

ARE THEY BEING RETAINED: AN ANALYSIS OF
THE EFFECT ON THE CUMULATIVE NEW
TEACHER RETENTION RATE OF THE
OKLAHOMA *CAREERTECH* NEW
TEACHER INDUCTION PROCESS

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By

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DEDICATION

To My Precious Angel

Eli

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There are many people I would like to thank who have supported and encouraged me throughout this journey to complete my degree and dissertation. It is not possible to truly put into words my feelings of love and appreciation, knowing words are not adequate I will try.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

At no other time in our history have America's schools been asked to educate a more diverse student population under greater systems of accountability. For a few distinct populations such as CareerTech teachers, there are requirements to be met in addition to those for "highly qualified" teachers, that were federally imposed by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB).

In the comprehensive schools (including elementary, middle/junior, and senior high schools), highly qualified teachers, as defined by the NCLB, were required by 2005-2006 school year. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 has been reauthorized for 2007 (US Department of Education, 2007) assuring that the standards, practices and oversight that are a part of the act will continue to be imposed on America's schools. With a somewhat different mission, the Career and Technology Education schools, commonly referred to as *CareerTech*, also seek teachers that are "highly qualified." However, because the CareerTech system's unique mission is to provide business and industry with a trained workforce, skilled professionals--those who are, by industry standards,

considered subject matter experts in a particular area of skill—often fill teaching positions. This creates a unique challenge for the *CareerTech* system because it seems that when industry trained subject matter experts are found, the likelihood that these individuals have had any pedagogical/andragogical training is unlikely (Walker, Gregson, & Frantz, 1996, para 4).

Research indicates that recruiting and retaining highly skilled teachers is a critical dilemma that all schools face (Ingersoll, 2002, 2003; see also Holmes Group, 1986; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). This is especially difficult for *CareerTech* schools that typically must financially compete with business and industry to recruit and hire subject matter experts. The issue of financial compensation is only one of several factors that can lead to high rates of new teacher turnover in the *CareerTech* sector (Joerger, 2002, 2003; see also Crawford Self, 2001; Heath-Camp & Camp, 1990).

Teacher turnover, especially within the first five years, places schools and students at a disadvantage. It is very costly to schools from both a financial perspective and as high turnover reduces the level of performance for both teachers and students. It takes a considerable amount of time and resources to hire, train, and retain teachers. Research also supports that student learning is impacted by the number of years a teacher has taught (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005; Joerger, 2002; Rubin, 1989; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The bottom line is schools continue to use precious financial resources and time on recruiting and orienting new teachers while students are caught in the middle and may not be receiving consistent quality of instruction.

An induction process was implemented in Oklahoma during the academic year 2000-2001 with the intention of influencing the retention of new *CareerTech* teachers. This induction process was implemented by the following stakeholders: the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education (later referred to as the State Department), the two teacher education universities and the local technology training centers that are a part of the *CareerTech* system of education. In particular the state *CareerTech* agency has spent \$300,000 to support the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process in an effort to address the problem of teacher retention. According to the State Department of *CareerTech*, the new teacher induction process has saved the state between \$2 and \$2.7 million during the first six years, 2001-2007. This is based upon the national average cost to replace teachers (advertising, vacancy costs, training, interviewing, etc.) of \$8,000 to \$11,000 per teacher (Darling-Hammond & Berry, 2006). Based on comments from technology center administrators, the replacement cost may actually be higher for *CareerTech* teachers. For example, Jim Strate, superintendent of Autry Technology Center in the northern part of the state, indicated that “the average replacement cost for a *CareerTech* instructor ranges between \$10,000 to a high of \$18,000 for instructors in health fields” (personal communication, 2007). Judy Robinson, assistant superintendent at Central Technology Center reported, “We estimate our cost for replacing a *CareerTech* teacher at \$15,000” (personal communication, 2007). Linking a monetary value to the problem of teacher retention clearly illuminates the critical

need to address the situation and recommend changes that will support the retention of new teachers.

Statement of the Problem

Based upon average national costs of teacher replacement, the State Department of *CareerTech* calculates that the new teacher induction process has saved Oklahoma between \$2 and \$2.7 million during its first six years. This would appear to provide clear evidence that the process is working.

In reality, however, the impact of the process on even short-term teacher retention (between years 1 and 5) is not known. Information has been compiled annually for only the one-year (initial year) retention rate (number of teachers retained from the induction year to Year 2). Information is available for all six cohort groups, identified by the year of participation in the induction process, which span the school years 2000-01 to 2005-06. For example, by referring to Table 1, it can be determined that for Cohort 1 of 21 teachers, 17 teachers (81%) were retained for the 2001-2002 school year. While the data in Table 1 appear to show a trend toward increased retention in Year 1, no data exist about the retention rate of teacher members of Cohort 1 as they progress in teaching for the school years 2002-03; 2003-04; 2004-05; and 2005-06. Therefore, current data collection efforts seem to assume that retention rates in year 1 will somehow be predictive of even short-term (up to five years) retention in the profession.

Table 1

First Year Retention Numbers and Percentages per Year by Cohort Group

Cohort/ Years in Induction	# of part	2000-01	2001-02 # / %		2002-03 # / %		2003-04 # / %		2004-05 # / %		2005-06 # / %		2006-07 # / %	
1 6 years	21	Induction Year	17	81%										
2 5 years	45		Induction Year		37	82%								
3 4 years	49				Induction Year		42	86%						
4 3 years	55						Induction Year		46	84%				
5 2 years	67								Induction Year		58	87%		
6 1 year	62										Induction Year		54	87%
Total	299												253	85%

What is needed for determining the true efficacy of the induction system is to identify a cumulative retention rate for the induction process using data from each of the six cohorts who have participated thus far (a total of 299 teachers). In addition, a better understanding is needed of the reasons some *CareerTech* teachers left their profession during the first five critical years. These two sets of data will create a more comprehensive, more accurate picture of the effectiveness of the current system and provide great insight into changes need to be made to the system to more finely focus it toward its goals.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the effect of the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process on teacher retention for its first six years. First, this study determined how the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process has impacted the cumulative new teacher retention in the first six years as compared to national teacher retention statistics. Second, this study uncovered factors that have led to teachers' decisions to leave the profession. Finally, this study applied the framework of the Teacher Proximity Continuum created by Betty Heath-Camp and William Camp (1990) to find congruency, or lack of congruency, with the reasons for leaving teaching that were reported by participants. This lens will be used to compare the themes that emerged during the participant interviews with the Teacher Proximity Continuum indicators. The usefulness of the framework for this research as well as recommendations for its future use are discussed in Chapter 5.

