

TROOPS TO TEACHERS CHALLENGES
AND STRENGTHS FOR TODAY'S CLASSROOMS:
A CASE STUDY

By

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Abstract: Recruitment of quality teachers has become difficult in today's educational turmoil. Failing schools, disruptive classrooms, stringent testing goals, teacher evaluations and more have created a demanding work environment for new teachers entering the workforce. This study will analyze administrator and teacher beliefs and perspectives of with the focus on former veterans and the Troops to Teachers (TTT) teachers and further evaluate capabilities of TTT teachers in varied areas of teaching practices. Through the exploration of data collected from educators throughout the state, this study will review variables that may influence administrator and teacher perspectives and capabilities of TTT Teachers. The research will provide valuable data to interested parties in determining the impact perspectives have on recruitment and hiring of TTT teachers and will further provide research on the performance of current TTT teachers in the state. The insight provided into the alternative certification program will assist administrators in understanding, recruiting and retaining TTT teachers in today's educational workforce.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The landscape of the teaching profession constitutes a plethora of teachers and administrators from varying fields of experiences, schools, and paths that led each of them to this profession. Many entered the education field due to a “sense of calling,” or a need to guide today’s youth and prepare them for the future. Others chose the profession with a perceived sense that it would be an easy job and may have, in turn, left students unprepared and lacking in a proper education (Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2012). Those who choose teaching without a commitment to academic rigor for preparing students for success may actually undermine the very purposes of education. For example, Perry, Moses, Wynne, Cortes, and Delpit (2010) stated,

The Supreme Court of the United States has given only one institution the charge to teach the habits and skills requisite for a democratic culture – the public school. Chief Justice Warren outlined in 1954: “Today, education is perhaps the most important function of the state and local government. Compulsory school attendance laws and the great expenditures for education both demonstrate our recognition of the importance of education to our democratic society. It is required in the performance of our most basic public responsibilities, even service in the armed forces. It is the very foundation of good citizenship.” (p. 99)

While these words were written in 1954, they hold a meaning that still resonates today.

Public education in the United States has morphed from providing students with the

necessary skills to be “good citizens” to an entity that produces some of the brightest minds in the world. As such, the educational arena must ensure only the highest quality of teachers are educating the future engineers, scientist, doctors, and more of the future.

Recruitment of quality teachers, however, has become difficult in today’s educational turmoil. Failing schools, disruptive classrooms, stringent testing goals, stringent teacher evaluations, and additional stresses imposed by a high-stakes policy environment have created a demanding work environment for new teachers entering the workforce. Therefore, the recruitment of teachers is one key element in the educational field that continually raises concerns for educators. As the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) launched a new campaign in 2010 to recruit teachers, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan reported, “More than a million teachers are expected to retire in the coming years; we have a historic opportunity to transform public education in America by calling on a new generation to join those already in the classroom” (Department of Education, 2010, p. 4). The goals of the Department of Education in the campaign to recruit quality teachers include the following:

Increasing the number of quality and diversity of people seeking to become teachers, particularly in high-need schools (rural and urban) and subject areas in greatest demand: Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM), English Language Learners (ELL), and Special Education; connecting aspiring teachers with information about the pathways to teaching including preparation, certification, training and mentoring; celebrating and honoring the profession of teaching. (p.7)

The task of recruiting quality teachers is not an easy feat. Sykes and Dibner (2009) stated that school administrators must attract quality teachers that are vital for the success of “high-need schools and districts” (p. 582). Sykes and Dibner commented on this challenge:

Poor students in poor schools don’t have access to the best teaching. This stubborn problem has roots in how our educational system has been constructed over the years. Past measures to equitably distribute quality teachers have only been moderately successful, so bolder approaches are needed. (p. 588)

One of the methods currently used to attract quality teachers to the teaching profession is the option of alternative paths to certification for previously uncertified individuals who might be interested in teaching. The alternative certification pathway to those seeking certification, however, is not without its challenges or limitations. One of those challenges is the variety of methods that each state has developed for an individual to receive alternative certification. Darling-Hammond (1990) stated,

The concept of “alternatives” to traditional state certification leaves a great deal of room for varied meaning. It can mean alternative ways to meet teacher certification requirements – such as a graduate level masters’ degree program rather than an undergraduate teacher education program. It can mean alternative standards for certification that allow for truncated or reduced training – or for training completed during the course of a teaching career rather than prior to its initiation. Or, it can mean alternatives to state certification itself as where a state allows local employers to train and certify their own candidates. (p. 136)

While alternative certification may increase the number of certified teachers by attracting individuals to the profession that may not have entered the field of teaching except through alternate means, a lack of continuity in means of preparation indicates variance in the capacity of these individuals to successfully lead the most challenging classrooms.

Troops to Teachers Alternative Certification Program

The Department of Defense, in conjunction with the Department of Education, has presented veterans with a path to alternative certification that offers promise for preparing individuals to meet the demands of challenging classrooms. This program may help to meet the demands of locating well prepared, quality teachers to fill classroom positions. Established in 1992, the Troops to Teachers (TTT) program allows military personnel to transition to the educational field and teach in grades K-12 (Becker, 2009). The program assists veterans in acquiring state certifications, required educational classes, and other professional development requirements for certification as required by the states. In some cases, TTT candidates are provided a stipend if they choose to serve in low-income, hard-to-fill classroom positions. Each of the veterans accepted into the program must have served honorably, have a degree recognized by the state, and must sign an agreement to teach in geographical locations that meet the criteria for special needs schools, in order to receive TTT benefits (Proud to Serve Again, 2015). TTT currently has state offices across the country responsible for recruiting individuals that meet pre-established requirements and assisting them in achieving state certification. The program is a gateway to ensuring that military professionals desiring a second career in education have an avenue to achieve success. In addition to teaching certifications the

TTT program provides an avenue for individuals with management and leadership skills to become certified principals and school administrators.

The program offers promise because individuals in the military often align well with the teaching field. The veterans entering the educational field have that same “sense of calling” they once experienced in the military (Bullough & Hall-Kenyon, 2012). Further, the significant pay decrease does not deter their willingness to continue a life of service as they enter the world of education. A primary understanding of proponents involved in the TTT program is that the application of the skills, leadership, and mentoring abilities that individuals learned in the armed forces can be valuable assets to the educational workforce. Prospective teachers who choose the alternative certification path through TTT and other avenues do so knowing that the educational field will be as challenging as any battlefield previously faced.

Troops to Teachers: Meeting the Needs of Diverse Student Population

Training teachers to successfully educate highly diverse student populations is a critical factor for teacher and student success. However, teacher training has not morphed as quickly as needed to meet the demands of an increasingly diverse student population. Slick (1995) stated,

One very critical area that must be addressed in teacher preparation is adequate training for pre-service teachers in multicultural education. Providing pre-service teachers with pertinent field experiences that will prepare them to function effectively as teachers in diverse class settings is very important. (p.xxiv)

The need for training in the nation’s culturally diverse educational field discussed in 1995 is even more necessary today. Perry et al. (2010) stated, “Even when [educators] have

the desire to do so, educators are often unable to connect to the cultures of their students because our universities are so limited in what is taught about other cultures” (p. 184). However, with the diverse pool of candidates available to apply for the program, TTT may meet this critical need. TTT provides an alternative certification pathway to individuals that have already been exposed to working in a diverse workforce. Therefore, skills gained through experience in the military may lead to greater success as classroom teachers.

Problem Statement

Alternative certification programs were implemented to fill district needs for certified teachers in the areas of math and science and to fill needs in some urban areas (Birkeland, 2005). States developed alternative methods to certify teachers as per their state’s requirements (Roth & Swail, 2000). TTT is one such program that was designed to augment the traditional educational workforce shortage, and specifically, to fill critical STEM areas of teaching due to teacher attrition. The methods of certification have evolved over the last twenty years, and while there is a scarcity of teachers in varied locations, a higher number of TTT alternatively certified teachers versus traditionally certified educators have entered the workforce to fill the gaps in education (Owings, Kaplan, Nunnery, Marzano, Myran, & Blackburn, 2006). As the number of personnel entering the educational field via alternative routes, such as TTT, has risen, so has the importance of ensuring the quality of alternative certification programs.

However, traditionally prepared educators hold-varying views of TTT capabilities. Farkas and Duffett (2010) surveyed higher education instructors and found that the majority of professors believed “alternative certification programs threaten to

compromise the quality of the teaching force” (p. 32). Some refute the necessity of these programs and the quality of the alternatively certified teachers and “characterize these policies as a stop-gap solution that will ultimately downgrade teacher quality and the status of the profession” (Birkeland, 2005, p. 1). The above dilemma may exist because as the rise in numbers of alternative certification programs increased, the perceptions of regularly certified individuals concerning teachers entering the workforce via alternative methods may have become biased. Critics of the alternative certification program loudly espouse that teachers entering the workforce via this route may not be professionally or psychologically prepared for the classroom (Newton, Jang, Nunes, & Stone, 2010). This bias may even have a role in alternatively certified teachers departing the workforce today (Baines, 2010).

School administrators understand that an essential component of the hiring process is to evaluate each applicant and recruit and retain qualified teachers. However, Darling-Hammond and Snowden (2005) discovered that each year teachers with little experience enter the low-income urban and rural areas and fail. These urban and rural areas need teachers who understand students’ cultures and lifestyles and have the ability to form a relationship with the families necessary for student success (Warren, 2005). A dire need exists within school districts across the nation for qualified teachers to teach diverse students in classrooms today, and TTT may provide teachers of diverse backgrounds and cultures to fill these positions.

The increase of teachers who have acquired certification through TTT may serve to augment the traditional educational workforce, teach in critical areas within the STEM core, and provide a diverse leadership pool for many of the low-income areas across the

state. The professionals entering the profession by alternate routes such as TTT may have previous work experience in multicultural areas with diverse teams honing leadership skills and knowledge of varied cultures. However, some alternatively certified teachers are accepted and respected in the profession, and others are not. One explanation for the lack of acceptance may be misunderstandings, by individuals who are certified in a traditional manner, about the preparation and competencies TTT teachers hold. If educational leaders and teacher colleagues view TTT unfavorably, these teachers may lack the influence or support that is needed for success in the classroom.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the perceived teaching capacity of individuals who entered the teaching profession through the Troops to Teachers program, as reported by traditionally certified teachers and administrators, alternatively certified teacher peers, and the TTT teachers themselves. Specifically, through the exploration of data collected in one district with a large number of TTT teachers in the state of Oklahoma, this study evaluated, through the theoretical framework of the Skills Approach to leadership theory (Katz, 1955) perspectives concerning the conceptual, technical and human skills that former military personnel in this district bring to the educational field of teaching.

Research Questions

This case study will focus on the following research questions:

Overarching research question: How does the skills approach leadership theory (Katz, 1955) explain Troops to Teachers teacher's capacity for success in the classroom?

1. What perceptions do administrators and teachers, who hold traditional certifications have of Troops to Teachers' (TTT) preparation in conceptual, technical, and human skills for success in the classroom?
2. What perceptions do "other" alternatively certified teachers have of Troops to Teachers' (TTT) conceptual, technical, and human skills and preparation for the classroom?
3. What are Troops to Teachers' perceptions about the skills and academic preparation they bring the teaching workforce?
4. How do administrators employ the Troops to Teachers' conceptual, technical, and human skills within the school system?
5. What are Troops to Teachers' perceptions concerning barriers that exist that preclude integration into the school's culture?
6. What other realities are present that this study uncovered?

Theoretical Framework

The constructionist perspective is the epistemological perspective for the study. Crotty (1998) defined constructionism, "Truth, or meaning, comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities of our world. There is no meaning without mind. Meaning is not discovered, but constructed" (pp. 8-9). Constructionism determines that individuals set their reality. Therefore, findings from this study will be based on the realities and perceptions of administrators, traditionally certified peers, other alternatively certified teachers, and TTT personnel. This epistemological perspective, developed by Papert (1991), was clarified by Ackerman (2001), "Constructionism – the N word as opposed to the V word – shares constructivism's view of learning" (p. 5) however,

Paperts' approach "helps us understand how ideas get formed and transformed when expressed through different media, when actualized in particular contexts, when worked out by individual minds" (p. 5).

The theoretical framework for the study is the skills approach theory of leadership (Katz, 1955). In the 1990s, further research developed by Mumford et al. (2000), introduced a "comprehensive skills approach model of leadership" (Northouse, 2016, p. 69). The theory combines a leader-centered perspective with the personality choices in trait leadership theory and shifts to an "emphasis on leadership, skills and abilities that can be learned and developed" (Northouse, 2016, p. 43). Although the skills approach is meant to assess and prescribe leadership skills that are necessary for success, rather than teaching skills, the three skill areas addressed by the skills approach, conceptual, technical, and human are applicable to the characteristics that TTT teachers bring to the profession. Additionally, the recent emphasis in the literature on the importance of developing "teacher leaders" for success in the classroom further supports the utilization of the skills approach leadership theory as the theoretical framework for this study (Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009). Assessing the contribution that TTT teachers make to the teaching profession through the combined lens of conceptual, technical, and human aspects can inform educational leaders about the types of characteristics that TTT bring to the profession.

Significance of the Study

The key to success in education rests in the quality of teachers in each classroom and their dedication to education and the future.

Education policy makers are starting to act on what teachers have long known: No matter what policies, curricula, or governance structures are in place, they are only as effective as the teacher who translates them into the daily life of the classroom. (“The Obama Education Plan”, 2009, p. 156)

Military personnel seeking alternative certification have shown a dedication to an organization, the military, and a way of life. The same dedication can be an asset to the educational workforce. The U.S. Department of Education (2004) released the following statement,

With both high retirement and high attrition rates among K-12 teachers and a burgeoning `student population worldwide, more teachers are needed. Yet, if we are to turn schools in need of improvement, help all students meet rigorous academic standards, and close the achievement gap, simply getting more teachers into the profession will not suffice. As reflected in the No Child Left Behind requirement that all teachers of the academic subjects be highly qualified, new teachers must be equipped with the knowledge, skills and dispositions to teach to high standards and to be effective with the increasingly diverse array of students in today’s classrooms. Moreover, a good number of these newcomers must commit and be able to teach in hard-to-staff content areas and in our most challenging schools. In short, the challenge of the profession is to prepare and retain greater numbers of quality teachers. (p. 1)

This emphasis on both quality and quantity is illustrated by the words of the U.S Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, in December 2010 while in Boston to receive the 2010 “Call to Service” Leadership in Education Reform Award. His speech reminded the

audience “quality education can literally transform children’s lives” and “with real opportunities, support, and long-term guidance all children can learn and succeed” (p. 2). With the loss of expertise and leadership that many schools face today, it will be harder to replace these individuals with those who have educational experience as traditionally understood. The educational reform and Call to Service from 2010 is even more vital today in order to ensure students have individuals with the capabilities to “transform lives.” Schools are increasing reliance on varied alternative certification programs, and the challenge is to maintain the quality of teachers that are recruited into the classrooms of today.

The new generation of teachers face more challenges in the workforce than ever before. Information gathered from this research and the subsequently gained knowledge can be employed by educators and new teachers to showcase the capacity of TTT teachers to meet the needs of challenging student populations and identify obstacles (if any) in the TTT alternative certification process. Another significant impact of the research will be, through the theoretical framework of the skills approach to leadership (Katz, 1955). The study will help to expand understanding concerning the level of training varied former military personnel alternative certified teachers achieve based on work-related experience before entering the teaching workforce.

Culturally diverse qualified Veterans applying for TTT and other alternative certification programs may be the right candidates to fill the demanding positions needed in today’s educational field. It is imperative to remember that when individuals apply for TTT, administrators must safeguard quality as the key criteria in selection of individuals into the alternative certification program provided.

The research can potentially contribute valuable understandings to research regarding the perspectives that individuals have on recruitment and hiring of TTT teachers, and it will further provide understandings concerning the potential that former military alternative certified TTT personnel offer to this Oklahoma district. Specifically, understanding the conceptual, technical, and human skills that TTT teachers bring to the profession may provide a platform for further research that may assist administrators in understanding, recruiting and retaining quality teachers in today's educational workforce. It may also enhance understandings of teacher leadership as analyzing findings through the theoretical framework of the Skills Approach (Katz, 1955) may help to further define leadership characteristics that support teacher success in the classroom.

Definition of Terms

Alternative Teacher Certification- For the purpose of the study, this term refers to the certification individuals having at least a baccalaureate degree and considerable life experience may receive to become an educator (Feistritzer, 2008).

Alternative Teacher Certification Program (ATCP) - For the purpose of the study, this term refers to any alternative to the 4-year or 5-year undergraduate education program, including both those programs that have reduced standards and those that hold teachers to the same standards as college and university-based undergraduate teacher education (Zeichner & Schulte, 2001, p. 266).

American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) - For the purpose of the study, this term refers to the American Board for Certification of Teacher Excellence is an education program founded by the Education Leaders Council and the National Council on Teacher Quality. It was created to develop high-quality teacher

credentials that are portable, time efficient, cost effective, and committed to helping states; districts and communities meet the requirements of the federal No Child Left Behind Act (ABCTE, 2003).

Credential - For the purpose of the study this term refers to a credential is an active certificate, license, permit or documentation held by an individual that authorizes the holder to perform certain functions or to make certain claims about his/her competencies (United States Department of Education (USDE), 2003).

Financial Compensation - For the purpose of the study, this term refers to financial compensation will apply to funding provided to Troops to Teachers personnel upon certification and subsequent hire.

Hard to Staff Schools - For the purpose of the study, this term refers to schools designated by the U.S. Department of Education or State Board of Education that has a hard to fill teaching position, due to location, language, or funding (USDE, 2003).

Highly Qualified Teacher - For the purpose of the study, this term refers to one who holds, at least a bachelors' degree, and has obtained full state and national certification and has demonstrated knowledge in the core academic subjects he or she teaches (USDE, 2005).

Non-commissioned Officer - For the purpose of the study, this term refers to the rank of Army personnel considered in a leadership position (*Army Training and Leadership Development*, Regulation 350-1, 2014).

Paygrade- For the purpose of the study, this term refers to the pay level attained by military personnel (Navy Basic Military Requirements, 2002).

Petty Officer - For the purpose of the study, this term refers to Navy personnel considered in a leadership capacity (Navy Basic Military Requirements, 2002).

Traditional Teacher Certification - For the purpose of the study, this term refers to certification granted to personnel who have gone through a four or five-year program, participated in a supervised teaching program and completed licensing from the state in which they are teaching.

Troops to Teachers (TTT) - For the purpose of the study, this term refers to a U.S. Department of Defense funded a program that assists military personnel to start a new career in teaching. The federal government may offer financial benefits and counseling to help Veterans in becoming a licensed teacher in the state in which personnel apply (Feistritz, 2011).

Troops to Teachers Teacher- For the purpose of the study, this term refers to a Troops to Teachers teacher who is a military veteran that has been certified through the Troops to Teachers legislative program (Feistritz, 2011).

Summary and Organization of the Study

This study is formalized in six chapters. Chapter One provides the introduction to the study and includes the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study and research questions. A case study design is used as the methodology for this study because it provides a framework for gathering valuable data and assisting in understanding, from a skills approach leadership theory perspective (Katz, 1955), the conceptual, technical and human skills that teachers who have entered the teaching profession through the Troops to Teachers alternative certification path bring to the educational workforce. The epistemological framework of the study, constructivism, was used to understand the

perceptions, truths, expectations, and worldviews of those individuals who work with TTT teachers. The theoretical framework of the Skills Approach to Leadership is also introduced and explained.

Chapter II provides an in-depth literature review that can assist in better understanding the history of alternative certification programs to include Troops to Teachers. Most importantly, it provides information concerning the preparedness of individuals in the areas of instructional competency, classroom management, teacher leadership capacity and mentorship required for today's demanding role of teaching. Chapter II concludes with a detailed description of the theoretical framework for the study.

Chapter III provides the detailed methodology and research methods applied to the case study. Procedures with participant selection, data collection, and analysis are detailed. The ethical considerations and bias are reviewed and the chapter concludes with the trustworthiness table of findings and the limitations to the study.

Chapter IV presents the data and a description of the school sites and participants. Data collected includes interviews, observations, and field notes. A detailed description of each area is provided.

Chapter V presents the findings as analyzed through the lens of the Katz Skills Leadership Theory and includes an analysis of TTT teachers' technical, human and conceptual skills.

Chapter VI discusses the findings based on the Katz Skills Leadership Theoretical framework. Limitations, implications for research, theory, and practice and recommendations for future research are also presented.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The principal proposition of this study is that the intent and goals of alternative teaching certification programs are to develop and train qualified teachers to augment and enhance the traditional educational workforce in education. In the early eighties, there were few alternative certification programs. By 1990, states began to offer more routes to alternative teacher certification, and according to Hawley (1992), the number of states reporting programs varied from some sources citing 33 states (Zhao, 2005), to others citing 48 states (Zhao, 2005). This method of certification has evolved over the last twenty years, and currently all states have developed alternative methods to certify teachers (www.teachingcertification.com, 2016). The purpose of this literature review is to a) discuss the history and purpose of Troops to Teachers, b) establish the need for alternative certification programs, such as Troops to Teachers, and c) discuss the way forward for alternative certification.

History of Troops to Teachers

As we continue to seek ways to improve the quality of education in our country, we should encourage programs like Troops to Teachers to incite returning servicemen and women from Iraq and Afghanistan to go into the classroom. Our veterans make excellent candidates to impart the virtues of service to the next generation and instill the value of

learning as a means to self-improvement” (Legislation Report, 2013, Senator John McCain).

Troops to Teachers (TTT) was a program established in 1992 (U.S. Public Law 102-104, 1992), and funding was provided in 1994 to allow the first Veterans to apply for the program.

Dr. Hexter, who was known for returning to the educational arena after his first retirement from Yale University, had a vision to employ the skill set of thousands of retired military personnel at the “end of the Cold War” (Banks, 2007). Dr. Hexter viewed this situation as a perfect opportunity to fill the nation’s teacher shortage and worked tirelessly with Senator John Danforth of Missouri to implement the program in the 1993 Defense Bill. Dr. Hexter’s dream was realized just one year before he passed away (Stanford Social Innovation Review, 2007).

This program was in direct correlation to legislation that, during this time, called for a troop drawdown within the military that resulted in thousands of Veterans seeking new employment. The Department of Defense, with the enactment of this new law, provided funding “to recruit, prepare and support former members of the military services as teachers in high-poverty schools” (Owings, Kaplan, Nunnery, Marzano, Myran, & Blackburn, 2006, p. 102). A report by the National Center for Education Information found that by 1998 nearly 3000 individuals had benefited from the new program. These individuals were highly motivated service members who now chose to start a new career due to the drawdown. While the military was over-staffed, there was an extreme shortage of teachers in the areas of math, science, and special education, and individuals with backgrounds in these areas were desperately needed.

Congress further expanded the act in 1999 by passing the “Troops to Teachers Program Act” (Title XVII of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2000). The program sought to increase further certification and licensing opportunities for former military personnel (n.d, 2004). At a hearing before the Subcommittee on Benefits in 2003, Representative Michand stated,

Our nation faces a teacher shortage. Today we are looking at a program that is one of the solutions to this growing problem. In 1994, Congress provided the funding that established the Troops to Teachers program to enable former service members a successful transition into a teaching career. Since Congress enacted the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, the Departments of Education and Defense have been working together to serve schools and former service members. Schools have hired over 4,500 former service members through the Troops to Teachers program in 50 states, a quarter of them reservists and National Guardsmen. These men and women are excellent role models for the youth in America. They bring leadership, discipline, and a maturity gained from military service into the Nations’ classrooms. First Lady Laura Bush, one of Troops to Teachers greatest advocates, said it best when she stated, “Members of the military have always been tremendous role models. They possess the greatest in character, commitment, and resolve, and today our children need those qualities more than ever.” (p. 1)

Dr. Dunlap reported to the legislative session:

Teaching is an art. It’s a calling. Teaching requires knowledge and skills, to be sure, but it also requires heart. It’s the willingness and the need to serve, and who

better fit to serve than those men and women in uniform? Veterans have already proven themselves and many have given us so much. Why are they appropriate? The high level of training and education; there's a high ethnic minority ratio, missing in our schools; their military experience as trainers; their training in safety and security-let's not underestimate that importance in our schools today; their organizational, technical, and leadership skills; they're great role models for kids; they're mature; they're physically fit; they're drug free; and they have a world view that they bring to the schools that heretofore has been missing. (p. 11)

The Troops to Teachers Act was amended in 2009 to include high-need local educational agencies and charter schools eligibility for Troops to Teachers applicants. In 2013, Congress amended the act by opening offices nationwide for counseling and referral, and changed the time-in-service requirement. Table one in Appendix H provides amplified information on teacher to student ratio by year and illustrates the need for alternative certification.

Data indicates former military personnel are filling critical shortages within the educational workforce. For example, the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support (DANTES) reported the following in 2015:

- More than 85% of Troop to Teacher educators coming into teaching are male, compared to 26% in the overall teaching force;
- 33% of Troop to Teacher educators are from a minority group compared to 10% of current workforce;
- 32% of Troop to Teacher teachers report they are teaching mathematics and science, compared to 24% of all teachers;

- 18% of Troop to Teacher teachers compared with 12% overall are teaching in special education;
- 24% of Troop to Teacher teachers work in inner-city schools, compared to 16% overall, and
- 68% of Troop to Teacher teachers indicate a willingness to teach in rural communities, compared to 23% overall.” (Troops to Teachers Dantes Website, 2015).

Banks (2007) noted that in the 13 years since inception “the program has helped train and place 9,500 veterans in public school classrooms where they are most needed” (p. 23).

Owings, Kaplan, Khrabrava, and Chappell (2015) stated that most TTT teachers were working in “high-poverty, high-minority schools, teach critical subjects, use research based instructional and classroom management practices and plan to stay in the profession longer than traditionally prepared teachers” (p. 4).

Requirements for Troops-to-Teachers

The requirements for TTT teachers have changed as necessary throughout the years to maintain alignment with traditional certifications. Early program requirements were that individuals must have served honorably for six or more years, have retired from the military service, or must have served as Reserve or National Guardsman with 10 or more years of service. New requirements allow all veterans who were discharged from the service “regardless of time in service” to apply for the program. Individuals that served in the military on, or after, January 2002 may be eligible for monetary bonuses on the conditions of service of four or more year’s active duty and of completion of service in the National Guard or Reserve for six or more years. Individuals accepted into the

program must complete state-specific requirements and/or one or more of the Praxis Series Exams (DANTES). After certification, as cited in Military Times (2015), by Owings et al. (2014), individuals within the TTT program can receive the following:

\$5000 stipend/bonus if they agree to teach for three years in a “high-needs school in a district in which at least 50% of students are eligible for free or reduced – price lunch programs - or have a “high percentage” of students with disabilities (any percentage over the nationwide average, determined annually) and between 10% and 20% of the district’s students are from poverty-level families. In place of a stipend, Troops teachers may receive a 10,000 bonus if they are employed for 3 years as a teacher in a district that has at least 50% of the student population eligible to receive free or reduced-priced lunches or in schools with a “high percentage” (determined annually) of students with disabilities.

