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ACCEPTANCE

This dissertation, THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS TO REDUCE NOVICE TEACHER ATTRITION: A CASE STUDY OF ONE HIGH-NEEDS SCHOOL, by ELDREAD L. NUNNALLY, JR, was prepared under the direction of the candidate's Dissertation Advisory Committee. It is accepted by the committee members in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree, Doctor of Education, in the College of Education & Human Development, Georgia State University.

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THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS TO REDUCE NOVICE TEACHER ATTRITION: A CASE STUDY OF ONE HIGH-NEEDS SCHOOL

by

ELDREAD L. NUNNALLY, JR.

Under the Direction of Nicholas J. Sauers, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

Novice teacher attrition is an increasingly growing phenomenon faced by the modern United States on an annual basis. Moreover, schools with high minority and high poverty characteristics are continuously struggling to not only recruit newer educators, but also retain them in the field of education. On average, high-needs schools spend approximately $70,000 each year to replace teachers, which equates to be roughly $8,750 per teacher (Djonko-Moore, 2016). Educational leaders are now looking toward the application of established organizational systems and processes to provide a resolution to this problem. The purpose of this qualitative study is to analyze how high-needs schools have successfully utilized organizational systems to reduce novice teacher attrition. With organizational theory and the associated sub-framework of

general system theory being employed as the driving theoretical framework, the case study approach was used to examine one high-needs elementary school located within a suburban school district in the state of Georgia. The investigation sought to uncover the different, concrete mechanisms that are currently being used to reduce novice teacher attrition in a single, high-needs school and the reasons for their continued success. Data was collected through three distinct methods, including individual interviews, naturalistic observations, and document analysis. All data captured in the interview and observation phases was openly coded using the NVivo software, with the subsequent employment of axial and selective coding to establish connections that addressed the prevailing purpose of the research and guiding questions. The implications from this study will be used to inform educational leaders of the best practices that can be used to effectively address novice teacher attrition and how those practices can be converted into routine procedures that can be used on a daily basis.

INDEX WORDS: Teacher attrition, retention, novice, veteran, high-needs school, organizational systems, organizational theory, general system theory

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS TO REDUCE NOVICE TEACHER ATTRITION: A CASE STUDY OF ONE HIGH-NEEDS SCHOOL

by

ELDREAD L. NUNNALLY, JR.

A Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for the

Degree of

Doctor of Education

in

Educational Leadership

in

Educational Policy Studies

in

the College of Education and Human Development

Georgia State University

Atlanta, GA
2020

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this dissertation and the efforts taken throughout this educational expedition to my son, Eldread Lamar Nunnally III, and to my future child. This journey has shown me that anything can be accomplished through hard work, consistency, and perseverance. I just hope this overall experience can serve as a model for you to strive for the highest in all of your future endeavors.

I would also like to dedicate this dissertation to all of the mentees, students, and colleagues that have ever learned anything from me. I truly hope that I can continue to be an example of placing your best foot forward and putting your mind toward accomplishing your goals, no matter how challenging they may be.

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Teacher attrition is widely regarded as one of the most important determinants in the overall ineffectiveness, low performance, and lack of quality in the modern educational system in the United States (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014). Moreover, novice teacher attrition in the public-school sector of education has grown to become a prevalent concern for federal and state government officials throughout the course of the last decade (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011). Attrition and burnout occurring within the early career stages of newer educators are becoming major topics of apprehension within the fiscal, communal, and scholastic discussions occurring among educational policymakers (Long et al., 2012). New narratives and research on teacher attrition are developing into more of a common phenomenon in educational research and contribute to the evolving perspective of teaching in modern public schools through the illustration of the adversities faced by educators on a daily basis (Dunn & Downey, 2018).

Public schools in the United States that serve higher populations of minority and low-income students face even greater challenges in combating the threat of rising teacher attrition and mobility (Djonko-Moore, 2016). Consequently, the educational outcomes of children in these neighborhoods, where turnover is more likely to occur, are often compromised and directly correlated to accumulative, long-term costs for schools, school districts, and the surrounding community (Martinez, Frick, Kim, & Fried, 2010). Most of these high-needs schools have continuously participated in a common practice involving the re-direction of school improvement funds toward efforts for recruiting and supporting new teachers, which often has adverse effects on long-term student learning and achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Djonko-Moore (2016) furthered this notion through an analysis of the findings of the Alliance

for Excellent Education, who concluded that high-needs schools spend an average of $70,000 annually ($8750 per teacher) per school to replace teachers while suburban and rural schools spend approximately $33,000 each year ($6250 per teacher) per school.

Organizational systems that specifically target factors of building-level teacher attrition have become a more popular remedy for addressing this perennial phenomenon (Minarik, Thornton, & Perreault, 2003). This most often consists of an intricate interplay of crucial attributes and practices that pinpoint a central vision and mission of teacher retention as the focal point, such as providing genuine opportunities and incentives to encourage teacher collaboration, making teachers feel valued, and constantly assisting in teacher growth through endlessly seeking methods to improve professional pedagogies, school culture, and high academic achievement (Hagelskamp & DiStasi, 2012). The essential focus of this chapter is to introduce the primary purpose of the study in conjunction with the guiding questions that were used to drive all conducted research. Furthermore, this chapter will seek to provide a purposeful rationale for research that investigates the success of implementing organizational systems to reduce novice teacher attrition in high-needs schools through a review of the literature concerning the impact of attrition on beginning educators.

Purpose of the Study

The prevailing purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of implementing organizational processes to reduce attrition in novice teachers who are employed in high-needs schools. With around half a million teachers in the United States leaving their schools on an annual basis and the continual increase in the turnover rate from year to year, school administrators and politicians are most concerned with the severity of movement among educators in urban schools (Fuller, Waite, & Irribarra, 2016). High rates of teacher turnover have

a negative impact on student progress and achievement, while also exhausting school and district resources related to the recruitment, hiring, and training of newer teachers (Farinde-Wu & Fitchett, 2018). This study will attempt to add to the body of literature involving the various methods for reducing beginning teacher attrition and turnover in high-needs schools while also giving educational leaders a reference for reducing teacher attrition before its earliest onset.

Guiding Questions

The following research questions were used to guide the study within this manuscript:

1) How do educational leaders implement organizational systems to reduce novice teacher attrition in high-needs schools?

2) How does the successful implementation of these systems affect both novice and veteran teacher retention in high-needs schools?

Review of the Literature

Teacher recruitment and retention have typically been major areas of focus within the educational system of the United States, with teacher shortages and teacher attrition serving as the two greatest concerns for human resource administrators (Newberry & Allsop, 2017). "Since the early 1990s, the annual number of exits from teaching has surpassed the number of entrants by an increasing amount, putting pressure on the nation's hiring systems" (Darling-Hammond, 2003, p. 7). Pearman and Lefever-Davis (2012) cited ineffective government policies, a consistent lack of support from school and district administrators, rising student discipline issues, decreasing salaries, and a general lack of professional reverence as issues that influence teacher satisfaction and serve as the primary factors in the desire of teachers to exit the field of education.

The study of teacher attrition is often conducted through the lens of classifying an affected educator as a leaver, mover, or stayer (Lathem, Mertans, & Hamann, 2015). Bobbit, Leich, Whitener, and Lynch (1994) provided clarity to these categories of educators who experience teacher attrition through describing teachers who remain in the same position within the same school as stayers, those who transfer to different schools but remain in the field of education as movers, and those who completely leave the profession as leavers. The National Center for Education Statistics (2014) conducted a survey of 3,377,900 public school teachers that were employed during 2011-12 school year and revealed results that classified 84% as stayers, 8% as movers, and 8% as leavers prior to the beginning of the following school year.

Attrition patterns tend to suggest that attrition is at its highest among young teachers within the first five years of their career (Harfitt, 2015). An abundance of recent data has shown that an increasing proportion of novice teachers are leaving the profession after a few months or a few years of being in the field of education (Dupriez, Delvaux, & Lothaire, 2016). According to Redding and Henry (2018), approximately 5% of teachers resign during the school year on an annual basis, with a greater amount of this figure consisting of novice teachers within their first year in education. Furthermore, steeper attrition has shown to be an especially problematic and everlasting concern for novice teachers within their first three years in the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2003). This mounting apprehension continues to be fueled by policy reports and media accounts indicating that approximately 50% of novice teachers will eventually leave the teaching profession entirely (DeAngelis and Presley, 2011). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2014), among public school teachers in the United States with experience levels ranging from one to three years, 80% remained in the school in which they were first hired, 13% transferred to another school, and 7% left the profession.

Beginning teacher attrition is even higher in schools with an immense proportion of poverty-stricken minority students, mostly due to the lack of teacher collaboration, automatic allocation of inexperienced teachers to the most underperforming schools, and a lack of steady supplemental assistance for those teachers (Moseley, Bilica, Wandless, & Gdovin, 2014). Moreover, many studies show that high-needs schools, which predominantly consists of institutions with a large proportion of students coming from disadvantaged backgrounds, belonging to ethnic minorities, and/or facing learning difficulties, have an increasingly higher rate of staff turnover (Dupriez et al., 2016). The primary focus of this dissertation centers on novice educators employed in high-needs schools who leave the field of education entirely.

History of Teacher Attrition

Turnover among public school teachers has traditionally been higher than any other position within the field of education, with a rising turnover rate that is subsequently coinciding with increasing student populations (Tehseen & Hadi, 2015). Teacher attrition has been identified as the primary cause of these shortages and account for approximately 8% of teachers in the United States that leave the profession on an annual basis (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2019). Historically, researchers have used several distinctive definitions to describe teacher attrition and mobility. Macdonald (1999) described attrition as being a form of wastage within education and the primary contributing factor to decreased teacher retention in schools. Billingsley (2004) provided a multi-categorical characterization of attrition and mobility, including internal school transfers (teachers who convert to a different teaching position within the same school), external school transfers (teachers who relocate to a different building, but remain in the same position), and exit attrition (teachers who leave the profession altogether due to retirement, engaging in postsecondary educational endeavors, staying home

with young children, or taking nonteaching positions in education such as counseling and administration). Hahs-Vaughn and Scherff (2008) conceptualized and confirmed this notion through identifying teacher exit attrition as the total number of teachers that leave the profession and teacher mobility as the number of teachers who change schools, who can also be characterized as leavers and movers, respectively. This migration of teachers is often caused by higher levels of dissatisfaction attributed to classroom and/or school environment experiences (Geiger & Pivovarova, 2018). The most current MetLife survey (2013) chronicled a 22% increase in teacher satisfaction from 1984 to 2008, then details a sharp 23% decrease in that same category from 2009 to 2012, which marks the lowest percentage (39%) reported over the 25-year history of the survey. Emotional exhaustion, which is produced by a sudden surge in emotional labor over an elongated period of time, has been credited to be a key contributor to decreased teacher satisfaction and increased teacher turnover (Keller, Chang, Becker, Goetz, & Frenzel, 2014). Diminished teacher satisfaction has shown to have very little to no effect on full-time, public K-12 educators who decide to leave for professional or personal reasons that include retirement, resignation without pursuing further employment (first-time mothers, individuals that come into sudden financial gain, etc.), and relocation due to the changing circumstances of an immediate family member (Gu, 2014).

Factors causing teacher attrition.

In the modern United States, the teaching profession has been depicted as containing work environments highlighted by extensive levels of responsibility with inadequate benefits comparable to other occupations (Imran, Allil, & Mahmoud, 2017). As a result, various factors continually play an active role in the increase of teacher attrition within the United States (Newberry & Allsop, 2017). This often includes diminishing matriculation in traditional teacher

preparation programs, elevated expectations of specified content areas, inequitable salary scales, and feelings of nonexistent administrative support (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Consequently, a lack of appropriate preparation prior to entering the field of education has popularly been classified as the primary reason for increased levels of novice teacher attrition and the eventual exit of these educators from the teaching profession (Goldhaber & Cowan, 2014). Educators who received extensive preparation within traditional certification programs and student teaching experiences are 50% more likely to remain in the field of education than those who engaged in the non-traditional route of entering the teaching profession and lack participation in conventional preparatory methods (Lathem et al., 2015). Premium value has been placed on these student teaching experiences due to the role of first-year educators in effectively combining all learned tactics from university instruction and practical skills gained from occurrences during the practicum phase, with longer student teaching experiences contributing to better preparation and extended tenures in the field of education (Pearman & Lefever-Davis, 2012).

Content area has also shown to be a contributing factor of increasing teacher attrition, especially among math, science, and special education teachers (Sutcher et al., 2019). The issue of rising attrition and decreasing retention among special education teachers has been continuously ongoing and problematic for school district administrators for the last 20 years (Brunsting, Sreckovic, & Lane, 2014). Within the last decade, many special education teachers have made the decision to become general education teachers at a significantly higher rate than any other time period in the history of the U.S. educational system, which creates an uneven distribution among all students in the school environment (Mason-Williams, 2015). The content areas of math and science have also historically shown the greatest amount of shortage and need

for teachers, especially in schools with high teacher attrition and low teacher retention (Borgerding, 2015). According to the Schools and Staffing Survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (2015), the math and science subject areas possessed the first and third highest percentage of difficult-to-staff teaching vacancies among public high schools in the United States, with at least one mathematics position being available in 9.1% and at least one science position being available in 6.7% of all surveyed schools.

The compensation afforded to teachers has demonstrated an inconsequential, yet causative influence on overall teacher attrition (Miles & Katz, 2018). Comparatively, teacher salaries are significantly lower than that of other professions with similar experience and education levels (Feng & Sass, 2016). According to National Education Association Research (2019), the national average starting teacher salary was $39,249 during the 2017-2018 school year, which serves as an estimated 19% lower than similar occupations with comparable levels of earned education. Teachers who work in districts with relatively lower wages than other school districts across a given state are more likely to transfer or completely leave the field of education, especially if the salary is lower than potential wages that could be earned outside of the teaching profession (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). Schools and school districts should not only be generally concerned with losing educators to the prospect of higher wages in neighboring areas, but also to other professions with comparable educational requirements that yield superior salaries (Hendricks, 2014).

Administrative support has exhibited an extensive effect on teacher attrition (Tyler, 2016). When schools possess the inability to create a culture of strong collegial relationships, teachers may become hesitant to actively participate in professional learning communities or assume the responsibilities of leadership positions, which limits the capability of educational

leaders in developing or modifying programs, curriculum, and practices that positively impact daily school operations (Simon & Johnson, 2015). Building-level administrators are charged with facilitating a school culture that supports teachers in creating positive learning experiences for students, while also cultivating relationships among teachers that are guided by feelings of trust and collaboration (Turner & Morelli, 2017). Additionally, as the primary leader of the school, the principal is not only responsible for the daily operations of the building, but also for the professional growth of each educator under his or her care (Tehseen & Hadi, 2015). Therefore, educational leadership styles have a significant impact on teacher job satisfaction and play a crucial role in overall teacher retention, which suggests that administrators must be more aware of the impact of their actions and behaviors on the faculty and staff of a school (Thibodeaux, Labat, Lee, & Labat, 2015).

Personal circumstances both within and outside of the classroom environment have displayed a lasting impact on teacher attrition (Rinke & Mawhinney, 2017). Modern instructors must navigate numerous hindrances that include public scrutiny, shifting measures of accountability, and the inaccessibility of useful resources (Turner & Morelli, 2017). The workplace environment and working conditions also have an indelible impact on teacher attrition and provide a major influence on the decision of an instructor to switch schools or completely exit the field of education (Dupriez et al., 2016). Massive workloads combined with added pressures created by high stakes testing/accountability mandates have shown to be integral in creating highly stressful atmospheres for teachers and have an immense impact on teacher attrition (Farinde, Allen, & Lewis, 2016). Consequently, teachers tend to move to schools where they feel the average quality of productivity and instruction is similar to their own pedagogy (Feng and Sass, 2016). Additional factors that contribute to personalized attrition within a single

teacher may include stress and anxiety, increased teaching responsibilities caused by heightened administrative demands (grade submission deadlines, student supervision duties outside of the classroom, academic meetings and planning sessions, etc.), sudden curriculum modifications being enforced at the school and district levels, amplified mandates of constant flexibility and differentiation due to increasing diversity in the classroom and surrounding community, expanded requirements of infusing technology and personalized learning into pedagogical practices, and mandatory attendance at professional development sessions to address identified areas of growth and improvement that occur before or after designated work hours (Harfitt, 2015). Alternatively, according to Hahs-Vaughn and Scherff (2008), others leave the profession due to inadequate professional progression and promotion within the educational sector, with research showing that potential educators are pulled toward career possibilities in other areas of employment due to enhanced professional prestige, substantial increases in compensation, more productive work environments, and the opportunity for expedited career advancement in a meaningful occupation. The culminating outcome is teacher burnout, which is caused by a mixture of extreme stress over an elongated period of time combined with the inability to cope with specific events that occur in the school environment, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished feeling of teacher satisfaction (Brunsting et al., 2014).

Cost of teacher attrition.

Teacher attrition also continues to bear a heavy cost on school systems (Vagi, Pivovarova, & Miedel Barnard, 2019). The National Center for Education Statistics (2010) reported the monetary cost of teacher attrition reached an all-time high in the U.S. of $2.2 billion dollars during and after the 2008-2009 school year. Attrition of this magnitude creates a very troublesome dynamic for schools and school districts, who often are forced to reallocate funds

needed for school improvements toward efforts of recruiting to fill teacher vacancies (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Moreover, this continuous process tends to further contribute to long-term teacher shortages and usually results in a poor return on investment, with the typical estimated cost of recruiting, hiring, training, and supporting a new teacher reflecting 25% - 35% of the average teacher salary in the United States (Hahs-Vaughn & Scherff, 2008).

Teacher attrition is especially costly to low-income level schools or those with a high minority population, who often experience extreme trials to replace the loss of teachers with a limited means of hiring adequate replacements (Dunn & Downey, 2018). Simon & Johnson (2015) revealed that schools who serve high minority and low-income populations spend approximately $70,000 annually due to teacher turnover, while suburban rural schools spend roughly $33,000 each year. Djonko-Moore (2016) illustrated an individualized comparison of replenishing teachers that completely leave high-needs schools and the profession, with the cost of replacing teachers in urban school districts totaling $8750 per teacher compared to non-urban school districts that spend $6250 per teacher. A discrepancy of this magnitude depletes necessary resources from high-needs schools and hinders their ability to effectively build social, cultural, and financial capital to best serve students who require the most assistance (Yavuz, Parzych, & Generali, 2019).

