizona, only 35 % of the teachers perceive they are involved in decision making, while 85% of the administrators believe teachers are involved (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007a). Ohio survey data indicates only one third (36%) of teachers agree they are involved in decision making while less than half (43%) of all teachers agree there is a school level process for making decisions (Berry, Fuller, Lobacz, & Williams, 2007). Nevada teachers reported less than half of all teachers (39%) perceive they are involved in decision making. Ninety-four

percent of the administrators perceive teachers are involved (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007b). Additionally, in the state of Mississippi, administrators perceive teachers are central to decision making (84%), while only 37% of teachers perceive they are involved in the process (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2008). A summary of the most recent North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey results have indicated 58% of all North Carolina teachers perceive they are involved in making decisions. While 96% of the administrators perceive teachers are involved in making decisions (North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Initiative, 2008).

In comparison to previous studies this study indicated the gap between administrator and teacher perceptions of teacher involvement was not as wide as indicated in previous studies. In the current study, 67.6% of the teachers indicated they were satisfied with their level of involvement in decision making in the school, 73.5% of the administrators perceived teachers were satisfied with the level of involvement. Unlike the previous studies, this study indicated administrators and teachers had similar perceptions of teacher involvement in decision making regarding certain decisions. For example, teachers and administrators had similar perceptions of (a) teacher involvement in making decisions regarding school policies, practices, and procedures, (b) teacher involvement in goal setting, (c) teacher involvement in strategic planning, (d) teacher involvement in evaluating the school goals, and (e) teacher involvement in selecting materials and equipment.

Additionally, previous studies have indicated teachers believe they are the decision makers for their classroom. For example, Arizona teachers report they play a large role in making classroom decisions (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007a). On the Nevada survey, teachers rated decision making at the classroom level higher than the school level (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2007b). In addition, Mississippi teachers have indicated they are less likely to play a

role in school level decisions, but are involved in classroom level decisions (Berry, Fuller, & Williams, 2008). Teachers in Ohio believe they make decisions regarding their classrooms, but do not believe they play a role in making decisions at the school level (Berry, Fuller, Lobacz, & Williams, 2007).

The current study is aligned with previous studies, which have indicated teachers perceive themselves involved in making classroom decisions. According to the current study, 89.8% of the teachers responding agree they are involved in making decisions at the classroom level. While 82% of the administrators agree teachers are the decision makers in their classrooms.

The current study surveyed teachers requesting to move to another school while previous studies surveyed all teachers. The results were based upon only the perceptions of movers in one Southeastern LEA. It can only be assumed the results regarding teacher involvement in decision making may differ somewhat from previously collected data due to the current study did not include perceptions of all teachers.

Recommendations for Practice for Administrators

The current study concluded administrators perceive teachers are involved in an effective process for making decisions, such as the strategic planning process. While the administrators reported they involve teachers formally and informally in the decision making process, it is apparent all teachers may not understand the decision making process at their school or administrators are not utilizing the processes as reported. Based on the findings from this study, the researcher suggests the following recommendations:

1. Administrators are encouraged to assess their leadership skills and to participate in professional development that will assist them in empowering teachers to be decision makers.
2. An effective school wide decision making processes needs to be implemented and communicated to all teachers. While the administrators reported they involve teachers formally and informally it is evident that some teachers do not perceive they are involved in the decision making process.
3. Administrators need to empower teachers as leaders. Teacher leaders need professional development to develop a better understanding of their roles as decision makers. Furthermore, teacher leaders need to develop an understanding of district level policies and procedures in order to make sound decisions.

Until both teachers and administrators understand each others perceptions of teacher involvement in decision making, the gap between administrator and teacher perceptions will not close. Administrators having a better understanding of how teachers perceive their involvement in decision making and how they can empower teachers to become decision makers will improve their school's chances of retaining teachers.

Recommendations for Further Research

The current study considered the impact of decision making on teachers who requested a transfer to move to another school. This study solicited input from administrators on the processes they utilized to involve teachers in decision making. The study failed to solicit input from the movers on the decision making processes in which their school utilized to involve teachers in decision making. The results from this study suggest additional research is needed to determine if teachers understand the decision making process utilized at their school. This topic

would be worthy of further exploration to assist administrators in understanding why some teachers perceive they are not engaged in school level decisions. Findings from such research may enlighten administrators on how they can implement, change or enhance the decision making process at their school. Finally, additional research on decision making and teacher retention could reveal teachers' understanding of the decision making process and confirm or deny the impact of decision making on a teacher's decision to remain at their school.