This study is bounded by participation in the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process and by the time frame of participation dates from 2000-2006. The researcher understands that the data gathered and presented in this study have been captured at a moment in time and, at other points in time, may change due to numerous factors.

Research Questions

This study addressed the retention of new *CareerTech* teachers who participated in the *CareerTech* new teacher induction process. This study utilized both quantitative data and qualitative data to address the following research questions:

1. What is the cumulative retention rate for participants in the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process? What is the retention rate for each individual cohort, occupational division, and gender?
2. For participants who left teaching, why did they leave? What were the factors that contributed to their exits from teaching?
3. Do the factors for departure from teaching align with the theoretical framework of the Teacher Proximity Continuum created by Betty Heath-Camp and William Camp?

Methodology

The methodology used for this research advocates a philosophy that has been called “the ‘third wave’ or third research movement, a movement that moves past the paradigm wars by offering a logical and practical alternative” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). This “third wave” is a move towards mixed methods research, which can be a blending of two paradigms as well as a blending of methodology in the use of qualitative and quantitative research traditions. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie explain this blending as “an attempt to legitimate the use of multiple approaches in answering research questions, rather than restricting or constraining researchers’ choices. It is an expansive and creative form of research, not a limiting form of research” (2004, p. 17). By using methods from the objectivist and interpretivist paradigms, this mix of qualitative and quantitative methods allowed many truths to be found, constructed, and/or illuminated on this very important question for teacher education research.

To determine the cumulative new teacher retention rate for the induction process, descriptive data were collected from the *CareerTech* centers who participated in the induction process. The information requested for participants was their current teaching status, the number of years taught and, if they had left teaching, their last known address, phone number, and employer. Through the SPSS program, calculations of mean scores (averages), and proportions (percentages) were completed. Confidence level calculations were not needed since the data collected represented the entire population.

The method of purposeful criterion sampling was used in the selection of 12 participants for one-on-one interviews. In order to uncover their stories, two in-depth interviews were conducted for participants in each cohort who were no longer teaching. The resulting qualitative data in the form of interview transcripts were analyzed inductively and sorted to allow major themes to emerge.

Significance of the Study

The need to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers continues to plague our *CareerTech* centers and demand our attention. The challenges to *CareerTech* centers include the burden of new teacher replacement costs, the difficult task of finding subject matter experts, and the detrimental effect of high teacher turnover on student learning. This issue is among top concerns for school administrators. The financial burden is significant to schools, but the unique skills needed by a teacher who must also be an expert in his or her trade quickly diminishes the pool of qualified individuals available and willing to move from industry into education. This study will contribute to the research available on retention of new *CareerTech* teachers by reporting the impact of the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process on cumulative retention rates across six years and seeking to better understand the reasons behind those who chose to leave the teaching profession.

Based on the findings of this study discussed in Chapter 5, recommendations of possible interventions and support for new *CareerTech* teachers are presented. Just as the nature of research insists on developing,

changing, and growing, so does the purpose and significance of work in teacher retention. It is with great respect to research already presented that this researcher hopes to add to the body of understanding regarding new *CareerTech* teacher's experiences. It is with great hopes of uncovering possible ways to increase the retention of this subset of new teachers that this research seeks to contribute to the betterment of our schools and the education of our students.

Theoretical Framework

This study used the framework developed in 1992 by Heath-Camp and Camp, the Teacher Proximity Continuum, as the theoretical lens in which the data was analyzed. According to Joerger and Bremer (2001), the Teacher Proximity Continuum

was initially used to classify the problems, concerns, experiences, and challenges of beginning career and technical education teachers into eight categories:

- *Internal* needs and challenges that arise within the teacher, such as personality variables
- *Pedagogy* experiences related to short-term planning, delivery, evaluation, and improvement of instruction
- *Curriculum* experiences related to the intermediate planning of course content and preparation for instruction
- *Program* experiences that arise in long-term planning and operation of the department or program

- *Student* experiences that result from exchanges with students
- *Peer* experiences that arise from contacts and exchanges that arise with co-workers
- *System* experiences that arise from individuals and forces within the educational system that require compliance
- *Community* experiences that arise from outside the administrative and physical bounds of the educational system. (p. 13)

The use of these eight categories became a structural framework from previous research in which to compare the data gathered from the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process. The themes found in the qualitative interviews of participants who left teaching were compared to the eight categories of the Teacher Proximity Continuum. The usefulness of this theoretical lens will be discussed in Chapter 5, as well as recommendations for future research.

Researcher Perspective

Interest in this line of inquiry is based on the researcher's past experience as a career and technical teacher, a *CareerTech* administrator, a school principal, and involvement in the area of teacher education as a graduate assistant. Research into the current literature and introduction to the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process has sparked this passionate research agenda. This research agenda is especially targeted to the experiences

of new *CareerTech* teachers who continue teaching and those who leave the field of teaching within the first five years, as this researcher did. It was startling to realize that this researcher fits the statistics this study will explore. Five years as a Career and Technology Education teacher in Marketing and Management Education led the way to an administrative position in a *CareerTech* center. This exit from the classroom into an administrative position was not a move out of education, but it was a move out of the classroom. For most new teachers who leave the classroom within the first five years, it is a case of them leaving education altogether.

Even with a traditional teacher preparation program, the first few years of teaching can be a challenge. Teaching is one of the most important professions, yet we seem to be quick to discount the many difficulties inherent to education that are necessary for successful classroom environments. It is a great challenge for many new *CareerTech* teachers, who do not have the traditional teacher education preparation, to be successful and manage the day-to-day operation of a classroom.