Academic shortfalls caused by teacher attrition.

High-quality teachers who possess valuable talents and abilities that are transferable to other occupations are more likely to leave the teaching profession, which often results in an erosion of average teacher quality (Feng & Sass, 2016). More recently, an increasing trend has begun to emerge suggesting that a greater number of novice educators are exiting the teaching profession prior to the end of their first year in education (Redding & Henry, 2019). A mass

exodus of this manner can have an immensely destructive impact on school culture and climate, including increased class sizes, a reduction in course offerings, and an influx of inexperienced educators within a single school setting (Sutcher et al., 2019). The collective impact of these factors has exhibited adverse effects on the daily routine and operations of a school building, which can be especially challenging to rectify if displayed over an extended period of time (Elyashiv, 2019). Furthermore, high levels of teacher attrition tend to have a negative influence on the faculty culture of a school (Farinde-Wu & Fitchett, 2018). This includes instances of disruption that often occur within important areas that support student learning, such as professional learning communities, cross-curricular collaboration, and overall teacher development (Newton, Rivero, Fuller, & Dauter, 2018). Consequently, educational leaders at these schools are endlessly tasked with creating and providing effective solutions to maintain a positive culture among its ever-changing faculty members (Fuller et al., 2016).

The ultimate impression left within schools severely affected by teacher attrition primarily centers around a large deficit in student learning and achievement (Dunn & Downey, 2018). Over the course of a five-year period, according to a study conducted by Ronfeldt, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2013), students who were impacted by high turnover experienced a decrease in math test scores by 5.6% to 9.4% and in language arts test scores by 5.0% to 8.5%. Increased teacher turnover is also correlated with an average loss of 32 to 72 instructional days throughout the course of a full school year, which often results in the disruption of student learning and achievement (Henry & Redding, 2018). Students who are consistently and directly exposed to experiencing the effects of teacher turnover are more likely to develop negative perceptions and relationships with their future teachers, which is mainly attributed to an identified lack of trust and anticipated feeling of abandonment (Simon & Johnson, 2015). These occurrences interfere

with the process of building, developing, and maintaining a specified school culture of achievement, as well as diminishes the established scholastic values, norms, and goals of the school and school district (Kelchtermans, 2017). Moreover, research suggests that increased teacher turnover can affect many areas of long-term student achievement both within and outside of the school environment, including lower percentages of college enrollments and decreased opportunities to obtain employment in premium occupations with higher wages (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2014). The culminating result is a continuous, undesirable, and unjust circumstance for students who are seeking a fair and meaningful educational experience (Shirrell, 2018).

Novice Teachers and Attrition

For many decades, the greatest group affected by the problem of teacher attrition has been educators that are new to the field (Dassa & Derose, 2017). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2018), approximately 340,000 new teachers enter the field of education on an annual basis. The chief reason for this amount is attributed to the number of campaigns launched during recent years to attract young people to the teaching profession, with more notable strategies involving incentives such as loan subsidy programs, signing bonuses, higher salaries, and alternative certification routes like Teach for America (Lindqvist, Nordänger, & Carlsson, 2014). Consequently, the most substantial obstacle for the United States educational system becomes creating methods to keep novice teachers in the profession (Cross & Thomas, 2017). According to Cobia, Stephens, & Sherer (2015), previous efforts by the Georgia Department of Education included reducing the amount of certification requirements for teachers seeking alternative certifications, while also assuming the financial responsibility of contributing a greater number of resources to local schools, increasing professional development

opportunities for novice teachers, and introducing monetary stipends to cover expenses associated with supplemental training courses. The Florida Critical Teacher Shortage Program specifically targets early career teachers who are employed in designated shortage areas and provides up to $10,000 to educators that actively teach in high-needs subjects, while also offering up to an additional $1,200 to teachers that are purposely employed in areas identified as vital by the state of Florida (Feng & Sass, 2018). Despite these efforts, the constant failure to retain novice educators in the U.S. educational system is continuing to garner more attention on a national scale and deployed strategies by school districts are appearing less effective in reducing stress-related occurrences, which often results in mass departures from the teaching profession (Fisher, 2011). The drawbacks of increased attrition in beginning teachers are two-fold: over two billion dollars are spent annually in the United States to replace teachers that leave the field of education and the revolving door of constant newcomers and leavers often has a negative impact on student achievement (Clandinin et al., 2015).

Newer teachers are faced with many obstacles that hinder their professional growth and serve as catalysts for exit attrition (Buchanan et al., 2013). Harfitt (2015) distinguished various components that typically have significant impressions on increasing novice teacher attrition, including stress, increased academic accountability, sudden district-level curriculum modifications, demands to infuse technology into the classroom setting, directives from school administrators, requirements to meet and understand cultural diversity among students, and consistent professional development opportunities that occur outside of the typical work day. "No other profession takes newly certified graduates, places them in the same situation as seasoned veterans, and gives them no organized support……beginning teachers often face difficulty learning to adapt to the number and scale of the decisions they are called upon to make

instantaneously and simultaneously without the benefit of experience to guide them in finding solutions to the problems" (Le Maistre & Paré, 2010, pp. 560-561). As a result, according to the National Center for Education Statistics (2018), roughly 70,000 novice teachers completely exit the teaching profession each year, with a significant majority being in their very first year in the field of education.

History of High-Needs Schools

Research has shown a significant increase in the enrollment of African-American and Hispanic students in K-12 public schools in relation to that of White and Asian students, which has contributed to a rise in the amount educational institutions known as high-needs schools (Martinez & Welton, 2014). Schools that are assigned a high-needs designation are identified by several different indicators. According to the Ready to Teach Act (2003), high-needs schools are identified as those in which a minimum of 20% of the student population lives below the national poverty threshold of the United States (Diamond et al., 2010). Djonko-Moore (2016) provided further clarification through defining high-needs schools as public educational institutions that possess student populations classified as both high poverty (a minimum of 75% of students receiving free and/or reduced lunch) and racially segregated (a minimum of 75% of students identifying as racial minorities). Medina, Martinez, Murakami, Rodriguez, and Hernandez (2014) described high-needs schools as those that serve students who face various characteristics of poverty outside of the school environment, while also being encapsulated by a community that is deficient in effective family programs or traditional family structures that address any issues, concerns, and various physical and social deficits associated with economic hardships. Amrein-Beardsley (2012) expounded on this classification by characterizing high-needs schools as those designated within urban or rural areas in which at least 30% of the student population comes

from families that possess income levels below the national poverty line, have been identified as being among the top 25% of a schools within a state that have unfilled teaching positions, and have a comparatively large number of teachers who are not fully certified/licensed or teach out of field. The state of Georgia, as well as other states within the U.S., chooses to term public K-12 educational institutions that meet such qualifications as Title I schools and provide funding to local educational agencies to ensure that the basic educational needs of the student populations in these communities are met (United States Department of Education, 2018). According to the Georgia Department of Education (2015), schools where at least 75% of the student population qualifies for free or reduced lunch are given the designation as Title I institutions and are assigned priority access to Title I funds. However, the extent of challenging obstacles for Title I schools does not simply cease within the realm of the school environment and culture (Johnston & Martelli, 2019). The problems of high-needs schools extend beyond the capacity of student performance and achievement, with more of a shifting focus on contemporary areas of student support outside of the field of education, such as the political and socioeconomic arenas of society (Spring, 2017).

Academic adversity within high-needs schools.

High-needs schools in the U.S. are consistently stigmatized with possessing characteristics of low academic performance, which is most often associated with the low socio-economic status of its overall student population (Medina et al., 2014). Moreover, students from high-needs schools are typically identified as low-achieving, living in communities with the highest rates of poverty, very transient, and require the most assistance in reading due to a limited English proficiency (Johnston & Martelli, 2019). In spite of these identified deficiencies, these schools are expected to meet the same level of success as their more affluent counterparts

(Tyler, 2016). However, increased teacher attrition and mobility tends to further widen the achievement gap between White and minority students, as well as furthering the scholastic divide among students who are poverty-stricken and wealthy (Feng & Sass, 2016). This dilemma continues to greatly affect students of color, specifically African American and Hispanic students, who continue to struggle due to a lack of available resources and qualified teachers who understand their cultural inequities (Redding, 2019).

High-needs schools are often faced with a myriad of obstacles, such as increased academic discord and circumstances, that must be overcome in order for success to be achieved (Knight, 2019). Despite having a relatively large quantity of students who are classified as high-achieving and gifted, high-needs schools face situations where a steadily rising number of students are continuing to underperform in various academic disciplines (Farinde et al., 2016). The inclusion of standardized tests within educational curriculums at the federal and state levels consistently call for the steady improvement of all student subgroups in the United States (Kraft et al., 2015). However, due to the wide variety of characteristics exhibited by students in high-needs schools, such as language proficiency, differing cultures, and scholastic readiness, constant underperformance on standardized exams can begin to affect various portions of the students' educational experiences (Diamond et al., 2010). The outcome of this circumstance often presents itself through the overrepresentation of minority students in special education courses and severe underrepresentation of the same student group in gifted education and advanced placement courses (Martinez & Welton, 2014). Furthermore, underachieving minority students from high-needs schools are more likely to struggle academically and experience social/behavior problems due to low literacy achievement and are less likely to matriculate at a congruent pace with their peers (Johnston & Martelli, 2019).

Economic adversity within high-needs schools.

Educational leaders and teachers in high-needs schools regularly face excessive levels of economic uncertainty, which are often compounded by the combination of realities experienced by urban students outside of the school environment and accountability policies created by local/state government officials to track and report the overall performance of the student population (Kraft et al, 2015). According to Medina et al. (2014), principals are repeatedly forced to address the economic and social issues occurring within the school building prior to focusing on any component of academic achievement. A lack of adequate instructional resources, combined with an inequitable distribution of available funding, also continues to hinder the ability of high-needs schools to recruit and acquire high-quality, experienced educators (Knight, 2019). Additionally, high-needs schools are often unable to supplement necessary materials, such as high quantities of books and electronic resources, to cultivate literacy and reading achievement (Johnston & Martelli, 2019). Educational leaders in these school settings are often tasked with hiring highly-qualified faculty members utilizing very few monetary incentives, usually resulting in a sizable quantity of less-qualified teachers being selected to fill the void (Adamson & Darling-Hammond, 2012). Policymakers have also historically been pressured to assist in raising the academic success level of high-needs schools through automatically assigning and placing the most qualified, experienced teachers of a school district in targeted locations that would benefit most from their expertise and instructional pedagogies (Stronge et al., 2007). Concurrently, teachers in high-needs schools are habitually challenged to educate highly transient students who have parents with low-wage jobs or no employment and reside in environments where medical care and daily academic support are

nonexistent, which undeniably impacts personal capabilities and performance at school (Ullucci & Howard, 2015).

   Pedagogical adversity within high-needs schools.

   Teachers employed in high-needs schools must possess an innate flexibility to positively affect multiple sectors of the learning environment, with student achievement and community relations serving as the areas of greatest importance (Petty, Fitchett, & O'Connor, 2012). Furthermore, educators in high-needs schools continually face a plethora of obstacles that hinder the delivery of quality instruction (Morgan, 2012). The largest of these barriers consists of stagnant student growth, continuous cultural misconceptions, and diminishing parent and community support (Simon & Johnson, 2015). Educators across the U.S. are facing increasing political pressure and accountability associated with earning significant growth and gains on achievement-based assessments (Childs & Russell, 2017). Classroom teachers continue to feel the most intense portion of this stressor through the task of satisfying state and federal mandates while also managing the additional responsibilities of addressing individual student accommodations and creating a differentiated learning environment, which affects both their current and future professional pedagogy (Dunn & Downey, 2018). Further pedagogical responsibilities include facilitating multiple interventions designed to meet the social and emotional needs of students, helping students to manage external factors that may be affecting his or her academic performance, and locating and acquiring resources intended to differentiate instruction for students with extreme scholastic needs, such as students with severe learning disabilities and those who are learning English as a second language (Berry, Daughtrey, & Wieder, 2009). Conversely, students in high-needs schools primarily continue to see minimal success on state-mandated exams, which prompts some teachers to either leave their current

position, or the teaching profession, in search of an opportunity to achieve true success (Kraft et al., 2015).

From a cultural perspective, a majority of teachers in the U.S. are unable to sympathize with the socio-economic plight of the student populations in high-needs schools, leading to perceived student behavior issues and an inability to effectively deliver the assigned curriculum (Redding, 2019). Student behavior that is perceived as negative tends to have an adverse effect on teaching and learning in the classroom environment, while also rendering the instructional strategies of the teacher as ineffective (Farinde-Wu & Fitchett, 2018). Moreover, ineffective employment of multicultural teaching strategies or the failure to understand the cultural sensitivities of student minority groups contributes to the rise of unconstructive teacher opinions regarding academic and social student performance (Pierce, 2017). Consequently, negative perceptions centered around the areas of student conduct, administrative support, and community involvement have begun to arise and impact pedagogical practices (Djonko-Moore, 2016). Educators who are continuously exposed to these types of experiences most often leave either their current position or the field of education (Janzen & Phelan, 2015).

Novice Teacher Attrition and High-Needs Schools

Urban, high-needs schools with consistent track records of low scholastic achievement typically face the greatest amount of staffing challenges (Aragon, 2016). Furthermore, attrition in high-needs schools often acts as a troublesome obstacle for teachers who seek to deliver a rigorous and purposeful experience to all students in their classrooms (Djonko-Moore, 2016). While high success rates and positive contributions have shown to greatly impact the stability of teachers at these schools, the inclination to leave the school, or exit the profession, is amplified due to rising levels of inadequate cultural relativity with local students and community members

(Dupriez et al., 2016). Thibodeaux et al. (2015) also indicated that job dissatisfaction caused by a lack of administrative support is a key contributing factor in rising teacher attrition in high-needs schools, mostly due to heavy reliance on the ability of school administrators to maintain environments where teachers feel safe and fulfilled. According to Dunn and Downey (2018), there has been a recent concern regarding the mass number of educators leaving high-needs schools at such an alarming frequency. Approximately 25% of teachers leave urban schools annually, with the majority leaving to pursue a career in a different industry due to various reasons such as a disparaging school culture and environment, inadequate teacher preparation for their specific school site, nonexistent administrative support and collegial relationships, and absent professional development opportunities to supplement pedagogical practices in the classroom (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). Moreover, the National Center for Education Statistics (2016) found that 12% of teachers transferred from high-poverty schools to a different school location, compared to 6% of teachers transferring from schools with mid- to low-poverty classifications.

Novice teacher attrition has historically been prevalent in high-needs schools for a multitude of reasons, including a severe shortage of and access to critical scholastic resources, increasingly stressful working conditions, and teachers' personal perception of their inability to effectively address the growing needs of all stakeholders in the surrounding community (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Furthermore, the most integral characteristics in manipulating modern teacher exit decisions from these schools have been identified as diminished administrative support, rising student to teacher ratios, and mounting student conduct concerns (Amrein-Beardsley, 2012). Though many educators are aware of the many prospective challenges that will arise and are still compelled to teach at high-needs urban schools, many

specified a lack of administrative support at these schools as the primary influence for either

transferring to a different school or completely leaving the field of education (Farinde et al.,

2016). Many novice teachers identify the variance between expected teacher work ethic and the

realized duties and responsibilities of an educator as a catalyst for novice teacher attrition, with

many struggling through the comprehension of being at his/her current level of success instead of

his/her prospective level of achievement (Barnes, 2018).

     Cross and Thomas (2017) identified the teacher preparation process as being the primary

contributor to the surge in beginning teacher attrition rates in high-needs schools, including a

culture of deficient and inconsistent preparedness to teach in urban educational environments

caused by diminished pedagogical training and quality feedback on instructional practices.

Failure to acquire an adequate student-teaching experience that provides proper exposure to

situations and circumstances that may occur within high-needs schools or other comparable

settings could cause any educator to prematurely exit the profession (Diamond et al., 2010). As a

result of the deficiency in traditionally prepared educators, in an effort to fill rising vacancies,

states and school districts are often placed in the predicament of loosening hiring standards and

practices through the issuance of non-renewable or emergency teaching certificates to

individuals who are not fully qualified to teach (Aragon, 2016). In New York alone, over the

course of tracking a five-year statewide cohort of educators, the quantity of teachers lacking

certificate completion for their content area nearly tripled (Dee & Goldhaber, 2017). This

suggests an uneven, unequitable distribution of quality educators among schools and a lack of

student access to adequately prepared teachers with sufficient resources, with specific attention

focused on high-needs schools where the academic performance of associated student

populations heavily depend on the quality of their instructors (Mason-Williams, 2015).

Non-traditional novice teachers, who choose to enter the profession through engaging in alternative certification methods, are more likely to leave high-needs schools than teachers that participated in traditional preparation programs (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019). This particular type of human resource action also serves as a catalyst for the decrease in the quality of education provided to students in high-needs schools, which continuously attributes to increasing class sizes for highly qualified educators, the rise of employment for long-term substitutes, and the rising indoctrination of less qualified individuals into the culture and environment of high-needs schools across the country (Feng & Sass, 2016). In fact, based on school-level data acquired from New York during the 2015-2016 academic year, 13.2% of the faculty in high-needs schools were found to be lacking a conventional certification compared to 2.5% of the faculty in schools with a low poverty level and minority student population (Dee & Goldhaber, 2017). These specific dynamics tend to produce an educational disadvantage for high-needs schools and impedes the progress of instructional improvements and overall student achievement (Kini & Podolsky, 2016). Additionally, these types of recruitment efforts tend to lessen the quality of the overall teacher workforce within a school district and do not effectively give focus to the enduring concern of novice teachers consistently exiting the field of education (Ingersoll, Merrill, Stuckey, & Collins, 2018). Teachers within these environments are charged to not only conquer personal and professional impediments on a daily basis, but to also effectively educate students that continually face far worse private complications (Imazeki, 2005). Students within high-needs schools habitually bring their academic and social needs to the school environment, which adversely affects both their academic performance on standardized exams and overall mental stability (Kraft et. al., 2015). Faculty members are charged with the task of creating safe, culturally inclusive environments where minority students can participate in

meaningful discussions that target current community issues, which often diverts time away from the traditional classroom curriculum model (Pierce, 2017). Moseley et al. (2014) suggested that continually experiencing reduced amounts of instructional time often contributes to greater occurrences of decreased self-esteem within educators and the acquisition of inaccurate moments of self-efficacy while instructing impoverished minority students.