Summary

Chapter 5 restated the research problem, reviewed the study's methodology and summarized the findings. Conclusions, connections between prior research, recommendations for administrators and recommendations for administrators were included. Five conclusions were drawn from the study (a) movers agree they are more involved in making certain school level decisions than others, (b) administrators perceive movers are involved in decision making at the school level, (c) administrators in this LEA have similar perceptions as teachers in regards to teacher involvement in decision making, (d) administrators in this LEA have different perceptions as movers in regards to teacher involvement in decision making, and (e) only a small percentage of movers request to transfer to another school in the district because of their lack of involvement in decision making. Three recommendations for administrator practice were presented: (a) administrators are encouraged to assess their leadership skills and participate in professional development activities that will assist them in empowering teachers (b) administrators need to develop an effective school level decision making process and (c) administrators should empower teachers as leaders. While the results from this study may not be generalized to another school district, the results from this study will provide the administrators

and educational leaders of this Southeastern LEA with valuable and usable information in regards to decision making and teacher retention.

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APPENDIX A: TEACHER SURVEY

Onslow County Schools Teacher Retention Survey

Section 1: Demographic Information

☐ Preschool or elementary teacher ☐ Middle school teacher ☐ High school teacher
☐ Female ☐ Male

How many total years do you have in the education field as a teacher? Please check one answer.

☐ <1 to 1 year ☐ 2-5 years ☐ 6-12 years ☐ 13-20 years ☐ 20 + years

My involvement in the decision making process at my school played a role in my decision to request a transfer to another school.

☐ No
☐ Yes

Section 2: Decision Making

Please rate your level of agreement with the statements below. During the year in which you requested a transfer:

	Agree	Disagree
	1	2
1. I was involved in making decisions regarding school policies, practices, and procedures.		
2. I was involved in curriculum decisions.		
3. I was involved in the employment process of new staff members.		
4. I was involved in school budgeting decisions.		
5. I was satisfied with the amount of autonomy and control I had in my classroom.		
6. I was satisfied with the level of involvement in the decision making process at my school.		
7. I was a decision maker at my school.		
8. I participated in the goal setting process.		
9. I was involved in the strategic planning process.		
10. I played a role in evaluating the school goals.		
11. I was involved in the school budget process.		
12. I was involved in developing student discipline standards and procedures.		
13. I was involved in setting the standards for student promotion.		
14. I was involved in setting standards for my students' work in my classroom.		
15. I was involved in selecting curriculum materials and equipment.		

APPENDIX B: ADMINISTRATOR SURVEY

Onslow County Schools Teacher Retention Administrator Survey

Section 1: Demographic Information

How many total years do you have in the education field as an administrator? Please check one answer.

☐ <1 to 1 year
☐ 2-5 years
☐ 6-12 years
☐ 13-20 years
☐ 20 + years

Section 2: Decision Making

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statements.

	Agree 1	Disagree 2
1. Teachers are involved in making decisions regarding school policies, practices, and procedures.		
2. Teachers are involved in curriculum decisions.		
3. Teachers are involved in the employment process of new staff members.		
4. Teachers are involved in school budgeting decisions.		
5. Teachers are satisfied with the amount of autonomy and control have in the classroom.		
6. Teachers are satisfied with the level of involvement in the decision making process in the school.		
7. Teachers are the decision makers in the school.		
8. Teachers participate in the goal setting process.		
9. Teachers are involved in the strategic planning process.		
10. Teachers play a role in evaluating the school goals.		
11. Teachers are involved in developing student discipline standards and procedures.		
12. Teachers are involved in setting the standards for student promotion.		
13. Teachers set standards for students' work in the classroom.		
14. Teachers are involved in selecting curriculum materials and equipment.		

How do you involve teachers in the decision making process at your school?