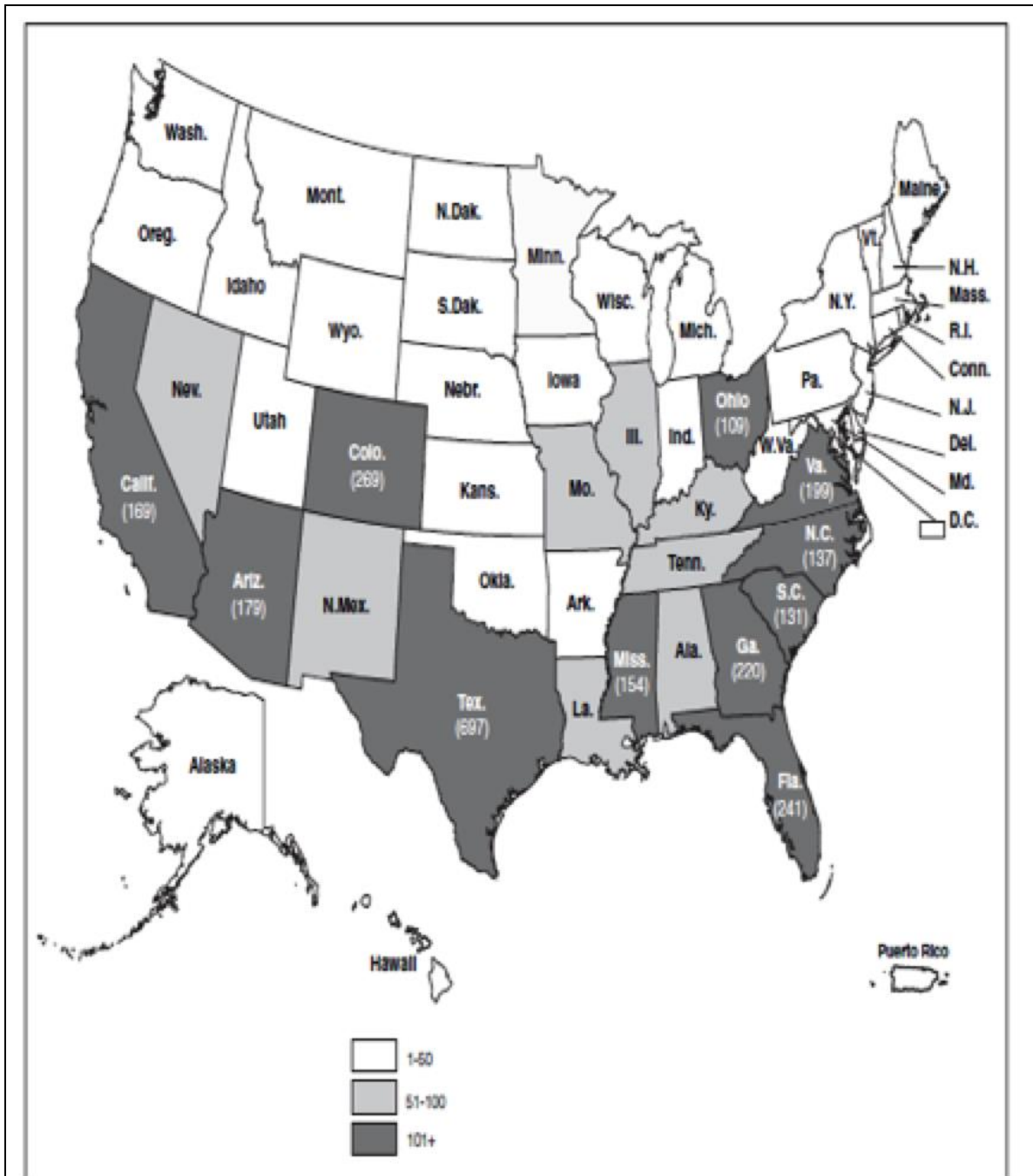
The TTT program and the U.S. Government define high-need schools and districts as

A public elementary, public secondary, or public charter school in which either (1) 50 percent or more of the enrolled student population is eligible for free or reduced-priced lunches or (2) a large percentage of students qualify for assistance under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. A high-need district is one in which (1) 10,000 or more children are from families with incomes below the poverty line, or (2) 20 percent or more of children are from families with incomes below the poverty line, or (3) between 10 and 20 percent of students have families with incomes below the poverty line and all teachers funded through the program are employed in high-need schools (United States Government Accountability Office. *TTT Program*. (2006) p.7).

Further discussion has transpired that if individuals teach in critical areas – “mathematics, science, special education, or foreign languages – in high-needs schools they may be eligible for up to a \$10,000 bonus” (Owings, et al., 2015, p. 11). In 2009, requirements for eligibility once again changed within the program and required that members of the armed forces meet any of the following four primary requirements:

- 1) Individuals are retired from active or reserve service;
- 2) Individuals have an approved date of retirement that is within one year after the date on which the member submits the application to participate in the program;
- 3) Individuals have separated from active duty after six or more years of continuous service and enter into a commitment to continue in the reserves for at least three years and,
- 4) Individuals are currently serving in the reserves and have at least 10 years of active or reserve duty and entered into a commitment to continue in the reserves for at least three years. (Government Accountability Office, 2006)

States have additional requirements or obligations dependent upon the needs of the state. Figure 1 provides information on the number of TTT applicants hired by states where it is documented that the states with the highest number of individuals hired also have the largest number of military bases in the United States. The areas noted representing the states with the largest numbers of incoming military recruits or highest percentage of military retirees also have large numbers in TTT.



Source: GAO analysis of DANTES hiring data.

Note: Map does not include the nine hires in overseas locations.

Figure 1: Troops to teachers' participants by state. Data and figure retrieved from the Government Accountability Office, (2006) p. 16.

Background on Military Services Experience

Veterans represent a unique group of individuals because of their commitment to values as a part of their military service. Additionally, these values translate well to the teaching profession. Each branch of the armed services defines the values that are inherent in successful service in the armed forces.

Army Regulations 6000-100, *Army Leadership* states that Army values are:

- Loyalty. Bear true faith and allegiance to the U.S. Constitution, the Army, your Unit and other soldiers. This means supporting the military and civilian chain of command as well as devoting oneself to the welfare of others.
- Duty. Fulfill your obligations. Duty is the legal and moral obligation to do what should be done without being told.
- Respect. Treat people as they should be treated. This is the same as do unto others as you would have done to you.
- Selfless service. Put the welfare of the Nation, the Army and subordinates before your own. This means putting the welfare of the nation and the accomplishment of the mission ahead of personal desires.
- Honor. Live up to all Army values. This implies always following your moral compass in any circumstance.
- Integrity. Do what is right – legally and morally. This is the thread woven through the moral fabric of the professional Army ethic. It means honesty, uprightness the avoidance of deception, and steadfast adherence to the standards of behavior, and,

- Personal Courage. Face fear, danger, or adversity (physical and moral). This means being brave under all circumstances (physical or moral). (nd, p. 2)

Navy and Marine Corp Values as described by T.J. Cutler in *A Sailor's History of the United States* are

- Honor, those Sailors who have contributed the most to the great heritage of our Navy are those who have conducted themselves in the highest ethical manner: placing honest and truthfulness above convenience, taking personal responsibility for their actions, and never compromising the high ideals of the great nation they serve,
- Courage, the most obvious requirement for an effective fighting force is physical courage in the face of great danger. Less obvious is the need for moral courage. Yet both are absolutely necessary, and both are found in abundance in the annals of American naval heritage, and
- Commitment, The record of achievements by the U.S. Navy reflects a deep sense of commitment to the nation, to the service and to fellow shipmates.
(2005, p. xx)

The *United States Air Force Values Core Values* states that Airmen serve by the values of

- Integrity First, “Integrity is a character trait. It is the willingness to do what is right even when no one is looking. It is the “moral compass”—the inner voice; the voice of self-control; the basis for the trust imperative in today’s military” (p. 5)

- Service Before Self, “*Service before self* tells us that professional duties take precedence over personal desires” (p. 6) and Excellence in All We Do, *Excellence in all we do* directs us to develop a sustained passion for the continuous improvement and innovation that will propel the Air Force into a long-term, upward spiral of accomplishment and performance (p. 7).

These service core values are key in developing the leaders that can succeed in today’s school environments.

Individuals who enter the military begin training immediately in the areas of leadership, mentorship, and teamwork and these areas are applicable regardless of the service component in which the Veteran served. Technical competencies in each source rating, the skillset that each individual is trained for, are of such a nature that excellence is in demand at all times.

Day one of boot camp (initial training) starts the individual on a path to personal and professional growth. Individual leadership skills are immediately assessed, and personnel may be placed in positions of leadership that result in having the responsibility for oversight of 20-70 personnel at one time. If these new leaders struggle, then those in charge immediately provide mentorship and guidance necessary for the Soldiers’, Sailors’, Airmen, or Marines’ success (Cox, 2009).

Upon entering the service, new personnel immediately begin serving with a group of diverse individuals from all states and ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Diversity is just one of the major strengths of today’s military (TTT, Proud to Serve Again, 2004). According to a study conducted for Troops to Teachers, the ethnicity profile of the active duty forces stands at 25.4% minority of total force, 17.8% African American and 7.6%

other. Approximately 4.2% indicate ethnicity as multi-racial. The gender for enlisted military personnel is at 14% female and Officers at 15.3% (2014).

See Figure 2 and Figure 3, which provide the 2015 demographics of Military Officer and Enlisted personnel.

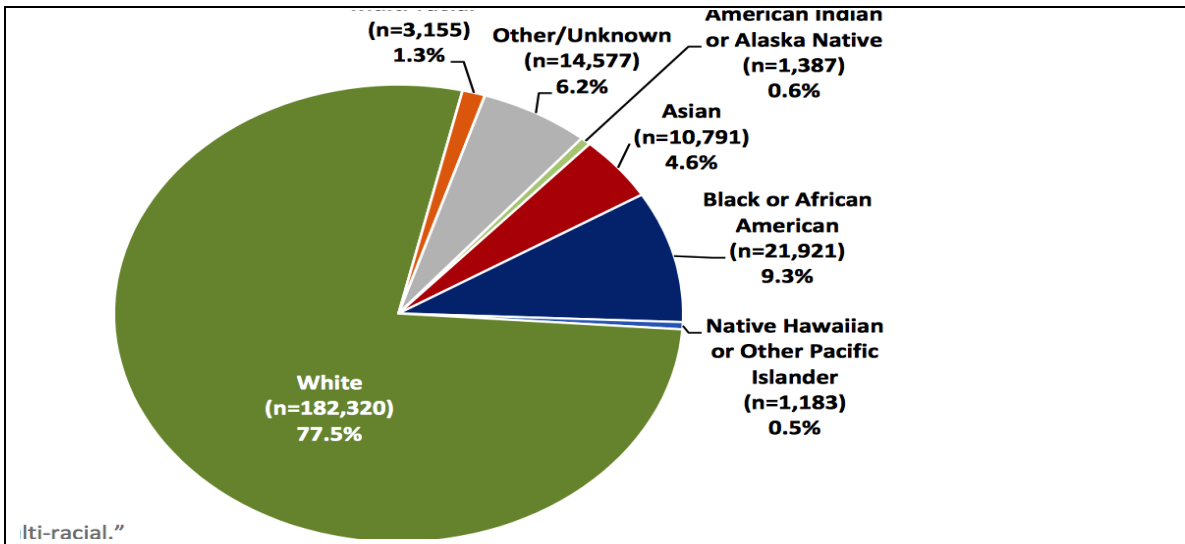


Figure 2. 2015 Military officer demographics. Data and graph retrieved from the U.S. Department of Defense. (2015). *Demographics: Profile of the Military Community*.

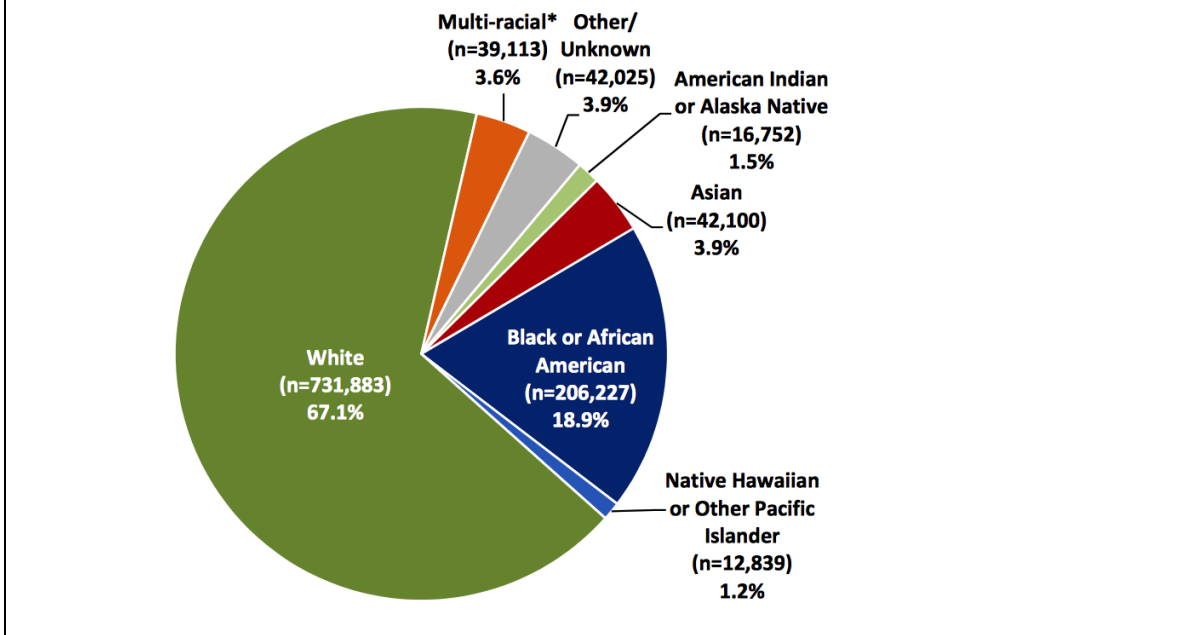


Figure 3. 2015 Enlisted personnel demographics. Data and graph retrieved from the U.S. Department of Defense. (2015). *Demographics: Profile of the Military Community*.

Table 1 provides further information in establishing the profile of each service component and Table 2 and 3 provide gender demographics.

Table 1

Race Profile of Active Duty Force by Military Branch

Race Profile of Active Duty Force				
Service	% White	% Minorities	% Black	% Other
Army	73.9 %	26.1 %	21.5 %	4.6 %
Navy	66.2 %	33.8 %	19.3 %	14.4 %
Marine Corps	83.7 %	16.3 %	11.1 %	5.2 %
Air Force	78.1 %	21.9 %	15.6 %	6.3 %
Coast Guard	82 %	18 %	6.1 %	11.9 %
Total	74.6 %	25.4 %	17.8 %	7.6 %

Adapted from “Demographics of U.S. Active Duty Military,” retrieved from: www.statisticbrain.com/demographics-of-active-duty-u-s-military. (2015).

Table 2

Women Active Duty Military Statistics by Military Branch

Women Active Duty Military Statistics	Number	Percent of Branch
Total number of women serving in the military	214,098	14.6 %
Army	76,694	13.6 %
Marine Corps	13,677	6.8 %
Navy	53,385	16.4 %
Air Force	63,552	19.1 %
Coast Guard	6,790	15.7 %

Adapted from “Demographics of U.S. Active Duty Military,” retrieved from: www.statisticbrain.com/demographics-of-active-duty-u-s-military. (2015).

Table 3

Women Reserve Military Statistics

Women Reserve Military Statistics	Number	Percent of Branch
Total number of women in the reserves	118,781	19.5 %
Total number of women in the National Guard	470,851	15.5 %

Adapted from “Demographics of U.S. Active Duty Military,” retrieved from: www.statisticbrain.com/demographics-of-active-duty-u-s-military. (2015).

Upon graduation from initial training, training in various fields of expertise from infantryman to nuclear propulsion now consumes the newest recruit. Time management,

study habits, new leadership proficiencies and more are gained in the weeks and months of initial training. Upon completion of the next phase of training, these individuals transition to the military world of the Soldier, Sailor, Airman, or Marine. Unit training, battle preparations, ships maneuvers, and more, have further enhanced military personnel in the areas of leadership, management, and mentorship. In some areas of work, training is provided in in instruction and the field of curriculum development. Data obtained from the Department of Defense, Table 4, provides information that illustrates the varied occupational fields military personnel receive training. These varied areas may provide the skill set needed to succeed in the classroom.

Table 4

Active Duty Enlisted Personnel by Occupational Group and Military Branch 2015

Enlisted	Army	Air Force	Coast Guard	Marine Corps	Navy	Total enlisted personnel in each occupational group
Occupational group						
Administrative	6,140	14,046	1,507	12,018	18,635	52,346
Combat Specialty	109,625	677	649	39,350	8,388	158,689
Construction	15,313	5,195	—	6,252	3,987	30,747
Electronic and Electrical Equipment Repair	31,051	29,310	4,341	16,822	48,236	129,760
Engineering, Science, and Technical	43,567	49,162	1,256	26,917	39,611	160,513
Healthcare	29,986	15,441	707	—	25,345	71,479
Human Resource Development	16,558	7,720	1	2,214	3,941	30,434
Machine Operator and Production	4,107	6,063	1,688	2,539	8,542	22,939
Media and Public Affairs	6,646	7,095	136	2,439	3,859	20,175
Protective Service	21,802	32,573	2,720	6,096	12,011	75,202
Support Service	9,901	4,981	1,145	2,263	8,129	26,419
Transportation and Material Handling	48,096	27,840	9,879	23,213	37,709	146,737
Vehicle and Machinery Mechanic	45,344	41,555	5,532	21,511	47,353	161,295
Non-occupation or unspecified coded personnel	2,984	5,038	1,439	1,161	2,555	13,177
Total enlisted personnel for each military branch and Coast Guard	391,120	246,696	31,000	162,795	268,301	1,099,912
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Defense, Defense Manpower Data Center						

Adapted from “U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Outlook Handbook,” (2015). p.6.

The average service member, upon completion of four years of service, has deployed over three times to foreign countries and attended a plethora of cultural diversity, equal opportunity, and leadership training. Table 5 provides data collected on troop deployment for the Department of Defense, 2014.

Table 5

Military Deployments

Cumulative Time That Individuals Have Deployed to OIF/OND and OEF Between September 2001 and December 2011, by Year

Years of Deployed Duty	Army	Navy	Air Force	Marine Corps
Not yet deployed	151,341 (27.3%)	108,021 (34.0%)	133,989 (40.9%)	77,233 (38.6%)
1 year (1–12 months)	131,057	141,232	118,035	66,459
2 years (13–24 months)	135,876	57,460	55,885	44,148
3 years (25–36 months)	94,574	9,479	15,498	10,584
4 years (37–48 months)	35,705	1,564	3,501	1,362
5+ years (49+ months)	5,959	368	1,029	161
Total	554,512	318,124	327,937	199,947

NOTE: In the table, partial years of deployment are counted as a full year. For example, the "1 year" row includes all AC soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines in some stage of beginning or completing their first cumulative year of deployed duty (i.e., 1–12 months of cumulative deployment time).

Adapted from "Rand Corporation," *Measuring Army Deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan*, by D. Baiocchi, (2013). p.4.

If the individual separates at a pay grade of E5 or above (regardless of branch) there is a high probability that he/she has been in charge of managing and leading personnel. Training in Air Force Leadership Development (Air Force), Petty Officer Indoctrination (Navy), Army Leadership Development, (Army), CNO Sailing Directions

(Navy and Marine), and Developmental Mentorship (All Forces) are just some of the many schools that the service member will attend within four years.

Veterans, in many cases, have been placed in situations that resulted in the necessity to make life or death decisions. These are just a few of the conceptual, technical, and human skills in alignment with Katz' Skills Based Leadership Theory that may assist Veterans with preparation of a second career in education. From the battleground of the enemy to the battleground of the classroom (politically and sometimes physically), the military men and women are prepared. The valuable skills obtained from personal experience may be the very skills necessary to succeed in the classroom.

While the discussion thus far has centered on the enlisted community (the largest percentage of military personnel), Veteran Officers can also provide valuable resources for the educational field. The former officer veterans have received even more training in the areas of mentorship, leadership and vital STEM areas of teaching. By the age of 25, most junior officers will have already held positions of leadership. For example, they will have had experience in leading men and women into battle, piloting our nation's fighter jets and transport planes, piloting a five billion dollar aircraft carrier (responsible for all equipment and crew on board), responsibility for millions of dollars in budgeting, responsibility for national and nuclear assets and most of all, providing leadership to personnel and managing the nation's greatest assets, people. The experiences indicate that these individuals have valuable attributes that can be provided in the areas of instructional competency, classroom management, teacher leadership and mentorship.

In the military officer community 82.8% hold a bachelor's degree or higher as compared to 29.9% of the general population. The enlisted community has 93.6% with high school diploma or some college compared to 59.5% of the general population. The United States military has invested billions of educational dollars to educate the military workforce. Capitalizing on this investment may be the Troops to Teachers most valuable asset to the educational community.

A Need for Teachers (Traditional and Alternative)

“Good teaching is perhaps the most critical part of a solid education” (Roth & Swail, 2000, p. 6). One ineffective teacher today could lead hundreds of students to the path of mediocrity rather than assisting individuals in the attainment of their full potential. Darling-Hammond (2000) provided what she called the “Marshall Plan for Teaching” (p. 164), in which she listed the five areas to improve teacher recruitment and retention:

1. Establish service scholarships to cover training cost in high-quality program;
2. Recruitment incentives such as matching grants could leverage additional compensation for teachers with expertise and/or additional responsibilities, such as mentoring or coaching;
3. Support improved preparation;
4. Incentive grants should upgrade all teachers' preparation for teaching literacy skills, special education and English-language learners, provide mentoring of all beginning teachers;
5. Preparation and mentoring can be strengthened if they are guided by a high-quality teacher-performance assessment. (pp. 166-168)

However, even with multiple studies, continued research, state and local programs, teachers continue to leave the education field or transfer to new districts. Coggins and Peske (2011) detailed how “new teachers are the new majority” and “teachers with 10 or fewer years’ experience now constitute over 52 percent of our teaching force” (p. 28).

This teacher movement can and does create a void in lower income schools or those designated as hard-to-staff that have been unable to attract teachers to their areas. In the last few years, this same void has been felt in all districts in the areas of math, science and special education. The constant “leaver and mover” shift of teachers results in a loss of leadership talent that results in new assessments each year. This leadership challenge provides a necessary impetus for the improvement and growth of the alternative certification program and continual professional development of those that achieve certification via this alternative method (Kaiser, 2011).

The intent of alternative certification remains one of training and recruiting the right teachers for the right job and the community. Constantine et al. (2009) stated, “Every year, thousands of new teachers pass through hundreds of different teacher preparation programs and are hired to teach in our nation’s schools” (p. 10). In past years, the alternative certification program gained ground and advocates as the need for math and science teachers increased (Hawley, 1992). Filling the critical shortages in various areas of education was only one of the intents envisioned by the program. Other teacher characteristics viewed as lacking in the traditional certification path are minorities and males. “It is essential that schools provide valuable role models for minority and non-minority students alike” (Wade, 2005, p. 108).

In their study concerning alternative certification teaching, Zeichner and Schulte (2001) noted,

The university-certified novice teacher found it difficult to relate to students who were different from them. They emphasized the difference between themselves and the low-income minority students they were teaching. Most held a “cultural deficit” perspective on student achievement and believed that their poor and minority students lack enriching life experiences made it difficult for them to function as autonomous learners or understand higher order concepts. In contrast, six of the eight alternatively certified novice teachers held higher expectations for low-income and minority students and attempted to develop curriculum and instructional practices responsive to the needs of diverse learners. (p. 272)

Universities, schools, states, and districts are looking for increased ways to augment the teacher workforce.

Over the past two decades, growing numbers of states have approved alternative teacher certifications as a proposed solution to two problems in US education: one, to increase the highly publicized shortage of teachers, and two, to address the widespread concern about teacher quality. (Birkeland, 2005, p.iii)

Table 6, reproduced in part in-text and in full in Appendix F, displays the statistics of how the student-to-teacher ratio has grown exponentially. Table 6 further illustrates the 60 years of educational data, includes future projected numbers, and also illustrates the importance of recruitment as the rise in student population is represented. As I evaluated the data, it became clear that the years of 2011-2015 revealed a decrease in traditionally trained teachers entering the educational workforce. The projected numbers for 2016

show only moderate improvement in the area of teacher hire. Data does not indicate, however, the path to education that the teacher chose or whether the teachers surveyed possessed traditional or alternative certifications.

Table 6

Teacher Statistics

	Teachers (in thousands)			Enrollment (in thousands)			Pupil/teacher ratio			Number of new teacher hires (in thousands)		
Year	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
2011	3,524	3,103	421	54,790	49,522	5,268	15.5	16.0	12.5	241	173	68
2012	3,525	3,111	414	54,833	49,652	5,181	15.6	16.0	12.5	245	171	74
2013	3,524	3,118	407	54,842	49,750	5,091	15.6	16.0	12.5	239	170	69
2014	3,515	3,118	397	54,725	49,751	4,974	15.6	16.0	12.5	232	166	66
2015	3,514	3,123	391	54,731	49,839	4,892	15.6	16.0	12.5	241	175	67
2016	3,544	3,155	390	54,790	49,951	4,839	15.5	15.8	12.4	272	202	70

Adapted from: “Digest of Educational Statistics D13,” National Center for Educational Statistics. Table 202.20, retrieved from [www://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest13](http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest13). (2014).

While the above table represents optimistic data with regard to future teacher employment, the data also indicates that many of those in the educational arena currently are not teaching in their field of certification. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (2005) addressed the dilemma that “all four categories of new hires were more likely to teach out-of-field and less likely to have both a major and certification in the field of their main teaching assignment” (p. 3). Further factors showed that “among all the beginning teachers in 2007-2008, 10 percent did not teach in 2008-2009, 12 percent did not teach in 2009-2010, 15 percent did not teach in 2010-

2011, and 17 percent did not teach in 2011-2012” (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2015, p. 3). Table 7 presents data in a longitudinal study of beginning teachers.

Table 7
Distribution of 2007-08 Beginning Public School Teachers

Number and Percentage Distribution of 2007-08 Beginning Public School Teachers, by Teacher Status: 2007-2008 through 2011-2012			
Year	Percentage Distributed	Teacher Status	
		Current Number of Teachers	Former Number of Teachers
2007-2008	90	156,100	156,000
2008-2009	90	156,100	140,900
2009-2010	87.7	155,800	136,900
2010-2011	85.2	155,800	132,700
2011-2012	82.7	155,600	128,700

Adapted from: Gray, L., & Soheyla T. (2015). *U.S. Department of Education Public School Teacher Attrition and Mobility in the First Five Years. Results from the First through Fifth Waves of the 2007-2008 Beginning Teacher Longitudinal Study.* National Center for Statistics in Education.

This data illustrates an inability to fill necessary teaching positions with traditionally certified personnel, resulting in the necessity of alternative certified teachers.

A New Way Ahead

The tension has developed over time as the number of teachers entering the workforce via alternative certification programs increased resulting in traditional educators’ varying views of alternatively certified teacher capabilities. Owings, et al, (2006) stated,

“Over 90% of supervising principals say that their TTTs exhibit research-based best instructional and classroom management practices linked with increased student achievement, have a more positive impact on student achievement, and work well within the school environment at a higher rate than other teachers with similar years of teaching experience” (p. 213).

The alternative certification program, such as Troops to Teachers or Teach for America, continues to receive criticism from educational institutions, teachers and administrators. “It is no secret: Teach for America (TFA) and traditional colleges of education have had strained relations over the past 20 years, as their approaches to teacher preparation are starkly distinct” (Heineke, Carter, Desimone, & Cameron, 2010, p. 123).