History of Organizational Systems

For many years, organizational structures have been prevalently used in business models as a method for increasing employee productivity and efficiency (Meyer & Rowan, 1977). Moreover, the concept of utilizing organizational structures in the field of education has generated interest for more than four decades (Collinson, Cook, & Conley, 2006). In recent years, schools have experimented with using organizational systems to improve different facets of their daily operations and student achievement (Sanders, 2014). McFarlane (2010) discussed the impact of school district-level and building-level leaders utilizing established systems of collaboration to influence local laws and policies. Young and Lambie (2007) suggested approaches for altering the systemic structure of educational institutions to better support the wellness and mental health of students and educators.

Evolution of organizational systems in education.

Various countries with highly productive educational programs have managed to fully integrate solidified systems for effectively reducing teacher attrition (Craig, 2017). Primary and secondary school teachers in Finland are required to complete a five-year program that specifically focuses on their prospective subject area, participate in a teacher training school that mirrors the national expectation of curriculum/instruction while also providing a safe and supportive space for teachers to cultivate their pedagogical skills, and continually engage in

professional development sessions within a model school throughout their first five years in the teaching profession, which has led to roughly a 90% retention rate of teachers who remain in the field of education for the entirety of their careers (Hammerness, Ahtiainen, & Sahlberg, 2017). Teachers in Japan are required to participate in a supervised induction period over the course of one year with a narrowed focus on planning and analyzing classroom management/instruction, change school locations every three years throughout the beginning of their career in order to gain knowledge from experienced educators in differing environments, spend more time in planning and working with colleagues than directly instructing students, partake in daily professional development sessions based on their level of experience, and continuously learn from coworkers through weekly participation in an informal practice called lesson study, which has resulted in teaching being one of the most popular, oversupplied, and longest-tenured professions in Japan (Ingersoll et al., 2007). While similar to the United States, the United Kingdom has implemented systems that work to increase teacher retention by decreasing workload through the reduction of required working hours for teachers, provide specialized professional development opportunities for educators who are pondering an exit from the field of education, and offering government-paid opportunities to enhance the certifications, skills, and mentorship capabilities of current educators to recruit newer teachers to the profession, which has resulted in a steady increase in teacher retention rates over the previous three years (Foster, 2019).

Implementing routine organizational processes driven by systems-thinking establishes a strong foundation for schools to regularly address circumstances involving teacher attrition (Minarik et al., 2003). However, school systems in the United States have holistically failed to fully integrate operational systems solely aimed at reducing teacher attrition (Minarik et al.,

2003). Processes used for this purpose must be solidified and possess a very structured composition to effectively accomplish this goal (Hinds, Jones, Gau, Forrester, & Biglan, 2015). Bolman and Deal (2017) highlighted the required parts of a structural system to produce the greatest amount of efficiency, which primarily includes establishing common and attainable organizational goals, allocating roles and responsibilities to appropriate members of the group, coordinating efforts to continuously support the continuity and cultivation of a diverse workforce, maintaining a positive culture and environment to help supplement all efforts, and constructing a plan to resolve any and all problems encountered throughout the process. Bryson (2018) suggested heavily utilizing strategic planning as the base for designing the blueprint of any organizational system, with a targeted emphasis on functionality, collaboration, transparency, support, and advancement.

There is very little research that specifies the methods and procedures for utilizing organizational systems to reduce teacher attrition. Conversely, there is a good amount of existing research that examines the relationship between implemented organizational systems and other areas of the school environment. Deal and Peterson (2016) discussed the different effects of a structured system on school culture, which includes promoting productivity and innovation, building an atmosphere of motivation and trust, facilitating focus on the vision and mission of the school, and fostering a culture of collaboration among colleagues and genuine communication among all stakeholders. Liou and Rotheram-Fuller (2019) examined the restructuring of a previously inadequate system within a high-minority school to increase instructional efficiency and student academic performance, while also working in tandem to increase the positive perception and district expectation of the school. Carpenter (2015) suggested methods and practices to systematically improve the operational capacity of content-

based professional learning communities in schools through formulating shared norms, goals, collaborative efforts, collective inquiries, and methods of steady improvement.

Modern methods for addressing teacher attrition.

Solutions to grounding teacher attrition have been rooted in several different theories. Hagelskamp & DiStasi (2012) recommended several interconnected techniques for simultaneously reducing teacher attrition and promoting student achievement, such as principals being proactive in engaging staff members with problem-solving techniques that center around the school vision and goal, continually celebrating teacher and student scholastic success, and adamantly soliciting parent and community support for school policies/practices. Schaefer (2013) proposed two modes for reducing teacher attrition, including the examination of attrition through the perspective of the teacher experiencing negative feelings and analysis of the organizational environment in which the teacher works. Barnes (2018) inferred that veteran teachers and school leaders should make more of an effort to help novice teachers become more entrenched into the community in which they teach, while also educating novice teachers on various practices to help adjust their pedagogies to the shifting needs and circumstances of the local stakeholders. Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2019) advocated for the inclusion of effective, high-quality mentoring and induction programs for novice teachers that are tailored to meet the demands of an increasingly diverse teacher workforce.

Fisher (2011) suggested the inclusion of various stress-reducing tactics, such as more thorough collaboration sessions between both novice and veteran teachers, more solidified teacher mentoring programs, and the increased availability of professional development sessions specifically directed toward beginning educators. Richmond and Floden (2018) recommended a prospective focus for teacher preparation programs to effectively reduce novice teacher attrition:

Support must be framed by an understanding of how teachers learn, and about the

particular needs they have as a function of where they are in their development as

educators…teachers becoming effective educators only begins with their certification

work and must be continued throughout their careers with professional supports that are

guided by empirically grounded knowledge of subject matter, of child and adult learning,

and of the contextual factors which must be attended to in teaching (pp. 4-5).

Policymakers and educational leaders also tend to heavily utilize teacher recruitment policies as

the primary method for resolving teacher shortages, with less concentration on the role that

teacher attrition plays in this problematic event (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2019).

Rectifying the issue of teacher shortages should place less of an emphasis on filling vacancies

and more on accurately placing teachers in positions and school environments that fit with their

personal experiences (Aragon, 2016). Consequently, legislators at every level of government are

beginning to take a different approach toward reducing teacher attrition (Goldhaber & Cowan,

2014). Modern state legislatures, research officials, and local political representatives have begun

to examine teacher shortages through the lens of modern teacher attrition in an effort to provide a

well-rounded strategy for effectively addressing this issue (Aragon, 2016).

These forms of investigation were used as the basis for creating research questions that

delve into the attitudes school leaders have toward reducing novice teacher attrition and utilizing

those resolutions within their professional pedagogies. Many more varieties of research were

used to establish the severity of teacher attrition on novice teachers. The entirety of all aforesaid

information was employed to support the proposition of the research within this manuscript.

Summary

Teacher attrition presents a perennial problem to the United States' public education system due to its rapid growth in recent years and the constant pressure placed on policymakers to find an adequate resolution to this issue (Craig, 2017). Moreover, a decreased desire to implement support strategies that specifically target novice teachers has begun to emerge, which creates a void of streamlined assistance for new educators seeking to transition to the second stage of their teaching careers (Warsame & Valles, 2018). This poses an even larger predicament for high-needs schools, which most often employ a larger number of novice teachers, but struggle with providing training and resources necessary to retain them (Bastian & Marks, 2017). Accordingly, the literature within this review focuses on the various factors that impact novice teacher attrition, the historical adversities faced by high-needs schools, and the current systems implemented to address this particular phenomenon.

Various factors continue to play a major role in the progression of teacher attrition, including a deficiency in course content knowledge, poor working conditions, and absent administrative support (Hagaman & Casey, 2018). Furthermore, novice teachers frequently face steeper attrition through experiences that involve overwhelming teaching and administrative workloads, fluctuating curriculums and instructional practices, classroom management difficulties, and constant periods of anxiety associated with negative self-efficacy (Harfitt, 2015). Beginning educators in high-needs schools tend to not only carry these types of afflictions on a regular basis, but also those from the student populations they serve, who struggle with situations affiliated with low-poverty and deficient learning (Dupriez et. al, 2016). The influence of these composite circumstances causes novice teachers to exit the profession at a higher rate than veteran educators (Elyashiv, 2019).

High-needs schools face extreme levels of adversity in numerous areas on a consistent basis (Djonko-Moore, 2016). Scholastic institutions that possess a large number of poverty-stricken, minority students habitually face stigmas of lower academic achievement and increased pressures to demonstrate swift improvement in a short time period (Childs & Russell, 2017). Unfortunately, an unequitable allocation of high-quality instructional resources often hinders the potential growth of these schools (Knight, 2019). Despite these particular conditions, educators in high-needs schools are expected to deliver effective instructional practices and interventions in a similar capacity as traditional scholastic institutions (Whipp & Geronime, 2017). This repetitive process continues to negatively sway the decisions of novice teachers to leave high-needs schools and contributes to a culture of low retention at these locations (Simon & Johnson, 2015).

Organizational structures have historically been utilized in the business sector to stimulate productivity and efficiency (Pennisi, 2012). Accordingly, school districts have begun to implement organizational systems to regulate and reform specific components of their local institutions (Sanders, 2014). The success of organizational structures with similar objectives have been realized in the accomplishments of high-achieving, high-poverty schools in Ohio, which were most known for implementing solid systems that encompassed the vision, mission, and goals of all involved stakeholders (Hagelskamp & DiStasi, 2012). The subsequent chapter will examine the implementation of an organizational structure at a single high-needs school, its impact on the reduction of novice teacher attrition at that particular location, and delve into deeper detail regarding the specific components employed to assist in the success of the program.

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2   THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL SYSTEMS TO REDUCE

NOVICE TEACHER ATTRITION: A CASE STUDY OF ONE HIGH-NEEDS SCHOOL

The purpose of the study is to analyze the success of implementing organizational processes to reduce novice teacher attrition in high-needs schools. Chapter one highlighted the existing literature associated with novice teacher attrition in high-needs schools as well as the research questions that were used to guide this research study. This chapter will briefly revisit the aforementioned areas of chapter one and will delve into further detail within the scope of the conducted research, including the significance of the study, theoretical framework, and research methodology. Furthermore, within the findings section, this chapter will provide an in-depth analysis of all acquired data from the research study in an effort to understand the inner workings and mechanisms of the organizational structure at the high-needs school. These findings will then be analyzed to fully address the existing literature associated with novice teacher attrition and provide various discussion points for educational leaders, including implications for future practice, suggestions regarding future research, and all concluding thoughts.

Significance of the study.

This study is significant because it can serve to inform educational leaders of their role in reducing the attrition of novice teachers in high-needs schools and advocate for the employment of organizational systems as a mechanism for accomplishing this goal. Retaining quality educators is of the utmost importance and highest priority for increasing the success of urban schools (Fuller, Waite, & Irribarra, 2016). Nonetheless, the growing disparity between teacher and organizational attributes have been previously correlated with teachers' rationale for transferring schools or completely exiting the field of education (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011). These influential factors often include perceived problems about the institution, nonexistent

support from school administrators, and stagnation caused by a lack of professional progression (Kelly & Northrop, 2015). However, systems-thinking offers educational leaders the most reliable conceptual framework for analyzing methods of resolution for this particular phenomenon (Minarik, Thornton, & Perreault, 2003). The following research questions were used to guide the proposed study:

1) How do educational leaders implement organizational systems to reduce novice teacher attrition in high-needs schools?

2) How does the successful implementation of these systems affect both novice and veteran teacher retention in high-needs schools?

This research study provided a level of significance due to its objective of identifying and revealing specific practices used by educational leaders in high-needs schools to reduce novice teacher attrition. As previously mentioned, a majority of the current research focuses on offering suggestions to reduce attrition and burnout in all teachers. This study seeks to add to the existing literature by highlighting strategies that current educational leaders implement to specifically target attrition in novice educators, with an emphasis on those teaching in environments consisting of student populations characterized as high-needs. The guiding questions for this study were derived from existing literature that suggested techniques for reducing novice teacher attrition, while also aspiring to uncover the nuances that attribute to the continued success of the organizational systems at the site location. Utilizing this information, educational leaders may be able to implement similar strategies to reduce novice teacher attrition in their schools and school districts, while also being able to open the discussion for similar research-based topics beyond the scope of this study.

Theoretical Framework

This study utilizes organizational theory as an approach for examining the effectiveness of instituted structures aimed at reducing novice teacher attrition in a high-needs school environment and the role of school leaders in facilitating those initiatives. Through the course of formal research practices, organizational theory is primarily applied to expound on the effective practices and procedures used by organizations to increase efficiency in targeted areas of improvement, which most often includes the perceived ideologies of people within the organization, the effects of those thoughts on daily operations, and the way those individuals view and understand their active experiences with the organization (Dominguez-Whitehead, 2018). According to Heck (2015), within the field of education, the primary objective is to "feature public schools as formal and informal organizations which provide structures and conditions that principals might coordinate to enhance student learning, while also showcasing the application of organizational theory to understand the structure of schools and its impact on the processes of schooling" (p. 60). The above-mentioned research questions within this document reflect an inquisitive inquiry of organizational theory characteristics located in the internal structures of high-needs schools and how those configurations work to routinely reduce novice teacher attrition. Moreover, the concept of general system theory will serve as a sub-portion of the organizational theory framework and will be commissioned throughout the remainder of this manuscript to support the overall study, accompanying research questions, and all realized results.

General system theory.

Systems have been shown to be continuously present and embedded in almost every portion of our modern society (Reeb et al., 2017). As such, general system theory was the

primary tenet of organizational theory that was utilized to investigate the interconnected systems that are being implemented to regularly reduce novice teacher attrition at the site location. Ludwig von Bertalanffy (1968), who was most known as one of the founders of general system theory, described the concept and role of systems as an intertwined network of interactions that are necessary to identify methods of resolving complex problems with maximum efficiency while also generating minimal cost. Moreover, according to Reeb et al. (2017), general system theory is driven by the concept of combining previously independent processes into one interdependent, coordinated system and employing the system in a single area that will maximize its effectiveness. The culminating philosophy is then implemented to display the contributions of interdependent systems and sub-systems toward influencing one another in an effort to accomplish an established task or goal (Mania-Singer, 2017). Though Bertalanffy's philosophy was predominantly developed within the field of biology, the various beliefs that compose the theory are often transposed and applied to other areas of human sciences such as business studies, psychology, sociology, economics, and education (McMahon & Patton, 2018). Correspondingly, according to Grissom et al. (2017), school-level and district-level leaders have already achieved success implementing systems for measuring and maintaining teacher effectiveness in the classroom. This study utilized general system theory as the driving force for understanding how similar systems have been used to reduce novice teacher attrition at the site location. Moreover, the site location being examined in this study has displayed a history of consistently employing distinct, interdependent systems aimed at reducing novice teacher attrition. As a result, the educational leaders at the site location have been able to realize their goal of increasing the retention of novice teachers in their building.

Martz (2013) promoted the concept of systems-thinking within organizational theory through the analysis of the connection between activities within the systems approach and the continuing evolution of the structure being evaluated. Once the comprehensive evaluation is complete, these systems are then used to transfer and communicate important resolutions that are necessary to successfully address all concerns that either have or will arise (Lehman, 2017). This particular practice is very significant because it allows the opportunity for the systems to become repetitive and replicable, which continues to generate successful resolutions for the initial organization and any other organization that has similar circumstances (Caws, 2015). Systematic routines such as these are important in upholding the validity of an organization and seek to accomplish a plethora of tasks such as implementing productive action plans, minimizing conflict among members, guiding experiences affiliated with the organization, and promoting active collaboration toward accomplishing shared goals (Spillane et al., 2011). Educational leaders will only be able create effective solutions to resolve rising teacher attrition by analyzing teacher attrition through the lens and perspective of systems-thinking, which involves in-depth exploration of the relationship between the interconnected parts of individual schools, school districts, and the current political climate surrounding the teaching profession (Minarik et al., 2003).

To conclude, the theoretical framework of organizational theory was employed to drive this research study. General system theory, one of the subsets of organizational theory, was definitively applied to the study to investigate and gain a better comprehension of how the interconnected systems at the site location are being implemented to regularly reduce novice teacher attrition. Moreover, applying this framework offered the opportunity to view the high-needs school within the study as a formal organization, which produced further insight regarding

the effective structures and systems being implemented within the institution. Data gathered from this study will seek to provide educational leaders with reinforced strategies, from a perspective based on systems-thinking, that will be effective in reducing attrition in novice teachers in high-needs schools.

Methods

Research design requires the utilization of several interconnected components that are integral to the success of the study, including conceptual organization, practical philosophies, synthesized schemas to support the start of research, solidified methods for data collection, and a comprehensible approach for delivering all research findings to specific audiences (Stake, 1995). As previously mentioned, this study employed organizational theory as the primary theoretical framework, with the specific utilization of general system theory, to serve as its foundation and incorporated diverse notions of sample selection, data acquisition, and data analysis to build a comprehensive understanding of the case. The target school was selected through purposive sampling, which offered the best opportunity to address all research questions. After permission to utilize the site of the research study was granted, a sample group of participants was identified based on an established archetype and their current professional status within the school. Data collection consisted of all information gathered through individual sample participant interviews, observations of novice teacher mentorship conferences that occurred within the school environment, and a review of school district documentation specifically highlighting teacher retention. All collected data was then appropriately coded and triangulated to allow for an accurate analysis of the aforementioned research questions, introduce concrete information that supports the scholarly literature surrounding novice teacher attrition, and provide authentic implications that educational leaders can use to inform their future practice.

Research Design

Case study research is viewed as a qualitative methodology that is used to examine and understand the authentic experiences produced by a single, unique organization through the comprehensive collection of varying sources of data over a specified period of time (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This research study employed an intrinsic case study approach to support the research design while also addressing each research question in meticulous detail. Berg (2001) states that the employment of a case study methodology is best suited to acquire a comprehensive understanding of how an exceptional person, environment, event, or organization functions on a consistent basis. Furthermore, using the case study approach to specifically analyze elements within the field of education reveals a more thorough understanding of certain dynamics and aspects that occur within the profession (Merriam, 1985). The focus of this research study was to gain insight into the "exceptional" procedures utilized by a single, Title I school to reduce a higher percentage of attrition within its novice teachers in comparison to locations with similar characteristics.

The holistic single case study method is typically applied to research studies with a goal of gaining a better understanding of a unique circumstance that could be relative to other, comparable situations within similar environments and contexts (Baxter & Jack, 2008). This technique was employed to gain an intricate understanding of how current educational leaders at high-needs schools are currently utilizing appropriate organizational processes to reduce teacher attrition in novice educators. Additionally, the holistic single case study approach was able to inform, support, and enhance the study through its ability to examine and modify established theories within the research while also providing methods for gathering and analyzing data using

traditionally-employed techniques, which aided in the thorough and complete investigation of implemented systems to reduce novice teacher attrition at the site location (Merriam, 1985).