As a former *CareerTech* teacher and administrator, this researcher must recognize the possibility that these previous experiences could bias the analysis and reporting of this research. It was with heightened attention to these possible biases that this researcher guarded against making assumptions about the reasons participants share regarding why they left teaching and possible dismissal of difficulties shared by the participants as not meaningful or important.

Having worked with many new *CareerTech* teachers over the last two years in student advisement and as an instructor, this researcher must acknowledge and guard against a bias supporting the *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process. Having been a new teacher and having worked with many new teachers, this researcher will guard against any preconceived ideas regarding the usefulness of the induction process.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in conducting this research:

1. *CareerTech* Centers maintained accurate records of retention rates and that the information was transmitted correctly.
2. Participants' interviews reflected their true experiences and that each participant answered questions truthfully.
3. Through the sharing of these new *CareerTech* teachers' experiences, this researcher understood the teacher's experience.
4. As a former teacher, administrator, and teacher educator that the researcher's analysis and interpretation of participants' interviews was shaped by these past experiences.

Limitations

The use of a mixed-methods approach for this study is a strength as well as a limitation. The mixed-methods approach encourages the use of and highlights the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative research traditions.

However, critics have stated that the use of mixed-methods can weaken research findings. By using the philosophy of pragmatism, and using one method to direct the second method, these criticisms can be overcome.

The purposefully selected sample size for the in-depth interview phase of the research may be seen as a limitation. However, the sample size was large enough to identify and analyze emic themes that will increase our knowledge base of new *CareerTech* teacher's experiences.

The nature of qualitative research is such that it is not designed to be generalized to the larger population. However, the applicability of qualitative research findings depends on the reader's ability to determine the usefulness of the reporting to his or her own environment. Additionally, a qualitative researcher cannot control how readers of the study may interpret results.

Interviews were conducted on only 12 or 13% of members. While the researcher is confident this fairly represented the available sample, it is always possible that additional interviews could have impacted results and/or provided anomalies not seen from this group of participants.

Many quantitative measures of success could be used to evaluate the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process. For the purpose of this study, only one of these measures will be evaluated, cumulative teacher retention rate.

Additional information that could have been gathered from all participants is their age. The fact that this information was not gathered for this study did not allow for comparison across possible age groups.

A final limitation of this study is the researcher's and reader's own experiences, which will shape and influence the meaning making of the stories that will be told from the perspectives of the interview participants.

Definitions

The following definitions related to this study have been included to assist readers with clarification of specific language and terms that have been used throughout this study.

CareerTech- An abbreviation or shortened term for Career and Technical Education.

CareerTech Center- For the purposes of this study, this term was used in reference to one or more of the 29 Oklahoma Technology Centers.

Induction- support and guidance provided to novice teachers and school administrators in the early stages of their careers. Induction encompasses orientation to the workplace, socialization, mentoring, and guidance through beginning teacher practice. Comprehensive, high-quality induction consists of several key elements: a multi-year program, rigorous mentor selection and training, subject-area pairing of mentors and beginning educators, sufficient time for mentors to meet with and observe new educators, formative assessment that assists beginning educators to advance along a continuum of professional growth.

Occupational Division- The Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education is organized into seven occupational divisions. They

included: Agricultural Education (AgEd), Business and Information Technology (BITE), Family and Consumer Science Education (FACSED), Health Careers Education (HCE), Marketing Education (ME), Technology Education (Tech Ed), Trade and Industrial Education (T&I) (Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education (ODCTE, 2007).

Oklahoma CareerTech New Teacher Induction Process- The Teacher Induction system is a seamless, competency-based instructional system designed to help any teacher entering or already within the *CareerTech* system in Oklahoma. However, its main focus is for non-degreed teachers. In this system, our local technology centers, two state universities, and the state agency work together to provide the support, instruction, and resource facilitation that teachers need to perform effectively in the classroom (ODCTE, 2007).

Oklahoma Department of Career and Technical Education- The Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education is located in the north-central Oklahoma town of Stillwater. The department provides leadership, resources, and assures standards of excellence for a comprehensive statewide system of career and technology education. That system offers programs and services in 29 technology center districts operating on 56 campuses, 398 comprehensive school districts, 25 skill centers and three juvenile facilities. The department is governed by the State Board of Career and Technology Education. The department works closely with the State Department of Education and the State Regents for Higher Education to provide a seamless educational system for all Oklahomans (ODCTE, 2007).

Summary

The purpose of this study was two-fold. First, this study determined the cumulative retention rate for the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process for the initial six years, 2000-2006. Second, this study conducted one-on-one interviews with induction process participants who were no longer teaching. These interviews uncovered key factors induction participants identified as leading to their decision to leave teaching. The use of mixed-method research methodologies allowed this study to present both quantitative descriptive statistics and qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews. This allowed for the calculation of a cumulative retention rate as well as inductive themes, which allowed for greater understanding of the individual experiences of these new teachers.

Organization of the Study

The organization of this study follows the generally accepted standard format of a doctoral dissertation. An introduction to the study is presented in Chapter 1, Chapter 2 presents a review of literature relative to the subject. An explanation of the research methodology used in the study is presented in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 details the data gathered, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Chapter 5 presents discussion of the data analysis, summary of the findings, and conclusions. An extensive reference list and appendices follow Chapter 5.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter is a review of current literature related to teacher retention. Teacher retention is a broad subject area with volumes of literature available. However, the purpose of this literature review is to present relevant research related to the questions presented in this study.

The organization of the literature review will include five sections beginning with why teacher retention is a problem. The second section presents factors and issues that lead to teacher turnover. The third section explores what research indicates can be done to reduce teacher turnover; this section references specific studies addressing teacher retention, first in general teacher turnover and then specifically for *CareerTech*. The fourth section provides information specific to Oklahoma's New Teacher Induction process. The final section presents in detail Camp and Heath-Camp's (1990) Teacher Proximity Continuum, which will be used as a theoretical lens for comparing this studies themes with the eight continuum categories will be reported in Chapter 4.