APPENDIX C: MOVERS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE 2-5YEARS

Survey Data Collection Teachers
2-5 Years of Experience

Teachers are involved in making decisions	**Agree**	**Disagree**
1. Policies, practices and procedures	16 (89%)	2 (11%)
2. Curriculum decisions	10 (55%)	8 (45%)
3. Employment procedures of staff members	1 (6%)	17 (94%)
4. School budgeting decisions	5 (28%)	13 (72%)
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	18 (100%)	0
6. Decisions making progress at your school	14 (77%)	4 (22%)
7. Decision maker at your school	7 (38%)	11 (61%)
8. Goal setting process	11 (61%)	7 (39%)
9. Strategic planning process	11 (61%)	7 (39%)
10. Evaluating the school goals	12 (67%)	6 (33%)
11. School budget process	3 (17%)	15 (83%)
12. Discipline standards and procedures	8 (45%)	10 (55%)
13. Setting the standards for student promotion	3 (17%)	15 (83%)
14. Setting standards for student's work	17 (94%)	1 (6%)
15. Selecting curriculum materials and equipment	15 (83%)	3 (17%)

APPENDIX D: MOVERS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE 6-12 YEARS

Survey Data Collection Teachers
6-12 Years of Experience

Teachers are involved in making decisions	**Agree**	**Disagree**
1. Policies, practices and procedures	23 (79%)	6 (31%)
2. Curriculum decisions	18 (62%)	11 (38%)
3. Employment procedures of staff members	9 (31%)	20 (69%)
4. School budgeting decisions	5 (17%)	24 (83%)
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	27 (93%)	2 (7%)
6. Decision making progress at your school	21 (72%)	8 (28%)
7. Decision maker at your school	17 (59%)	12 (41%)
8. Goal setting process	23 (79%)	6 (21%)
9. Strategic planning process	23 (79%)	6 (21%)
10. Evaluating the school goals	15 (52%)	14 (48%)
11. School budget process	6 (21%)	23 (79%)
12. Discipline standards and procedures	15 (52%)	14 (48%)
13. Setting the standards for student promotion	5 (17%)	24 (83%)
14. Setting standards for student's work	29 (100%)	0
15. Selecting curriculum materials and equipment	23 (79%)	6 (2 %)

APPENDIX E: MOVERS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE 13-20 YEARS

Survey Data Collection Teachers
13-20 Years of Experience

Teachers are involved in making decisions	**Agree**	**Disagree**
1. Policies, practices and procedures	16 (55%)	13 (45%)
2. Curriculum decisions	20 (69%)	9 (31%)
3. Employment procedures of staff members	4 (14 %)	25 (86%)
4. School budgeting decisions	8 (28%)	21 (72%)
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	25 (86%)	4 (14 %)
6. Decision making progress at your school	16 (55%)	13 (45%)
7. Decision maker at your school	14 (48%)	15 (22%)
8. Goal setting process	21 (72%)	8 (28%)
9. Strategic planning process	20 (69%)	9 (31%)
10. Evaluating the school goals	21 (72%)	8 (28%)
11. School budget process	6 (21%)	23 (79%)
12. Discipline standards and procedures	12 (41%)	17 (59%)
13. Setting the standards for student promotion	5 (17%)	24 (83%)
14. Setting standards for student's work	26 (90%)	3 (10%)
15. Selecting curriculum materials and equipment	24 (83%)	5 (17%)

APPENDIX F: MOVERS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE 20+ YEARS

Survey Data Collection Teachers
20 +Years of Experience

Teachers are involved in making decisions	**Agree**	**Disagree**
1. Policies, practices and procedures	20 (74%)	7 (26%)
2. Curriculum decisions	18 (67%)	9 (33%)
3. Employment procedures of staff members	10 (37%)	17 (63%)
4. School budgeting decisions	9 (33%)	18 (67%)
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	22 (81%)	5 (19%)
6. Decision making progress at your school	18 (67%)	9 (33%)
7. Decision maker at your school	18 (67%)	9 (33%)
8. Goal setting process	24 (89%)	3 (11%)
9. Strategic planning process	25 (93%)	2 (7%)
10. Evaluating the school goals	26 (96%)	1 (4%)
11. School budget process	9 (33%)	18 (67%)
12. Discipline standards and procedures	16 (60%)	11 (40%)
13. Setting the standards for student promotion	8 (30%)	19 (70%)
14. Setting standards for student's work	24 (89%)	3 (11%)
15. Selecting curriculum materials and equipment	22 (81%)	5 (19%)

APPENDIX G: PRINCIPALS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE 2-5 YEARS