The study was also framed in the epistemological paradigm of constructivism. This type of interpretive framework heavily relies on the subjective meanings and views of participants, which allows the researcher to investigate the true complexity of all gathered data (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The aim of the investigation was to provide clarity of all acquired data through the collective interpretations of people who are most familiar with the case while simultaneously interweaving all acquired accounts into a coherent illustration (Stake, 1995). In this capacity, the researcher served in the role as collector and interpreter of data by assembling a constructed reality with all knowledge obtained throughout the course of the investigation (Yazan, 2015). This concept will be displayed within the study through the implementation of data collection methods, with specific attention to individual sample participant interviews and moments of naturalistic observation.

Sample

The process of selecting a sufficient sample for a research study is integral in obtaining relevant, generative data sources that produce meaningful insight from the perspective of a broad population (Mason, 2018). Moreover, accurate sampling conducted in a case study allows the focus of the research to be centered on a single unit of analysis with similar characteristics as the criteria found within the study (Bernard, Wutich, & Ryan, 2017). Utilizing best practices from the literature, this study sought to identify an ideal site location that possessed similar characteristics and attributes as a typical high-needs school. Furthermore, this study also aimed to select participants who were not only strong contributors to the successful operation of the organizational

systems being examined, but also the novice teachers who were affected by the systems and able to reap the benefits of their successful implementation.

While facilitating a single-case study, appropriate actions must be taken to ensure that sampling methods yield a site location and participants for the study that are an accurate representation of the research (Yin, 2018). Selecting an adequate site location incorporates a process that carefully analyzes the theoretical interests within the study combined with the goals that drive the research (Seawright & Gerring, 2008). The designated site location for this qualitative case study was chosen using criteria created with the assistance of the aforementioned principles. Additionally, participants who contribute data to interviews in a qualitative study should possess attitudes that are supportive and reflective of the research objectives (Saunders & Townsend, 2016). Robinson (2014) suggested a practical approach for achieving an optimum sample group within interview-based research, including specific emphasis on selecting a suitable target population, choosing a sample size that is an optimal fit for the research being conducted, creating an effective strategy to select the most appropriate participants for the study, and successfully sourcing the identified participants to take part in the study. Utilizing the concepts within these criteria, an adequate sample group that yielded the most authentic, relative data to the research questions was selected.

School site selection criteria.

According to Naderifar, Goli, and Ghaljaie (2017), choosing an appropriate means of sampling serves as an integral, principal part of establishing solid methodologies for a qualitative research study. The purposive sampling technique is a nonrandom selection approach used in qualitative research to deliberatively choose participants based on their qualities and willingness to provide experience-based knowledge relative to the study (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016).

Additionally, this approach allows the researcher to implement a non-probability sampling method that justifies the use of theoretical, analytic, or logical generalizations toward the selected sample group (Sharma, 2017). Therefore, the purposive sampling method was used to identify the target school and principal to serve as participants in the study.

Four criteria were used to identify the appropriate site for this study:

- an educational institution where a minimum of 75% of students are classified as racial minorities and at least 60% of students receive free/reduced lunch

- an overall teacher retention rate of 92 percent or above

- a novice teacher retention rate of 89 percent or above

- above characteristics have continued for over a span of three consecutive years

Novice teacher attrition is exceptionally higher among educators employed in high-needs schools, where the annual retention rate is often substantially lower than the national average (Simon & Johnson, 2015). Furthermore, high-needs schools that continually exhibit high rates of teacher attrition create a revolving door of inexperienced educators who enter and leave the profession on an annual basis, which decreases the teacher retention rates of those schools from year to year (Harrell, Thompson, & Brooks, 2019). Requiring the site location to possess a minimum of a 75% minority student population, while at least 60% of all students also receive free or reduced lunch, classifies it as a high-needs school (Djonko-Moore, 2016) and Title I school in the state of Georgia (Georgia Department of Education, 2015).

Requiring the site location to possess an overall retention rate that is higher than the state average in Georgia of 91% (Tio, 2018) would ensure that the institution has developed a school culture that supports teacher retention. In hard-to-staff schools, a school culture that exhibits various attributes such as public displays of emotional, environmental, and instructional support

of its teachers are often successful in retaining those educators (Hughes, Matt, & O'Reilly, 2015). Exhibiting an above-average teacher retention rate suggested the exemplary efforts being made by educational leaders at the site toward keeping good teachers in their building. Additionally, it suggested that these leaders have established this goal as a high priority for the school and set measures in place to accomplish it on an annual basis.

Requiring the site location to possess a novice retention rate that is higher than the state average in Georgia of 88% (Tio, 2018) ensured that a specific point of focus for the school is centered around preserving the beginning teacher cohort within the building. Educational leaders who place an emphasis on retaining novice teachers ensure that specialized resources and training are readily employed to achieve this objective (Redding & Henry, 2019). Exhibiting an above-average novice teacher retention rate implied that educational leaders at the site location have acknowledged the growing reality of novice teacher attrition and how it impacts the decreasing retention of new teachers within the field of education. Moreover, it insinuated that these leaders have undertaken a specialized focus on providing the necessary resources and professional development opportunities to keep novice teachers in their buildings.

Consistently implementing techniques to help reform specified areas of high-needs schools has an immense effect on the continued achievement of students and teachers in those organizations (Sanders, 2014). Educational leaders increase the likelihood of their school culture shifting toward supporting the vision and mission of their schools when they are able to display steady improvement over extended periods of time (Carpenter, 2015). Exhibiting a consistent trend of above-average novice and overall teacher retention rates, while continuing to maintain a high-needs/Title I school classification, indicates the effectiveness of the organizational systems being implemented to reduce novice teacher attrition at the site location. Additionally, it implies

a high level of dedication exhibited by the educational leaders at the site location toward

continuously assessing the efficiency of the employed systems to further address the growing

needs of their novice educators.

Participant selection criteria.

The overall participant group was comprised of ten individuals employed within the site

location and in possession of an active familiarity with the system being implemented inside the

school to reduce novice teacher attrition. This group included three novice teachers (zero to three

full years of experience), two transitional veteran teachers (four to five full years of experience),

three teacher leaders (one teacher mentor, one instructional coach, and one grade-level

chairperson), one assistant principal, and the school principal. The purposive sampling method

was again utilized to establish the criteria for individuals participating in the sample group due to

its approach that utilizes nonrandom selection and the ability to choose participants who are

willing to provide personal experiences that are relevant to the study (Etikan et al., 2016). The

expertise of the school principal was very significant, as she was sent an initial email asking for

suggestions of potential participants within the school that best fit the archetype of those sought

to be in the sample group (See Appendix A). Once a list of names was obtained, the researcher

sent out recruitment letters via email requesting the participation of each individual to assist with

the study (see Appendix B). This technique was enacted due to its efficient and cost-effective

disposition of procuring participants with the specified target characteristics who would

otherwise be very difficult to find (Naderifar et al., 2017). Moreover, applying this procedure

aided in establishing a more trusting relationship between the researcher and subjects by virtue of

the shared affiliation between the principal and proposed participants.

Sample group participants were selected based on professional qualities and experiences that directly correlated with the research questions of the study (Etikan et al., 2016). The principal of the institution was asked to recommend three novice teachers, two transitional veteran teachers, three teacher leaders, and one assistant principal based pre-established criteria to create the target group:

- direct participation in, assistance with, or supervision of the organizational structures of the school that reduce novice teacher attrition

- zero to three full years of experience in the field of education (novice teachers)

- four to five full years of experience in the field of education (transitional veteran teachers)

- six or more full years of experience in the field of education (teacher leaders and administrators)

- two or more full years of experience at the target school (teacher leaders and administrators)

- one or more full years of experience employed at one other school, in another school district (teacher leaders and administrators)

According to DeAngelis and Presley (2011), roughly 50% of all novice teachers will inevitably exit the teaching profession during the first five years of their career. Conversely, veteran teachers with higher years of experience, and especially those that are close to retirement, have lower attrition rates than younger teachers and are less like likely to exit the profession (Sass, Flores, Claeys, & Perez, 2012). The combination of these perspectives helps to portray the plight of novice teachers in high-needs schools as they advance in their careers toward becoming more stabilized veterans in the field of education (Moseley, Bilica, Wandless, & Gdovin, 2014).

Consequently, a variety of educators with varying experience levels were chosen to participate in this study to help illustrate a vivid picture of how attrition affects novice teacher wellness while in the profession and how implemented systems influence those feelings. Novice teachers were chosen due to their higher probability of exiting the profession and ability to provide authentic interview and observational data that would greatly contribute to the study. Veteran teachers, who have recently participated in the organizational structure as novice teachers, were selected to participate due to their perspective of the site location's ability to retain them through their beginning years.

Novice teachers' perceptions of the amount of preparedness and support they receive during their first few years in the profession provides vital insight toward reducing the exit attrition of these educators (Hesson, 2016). Veteran teachers, who are typically in different stages of their professional and personal lives, have a greater understanding of the factors of job satisfaction, job retention, and teacher burnout (Admiraal, Veldman, Mainhard, & van Tartwijk, 2019). Comparably, educational leaders should understand the significant impact of the workplace and working conditions on teacher stability, which most notably includes those found in environments that have higher amounts of minority, disadvantaged, or special education students (Dupriez, Delvaux, & Lothaire, 2016). Acquiring the experiences of beginning educators with zero to three full years of experience provided the opportunity to gauge the current effectiveness of the local- and district-level systems being implemented at the site location to reduce novice teacher attrition. Procuring the expertise of transitional veteran teachers with four to five years of experience, including some experiences in previous school settings, allowed the chance to see a variance in success between novice teacher attrition programs implemented in different environments and how those systems had a long-term impact on these

educators. Including the perspective of teacher leaders and school administrators, who have been at the site location for a minimum of two years, granted the prospect of viewing structural support and collegial relationships from those who have been immersed in the school culture for an extended period of time. Moreover, it also allowed enough elapsed time for the participant to have assimilated to the school culture and serve as a product of the procedures that decrease teacher attrition.

Hagaman and Casey (2018) suggested the possibility of increased administrative awareness in the area of novice teacher attrition, including the newer challenges that are encountered by beginning teachers and the methods for support that can be provided. In this manner, school administration continually serves as a vital element in reducing beginning educator attrition and educational leaders must work diligently to maintain an understanding of why teachers leave the profession (Elyashiv, 2019). Incorporating the experiences of teacher leaders and school administrators provided the opportunity to view the effectiveness of the program from the lens of an educational leader and how continuous support can be provided to increase the impact of the program on overall teacher attrition at the school. The prerequisite of laboring in at least one other school for teacher leaders and administrators, which would include professional service in another school district, would confirm that veteran teachers and educational leaders in the study possessed a relative rationale for departing their previous job assignment. These factors of exit attrition can include school quality, lack of available resources, poor school culture, a large student population, and poor community relationships (Struyven & Vanthourn, 2014). Moreover, it gives educational leaders additional insight regarding the rationale novice teachers choose to leave their previous locations. Lastly, possessing a qualification that every participant in the sample has participated in, directly supervised, or

actively assisted with the deployment of the organizational structure that reduces novice teacher attrition assures that each participant is very knowledgeable of the different local- and district-level systems currently being used to reduce novice teacher attrition at the site location. All educators selected to participate in the study contributed relevant information to confirm their professional qualifications, how those attributes matched the criteria established for participation in the study, their role in the novice teacher attrition program at the site location, and the perspective of how their past experiences affected their present mentalities at their current placement (see Table 1). Additionally, pseudonyms were created and utilized to protect the identities of all participants.

Table 1

Study Participants' Titles, Years of Experience, and School Placements

Participant Name	Current Title	Study Classification	Completed Years of Experience (Public School Setting)	Completed Years at Current School	Total Number of Different School Placements
Amelia Austin	Teacher	Novice	0	0	0
Brittney Benjamin	Teacher	Novice	0	0	0
Rebecca Rice	Teacher	Novice	0	0	0
Jackie Jacobs	Teacher	Transitional Veteran	4	2	3
Wanda Winters	Teacher	Transitional Veteran	4	3	2
Faith Frazier	Mentor Teacher	Teacher Leader	15	5	3
Serena Simpson	Instructional Coach	Teacher Leader	12	2	4
Tracy Tucker	Grade-Level Chairperson	Teacher Leader	9	4	2
Katherine Knox	Assistant Principal	School Administrator	24	5	5
Laura Lyons	Principal	School Administrator	33	5	6

Data Collection

The data for a case study is gathered through three primary strategies: observation,

interviewing, and document analysis (Merriam, 1985). Consequently, all data within the study

was captured utilizing those three preferential methods. Merriam (1985) furthered this sentiment through specifically discussing the impact of the three primary strategies on obtaining data within a case study:

> Through interviewing participants, observing the phenomenon, or analyzing documents, five types of qualitative data most relevant to a case study can be obtained: form and content of verbal interaction between participants, form and content of verbal interaction with the researcher, non-verbal behavior, patterns of action and non-action, and important paper-based research documents such as traces, archival records, and artifacts (p. 208).

Interviews.

Time should be taken to get to know and understand the participant groups within the study, which includes recognizing any cultural differences or oppositions presented by the procedures within the study, developing convenient schedules for all contributors to be interviewed, and crafting questions that do not give the perception of being offensive to any participants (Berg, 2001). Shenton (2004) suggested the implementation of structured interview procedures with definitive, probing questions that extract more precise data from participants based on personal experiences that are relative to the study. The primary objective of this type of interviewing, also referred to as iterative questioning, is not to get yes and no responses that serve as vague evidence, but to gain a practical and comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon through detailed replies (Stake, 1995). The study utilized the structured interview model for qualitative research and data was collected through responses to the presented interview questions (see Appendices D-H). Also, to further ensure the credibility of the responses attained from the participants, the interview was structured in the form of iterative questioning. The purpose of all presented questions during the interviews were to elicit authentic

and appropriate responses that would procure data to effectively address the guiding questions in the study. Various scholarly literature centered around novice teacher attrition, in association with the guiding questions of this study, was reviewed to create interview questions that would capture the essence of each participant's perspective and past experiences. The initial questions in the interview protocol were created to gain insight on each participant's professional and personal experiences with teacher attrition. The remaining questions solicited each participant's perspective of their participation or role in the organizational structure at the site location, the structure's impact on novice teacher attrition and performance, and the success of the structure on novice and veteran teacher retention.

Each participant was interviewed at the site location in a quiet area of their choice, which typically consisted of their designated classroom or office space. Interviews were conducted approximately 30 minutes to two hours after the conclusion of the normal school day, were completed over the course of four consecutive days, and resulted in a range of two to three interviews being successively completed each day. All interviews were attended only by the participant and student researcher with minimal distractions from outside sources. All participants were asked to sign the consent form (see Appendix C) associated with this study, given a copy of the signed consent form, and provided with a copy of the interview protocol (see Appendices D-H) that matched their specific role in the school and the novice teacher attrition program.

Observations.

The employment of observations within the case study model benefits the researcher through engaging and strengthening all discernments related to pertinent points within the investigation (Stake, 1995). The perceived goal of teacher mentorship conferences is to stimulate

the growth of all newcomers to the profession through the infusion of researched-based strategies aimed at strengthening instruction and producing a sense of acceptance among faculty and staff members, which also simultaneously strives to retain those teachers in the host school (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). To gain a greater understanding of reasons for the success of the program, new teacher mentorship conferences were examined during regular meeting times based on the schedule set by the school administration. Observations of new teacher mentorship conferences took place at the site location, with the same participants in the study, approximately 30 minutes to one hour after the conclusion of the normal school day. Additionally, the three conferences observed during the study occurred over a span of three non-consecutive days during a single week and lasted roughly 20-30 minutes in length.

Documents.

The review of documentation seeks to provide different vantage points to study subjects or events that may otherwise be challenging to acquire or completely unobtainable (Berg, 2001). Additionally, these documents often serve as key indicators to supplement findings throughout the course of case study research and may be analyzed for specific points to identify the success and achievement of the special occurrence being studied (Stake, 1995). County-based documentation was investigated to support the selection of the school as an institution for increased teacher retention. This primarily included acquiring and analyzing county/state teacher attrition and retention data for comparison. All documents in conjunction with the study were selected based on their relevance to the previously mentioned research questions.

Ethical considerations.

Dooly, Moore, and Vallejo (2017) outlined several methods for addressing ethical considerations prior to the commencement of any qualitative research-based activity:

The researcher and/or research team will always provide sufficient information to

reviewers, ethical board members and participants to fully comprehend the scope of the

research project. Participants will be fully informed of the purpose and approach of the

research. Also, how data will be collected and processed will be explained fully. The

researcher will always obtain informed consent from all parties involved in the research

prior to implementing the research project. The researcher will ensure confidentiality of

all research subjects, including data stemming from systematic reviews of documents (pp.

352-353).

Consequently, informed consent was gained from all participants through the acknowledgement

of the characteristics of the study and the validation of an informed consent letter prior to any

contribution to the study (see Appendix C). All data and records gathered from interviews,

observations, or through physical and digital correspondence were kept private to the extent

allowed by law. Pseudonyms were utilized in place of actual participant names and served as

identifiers for individual participant responses.

Data Analysis

According to Stake (1995), the most frequently utilized strategic methods of achieving

newer context within the analysis of results in a case study involve direct interpretation and

categorical aggregation. All gathered results were evaluated and interpreted using these

approaches. Individual interviews were recorded via an audio recording device, transcribed

verbatim, and coded using open coding as a method of deconstructing the dialogue. The

fundamental intention of this framework is to uncover the underlying meaning of collected data

and to identify noticeable patterns that provide context to support the research being conducted

(Merriam, 1985). The NVivo qualitative data analysis software was the primary instrument used

to decipher and log all preliminary data acquired in all interviews and observations. All data that was unable to be captured by NVivo was manually transcribed and coded. All received interview data was compiled into similar categories that were easier to compare and uncover the true motivation behind a given account (Berg, 2011). Each category created during the open coding phase was then coded again to determine the commonalities within its area and analyzed for any relevance toward the applicable research questions.