Why Teacher Retention is a Problem

Teacher retention has become a critical issue for education, brought to the forefront by the 1986 Holmes Group Report, "Tomorrow's Teachers." This and subsequent reports from the Holmes Group and other entities have issued warnings that our country is facing a "crisis", an insurmountable shortage of over 2 million public school teachers in this decade alone (Lynn, n.d). According to Darling-Hammond (1997), this issue of a teacher shortage caused by increasing teacher turnover is facing the entire population of new teachers (not just career and technical education teachers) and indicates that this rate of turnover for beginning teachers is higher than the turnover rate of beginning workers in other careers. However, Smith and Ingersoll (2004) report

in analyses of national data we have found that school staffing problems are not solely, or even primarily, due to teacher shortages, in the sense of too few new teachers being produced. In contrast, the data indicate that school staffing problems are to a large extent the result of a "revolving door". (p. 682)

This would indicate enough teachers are being trained and entering the field of teaching. The problem appears to be a retention issue, not a shortage issue. However, conclusions presented by Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005) indicated, "that the nation needs strategies that will ensure not just greater rates of teacher retention, but also retention of great teachers" (p.2).

This issue of retention is compounded for Career and Technical Education (CTE) teachers. Many new CTE teachers enter the field with subject matter

expertise and little or no traditional teacher preparation. This issue of “finding persons who have both industrial experience and pedagogical expertise” has historically been a stumbling block for career and technical education; this has brought to light the need for improved teacher preparation (Walker, Gregson, & Frantz, 1996, para 4). This lack of preparation could possibly be linked to teacher dissatisfaction, and be contributing to the increased teacher turnover rate among *CareerTech* teachers.

Reports of Turnover Rates

According to Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005), “In some districts, the teacher dropout rate is higher than the student dropout rate” (p. 1). It is expected, and organizationally healthy, for schools to have some level of turnover, whether voluntary or involuntary on the part of the teacher and, according to Smith and Ingersoll (2004), “researchers hold that teaching has long had high rates of attrition among newcomers” (p. 682). However, the alarming reports that 40-50% of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years indicate a very critical situation for schools (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; see also Curtis, 1985; Hafner & Owings, 1991; Huling-Austin, 1990; Ingersoll, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Jensen, 1986; Joerger, 2003; Marso & Pigge, 1997; Murnane, Singer, Willet, Kemple, & Olsen 1991).

Additional research reports information regarding turnover rates within the first five years. DePaul (2000) gives teacher retention rates for the first three years of 20-30%. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) report “overall, 29% of first-time

teachers in 1999–2000 either changed schools at the end of the year (15%) or left teaching altogether (14%)” (p. 693). Based on the overwhelming number of reports that indicate new teacher retention is high, it becomes evident that this issue must receive immediate attention. As Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005) report, “Almost one out of every two new teachers has left the classroom by the end of the fifth year” (p. 1). Schools can not afford to ignore this issue any longer.

Cost to Schools

Schools are faced with financial difficulties around every corner such as federal and state unfunded mandates, expansion of technology, and the public expectation of a quality student; all these pressures come with minimal funding. School administrators are challenged with the responsibility to stretch diminishing dollars even farther. Identifying areas where dollars can be saved and/or reallocated to critical areas of need within schools are priority tasks for school financial officers.

The cost of teacher turnover has not been thoroughly explored in the literature. According to the Texas Center for Education Research (2000) as cited in Smith and Ingersoll (2004),

A number of costs and consequences are associated with employee turnover. But in education research, unlike research on the industrial and corporate sectors, there has been virtually no work on this issue. One notable exception is a recent effort to quantify the costs of teacher turnover in Texas. That study produced a “conservative” estimate that

teacher turnover cost the state of Texas more than \$300 million per year.

(p. 686)

The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future has estimated that, "every year, America's schools lose approximately \$2.6 billion to teacher attrition" (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005, p. 8). Darling-Hammond and Berry (2006) estimated the cost to replace a teacher was between \$8,000 to \$11,000 and the "U.S. Department of Commerce estimates that it costs \$12,500 for each lost full-time employee" (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005, p. 8).

Comments from several *CareerTech* superintendents indicate these estimates may be on the lower end of the spectrum. According to Jim Strate, superintendent of Autry Technology Center, "the average replacement cost for a *CareerTech* instructor ranges between \$10,000 to a high of \$18,000 for instructors in health fields" (personal communication, 2007). Judy Robinson, assistant superintendent at Central Technology Center reported, "We estimate our cost for replacing a *CareerTech* teacher at \$15,000" (personal communication, 2007). School administrators must concern themselves with the issue of teacher retention in order to fulfill their duty to be fiscally responsible.

The cost of teacher retention is not just financial. It is much easier to calculate the monetary value that corresponds with hiring, training, and retaining good teachers. What is not as easy to identify are organizational costs that are precipitated by teacher turnover. Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005) caution those concerned with teacher retention issues that,

Teacher turnover is not just about numbers, and the costs go far beyond the impact of lost dollars. The organizational and human toll, while harder to quantify, is devastating to struggling districts, schools, parents, and students. Districts lose the momentum of reform initiatives when their teachers leave. Schools lose the continuity and consistency that are essential to the fabric of their communities. Students are forced to adapt to a passing parade of teachers, severing the emotional bonds formed with some of the most important adults in their daily lives. (p. 9-10)

The caution that teacher turnover is not just a financial concern was echoed by Smith and Ingersoll (2004) when they explained,

High rates of teacher turnover can inhibit the development and maintenance of a learning community; in turn, lack of community in a school may have a negative impact on teacher retention, thus creating a vicious cycle. Thus the assumption underlying our analysis is that high rates of beginning teacher turnover are of concern not only because they contribute to school staffing problems and perennial shortages but because this form of organizational instability is likely to be related to organizational effectiveness. (p. 686-687)

This “vicious cycle” must not be ignored, especially at a time when school performance and student achievement are at the forefront of public attention.

The “cost” of organizational effectiveness described above must also become a driving force behind the search for solutions to the problems of teacher turnover because “decades of educational research have documented that a sense of

community and cohesion among families, teachers, and students is important for the success of schools” (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004, p. 686).