Professionals in various fields advocate that the original intent of the programs has evolved from garnering a few desired teachers to fill the void in urban schools and to teach in STEM areas to multiple varied state alternative certification programs and what some have perceived as the “new normal for educating teachers” (Levine, 2011, p. 2). As stated by Farkas and Duffett (2010), “Schools’ failure to narrow achievement gaps may well lead to total restructuring, including replacement of staff. That’s why ‘alternative routes’ into classrooms are gaining popularity” (p. 6). However, this change in teacher preparation is not always accepted favorably. Colleges of Education continue to be critical of the process. Educators surveyed in several studies stated that alternative certification teachers “threaten to compromise the quality of the teaching force in public schools” (Farkas & Duffett, 2009, p. 32).

However, according to Feistritzer (2008), the same individuals who criticize the Alternative Certification programs may overlook the possibility that there could be a particular market niche for TTT/AC teachers. Advocates for the alternative certification program believe that this program can “lead to improvements of what I have referred to as traditional certification of new teachers-competition and demonstration” (Hawley, 1992, p. 23). It is also clear that “alternative certification programs are blossoming in every corner of the land, competing for the bread and butter of these once-dominant institutions” (Farkas & Duffett, 2009, p. 8). While some worry that those receiving alternative certifications are not as qualified as those gaining their certifications via traditional routes, studies on New Jersey school districts presented by Zeichner and Schulte (2001) “found that the academic qualifications of alternative interns exceeded those of traditionally prepared teachers” (p. 273). Studies such as these could result in a possibility of calling into question the value of traditionally trained classroom management classes and how these classes and training may be deficient in training new teachers.

Table 8 illustrates the varied fields that individuals certified via alternative certification choose.

Table 8 Alternative Certification by Subject

Subject Area	Total number of completers	Number in traditional route programs	Number in alternative route programs	Percent in alternative route programs
Business	1,803	1,007	796	44
Science	14,595	10,733	3,862	26
Career and technical education	2,018	1,510	508	25
Foreign languages	5,740	4,335	1,405	24
Middle school education	16,997	12,971	4,026	24
Multiple grade levels	16,270	12,866	3,404	21
Mathematics	14,735	11,671	3,064	21
Special education	32,978	26,277	6,701	20
Secondary education	32,594	26,689	5,905	18
General education	12,640	10,554	2,086	17
English and language arts	24,306	21,269	3,037	12
Social studies and social sciences	21,514	19,222	2,292	11
Bilingual education and ESL	15,336	13,836	1,500	10
Health and physical education	12,377	11,239	1,138	9
Arts	12,346	11,220	1,126	9
Early childhood education	22,228	20,182	2,046	9
Elementary education	81,196	74,036	7,160	9
Other	3,563	2,988	575	16
Total	343,236	292,605	50,631	15

Adapted from “Highly Qualified Teachers Enrolled in Programs Providing Alternative Routes to Teacher Certification or Licensure. (2016). retrieved from: <https://ww2.ed.gov/rschstat/eval/teaching/hqt-teacher-certification/report.pdf>.

Despite the shortage of teachers, The Department of Education still has been unable to adequately place measures to stem the flow of teachers leaving the workforce and no definite solution has been provided to correct the deficit. Feistritzer (2011) stated,

The nations need specific kinds of teachers. We need more male teachers, more qualified teachers in our inner cities, and we especially need teachers of special education, mathematics and the science. We need more persons of color teaching and more teachers who can competently teach the subjects in the grades they are teaching. The nation’s needs teachers who want to teach, who put a premium on education and who want to help young people learn and meet high standards. We need committed teachers who plan to stay a while. (p. 1)

Filling these shortages is just one area of concern for the Department of Education.

In reviewing the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards, the research may indicate that a teacher with educational credentials and certifications, regardless of pathway to attainment, may be an asset for the school systems. These certified individuals may be more valuable in filling critical school positions than those without credentials currently hired into those positions.

The New Normal

A shortage of teachers still exists in all areas of education even though the United States Department of Education has increased efforts of recruitment. Attrition of a growing number of the youngest teachers in the classroom may be linked to a lack of training in areas of cultural understanding, testing, classroom management, leadership and a lack of mentorship provided by senior professionals (Baines, 2010).

The explanations provided concerning the rise in attrition are wide-ranging, and “evidence suggests that teachers tend to move away from low-performing, high poverty schools and, as a result, these schools have the least-qualified teachers” (Golhaber, Gross, & Player, 2007, p. 2). The mentorship and professional development necessary to ensure the success of not only alternative certified teachers but also traditionally certified teachers is lacking.

The process involved in hiring a teacher in today’s educational arena involves more than verifying certification. The changing demographics of school districts across the United States have created a void in role models for minorities within the school districts. “In public schools across the nation, there appears to be a significant and widening disparity between the percentage of students from ethnic minority groups (most notable African American and Hispanic) and the percentage of teachers representing

these groups” (Brennan & Bliss, 2010, p. 4). Increased demands for higher standards are another area that raises concern within the educational community. *The No Child Left Behind Act* and community leaders expect increased academic scores, and in 2008, NCATE released this statement:

Today’s society needs a workforce that can apply knowledge, reason analytically and solve problems. At the same time, American society is becoming more diverse, with students in classrooms drawn from many cultures and ethnic groups. Preparing teachers to teach all students to meet society’s demands for high performance has created a new agenda for educators and policy makers. To meet these changing needs, norms in teacher preparation and licensing are changing.

(p. 8)

Owings (2016) study provided the demographics of personnel within TTT and shown on Table 9. In reviewing the demographics, the research indicated varied ethnic groups are completing the program at higher percentages than other programs. The demand for culturally and racial/gender requirements for teachers in high needs schools may indicate that more TTT teachers possibly will benefit the educational workforce.

Table 9

Ethnicities of Participating Troops to Teachers Program Completers

Ethnicity	<i>n</i>	Percentage
Black	780	18.8
White	1,698	40.8
Hispanic/Latino	241	5.8
Asian	28	0.7
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	12	0.3
American Indian/Alaskan Native	50	1.2
Other	46	1.1
Undisclosed	1,302	31.3

^aAbout one third of respondents did not disclose gender, ethnicity, or the number of years they have worked as a K-12 teacher. This table represents data from the two thirds who did respond to this question.

Adapted from, “Troops to Teachers Update: Changing, but Still Pleasing Principals With High Teaching Quality,” by W.A. Owings, et al (2015). *NASSP Bulletin* 1-29 DOI: 10.111770192636515571933.

The continual increase of a more diverse pool of students, changing standards, and increased states requirements were only a few of the demand signals that resulted in the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) implementation of updated requirements for institutions preparing teachers for the workforce. According to NCATE (2008), future teacher candidates who are graduating from professionally accredited institutions should possess the following abilities:

- Help all pre-kindergarten through twelfth grade (P-12) students learn;
- Teach to P-12 student standards set by specialized professional associations and the states;

- Explain instructional choices based on research-derived knowledge and best practice;
- Apply effective methods of teaching students who are at different developmental stages, have different learning styles, and come from diverse backgrounds;
- Reflect on practice and act on feedback; and
- Be able to integrate technology into instruction effectively. (p. 10)

Further research in the Troops to Teachers certified professional may indicate how each of the individuals in the program brings conceptual, technical, and human skills indicated in Katz (1955) skills-based leadership theory that possibly will meet these demands. The institutional standards set for teachers is as follows:

- Standard 1: Candidate Knowledge, Skills, and Professional Dispositions
 - Candidates preparing to work in schools as teachers or other school professionals know and demonstrate the content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge and skills, pedagogical and professional knowledge and skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates meet professional, state, and institutional standards.
- Standard 2: Assessment System and Unit Evaluation
 - The unit has an assessment system that collects and analyzes data on applicant qualifications, candidate and graduate performance, and unit operations to evaluate and improve the performance of candidates, the unit, and its programs.

- Standard 3: Field Experiences and Clinical Practice
 - The unit and its school partner’s design, implement, and evaluate field experiences and clinical practice so that teacher candidates and other school professionals develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn.

- Standard 4: Diversity
 - The unit designs, implements, and evaluated curriculum and provides experiences for candidates to acquire and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions necessary to help all students learn. Assessments indicate that candidates can demonstrate and apply proficiencies related to diversity. Experiences provided for candidates include working with diverse populations, including higher education and P-12 school faculty, candidates, and students in P-12 schools.

- Standard 5: Faculty Qualifications, Performance, and Development
 - Faculties are qualified and model best professional practices in scholarship, service, and teaching, including the assessment of their own effectiveness as related to candidate performance. They also collaborate with colleagues in the disciplines and schools. The unit systematically evaluates faculty performance and facilitates professional development.

- Standard 6: Unit Governance and Resources
 - The unit has the leadership, authority, budget, personnel, facilities, and resources, including information technology resources, for the preparation

of candidates to meet professional, state, and institutional standards.

(Brennan & Bliss, 2010, pp. 12-14)

The research will endeavor to reflect the skills attained by military members may prepare Veterans for the educational work environment equivalent to the educational institutions training for the student teacher to meet the above standards.

Future of Teachers in Alternative Certification

While there is evidence that the United States “produces many more new teachers than its schools hire” (Darling-Hammond, 2000, p. 6), the educational system still reflects a shortage of teachers in rural and urban areas and in certification areas such as special education and STEM subjects. Studies show the attrition rates of teachers in the first years of teaching continue to climb. Proper recruitment and retention are a vital part of the alternative certification programs, and the goal is to retain these trained professionals in often hard-to-fill teaching positions. This study will provide data that will lead to further understandings of TTT and the program’s capacity to provide a diverse, qualified individual capable of providing teacher leadership in the conceptual, technical and human areas in each school district. These individuals may be able to fill critical areas of teacher shortages; however, others’ perceptions may limit their ability to experience success in the positions that they fill. Thus, this study may provide further data that point towards the factors for retention issues of TTT teachers.

Oklahoma Troops to Teachers

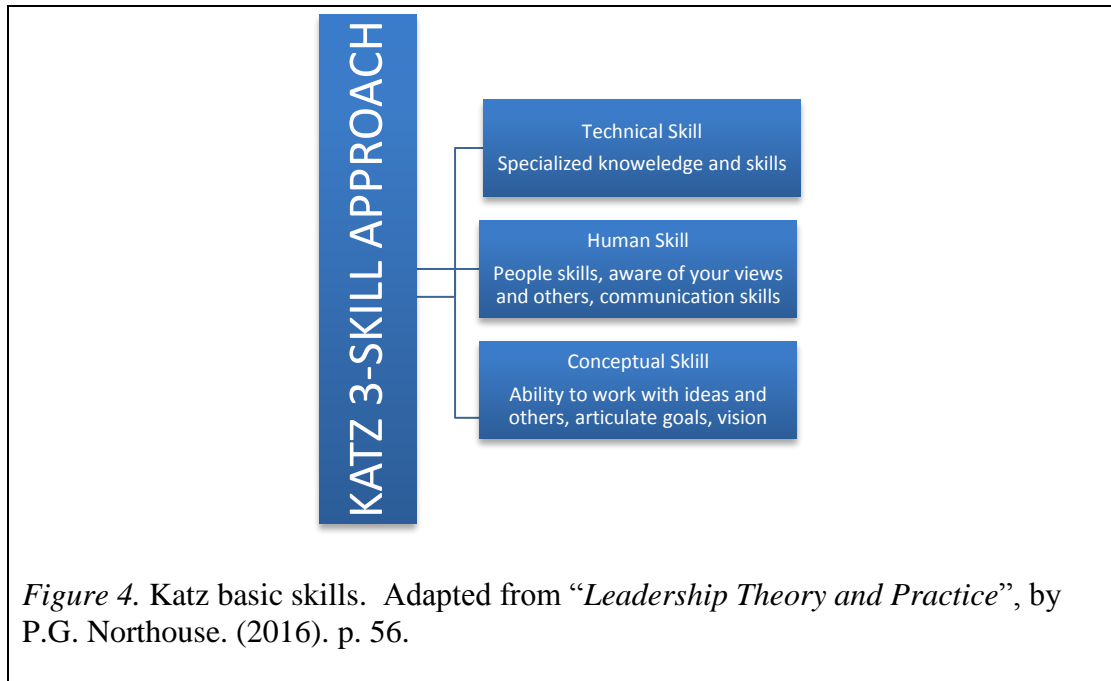
In 2007, The Tulsa News reported that Oklahoma school superintendents were “clamoring” for more teachers provided through TTT in Oklahoma. The main individual interviewed, Major (Retired) Riggs (2007) shared, “About 35 service members completed

Oklahoma's Troops to Teachers program in each of the past two years” (Tulsa News, 2007). This sentiment may be due to the fact that these former military members are proving to be highly successful in a classroom setting, which is a surprise to many (Owings et al., 2015). Apprehension was the initial feeling regarding this program. Research by Owings et al. (2015) provided data that indicated concerns such as; former military personnel may not be adept at handling children in the classroom and may turn the classroom into a boot camp. However, TTT teachers in Oklahoma have demonstrated that the military trains individuals to be far more than a disciplinarian. According to the study conducted by Owings et al. (2015), the valuable traits that these veterans bring to the classroom include excellent leadership skills, excellent classroom management skills, and a high level of goal-orientation.

Theoretical Framework

Katz’ Skills-Approach Leadership Theory relies on two sets of skills: personal skills and leadership skills. Northouse (2016) identified the three personal skills as conceptual, technical, and human (Northouse, 2016). Mumford (2007) identified the four leadership skills to be cognitive, interpersonal, business, and strategic. These two skill sets combined provide a more comprehensive insight into how these skills can be applied in an effective way in a leadership position. Northouse (2016) commented on Mumford’s (2007) skills model theory, “Their skills model contends that leadership outcomes are a direct result of a leader’s competencies in problem-solving skills, social judgment skills, and knowledge. Each of these competencies includes a large repertoire of abilities and can be learned and developed” (p. 57). This model will be used to determine if the managerial duties teachers are responsible for and the Skills Approach Leadership

Theory skills are the necessary skills desired in today’s teachers. One of the main concepts of Katz theory is in how it details the idea that “leadership can be learned.” This understanding may provide insight to the educational community that teachers can be trained to be leaders. Figure 4 illustrates the three basic skills and meanings Katz stated were necessary for successful leadership.



Researching various theories, the skills-approach leadership theory is the logical theory to apply for the case study because it helps to explain the technical, human, and skills that are needed for success. Additionally, because it emphasizes an understanding of leadership as something that can be “learned,” it serves as a framework for understanding how the military training provided to these TTT teachers prepared them for classroom responsibilities.

The goal of the researchers in developing the skills-approach leadership theory was to determine elements necessary for successful performance (Northouse, 2016). The

three elements determined of the skill-approach leadership theory, technical, human, and conceptual, also contain further necessary competencies for success. Figure 5 below illustrates these competencies:

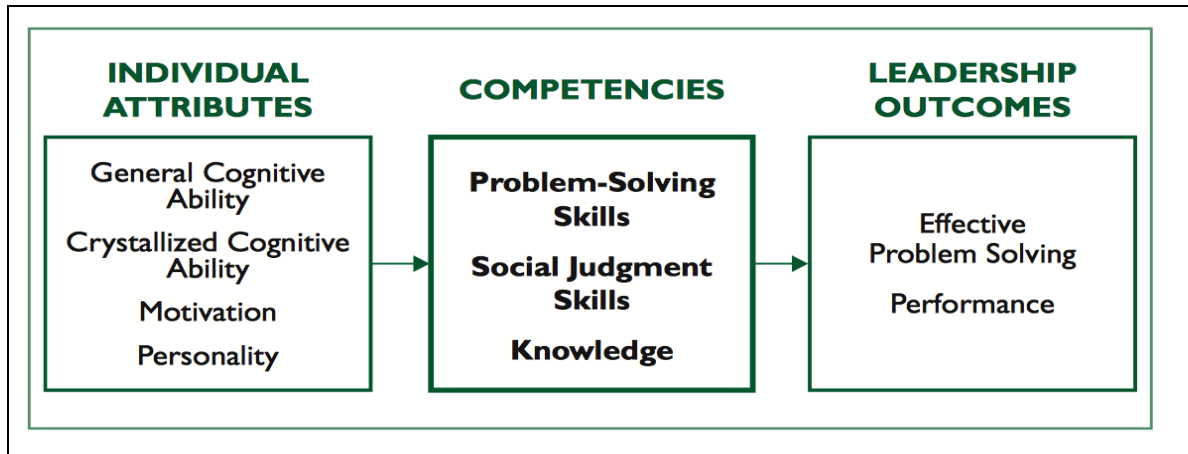


Figure 5. Three components of the Katz three-skill model. Adapted from, “*Leadership Theory and Practice*,” by P.G. Northouse, (2016). p. 56.

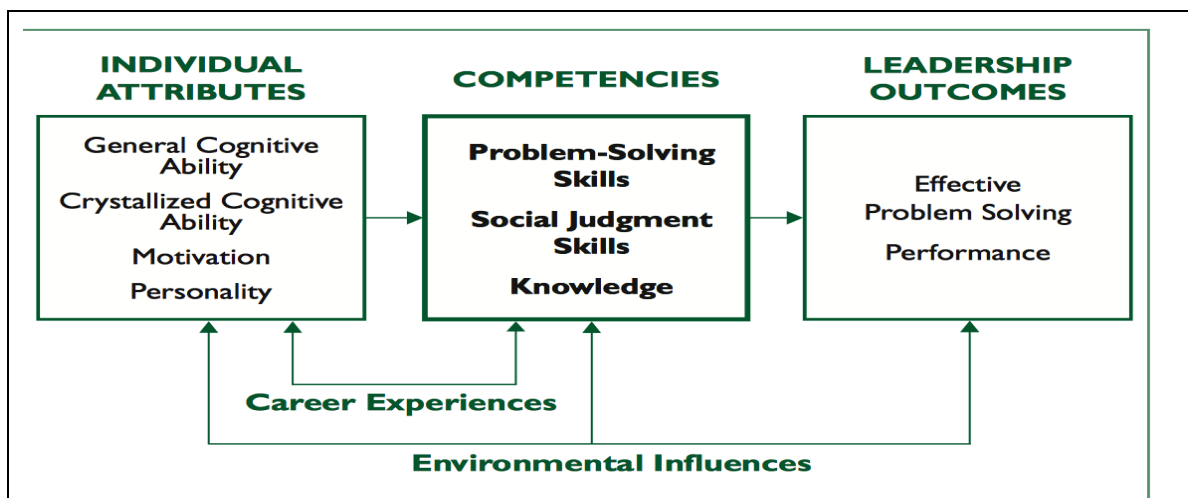


Figure 6. Varied competencies for successful skill traits. Adapted from, “*Leadership Theory and Practice*,” by P.G. Northouse, (2016). p. 56.

These leadership skills may also be affected by other elements within the leadership arena an individual is working for or with. Figure 6 illustrates the elements that may affect the varied competencies for successful skill traits. The new environment

for Troops to Teachers participants is the classroom and shifting from a military culture to a school culture may affect the application of skills each veteran brings to the table. The lens a Troops to Teacher participant has viewed his/her world now requires a shift to an educational lens, and these new environmental influences may, in turn, influence the success of the TTT teacher. Additionally, understanding the perspective of others, including traditionally certified teachers and administrators and peer alternatively certified teachers, will provide a better understanding of not only the skills that TTT individuals bring to the profession, but also the challenges that they encounter as they enter the teaching workforce.

Summary

The TTT program is one avenue for veterans to continue to serve the community they have defended for many years. Veterans with a plethora of degrees and training skill sets may be the personnel that can fill the gaps in the educational field. The diversity and leadership these individuals bring to the educational workforce may be invaluable. This chapter highlighted the extant literature on Troops to Teachers' training and former military experiences, teacher shortages, and alternative paths to certification to meet identified needs of filling each classroom with a qualified teacher. The theoretical framework of the Skills Approach to leadership was explained also. Although this framework is applied as a means to assess individual leadership capacity, it also has application for the teaching profession. The recent emphasis in the literature on developing teacher leaders provides a context for utilizing this framework for assessing the capacity of TTT teachers.

Chapter III provides the detailed methodology and research methods applied to the case study. Procedures with participant selection, data collection, and analysis are detailed. The ethical considerations and bias are reviewed and the chapter concludes with the trustworthiness table of findings and the limitations to the study.

Chapter IV presents the data and a description of the school sites and participants. Data collected includes interviews, observations, and field notes. A detailed description of each area is provided.

Chapter V presents the findings as analyzed through the lens of the Katz Skills Leadership Theory and includes an analysis of TTT teachers' technical, human and conceptual skills.

Chapter VI discusses the findings based on the Katz Skills Leadership Theoretical framework. Limitations, implications for research, theory, and practice and recommendations for future research are also presented.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the perceived teaching capacity of individuals who entered the teaching profession through the Troops to Teachers program, as reported by traditionally certified teachers and administrators, alternatively certified teacher peers, and the TTT teachers themselves. Qualitative methodology through a case study design was used, and the Skills-Approach to Leadership (Katz, 1955) served as a theoretical framework for considering perceptions of the technical, human, and conceptual skills and abilities that alternatively certified Troops to Teachers participants bring to education. Although the Skills-Approach Leadership Theory is a theoretical framework that is designed to assess leadership capacity, it can be argued that teachers serve as leaders in their own classrooms. Additionally, teacher leadership is a well-researched (Bass, 1990) and highly regarded characteristic of effective teachers (Green, 2013). Understanding the technical, human, and conceptual skills that Troops to Teachers participants bring to the profession provided valuable insight into the capacity of these individuals to meet the challenges imposed by severe teacher shortages across the nation. Mumford (2000) illustrated the influences individuals experience during their career can have a direct relationship to personal leadership skills. This study further provides insight into whether these teachers, through the training they have received in the military, exhibit skills that promote success in the

classroom. The evaluative case study research I conducted used appropriate methods of data collection for a qualitative study. “Evaluative case studies involve description, explanation, and judgment” (Merriam, 1988, p. 28). The evaluative case study method I used to “provide a thick description that is grounded, is holistic and lifelike, simplifies data to be considered by the reader, illuminates meanings, and can communicate tacit knowledge” (Merriam, 1998, p. 29). Stake (1995) described that “all researchers have a great privilege and obligation: the privilege to pay attention to what they consider worthy of attention and the obligation to make conclusions drawn from those choices meaningful to colleagues and clients” (p. 49).

The case study methodology is one I used to gain the most insight needed for the study. Stake (1995) noted that “we may have reservations about some things the people (I will call them *actors*) tell us, just as they will question some of the things we will tell about them” (p. 1). The case study method allowed me to use a research design to “study a phenomenon systematically” (Merriam, 1998, p. 6). The goal of the research was to ensure that this case study meets qualifications as described by Merriam (1998),

- 1) The case study must be significant;
- 2) The case study must be complete;
- 3) The case study must consider alternative perspectives;
- 4) The case study must display sufficient evidence;
- 5) The case study must be composed in an engaging manner. (p. 206)

Accomplishment of this goal provided a “contribution not only in terms of the study’s content but in terms of case study as a research genre having its own form of reporting” (Merriam, 1998, p. 207).

Methodological Procedures

Study Population

The Dixie McCall Public School district, established in 1901, is unique in that it serves civilian and a high number of military-connected families from diverse cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds. The district is located in a Midwestern state and is categorized as a “small city” based on the school locale definitions for the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2015), in conjunction with the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). There are approximately 15,000 students that attend the 16 elementary, four middle, one alternative high school, and three high schools in the district (District Website, 2016). The district operates two pre-kindergartens schools and collaborates with other businesses in the community to provide educational services for four-year-olds.

Dixie McCall School district employs 2,300 administrators, teachers, and support personnel. Demographics for the school are: 39% white, 26% African-American, 17% Hispanic, 6% Native American, and 2% Asian (District Website, 2016). The remaining demographics include varied multi-racial backgrounds. Approximately 17% of the student population meets requirements for special needs. The U.S. Army has a base that has been designated as a “compassionate assignment” based on the Dixie McCall School Districts special education programs. Almost 50% of the student population is military-connected. This connection also provides needed funding to assist in ensuring the district meets high standards. The mission of the Dixie McCall district is “to ensure the highest quality instruction in order to create the most successful students” (District Website, 2016).

The Dixie McCall school district employs approximately 2,300 administrators, teachers, and support personnel of which 29 are full time and 16 part time Teachers teachers'. The TTT teachers were employed across the district in one of the 19 elementary, four middle school, and three high schools.

Sample and Data Collection

Data gathered for the study were collected in the form of interviews, documents, and field notes taken from visits conducted at the participating schools. I understood that “data collection is very much dependent upon the investigators sensitivity and analytic skills” (Merriam, 1998, p. 121), and, as such, I strove to collect information necessary for a thorough study of this case.

Participant selection. Participants included four Dixie McCall Independent School District (ISD) TTT teachers, the district superintendent, four principals, five traditionally certified teachers, four TTT teachers and two alternatively certified teacher who have worked with the TTT participants, for a total of 16 participants. I conducted interviews of participants to gather insight into the perceptions of individuals within the program. The participants represented one elementary, one middle school, and two high schools located in the Dixie McCall ISD. Purposeful sampling was used to ensure the selected participants provided information that was essential to the research. Criterion for purposeful sampling for each category of participant primarily was based upon their experience working with TTT teachers and a minimum of two years in current positions. Limiting participation to those with two or more years of experience in their current positions helped to ensure adequate knowledge of the capacity of TTT teachers in their buildings. One building leader from each level (elementary, middle, and high school)

who worked with a large number of TTT teachers was invited and chose to participate in the study. TTT teachers and other alternatively certified teachers with at least two years of teaching experience were also asked to participate. Four traditionally certified teachers (one from each building) who worked with a large number of TTT teachers were invited to participate. I ensured the participants knew they were neither judged nor assessed so that individuals were provided detailed information rather than what the participant deemed as “socially acceptable” (Merriam, 1998, p. 95).

Observations. Data were compiled from multiple visits to classrooms. I spent multiple hours in classroom observations of TTT teachers to better “provide a detailed descriptions of situations, events, people, interactions and observed behaviors” (Merriam, 1998, p. 67). Further observations included classroom periods, extracurricular activity assignments, and professional development training provided for teachers. Viewing these events allowed me to attain further knowledge for developing the case study (Stake, 1995), because I was able to observe the TTT teachers in their natural setting. I further observed interactions between TTT teachers and others in the building. My goal was not to be intrusive in any of the school settings. I also remembered to keep focused on the critical events as they related to the purpose of the study.

Interviews. A total of 16 interviews were conducted (one superintendent, four building level leaders, four TTT teachers, two alternative certified teachers, and five traditional certified teachers) located in one elementary, one middle school, and two high schools within the district. Each interview lasted approximately 45-50 minutes. Interviews were recorded using a Life Scribe and backup tape recorder to ensure accuracy of information. I took hand written notes to ensure key points were annotated,

as these may not have been reflected in the voice recordings. I ensured transcription of interviews was completed so that I have a direct and fresh accounting and perception of those individuals interviewed. Recordings ensured that accurate information was provided for the research. I provided interview questions before the appointment so participants could prepare answers or collect any data they deemed necessary to assist with the research. I understood that the “key to getting good data from interviewing is to ask good questions” (Merriam, 1998, p. 78). I was always mindful of the purpose of the study and the research questions. The interview questions developed were critical to collecting valid data to answer the research questions for this study. I used a semi-structured interview protocol, which as Creswell (2009) explained, “The research questions may evolve and change during the study in a manner consistent with the assumptions of an emerging design” (p. 131).