Once the open coding phase was complete, axial coding, followed by selective coding, was utilized to create categories that helped to form precise explanations and developed an essential concept within the study that supported the purpose of the research (Blair, 2015). These procedures were instrumental in revealing the relationships between primary categories and sub-categories that were examined and utilized to progress the research (Pearman & Lefever-Davis, 2012). Data analyzed and retrieved from documents were also examined in conjunction with information previously acquired within the scope of the study, a process commonly referred to as naturalistic generalization (Hyett, Kenny, & Dickson-Swift, 2015). Through studying documents for generalization, new realizations can be generated from single cases through pre-existing or procured schemas associated with other cases, which can lead to the creation of new groups through the modification of old generalizations (Stake, 1995). Consequently, the established, definitive categories and subcategories were analyzed for significance and relevance to the research questions. Visible relationships between categories helped to establish themes that would provide a thorough comprehension of all acquired data, be applied to address the research questions within the study, and drive the remaining process of data analysis. After the conclusion of the individual interviews, all data received from new teacher mentorship conferences were recorded, coded, and directly interpreted. The same procedures of coding as mentioned above

were utilized during this phase as well. School and county documents, that were evaluated and interpreted through naturalistic generalization, helped to establish an illustration of the target school's success in reducing novice teacher attrition while also confirming the use of the organizational structure to accomplish that particular goal.

       Bias and reliability.

       Data triangulation serves as a supplemental procedure for reducing bias and evaluating the integrity of all received responses (Anney, 2015). The use of multiple data sources, in part, distinguishes qualitative or naturalistic inquiry from traditional forms of research (Merriam, 1985). Consequently, data triangulation was used to certify the reliability and credibility of all collected data within the study. Data triangulation was employed to compare information from these sources to determine corroboration and construct an authentic, pervasive conclusion (Oliver-Hoyo & Allen, 2006). Furthermore, this technique allowed for the use of different sources of data during the analysis process, including those acquired during interviews and observation sessions, to inform and enhance the quality of information acquired to support the study (Anney, 2015). Methodological triangulation was applied to all gathered data to gain multiple, distinct perspectives on the same educational construct and analyzed for similarities/differences. The advantage of utilizing this approach was to either reveal or invalidate identified, unrelated influences within the study (Stake, 1995).

Findings

       The prevailing goal of this study was to examine the success of an organizational system on reducing novice teacher attrition at a high-needs school. Moreover, all research aimed to uncover the precise elements within the system at the site location that attributed to a decrease in novice teacher attrition, while also determining the impact of novice educator retention on the

retention of veteran teachers at the site location. The following findings align with and extend the existing literature regarding the various causes of novice teacher attrition and how these occurrences could lead new teachers to prematurely exit the field of education. Research data yielded four prevalent themes surrounding the methods educational leaders consistently use at the site location to reduce novice teacher attrition. These themes include the establishment of proactive structures and interventions to assist in resolving job-related struggles, the identification and cultivation of key goals that motivate novice teachers to perform at high levels, the partnership of initiatives enacted by the local school and school district that assist beginning educators in adjusting to the culture of the school, and the contribution of continuous support from school administrators and authentic acts of collaboration with colleagues. The aforementioned factors were all recognized as being the most impactful in helping novice teachers remain at the site location.

The subsequent sections will chronicle these themes and dive into deeper detail to explain the connection between their utilization and the continued success of the implemented system. Prior to describing the four themes, the first section presents a detailed description of the systems and processes within the structure and how those procedures are used to assist novice teachers at the site location. The next section will examine the past negative experiences of novice and transitional veteran teachers while also describing the methods used at the site location to proactively prevent the continued development of these situations. The third section will investigate the site location's use of socioemotional strategies to assist novice teachers in creating goals that will help boost their intrinsic motivation. The fourth section will discuss the importance of utilizing school- and county-based initiatives to help novice teachers progress and the rationale for expanding this practice to further limit novice teacher attrition. The final section

will highlight the perceptions of all participants regarding the impact of administrative support and collegial collaboration on helping reduce novice teacher attrition at the site location.

Novice teacher attrition program systems and procedures.

The purpose of this section is to facilitate an understanding of the systems within the novice teacher attrition program at the site location. While reviewing the data received from participant interviews, the different components of the novice teacher attrition program were revealed and assisted in explaining the functionality of the structure (see Figure 1). All participants described the novice teacher program coordinator, who also serves as a classroom teacher at the site location, as being the most important component of the structure. According to Laura Lyons, the principal of the site location, "that person is someone who comes with a lot of credibility, builds relationships with our novice teachers, checks in on them regularly, and is definitely the go-to person for all situations involving the program." Accordingly, selecting the person in charge of the structure appeared to be a very significant and imperative task. Both school administrators agreed that the criteria used to select the novice teacher program coordinator involved identifying characteristics that focused on the prospective individual possessing a strong depth of knowledge in the areas of instructional methodology and social-emotional awareness. This particular practice was identified as contributing to the success, consistency, and longevity of the novice teacher attrition program, which has been under the leadership of two program coordinators in its five years of existence.

Once the novice teacher attrition program coordinator is selected, the school site uses a collective system of mentor teachers, grade-level chairpersons, and instructional coaches who serve as the first through third lines of support for new teachers. Strategies to address potential obstacles are presented by these groups to novice teachers prior to the new educators' first

contracted date of employment and cultivated during school pre-planning sessions and mentorship conferences that occur throughout the course of the school year. Mentor teachers revisit these areas with novice teachers on a weekly basis for the first 12 weeks of the school year, thereafter transitioning to a bi-weekly basis for the remainder of the school term. Furthermore, each group within the support system is specifically tasked with addressing a certain area of need. Mentor teachers are responsible for facilitating collaboration and teamwork among grade-level team members. Grade-level chairpersons are tasked with researching potential resources and assisting with efforts to solidify planning strategies that new teachers can use, both inside and outside of school. Instructional coaches gather classroom data to assess the instructional effectiveness of novice teachers and conduct curriculum-based professional development sessions to suggest strategies that will positively impact specific parts of their pedagogies. Instructional coaches are also challenged to ensure that new teachers are implementing those instructional strategies and, most of all, are understanding both the purpose of and execution of those techniques. This frees up time for the grade-level chairpersons, as well as other mentor teachers, to help support in various ways such as assisting with the structure and completion of teacher-related responsibilities, aiding in the compliance of all school procedures and protocols, and balancing the dynamics of professional duties and personal obligations. "Mentor teachers serve as very important cornerstones in reducing novice teacher attrition and the willingness for our new teachers to leave our school" stated Mrs. Lyons. School administrators put various events in place at the request of the teacher leaders based on observations or acquired data, including monthly meetings that are exclusive to new teachers and the novice teacher system coordinator, bi-weekly self-assessment surveys for new teachers, and

professional development sessions catered to the data from the surveys and/or observations conducted within a period of 20 school days.

While every faculty member at the site location does not have a direct role in the system for reducing novice teacher attrition, it is the expectation of the school administration that everyone be adequately trained and familiar with it, as well as various team-building methods to aid novice teachers in support of a culture that promotes student achievement and the success of all educators. "As a faculty, I think we all do a good job of embracing new teachers and providing that guidance for them to be successful. It's not just up to the veteran teachers involved with the program. It's up to all of us to actively contribute" expressed Faith Frazier, a mentor teacher at the site location. Katherine Knox, the assistant principal at the site location, furthered this sentiment by saying,

> We often ask our school leadership team and other faculty members to participate in the process of helping new teachers. Not necessarily by being mentors, but by supporting them whenever possible. We also ask our staff members to notice some of the great things our novice teachers are doing. They report these things to the novice teacher program coordinator, who reports regularly on the progress of the novice teachers, including all glows and grows, and gives suggestions on how we can help them. That information is then communicated back out to the mentor teachers and instructional coaches, while the strategies for improving instructional capacity are communicated to all faculty members. We also organize monthly faculty meetings where the good works of novice teachers are highlighted, just so we can give them shout outs.

In addition to discussing the procedures of the novice teacher attrition program, educational leaders were also able to articulate the impact of the system on the decisions of novice teachers

to remain at the site location and the effect of the increased retention on school culture (see Table 2).

Figure 1

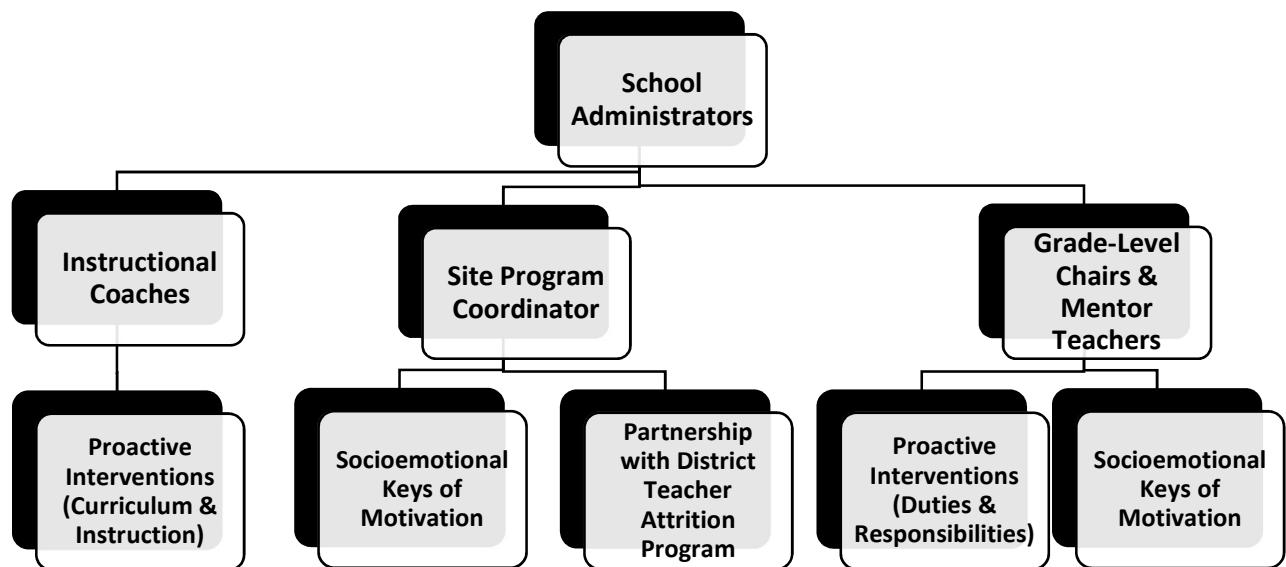*Site Location Novice Teacher Attrition Program Components*

Table 2

Leaders' Perception of Novice Teacher Attrition Program Impact on Novice Teacher Retention

Participant Name	Does System Impact <u>Novice</u> Teacher Attrition/ Retention?	Does System Impact <u>Overall</u> Teacher Retention?	Reasons for Retention	Impact of Retention on School Culture
Faith Frazier	Yes	Yes	• "We do a good job of embracing new teachers and guiding them"	• "Fosters a positive learning environment" • "Re-ignites veteran teachers' passion for learning" • "Helps maintain a high morale among teachers"
Serena Simpson	Yes	No	• "They feel like they are learning and growing as educators" • "New teachers feel good knowing they can fail and grow in a safe space"	• "Keeping new teachers makes other teachers want to stay"
Tracy Tucker	Yes	Yes	• "New teachers stay because of the team they have and the people they are working with" • "A strong sense of trust with colleagues and administration" • "New teachers really feel appreciated here"	• "Helps to develop positive relationships among colleagues"
Katherine Knox	Yes	Yes	• "Solid relationships formed with colleagues around the school building" • "Professional growth experienced while working here"	• "Fresh ideas from new teachers help to spark creativity in veteran teachers" • "New teachers bring excitement to the school building"

Participant Name	Does System Impact Novice Teacher Attrition/ Retention?	Does System Impact Overall Teacher Retention?	Reasons for Retention	Impact of Retention on School Culture
Laura Lyons	Yes	Yes	• "Novice teachers know this is a judgement-free zone and are comfortable asking for help"	• "Veteran teachers can learn from the success of novice teachers" • "Maintains consistency in educational practices of school" • "Solidifies trust between school and community stakeholders"

Proactive interventions.

The first theme to emerge involved educational leaders recognizing past or current

vocational barriers communicated by novice teachers and implementing proactive interventions

to assist prior to the further development of teacher attrition. In order for beginning educators to

become better acclimated and flourish during their first three years in the profession, defined

interventions must be in place to assist with deficiencies, such as inefficient classroom

management strategies, and provide effective practices to stimulate teacher growth and self-

efficacy (Hirsch, Lloyd, & Kennedy, 2019). Additionally, as stated by Mrs. Frazier, "Novice

teachers can really get overwhelmed a lot of the time. School and district administration should

keep working to incorporate specific practices to help provide guidance to them." The remainder

of this section will examine a few challenges experienced by the novice teachers in the study and

how certain components of the novice teacher attrition program effectively continues to resolve

these issues.

In accordance with the existing literature, all participants in the study were able to clearly

illustrate various areas of difficulty typically faced by teachers during their first year in the field

of education. Specifically, several participants referenced inadequate course content knowledge, teacher workload, and time management as a few complications commonly encountered by new teachers during their first year. "One of the most difficult parts is becoming more familiar with the content while you are teaching it; studying every day, then trying to figure out how I can teach it to my students. It's a lot of trial and error. And then, I am also trying to learn how to become a teacher" said Rebecca Rice, a first-year teacher at the site location. "Adjusting to the workload is very frustrating for a new teacher. During my first year, I just remember being upset and confused. I felt like I could not complete all of my tasks at work and have free time to myself at home. It was very stressful. I almost quit teaching" stated Jackie Jacobs, a transitional veteran teacher at the site location. "Being able to balance the instructional part of it, along with other added responsibilities, and still show student growth in your assigned content areas is especially hard for first-year teachers" expressed Tracy Tucker, one of the grade-level chairpersons at the site location. The greatest amount of negative experiences that were identified centered around novice teachers being able to execute the traditional duties and responsibilities of an educator outside of direct classroom management and instruction. In addition to direct responsibilities associated with the classroom environment, novice educators in the study acknowledged the actions of completing tasks assigned by district administration, organization of daily tasks, executing school initiatives, and effectively communicating with parents as being the most prevalent elements in creating perceptions of overwhelming working conditions. Amelia Austin, a first-year teacher at the site location, echoed this sentiment through sharing her viewpoint of her current teaching obligations as a novice educator,

It's hard to keep pace when you have to attend a lot of faculty meetings, county

meetings, and grade-level meetings. Then, you still have to learn content, write lesson

plans, and call parents. It's difficult to keep up with the large amount of kids we have and do all of that stuff. And it's especially hard because I'm new.

Being inadequately prepared to implement direct instructional strategies in the classroom environment and the ability to effectively teach specific areas of content in their curriculum was slated as the next highest area of apprehension for new teachers. Content-based instructional deficiencies, which were recognized by the novice teachers during their first few weeks in the profession, included a steep lack of knowledge regarding the curriculum for their prescribed subject, having to learn course content as the semester progressed, and the inability to create a comfortable pace for delivering course content to students. The final obstacle mentioned by the novice teachers in the study involved the influence of the teaching profession on their personal lives outside of work. "There were definitely some days where I went home and cried. It can get very depressing and overwhelming" stated Mrs. Austin. These effects included, but were not limited to, elevated stress levels, increased physical sickness, diminished personal relationships with family and friends, growing pessimism, and negative self-efficacy. When recalling their experiences as novice educators, the transitional veteran teachers echoed these views through the description of associated struggles within their previous placements, which eventually concluded in each teacher leaving their former work locations.

Based on data gathered from participant interviews, the novice teacher attrition program proactively employs procedures to regularly and effectively resolve the various areas of difficulty faced by novice teachers. Issues surrounding the inability of a novice educator to complete typical responsibilities outside of direct classroom instruction are addressed through the deployment of mentor teachers and other grade-level team members who assist with suggesting and demonstrating proper organizational practices with new teachers. The

overarching objective is to focus on these areas with specific modules aimed at proactive preparation, time management, one-on-one interventions when necessary, and heavy progress monitoring for the first three months of the school year. Circumstances involving the inability of a novice teacher to implement instructional strategies and teach certain content in the classroom environment are addressed through strategically utilizing school instructional coaches to assist with specified content area concerns based on formative assessment data acquired from the classes of the new educators. More specifically, the school administrators at the site location reported providing assistance through delegating certain tasks and responsibilities to content-specific coaches, which included being responsible for surveying and observing novice teachers on a consistent basis, providing constructive feedback from all received data and observations, modeling the desired instructional strategies in an active classroom setting, and guiding the teacher toward additional instructional resources and research-based instructional practices to assist with any similar issues that may arise in the future. These system-based interventions are normally conducted prior to a request for assistance from the novice teacher, which was reported as being beneficial to suppressing negative feelings of attrition within the new educators. The school administrators, due to their background in instructional coaching, also directly assist with this practice of boosting the instructional morale of identified novice teachers. However, this usually only occurs at the request of the novice teacher program coordinator, displaying the school administrators' use of autonomy, promotion, and trust to facilitate the system. "We do our best to provide a lot of strategic support in the areas of academics and classroom management through the various specialists in our building. We also try to provide direct support from administration as well" stated Mrs. Knox.

Consequently, during and after their participation in the novice teacher attrition program, the transitional veteran teachers identified a sharp increase in their students' understanding of the course content throughout the matriculation of the school year and on the culminating Georgia Milestones End of Grade exam. They also described an increase in their overall, individual instructional capacities due to successfully conquering many perceived areas of struggle acquired prior to participating in the novice teacher program (see Table 3). Lastly, concerns involving the negative impact of the teaching profession on the personal life of a novice educator are addressed through established practices that included monthly new teacher meetings, one-on-one mentorship conferences, grade-level team meetings, and scheduled conferences with school administrators. As Brittney Benjamin, a first-year teacher at the site location, stated,

> Being surrounded by people like my grade-level chair or by my mentor, who is also over the new teacher program, helps a lot because they show me that I am not going through this alone. That helps me to keep a good attitude, push me forward, and say that I would stay here for another year or so.