Many times, school officials are hesitant to allocate the funds to support interventions, such as induction programs, for new teachers. Many times the reason given is the expense associated with the intervention is too high or the intervention “is seen as an expensive extra, something that is ‘nice but not necessary,’ an additional cost for already overburdened school districts” (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005, p. 8). Current research has indicated that it may be too costly to not support interventions for new teachers. Fulton, et al. (2005) ask those who are hesitant to invest in new teachers due to the cost of the intervention this rhetorical question, “Just how much does it cost to lose almost one of every two new teachers within five years of their entering the classroom?” (p. 8).

How Student Learning is Affected

A troubling issue with teacher retention is the effect it has on student learning. The problem arises when schools are continually placing new, inexperienced teachers in the classroom and “as chaotic as this is for schools and districts, it is the students who suffer the most when they are left with inexperienced, unseasoned teachers year after year” (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005, p. 1). Joerger (2002) points out, “one of the best predictors of students’ achievement (beyond their own reading ability and previous grades) correlates to the length of teaching experience of their teachers” (p. 1). Also, Rubin (1989) writes about an experienced teacher’s “conditioned instinct” to guide students

and their learning. It would follow that schools, in the best interests of their students, would work to keep teachers in the classroom long enough to gain a command of content and methods to develop this “conditioned instinct” (p. 39). Schools that continually place new, inexperienced teachers in the classroom jeopardize student learning and overall school performance. According to Smith and Ingersoll (2004), “It is widely believed that one of the pivotal causes of inadequate school performance is the inability of schools to adequately staff classrooms with qualified teachers, as a result of teacher shortages” (p. 682). Clearly teacher retention is an issue for education.

Factors and Issues that Lead to Teacher Turnover

The need for immediate attention to the issue of teacher turnover has been stated. However it is necessary to explore the underlying factors and issues that lead to or contribute to this critical situation. There are many reasons given in the research that teachers leave the profession. A significant portion of this research indicates that teachers identify reasons for leaving the profession that are personal, cultural, and systemic in orientation. According to Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005), “Teachers cite many reasons for leaving, but school culture and professional working conditions are always high on the list” (p. 1). These issues, school culture and professional working conditions, are factors that can lead to teacher dissatisfaction and ultimately, teacher turnover.

Dissatisfaction

Teacher dissatisfaction has been identified as a major factor in teacher turnover. Richard Ingersoll's (2003) research with public school teachers who left teaching asked these teachers to complete a self-report survey discussing their reasons for leaving the profession. These teachers listed dissatisfaction as their reason for leaving the profession. This dissatisfaction was further identified by the teachers and placed into specific categories including; teacher pay, lack of administrative support, student discipline problems, lack of teacher involvement in decision making, and student motivation problems (Ingersoll). These reasons were reiterated by *CareerTech* teachers in Crawford Self's (2001) study, *On Retention of Secondary Trade and Industrial Education Teachers: Voices from the Field*. Crawford Self found,

eleven main aspects of teaching which caused (T&I Teachers) dissatisfaction with teaching and led to their departure with the percentage distribution are:

1. Lack of recognition and support, 31.6%
2. Student discipline problems, 16.6%
3. Poor student motivation, 15.5%
4. Poor salary, 10.3%
5. Lack of influence over policy, 6.6%
6. Lack of opportunity for advancement, 5.5%
7. Lack of control over classroom, 4.4%
8. Lack of teaching time, 4.2%

9. Lack of preparation time, 2.7%
10. Lack of resources and materials, 1.4%
11. Large class size, 1.3%. (p. 68-69)

The findings by Ingersoll and Crawford Self agree and indicate an acceptance of these reasons as issues of teacher dissatisfaction which can lead to teacher turnover. “This dissatisfaction is coming at a most critical time when shortages of teachers and school executives are rapidly increasing” (Snyder, para 2). The literature indicates schools must consider ways to address teacher dissatisfaction and work to reduce their teacher turnover rate.

We “Eat Our Young”

Typically, schools welcome new teachers into the profession by assigning them the most difficult classes, with the most difficult students, with several different subject preparations. This practice of “bringing new teachers into the profession is akin to the profession eating its young” (Joerger & Bremer, 2001, p. 7). Joerger and Bremer (2001) go on to say “few other professions expect the first-year practitioner to immediately perform at the same level as their experienced colleagues” (p. 7). This right-of-passage approach is difficult for new teachers as Smith and Ingersoll (2004) explain,

upon accepting a teaching position in a school [new teachers] are often left to their own devices to succeed or fail within the confines of their own classrooms—an experience likened by some to being lost at sea (e.g., Kauffman, Johnson, Kardos, Liu, & Peske, 2002; Johnson & Birkeland,

2003). Indeed, critics have long assailed teaching as an occupation that “cannibalizes its young” and in which the initiation of new teachers is akin to a “sink or swim,” “trial by fire,” or “boot camp” experience. Perhaps not surprisingly, teaching has also traditionally been characterized as an occupation with high levels of attrition (i.e., loss of practitioners to other occupations), especially among beginners (Lortie, 1975; Grissmer & Kirby, 1987, 1992, 1997; Veenman, 1985). (p. 682)

Dissatisfaction and first year right-of-passage practices are two of the most critical factors in the tremendous percentage of teacher turnover in schools today.

What Can Be Done?

The literature on what can be done to reduce teacher turnover typically focuses on mentoring and induction programs. The literature makes a distinction between mentoring and induction as these terms are frequently used incorrectly. According to Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005),

the term “mentoring” often is used interchangeably with induction, as mentoring has been the dominant form of teacher induction in this country over the last two decades. Nevertheless, the two terms are *not* synonymous. Mentoring describes a process by which a more experienced or knowledgeable individual offers assistance to a less expert individual. The support may or may not be structured in a full- or (as is most often the case) part-time capacity. (p. 4)

Smith and Ingersoll (2004) define mentoring as “the personal guidance provided, usually by seasoned veterans, to beginning teachers in schools” (p. 683). The literature goes on to describe the benefit of a good mentor, “A good mentor can be of real help to a new teacher as a ‘safety net’ and source of emotional support at times of great stress and many challenges” (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005, p. 4). The same authors also describe consequences that may occur with a poor mentor match, “a poorly prepared or over-extended mentor can be of little assistance, and, in some situations where mentor selection is haphazard, mentors may even reinforce bad practice. In short, mentoring alone is not enough” (p. 4). However it is important to understand Fulton, Yoon, and Lee’s connection between mentoring and induction. They explain,

mentoring, when done well, can provide an important component of induction, but it is only one piece of what should be a *system* of induction. A system of induction should include a network of supports, people, and processes that are all focused on assuring that novices become effective in their work. An induction system is both a phase – a set period of time – and a network of relationships and supports with well defined roles, activities, and outcomes.” (2005, p.4)