Documents. Documents collected included Troops to Teachers training materials, professional development materials, and TTT information distributed by the district.

Data Analysis

Organize, prepare, and read data. I prepared for each interview by ensuring I had all available information concerning interviewee and equipment needed to conduct the interview. I organized research by sections according to those interviewed. Data were read and reviewed continually to ensure all information was complete. I used the table provided in Stake (1995) that provided a thorough methodology and guidelines for field observations. Information was divided into sections that are “anticipation, first visit,

further preparation for observation, further development of conceptualization, analysis of data, providing audience opportunity for understanding” (pp. 52-53).

Code data. I compiled the data and applied the technique of “generating categories of information (open-coding), selecting one of the categories and positioning it within a theoretical model” (Creswell, 2009, p. 184). This method of analysis provided a “rich, thick description” (Merriam, 1988, p. 177). I used a matrix board as described in Stake (1995) and a meta-matrix described in Merriam (1988) that allowed me to keep track of data sources, content, personal diary and interview recordings.

Generate themes or categories. In generating the themes throughout the study, the focus was maintained on the purpose of the study. Themes/categories are divided into areas in relation to Skills-Approach Leadership Theory. Main categories included the overarching areas of Katz’s (1955) Skills Approach theory of technical, human, and conceptual leadership skills. The sub-themes included the attributes and the effects on the attributes of the skills needed, individual attributes, competencies, and leadership outcomes. Categories included administrators’ and certified teachers’ perceptions of the skills as collected from interviews. I took care to ensure that “important themes, patterns and relations” are evaluated, categorized, studied and further researched if necessary.

Convey findings and interpret meanings. The goal of the study is to present an accurate accounting of the data. A further goal is to ensure that “I present these descriptions and themes that convey multiple perspectives from participants and detailed descriptions of the setting or individuals” (Creswell, 2009, p. 193).

Researcher Role

Researcher Bias

I, as a qualitative researcher, know that it is important to be transparent and position myself in the research. I recently retired after 30 years in the United States Navy and during my time in the Navy, I was fortunate to rise through the ranks of enlisted personnel. I am blessed to have been able to take advantage of all the opportunities for travel, education, and leadership that are available to personnel serving in the military. While this information is necessary to note because of the potential for researcher bias, I fully attempted to ensure I reviewed all data, to listen to the voices of participants in all writings and information provided during my interviews and research, and I also attempted to maintain objectivity. I further sought to remain “consistently constructionist” (Crotty, 1998, p. 15) in keeping with my epistemological framework.

Working within the military and understanding the opportunities provided to all service members afforded me the unique insight to how if individuals capitalized on training, military skills could be transferred to the educational field. This study is of tremendous interest to me as I provide information on the Troops to Teachers personnel and how the military can transition to a second career in education. Although I understand that the slogan, “From boots on the battlefield to boots in the front of the classroom” is a way to view the military personnel who may be working in the educational arena, I completely understand that, as a qualitative researcher utilizing a constructivist epistemology, I must allow meaning to be constructed by the participants in the study. Therefore, I was diligent and careful not to allow bias from my former

experience in the military to influence my analysis or interpretation of findings from this study.

Ethical Considerations

I used all means necessary to ensure that ethical procedures were followed. I was reminded that “researchers need to protect their research participants; develop a trust with them; promote the integrity of research; guard against misconduct and impropriety that might reflect on their organizations or institutions and cope with new and challenging problems” (Creswell, 2009, p. 87). It was also imperative that I “[kept] a focus on learning the meaning that the participants hold about the problem or issue, not the meaning that the researchers bring to the research” (Creswell, 2009, p. 175).

Data collection ethics. The goal was to ensure that all data collected were studied, annotated and secured in the proper manner. I “respected the participants and the sites for the research” (Creswell, 2009, p. 87). Institutional Review Board approval was obtained prior to any data collected to further evaluate all ethical procedures. I maintained a field diary of all interviews, locations, and times to ensure that I had a detailed account of the research.

Data analysis and interpretation ethics. Qualitative data analysis is the “complex process that involves moving back and forth between concrete bits of data and abstract concepts” (Harris, 2012, PowerPoint Slide 1). As the study progressed, I compiled the data based on categories and schemes and translated the data into information necessary for the case study. All information was provided in the most accurate account available. Accuracy was achieved by utilizing triangulation of data and member checking (Creswell, 2009).

Trustworthiness of the Findings

Credibility

The credibility of the research has been enhanced with “prolonged engagement, referential adequacy, peer debriefing, member checks and a reflexive journal” (Harris, 2005, Slide 4).

Transferability

I provided a “thick description” of the findings. It is important that I note that the case study is time bound and context bound. The positive findings of the study are congruent with context (large number of military families in region of study) and time (large number of teacher vacancies) bound. The study may result in varied findings if location and timing of new study does not contain the same elements of this case study. I had the goal to ensure that those capitalizing on the research feel as if they have experienced work with a TTT teacher.

Dependability and Conformability

I used the field diary and journal to ensure that I maintained an accurate reporting of all information gathered during the research.

Table 10		
<i>Trustworthiness Criteria and Example</i>		
Credibility		
<i>Criteria/Technique</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Prolonged engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developed rapport with interviewees • Obtained information from school districts, administrators and teachers to enhance data 	I was in the field from October 2016 to February 2017. I communicated through emails, interviews, phone calls and appointments.
Persistent observation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtained in-depth data • Obtained accurate data 	I observed participants in the classroom and other work

Triangulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sorted relevancies from Irrelevancies Verified data 	environments, conducted multiple interviews allowing for further teacher observation. Attended school activities, professional development training, and community events. Multiple sources of data included: interview notes, transcripts, observations, reflections, educational program criteria data, application procedures and processes. Sorted data in variety of methods to ensure accuracy and relevance.
Peer debriefing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Received guidance and recommendations from mentors and dissertation advisor. 	I requested guidance and obtained feedback from advisor, multiple cohort members and school personnel. I obtained feedback on the dissertation, interview process, and presentation of data.
Member checking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continually reviewed categories and schemes. Verified interpretations and conclusions 	I provided the participants with informal copies of the interview transcripts for review and verification. I conducted review of material and data confirmation. I used multiple data tables to compile information and requested individual's check for accuracy.
Purposive sampling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information provided by the State of Oklahoma on number of TTT personnel 	I set criteria for selection on 1-3 years in TTT program, established working relationship with TTT teachers and administrators for TTT personnel. I requested as many personnel available within the database volunteer for interviews.

Transferability

<i>Criteria/Technique</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Examples</i>
Referential adequacy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided a comprehensive review and information of the TTT program 	Information was provided on websites, databases and historical documents.
Thick description	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provided an in-depth reflection on each interview. Provide the reader an avenue to see the process. 	I provided a rich description of the participants, settings, history of the participants and the background individuals have in the military and education. Provided overall observations and information provided by administrators and fellow teachers.

Dependability/Conformability

<i>Criteria/Technique</i>	<i>Result</i>	<i>Examples</i>
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Access to an audit trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow auditor to determine trustworthiness of study 	I kept all transcripts and tape recordings in a safe environment. I used the five-step process for transcript analysis and separation of data, interview guides, field notes, documents, note cards, peer-debriefing notes.
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Limitations of the Study

As indicated, my prior experience in the military offers potential for interpretation bias. I sought to minimize this limitation by listening carefully to participants and maintaining an objective perspective, allowing meaning to come from participants in the study. The district selected for the study has a higher than average number of military students and, as such, the military base provides a high percentage of retirees that may enroll in the TTT program. Districts located throughout the state have varied numbers and data for rural areas may not be similar to the case study. The desire to provide all information was there, and I presented data and information as related to the actual study. Additionally, I gathered information from a large number of participants (16), and from a variety of data sources to minimize researcher bias. Other limitations existed in the areas of participant's interview availability. The teachers interviewed had limited time availability that may be attributed to a lack of teachers within the district. Triangulation of data relied on observations of the Troops to Teachers teacher in the classroom, community, professional development, and extracurricular activity environment. I also capitalized on my prior military experiences and knowledge of military processes and procedures to further explain capabilities of service members eligible for the TTT program.

It is important that the reader understand, in using the case study research methodology, the study is time and context based. Due to the increasing teacher

shortages throughout the district and the state, data collected of a positive nature may not occur in other studies conducted in different locations and with different circumstances.

Conclusion

Chapter III states the methodology and how, as the researcher, conducted myself with the utmost ethical standards. A qualitative case study was proposed, and details were provided concerning the study population and sample. Purposeful sampling criteria were carefully explained, and data collection and analysis were discussed. I discussed researcher bias and the effects it can have on the study and how the goal is to put aside all bias and provide the most accurate accounting of the data presented. The trustworthiness criteria table provided the reader with a clear description of credibility, transferability and dependability.

Chapter IV presents the data and a description of the school sites and participants. Data collected includes interviews, observations, and field notes. A detailed description of each area is provided.

Chapter V presents the findings as analyzed through the lens of the Katz Skills Leadership Theory and includes an analysis of TTT teachers' technical, human and conceptual skills.

Chapter VI discusses the findings based on the Katz Skills Leadership Theoretical framework. Limitations, implications for research, theory, and practice and recommendations for future research are also presented.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF DATA

Chapter IV presents the data collected and reviewed in the course of this study. The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the perceived teaching capacity of individuals who entered the teaching profession through the Troops to Teachers program, as reported by traditionally certified teachers and administrators, alternatively certified teacher peers, and the TTT teachers themselves. Findings on the current state of education within the state and district, followed by a depiction of the district and the schools visited, will establish a richer context for the case study. The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What perceptions do administrators and teachers, who hold traditional certifications, have of Troops to Teachers' preparation in technical, human, and conceptual skills' for success in the classroom.
2. What perceptions do "other" alternatively certified teachers have of Troops to Teachers' technical, human, and conceptual skills and preparation for the classroom?
3. What are Troops to Teachers' perceptions about the skills and academic preparation they bring the teaching workforce?
4. How do administrators employ the Troops to Teachers' technical, human, and conceptual skills within the school system?

5. What are Troops to Teachers' perceptions concerning barriers that exist that preclude integration into the school's culture?

6. What are other realities present that this study uncovered?

The State of the State

As I began collecting data in this district, I became keenly aware that the teacher shortage in the state had reached a new high (Interview, August 2016). Leaders in this district, similar to others discussed previously in the study, have struggled with the recruitment of teachers due to failing schools, disruptive classrooms, stringent testing goals, and increased teacher evaluations. One indicator that supported the evidence of current shortages is the growing number of applicants for emergency alternative certifications within the state (Officer of Teacher Certification, 2017). At the beginning of the present study, the process for alternative certification may have been viewed by some as intentionally complicated; wait time, testing, multiple documents required and interviews may have deterred individuals from seeking alternative certification. However, due to an increase of vacant teaching positions and the district struggle to staff increasing classroom size in some schools, individuals with alternative forms of certification became a valuable resource (Interview, August 2016). The decision to rely on candidates with alternative certifications became an increasing necessity, and the state saw a staggering growth in the number of applications for emergency alternative certification, from 32 during 2011-2012 to 1,125 emergency teacher certifications from July 16 to January 2017 (OSDE Officer of Teacher Certification, 2017). The possibility exists in the administrators' minds that perceptions may have changed over time due to the teaching shortage. The administrators welcome all applicants regardless of

certification process due to unfilled positions and a small number of applicants applying for the vacant positions. There was skepticism in the voices of the administrators as they reflected on the questions during the interview process. Varied teachers and administrators commented during the interview process on how they did not know if the answers they provided would be different if the school or district was not facing a teacher shortage.

The state has recently seen the highest increase in numbers of emergency alternatively certified teachers to date. These individuals begin their careers immediately, without the previously mandated state requirements. TTT teachers and traditionally certified teachers are still required to complete all application requirements including testing, background checks, and interviews prior to beginning employment within the state. In contrast, current requirements permit schools within the state the ability to request emergency certifications if the schools provide the following: emergency application, \$50.00 processing fee, a letter on district letterhead with the superintendent's signature explaining why the request needs to be made, updated resume from the applicant, official transcripts (if not already on file), documented proof of the job posting, and verification that the applicant has either passed the requested subject area test or obtained registration for the test (Oklahoma State Department Website, 2016). Additionally, "Applicants approved for an emergency certificate must have a current Oklahoma State Bureau of Investigation (OSBI) and Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) fingerprint-based criminal history record check processed by the Professional Standards Section before a certificate will be issued" (Oklahoma State Department Website, 2016). Thus, the emergency alternative certification process, while viewed by

district managers as critical to filling shortages, has resulted in teachers in the classroom with minimal professional teacher training and, potentially, little to no classroom management skills.

Unlike the emergency alternative certification process, the TTT certification process has remained, in part, consistent. Current requirements for state applicants include the following:

Retired from active duty, Retirement must take place within one year of the submission of the application, must have transferred to the ready reserve, must have released from the Armed Forces following at least six years of active duty service, must have a minimum of 10 years of active duty service, must have served in the reserves for at least three years, must have been medically discharged due to a physical disability, must have experienced a forced separation due to a force reduction during the Oct. 1, 1990, and Sept. 30, 1999 timeframe, must have applied to and been qualified for the previous Troops To Teachers program (www.proudtoserveagain.com, 2017).

The increased time in service requirement may have resulted in applicants with an increase in knowledge of leadership and management. Further provisions for the certification process include completion of a Bachelor's degree in the desired area of certification, successful passing of state testing of the Oklahoma General Education Test and successful completion of subject area test.

Study Population

Dixie McCall Independent School District

The Dixie McCall Independent School District (ISD) sits in view of some of the most beautiful mountains located within the state. The community is considered the largest in the southwest area of the state. The city, established in 1901, is one of the original town sites of a land lottery for non-Indians. The first schools in the county provided education to three Native American Tribes. In 1902, settlers established sub-schools within the area for all students. The first High School was built in 1909 and still stands today with over 1,500 students enrolled. The district founded one of the original agricultural high schools that later became designated a junior college and in 1941, was granted the status of higher education and became a four-year university. The Dixie McCall (ISD) District's Guiding Principles follows:

- (1) Prepare Career-Bound Citizens.
- (2) Shared Professional Ideals
- (3) Communication, Collaboration, and Transparency
- (4) Healthy Fit Lifestyles (District Website, 2016).

As part of the responsibility for maintaining a quality educational program for all students, the Board of Education charged the teachers and administrators with providing

- 1) an opportunity for individual students to achieve their full potential as contributing members of society,
- 2) an educated citizenry who will preserve, protect, and improve the institutions of our democratic society (District Website, 2016).

The Dixie McCall District currently has 17 elementary schools, four middle schools, one alternative high school, and three high schools. The district provides two pre-kindergarten centers and partners with the local military base for a four-year-old pre-school class. The district provides an education for approximately 15,000 students and employs 2,300 administrators, teachers, and support personnel. Student socioeconomic data are presented in Figure 7 and shown in comparison to state data. The local military base has designated the city as a “compassionate assignment,” one that provides the military with medical, psychological and educational facilities for special needs children, and, as such, resulted in a 17% increase of disabled students. The district’s population includes 47% of military connected students, and 31.4% teachers have achieved advanced degrees (Master’s or Doctorate). The average teaching experience within the district is 13.4 years.

District Data

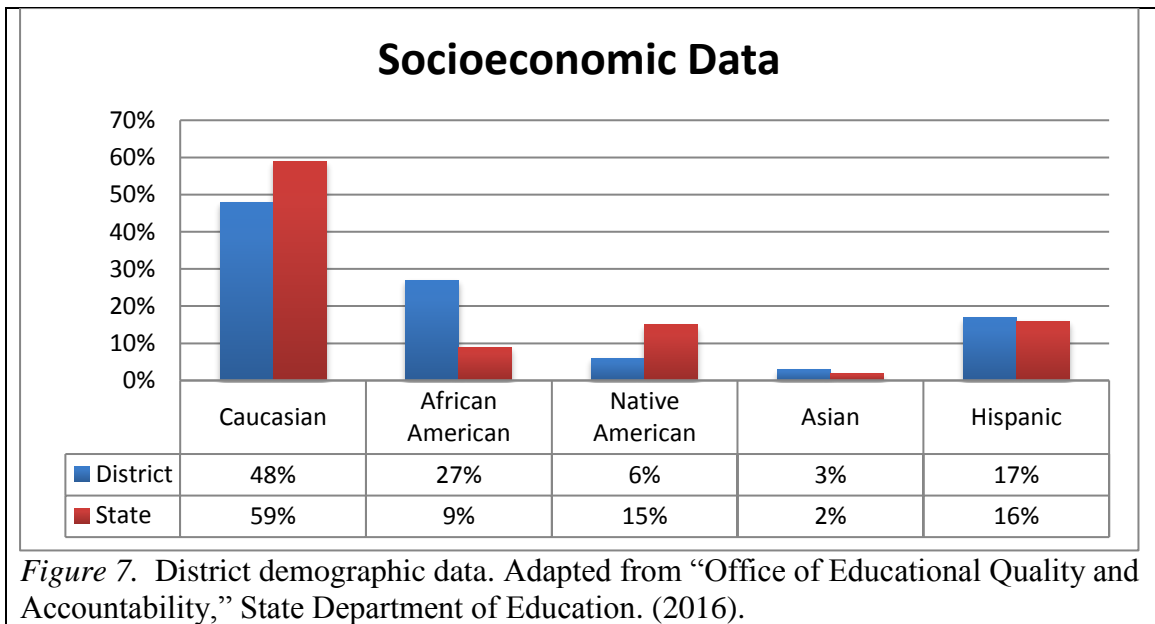


Figure 7. District demographic data. Adapted from “Office of Educational Quality and Accountability,” State Department of Education. (2016).

The Dixie McCall School superintendent commented that he is fortunate to serve as the leader for many great teachers and staff (Interview, January 2017). He is very proud of the accomplishments the district has achieved over the last year. The team, experiencing an eight million dollar state-funding cutback, managed the budget with zero layoffs (Interview, January 2017). The financial state funding status has drawn new concerns from administrators and teachers; however, the district is fortunate to receive additional funds based on high percentages of military and American Indian students. This additional funding has resulted in allowing the school to remain financially solvent. The community supports the school in areas of extracurricular activities, student materials, and additional monetary support as necessary.

The superintendent is confident in his assessment of the district's progress over the last several years, and he points to a steady upward climb in graduation rates. The district continued to see improvement in SAT and ACT scores under his leadership. One of the major accomplishments he is proud of is the development of a district-wide professional development program. He credits this success to having highly qualified teachers involved in the creation of the training. He stated,

These teachers and administrators worked hard to make the program successful, and the collaboration is remarkable. The work between schools and the district is the best I have ever seen, a true example for all districts that professional development can occur if the district makes it a priority. (Interview, November 2016)

Collaboration, a fundamental necessity for success, is an area of focus for the superintendent and one he credits as a major component of the district's success.

Collaboration among the community, schools, teachers, and parents resulted in a powerful partnership that led to increased student retention, graduation rates, and community involvement (Interview, January 2017). Collaboration also exists between the school and the local University. The teacher graduates of the university, employed with the district, have continual opportunity for mentorship and training with university personnel. This ongoing support provides a much-needed mentorship for new teachers. The district has three beginning teachers in each school and credits the program as key to maintaining new teacher stability within the area. The sites were selected based on information acquired from the state Troops to Teachers program. I asked schools with larger number of TTT teachers to participate in the study and based on responses received, schools were selected.

Alpha Elementary School

The school was built in 1955 and serves grades kindergarten through five. Alpha Elementary School is the 2014 recipient of the Alliance for Healthier Education Bronze Award and is a Title I Leadership School. The Vision Statement is “Prepare citizens for the 21st century recognizing their individual needs and strengths” (School Website, 2016). The Mission Statement is “Create a student-centered learning environment that will reflect a caring connected community, set positive and high expectations, and provide opportunities for meaningful participation” (School Website, 2016). Alpha has a full-time counselor and two full day pre-kindergarten teachers. The two computer labs are fortunate to be staffed by full day lab assistants. Each classroom is equipped with the latest technology to include a SmartBoard, Elmo, InFocus, and a teacher laptop for each class. Alpha Elementary fosters a close teacher and community relationship and has

partnered with the community in a variety of programs including Neighborhood Watch Committee, Boys and Girls Club, church events, fraternal organizations, local businesses, and civic groups.

The staff of Alpha Elementary School currently includes 20 certified staff members: seven have master's degrees and 13 have bachelor degrees. The average educational experience for the teachers is 14.3. Of the teacher in the school, 29.4% have advanced degrees, and two have special education certificates. Alpha lists all teachers as 100% highly qualified teachers. The state's classification of a highly qualified teacher is one who holds a bachelor's degree, has obtained full state certification or holds a state teaching license (State Department of Education Website, 2016). The teachers must also demonstrate subject-matter competency in each of the academic subjects in which the teacher teaches in a manner determined by the State (State Department of Education, 2016).

Alpha Teachers are further classified as Title 1 State Certified Personnel. The criteria the teachers must meet to obtain the classification is stringent, and major areas include a comprehensive needs assessment, school reform strategies to increase the quality and quantity of instruction, and detailed accelerated curriculum for all students that address the needs of all students. Low-achieving students must be identified, and curriculum for all students must address their specific needs. Teachers and paraprofessionals must also meet the highly qualified teacher standards listed above. The school must have a transparency that allows parents to be aware of all teachers' status and assignments on the teams. Teachers who are highly skilled are assigned to students designated as low achieving. Parental involvement is mandatory, and parents meet with

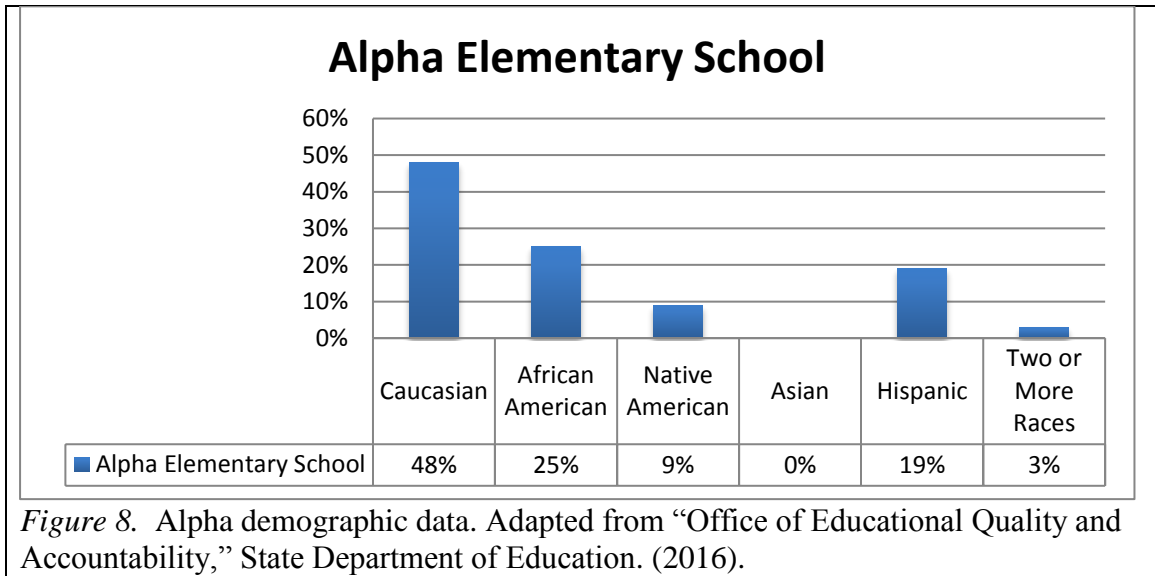
teachers regularly to assess students' progress based on the needs assessment. The school must maintain an up-to-date process that identifies students with difficulties (State Department Website, 2016). The principal of Alpha Elementary indicated that he is impressed and proud of the hard work the staff and community completed to attain the classification (Interview, February 2017). The efforts resulted in above average student state test scores for the last two years (State Department Website, 2016).

Staff data includes a teacher-student ratio of 1:16 and counselor-student ratio of 1:103 (State Department Website, 2016). The staff data that gave me cause for concern is the "higher than state average" of teacher absenteeism, currently at forty percent. The teacher absence resulted in doubled classroom size due to a lack of substitute or regular teachers.

Extracurricular activities for the school include, but are not limited to, Student Council, Math and Science Clubs, Stomp Team, Strings, Food for Kids, PTA, Booster Club, and more. TTT teachers are heavily involved in these activities, and the principal relies on the TTT teachers to organize events that are large in number and engage the community.

The student socioeconomic demographics at Alpha Elementary are shown in Figure 8.

Alpha School Data



The scene I observed while waiting for my interview could only be described with one word: quiet. All was quiet. As I waited for the interviews with the teachers, I was amazed at how peaceful the school appeared. I looked into the classrooms, and I saw student’s intent on learning, teachers speaking quietly, and other teachers laughing and joking with the students. I observed teachers using a variety of instructional strategies in the classroom, including the traditional lecture and discussion, and multiple teachers were engaged in varying activities aimed at student engagement.

The standard design for all the schools visited during the interview process was painted cinderblock. The various poster boards and signs displayed announced future activities, and the student artwork artfully obscured the cinder block walls. The classroom doors were uniquely decorated in a fashion that provided the viewer with an insight into the teacher’s personality or the subject presented in the class. The most unique door observed was the door of the science lab. The door displayed multiple student drawings of bones. Each bone was laboriously drawn and labeled with the student’s name proudly displayed on each drawing. The ceiling tiles, the water stained

ceiling tiles, are no longer recognizable. The ceiling tiles had been painted in a myriad of scenes and colors. Past and present students “tile” artwork had replaced the dinghy white tiles so often seen in older buildings. It rivaled (in my opinion) the artwork in a museum, and all I wanted to do was have the time to lie down on the floor and stare upward at the beautiful artwork.

Then CHAOS ensued, the bell, that same bell I remembered from my childhood days, began ringing in my ears. I jumped, and so did a teacher walking down the hall. She stated, “Man, you never get used to it.” The doors slammed open and out poured laughing, jostling students. As I looked into the faces of the students, the cultural diversity replicated the demographics data. Student’s expressions were a myriad of emotions that ranged from happy to sad, and some of the older students had that “harried look” of despair. Teachers kept reminding students, in a drill sergeant tone, “Slow down,” “Hey be careful,” and “Stop that.” These commands and more were the orders shouted out to students whom I was sure could not hear anything over the cacophony of voices in the hall. Then suddenly all was quiet as doors snapped closed, and silence once again filled the hallways. The 306 students of the Alpha Elementary School were once again in “learning mode.”

Professional development is a core component for the school. The session I observed was conducted by a TTT teacher and titled *Education of Foster Care under Title I Foster Care Provisions*. Training was held in the lunchroom, and the tables and chairs formed a U-shaped area for the teachers to sit. Teachers began arriving in twos and threes joking and laughing and oblivious to my presence. The comradery among the faculty was evident during the session as the teachers were respectful to the individuals

leading the training. The presenters were well prepared for the discussion. When questions arose that the presenters could not answer, the teachers in the audience assisted with answers. The teachers leading the training provided handouts, used media tools to aid in conveying the information, and two guest speakers from various agencies were available for amplifying information. I sat by the principal during the training, and he interjected at various moments to explain to me that the TTT teacher leading the training is one that leads the professional development training for all Title 1 information sessions.

The student data presented in Figure 9 clearly indicates the hard work, time, and dedication the staff and the community at Alpha Elementary provide to aid in the training needed to maintain high standards. The students strive to achieve success, and the teachers are student-centered and desire that all meet the school’s mission and vision.