Survey Data Principals
2-5 Years Experience

	Agree	**Disagree**
1. Policies, practices and procedures	6 (100 %)	0
2. Curriculum decisions	5 (83%)	1 (17%)
3. Employment procedures of staff members	5 (83%)	1 (17%)
4. School budgeting decisions	3 (50%)	18 (67%)
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	6 (100%)	0
6. Decision making progress at your school	4 (67%)	2 (33%)
7. Decision maker at your school	3 (50%)	3 (50%)
8. Goal setting process	6 (100%)	0
9. Strategic planning process	6 (100%)	0
10. Evaluating the school goals	6 (100%)	0
11. Discipline standards and procedures	5 (83%)	1 (17%)
12. Setting the standards for student promotion	4 (67%)	2 (33%)
13. Setting standards for student's work	6 (100%)	0
14. Selecting curriculum material and equipment	6 (100%)	0

APPENDIX H: PRINCIPALS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE 6-12 YEARS

Survey Data Principals
6-12 Years of Experience

	Agree	**Disagree**
1. Policies, practices and procedures	15 (100%)	0
2. Curriculum decisions	15 (100%)	0
3. Employment procedures of staff members	12 (80%)	3 (20%)
4. School budgeting decisions	13 (87%)	2 (13%)
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	11 (73%)	4 (27%)
6. Decision making progress at your school	11 (73%)	4 (27%)
7. Decision maker at your school	10 (67%)	5 (33%)
8. Goal setting process	15 (100%)	0
9. Strategic planning process	15 (100%)	0
10. Evaluating the school goals	15 (100%)	0
11. Discipline standards and procedures	15 (100%)	0
12. Setting the standards for student promotion	9 (60%)	6 (40%)
13. Setting standards for student's work	14 (93%)	1 (7%)
14. Selecting curriculum materials and equipment	15 (100%)	0

APPENDIX I: PRINCIPALS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE 13-20 YEARS

Survey Data Principals
13-20 Years of Experience

	Agree	**Disagree**
1. Policies, practices and procedures	4 (100%)	0
2. Curriculum decisions	4 (100%)	0
3. Employment procedures of staff members	2 (50%)	2 (50%)
4. School budgeting decisions	4 (100%)	0
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	4 (100%)	0
6. Decision making progress at your school	4 (100%)	0
7. Decision maker at your school	4 (100%)	0
8. Goal setting process	4 (100%)	0
9. Strategic planning process	4 (100%)	0
10. Evaluating the school goals	4 (100%)	0
11. Discipline standards and procedures	4 (100%)	0
12. Setting the standards for student promotion	3 (75%)	1 (25%)
13. Setting standards for student's work	4 (100%)	0
14. Selecting curriculum materials and equipment	3 (75%)	1 (25%)

APPENDIX J: PRINCIPALS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE 20+ YEARS

Survey Data Principals
20+Years of Experience

	Agree	**Disagree**
1. Policies, practices and procedures	9 (100%)	0
2. Curriculum decisions	8 (81%)	1 (11%)
3. Employment procedures of staff members	8 (81%)	1 (11%)
4. School budgeting decisions	7 (78%)	2 (22%)
5. Autonomy and control you had in your class	7 (78%)	2 (22%)
6. Decision making progress at your school	5 (56%)	4 (44%)
7. Decision maker at your school	2 (22%)	7 (78%)
8. Goal setting process	9 (100%)	0
9. Strategic planning process	9 (100%)	0
10. Evaluating the school goals	9 (100%)	0
11. Discipline standards and procedures	9 (100%)	0
12. Setting the standards for student promotion	6 (67%)	3 (33%)
13. Setting standards for student's work	9 (100%)	0
14. Selecting curriculum materials and equipment	9 (100%)	0

APPENDIX K: PRE LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

February 15, 2009

Dear Colleague,

My name is Donna Lynch and I am the Student Services Director for Onslow County Schools. As a part of my doctoral dissertation at East Carolina University, I am conducting research on the topic of teacher retention and the impact of teacher involvement in the decision making process at the school level.

This research is designed to enhance the professional knowledge of educational leaders in the education field to help retain and recruit the best teachers in the profession. I believe the information gathered from this study will assist educational and governmental leaders in improving teacher retention. Your opinions are very valuable to my research.

You will receive a consent form, instructions and a survey on February 18, 2009. Please respond to the survey by March 3, 2010. I can assure you that confidentiality and anonymity of participants will be protected. If you have any questions about my research, please call me at (910) 455-2211, Ext. 20402 or email me at donna.lynch@onslow.k12.nc.us. Thank you for your participation.

Donna Lynch

c: Superintendent Dr. Kathy Spencer

APPENDIX L: SURVEY THANK YOU AND REMINDER

Dear Colleague,

I sincerely hope you have had a great week end. You received a letter from me last week requesting that you participate in a survey that I am conducting as part of my doctoral dissertation at East Carolina University. As a reminder, I am conducting a survey on teacher retention and decision making.