Table 3

Novice/Transitional Veteran Teacher Perceptions of Program Impact on Areas of Improvement

Participant Name	Identified Areas of Improvement	Evidence of Improvement	Teacher Leader(s) Credited for Improvement
Amelia Austin	• "It's hard to teach every kid when I have so many with different personalities" • "I know my pacing is behind. I'm behind on everything" • "I have to use class time sometimes to call parents"	• "I don't feel like quitting, like I did before" • "My students are starting to do better on their assessments"	• Grade-Level Chairperson • Instructional Coach
Brittney Benjamin	• "There are so many responsibilities that trickled down that I didn't know about" • "In the beginning, I did feel a little overwhelmed, but now I am more comfortable with what my day is supposed to look like"	• "My collaboration with my team has improved and I know what I am teaching every day" • "I feel more confident in how I am teaching reading/math and how much better my students are responding to me"	• Program Coordinator • School Administration
Rebecca Rice	• "One of the most difficult parts is becoming more familiar with the content while you are teaching it"	• "My own confidence grew, and I have been learning how to be a better teacher as I am teaching my students" • "I have seen an increase in test scores, ability, and confidence of my students"	• Mentor Teacher • School Administration

Participant Name	Identified Areas of Improvement	Evidence of Improvement	Teacher Leader(s) Credited for Improvement
Jackie Jacobs	"I didn't even understand the standards and how to teach them" "I didn't know how to teach strategies based on my students quizzes and tests" "Adjusting to the workload is very frustrating"	"Data talks helped me target what to specifically teach my students" "I began to gain much more confidence in what I was teaching" "My students' math and reading scores on the Georgia Milestones exam were much better than everyone, including me"	- Mentor Teacher - School Administration
Wanda Winters	"I had no idea how to pull out specific concepts from student data to help with their strengths and weaknesses"	"I've learned a lot about reading/ interpreting data from my students and how to apply it to the classroom" "A lot of positive improvement has shown in their test scores"	School Administration

Socioemotional keys of motivation.

The second theme to appear involved educational leaders deploying socioemotional strategies to guide the goal-setting process for novice teachers in an effort to increase the intrinsic motivation of the new educators. Socioemotional learning, derived from the concepts of social interactions and cooperation with others, is an important resource for developing interpersonal skills and maintaining positive mental health (Venegas, 2019). The mental health and wellness of teachers has become a very important topic of discussion in modern education and has shown to have an immense impact on student and teacher achievement, especially in environments with large populations of high-needs students (Hindman & Bustamante, 2019).

Moreover, the moods and perceptions of teachers are heavily influenced by internal goals and motivational factors established by the organizational culture of their school (Uçar & İpek, 2019). "Giving proper training to new teachers allows them to become self-sufficient quicker and more motivated to excel in the classroom." stated Mrs. Tucker. The remainder of this section will depict the use of specific components of the novice teacher attrition program to boost beginning teacher motivation through the employment of social-emotional strategies and goal setting.

One feature of the novice teacher attrition program is the ability to detect, highlight, and refine the short- and long-term goals of a novice teacher and utilize these ambitions as continuous keys of motivation during his/her first year in the profession. This practice is accomplished through the facilitation of authentic dialogue centered around the personal interests and desires of novice teachers, which takes place during the designated pre-planning period prior to the start of the school year. To help facilitate these conversations, the principal recalled and chronicled a book study she conducted on two separate occurrences with the school administrative team and faculty members. Primarily involving the practice of effectively recognizing the different ways people understand and emotionally connect to one another, also referred to as love languages (Chapman, 2015), each school administrator credited the novice teacher attrition program with pinpointing the personal motivator(s) for every novice teacher and continuously nurturing those specific interests throughout the remainder of the school term. "We all have different love languages, we all need to make sure we take care of both our professional and personal self. As a building leader, I felt the necessity to tap into the specific needs and goals of our teachers" stated Mrs. Lyons

Once all goals are determined, a sequential plan of action is created to help that teacher target and become proficient in these areas. The most mentioned professional goals included

greater student achievement, organization, classroom management, promotions, and/or gaining more professional knowledge to continuously grow within the occupation. "One of my personal goals for this year is to learn more about policies in education and how they apply to the classroom. I want to learn how to implement them and how they affect kids. I plan to get my master's degree in education policy one day, so I think learning that information would help" expressed Ms. Benjamin. Additionally, the novice teacher attrition program seeks to stimulate social-emotional goals that include greater notoriety for novice teachers among peers and administration, external incentives for outstanding performances in specified areas, and increased feelings of self-efficacy and personal contribution to the culture of the school. "Helping novice teachers create and realize their own goals helps to create a sense of purpose. It keeps them going from day to day. It gives them a reason to come to work every day" stated Serena Simpson, one of the instructional coaches at the site location.

This practice of pinpointing novice teacher motivation was thoroughly reviewed in one of the attended mentorship meetings within the scope of the study. As Mrs. Tucker expressed,

The key to keeping novice teachers is through mentorship meetings, and we meet a lot. It helps new teachers know what to expect, what not to expect, and how to create realistic goals. It shows them what they can do and cannot do, where they need the most improvement. And it happens with someone they are comfortable with, someone who they are not scared to be around and with whom they can be themselves. That is key, especially for new teachers coming straight out of college.

During the session, which occurred toward the end of the first semester of the school year, the mentor teacher highlighted three short-term goals and two long-term objectives that were created by the novice teacher during the pre-planning period, prior to the start of the school term. The

short-term goals included increasing creativity in lesson planning, simplifying differentiation procedures by using small-group instruction, and implementing more structured classroom management procedures. Long-term objectives discussed during the mentorship meeting included attaining specified pass-rate percentages on the Georgia Milestones End of Grade exam and being able to re-deliver innovative instructional strategies to other novice teachers or veteran faculty members through professional development sessions. The mentor teacher discussed the progression of some of the short- and long-term goals, while also offering different strategies and scenarios intended to stimulate the thought process of the novice educator and help her create personalized approaches for accomplishing the short-term objectives. Consequently, the novice teacher was able to modify the established plan of action and appeared to be more motivated to resolve a few obstacles she had been experiencing and progress through the remainder of the school year.

Partnership of school and district novice teacher systems.

The third theme to surface involved educational leaders expanding the use of the site level novice teacher attrition program, in partnership with the school district's new teacher program, to assist beginning educators with adjusting to the specific culture of the site location. High-needs schools often face the greatest amount of specialized issues concerning social justice, collaboration and trust between faculty/community members, and teachers who are in constant need of quality instructional practices, resources, and interventions (Weiner & Holder, 2019). "All students can learn. No two students are the same, though. Some students come in every day with their own, personal struggles. We have to help our new teachers recognize the appropriate strategies to help those students succeed" explained Mrs. Simpson. The remainder of this section will detail how the site- and district-level novice teacher initiatives successfully cooperate to

limit attrition in new educators and how the expansion of the site-level novice teacher attrition

program provides a specialized impact that further limits novice teacher attrition.

All novice educators in the study acknowledged the county new teacher program as being

beneficial to their pedagogies, with a collective emphasis on the program assisting in their

assimilation to the school district. The shared, most advantageous sentiment included the ability

to discuss varying strategies with numerous veteran teachers from other schools in the county.

As Mrs. Austin said,

> I believe the county-based program is beneficial. They give us the kind of help where we
>
> can talk to veteran teachers about what happens in our school and our classroom. They
>
> give us advice and strategies that may work. I think having those different outlets gives
>
> us a better picture of teaching.

Documentation acquired from the school district supported the cooperative efforts of the school

and county toward reducing novice teacher attrition, with district records revealing a 6% increase

in total teacher retention at the site location and a 2% increase in novice teacher retention across

the county. This data does not include the specific novice teacher retention rate for the site

location and only consists of novice teachers that have completed a four-year educational degree

program, which excludes teachers that are currently partaking in alternative certification

methods. Conversely, the county-based program also appeared to exhibit an impression

of minimal impact on novice teacher attrition at the site location and these teachers' decisions to

remain at their schools. All novice teachers disclosed that the county-based new teacher program

was not as impactful as the novice teacher attrition program being implemented at the site

location. More specifically, the county-based program was perceived as more of a hindrance that

consistently confined them to meetings and took away valuable instructional time in the

classroom. Ms. Benjamin shared her viewpoint of attending county-based meetings as a novice educator by stating,

> The county-based meetings are a little overwhelming. Not necessarily because they happen often, but because it's a lot of material and I am still just trying to learn how to be a teacher. Most of the time, I don't know how to interpret the things I learn at those meetings or I try the strategies in the classroom, and they don't work, which is frustrating.

Furthermore, it appeared as if the specialized initiatives and culture-building practices employed by the site location have a much larger impact on decreasing novice teacher attrition. Mrs. Rice provided more in-depth detail regarding this logic by saying,

> I think the county program is a good program for some teachers that really need the help, but not for everyone. I feel like it is actually more detrimental because we tend to get our most important experiences in the classroom, not in county-based meetings. And we can't really learn how to get better or be effective if we are always out of the classroom for a whole day or a half day. That's detrimental to my students. Also, county officials are trying to show us a lot of different philosophies and ways of teaching, which is great. But, most of the time, we spend a whole hour just talking about how to make kids feel comfortable in the classroom and suggested practices to help with this. Most of the strategies we learn are great in theory, but not in actual situations and are not applicable to our specific environment. Each place is different. If I were to go to another school, my experience would be nothing like what I am going through now. I think that the new teacher program should be catered more to the school and should be more department-based than county-based.

Additionally, all novice teachers were able to convey the influence of the school's novice teacher attrition program on their top reasons for remaining at the site location, while also providing their top reasons for a potential exit (see Table 4).

Both transitional veteran teachers, when recalling their experiences as novice educators at the site location, conveyed a deep appreciation for the school's novice teacher attrition program and the county's new teacher program, mostly due to a lack of a viable system in their previous schools and school districts. They also acknowledged that the potential presence of an organized novice teacher program, among other improvements, could have convinced them to stay at their previous placements (see Table 5). "If they had a novice teacher program at my previous school, it may have caused that location to be a lot more organized. I really believe a lot of us would have stayed there then" expressed Wanda Winters, a transitional veteran teacher at the site location. Ms. Jacobs communicated her gratitude for the school- and county-based novice teacher programs by saying,

> I feel like the county program helped me to acclimate to the expectations of the school district. We learned a variety of personalized learning techniques that we could implement in the classroom to help students learn. But I also really appreciated the program here at the school. It really helped me to become a better teacher for my students.

There was no mention of a greater affinity for the county-based new teacher program over the school-based one, or vice versa. However, both transitional veteran teachers credited the system at the site location with increasing their instructional effectiveness in the classroom, as well as the achievement of their students. These vantage points helped to establish the increasing significance and effectiveness of the school-based novice teacher attrition program, while

simultaneously displaying the need for the county-based new teacher program to work in partnership with the local school plan of action.

Table 4

Novice Teacher Perceptions of Program on Novice Teacher Retention

Participant Name	Would <u>School</u> Novice Teacher Program Impact Your Retention?	Would <u>County</u> Novice Teacher Program Impact Your Retention?	Reasons for Retention	Impact of Retention on School Culture
Amelia Austin	Yes	Yes	• "Knowing I have co-workers that I can go to and ask for help" • "Going to administration and knowing that they're backing me is so helpful"	• "Just coming out of school, we have learned newer strategies that could help the school" • "New teacher classrooms/ideas rejuvenate older teachers and make them want to try harder"
Brittney Benjamin	Yes	No	• "The relationships with my team and mentor teacher have greatly helped me" • "The school administration does a really good job of helping us understand why the strategies we get are helping"	• "Keeping teachers with new ideas would help everybody else to see things differently" • "If a school is able to keep new teachers, then you would be able to develop the culture of learning at that school"
Rebecca Rice	Yes	No	• "If I were to hate my co-workers, I would be working at a new school already" • "The atmosphere here allows me to learn and grow"	• "Would greatly help student learning" • "Would really impact older teachers' methods"

Table 5

Transitional Veteran Teacher Perceptions of Factors for Retention (Previous/Current Placements)

Participant Name	Geographical Characteristics (Previous Placement)	Ethnic/Economic Characteristics (Previous Placement)	Top Reasons for Exiting (Previous Placement)	Top Reasons for Retention (Current Placement)
Jackie Jacobs	Rural	High minority/ High poverty	• "I wasn't learning much, and I was not trained to teach my students" • "I just felt like administration was talking about me, saying things about me to each other"	• "I always get help in areas I need" • "Just working with my mentor teacher made me want to stay" • "The strategies I have learned here have made me become more comfortable teaching"
Wanda Winters	Urban	High poverty	• "A lot of times, I was asked to do things that I felt I should not have to do or that I thought was unnecessary"	• "I would say administration, across the board, makes you feel appreciated" • "I intend to look into becoming an administrator; I like how this school can help with that goal"

Administrative support and collegial collaboration.

The final theme to emerge involved educational leaders building a true culture among their faculty members that is framed on a foundation of administrative support and collegial collaboration. Moreover, the concepts of a supportive school administration and collegial collaboration were unanimously mentioned by all participants as the most important components

of the novice teacher attrition program at the site location. Improving the social capital of teachers, through the consistent infusion of support and collaborative practices, plays an integral role in limiting novice teacher attrition (Cross & Thomas, 2017). The coordinator of the novice teacher attrition program at the site location, as well as the principal and assistant principal, are primarily responsible for performing various acts of support and positive reinforcement. "Our administrators do a great job of leading by example. It could be in classroom observations, one-on-one conferences, or calling parents. They really help and support us when we need it" stated Mrs. Simpson. These actions most notably include constantly checking on the overall well-being of the novice teachers, providing consistent encouragement to mentor/veteran teachers, delivering resources, approving professional development sessions, and motivational tactics communicated through the mentor and veteran teachers based on acquired feedback and data. "We, as building leaders, need to create and maintain a culture of appreciation, encouragement, and affirmation. It helps remind teachers that someone is in their corner fighting for them" expressed Mrs. Lyons. The remainder of this section will feature the perceptions of the study participants and how specified components of the novice teacher attrition program contribute to the maintenance of a school culture highlighted by interconnected support and collaboration among faculty members.

The transitional veteran teachers pinpointed a lack of administrative support and collaboration, as well as a plethora of associated factors within that particular category, as the primary reason for leaving their last placement(s). One veteran teacher categorized her experiences as being filled with paranoia associated with her principal, a severe lack of proper professional development, and disconnected relationships between new teachers and school administration. According to Ms. Jacobs,

I really just felt like administration was always talking about me, saying things about me to each other. The sad part is, when she (the administrator) came in to observe me once, she didn't even know my name or what grade I was teaching. Between that, and feeling like I was failing as a teacher, I honestly felt really bad. I just felt that I was not trained to teach those students.

Conversely, the novice teacher attrition program at the site location invoked considerably different moods and perspectives from participants in the study. The novice teachers at the site location conveyed emotions that exhibited a true support from school administration. They felt the administrators were there to assist in addressing important issues outside of those that can be handled by their colleagues. "The administration here is very hands-on. If I need anything, I know I can go to either of them. That is one thing that makes me want to stay here" stated Mrs. Rice. Transitional veteran teachers described the school administrators at the site location as being very integral in establishing a strong support group within the novice teacher attrition program. "I would say that our administration is great overall. We have a very good principal. She has high expectations, but she is fair. If you start struggling, in or outside of the classroom, she helps support you in improving and meeting your goals" said Ms. Winters. The teacher leaders classified their school administration as being the foundation of the novice teacher attrition program through constant, genuine acts of support. Specifically, as Mrs. Tucker stated, "We have a fabulous support system through the administration at our school. As a result, I believe a lot of teachers really say, 'This is where I want to be.'" The school administrators at the site location described their role of collaborating with and supporting the teacher leaders as being the most contributing factor for the success of the novice teacher attrition program. From facilitating the different components of the process to providing consistent words of inspiration

to new teachers, the school principal and assistant principal are there to ensure all educators involved in the novice teacher program feel motivated and encouraged. As stated by Ms. Knox, "We try to provide a lot of professional learning opportunities for our new teachers, but we also support through writing little notes and providing encouraging words to them as they are going through this process, which we know is hard."

The novice teachers also exhibited a real appreciation for the constant guidance and assistance received from grade-level members and colleagues within the school. Moreover, the novice and transitional veteran teachers highlighted the consistent level of collegial collaboration experienced both within and outside of the work environment, including events such as grade-level meetings, new teacher meetings, faculty meetings, and one-on-one support sessions. Ms. Benjamin further elaborated,

> We as new teachers find it beneficial to sit here with other new teachers and say 'I had a really bad day. Maybe it's something we all did?' or 'what did you do in your class that really worked?' or 'what did the students in your class do that was crazy? Maybe the same thing is happening with my kids, what can we change?'

Subsequently, all novice teachers displayed emotions of comfort and a sense of belonging when referring to these types of events. All three teacher leaders described the collective efforts of collaboration by mentor educators, teacher leaders, and veteran faculty members as being the most essential element in maintaining the continuity of the novice teacher attrition program. Specifically, the teacher leaders pinpointed those individuals who actively participate in and have a direct working relationship with the new educators in the novice teacher program, including mentor teachers and instructional coaches, as being the most impactful. This aspect of collegial collaboration, ingrained in their professional pedagogies as novice teachers, has shown

to be a continuing characteristic within the transitional veteran teachers, which was also stated as an ongoing rationale for their decision to remain at the site location. The actions of veteran teachers who do not directly participate in the novice teacher attrition program also continues to play an integral part in persuading new teachers to stay at the site location. As stated by Mrs. Simpson,

> It is up to all older teachers to mentor and help the young ones. We can help take the load off of them. We let them know that we are here to do whatever we need to help them, whether it's professional development, just listening to them, or offering a little feedback as needed. We have to let them know that they are not going through this alone and that we all are going to make it through this together.

Accordingly, due to this overarching level of support received from nearly every faculty member, all novice and transitional veteran teachers reported feelings of loyalty and satisfaction when referring to their experiences at the site location.

Limitations

Limitations in case study research should be assumed and accepted as a fundamental portion of the research process, with benefits that very often complement other forms of research (Yin, 2018). There were several limitations that became visibly present as the research in this case study progressed. The most noticeable limitation surrounded the sample group of participants being only comprised of core content area teachers. This was not a specific exclusion as a result of the target sample criteria. Rather, the principal did not offer a suggestion for an individual employed in the exceptional education or fine arts content areas to serve as a potential participant in the study. The participants in the study also consisted of all female teachers and educational leaders from the site location. The principal recommended one male

novice teacher and one male instructional coach for participation in the study. However, the male novice teacher declined to participate, and the male instructional coach did not reply to the initial or subsequent recruitment email.

The school site for this case study was limited to the elementary school setting, which is considerably different from the middle and high school environments. Additionally, the study was limited to educators employed in the public-school setting, instead of also being open to those employed in the private-school setting. Lastly, all interviews and observations were conducted immediately after the conclusion of regular school hours at the site location instead of before regular school hours or throughout the school day, which could have impacted the moods, mentalities, and response times of the participants.