Alpha Student Data

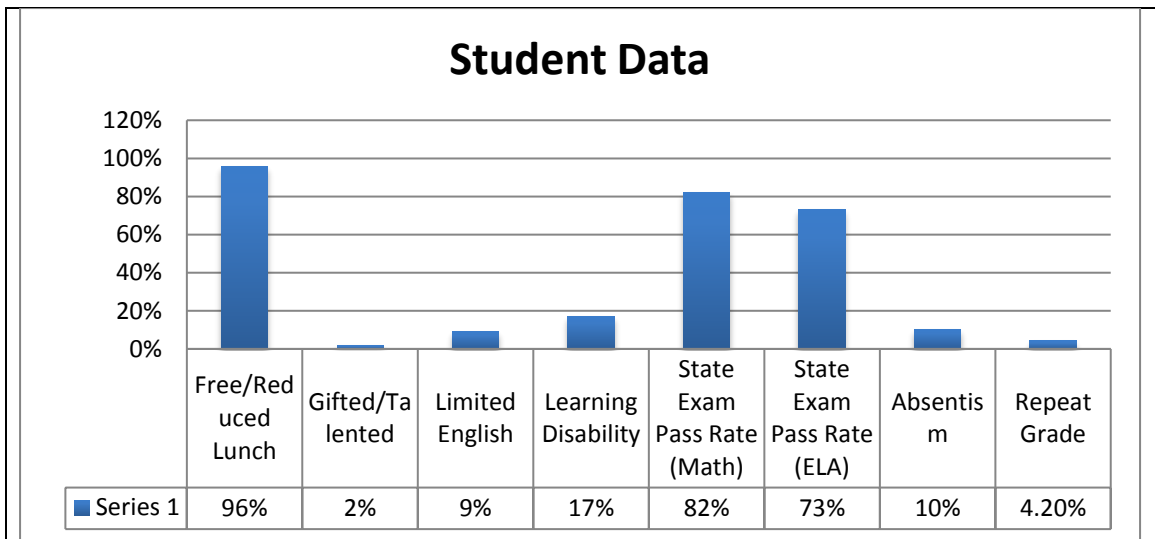


Figure 9. Alpha student data. Adapted from Startclass. Retrieved from: <http://public-schools.startclass.com>. Dec 17, 2016.

Bravo Middle School

Bravo Middle School is the home of the proud Vikings. The school is one of three middle schools in the district and is considered one of the largest in the state (District Website, 2016). The school is located on the east side of the city and shares the sports fields with one of the largest high schools in the city. The school serves sixth grade through eighth grade and is also one that currently has the most significant number of students with military parents. These numbers are based on enrollment and state funding provided for military dependents. The school mission statement is “to teach the whole child to become a caring, successful, and informed citizen through a partnership involving students, staff, parents and community” (School Website, 2016). This mission statement is prominently displayed on the website and posters throughout the school. The school has an additional goal dedicated to providing a safe, stimulating and developmentally appropriate learning environment where each student may enhance academic skills, build self-reliance and strengthen a sense of responsibility to self and others as foundations for future success (Student Handbook, 2016-17). The school currently has a staff of 60 teachers and 878 students, allowing for a teacher-student ratio of 1:15 (below state average) and a counselor-student ratio is 1:296. The average years of experience for teachers is 17.9%, and the school has 40% of teachers with advanced degrees. The school employs three full-time counselors and three certified professional staff to assist students with learning disabilities.

The bright purple and yellow of the proud Viking school mascot is displayed on the colors of the cinder block school walls (the standard material for buildings in the school district). Artwork that depicts the artistic ability of the students is prominently

displayed in the hallways and represents the varied athletics, clubs, and students. The display cases were free of dust, and these cases are the first thing I saw as I walked into the school. The cases hold the numerous athletic and academic awards received by students past and present. As I entered the school, I observed the “trophy case” that was centered on the wall in front of me. Past and present student achievements are displayed for students, faculty, parents, and alumni to view and reminisce about the memorable times had in achieving the dreams of the Vikings. During my many trips to the school for interviews and observations, there was never a time that I entered the school that there were not individuals standing around the case discussing the victories associated with the awards.

The school shares a special relationship with the military located within the town. There are numerous community projects the students participate in that are military affiliated. The students visit veterans in the local Veterans Nursing Home, have military guest speakers at career fairs, hold monthly parent, student, and faculty meetings with base leadership, and have monthly newsletters listing different military assistance programs for children with deployed parents. Clubs and activities are available for all students and include, but are not limited to, Chess, Art, Builders Club, Military Child, Orchestra, Gifted and Talented Honors Program, Academic Team, and Fellowship of Christian Athletes. The student academic team, that normally represented students in competitions for the core courses, recently expanded the competition to include poetry, mythology, religions, foreign languages, and art. The diversity of the clubs allows for the students to master a wide variety of skills and activities that can foster teamwork and

citizenship. The student population is 51% male and 49% female, and the demographic data are represented in Figure 10.

Bravo Demographic Data

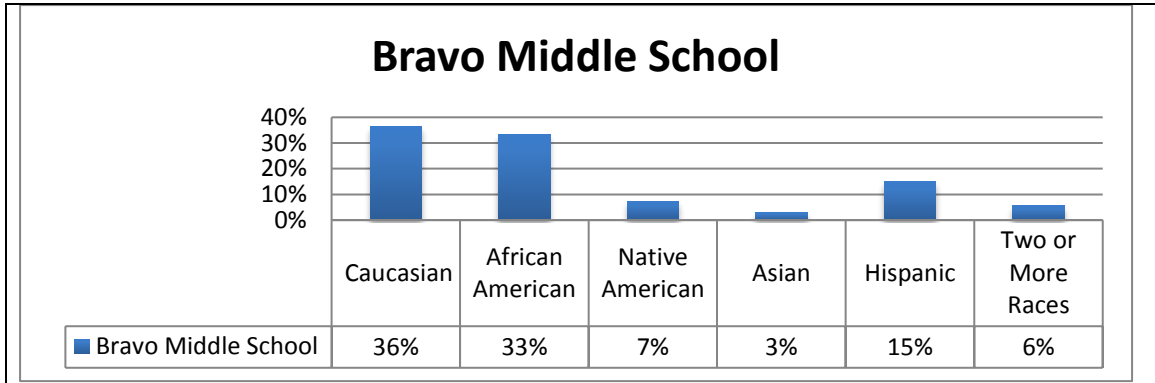
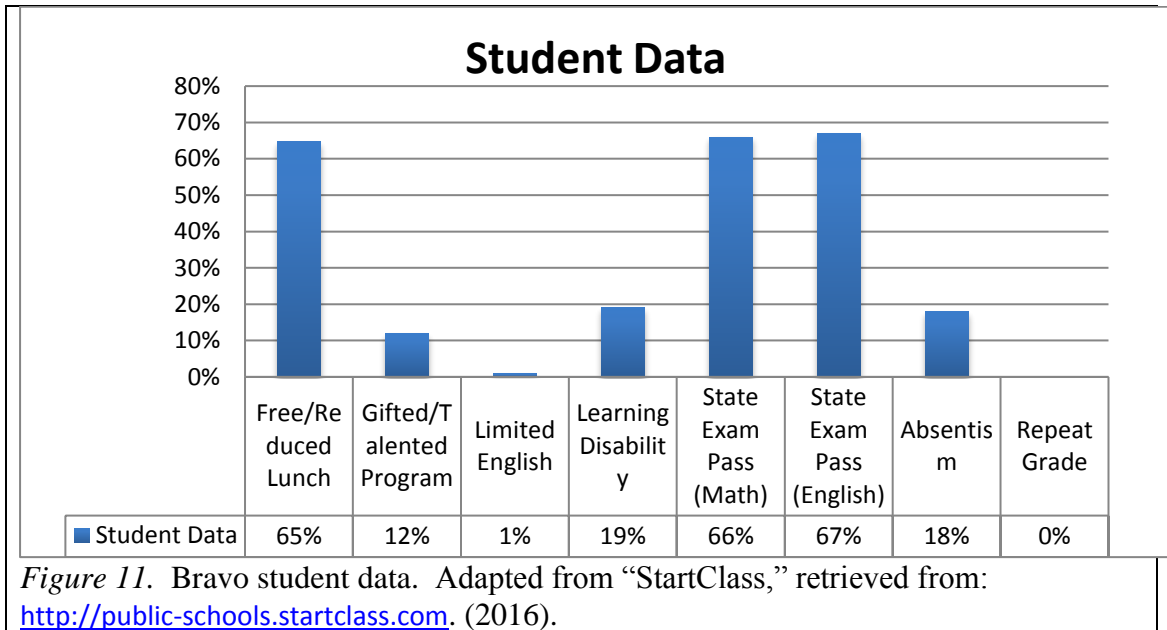


Figure 10. Bravo socioeconomic data. Adapted from “Office of Educational Quality and Accountability,” State Department of Education. (2016).

The principal of the school is a 20-year educational veteran who is proud to serve the school and considers it a privilege to lead the administrative team (Interview, January 2017). The reputation of the school is one of excellence in education and academic success and pride. The principal reflects this achievement in her tone during the interviews. One area that changed within the last two school years, was the state report card grade drop from a “B” to a “C”, a challenging score for a school noted for achieving excellence and academic success. The principal stated,

The grade we received from the states testing assessments is not one on which I view all the student’s success. I also look at the work of the teachers and how hard they are working to ensure the students have what they need to be successful in a high school environment. The frequent testing and associated point system is at times a discouragement for the staff, but I let them know there is more to success than a grade on a report card. (Interview, January 2017)

Bravo Student Data



Charlie High School

Charlie High School is a 5A school located on the east side of the city. The school was built in 1968 due to an economic and housing boom within the area. The school mascot is a giant Highlander that represents the Scottish theme. This mascot and theme are shared with the middle school co-located on the property. The high school is the third high school built in the area.

The school values are “Service, Leadership, and Sportsmanship,” and the Mission Statement is “to provide academic excellence in a safe and caring atmosphere by developing life-long learning skills and by encouraging self-worth, self-motivation, and mutual respect” (School Website, 2016-17). Diversity is evident in the multiple clubs/organizations that are provided for student participation. Samples of these include

Stomp Team, African American Club, Future Farmers of America, American Sign Language Club, Gay/Straight Alliance, JROTC, and Archery.

The school also shares a special relationship with the local military base. Soldiers and their families volunteer time to tutor and mentor students, providing valuable leadership and guidance to the students. Sports are a predominantly high point for the students of the school. The school is the state champion for their class in baseball, football, softball, track, choir/band, and wrestling.

The Student Council received the National Gold Council of Excellence and State Gold Chapter Awards for multiple years, and the 90.5 grade on the state A-F Report Card (State Department of Education Website, 2016) is rewarding for the hard work the administrators, teachers, and students dedicated to achieving success.

Demographic data for Charlie High School is presented in (figure 12).

Charlie Demographic Data

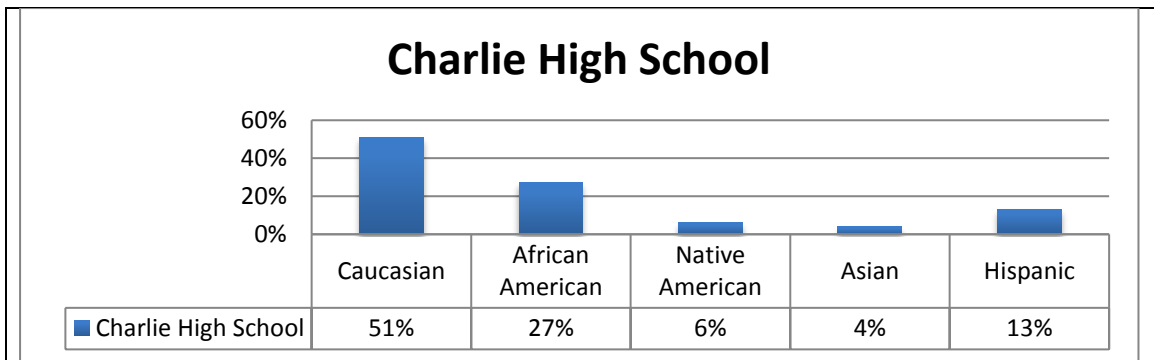


Figure 12. Charlie socioeconomic data. Adapted from “Office of Educational Quality and Accountability,” State Department of Education. (2016).

The school currently has 60 teachers and 1,207 students resulting in a teacher-student ratio of 1:18 (above state average) and the counselor-student ratio is 1:224 (District Website, 2016). The staff has 79 certified teachers of which 40 have advanced

degrees, four teachers are National Board Certified, and the average years of experience of the teachers is 18 years. Ten percent of the teachers listed are new teachers, and the absenteeism rate is 25%, representing another district school with high teacher absenteeism numbers. The response from the principal, concerning the absenteeism numbers, is similar to one heard by a fellow principal, a lack of substitutes and unfilled vacancies due to a teacher shortage has resulted in classroom size growing when teachers are absent. Four of the teachers resigned unexpectedly in the middle of the year due to family relocation, and their departure created an additional teaching gap (Interview, December 2016).

The hallways are filled with laughing, joking students, some display head down and a “move out of my way” attitude, and some are running to get to the next class. The student’s attire represents the cultural diversity of the student population. It is no surprise to see students in their cheerleading outfits, football jerseys, letter jackets and the uniforms of the JROTC students. I am at a complete standstill in the hallway, but it is truly like I do not exist. The students move effortlessly around me, like a well-choreographed dance, to reach the next class. Teachers are at each of the doors to greet the students, and this factor had me in awe. It was 1:30 in the afternoon, yet every teacher was smiling and laughing with the students.

The talents of the students are represented in the array of artwork decorating every square inch of wall space available. This artwork is even more impressive than the art on display in the elementary and middle schools. Each of the classes has a row of windows located high on the wall next to the ceiling above the standard painted cinder block. As I look around, it is like looking into a different world for each class. History,

math, English, arts, all the classes have different items for the viewer to observe. It is wonderful to witness a workplace that allows the teachers and students to display personal artistic work, family photos, and awards. The “corporate cubicle” world does not exist in the school culture.

The school is proud to be one of three schools that have the JROTC program. The program was funded under the National Defense Act of 1916 and allows the school to use federal equipment for the program. The instructors for the program are both TTT teachers. It is considered a citizenship program devoted to “the moral, physical and educational uplift of American Youth” (JROTC Website, 2016).

Charlie High School staff is also proud of the high graduation rates of the students. The principal credits the increase in numbers to his team and their dedication to the students. “They don’t quit, when they find out someone is thinking of dropping out they go after them, and the next thing I know I am handing that student a diploma, it is a great feeling” (Interview, December 2016). Student data for Charlie High School is displayed in (figure 13).

Charlie Student Data

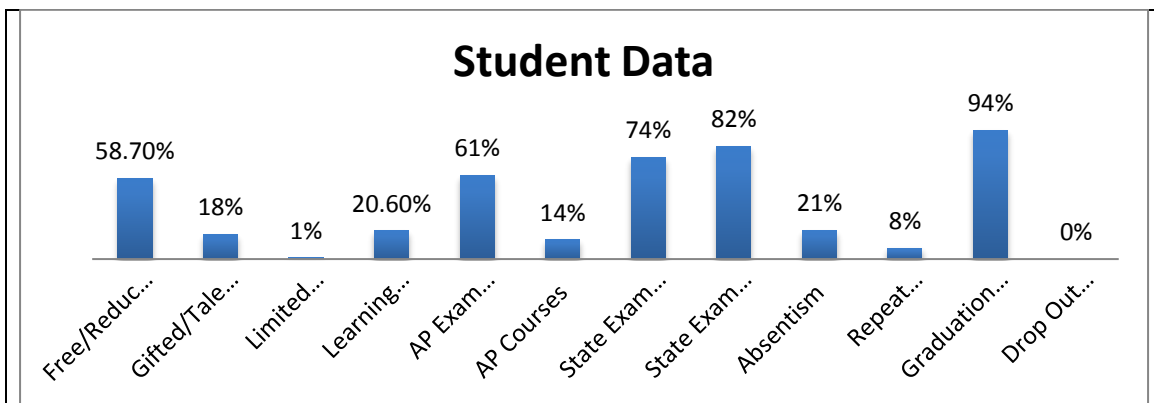


Figure 13. Charlie student data. Adapted from “StartClass,” retrieved from: <http://public-schools.startclass.com>. (2016).

Delta High School

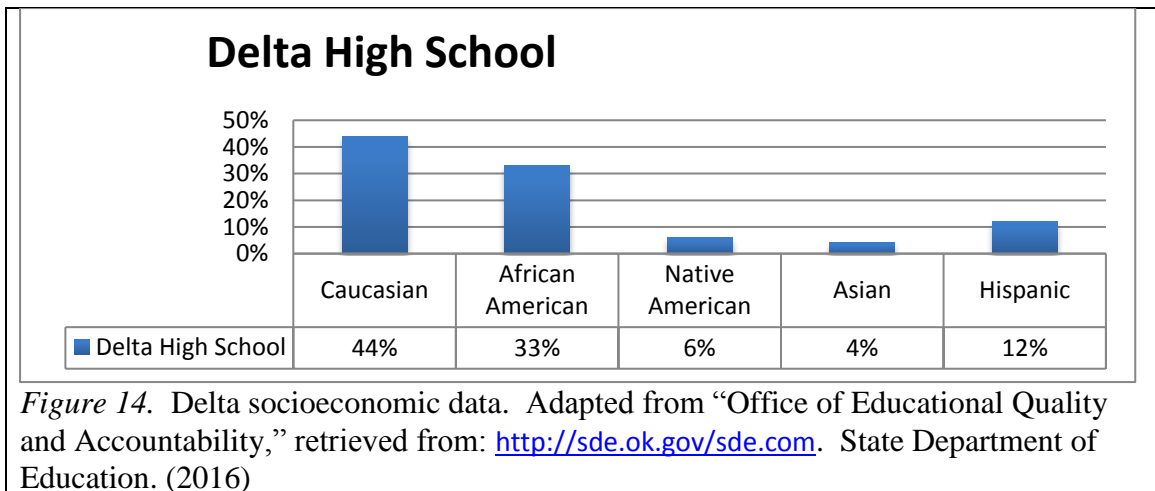
Delta High School is the second high school built in the city and is located on the west side of the town. The original construction was built in 1962 and had 48 rooms. In 2006, the school added a new wing that created 30 more rooms and a new cafeteria. The first thing that drew my eyes as I drove into the parking area of the school is the multiple colored flags flying in the breeze. Each flag had one word on it, and I came to learn that these words represent the school's goals and the school spirit. Words such as "reach," "inspire," "team," "dedicate," "dignity," "achieve," "respect," and "value" are written on the flags. As I walked the halls I noticed the flag "themes" are emulated in the schools goals and students artwork throughout the school.

Delta High School is known in the district for academic excellence. The school has been represented in the National Academic Decathlon for ten years. The Mission Statement is to promote integrity, knowledge, and excellence (School Website, 2016). The school accomplishes this mission by holding students to high standards in academics, participation in activities, and exemplary behavior. A further goal of the administration is one of "commitment to producing career-bound citizens who can contribute positively to the community" (Student Handbook, 2016-17). The school has been awarded the Promising Practice in National Schools of Character and continually works for improvement and maintaining the designation.

The school provides the diverse student population an array of activities for student participation. African American Club, Art, Band, Ignition Freshman Peer Mentoring Program, Lead2Feed, Blue Body Bugler, Choir, Academic Decathlon, Drama Fellowship of Christian Athletes, Future Leaders of America, Step and Spanish are just a

few of the 30 activities, clubs, and organizations that students can participate in throughout their time in the school. The new program for the school this year is the United Nations School Exercise. The exercise represented countries from around the world, including Afghanistan, Libya, and Macedonia. The project allows students to select a country and to understand the growth, politics, and stability of that selected nation. Students investigate natural disasters, war, and political upheaval and must provide answers when the country represented is in crisis. The project allows students to “see” beyond their borders and to understand that decisions made by a few can affect millions of people through political and economic dilemmas. The “Enough is Enough” Anti-Bullying Campaign, developed by students at the school, has been emulated by other schools throughout the district. The school currently has 74 teachers and 1480 students. The student’s demographics are shown in Figure 14.

Delta Demographic Data



The staff has a teacher-student ratio of 1:20 and counselor-student ratio of 1:434 (School Website, 2016). The principal is a 25-year educational veteran who has been employed at the school for two years. She is an advocate for education reform, and is

currently in the process of implementing procedures necessary to remove the school from the States “low-performing focus” category in the area of Math and Biology. She spoke of Biology and Math testing results and explained that teachers and students experienced discouragement when the school lost the high academic standings held in previous years. She understands the criticality of the STEM courses for student success and has her team analyzing the test and implementing programs to improve the scores. Her goal of test improvement is one that is led by the team, students, and parents who desire to achieve the high academic standards once again. The shift in focus for school improvement has resulted in an increase in professional development for teachers within academic departments. The principal recognizes that regaining high academic outcomes will not be easy, and she is proud of how hard the team is working to design training that assists in improvement in these areas. She stated that “she has an excellent team of capable and caring team leaders and the professional development provided by the district and at the school will help us get there” (Interview, February 2017).

The low math scores the school received, however, did not stop the school from being recognized nationally as the ninth best school in the state. The school continues to strive for excellences achieved in previous years, as they had the honor of being named the School of the Year by the Math and Sciences Initiative for 2013 (School Website, 2016). The principal pointed to the number of students successfully completing advancement placement exams. Additionally, she has increased the availability of AP tutors necessary to permit students to attain academic goals once again this year. Student data is presented in Figure 15.

Delta Student Data

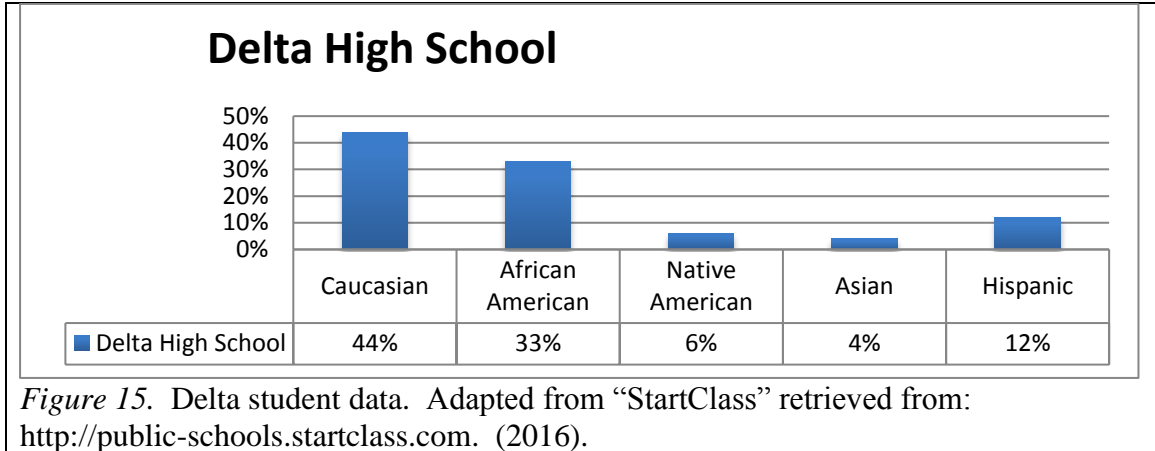
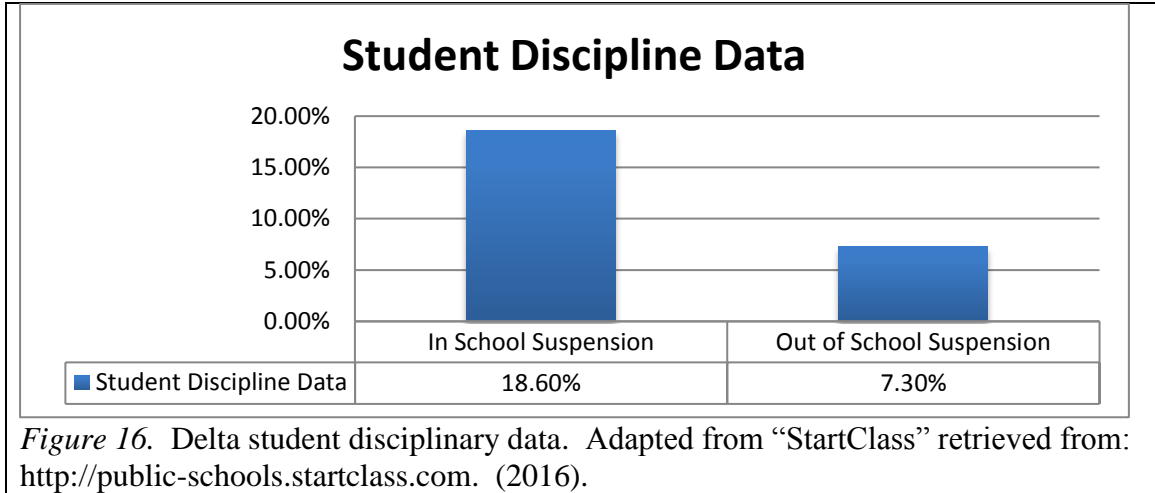


Figure 15. Delta student data. Adapted from “StartClass” retrieved from: <http://public-schools.startclass.com>. (2016).

Disciplinary problems within the school increased in the last two years, and the principal correlated this growth to the decrease in test scores. Delta disciplinary data (presented in Figure 16) below is high, and one the administration, with input from the student honor teams, is working on creating viable solutions to decrease the number of suspensions. These disciplinary problems decrease the student’s and teachers focus on learning, and at times created a disruptive atmosphere. The principal further discussed how a lack of discipline at home created concerns at the school and resulted in the multiple student infractions. A lack of respect for teachers and peers has led to some teachers deciding not to return next year. The Principal foresees a difficult year for 2017-18 with a decrease in availability of teachers in the district and the high number of retirees and resignations. Figure 17 provides information regarding the discipline at Delta High School.

Delta Disciplinary Data



Participant Profiles

The Superintendent. Daryl, the superintendent for the district, holds a Ph.D. in School Administration and has been with the district for four years. He has served in education for 23 years and has held teaching, assistant principal, principal, and superintendent positions throughout the state.

School Level Leaders. Jacob, the principal of Alpha Elementary, has been with the school for three years. His diverse background started with a degree in police science followed by a 14-year career in the military. Upon leaving the service, he received his degree in Elementary Education and began his career in education. His educational background includes working in grades first through sixth, and upon receipt of his principal certification, he became a principal within the district.

JoAnne, the principal of Bravo Middle School, is a 37-year veteran of education and she has seen many changes throughout the years in education (Interview, November 2016). She currently holds a Master’s Degree in Education and believes that professional development is key to success in any school. As a District Team Leader, she enjoys

designing professional development programs that include the most up-to-date training available for all schools. She has held positions as teacher, assistant principal, and principal of different schools within the district.

Peter, the principal of Charlie High School, currently holds a Masters in Secondary Education and has been with the school district for 32 years. A native of the state and city, he has worked in four different schools within the district from teacher to administrator. He is most proud of his current positions as principal of his alma mater (Interview, December 2016).

Julie, the principal of Delta High School, is a 22-year educational veteran who believes it is “a privilege” to serve as the principal for Delta High School (Interview, December 2016). She currently serves as a District Team Leader in the area of professional development. She has served in every position in education from teacher to administrator. She is highly involved in mobilizing the community to assist in educational reforms and projects and the recruitment of teachers for the school and the district.