Please accept this as a "thank-you" note and disregard this reminder if you have already responded to my survey. *If you returned the survey without the consent form, please return the consent form.* If you did not respond to the first request, please take approximately 10 minutes of your time and return the survey to me by March 5th, 2010. Your opinions are valuable to my research.

Thank you for your participation and assistance. Have a wonderful day!

Sincerely,
Donna Lynch

APPENDIX M: SUPERINTENDENT'S LETTER REQUEST FOR PERMISSION

Onslow County Schools

Board of Education
Margaret E. Brown, Chairman • Ronnie Ross, Vice Chairman
Jeffrey L. Brown • Fred Holt • Lina Padgett-Parker • Mary Ann Sharpe • Pamela E. Thomas
Superintendent
Kathy T. Spencer, Ed.D.

November 12, 2009

Mrs. Donna Lynch
332 Royal Bluff Road
Jacksonville, NC 28540

Dear Mrs. Lynch:

You have my permission to disseminate a voluntary survey to identified teachers and administrators employed as principals during the 2005-2006 and 2007-2008 school years. Please work with Human Resources Director, CJ Korenek, for assistance in this process.

Sincerely,

Kathy T. Spencer, Ed.D.
Superintendent

P.O. Box 99, Jacksonville, North Carolina 28541-0099
Phone (910) 455-2211 • www.onslow.k12.nc.us

APPENDIX N: CONSENT DOCUMENT

East Carolina University

Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Information to consider before taking part in research that has no more than minimal risk.

Title of Research Study: Teacher Retention: The Impact of Decision Making on Movers

Principal Investigator: Donna V. Lynch
Institution/Department or Division: Educational Leadership
Address: 210 Ragsdale Hall, East Carolina University
Telephone #: 252-328-6135

Researchers at East Carolina University (ECU) study problems in society, health problems, environmental problems, behavior problems and the human condition. Our goal is to try to find ways to improve the lives of you and others. To do this, we need the help of people who are willing to take part in research.

The person who is in charge of this research is called the Principal Investigator. The Principal Investigator may have other research staff members who will perform some of the procedures.

You may have questions that this form does not answer. If you do, feel free to ask the person explaining the study, as you go along. You may have questions later and you should ask those questions, as you think of them. There is no time limit for asking questions about this research.

You do not have to take part in this research. Take your time and think about the information that is provided. If you want, have a friend or family member go over this form with you before you decide. It is up to you. If you choose to be in the study, then you should sign the form when you are comfortable that you understand the information provided. If you do not want to take part in the study, you should not sign this form. That decision is yours and it is okay to decide not to volunteer.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of this research is to provide educational leaders additional knowledge on teacher retention and the impact of teacher involvement in the decision making process at the school level. The decision to take part in this research is yours to make. By doing this research, we hope to learn: 1) How movers rate their involvement in decision making at the school level. 2) How administrators rate teacher involvement in the decision making process at the school level.

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?

You are being invited to take part in this research because you were a teacher whom requested your name be placed on the school transfer list to be considered for a transfer to another school within the school

district. In addition to teachers this research involves principals. If you an administrator you are invited to take part in this research because you were serving as a principal during the 2006-2007, 2007-2008 and 2008-2009 school years in the Onslow County School System. If you volunteer to take part in this research, you will be one of about 200 people to do so.

Are there reasons I should not take part in this research?
I understand I may not want to volunteer for this study if I do not feel comfortable completing the survey. There are no negative consequences for not participating in the survey.

What other choices do I have if I do not take part in this research?
You have the choice of not taking part in this research study.

Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?
The research procedures will be conducted using a survey document. The survey maybe completed at the place of your choosing. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes.

What will I be asked to do?
You are being asked to complete a survey. You will receive a survey via Onslow County School Courier Mail during the month of February. The survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. You may respond to the survey statements by marking agree or disagree to statements regarding teacher involvement in decision making at the school level. You will have two weeks to complete the survey. Once you have completed the survey, you are asked to mail it back to the Principal Investigator via Onslow County School Courier Mail.
The surveys will be returned to the Principal Investigator in an anonymous manner. Individual person identifiers will be unnecessary and removed from the data.

What possible harms or discomforts might I experience if I take part in the research?
There are always risks (the chance of harm) when taking part in research. It has been determined that the risks associated with this research are no more than what you would experience in a normal life. However, some people react to things differently so it is important for you to tell us as quickly as possible if you experience any negative feelings, or feel sick.