Smith and Ingersoll (2004) include a caution to this distinction stating,

Theoretically, induction programs are not additional training per se but are designed for teachers who have already completed basic training. These programs are often conceived as a bridge, enabling the “student of

teaching” to become a “teacher of students.” Of course, these analytic distinctions can easily become blurred in real situations. (p. 683)

Even more troubling is the typical situation for *CareerTech* teachers who have the teaching profession from industry and do not have the basic training Smith and Ingersoll are discussing. The lack of traditional teacher preparation indicates there is an even greater reason *CareerTech* teachers need induction programs.

Induction Programs

Recently, a national trend has emerged where schools are turning to induction programs for new teachers. Teacher induction programs are much more in-depth than traditional entry-year teacher programs or typical professional development activities. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) explain their view of induction being different than pre-service or in-service,

Teacher induction, it is important to clarify, is distinct from both pre-service and in-service teacher training. *Pre-service* refers to the training and preparation that candidates receive before employment (including clinical training, such as student teaching). *In-service* refers to periodic upgrading and additional training received on the job, during employment. (p. 682-683)

The distinction between pre-service and in-service provides insight to the situation *CareerTech* teachers entering the profession with no pre-service training are facing. These teachers will need training beyond that of a

traditionally trained teacher in the areas of pedagogy/andragogy, classroom management, and managing a new and different work culture.

Induction programs can help new teachers assimilate to the unique arena of education, which is typically different than the arena of industry. According to the literature, cultural variables found in all schools, which contribute to job dissatisfaction and can lead to teacher turnover, are factors which can be addressed by schools in relation to supporting their new teachers. According to Becker & Reil (1999),

Schools, like all social organizations for work, have cultures that reward, foster, discourage, or constrain the actions of teachers. Those cultures are partly determined by policies and practices of school leaders, by the recruitment of individuals into various positions in the organization, and by a pattern of expectations that emerge from the interactions of participants.

(p. 6)

Understanding the importance of the “school culture” that can reward, foster, discourage, or constrain teachers and its ability to provide support to new teachers is critical for school administrators and teacher educators alike to consider as they work with new teachers. The use of an induction program can allow a new teacher the readily available key resources to access on a regular basis and a source of continued education or professional development to allow for support and personal growth as an educator.

Literature supports using induction programs in an effort to reduce teacher turnover. However, securing funding and human resources to implement

induction programs can be a hurdle that must be overcome by school leaders. Research on the effect of induction programs on teacher retention is critical as cited in literature. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) explore the use of induction programs to decrease teacher retention and possibly support request for additional funding when they reported,

A number of studies seem to provide support for the hypothesis that well-conceived and well-implemented teacher induction programs are successful in increasing the job satisfaction, efficacy, and retention of new teachers (e.g., Holloway 2001; Fuller 2003; Wilson, Darling-Hammond, & Berry, 2001; Strong & St. John, 2001). Educational advocates and reformers frequently cite examples drawn from this research to secure additional funding, to garner political support, or to confirm a particular educational perspective. (p. 684)

Continued research on the effect of induction programs on new teacher retention will continue to be needed as based upon the importance of fiscal responsibility, school performance, and student learning.

Characteristics of induction programs. What researchers indicate should be included in an induction program vary across several key elements. There are multiple perspectives on the components included in new teacher induction programs such as Lynn's (n.d.) necessary components which are,

Induction year teachers should be provided an individualized program that integrates the beginning teacher into the professional social fabric of the school and helps the beginner to recognize and manage the debilitating

effects of isolation, self-doubt, stress, and anxiety often associated with the first year of teaching. (para 8)

Other components often included in new teacher induction programs include the importance of shared planning time with key teachers, regularly scheduled and held meeting time with peers within the same discipline (subject), a reduced number of different class subjects for which to prepare, and participation in a new teacher workshop (Ingersoll 2003). Smith and Ingersoll (2004) present a “variety of elements—workshops, collaborations, support systems, orientation seminars, and especially, mentoring” as possible ways to deliver and organize induction efforts (p. 683). These researchers found

that some types of activities appear to be more effective than others in reducing turnover. The most salient factors were having a mentor from the same field, having common planning time with other teachers in the same subject or collaboration with other teachers on instruction, and being part of an external network of teachers. (2004, p. 706)

The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future issued research findings that support similar interventions for new teachers. Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005) summarized their recommendations for teacher induction,

- Induction should be a stage in a continuum of teacher development.
- Induction should support entry into a learning community.
- Mentoring is a useful component of induction, but only one element of a comprehensive induction system.
- External networks supported by online technologies can add value.

- Induction is a good investment. (pp.1, 21-22)

It becomes clear that induction programs vary in their organization and implementation, however broad areas of collaboration and personal interaction can be seen as common ground among all the examples.

Kathleen Szuminski (2003) introduced an emerging new model for supporting new teachers using the term, *teacher development*. The teacher development model according to Szuminski (2003) explained,

Traditional definitions, parameters, and programs no longer fit and need to be looked at more broadly (Gasner 2002). Consequently, **teacher development** --- The meshing of teacher education, mentoring, induction, and professional development --- becomes a more appropriate term and descriptor for the activities needed by novice CTE teachers (who have not completed traditional teacher education programs). New models encompassing a broader definition and spectrum of teacher development activities help CTE teachers entering from industry who often, because of limited educational preparation, experience higher degrees of job-related stress (Adams 1999). (para. 14)

The teacher development model as presented by Szuminski addresses *CareerTech* teachers in particular, identifying their unique situation in education. Examples of programs using the teacher development model include *Career in Teaching Program in Rochester, New York* (Thomas, 2001), and specifically in Career and Technical Education the model at *St. Clair Technical Education Center in Port Huron, Michigan* (Szuminski, 2002).