Discussion

Novice educators are more likely to acquire major feelings of attrition and leave the profession within their first three years in the field of education (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2019). Based on the findings of this study, a very solid addendum can be included with this sentiment and the existing literature associated with the concept of novice teacher attrition. The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the specific organizational systems being implemented by educational leaders at high-needs schools to reduce attrition in novice teachers. Furthermore, once the success of the organizational systems had been realized, the study also sought to examine the lasting effect of the novice teacher attrition program on new and veteran teacher retention at the high-needs school.

A thorough and extensive review of the literature revealed many of the catalysts and indicators for rising attrition in novice educators at high-needs schools, including inadequate teacher preparation, limited training opportunities, unsatisfactory working conditions,

unsupportive school administration, and excessively large occupational responsibilities (Cross & Thomas, 2017). Additionally, as Mrs. Tucker stated,

> The first year can be a lot for a new teacher to take in. You have to do a lot coming in the door and learn even more as the year goes on. From planning lessons and attending grade-level meetings, to contacting parents and managing your classroom. It can be a lot for anyone to handle.

The justification for this specific study was to add to the existing body of literature on novice teacher attrition by informing educational leaders of the precise steps for reducing novice teacher attrition in high-needs school through using organizational systems. Organizational theory and general system theory, serving as the theoretical framework and sub-framework within this study, contributed scholarly literature to reinforce the methods portion of this research. Information retrieved from participant interviews and observations produced the responses that addressed the guiding questions of the study. The following two sections provide a comprehensive analysis and discussion of the connection between the findings of the study and the current literature surrounding this topic. The final section will present important implications that were revealed as a result of the study.

Impact of successful system implementation.

The first guiding question of the study inquired about the specific systems and procedures utilized by educational leaders at high-needs schools to reduce attrition in their novice teachers. Based on data collected from participant interviews and mentorship observation conferences, four themes emerged that acted as resolutions to this particular question. Proactive interventions of assistance were established as the foundation for specifically targeting and improving the instructional practices of novice teachers. Socioemotional methods were employed to help

novice teachers create goals that sought to increase their intrinsic motivation. A successful partnership between the school-level and district-level novice teacher attrition structures was revealed to collectively resolve specialized concerns at the local school. Lastly, a faculty culture built on a foundation of administrative support and collegial collaboration was discovered to be the most influential feature of the novice teacher attrition program at the site location. All four themes will be further discussed in context with their relationship to the existing literature on novice teacher attrition.

There is a deep need for educational leaders to enact practices and procedures that aid in the professional growth of novice teachers (Newburgh, 2019). Proactive assistance should be given to new teachers that have been observed experiencing difficulties while attempting to deliver course content or employ instructional strategies in the classroom, which would help reduce attrition in these educators (Sutcher et al., 2019). All participants provided testimony that agreed with this principle and were able to reflect on specific actions within the novice teacher attrition program that aligned with this statement. Those particular actions included novice teachers receiving proactive assistance from the mentor teachers, grade-level department chairs, and instructional coaches at the school to assist with improving in areas that ranged from instructional effectiveness in the classroom to workload management. "We have to constantly stay ahead of the potential frustrations that our new teachers are experiencing in the classroom. We also have to be able to provide quality feedback and guidance for those situations in a timely fashion. It helps our new teachers grow and get better" stated Mrs. Frazier. Additionally, providing professional development and assistance in the essential areas of a teacher's daily routine at an early stage in his/her career creates positive experiences and may later influence that educator's commitment to remain in the profession (Renbarger & Davis, 2019).

Educational leaders should seek to understand the goals and aspirations of new teachers shortly after they enter the profession, which could also provide valuable insight into reducing early attrition within these educators (Janzen & Cranston, 2015). These goals should be continuously referenced to help motivate novice teachers and provide a reason for them to remain in the profession (Rinke & Mawhinney, 2017). The study highlighted actions taken by educational leaders at the site location to help novice teachers identify goals that would motivate them to continue through the school year. The majority of these efforts are conducted in novice teacher mentorship meetings, where an appointed teacher mentor facilitates dialogue surrounding short-term goals, long-term goals, and motivational aspirations that the novice teacher approves. Subsequently, throughout the remainder of the school year, the novice teacher and mentor consistently refer to these goals and motivations in recurring meetings that serve to stimulate the new teacher's interest in completing the school term and remaining at the school. "Helping new teachers accomplish their goals and keeping them motivated throughout the process is a big part of what we do as leaders in education. It's our responsibility and the reason why we are here" expressed Mrs. Lyons. Accordingly, a thorough understanding of novice teacher goals and motivations must be acquired to assist in reducing the future attrition that will be experienced by these educators (Mansfield & Beltman, 2014).

School and district leaders should consistently cooperate to implement an effective systems approach that builds the organizational capacities of local schools (Sanders, 2014). Like those in other countries, local schools and school districts across the United States have begun working together to enact systems aimed at reducing novice teacher attrition (Craig, 2017). The study revealed the collective efforts of the site-level and district-level programs in reducing novice teacher attrition at the local school level. Additionally, while all participants were in

agreement of the district-level program's contributions and utility, the site-level novice teacher attrition program was described by all novice/transitional veteran teachers as being more specialized toward their professional needs and development at that particular school. "The new teacher program provided by the county has definitely helped me transition into becoming a teacher. I just think the program we have here has helped me grow more as an educator and learn more about my capabilities at this particular school" said Mrs. Rice. A successful partnership between school- and district-level initiatives will culminate in realized success for both parties and a thriving relationship that will remain in place for a long time (Mania-Singer, 2017).

Authentic administrative support and collaboration with colleagues both play fundamental roles in reducing attrition acquired by novice teachers (Warsame & Valles, 2018). Moreover, the combination of these elements has shown to generate a positive and specified impact on effectively reducing the attrition of novice teachers employed in high-needs schools (Tyler, 2016). All participants concluded that the continuous support exhibited by school administration was a driving factor for the success of the structure at the site location. "I've always felt very supported by our school administration. Knowing that I am going to have the high level of support and backing of the administrators here is very refreshing. It makes me want to stay" stated Mrs. Austin. Furthermore, as expressed by Ms. Winters, "Our administrators go out of their way to create a positive, encouraging, and inviting environment where people feel supported. If all educational leaders could manage to do that, people would tend to stick around. A lot more people would stay." Similarly, all participants also credited the constant collaborative actions among colleagues as being integral to reducing attrition in novice teachers at the site location. "Having the ability to always bounce ideas off of my mentor or grade-level team members has been very important to me and my growth as a teacher this year. It has definitely

made an impact on my development. I probably would not be in such a good headspace if it weren't for that" said Ms. Benjamin. "I love my co-workers. I love collaborating. They really help me enjoy what I do every day and help me get through the rough times; the times I want to quit" stated Ms. Jacobs. The continued utilization of acts highlighted by support from educational leaders and collaboration with colleagues helps to further reduce the attrition experienced by novice educators (Clandinin et al., 2015).

Impact of increased novice teacher retention.

The second guiding question of the study investigated the impact of the successful systems and procedures within the novice teacher attrition program on the retention of novice and veteran teachers at high-needs schools. Based on data collected from participant interviews, the implementation of these organizational systems appears to greatly influence the retention of both novice and veteran teachers. Moreover, all participants cited the retention of novice teachers as a primary factor of the continued instructional evolution of the school and a key persuasive element for veteran teachers to remain at the site location. The remainder of this section will further analyze and discuss the effect of increased novice teacher retention on keeping veteran educators at high-needs schools.

Teacher attrition has become an established force that can affect any educator regardless of professional maturity, background, or years of experience in the profession (Dupriez et al., 2016). Novice teachers, with three or less completed years in the field of education, are much more likely to experience higher levels of attrition and leave the teaching profession (Newton, Rivero, Fuller, & Dauter, 2018). Conversely, veteran teachers are far less likely to succumb to factors of attrition as they continually progress through their careers, which is mostly attributed to the quantity of work contributed to the occupation, their overall job satisfaction, and the

looming vision of an eventual retirement from the profession (Admiraal et al., 2019). "This job can be stressful for veteran teachers too. However, I think when we can look back on the good experiences and how we've helped our students become successful, it is not so bad. We just keep going" stated Mrs. Tucker. According to Patterson (2019), veteran teachers, who are classified as possessing six or more completed years in the field of education, are more likely to transfer to a different educational institution within the same school district than completely leave the profession altogether, with a specific emphasis on those employed in high-needs schools. Consequently, based on the findings of the study, the retention of novice teachers produces two quality factors that attribute to retaining veteran educators in high-needs schools, which includes the continuous evolution of the instructional culture and ever-present aura of excitement within the faculty culture at the school.

Novice teachers often perceive their actions and ideas as impactful contributors within the instructional and working culture of faculty members at a school (Meristo & Eisenschmidt, 2014). These perceptions could be credited to coursework completed in teacher preparation programs, which may not directly provide adequate teaching experiences in specific environments but do an exceptional job of delivering instructional strategies to new teachers that are more specialized for educating today's youth (Cross & Thomas, 2017). All participants in the study agreed that the continued retention of novice teachers allows the presence of modern, research-based instructional practices to prosper within the school. Specifically, the school administrators were the most vocal when describing the perceived impact of novice teachers on the instructional culture of the site location. "I think that because they bring in fresh ideas, veteran teachers look at them and say 'Ok, this is what's new, this is the new, hot thing right now'" stated Ms. Knox. Additionally, the participants repeatedly stated that the constant

utilization of these newer ideas plays an important role in helping to evolve the instructional strategies of veteran teachers, which would result in increased academic achievement in their students and the increased desire for those educators to want to remain at the school. As Mrs. Lyons expressed,

New teachers come in with these ideas that give all teachers a bit of a spark and helps the veterans keep going. It helps veteran teachers see that novice teachers are being really successful and that veteran teachers can learn from them.

Continuing to cultivate the ideas of novice teachers can help propel the instructional culture of a school to new heights and dramatically increase the retention of its teachers for many years (Cheng & Szeto, 2016).

Novice teachers, with a specific emphasis on those seeking to become educational leaders, possess the ability to deliver a sensation of excitement to a school culture that could transform the perspectives of veteran educators (Szeto & Cheng, 2017). This renewed enthusiasm assists in creating and developing a school culture that targets student achievement as its central focus (Kelchtermans, 2017). Based on participant interviews, novice teachers typically bring a renewed level of enthusiasm accompanied by an optimistic attitude to the faculty culture of a school. Moreover, the novice teachers in the study inferred that these new vantage points continually create an exciting energy for the school environment that veteran teachers can use to progress through the school year. "New teacher classrooms and attitudes, particularly at the start of the school year, help to rejuvenate older teachers and make them want to try harder. I think older teachers want to stay in an environment like that" said Mrs. Rice. Additionally, according to Mrs. Simpson,

"New teachers come in with an energy that can be hard to lose for a while, because they

are normally fresh out of school. The enthusiasm they show is seen by everyone;

teachers, students, and parents included. If they can manage to get through the year with

the same attitude, their excitement can be infectious to veteran teachers and push them to

keep going"

Permitting this level of excitement to drive the faculty culture of a school could help educational

leaders promote an energetic, optimistic atmosphere that helps to widen the perspectives of their

faculty and retain all teachers under their care (Sinha & Hanuscin, 2017).

Implications for educational leaders.

The views and perspectives of the participants in this study provided insight into the

specific, routine procedures used by educational leaders in high-needs schools to reduce novice

teacher attrition. The findings of this study, in conjunction with current scholarly literature,

suggested several methods that can be used to accomplish this goal. Appropriately, the findings

revealed four themes for educational leaders to use as blueprints for effectively monitoring and

reducing novice teacher attrition in their schools. These themes include the following: (a)

establish proactive interventions to routinely assist novice educators, (b) employ the use of

socioemotional strategies to help novice teachers set goals that will intrinsically motivate them

throughout the duration of the school year, (c) expand the use of a novice teacher attrition

program at the local school level, in partnership with the same program at the school district

level, to help novice educators become acclimated to the specific culture of their school, and (d)

build a faculty culture that is solidified on a foundation of administrative support and collegial

collaboration. The purpose of this section is to provide specific suggestions to building- and

district-level administrators that will enable them to effectively address and reduce novice

teacher attrition in their local school locations. The precise implications for each theme, along with the benefits of continuously retaining novice teachers, will be discussed throughout the remainder of this section.

The predominant purpose of the highlighted novice teacher attrition program within this study is to identify potential causes of attrition in new teachers and provide proactive remedies to those situations. Moreover, the systems within the program help to targets specific areas of improvement for novice teachers and present quality feedback to help with instructional strategies. This practice helps to identify areas of growth in novice teachers and allows for potential problems to be resolved prior to an increase in associated attrition. School administrators should take the time to create a mentorship network in their schools with the primary focus of strengthening the instructional and administrative practices of novice teachers. Comprised of future educational leaders, these mentor teachers should serve as the first form of novice teacher remediation and would provide a constant checkpoint for novice educators that could help them understand the procedures and expectations of the school, while also minimizing the frustration that accompanies the introductory period of being new to the field of education. Employing this tactic would allow mentor teachers to acquire important leadership experiences through participating in regularly scheduled mentorship conferences and conducting periodic focus walk observations that highlight the strategies discussed in the mentorship meetings. School administrators would continuously benefit from facilitating a practice that is providing constant cultivation to novice teachers and future educational leaders, while also increasing faculty trust and increasing the eventual retention of all educators in the building. Novice teachers would also become more comfortable and confident in executing the required instructional-based practices that accompany the profession, while also acquiring a thorough

understanding of the positive impact these actions would have on their professional and personal experiences. By effectively implementing these particular systems, school administrators would not only hold new teachers accountable for fulfilling school- and district-level expectations, but also play a vital role in strengthening the individual self-efficacy and confidence levels of these educators.

Protocols within the novice teacher attrition program at the site location also strive to utilize socioemotional strategies to help novice teachers identify their short- and long-term goals during the early portion of their tenures in the field of education. Consequently, the successful employment of this strategy serves to provide a focused motivation that aids in continually growing and improving the professional pedagogies of beginning teachers. School administrators must strive to find the specific motives that drive the recurring moods and actions of novice teachers toward accomplishing their personal goals and staying in the profession. The first step includes administering an internal personality survey that focuses on assessing novice teacher interests and revealing their prime, personal motivators. Once the most prevalent motives have been discovered and acknowledged, school administrators should discuss the relevancy of these motivators with the novice teacher toward their teaching pedagogy and begin to outline goals for the school year. Additionally, school administrators should document these findings in the yearly evaluation process for the novice teacher so the chosen motives can be utilized throughout the school year to encourage the teacher to keep moving forward in accomplishing his/her goals.

Successfully completing this procedure would also allow mentor teachers and school administrators to effectively and consistently match novice teacher points of motivation with potential actions or initiatives being conducted at the school. Novice teachers primarily motivated by the concept of competition would receive challenges and tasks from educational

leaders that, if successfully completed, would result in the receipt of awards and public recognition at faculty meetings. Novice teachers primarily motivated by the concept of support would receive consistent phrases of affirmation and acts that signify encouragement. Novice teachers primarily motivated by the concept of promotion would receive access to experiences that intend to build leadership capacity in preparation for future endeavors within the realm of educational leadership. While matching the pre-determined novice teacher motive to the appropriate school action or initiative is ideal, the ultimate goal is to refrain from presenting an initiative that does not match with a teacher motive and cause a decrease in overall motivation level. This would include presenting an idea for a awards-based challenge to a novice teacher who is primarily motivated by acts of support, or continually providing unwarranted suggestions for improving teaching practices to a novice teacher who is primarily motivated by acts that assist with promotional aspirations. All aforementioned strategies would continuously display the appreciation that school administrators have for the novice teachers within their school and would seek to constantly combat the levels of attrition these teachers may be facing. Those leaders that are able to consistently accomplish this task will facilitate a sense of purpose in their newly assigned educators and increase the likelihood that these teachers grow into seasoned veterans who are more willing to continue their ambitious pursuit of accomplishing all attainable goals.

The collective combination of the site- and district-level novice teacher attrition programs assisted in acclimating the novice teachers in the study to the cultures of both the school and school district. While this partnership was able to display a level of success, there should be more attention and effort focused on swiftly helping novice teachers adjust to their assigned teaching locations. With the concurrent support of the district-level novice teacher program,

educational leaders should seek to expand the use of the site-level system through creating targeted evaluation methods that highlight the novice teachers' use of all learned strategies at their personal locations of employment. This would require district-level leaders to reduce the amount of off-site professional development sessions for novice teachers and increase the amount of site location visits conducted by central office leaders. Accordingly, central office leaders would schedule professional development dates centered around the pre-planning, mid-semester, and post-planning teacher workdays. At each meeting, district-level leaders would deliver the procedures and expectations of the county, conduct a checkpoint of novice teacher mindsets and attitudes, and facilitate a session that stimulates school year progression centered around reflecting on previous experiences. Furthermore, district-level leaders should take the time to visit local school sites on a more frequent basis to truly understand the culture in which the novice teacher operates on a daily basis. School- and district- level leaders should work together to coordinate the appropriate dates and times that would be most impactful in providing effective evaluations of novice teachers. Central office leaders should also place more autonomy on the novice teacher program coordinator at the local school level to facilitate the daily operations of the program and suggest the completion of strategies that are specific to the culture of the school. Accomplishing this task would reduce the amount of time new teachers spend outside of the classroom environment and help increase the effectiveness of all instructional strategies learned during district-based professional development sessions.

Participants in the study identified strong administrative support and continuous collaboration with like-minded colleagues as a huge reason for novice teachers choosing to stay at their school. Moreover, specifically in high-needs schools, teachers that feel as if they are working in isolation are more likely to seek another environment that is filled with collaborative

efforts and a team-based mentality (Farinde-Wu & Fitchett, 2018). A lack of support and collaboration from educational leaders and colleagues may also lead to poor self-efficacy and a persistent mindset of negativity within novice teachers, which could drive them to leave the profession (Meristo & Eisenschmidt, 2014). School administrators should strive to establish a faculty culture where teachers constantly support each other and feel supported by their building leaders. This would include conducting internal training and professional development sessions to assist every faculty member with understanding the guidelines and procedures for carrying out this vision. Furthermore, during the hiring and selection process, school administrators should seek to hire new teachers that are willing to participate in this vision of a faculty culture highlighted by authentic collaboration among educators. Accomplishing these tasks will help to maintain a high level of novice educator morale, minimize new teacher attrition, and promote increased novice teacher retention at the school.