Are there any reasons you might take me out of the research?
During the study, information about this research may become available that would be important to you. This includes information that, once learned, might cause you to change your mind about wanting to be in the study. We will tell you as soon as we can. There may be reasons we will need to take you out of the study, even if you want to stay in.

What are the possible benefits I may experience from taking part in this research?
We do not know if you will get any benefits by taking part in this study. This research might help us learn more about retaining teachers. There may be no personal benefit from your participation but the information gained by doing this research may help others in the future.

Will I be paid for taking part in this research?
We will not pay you for the time you volunteer while being in this study.
What will it cost me to take part in this research?
It will not cost you any money to be part of the research.

Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?
To do this research, ECU and the people and organizations listed below may know that you took part in this research and may see information about you that is normally kept private. With your permission, these people may use your private information to do this research:

- The University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) and its staff, who have responsibility for overseeing your welfare during this research, and other ECU staff who oversee this research.

How will you keep the information you collect about me secure? How long will you keep it?
The surveys will be completed anonymously. The surveys will be stored in a secured file cabinet. The surveys will be stored for 5 years.

What if I decide I do not want to continue in this research?
If you decide you no longer want to be in this research after it has already started, you may stop at any time. You will not be penalized or criticized for stopping. You will not lose any benefits that you should normally receive.

Who should I contact if I have questions?
The person conducting this study will be available to answer any questions concerning this research, now or in the future. You may contact the Principal Investigator, Donna Lynch, at 910-455-2211 ext. 20402 during the day, between 8:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m. or during the evenings 910-455-7120 after 5:00 p.m.

If you have questions about your rights as someone taking part in research, you may call the UMCIRB Office at phone number 252-744-2914 (days, 8:00 am-5:00 pm). If you would like to report a complaint or concern about this research study, you may call the Director of UMCIRB Office, at 252-744-1971.

I have decided I want to take part in this research. What should I do now?
The person obtaining informed consent will ask you to read the following and if you agree, you should sign this form:

- I have read (or had read to me) all of the above information.
- I have had an opportunity to ask questions about things in this research I did not understand and have received satisfactory answers.
- I understand that I can stop taking part in this study at any time.
- By signing this informed consent form, I am not giving up any of my rights.
- I have been given a copy of this consent document, and it is mine to keep.

_____ _____ _____

Participant's Name (PRINT) **Signature** **Date**

Person Obtaining Informed Consent: I have conducted the initial informed consent process. I have orally reviewed the contents of the consent document with the person who has signed above, and answered all of the person's questions about the research.

_____ _____ _____

Person Obtaining Consent (PRINT) **Signature** **Date**

APPENDIX O: INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

University and Medical Center Institutional Review Board
East Carolina University, 600 Moye Boulevard
ECU Brody Medical Sciences Bldg. • Greenville, NC 27834
Office 252-744-2914 • Fax 252-744-2284 • www.ecu.edu/irb
Chair and Director of Biomedical IRB: L. Wiley Nifong, MD
Chair and Director of Behavioral and Social Science IRB: Susan L. McCammon, PhD

TO: Donna Lynch, 332 Royal Bluff Rd., Jacksonville, NC 28540

FROM: UMCIRB

DATE: February 12, 2010

RE: Expedited Category Research Study

TITLE: "Teacher Retention: The Impact of Decision Making on Movers"

UMCIRB #10-0015

This research study has undergone review and approval using expedited review on 1.25.10. This research study is eligible for review under an expedited category number 7. The Chairperson (or designee) deemed this **unfunded** study **no more than minimal risk** requiring a continuing review in **12 months**. Changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. The investigator must submit a continuing review/closure application to the UMCIRB prior to the date of study expiration. The investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

The above referenced research study has been given approval for the period of 1.25.10 to **1.24.11**. The approval includes the following items:

- Internal Processing Form (received 1.12.10)
- Administrator Survey
- Teacher Retention Survey
- Letter of Support (dated 11.12.09)
- Informed Consent (dated 1.22.10)

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

The UMCIRB applies 45 CFR 46, Subparts A-D, to all research reviewed by the UMCIRB regardless of the funding source. 21 CFR 50 and 21 CFR 56 are applied to all research studies under the Food and Drug Administration regulation. The UMCIRB follows applicable International Conference on Harmonization Good Clinical Practice guidelines.