Another model that has significance in the *CareerTech* field is the work of Betty Heath-Camp and others who developed a new teacher induction model specifically for *CareerTech* teachers (Heath-Camp, Camp, Adams-Casmus, Talbert, & Barber, 1992). Wonacott (2002) presented a *Model for Induction Assistance* for beginning *CareerTech* teachers that was adapted from Heath-Camp et al. (1992). This *Model for Induction Assistance* consists of 11 components:

- Each new CTE teacher should receive a *Beginning Teacher Handbook* with information on the induction program, calendars of activities, contact person directories, induction activity materials, teaching resource listings.
- Beginning CTE teachers should also receive a *Detailed Orientation* providing information and materials on the induction program and other institutional professional development programs.
- Carefully selected teachers should receive release time, reduced loads, stipends, or other remuneration to participate in a *Structured Mentoring Program* to meet the personal, professional, and instructional needs of new CTE teachers through support, encouragement, and coaching.
- A *Teacher Peer Support Group* should be limited to beginning teachers; meetings or listservs provide a mechanism to discuss common experiences, problems, challenges, resources, solutions, and successes.

- Local schools, state departments of education, teacher education institutions, and professional administrators. Organizations must provide *Systematic Administrative Support* for effective teacher induction programs.
- A professionally staffed *Professional Development Center* should centralize and stage professional development activities for both beginning and experienced CTE teachers in partnership with a teacher education institution.
- A successful teacher should provide leadership as *Professional Development Coordinator*, organizing, facilitating, and coordinating teacher induction and other in-service programs and creating partnerships with teacher education institutions.
- The Professional Development Coordinator should identify *Certification Courses* that meet specific requirements for alternative or provisional certification.
- *Coaching in Reflection* allows beginning CTE teachers to benefit from critical analysis of their own teaching activities and experiences.
- Each beginning teacher should develop a *Professional Development Plan* with short-, medium-, and long-term goals and strategies to meet those goals.
- Ongoing *In-service Workshops* should be based on initial and periodic needs assessment, provide programming to meet those

needs in meaningful formats, and balance time for sharing, reflection, and direct instruction.

Combining these 11 components into a comprehensive teacher induction program requires support not only from the local school system but also from active partners: state department of education, outside funding sources, professional organizations, and teacher education institutions. (p. 2)

This Teacher Proximity Continuum model appears to also encompass the ideas presented in Szuminski's teacher development model. Both of these models were prepared for *CareerTech* teachers. This leads to the idea that *CareerTech* teachers are a unique population among new teachers and may need more in-depth, comprehensive induction programs than their traditionally trained counterparts.

Research cited above has focused on examples of induction programs in the United States. However, Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005) detail research from The National Science Foundation which conducted a three year study on comprehensive induction programs in five countries, Switzerland, China, New Zealand, Japan, and France. These five countries were chosen

from a pool of twenty ... by NSF as exemplars for in-depth analysis, based on their induction programs' components, scope, and longevity of activity. The three-year study was based on visits to schools throughout each country and extensive interviews with new teachers, supporting teachers and school leaders, the broader induction support communities, and local

and national administrators and leaders. The programs reflect the particular situation of the culture and education system in each of the profiled countries, and there are many differences across the five sites.

(Fulton, Yoon, and Lee, 2005, p. 16)

One major finding emerged from these countries induction programs, “Across all five cases, induction is viewed not as a tool for teacher retention, but as a means to help beginning teachers reach their potential” (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005, p. 16). What is interesting is the report does not give retention rates. It is left to the reader to conclude whether or not the missing retention rates are due to the focus of the program being for teachers to reach their potential, not teacher retention. The report did present three common elements among the programs and evident in all five countries,

1. Induction is *highly structured*, with clear roles for administrators, staff developers, mentors, and others responsible for the development on new teachers.
2. Induction is focused on *professional growth and structured learning* that are viewed as the entry into a lifelong professional growth process.
3. *Community and collaboration* are central to the induction process, using observation, demonstration, discussion, and friendly critique as ways of ensuring that teachers share the language, tools, and practices valued by the profession. (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005, p. 16)

These elements are broader, more inclusive language than has been found in the research on new teacher induction programs in the United States. However,

many of the components previously discussed fit into one of the larger elements from the international study. One final finding regarding the financial aspect of these programs, “As the researchers note, these countries perceive teacher induction as an investment that will enhance the learning of hundreds and thousands of students during a teacher’s career” (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005, p. 16). Information was not provided related to the funding that operated these programs, but perhaps the philosophical difference and investment commitment may have implications for further research.

Effect of induction programs on teacher retention. Data supporting the use of induction programs to improve teacher retention is limited and typically reports on the entire public school teacher population, as opposed to being specific to *CareerTech* teachers. However, the research by Smith and Ingersoll (2004) provides data to support the correlation between new teachers participating in induction programs and increased retention. Smith and Ingersoll used “the Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), administered by the National Center for Education Statistics” (p. 685) for their data source. The data were based on the 1999-2000 cycle of SASS. Smith and Ingersoll found an overall teacher retention rate of 71% with 14% of the teachers leaving the profession completely and 15% of the teachers changing schools (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). Only 3% of the teachers reported receiving no induction program or mentoring during their first year of teaching in the 1999-2000 school year. The retention rate for this group of teachers was 59% (Fulton, Yoon, & Lee, 2005; Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). These data support the argument

that induction interventions increase the likelihood that a new teacher will be retained.

Smith and Ingersoll's research looks specifically at what induction interventions were offered to teachers. The researchers reported,

Although some of the components of induction that we examined did not, individually, have a statistically significant impact on teacher turnover, most did collectively. That is, teachers participating in combinations or packages of mentoring and group induction activities were less likely to migrate to other schools or to leave teaching at the end of their first year.