Teacher Participants. Elizabeth, a TTT teacher, has been employed within the district for seven years and has been at her current location for five years. She currently is teaching the third grade but has held positions in all grades within the elementary school. She is a mentor for beginning teachers and the school’s leader for the Professional Development Team.

Jake, a TTT teacher, has been with the district for four years and at his school for three. He currently teaches Keyboarding and Computer Science to grades sixth through

eighth. He is the leader for the Student Academic Team and has been the soccer coach for two years.

Matthew, a TTT teacher, has been the ROTC Instructor for his school for the last eight years. He is also an assistant football coach and the juniors class sponsor.

Chris, a TTT teacher, has been with his school for three years. He recently started serving as one of the schools assistant principals and teaches World History/AP History for grades tenth through twelfth. He is the sophomore class sponsor and led the Academic Decathlon for the school.

Jim, an alternatively certified teacher, and has been with the school for five years and is the 11th and 12th grade Algebra/AP Algebra teacher. He is one of the junior class sponsors and was in charge of the 2016-17 Education Bowl.

Amanda, an alternatively certified teacher, has been with the school for five years. She currently teaches Business classes for grades 10th-12th and is one of the senior class sponsors and an assistant library aide as required.

Lois, a traditionally certified teacher, has been with the school for two years. She currently teaches fifth grade and is actively involved in various activities as needed. She also serves as the fifth grade sponsor and a tech aide as necessary.

Luke, a traditionally certified teacher, has been with his school for five years. He currently teaches physical education and health classes. He is the football coach and was the sponsor the schools Builder Team.

Jennifer, a traditionally certified teacher, has been with the school for two years and is the 8th grade English teacher. She currently serves as an aide and works with the Honors Program.

Joseph, a traditionally certified teacher, has been with the school for two years. He is the 11th and 12th grade Algebra/AP Algebra teacher and is the head soccer coach. He also serves as tutor and leader of the Math Team.

Becky, a traditionally certified teacher, has been with the school for two years. She is the 10th-12th grade Biology teacher and currently leads the Science Team and AP science program. She is also the Freshman Class Sponsor.

A participant profile summary is provided in (table (11)).

Table 11						
<i>Participant Profile Summary – Dixie McCall School District</i>						
Name	Age	Position	Years in Education	Years in Positions	Degree	Extracurricular Positions
Daryl Jacob	47	Superintendent	23	4	Ph.D. Education	
Elizabeth	57	Elementary Teacher	7	5	Elementary Education	District Team Lead Pro Dev Mentor/Pro Dev Team Lead
Lois	41	Elementary Teacher	10	2	Elementary Education Sponsor/ Tech Aide	5 th Grade Sponsor
JoAnne	51	Principal	37	4	MA Education	District Training Lead
Jake	29	Keyboarding/	4	3	Computer Design	Soccer/Academic Team
Luke	41	Physical Ed	10	5	Physical Ed	Football/Builder Team
Jennifer	24	English	2	2	English	Aide/ Honors Program
Peter	60	Principal	32	3	MA Secondary Ed	Mentor Team
Matthew	54	ROTC Instructor	8	8	Criminal Justice	Football Jr. Sponsor
Joseph	44	Algebra/AP Algebra	15	2	Math/Calculus	Soccer/Math Team/Tutor
Jim	45	Math	10	5	Advanced Math	Education Bowl/ Jr Sponsor
Julie	53	Principal	22	2	MA Ed	Professional Leadership
Chris	45	World History/ AP History	3	3	History	Sophomore Sponsor Academic Decathlon
Becky	45	Biology	13	3	Biology	Science Team/AP Sciences Freshman Sponsor
Amanda	32	Business	10	5	Business	Sr. Class/ Library Aide

Administrators' Perceptions of TTT in Technical, Human, and Conceptual, Skills

The superintendent's enthusiasm for the TTT program was visible, and he indicated that he considers the program vital to the district and the state. He discussed the current financial crisis within the state and viewed this issue as a direct link to teacher shortages within the district. The TTT program provides viable teachers for hire within the district and offers incentives for the teachers to stay within the district. The district at this time does not have the funds or resources to recruit teachers and can provide no incentives for employment within the district.

The district has experienced the effects of a decrease in new teacher graduates (within the state) and an increase in retirements within the district. These teacher shortages have been felt statewide and, with the assistance of the local military base, the TTT program has been able to attract recent retirees to the program. The location of local military treatment facilities and low cost of living have provided stability for military retirees and attracted individuals to the TTT program.

The district incorporates teachers from a myriad of backgrounds to lead the professional development and mentorship teams within the district. The superintendent views the TTT leadership skills as an asset for the professional development programs and has appointed TTT teachers as team leaders for many of the newly implemented teams. The superintendent further discussed how he viewed the human skills displayed by the TTT teachers as necessary to assist in multiple jointly run schools and community programs. He stated,

The conceptual skills such as the ability to work with and lead a culturally diverse group of individuals are skills the TTT teachers have developed in the military.

The quality skills are those needed to lead the various family and community programs the school is involved in. (Interview, November 2016)

Alpha Principal Interview

The principal of Alpha Elementary has worked for the district for three years. His former military service has in his words “probably led to bias [in a good way] for the TTT program” (Interview February 2017). The school currently employs two TTT teachers and three alternatively certified teachers with prior military service. The social judgment, problem solving, and personality skills displayed by the TTT in varying teacher and community collaboration projects are the same skills he desires new teachers to exhibit. The principal employed the TTT teachers in varied roles of leadership, from mentor leaders to acting principal. “Teamwork, such as leading the teachers in developing new training to incorporate cultural diversity, is something these leaders are exceptional at demonstrating” (Interview February 2017) and the desire of the principal is to employ the teachers in various leadership roles. The local universities teaching program work in cohort with the schools assigning student teachers to the school, and the principal has assigned the student teachers to his TTT personnel. The skills of motivating students and adapting to change are just a few of the skills TTT teachers can assist in helping new teachers develop. “TTT teachers bring varying traits to the table and are able to assist in teaching new teachers how to improve their skills in these areas” (Interview, February 2017).

Bravo Principal Interview

The principal for Bravo High School has been able to accomplish an increase in teacher professional development in spite of a decrease in staff and budget. The leadership the TTT teachers provide has been instrumental in achieving this success. She is currently working on increased incentives for a new TTT employee who is discussing moving to another school next year. “His skillset is one I am not prepared to lose, his diverse background and ability to relate to the students in the classroom is valuable” (Interview, January 2017).

Currently, the school has three TTT teachers, and each one holds a leadership position within the school. One TTT is currently is the team leader for the school Academic Team and as the coach of the Middle School Soccer Team. The principal stated, “his leadership and sportsmanship are skills to be emulated” (Interview, January 2017). The school has lost three teachers to early retirement and has four that will retire within the next year. These shortages are ones she hopes to fill with new TTT teachers that her current TTT teachers are working to recruit. She stated, “My TTT teachers love the school and are continually influencing other retirees to apply for the program and teach at our school.” (Interview, January, 2017) This type of initiative, displayed on a daily basis, by the TTT teachers is one that the principal relies on to assist in projects throughout the school.

The art of teamwork is a skill brought to the school, and the principal believes this is something that the TTT teachers honed in the military. “I don’t have to teach them how to be a part of or how to lead a team, they already know how to perform in a team, and I use it for the betterment of the school.” (Interview, January 2017). She loves the

positive and supportive attitude continually displayed by the TTT teachers. They are a part of the school, and even though some have only been with the school a short time, it appears, as they have always been a part of the team.

Charlie Principal Interview

The principal of Charlie High has been in the educational field for 32 years. He was eager and proud to discuss how his own children now serve in the educational workforce, and he has one daughter that currently is the counselor for the school. He has worked with several of TTT teachers throughout his time in the district. He detailed how he has worked with some great ones and some that struggled. One teacher could not adapt to the educational field, as he could not quite understand how the disciplinary system worked. The TTT teacher would not contribute comments nor meet with the principal and the student to review the Individual Education Plan (IEP). The teacher believed that the student was not trying hard enough and did not have an academic problem. The lack of concern for students and his inability to understand that the IEP is critical to the students' success, led to the TTT teacher not being hired the following year.

The Principal indicated that he has been fortunate within the last few years to work with some wonderfully skilled TTT teachers. He readily admitted that a few years ago he would have hired traditionally certified teachers over the TTT applicant, but he now admits that his attitude has changed. The increase in leadership and management skills required of today's teachers lead many administrators to hire those with experience in these areas. He stated, "I can teach anyone how to teach, I can't teach all how to lead" (Interview, December 2016). The leadership skills he was most impressed with were the TTT teachers' ability to manage the classroom, update instructional strategies (without

being told), and the ability to mentor the students and have the student set the goals that would lead them to success, rather than the teacher setting the goals. Teamwork, mentorship, problem-solving skills are those that he believes are learned over time, and the ability to hire a teacher with these skills is beneficial to the students and the administration.

Delta Principal Interview

The principal for Delta High School currently has five TTT teachers employed at the school. The school has experienced recent low numbers in testing scores in STEM areas, and two of the TTT teachers are working in these departments. She employs their research and analytical skills to determine areas of improvement necessary to increase the testing scores. The district Teacher of the Year is a current TTT teacher. He has been with the school two years and is currently working as one of the assistant principals for the school. This principal stated, “His leadership skills are amazing, and he has led his department to increased testing scores. I am sure he will be in the administration field in a permanent position very soon” (Interview, February 2017).

The ability of the TTT teachers in working with parents and students to achieve success has been proven in each of their respective departments. The TTT teachers are heavily involved in their respective departments’ professional development teams, and some of the TTT are designing creative programs that will enhance teacher improvement. Three of the TTT teachers currently serve on the District Professional Development Teams and one as a lead mentor for beginning teachers. Other TTT teachers are working with the administration on parent and community outreach programs, using the

exceptional personality, motivation, and social judgment skills have resulted in an increase in parental participation in various programs.

Teachers' Perceptions of TTT Teachers in Technical, Human, and Conceptual Skills

One 10-year elementary school teacher works with a TTT teacher in the mentorship program. She has been employed at the school for two years and stated, "This is the best mentorship program I have seen for new teachers. I also believe the program's success is due to the hard work and dedication that the TTT teacher have for the program" (Interview, January 2017). She is also a fifth grade class sponsor and Tech Ed Aide and credits her TTT friend for assisting her in leading the fifth grade class.

A 10-year veteran in the middle school is very proud to work with TTT teachers and other alternative certified personnel. He enjoys working with teachers from diverse backgrounds and readily admits that, when he first started teaching, a TTT teacher helped develop his classroom management plan. This process entailed the TTT teacher working after hours with him and the TTT teacher provided him valuable insight on developing student IEPs and group based learning styles and levels teams. The dedication demonstrated by the TTT teachers provided him the confidence he needed for teaching and ultimately resulted in his remaining in the teaching field. He discussed how his curriculum program at the college he attended did not prepare new teachers for the vast amount of administrative, management, and leadership tasks that he considers necessary to be successful. He explained that he learned these valuable skills through trial and error. He is now part of a professional development team that has a TTT teacher as the lead. "He forced us to think 'outside the box' and design training that will assist the

teachers in areas they are struggling with today” (Interview, November 2016). I asked him if he has been a mentor to an alternative certified or TTT teacher, and he stated “only for a short time. The TTT teacher started helping me during that mentorship, and it showed me he did not need my help, I needed his.” In his observations of TTT teachers, he noted how they always seem to “fit in” from the very beginning. “The TTT teachers carry themselves differently, they don’t portray the lack of confidence that some of the first year teachers portray.” The school has seen an increase in students with Individual Education Plans (IEP), and the TTT teachers are able to implement the plan more easily than other teachers. He explained, “They understand rules and guidelines and don’t question all the time with the ‘why’ they just do, and it works out great, sets a great example for all of us” (Interview, December 2016).

One interviewee is a 13-year veteran traditionally certified teacher who is proud to be a teacher at Delta High School. She is a member of the departmental leadership team that is currently providing various professional development training. She stated, “the school is fortunate to have some of the best TTT teachers that I have worked with in my career in education” (Interview, February 2017). She has been with the school for two years and as such is still considered a probationary teacher. She currently teaches Biology, AP Biology, Botany, and Chemistry and works in close collaboration with the team to improve STEM courses and validate areas of testing that need improvement. “I have been fortunate to work with the younger teacher in math and science, and the team lead a TTT teacher, has provided innovative insights on training for the teachers” (Interview February 2017). The school has created a culture of professional development and mentorship that has allowed the teachers and administration to work together for

school improvements and student success. Members of the team include two TTT teachers, and the display of teamwork had her impressed. “I love how they work with us, they bring a wealth of experience and instructional strategy ideas that we [traditional teachers] had just not thought to use” (Interview, February 2017).

One interviewee, a 15-year educational veteran, has been employed at the school for two years. He is a traditionally certified teacher who served in the Army for eight years. He stated, “TTT teachers are far more experienced in classroom management and student discipline than new teachers” (Interview, January 2017). The military personnel within the school have worked with him on several STEM and sports projects. His relationship and affinity with military personnel resulted in a bond with many TTT teachers. He has worked with TTT teachers in three states and noted that the leadership skills the military personnel learned during their time in service seemed to allow them to quickly adapt to the classroom environment. He pointed out that, at times, some struggled with students that had a lack of discipline but soon realized that these young people were not soldiers or sailors and adapted their methods to create a bond with the students in the classroom. He also noted that during his observations of the TTT teachers in the classroom, the students, upon learning of the TTT teachers experience in the military, showed more respect for the TTT teachers than others. The information shared in the interview provided an insight into traditional teachers and the respect held for the TTT teachers. “I have never met a TTT teacher that was not competent in their subject area, they have not had difficulties starting out in the classroom” (Interview, January 2017). He believes that, even though he had limited military experience, college training did not prepare him for the classroom. His first mentor at a school in Kansas was a TTT

teacher, and he appreciated the discipline and classroom management techniques that his mentor provided him. One area of change he noted was how the school culture for accepting alternatively certified personnel has shifted. His earlier schools were not receptive of anyone that did not have the “traditional degree,” and he has seen that has changed throughout the years. The teachers accept the TTT teachers, and he has seen a growth in appreciation for leadership, motivational, classroom management, and technical skills they bring to the classroom.

A 15-year math teacher who was interviewed is also a former military service member. Upon his separation from the service, he went back to college and received his teaching degree. His love for mathematics is a visible in the classroom. While I was waiting to interview him, students were coming in and out of the room, and they were each telling him math jokes. When I asked him about this, he stated it was his way of instilling a love of math in the students. Each student receives extra credit based on the complexity of the math problem contained in the joke. He currently works with the school’s professional development team; he is leader of the mathematics section of the educational bowl and Juniors Class representative. He further provides training in classroom management. One of the team members is a TTT teacher, and he stated, “he brings so much to the table, I love the skills he has for making the complex problems seem simple” (Interview, November 2016). The school works to develop teams across varying departments that are a combination of traditional and alternatively certified teachers. He explained that each of these teachers “brings something different to the team,” but he added that the way the TTT teachers can work with others to accomplish a goal is an asset to the school.

TTT Perceptions on Skills and Academic Preparation for Classroom

One TTT teacher I interviewed is a retired veteran that served 24 years in the service. The joy of teaching is evident in her face as she discusses the students and how much she loves Alpha Elementary. She has been at Alpha Elementary for three years and states military service unequivocally helped her be a great teacher. Upon entering the educational field, she hoped and assumed the area she would be teaching would be less stressful than the military. She quickly learned in working with students and their parents a different type of stress occurred.

She explained that the work that ensued was parallel to the work she had done in the military. Teaching, leading, and preparing students for the future were no different in her mind than what she did for her soldiers. The technical training she received assisted her in developing lesson plans, organizational skills, and classroom management. The conceptual skills such as, behavioral flexibility and social perceptiveness and the human skills, such as her ability to work with people, she attributes to developing in the Army and influenced her success in the classroom. “I am leading teams and working with the community and families on a daily basis,” she stated, and she credits the military for honing those skills. (Interview, February 2017)

She chose the TTT program as a path to teacher certification after hearing about the program during a retirement brief and continues to recommend the program for others. She is actively involved in a myriad of programs within the school. She trains teachers within her school in Active Learning in the Classroom, Prep for Parent Teacher Conferences, EdPlan 101, and Education of Foster Care Children under Title I Foster Care Provisions.

The youngest of the interviewees in the TTT program is currently an active member of the state National Guard and serves as the Public Relations Liaison. He holds two degrees with a focus on communications. He credits the schools that he has attended in his military career with preparing him for the demanding job of a teacher. He has attended the Warrior Leader class that provided him skills in Risk Management, Effects of Cultural Change, and Training Management. He further credits his school on Training Management for preparing him for the classroom. “The skills I learned in the Army school helped me be better prepared for classroom management, and I have been able to assist others in preparing classroom lessons due to this training” (Interview, January 2017). He successfully obtained six certifications in computers while on active duty, and those skills have assisted him in providing students with additional computer skills. He further received additional teaching certification for keyboarding and communications and stated “This has helped me in acquiring my position as a teacher” (Interview, January 2017). The love of his classes is evident in his voice as he discusses student activities and his extracurricular activities. He stated that his military classes and courses in communication and computers assisted him in developing technical and communication skills and allowed for him to have success as a teacher.

The training, *Effects of Cultural Change*, a military training requirement course for deployment, provided by the military and the multiple deployments to other countries aided him in developing the human skills necessary to work with students from all walks of life. “Understanding the diversity within the school and the different cultural heritages our students have in the school has allowed me to work more closely with the community and the parents of my students” (Interview, January 2017).

The school has used his skills in designing and developing the school's website and updating the Facebook page with continual information for parents and students. He believes he brings a unique talent to the classroom in his ability to relate to his young students. This belief comes from his classes being continually full with a number of students on "standby" to take his courses. "Young people are all about computers, and this has nothing to do with raising the ole GPA. All my kids just want to be up on the latest technology so they can communicate with the world" (Interview, January 2017). He believes he has more experience than the majority of teachers within the school in computer programs and has gladly offered his services to train new teachers in any program they desire.

The skills to successfully assist his fellow teachers he credits to his time overseas and working with other nations developing their computer skills.

We are living in a world that is bleak without the ability to access the knowledge we want at a moment's notice, my skills in computers helps me keep the world of the students brighter. I love being able to teach young people new and innovative ways to see the world beyond their backyard. (Interview, January 2017)

He assists the professional development team in leading training in the following sessions: Becoming Media Literate, Alpha Plus, STAR 360, Show Me-Teaching a Visual Generation, and Navigating the DM Website. The training employs his computer and training skills and assists the districts in ensuring the teachers can navigate the worldwide web.

One TTT teacher is a 25-year military veteran currently in charge of the JROTC program at Charlie High School. He is proud of the work he accomplishes with the

young people that join his program. “I have been blessed to watch young people who join the ROTC program grow as leaders and move on to college and military service” (Interview, November 2016). The program teaches young people a variety of skills from history to drill and practice.

The primary element that the program teaches the students is teamwork. The pride in his students shows as he points out the various awards that line the walls of the classroom. “I am so proud to be a part of this great program. I get to teach an amazing group of young people leadership, teamwork, and how hard work can be rewarding” (Interview, November 2016). As an officer in the military, he received years of training in leadership, training, and management. During his career, he was responsible for the training of over 200 soldiers in preparing for deployment. This training provided him the skill set to develop lessons, classroom schedules, and assist other teachers in honing their skills in this area. He is also a member of the professional development team and provides training to first-year teachers in the areas of classroom management and lesson plan preparation.

One TTT teacher is a 22-year veteran of military service who currently teaches AP Placement and World History. He entered the TTT program following retirement and has not regretted it for a minute.

I love what I do. Each day brings new challenges and much like my time in the military, no day is ever the same. I am fortunate to sometimes work with my students for multiple years, and it is great to see them grow and mature as individuals. (Interview, February 2017)

He currently teaches Advanced Placement and World History and credits the various places he visited during his multiple deployments allowing him to “bring the subject to life” for his students. He can share with them the customs and courtesies he has learned in all the many places he has visited. He firmly believes that “if you do not love what you do, then leave.” He has seen many teachers that are unhappy with the current state of education, and he reminded them that while the military went through many changes he did not agree with, he stayed until the joy was not there anymore. He further believes that, if teachers do not love teaching, students will recognize this and not provide the attention they need to give in the classroom to learn the material. “I enjoy what I do, and I learned from my military service that if you were not happy in your job, then you would not make those around you happy” (Interview, February 2017).

During his years of service, he attended multiple schools and training that provided him a variety of skills. These skills included Cultural Diversity, Leading Change, Training Management, Accepting Risk and a variety of others that he credits for his success in the classroom. He attributes the skills he learned in the Army to his success as a teacher. He does not spend time worrying about the changes that cannot be made, but instead he makes the most of his time with each group of students. He believes his duty is to his students, much like while in the military his duty was to the soldiers. “I don’t worry about all the little things that so many get wrapped up in. I know the bigger picture, create a learning environment for the students, and they will respect you and follow your rules” (Interview, February 2017).

He currently is serving as a team leader for professional development and mentorship in his school. The professional development classes that he is personally

involved in developing and training includes: Active Shooter Awareness, Strategies for Student Engagement, and Classroom Management. He applies his military skills to train teachers and students in Active Shooter Awareness and believes that being aware of surroundings, a skill acquired in the military, has become an important factor in the schools. He has recently been employed as an assistant principal and expertly demonstrates his technical, human, and conceptual skills in this demanding new role.

One of the items that he did not mention during the interview was that he was recently named the 2016 *District Teacher of the Year*. The omission fit with the humble attitude that he portrayed during the interview. The walls of the classroom are decorated with maps and pictures of leaders of years past. The walls also have posters with various quotes on the posters. Upon closer reading, I discovered these are not quotes from famous people, but rather they are current and previous student quotes. When I asked him about this, he simply replied, “Oh that, we do that each year. The students must write an original quote of their own. I give them no restrictions on what the quote can be about [laughs]. You should see the ones I don’t put on the wall” (Interview, February 2017). Upon completion of the interview, I wished I were able to return to class just to sit and learn from him.

TTT and School Culture

The administrators and teachers interviewed share a rich culture that includes loyalty and devotion to the community, district, schools, and each other. Each of the individuals interviewed had one common theme: a commitment to creating an environment that is culturally inclusive and provides learning experiences for the students

in an atmosphere that celebrates their cultural diversity. Each of the educators is united in a purpose: the education of the children of the district.

While each school had a mission statement and some had further goals or values, the overwhelming ideal that shined through was the ideal that all students are provided an opportunity to succeed. No matter the choice of the student, to attain further education or learn a trade, all teachers indicated that they were invested in the students' success.

According to *Is Your School Toxic or Positive*, "School culture is the set of norms, values, beliefs, rituals, and ceremonies, symbols, and stories that make up the personal of the school" (Peterson, 2002, p. 4). Peterson further described that there are two categories of school culture

Positive and toxic, a positive culture is one where there is an informal network of heroes and heroines and an informal grapevine that passes along information about what is going on in the school, a set of values that supports professional development of teachers, a sense of responsibility of student learning, and a positive caring atmosphere. (p. 15)

This positive culture is apparent in all of the schools visited. The administrators and teachers (regardless of certification) are dedicated to the success of the school and the students.

TTT teachers enjoy the rich culture of this district. For example, one explained, "I have never not felt like I was not a part of the team, and I have always been welcomed. They encourage and allow me use my own leadership style and never tried to change me. I was welcomed from day one" (Interview, January 2017). "The teachers within the school are a part of my family, just like when I was in the military; the culture is one of

mutual respect and a sense of purpose” (Interview, February 2017). These are just a few of the statements that supported the welcome each of the TTT teachers felt in the schools. “I was looking for more after I left the military, I felt lost without the family that grounded me in my job, working for the school provided me that sense of family once again” (Interview, February 2017).

Teacher Shortages

The underlying theme that resonates throughout the research is one of teacher shortages. Administrators and teachers continually expressed concern about the current teaching shortages in the state and the district. A lack of applicants and teacher graduates has the administrators doubting their ability to fill the vacancies that exist currently and in the future. There are presently 80 unfilled positions within the school district that require a certified teacher applicant (Interview, December 2016, February 2017).

The administration states this number will double by the next school year. Upcoming retirements, resignations, and doubts by current teachers on return to their positions have created a grave concern among the administration. Each of the schools visited has over ten vacancies at this time. The lack of applicants and substitute teachers has resulted in crowded classrooms and overburdened teachers.

The TTT teachers interviewed are actively reaching out to retired military in the area to fill positions within the district. A lack of incentives and low teacher pay has led current teachers to begin looking for future employment actively. The state recently passed a bill to increase teacher pay, which unfortunately for the state and district, did not have funding attached to the bill.

Summary

Chapter IV presents a representation of the data that was gathered during the research. The Katz Leadership Skills Theory technical, human, and conceptual skills are represented in the TTT teachers in a variety of avenues. In the area of technical skills, those demonstrated regularly by the TTT teachers are ones of problem solving, analytical, and classroom management skills.

Human skills are displayed in the form of the TTT teachers' ability to work with people across a broad spectrum of cultural, economic, and educational levels. They are seen as individuals who establish teamwork among groups and create an "atmosphere of trust" (Northouse, 2016, p.45) among teachers and students. The conceptual skills displayed by the TTT teachers are their ability to see the "bigger picture," think "outside the box," and an astute understanding of the mission of the school.

The schools share a rich tradition of excellence that each of the interviewees is willing to share. The schools do not all have an outstanding grade, as the state's A-F report card will reflect, however, that does not stop any of these individuals from sharing how the district and the school are working to attain the standards that result in student success.

Chapter V presents the findings as analyzed through the lens of the Katz Skills Leadership Theory and includes an analysis of TTT teachers' technical, human and conceptual skills.

Chapter VI discusses the findings based on the Katz Skills Leadership Theoretical framework. Limitations, implications for research, theory, and practice and recommendations for future research are also presented.

CHAPTER V

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the perceived teaching capacity of individuals who entered the teaching profession through the Troops to Teachers program, as reported by traditionally certified teachers and administrators, alternatively certified teacher peers, and the TTT teachers themselves. The case study was guided by Katz's Skills Approach Leadership Theory (1955). This theory provided the framework for the analysis. Katz' Skills Approach, in contrast to theories that perceive leadership through the lens of an individual personality trait, places emphasis on an individual's skills and abilities "that can be learned and developed" (Northouse, 2016 p. 43). Katz's Skills Approach specifically focuses on individuals' administrative competencies in the areas of conceptual, human, and technical skills. It is imperative to remind the reader that a case study is expected to "catch the complexity of a single case" (Stake, p.xi) and annotate findings that are relevant to the time and context in which the study is conducted. It is further noted that as discussed in *Qualitative Research & Evaluative Research Methods*, (2002) that during the "extrapolation" of the data it "clearly connotes that one has gone beyond the narrow confines of the data to think about other applications of the findings" (p.584). The case study, conducted during a time of severe teacher shortage, lends itself to positivity in the viewpoints of individuals interviewed of the TTT program. The timeframe and context during which the case study is conducted may impede the transferability "generalization and application to other

studies” if similar studies were conducted in areas with less military personnel or low teaching shortages.

Research Question One: What perceptions do administrators and teachers, who hold traditional certifications, have of TTT teachers’ preparation in conceptual, technical, and human skills for success in the classroom?