The perspectives of all participants in the study reflected the notion of increased novice teacher retention having a positive impact on the retention of veteran educators at the site location. More specifically, all participants indicated a shift in the faculty culture, due to the implementation of the novice teacher attrition program, that contributes toward influencing veteran teachers to remain at the site location. School administrators should strive to focus on retaining novice teachers and constantly provide them with the tools and resources to support the improvement of their pedagogies. Veteran teachers will be able to witness and perceive the level of support given to novice teachers and acknowledge the level of support that can also be afforded to them. Continuously retaining novice teachers will also help to keep modern ideas and innovations within the instructional culture of the school, which assists all teachers in proactively keeping pace with the evolving minds of student learners and cultivating true achievement for

students. Lastly, some novice teachers may be able to display an above average proficiency in certain areas of their pedagogy. Despite their lack of experience in the field, school administrators should challenge those particular individuals to deliver their strategies to the faculty members of the school, which would help to boost school morale and provide veteran teachers with more modern, innovative strategies to increase student achievement. Successfully creating this culture of consistency in the retention of novice teachers would cause a greater number of veteran teachers to remain at a school, while also establishing a culture of innovation and success that would be ever present.

Recommendations for Future Research

Several different concepts and ideas emerged from the completion of this research that could contribute to the cause of conducting related studies in the future. Further research could be conducted concerning the successful implementation of the systems mentioned in this manuscript at the middle and high school levels. Moreover, added research could be completed that investigates the success of the aforementioned systems in the private school sector. Based on the responses received from participants in this case study, novice teachers appear to be more excited and less affected by teacher attrition at earlier stages of their inaugural year in the profession or during their careers. According to the transitional veteran teachers, specifically in years two and three in the profession, a gradual process of experiences began to wear down their level of excitement as their careers progressed. Additional research could be conducted that chronicles how educational leaders utilize systems and procedures to identify the specific timing and occurrence of novice teacher attrition. Also, supplemental research could investigate the impact of this type of system on a cohort of teachers for a span of 3 to 5 years to detect the amount of exhibited attrition and the number of teachers from that specific cohort that was

retained. Lastly, research could be conducted from the perspective of school leaders in identifying how they can continue to grow teachers after the three-year and five-year marks, in order to help them maintain lowered levels of attrition. To complement this, further research can be completed that investigates the impact of increased attrition within veteran educators on the mindsets and actions of novice teachers.

Conclusions

Novice teacher attrition continues to present itself as a major problem for educational leaders across the world (Whalen, Majocha, & Van Nuland, 2019). Furthermore, rising attrition in novice educators employed within high-needs schools presents frequent problems for educational policymakers in the United States (Djonko-Moore, 2016). Current scholarly literature on this subject provides a plethora of information and suggestions to help reduce attrition in novice teachers. Nevertheless, there is very limited literature that displays an understanding of how educational leaders are currently implementing consistent practices to proactively reduce novice teacher attrition on a routine basis. This study attempted to bridge the gap between literature and modern practice by uncovering how current educational leaders are implementing organizational systems to routinely reduce novice teacher attrition in high-needs schools.

Increased, early career attrition is often caused by a failure of meeting either the growing requirements of school administration or the self-conceived expectations established prior to entering the teaching profession (Lysaght, O'Leary, and Scully, 2018). Moreover, novice teachers who persistently possess a negative view of their self-efficacy and impact on their students are at a greater risk of leaving the field of education altogether (Dunn & Downey, 2018). A thorough review of the literature has detailed several factors of novice teacher attrition,

which notably includes stress and anxiety, a lack of administrative support, and increased job responsibilities (Harfitt, 2015). With the assistance of a solid organizational system in place, it is a firm belief that an authentic environment that promotes collegial collaboration, coupled with strong leadership and support, is the primary reason novice teachers are willing to stay despite many of the perceived obstacles that may arise (Sanders, 2014).

The site location of this case study provided the opportunity to view an established, consistent program dedicated to reducing attrition in all novice teachers within the school building. The selected school in this study served as ideal due to its classification as a high-needs/Title I public institution with teacher retention rates that are higher than the average rate in the state of Georgia (Tio, 2018). The responses and viewpoints of the participants were integral in illustrating the specific systems and processes enacted by educational leaders in a high-needs school to reduce novice teacher attrition. Furthermore, these participants, along with school district data, were able to describe the specific reasons for the success of the implemented systems and how this achievement affected the retention rate of the novice teachers at the site location. These findings contributed to the creation of four overarching themes that were used to identify the definite systems employed by educational leaders to reduce novice teacher attrition at the site location.

Several conclusions were revealed as a result of the conducted case study in this dissertation. Establishing proactive interventions to improve the perceived difficulties of novice teachers helps to reduce their level of frustration and improve their opportunities to meet the expectations of the school. Employing socioemotional strategies to assist novice teachers with setting goals allows educational leaders to use those goals as motivating factors to help new teachers progress through the school year. Cultivating a partnership with the school district, that

allows for the expanded use of a novice teacher attrition program at the school level, helps novice teachers understand how to apply all learned strategies at their specific school. Building a faculty culture founded on the principles of strong administrative support and collegial collaboration helps to promote trust among all educators and serves as an integral reason for novice educators choosing to stay in the profession. The successful implementation of the aforementioned systems contributes to continuously maintaining a decreased level of attrition in novice teachers and keeping them employed at the site location. Furthermore, the increased retention of novice teachers helps to retain veteran educators at the site location and further evolve the instructional culture of the school.

This study aligns with the scholarly literature surrounding different remedies that can be utilized to reduce novice teacher attrition in high-needs schools. Moreover, it helps to bridge the gap between theory and practice that is currently present in the existing literature and advises school administrators on how to implement modern practices that have been successful at reducing novice teacher attrition in high-needs schools. The investigation of this singularity has prompted several implications for educational leaders. Time should be taken to create and establish solid mentorship networks where novice teachers and mentor teachers would be allowed to grow their professional pedagogies. Educational leaders should make concentrated efforts to identify and stimulate the personal motives of novice educators, while also seeking to use those motives as encouragement to help new teachers accomplish their goals. Local school and school district leaders should cooperate to create symbiotic systems that help novice teachers successfully acclimate to the teaching profession. Lastly, educational leaders should aim to construct and conserve a faculty culture where authentic support and collaboration are felt by all educators. As concluded by Ms. Winters, "Educational leaders should work to keep a positive,

constructive, and appreciative environment in their schools. Do this, and your people will stick

around."

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Appendices

Appendix A

Principal Assistance Letter/Email

Greetings,

My name is Eldread Nunnally and I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at Georgia State University. As you are aware, I have been approved to conduct a research study at your school. The purpose of this email is to request your assistance with identifying individuals that could be selected to participate in the study.

I would need your assistance in recommending volunteers for the study based on the following criteria:

- **Three novice teachers** (person that has completed zero to three full years in education)

- **Two transitional veteran teachers** (person that has completed four or five full years in education)

- **Three teacher leaders** (one teacher mentor, one instructional/curriculum coach associated with novice teachers, and one department chairperson)

- **One assistant principal** (person who is most familiar with the novice teacher attrition program)

- **One school principal**

Once volunteers are recommended, I will send a separate email asking for their participation in the study. At the conclusion of the interviews, all participants will receive a gift card for their participation in the study. Please let me know if you are able to assist with this request.

Thank you,

Eldread Nunnally, Jr.

Appendix B

Email Recruitment Letter/Script

Greetings,

My name is Eldread Nunnally and I am a doctoral candidate in the Department of Educational Policy Studies at Georgia State University. I am contacting you because of your present or previous role within the current novice teacher retention system at your school. The purpose of this research study is to investigate the effect of implementing organizational systems to reduce attrition in novice teachers who are employed in high-needs schools. I would like to ask you to participate in a 45 to 60-minute, audio recorded, face to face or telephone interview regarding your experience with the system. Additionally, you may be asked to allow the researcher to observe you in a professional development activity or conference. Your total expected participation time will be approximately 60 to 120 minutes. This research will not benefit you personally. However, knowledge obtained can be used by your school district's leadership department and other school districts engaging in similar activities, thus benefitting society. The research will be conducted remotely via telephone, in-person at the county-sanctioned and designated research location, or at a place of your choosing. Attached is the consent form with information about the study and detailed information regarding participation. Please read the consent form and decide whether you would like to participate in this study. If you are interested in participating, please contact me by replying to this email.

Thank you,

Eldread Nunnally, Jr.

Appendix C

Informed Letter of Consent
Georgia State University
Department of Educational Studies

Title: The Implementation of Organizational Systems to Reduce Novice Teacher Attrition: A Case Study of One-High Needs School
Principal Investigator: Dr. Nicholas Sauers
Student Principal Investigator: Eldread Nunnally, Jr.
Department: Georgia State University – Educational Policy Studies

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate the effect of implementing organizational systems to reduce attrition in novice teachers who are employed in high-needs schools. Moreover, the study will attempt to identify modern, systems-based initiatives that are currently being implemented to reduce novice teacher attrition in high-needs schools. The ultimate goal is to reveal the success of these organizational systems and to provide educational leaders with a reference for reducing novice teacher attrition and turnover before its earliest onset. Up to 10 participants will be recruited to contribute to the study through individual interviews and, if selected, naturalistic observation sessions.

Procedures

If you elect to participate in this study, you will be asked to partake in an individual interview with the student investigator, who will ask you to provide information regarding your experience with the aforementioned systems-based initiatives at your school. The interview will be conducted at either the school site or at a public location of your choosing, will consist of one session, and will require approximately 60 minutes of your time. The interview will be audio-recorded for the duration of the session and will only be used as data in conjunction with the study. If absolutely necessary, as pre-determined by both the student investigator and participant, an individual interview may take place via telephone. If this occurs, the student investigator will secure a private, quiet location where the interview will be unheard by others. Additionally, the duration of the interview will still be approximately 60 minutes and will still be audio-recorded. You will have the opportunity to withdraw from participating in the study at any time.

Furthermore, if selected, you may be asked to allow the researcher to observe you in an activity that consists of the systems-based initiative being implemented, such as a new teacher induction session or mentorship conference. The observation session will be audio-recorded for the duration of the session and will only be used as data in conjunction with the study. You will have the opportunity to withdraw from participating in the study at any time.

Future Research

Data gathered from interviews and observation sessions will only be utilized in conjunction with the aforementioned research study and will not be used or distributed for future research, even when codes within the data are removed.

Risks
Participation in this study will not provide exposure to any harmful components that are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits
This study is not designed to personally benefit any participant. As previously stated, the ultimate goal is to identify the use of modern organizational systems that reduce novice teacher attrition and reveal the successful implementation of those systems in high-needs schools, which could provide educational leaders with a reference for reducing novice teacher attrition and turnover. Knowledge obtained can be used by your school district's leadership department and other school districts engaging in similar activities, thus benefitting society. Nonetheless, this study may impact your future experiences if the findings lead to organizational and leadership practices being redesigned to improve novice teacher retention.

Alternatives
The alternative to participating in this study is to decline any contributions to the above-mentioned research.

Voluntary Participation and Withdrawal
Participation in this study is completely voluntary. At any point before or during the research process, you may elect to discontinue your participation and end your contribution to the study. During the interview and observation portions of the study, you may also elect to skip questions that cause discomfort or stop participating at any time. Selecting this option will not cause you to lose any benefits to which you are otherwise entitled.

Confidentiality
All data and records gathered from interviews, observations, or through physical and digital correspondence will be kept private to the extent allowed by law. Only Dr. Nicholas Sauers (Primary Investigator) and Eldread Nunnally, Jr. (Student Investigator) will have access to any information that is provided during the course of the study. Information may also be shared with entities who ensure the regulation and ethical conduct of the research, including the Georgia State University Institutional Review Board and your school district's leadership department. Pseudonyms will be utilized in place of actual participant names and will serve as identifiers for individual participant responses. An example will resemble an identifier such as "Henry Smith." Actual participant names will only be used on a single, digital document that will serve as a key to ensure that all participant responses are properly coded with their pseudonyms. Only the student investigator will have access to the key, which will be the sole method for placing pseudonyms used throughout the study with actual participant names.

All data will be digitally secured within a password-protected personal computer and a separate, password-protected external hard drive, both of which are property of the student investigator. All audio recordings will be securely transferred from the digital recording device to the personal computer of the student investigator, with the subsequent deletion of the audio recording from the digital recording device occurring shortly thereafter. The student investigator will refrain from using email or any other electronic means of transferring identifiable information. All data files will not contain identifying names or markers that will endanger the privacy of any

participant within the study. Additionally, all findings will be summarized and reported in group form. At the conclusion of the study, the student investigator will properly dispose of all data acquired from participants through individual interviews and observations.

Contact Information
Contact Dr. Nicholas Sauers at nsauers@gsu.edu or Eldread Nunnally, Jr. at enunnally1@student.gsu.edu or 404-242-6706.
- If you have questions about the study or your part in it
- If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the study

Contact the GSU Office of Human Research Protections at 404-413-3500 or irb@gsu.edu.
- If you have questions about your rights as a research participant
- If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about the research

Consent
A copy of this consent form will be provided to you for your records.
If you are willing to volunteer for this research, please sign below.

_____
Printed Name of Participant

_____   _____
Signature of Participant   Date

_____   _____
Student Investigator   Date

Appendix D

Novice Teacher Interview Protocol

*Note: Novice teacher is classified as a person that has completed zero to three full years in the

field of education)*

Student PI reads the following statement prior to reading any question within the interview:

Prior to beginning this interview, you agree to not reveal the identity of any other

participant within the study. Do you agree to this and consent to begin the interview?

If the participant agrees, then begin the interview. If the participant does not agree, then

immediately discontinue the interview.

1) Describe your employment background in the field of education. Feel free to include

   applicable years of experience, locations of job placements, and any positive or negative

   experiences.

2) According to Billingsley (2004), teacher attrition can be described as the accumulation of

   various work-related factors that motivate a teacher to transfer to another teaching

   position or exit the field of education altogether. If applicable, how has teacher attrition

   affected you both personally and professionally?

3) How has the novice teacher program at your school impacted your ability to perform your

   duties and responsibilities as a new educator?

4) How has your ability to perform your duties and responsibilities impacted the

   achievement of your students?

5) How did the novice teacher program affect your decision to remain at your school?

6) Do you believe the retention of novice teachers has an impact on the retention of all

   teachers at your school? Why?

7) Is there any other specific point of interest you would like to share regarding this topic?

Appendix E

Transitional Veteran Interview Protocol

Note: Transitional veteran teacher is classified as a person that has completed four or five full

years in the field of education)*

Student PI reads the following statement prior to reading any question within the interview:

Prior to beginning this interview, you agree to not reveal the identity of any other

participant within the study. Do you agree to this and consent to begin the interview?

If the participant agrees, then begin the interview. If the participant does not agree, then

immediately discontinue the interview.

1) Describe your employment background in the field of education. Feel free to include applicable years of experience, locations of job placements, and any positive or negative experiences.

2) According to Billingsley (2004), teacher attrition can be described as the accumulation of various work-related factors that motivate a teacher to transfer to another teaching position or exit the field of education altogether. If applicable, how has teacher attrition affected you both personally and professionally?

3) How did the novice teacher program affect your decision to remain at your school?

4) How has completing the novice program at your school affected your professional pedagogy?

5) How has your professional pedagogy impacted the achievement of your students?

6) Do you believe the retention of novice teachers has an impact on the retention of all teachers at your school? Why?

7) Is there any other specific point of interest you would like to share regarding this topic?

Appendix F

Teacher Leader Interview Protocol

Student PI reads the following statement prior to reading any question within the interview:

Prior to beginning this interview, you agree to not reveal the identity of any other participant within the study. Do you agree to this and consent to begin the interview?

If the participant agrees, then begin the interview. If the participant does not agree, then immediately discontinue the interview.

1) Describe your employment background in the field of education. Feel free to include applicable years of experience, locations of job placements, and any positive or negative experiences.

2) According to Billingsley (2004), teacher attrition can be described as the accumulation of various work-related factors that motivate a teacher to transfer to another teaching position or exit the field of education altogether. If applicable, how has teacher attrition affected you both personally and professionally?

3) Describe your role in assisting with the implementation of the current system that reduces novice teacher attrition at your school.

4) Describe the impact of the current system on novice teacher attrition at your school.

5) Do you believe the current system has impacted novice teacher retention at your school? Why?

6) Do you believe the retention of novice teachers has an impact on overall teacher retention at your school? Why?

7) Is there any other specific point of interest you would like to share regarding this topic?

Appendix G

Assistant Principal Interview Protocol

Student PI reads the following statement prior to reading any question within the interview:

Prior to beginning this interview, you agree to not reveal the identity of any other participant within the study. Do you agree to this and consent to begin the interview?

If the participant agrees, then begin the interview. If the participant does not agree, then immediately discontinue the interview.

1) Describe your employment background in the field of education. Feel free to include applicable years of experience, locations of job placements, and any positive or negative experiences.

2) According to Billingsley (2004), teacher attrition can be described as the accumulation of various work-related factors that motivate a teacher to transfer to another teaching position or exit the field of education altogether. If applicable, how has teacher attrition affected you both personally and professionally?

3) Describe your role in assisting with the implementation of the current system that reduces novice teacher attrition at your school.

4) Describe the impact of the current system on novice teacher attrition at your school.

5) How is the current system impacting overall school culture?

6) Do you believe the retention of novice teachers has an impact on the retention of all teachers at your school? Why?

7) Is there any other specific point of interest you would like to share regarding this topic?

Appendix H

Principal Interview Protocol

Student PI reads the following statement prior to reading any question within the interview:

Prior to beginning this interview, you agree to not reveal the identity of any other participant within the study. Do you agree to this and consent to begin the interview?

If the participant agrees, then begin the interview. If the participant does not agree, then immediately discontinue the interview.

1) Describe your employment background in the field of education. Feel free to include applicable years of experience, locations of job placements, and any positive or negative experiences.

2) According to Billingsley (2004), teacher attrition can be described as the accumulation of various work-related factors that motivate a teacher to transfer to another teaching position or exit the field of education altogether. If applicable, how has teacher attrition affected you both personally and professionally?

3) Describe the impact of the current system on novice teacher attrition at your school.

4) Why is the current system for reducing novice teacher attrition successful? How has it positively affected novice teachers in your building?

5) How is the current system impacting overall school culture?

6) Do you believe the retention of novice teachers has an impact on the retention of all teachers at your school? Why?

7) Is there any other specific point of interest you would like to share regarding this topic?