The administrators and traditionally certified teachers overwhelmingly agreed that TTT teachers were prepared for success in the classroom. The conceptual skills, the “ability to work with ideas and concepts” (Katz, 1955, p. 45) are visible to the administrators and teachers to appreciate as the TTT teachers lead and are integrated into professional development teams. Each of the TTT teachers interviewed fill the position of current leaders and team members who provide valuable input and experiences in the development of training and instructional strategies.

The administrators noted the skills the TTT teachers had in visualizing “the big picture.” The administrators and teachers noted and admired the ability that TTT teachers’ have to take the everyday decisions made by teachers and quickly understand the third and fourth order effects. The ability to promptly determine how the effects of teacher decisions might affect parents, students, classroom time, and others allowed TTT teachers to make informed decisions quickly. For example, when one of the TTT teachers developed a training lesson for the teachers, she was able to show the teachers how having this knowledge would not only benefit instructing the topic at hand but would also provide them guidance for future testing requirements that would be implemented within the school within six months. This training prepared by the TTT teacher allowed for the school to conduct quick, efficient, training rather than the weeklong training provided by the company resulting in saved man-hours and teacher

availability in the classroom. Conceptual skills is something that the interviewees agreed was not taught in a college, but rather, learned through time, trial, and error. The prior experiences and training of the TTT teachers enabled them to use these skills in the classroom. Understanding an organization's goals and leading a team to meet those goals is a skill that administrators and teachers admire in TTT teachers.

The administrators strongly agreed that the technical expertise TTT teachers' exhibit is an asset in the classroom. Their ability to use research-based practices and effective classroom management are an asset to the classroom, and these skills help to improve student achievement. Each of the interviewees agreed that the TTT teachers' capacity to exhibit instructional behaviors and employ a variety of instructional strategies to increase student learning are highly favored skills others desire to emulate. "The ability to adapt to varying learning styles is not one I was taught in the classroom, but one I have learned through my mentorship with a TTT teacher" (Interview, January 2017).

One participant stated,

I want the teachers that have a foundation in dealing with people. I can provide training on instructional strategies, teaching assessments and other areas that they may not have a foundation in, but I can't teach them leadership and people skills.

I need those individuals in my classrooms. (Interview, December 2016)

The conceptual skills that involve the ability to work with parents and the community are critical to a student's success, and all agreed that the TTT teachers are very efficient in this area. One administrator stated, "It is evident when conducting the first assessment on teachers, who has excellent people skills" (Interview, February 2017). Administrators and teachers agreed that the conceptual skills displayed by TTT teachers are skills the

individuals honed in military service. One of the principals made the statement, “anyone can teach,” but it takes time and a concentrated effort to become technically adapt.

TTT teachers employed within the school district have collectively over 100 years of experience in training personnel (student teaching), managing complex and, at times, critical programs, and leading teams. The benefits gained from experience in the military resulted in the administrators and fellow teachers recognizing the strengths TTT teachers have in technical, conceptual, and human skills.

Research Question Two: What Perceptions do “other” alternatively certified teachers have of TTT teachers’ conceptual, technical, and human skills and preparation for the classroom?

One alternatively certified teacher who participated in the study received his teaching certification within the last two years. He readily admits that he was not prepared for the responsibilities and requirements of his position as a classroom teacher. After struggling in the classroom for months, he gravitated to individuals with prior military service and was, in his words, “fortunate to have a TTT teacher mentor.” He noted that his mentor took his role as a mentor seriously. He received training each week in the areas of classroom management, student hours, required paperwork, instructional strategies, individual education plans, and more. “I know he was going above what I saw other mentors doing with their teachers” (Interview, November 2016). This teacher credits his mentor for his decision to remain in the teaching field.

Teachers with different routes to certification remarked that they gravitated to individuals with like interests and ones that demonstrate the ability to lead. The gravitation resulted in the selection of TTT teacher’s selection to varied departmental

teams and alternatively certified teachers requesting the TTT teachers become their mentors.

Research Question Three: What are TTT teachers' perceptions about the skills and academic preparation they bring the teaching workforce?

The TTT teachers interviewed stated each entered the workforce believing they were adequately prepared academically for teaching. It was noteworthy that each of the teachers had missteps along the way. The areas the teachers struggled in varied. For example, some had problems with students not “doing what they were told the first time,” and these teachers quickly recognized that they were not dealing with military personnel but, rather, with individuals who required different guidance and mentorship.

The TTT teachers discussed mentorship in each interview. Teachers viewed their students as young mentees, and it was the job of the teacher not only train to them in the educational topic taught in the classroom, but also to mentor the students and assist them in being successful. Each of the TTT teachers interviewed believed this was a trait they learned in the military and was not an easy one to let go of once entering the teaching profession.

One openly discussed how one of the reasons he considered himself a great history teacher is because he learned a love of the topic in the military. He stated that all officers were required to read, research, and train others on historical case studies and cultural information. This requirement created in him a love of lifelong learning, and he tries to instill this same love and a love of history in his students.

One teacher discussed how the years of training he had in the service helped him in his instructional design strategies. When he was in the military, he worked

continually to hone his skills in varying methods to train others in the multiple areas individuals must know to prepare for combat. The methods of instruction were not so different from those used in his classroom today: lecture, simulations, practical exercises, demonstrations. These are just a few of the varied teaching methods he perfected during his time in service. “I use all the varying instructional strategies in my classroom today, and I am glad I was taught them during my military service” (Interview, November 2016).

TTT teachers indicated the years in the military provided the skills needed to adapt to students’ varying cultures and interests. TTT teachers discussed how their military experience prepared them to be successful in the classroom. Organizational, time management, cultural diversity training, mentorship training, and motivational skills learned helped pave the way for success in the classroom.

Research Question Four: How do administrators employ the TTT teachers’ conceptual, technical, and human skills within the school system?

The administrators make use of the TTT teachers’ skills in various areas within the schools and the district. The administrators agreed that TTT teachers have leadership capacity, social judgment skills, motivation and the personal skills (Mumford, 2000) to lead a variety of demanding programs and teams within the organization. The superintendent of the district noted that he knows of five TTT teachers who are on planning committees currently in the process of updating curriculum. The administrators at each of the schools have TTT teachers working on projects for school improvement, community outreach, and more. The Alpha School principal said, “I never have to ask the TTT teacher to do something, she is the one in my office with recommendations for

change and a plan to make it happen” (Interview, February 2017). The motivation displayed on a continual basis by the TTT teachers leads to their selection and nomination to various organizations and projects throughout the district.

Charlie and Delta High School administrators shared information that highlighted the committees, teams, and organizations in which TTT teachers take the lead. The underlying theme in each of the interviews linked the Katz Skills Leadership Theory traits of leadership, motivation, and social problem-solving skills are in high demand in education, and TTT teachers exhibit the human and conceptual skills effective at the administrative level (Katz, 1955, p. 59). The administrator states these are the skills that the TTT teachers “learned as a member of the military.”

Research Question Five: What are TTT teachers’ perceptions concerning barriers that exist that preclude integration into the schools’ cultures?

The TTT teachers held varying views of what barriers existed for them when they entered the teaching field, yet the underlying difference in the variables was timing. For TTT teachers who entered the program over five years ago, the lack of acceptance by some teachers and administrators based on their non-traditional path to teaching was felt at a greater level than those TTT teachers entering the workforce today. For those entering the field in the last five years, there have been no visible signs indicating a lack of acceptance within the schools.

One teacher noted, when asked about the differing views, that the varying views of traditional teachers and administrators were probably due to timing. TTT teachers that entered the school system in previous years were not so welcome. One noted, “it was like entering the military all over again; I had to prove my worth and wait for a few years

to be accepted into the club” (Interview, February 2017). Now, however, the situation has changed at the school and “all hands on deck” (Interview, February 2017) are needed. Teacher shortages have reached dangerous levels, and what once might have been considered unacceptable (alternative certification) was now acceptable.

Teachers with less than five years of teaching experience felt that they were welcomed and quickly adapted to the schools culture. One teacher stated her team was just glad she was at the school and attributed this welcoming environment to the short staffing at the school at that time. The classroom sizes had become unmanageable, and she was a welcome addition to the team. She did, however, note that it might have been different if the school was not struggling with hiring teachers.

TTT teachers agreed that inculcation to the culture of education were similar to that experienced when first joining the military. The same joy, excitement, and feeling of anticipation for a new adventure, felt when the TTT teachers joined the military, was once again experienced 20 more years later as individuals began a new teaching career. The fear (of failure, of self-doubt, and one that stems from worry that you won’t be able to do the job), similar to the one all the TTT teachers had in basic training so many years ago, was present when these teachers entered the teaching profession. One TTT teacher explained that the fear was a result of knowing that so many people are depending on you to “get it right.” A new culture exists where, after twenty years of military acronyms, TTT teachers found themselves faced with the need to learn the thousands of acronyms associated with the educational arena. They worried that they would not “fit in.” Several TTT teachers explained that they had developed lasting friendships, moved multiple times, and now where going to have to start all over again. It was exciting and at times

disheartening to realize that there are individual personalities in the civilian sector similar to those one meets in the military. Individuals such as those eager to help, standoffish, friendly, and even confrontational coworkers who are on scene no matter the position or job you are holding.

The educational culture is one of stress, hard work, concern, caring, high tempo, and all around crazy, just like the one the TTT teacher had just retired from. The new language used by the staff, the cultures, symbols, and more were quickly learned by the TTT teachers in order for them to be considered a viable member of the team. The military experience the TTT teachers shared allowed them to enjoy this inculcation and embrace the change with less fear than experienced in their younger years.

Research Question Six: What other realities are present that this study uncovered?

The professional development program Dixie McCall ISD provides for the educators within the district, regardless of teacher experience, creates an opportunity to improve the teacher knowledge on technical, human, and conceptual skills. Instructional strategies, classroom management, increased computer based training for all core competencies are only a few of the programs offered to increase teacher knowledge. The involvement of individual teachers from all certification fields provides different levels of experience and knowledge that is contributed to the development of the program.

Teacher shortages throughout the district have reached a new high. Multiple schools within the district have increased classroom size due to short staffing. A lack of teacher graduates from universities and incentives to the teaching field have created

a void in the hiring pool of applicants. The state funding cuts have created an alarming financial situation for the schools resulting in administrators cutting popular programs and reviewing unpopular solutions of school mergers and reduced school days. The administrators see no “light at the end of the tunnel” as the state refuses to enact necessary reforms to provide needed funding. TTT teachers helped to fill this void, and because they met an important need in the district, these teachers were welcomed into the school environment.

Summary

Information provided and analyzed in this chapter were collected through interviews, observations, the State Department of Education, and school websites. Data were analyzed through the lens of the Katz Skills Leadership Theory (1955) and included analysis of TTT Teachers’ technical, human, and conceptual skills. The Dixie McCall School District Teachers apply their learned technical, human, and conceptual skills in varied methods in order to accomplish their job as a teacher. The pathway to certification, via TTT, was achieved with minimal difficulties and the teachers have found a home in which they desire to stay for many years, a position that once again allows the TTT teachers to serve their community. The pride expressed by those teachers interviewed is evident in their voices as each teacher discussed individual students that he/she/has in the school. This pride is further evident in the data presented.

Chapter VI discusses the findings based on the Katz Skills Leadership Theoretical framework. Limitations, implications for research, theory, and practice and recommendations for future research are also presented.

CHAPTER VI

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the perceived teaching capacity of individuals who entered the teaching profession through the Troops to Teachers program, as reported by traditionally certified teachers and administrators, alternatively certified teacher peers, and the TTT teachers themselves. The earliest research provided varying opinions on the ability of TTT teachers to successfully fill the role of a teacher. Baines (2010) commented “Originally, alternative certification was a stopgap to fill a vacancy with an unqualified individual when no certified teacher could be found” (p. 10). With the growing number of teacher vacancies within the education field, alternative certification has become mainstream and is used extensively within the state to fill vacancies. Baines (2010) also stated

American children deserve more. They deserve teachers with specialized training in teaching specific content to a particular age group. They deserve to have teachers with diverse, extended experiences with teacher real children. They deserve teachers who will be mentored in their early years by exporter teachers and PhDs who understand what it takes to be an effective teacher. They deserve intelligent, creative, empathetic teachers who can help them love as well as learn the material. (p. 95)

This statement was intended to imply that alternative certified teachers could not provide what American children deserve and are not the individuals who can fill the teacher shortages.

While negative views are present, some of the earlier research was positive. Feistritzer (2008) reminds us there are “groups that are particularly well suited” for alternative certification programs such as TTT, such as second career professionals and special population targeted individuals (pp. 113-114). In 2003, a hearing before the subcommittee on benefits of the committee on veteran’s affairs acknowledged that teaching not only requires knowledge but heart, as shown through the statement, “It’s the willingness and the need to serve, and who better fit to serve than those men and women in uniform? They have already proven themselves and given so much” (p.11). The training and ethnic ratio seen that is missing in the schools are areas that TTT teachers can fill.

Administrators and teachers in the Dixie McCall ISD expressed appreciation to have qualified TTT teachers to assist in filling vacancies that have grown over the last several years. The increasing teacher vacancies, seen as cause for concern at the beginning of the research, have increased over time. The findings of the research suggest that in this district, TTT teachers are instrumental in providing what the children need from their teachers and their schools.

Benefits of hiring TTT teachers with technical, human, and conceptual skills

Participants in this study expressed that TTT teachers in this district exhibited technical, human, and conceptual skills that are needed in the classroom. Technical skills, such as knowledge of a specific topic and analytical abilities were apparent in the

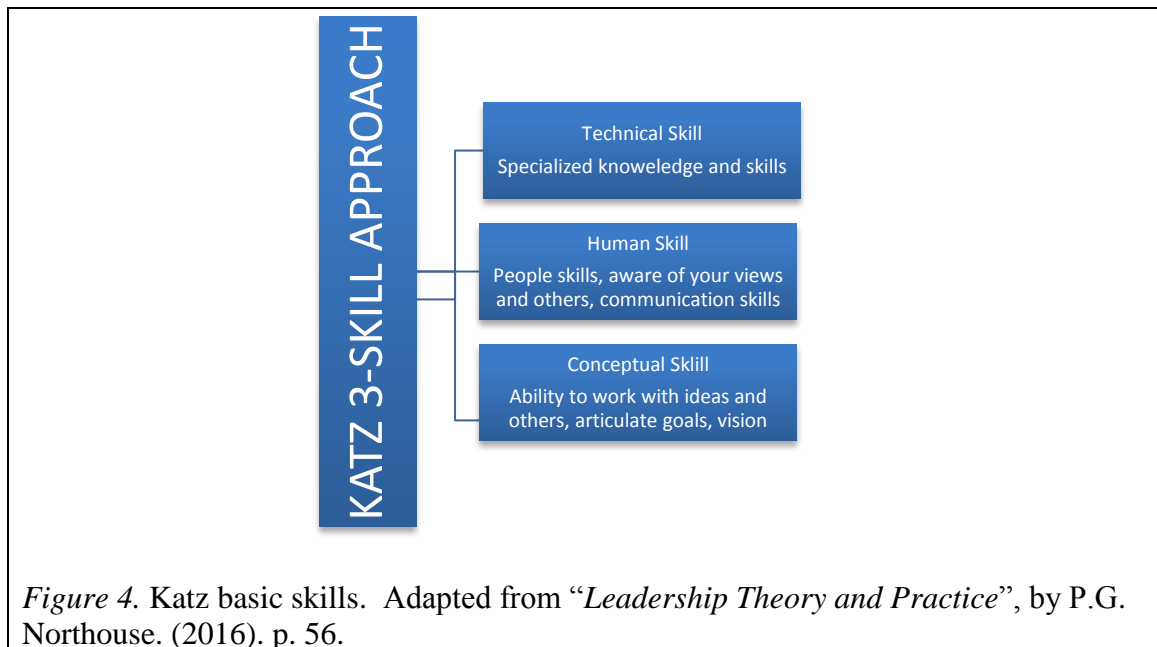
TTT teachers interviewed. TTT teachers were seen as highly effective, by administrators in the district, in their capacity to analyze student assessments and student learning needs. A TTT teacher at Bravo Middle School was able to analyze varying computer systems and training to determine what was the best fit for the students within the school. His ability resulted in new and exciting programs offered for the students at Bravo School and an increase in the number of students desiring to take the courses offered. His technical skills and knowledge of existing software are skills he developed in the military and subsequently brought to the classroom.

A TTT teacher at Alpha Elementary, was able to use human skills, such as the ability to work with people, lead peers, adapt her ideas to others, and create trust among her fellow teachers, to the classroom. She is continually called upon to lead programs that involve working with parents and the community. The administrators of all the schools agreed that each of the TTT teachers, currently employed at schools within the district, can work effectively with parents in developing goals for students. TTT teachers are often asked to provide assistance in training for beginning teachers in preparing student development plans to assist in parents' and students' understandings. TTT teachers' human skills are skills which are honed in the military as soldiers, sailors, airmen, and marines, due to their work on a plethora of community projects assisting nations around the world.

The conceptual skills, those abilities that Katz equated to individuals working with concepts, creating visions, using strategic skills, and working easily with hypothetical situations (Northouse, 2016) are the skills TTT teachers demonstrated, at varying levels, within the district. Two TTT teachers at different schools, use their

strategic planning skills that were first learned in the military, to assist the school and the district in creating professional development programs beneficial to teachers within the district. These TTT teachers demonstrated an innate ability to understand the school’s vision and incorporate that vision into the classroom. TTT teachers interviewed had benefitted their schools in presenting ideas and concepts in training. These ideas enabled students and fellow teachers to benefit from their knowledge.

Each of the Katz’ Skills beneficial to the classroom environment, are skills TTT teachers learned and enhanced during their military career. These skills are ones that assist the TTT teachers in providing “America’s children the education they deserve.” (Darling-Hammond, & Snowden (2005). p.12) The Katz Skill Approach Leadership is shown in Figure 17 below.



The significance of TTT teachers' abilities in technical, human, and conceptual skills in the classroom

“To make good decisions, teachers must be aware of the many ways in which student learning can unfold in the context of development, learning differences, language and cultural influences, and individual temperaments, interest, and approaches to learning” (Darling-Hammond & Branford, 2005). The skills TTT teachers exhibit in the classroom allow them to provide instructional strategies, varied methods of instruction, and mentorship to the students they teach.

Katz's technical skills “imply an understanding of, and proficiency in, a specific kind of activity, particularly one involving methods, processes, procedures, or techniques (p. 7). These processes include lesson plans, classroom management, and student individual development program plans to name a few. Strict schedules military personnel must adhere to while in the service results in increased time management skills. It is common at military meetings planned for 0900, to see military personnel ready and waiting at 0830 for the meeting to start. A common saying in the military is, “If you aren't early, you're late.” This ability to be prepared and ready for planned and unplanned events assists TTT teachers in excelling in time and classroom management. “Are you ready?” a common question asked of military personnel, is always accompanied by the standard reply “Always ready.”

Human skills, the ability to work effectively as a “team member and to build cooperative effort within the team he or she leads” (Katz, 1955, p. 9), or to work with people, results in TTT teachers having the capability to work efficiently with administration, fellow teachers, parents, and students. The individuals with the human

skills, as defined by Katz (1955), are those that can “create an atmosphere of approval and security in which individuals feel free to express themselves without fear of censure or ridicule” (pp. 9-10), the very individuals who can relate and work with the culturally diverse population of the school. TTT teachers explained that the diverse individuals TTT teachers worked for and led during their military career provided the TTT teachers more individual and group training in leadership and cultural awareness than any college could or does provide the beginning teacher.

Wade (2005) stated, “It is essential that schools provide valuable role models for minority and non-minority students alike” (p. 108). Administrators in all schools agreed that the TTT teachers employed by the district provide positive and culturally diverse role models to students. Students within the district can hear about the diverse life that TTT teachers have experienced and know that no matter their ethnicity or background, they can design their own path. Administrators in this district were excited to have dedicated individuals that want to lead the school and the students to attain the desired vision and goals of the school and the students.

Conceptual skills, according to Katz (1955), “involve the ability see the enterprise as a whole; it includes recognizing how the various functions of the organization depend on one another, and how changes in any one part affect all the others” (p. 12). These skills are those identified by the administrators as a “strong suit” for TTT teachers. Katz linked these skills to coaching and “the extent to which the individual is able to relate himself and his job to the other functions and operations of the company” (p. 57). The TTT teachers interviewed presented a clear understanding of the district and schools “vision” and how their positions are important to the organization as a whole.

Farkus and Duffett (2009) suggested that alternatively certified teachers, such as TTT teachers, would reduce the quality of the teaching force. Results from this study did not confirm this assumption for the teachers employed at either school. Conversely, TTT teachers in this study were viewed by administrators and peers to be quality teachers who added value to the classroom in technical, human, and conceptual skills. This finding corresponds with those who support the TTT program at the federal level. Specifically, at a hearing before Congress that discussed the TTT program and the military members who can apply for the program, Senator Michand (2003) commented, “[TTT] possess the greatest character, commitment, and resolve, and today our children need those qualities more than ever.” (p. 30). These words resonated in the findings of this study.

TTT teachers’ technical, human, and conceptual skills benefitted the district in mentorship and professional development

Mentorship. One of the unexpected findings of the research was the administrators’ and peers’ belief that TTT teachers provide valuable mentorship. Mentorship is provided to fellow teachers and students alike. TTT teachers’ technical and human skills allowed them to seek out those teachers in need of guidance and assist the teachers in learning new skills and ideas that can result in improvement in the classroom.

Professional Development. The research further showed how the majority of TTT teachers are involved in the professional development training for fellow teachers. TTT teachers throughout the district are team members and leaders in a variation of professional development programs. The teachers assisted in a variety of training developmental programs and training others in community outreach.

In the military, the mentality is “service before self,” and for the TTT teachers employed by Dixie McCall ISD, this is part of their training and background. Military personnel are taught from the beginning of their service that it is their job to train and mentor subordinates. For these teachers, the involvement in mentorship and professional development is a natural and familiar part of their previous experience in the military.

Implications

The findings from this study have implications for research, theory, and practice.

Implications for Research

It is clear from the research conducted for this case study that no “one” clear solution has been found to alleviate the increased teacher shortage in the state where this study took place. Further research is necessary to develop a recruitment plan capable of addressing the needs of the district and filling vacant positions. The increase in emergency teacher certifications within the last year demonstrates how current recruitment efforts are failing to meet current needs. “Job postings. Newspaper advertisements. Career fairs. These are all common elements of teacher recruitment campaigns, but all too commonly they are the only elements” (Feistritz, 2008, p.12). Further research, to include a review of the states TTT program, may enhance the states current recruitment material and provide findings to include with current research and provide a pathway for alleviating some teacher shortages.

For many years, teachers have been departing the positions within the district and have found employment in neighboring states that offer a more competitive salary. The average salary for a teacher with two-years of experience in this state is \$32,350, as compared to bordering state averages of \$35,000, \$44,000, and \$47,750 for first-year

teachers. Consequently, this discrepancy has created a demand within districts to provide recruitment incentives necessary to attract teachers who can fill critical positions. To date, adequate state funding to provide for such recruitment has not been provided. For example, state funding for the Dixie McCall ISD has decreased by 37% within the last five years (Interview, December 2016). The number of students has increased, yet unfortunately, the resources necessary to provide a quality education has declined. The realities of less pay with increased hours and required training can be a factor in teacher shortages, and the state must stabilize the constant flow of departing teachers. This study adds to understandings in the literature by enhancing understandings of the conceptual, technical, and human skills that these TTT teachers brought to their district. Further research is needed to determine how other districts utilize the skills of TTT teachers to meet district and school needs.

Another implication for research is to expand understandings of teacher competencies that are needed in rapidly changing, 21st Century classrooms. This study suggests that the technical, human, and conceptual skills that TTT teachers interviewed bring to the classroom were effective for promoting a healthy learning environment in the district. These skills may not be skills that are currently taught by state universities and within teacher preparation programs. The principals indicated (Interviews December 2016 & January 2017) that additional diversity and collaboration training would benefit the beginning teacher if added to programs. Varied programs throughout the state have a management or a diversity course offered for electives, however, to ensure that new teachers are prepared for the classroom, the addition to the program of these classes

would be beneficial. The training beginning teachers acquired during internship may not have the rigor that is associated with “teaching your own class”.

According to the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, “Teachers must become attuned to their students’ individual situations and changing circumstances” (NCATE, 2008, p. 13). This study may inform teacher preparation programs by suggesting skills required to achieve this objective of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards in course curriculum. Without adequate training for challenging classrooms, new teachers must often rely on trial and error or the mentorship of an already strapped teaching force to provide training in this area.

A further study on TTT teachers in varied demographic areas is recommended. The district, in which the case study was conducted, had a higher than average number of military students and military retirees that may be a factor in the high confidence of the TTT skills level. Districts with higher percentages of military retirees are located within the state and research conducted within those districts may provide validation of the technical, human, and conceptual skills TTT teachers bring to the workforce.

The teacher shortage has increased in high numbers since the beginning of my research for the case study. The state of Oklahoma coordinated the Oklahoma Educator Workforce Shortage Task Force and provided recommendations to alleviate the school shortages during my research. One of the strategic themes of the Task Force was to attract “high-quality individuals into the education profession” (State Educator Workforce Shortage Task Force, 2014); however, the recommendations of the task force did not include attracting qualified alternative certified teachers. With further research,

the hiring of alternatively certified teachers could possibly lead to a viable solution for teacher shortages.

Implications for Theory

Katz Skills Leadership Approach Theory (1955) was used to describe the competencies of technical, human, and conceptual skills that individuals learn and develop over time. This study focused on the three areas of technical, human, and conceptual skills. The study contributed to the theory and identified how the TTT teachers apply their technical, human, and conceptual skills to succeed in the classroom.

The results of the study suggest that a skills approach to leadership in the classroom may be congruent with training that is offered to military personnel (Mumford et al., 2007). Findings from this study suggest that these TTT teachers interviewed hold the leadership skills stated in the Katz Leadership Model. These skills include individual attributes, competencies, and leadership outcomes. Mumford, et al's, further development of Katz Skills Leadership Theory encompasses areas in which some TTT teachers held varying degrees of competency. Competencies are shown in Figure 18.

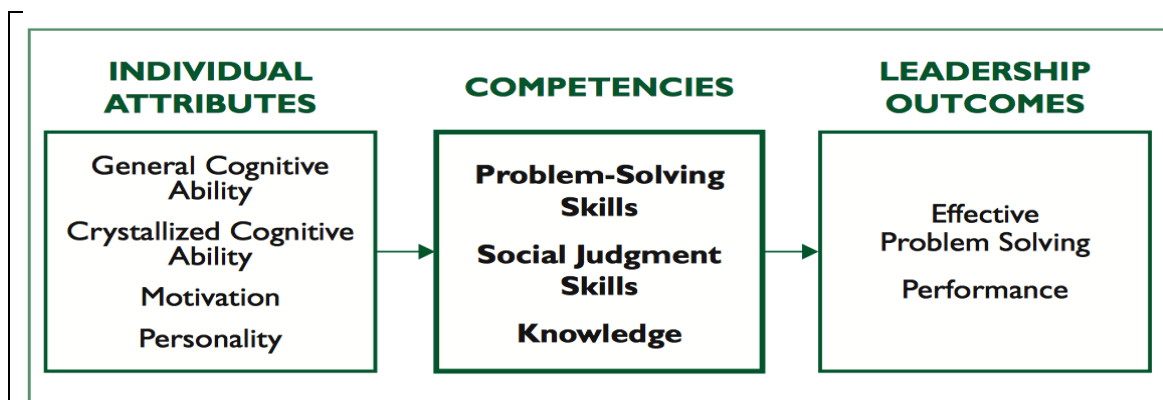


Figure 18. Varied competencies for successful skill traits. Adapted from P.G. Northouse. (2016). p. 56.

Implications for the Practice

This study provided implications for the district, administrators, and teachers.

District Leaders. The educational crisis within the state is growing and there is no solution in sight. Legislation recently passed a bill that provided teachers a small yearly pay increase; however, critics argue that the necessary allocated funds are not in the state budget (State Department of Education Revenue Comparison Report, 2016). The lack of financial stability within the state increased uneasiness among district teachers concerning the future of schools in the state. The community's willingness to assist in local schools often does not extend to their agreement (or a "yes" vote) on tax increases. A nearby district presented a bond for approval in March 2017 and the citizens voted no on the passage. Consequently, the county raised the taxes to the maximum allowable without a vote. Another example shown in this study's district is that the Board of Education is considering a variety of methods to alleviate the pain of the deep budget cuts for the upcoming school year. Schools in the state have combined classrooms, changed to a four-day schedule, cut student sports and activities, and eliminated hundreds of positions resulting in lost jobs (Fultonberg, 2016). Additionally, this district has a growing number of projected retirements and a lower number of qualified applicants to fill future vacant positions.

The findings of the study present that TTT teachers in this district were academically prepared for the educational field and, with the location of a military base within the district, a recruitment of military retirees into the TTT program is a viable source of personnel that is available for recruiting into the teaching profession. Additionally, the TTT program is of no cost to the district and could provide a highly

motivated and trained individual for possible hire. This finding may be similar for other districts as well. Additional research is needed to determine if TTT teachers meet the needs of districts with differing demographics and with differences in the availability of a local military base.

Administrators. The administrators interviewed face further difficulties as the fight to retain teachers continues. Administrators must create a culture that includes teamwork, professional development, and a culture of inclusiveness that prevents the individual from feeling the need to move to another school or profession. Findings from the study suggest that the TTT teachers employed within the district had the ability to persevere through tough situations and remain in the profession. The administrator's ability to attract, select and keep outstanding teachers will prove invaluable during the looming teacher shortage. The leaders in the study have a firm grasp on the necessity to attract and maintain quality educators within the schools. Each principal possesses varying leadership styles and the teachers interviewed showed loyalty for the schools. The TTT teachers interviewed agreed their goal was to stay in the district and continue in the job they love. Further study could investigate relationships between administrators and TTT teachers to gain a better understanding of leadership factors that support TTT teachers to remain in the profession.

“It is hard to recruit the right people to a bad situation” (Feistritzer, 2008, p. 9). If TTT teachers are the “right” teachers for diverse student populations, as the research suggests, additional research is needed to understand school factors that encourage the retention of TTT teachers. Additional research is also needed to understand TTT teacher effectiveness in settings with differing demographics.

Findings from this research indicate that these TTT program applicants were viable recruits for the stressful job of education in this district. The administrators within the Dixie McCall District were acutely aware of the struggles the teachers face. The leadership within the schools is one of collaboration and an openness to discuss with the staff the changes that must be made. This type of leadership appeared to work well for TTT teachers; however, because leadership style was not the focus of this study, additional research is needed to identify leadership characteristics that are effective with TTT teachers.

Teachers and TTT Teachers. “Teachers who lead leave their mark on teaching. By their presence and their performance, they change how other teachers think about, plan for, and conduct their work with students” (Little, 1988, p. 84). Findings from this study suggest that the TTT teachers in this district are ones that want to leave their “mark” in the educational field. Collaboration, teamwork, and a sense of comradery were evident. The teachers interviewed viewed themselves as down in the trenches and fighting a war on culture, social media, fast money, and a host of other lures that are grabbing the attention of these students. The goal the TTT teachers have is for each student to receive a valuable education that prepares them for the challenging world waiting after graduation.

The research indicated that the TTT teachers were prepared and willing to assist in all areas of leadership and professional development. Further, the “let’s get this done” attitude expressed by the TTT teachers was appreciated in administration and among peers. This finding is important as teacher leadership is an important aspect of the job (NCATE Standards. 2008), and the TTT teachers interviewed are willing and ready “to

take up the sword.” This study has application for districts that emphasize teacher leadership. Not only did these TTT teachers assume leadership positions, they also mentored other teachers. This mentorship could inspire teacher leadership across teachers who, otherwise, would not assume leadership responsibilities. Additional research is needed to determine the lasting influence that these TTT teachers had on individuals mentored. The challenges of the study reveal a further question, “Would TTT teacher fit as well in other districts?”. Further research needs to be conducted to determine the answer, as this case study is context bound.

Summary

Chapter VI provided further information on the perceived teaching capabilities of TTT teachers. Chapter VI provided discussion of the findings of this study as analyzed through the Katz Skills Leadership Theory and further discussion as related to the research questions. Findings and implication for research, theory, and practice are offered. Recommendations for further research are provided also.

The research discussed in Chapter VI showed evidence that the TTT teachers are equipped with the technical, human, and conceptual skills able to assist in their ability to perform as a teacher. The skills, as discussed by Katz, are skills that individuals acquire over a period of time. The TTT teachers have the benefit of a past career that assisted them in developing and honing technical, human, and conceptual skills.

The Dixie McCall ISD has a strong core of administrators dedicated to recruiting quality teachers for the district. The district provides further professional development that assists in the gaps found in the educational programs throughout the state for new teachers. The TTT teachers and alternatively certified teachers actively work with known

associates to recruit the quality individuals to become certified teachers and work within the district.

Chapter II provided an in-depth literature review that can assist in better understanding the history of alternative certification programs, specifically Troops to Teachers. Most importantly, it provided information concerning the preparedness of individuals in the areas of instructional competency, classroom management, teacher leadership capacity, and mentorship required for today's demanding role of teaching. Chapter II concludes with a detailed description of the theoretical framework for the study.

Chapter III provided the methodology and research methods applied to the case study. The volunteers for the case study were located within four schools within the Dixie McCall ISD. The teachers and TTT teachers had over two years of experience in the educational field and provided valuable insight for further research in the Katz Leadership Skills Theory. I collected information from the administrators of TTT teachers and professional development programs, from the state, district, and schools websites. I attended school sporting events, teacher professional development, and attended classes of various TTT teachers to observe the interviewee in their natural environment. I conducted interviews of one administrator, four principals, four traditionally certified teachers, four TTT teachers and one alternatively certified teacher.

The constructionist perspective was the epistemological perspective for the study. Crotty (1998) defined constructionism as "truth, or meaning comes into existence in and out of our engagement with the realities of our world. In this study, I gained knowledge that was constructed by the administrators, and traditional, alternative, and TTT teachers.

Chapter IV presented the findings and the data acquired during the research. The selection of the Katz Leadership Skills Theory provided the lens through which I viewed, collected, and analyzed the data. A description of the study population was provided, and the ideas, thoughts, and views of the study population discussed.

Chapter V presented information and analysis concerning information collected through interviews, observations, state education and school websites. Data were analyzed through the lens of the Katz Skills Leadership Theory (1955) and included analysis of TTT Teachers' technical, human, and conceptual skills. The Dixie McCall School District Teachers apply their learned technical, human, and conceptual skills in varied methods in order to accomplish their job as a teacher.

Researcher Comments

Discouragement, stress, joy, pride, sense of achievement, and love, oh the love of students, the job, the school, the district, these are just a few of the many emotions displayed in the actions, and the voices of the administrators and teachers interviewed for the research. I am continually amazed at the amount of dedication and love that teachers have for the work they do. The low pay, long hours, cumbersome paperwork, students with social, economic, and psychological issues are items that these dedicated teachers deal with each day in the demanding job they hold. The pride expressed as the teachers remembered some of their favorite students or favorite classes humbled me and filled me with respect for these amazing men and women.

At the time I began writing this dissertation, I was under the impression that traditionally certified teachers did not appreciate, nor want, TTT teachers in the classroom. I was wrong, the teachers and administrators interviewed welcomed the TTT

teachers into the classrooms at the schools. The TTT teachers experienced that same desire and joy (and sometimes stress) they once felt as a member of the military. The sense of belonging was back, and that is the feeling that the TTT Teachers interviewed enjoyed feeling once again. The culture of the schools share many similarities to the culture of the military and while this may seem strange to some, it is true. The traits I observed while interviewing TTT teachers are some of the same traits held by military personnel. The traits included: a dedication to others, a willingness to serve a greater good, the love of taking a title or sentence and making that sentence into an acronym are just some of the similarities I observed.

Teachers showed an endless love for each other and their students and as a result a sense of family exists at each school. The knowledge each teacher understands, that they will not be able to help everyone, does not stop the teachers from spending each day attempting to make a difference in students' lives. These are the characteristics that teachers have, regardless of training, certification, or experience.

The educational environment in the state, and now in the country, has changed since the start of this dissertation. The state has seen a steady decrease in federal funding and due to reduced state revenue; the schools have borne the brunt of budget cuts. The graduates of high schools today see the struggles of teachers and schools and a decrease in enrollment in the education field have resulted. There is, however, a pool of personnel that can be recruited to fill the vital role of a teacher. The research showed that individuals retiring from the service might provide the personnel needed to fill the shortages in the ranks of teachers. The state has conducted studies in the attempt to provide recommendations for recruitment of personnel yet unfortunately, the TTT

teachers program was not evaluated nor included as a possible recommendation to alleviate teacher shortages. It is my hope that further research and studies will be conducted and the TTT program will be highlighted as a viable option to decrease teacher shortages.

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APPENDIX A

Dear Dr. Superintendent:

In fulfillment of the research component required of students in Oklahoma State University's Doctorate of Education, I am seeking your permission to gain access to the staff of XXX Public School Elementary, Middle, and High Schools. I have already spoken with the principals on site and, pending your approval, each has indicated his/her willingness to participate.

I would like to conduct research this fall 2016 that will involve interviewing principals, veteran teachers, and current Troops to Teachers. The primary method of data collection will be audiotaped interviews, supplemented with direct observation, documentation, archival records, and physical artifacts. A copy of my Institutional Review Board application packet is attached to lend further insight. If you desire, I can also provide a copy of the entire research proposal.

Upon receiving approval of the Institutional Review Board, the study will commence in the fall of 2016. Data collection will extend throughout the spring semester. Any necessary follow-up interviews will be conducted to ensure credibility; member checks of the transcribed interviews will ensure accurate representation of the subjects' words and ideas. Data gathering and analysis should be complete by March 2017.

If you are willing to allow me to proceed with this research, please indicate so with your signature below. If you require additional assurances, please contact me for further discussion.

Email address: cynthia.patterson@okstate.edu Cell phone: 757.589.8211.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Patterson

Superintendent's Signature



APPENDIX B
Letter of Introduction
(letter to be sent via email to each school site)

To Elementary/Middle/High School Staff:

My name is Cynthia Patterson. I am a doctoral student at Oklahoma State University, pursuing a degree in School Administration. I am conducting a research study as part of the requirements of my degree, and your site has been selected for my study. I recently retired from the United States Navy after thirty years and currently work with the Department of the Army as an Instructional Systems Specialist.

I am conducting a case study to better understand the perspectives of administrators and teachers regarding teacher preparation through the Troops to Teachers program and to explore the performance of Troops to Teachers teacher' in relation to instructional competency, classroom management, teacher leadership capacity and mentorship. The purpose of the study will focus on the preparedness of former veterans in the classroom. The resulting analysis should be insightful to school administrators and others in the education community.

The superintendent, Dr. XXX, and the principal of your school have granted me access to _ Elementary/Middle/High School. I will be present at the school throughout this semester and will attend several blocks of instruction. In the following weeks, I will be seeking assistance of administrators and veteran teachers with three or more years of experience as well as Troops to Teachers certified personnel to agree to a 30 to 45 minute interview. The data collected from the interviews will be kept strictly confidential. If you decide to participate in this research, your identity and responses will not be revealed to the principal, or even in my dissertation. The principal will have no knowledge of who has agreed to be interviewed.

If you have any further questions about this study, respond to this email or call at 757.589.8211.

Sincerely,

Cynthia Patterson



APPENDIX C
Script for Soliciting Volunteers for Participation
(letter to be sent via email)

In fulfillment of the research component required of students in Oklahoma State University's Doctorate of Education, I have chosen to conduct a case study better understand the perspectives of administrators and teachers regarding teacher preparation through the Troops to Teachers program and further to explore the performance of Troops to Teachers teacher' in relation to instructional competency, classroom management, teacher leadership capacity and mentorship. The purpose of the study will focus on the preparedness of former veterans in the classroom. The resulting analysis should be insightful to school administrators and others in the education community and further assist in retention and recruitment of valuable teachers. . Both Dr. XXX and your principal have agreed to allow the staff members of this school to participate in the study. I am now seeking volunteers willing to participate in a 30 to 45 minute interview. I will record the interview on my iPhone so that I may later transcribe the interview word-for-word to more effectively analyze the content.

Your decision to participate is entirely voluntary. If at any time you feel compelled to withdraw from the study, you are welcome to do so. This study is in no way connected to your performance or evaluation at this middle school. Data gathered from this study will be used to determine perceptions (if any) and explore the performance of TTT teachers.

Should you decide to participate, your identity will be carefully and respectfully guarded. All findings and subsequent published material referencing this study will be masked to maintain the confidentiality of the school site and the specific participants. As teacher participants, your decision to participate will be withheld from the principal. He/she will not be given access to either your decision to participate or your responses. To ensure accurate representation of participants' words and ideas, scripted copies of all interviews will be provided to interviewees prior to the analysis of data. Corrections, additions or deletions will be made as noted by the participants.

If you are open to the possibility of an interview, please complete the requested demographic information form attached to this email/letter. You can either fill out the document on the computer and email back to me, or print a hard copy and I will come pick it up from you. I will make every effort to comply with your schedule and preferences for date and time. I will be contacting those of you who indicate an interest in participating.

Thank you,
Cynthia Patterson



APPENDIX E
Informed Consent

Alternative Leadership Challenges and Strengths for Today's Classrooms: A Case Study

Investigator: Cynthia Patterson, Doctoral Candidate, Oklahoma State University

Purpose:

You are being invited to participate in a study on the Troops to Teachers (TTT) Alternative Certification and the challenges and strengths brought to today's classrooms. The purpose of this study is to determine the impact, if any, certain perspectives have on recruitment and hiring of TTT teachers and will further provide research on the performance of current former military alternative certified personnel in the state of Oklahoma. Participants will be asked to share their insights concerning the perspectives administrators and teachers may have regarding teacher preparation through the TTT program, and second to explore the performance of the TTT in relation to instructional competency, classroom management, teacher leadership capacity and mentorship.

Procedures:

As a participant in this study, you have been purposefully selected to participate in an interview, where you will be asked questions regarding general information about yourself, perceptions of AC teachers and experiences that TTT personnel have in the field of education. The interview should take approximately one hour and will be conducted in the location of your choice. I will record the interview on my iPhone or other recording device so that I can later transcribe the interview. I will provide a copy of the transcribed interview to you so that you can verify the accuracy and content of the interview.

Risks of Participation:

There are no known risks associated with this project that are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life.

Benefits:

There are no direct benefits to you. The results of this study will inform university programs, mentor teachers, administrators, legislators, and beginning teachers of the role of school culture in supporting beginning teachers.

Confidentiality:

The records and results of this study will be kept private and confidential. Any written results will discuss group findings and will not include information that will identify you. Pseudonyms will be assigned to all participants in the study. Consent forms will be kept separate from all other documents. Research records will be stored on a password-protected computer in a locked office and only researchers and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. It is possible that the consent process and data collection will be observed



by research oversight staff responsible for safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of people who participate in research. Interviews will be recorded on my iPhone or other recording device and data files will be transferred to a flash drive that will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. Immediately following the interview, the researcher to ensure maximum confidentiality will complete all transcriptions. As soon as transcription is complete, the data files will be permanently removed from my iPhone and or recording device. Data will be destroyed three years after the study has been completed.

Compensation:

No compensation will be provided for participation in research.

Contacts:

If you have any questions about this study, please contact:

Cynthia Patterson
Ed.D. Candidate
P.O. Box 298
Apache, OK 73006
(757)589-8211
cynthia.patterson@okstate.edu

or

Dr. Katherine Curry, Advisor
Oklahoma State University
College of Education
308 Willard Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078
(918)-520-9217
Katherine.curry@okstate.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact:

Whitney McAllister
219 Cordell North
Stillwater, OK 74078
(405)744-3377
irb@okstate.edu

Participant Rights:

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may choose to discontinue participation at any time with no risk or penalty.

Signatures:

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Signature of Participant

Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

Signature of Researcher

Date



APPENDIX G

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

Interview Questions for Troop to Teacher Teachers

- 1) Why did you decide to become a teacher?
- 2) What state did you obtain your teaching certification in?
- 3) What teaching certifications do you currently hold?
- 4) How did you first hear about the Troops to Teacher alternative certification program?
- 5) Tell me about your experience in applying for Troops to Teachers?
- 6) What if any were the difficulties you faced in applying for first job upon certification?
 - a. Have you seen the process change in your time as an educator?
- 7) How did you obtain your teaching certification?
- 8) Do you hold any other positions in the school other than teaching?
- 9) How have the fellow teachers and administrators welcomed you into their school?
 - a. Describe scenarios that illustrate how teachers/administrators provided information to you as a new teacher.
- 10) Do you communicate with other program applicants?
 - a. If so, how have they described their experiences in teaching?
- 14) In what ways, if any, have the administration supported new alternative certified personnel (teachers in their first three years)?
 - a. Training, mentorship, program-based assessment/information?
- 15) How many years and in which branch of service did you serve?
- 16) What positions did you hold and how did those positions help you in the following areas?
 - a. Classroom management
 - b. Mentorship
 - c. Instructional Competency
 - d. Teacher leadership capacity
- 17) What are the barriers you see existing in the school district that impede your success?
- 18) What are the challenges and struggles you face as a teacher?
- 19) What are the areas you excel in within the school?

Interview Questions for Veteran Teachers & Administrators

- 1) How did you come to hire/know XXX TTT teacher?
- 2) What were your first impressions when XXX came here?
- 3) Where did you obtain your degree?
 - a. How long have you worked in the field of education?
 - b. What current certifications do you hold?
- 4) What if any difficulties have you had or seen with XXX.
- 5) Does the school/administration have a mentorship program for new teachers?
- 6) Does the school offer training, and if so what type, for newly reported teachers?
- 7) What program-based assessments are used at the school to evaluate beginning teachers?
- 8) What, if any, perceptions or experiences did you have concerning alternative certification personnel?
- 9) Have those perceptions, if there were any, changed and how have they changed since you started working with XXX?
- 10) In what ways have you personally supported XXX, or any newly reported teachers, in your organization?
- 11) What positions do you hold and how do these positions help you in the following areas?
 - a. Classroom management
 - b. Mentorship
 - c. Instructional competency
 - d. Teacher leadership capacity

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS FOR ADMINISTRATION

- 12) Does XXX currently meet the INTASC or Professional Standards for accreditation of teacher preparedness?
- 13) If XXX does not in your opinion meet these standards what, if any, training is the school providing to correct the areas of concern?
- 14) What, if any, of the below listed skills has XXX brought to your organization?
Classroom management, mentorship, instructional competency and teacher leadership capacity

APPENDIX H

Year	Teachers (in thousands)			Enrollment (in thousands)			Pupil/teacher ratio			Number of new teacher hires (in thousands) ¹		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1955	1,286	1,141	145 ²	35,280	30,680	4,600 ²	27.4	26.9	31.7 ²	—	—	—
1960	1,600	1,408	192 ²	42,181	36,281	5,900 ²	26.4	25.8	30.7 ²	—	—	—
1965	1,933	1,710	223	48,473	42,173	6,300	25.1	24.7	28.3	—	—	—
1970	2,292	2,059	233	51,257	45,894	5,363	22.4	22.3	23.0	—	—	—
1971	2,293	2,063	230 ²	51,271	46,071	5,200 ²	22.4	22.3	22.6 ²	—	—	—
1972	2,337	2,106	231 ²	50,726	45,726	5,000 ²	21.7	21.7	21.6 ²	—	—	—
1973	2,372	2,136	236 ²	50,445	45,445	5,000 ²	21.3	21.3	21.2 ²	—	—	—
1974	2,410	2,165	245 ²	50,073	45,073	5,000 ²	20.8	20.8	20.4 ²	—	—	—
1975	2,453	2,198	255 ²	49,819	44,819	5,000 ²	20.3	20.4	19.6 ²	—	—	—
1976	2,457	2,189	268	49,478	44,311	5,167	20.1	20.2	19.3	—	—	—
1977	2,488	2,209	279	48,717	43,577	5,140	19.6	19.7	18.4	—	—	—
1978	2,479	2,207	272	47,637	42,551	5,086	19.2	19.3	18.7	—	—	—
1979	2,461	2,185	276 ²	46,651	41,651	5,000 ²	19.0	19.1	18.1 ²	—	—	—
1980	2,485	2,184	301	46,208	40,877	5,331	18.6	18.7	17.7	—	—	—
1981	2,440	2,127	313 ²	45,544	40,044	5,500 ²	18.7	18.8	17.6 ²	—	—	—
1982	2,458	2,133	325 ²	45,166	39,566	5,600 ²	18.4	18.6	17.2 ²	—	—	—
1983	2,476	2,139	337	44,967	39,252	5,715	18.2	18.4	17.0	—	—	—
1984	2,508	2,168	340 ²	44,908	39,208	5,700 ²	17.9	18.1	16.8 ²	—	—	—

Year	Teachers (in thousands)			Enrollment (in thousands)			Pupil/teacher ratio			Number of new teacher hires (in thousands) ¹		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
1985	2,549	2,206	343	44,979	39,422	5,557	17.6	17.9	16.2	—	—	—
1986	2,592	2,244	348 ²	45,205	39,753	5,452 ²	17.4	17.7	15.7 ²	—	—	—
1987	2,631	2,279	352	45,488	40,008	5,479	17.3	17.6	15.6	—	—	—
1988	2,668	2,323	345 ²	45,430	40,189	5,242 ²	17.0	17.3	15.2 ²	—	—	—
1989	2,713	2,357	356	46,141	40,543	5,599	17.0	17.2	15.7	—	—	—
1990	2,759	2,398	361 ²	46,864	41,217	5,648 ²	17.0	17.2	15.6 ²	—	—	—
1991	2,797	2,432	365	47,728	42,047	5,681	17.1	17.3	15.6	—	—	—
1992	2,823	2,459	364 ²	48,694	42,823	5,870 ²	17.2	17.4	16.1 ²	—	—	—
1993	2,868	2,504	364	49,532	43,465	6,067	17.3	17.4	16.7	—	—	—
1994	2,922	2,552	370 ²	50,106	44,111	5,994 ²	17.1	17.3	16.2 ²	—	—	—
1995	2,974	2,598	376	50,759	44,840	5,918	17.1	17.3	15.7	—	—	—
1996	3,051	2,667	384 ²	51,544	45,611	5,933 ²	16.9	17.1	15.5 ²	—	—	—
1997	3,138	2,746	391	52,071	46,127	5,944	16.6	16.8	15.2	—	—	—
1998	3,230	2,830	400 ²	52,526	46,539	5,988 ²	16.3	16.4	15.0 ²	—	—	—
1999	3,319	2,911	408	52,875	46,857	6,018	15.9	16.1	14.7	305	222	83
2000	3,366	2,941	424 ²	53,373	47,204	6,169 ²	15.9	16.0	14.5 ²	—	—	—
2001	3,440	3,000	441	53,992	47,672	6,320	15.7	15.9	14.3	—	—	—
2002	3,476	3,034	442 ²	54,403	48,183	6,220 ²	15.7	15.9	14.1 ²	—	—	—
2003	3,490	3,049	441	54,639	48,540	6,099	15.7	15.9	13.8	311	236	74
2004	3,536	3,091	445 ²	54,882	48,795	6,087 ²	15.5	15.8	13.7 ²	—	—	—

Year	Teachers (in thousands)			Enrollment (in thousands)			Pupil/teacher ratio			Number of new teacher hires (in thousands) ¹		
	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private	Total	Public	Private
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
2005	3,593	3,143	450	55,187	49,113	6,073	15.4	15.6	13.5	—	—	—
2006	3,622	3,166	456 ²	55,307	49,316	5,991 ²	15.3	15.6	13.2 ²	—	—	—
2007	3,634	3,178	456	55,203	49,293	5,910	15.2	15.5	13.0	327	246	80
2008	3,670	3,222	448 ²	54,973	49,266	5,707 ²	15.0	15.3	12.8 ²	—	—	—
2009	3,647	3,210	437	54,849	49,361	5,488	15.0	15.4	12.5	—	—	—
2010	3,529	3,099	429 ²	54,867	49,484	5,382 ²	15.5	16.0	12.5 ²	—	—	—
2011	3,524	3,103	421	54,790	49,522	5,268	15.5	16.0	12.5	241	173	68
2012 ³	3,525	3,111	414	54,833	49,652	5,181	15.6	16.0	12.5	245	171	74
2013 ³	3,524	3,118	407	54,842	49,750	5,091	15.6	16.0	12.5	239	170	69
2014 ³	3,515	3,118	397	54,725	49,751	4,974	15.6	16.0	12.5	232	166	66
2015 ³	3,514	3,123	391	54,731	49,839	4,892	15.6	16.0	12.5	241	175	67
2016 ³	3,544	3,155	390	54,790	49,951	4,839	15.5	15.8	12.4	272	202	70
2017 ³	3,593	3,199	394	55,132	50,280	4,852	15.3	15.7	12.3	293	217	76
2018 ³	3,630	3,235	395	55,380	50,543	4,837	15.3	15.6	12.3	289	214	74
2019 ³	3,666	3,269	397	55,671	50,834	4,836	15.2	15.5	12.2	292	217	75
2020 ³	3,699	3,300	398	56,010	51,165	4,844	15.1	15.5	12.2	291	216	76
2021 ³	3,736	3,335	401	56,343	51,485	4,857	15.1	15.4	12.1	296	219	77
2022 ³	3,776	3,371	405	56,684	51,804	4,880	15.0	15.4	12.1	303	225	79
2023 ³	3,817	3,408	409	57,023	52,113	4,910	14.9	15.3	12.0	308	227	80

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Wednesday, September 21, 2016
IRB Application No GC1611
Proposal Title: Troops to teachers challenges and strengths for today's classrooms: A case study
Reviewed and Processed as: Exempt

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 9/20/2019

Principal Investigator(s):

Cynthia Patterson

Stillwater, OK 74078

Katherine Curry

306 Willard

Stillwater, OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes to the title, PI advisor, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of the research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Dawnett Watkins 219 Scott Hall (phone: 405-744-5700, dawnett.watkins@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Hugh Crethar, Chair
Institutional Review Board

VITA

Cynthia Dawn Patterson

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Thesis: Troops To Teachers Educators Challenges and Strengths in Today's Classrooms:
A Case Study

Major Field: School Administration

Biographical:

Education:

Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Education in School Administration
at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in 2017

Completed the requirements for the Master of Science in Human Resource
Management at University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK in 2006.

Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Science in Government and
Politics at University of Maryland, College Park, MD in 2002.

Experience:

United States Army – June 2015 – Present
Instructional Systems Specialist

United States Navy – February 1985 to March 2015
Instructor for Leadership and Development
Senior Enlisted Advisor on Career and Program Development
Senior Mentor for over 5000 Sailors

Professional Memberships:

National Association of Federally Employed Women
National Honors Society
National Association of Professional Women
Navy Chief Petty Officers Association