(Smith & Ingersoll, 2004, p. 706)

Researchers then looked at the effect of induction "packages" that new teachers reported receiving. Fulton, Yoon and Lee (2005) write about these research findings and indicate,

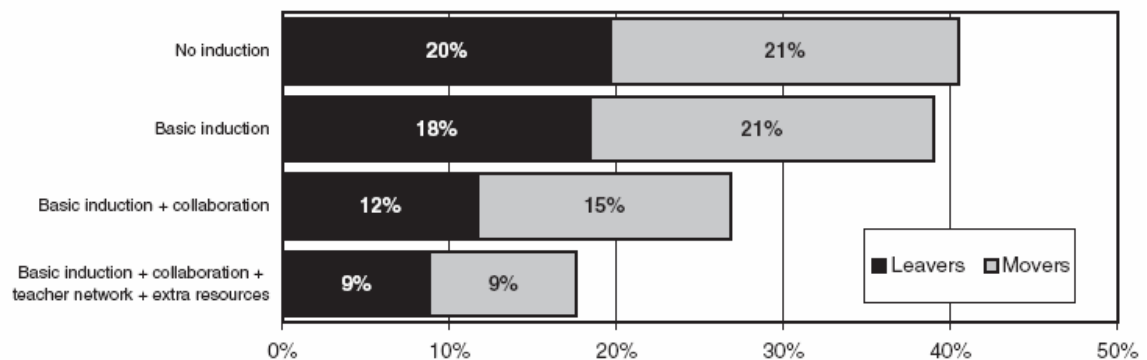
What is most telling about this data, however, is the importance to teacher retention of the "package" of induction support that new teachers received. Smith and Ingersoll's analysis indicates that fewer than one percent of beginning teachers in the 1999-2000 SASS survey experienced a complete and comprehensive "package" of induction components (defined as having a mentor; supportive communication from principal, other administrator, or department chair; common planning or collaboration time with other teachers in the field; reduced preparations (course load) and help from a teacher's aide; *and* participation in an external network of teachers).... teachers with this comprehensive induction package are *half*

as likely to leave at the end of their first year of teaching when compared with new teachers who participate in no induction activities.(p. 8)

Figure 1, from Smith and Ingersoll's research shows the predicted turnover probabilities for teachers completing the various induction packages (the darker bar is the predicted probability of leaving; the lighter bar adds the predicted probability of moving) (p. 704).

Figure 1

Predicted Probability of Turnover After the First Year of Teaching
by Various Induction "Packages."



Source: Smith, T. M. & Ingersoll, R. M. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? *American Education Research Journal* 41(3) p. 705.

These research findings indicate there is no statistically significant difference in teacher retention for the 3% of teachers who received no induction interventions (41% predicted turnover) and the 56% of teachers who received basic induction consisting of two interventions, a mentor and supportive communication with a supervisor (39% predicted turnover) (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). However, the

impact of induction interventions on new teacher retention did appear at the significant level when teachers received,

A second “basic induction + collaboration” package included four support components: the teachers had mentors from their own field; they had regular or supportive communication with their principals, other administrators, or department chair; they had common planning time or regularly scheduled collaboration with other teachers in their subject area; and they participated in a seminar for beginning teachers. (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004, p. 705)

The 26% of new teachers who received this “basic induction + collaboration” interventions had a predicted turnover rate of 27% which is significantly lower than basic induction only (39% turnover). Smith and Ingersoll’s findings indicate induction interventions can influence teacher retention. The question remains, however, as to how the current Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction process impacts teacher retention in this state.

Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process

Background

An induction process was implemented in Oklahoma during the academic year 2000-2001 with the intention of influencing the retention of new *CareerTech* teachers. This induction process is now in its seventh year operating under the mission as cited in Osgood and Self (2003) “to provide services to ensure continuous individual and organizational improvement in support of teachers in

the career-tech system” (Warner, 1997) (p. 4). Osgood and Self identify the induction processes key partners,

within the system’s framework are the state agency, Oklahoma Department of *CareerTech* Education and its divisions (Instructional Services, Technology Centers, Curriculum Instructional Materials Center [CIMC], Educational Technology Resources, and the occupational Divisions [health, trade and industrial, business, etc.]), and career-tech teacher education universities (Oklahoma State University and the University of Central Oklahoma). (p. 5)

The Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process is based upon four objectives,

- Install a more field based, individualized, and effective induction process for teachers specifically recruited from business and industry;
- Make the induction process more effective and efficient in facilitating the attainment of standard teaching certification for provisionally certified teachers;
- Develop a more helpful and aligned support system so teachers may not only ‘survive’, but also ‘thrive’ professionally; and
- Increase the collaboration among all major partners directly involved in the Oklahoma Career-Tech development process. (Osgood & Self, 2003, p. 5)

Funding Source

One thing that makes this induction process unique is the funding structure. According to Sanford and Self (under review), “this project is funded with two main sources of revenue; the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education located in Stillwater, Oklahoma and the local technology centers located across the state” (p. 1). This dual funding system strengthens the commitment from all partners within the process. Sanford and Self addressed this issue in their research reporting, “given the infusion of the technology centers’ monies into the project, it is understandable that local administrators have a strong interest and investment in the success and outcomes of the process” (p. 1).

Induction System Components

According to Osgood and Self (2003) the components of the new teacher induction system “have included a New Teacher Institute with a subsequent follow-up session, formation of an induction team, and various components and products designed to provide assistance and support” (p. 6). The various components and products include new teachers visiting similar programs at other schools; and average of seven visits to their classroom for one-on-one customized assistance by the university field representative; a self-assessment tool; a handbook for the new teacher, mentor and administrator; and instructional modules on CD-ROM containing lessons for the new teacher.

Available Retention Data

The Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process has reported the one-year retention rates for each year starting in 2000-2001 to 2005-2006 which are 81%, 82%, 86%, 84%, 87%, and 87% respectively. The induction process' average one-year retention rate is 86%. What is not known is the cumulative retention rate for participants past the first year. The previously mentioned research in this chapter indicates teacher turnover is 40-50% in the first five years. This study gathered data to report not only the cumulative retention rate for participants, but also looked for factors that lead to teachers' decisions to leave the profession.

Theoretical Lens

The Teacher Proximity Continuum

The lens through which the data gathered for this research will be viewed is the framework developed in 1989 by Camp and Heath-Camp, the Teacher Proximity Continuum. This continuum was created to assist researchers in understanding "teaching events" that influenced new *CareerTech* teachers (Joerger, 2003, 54). Joerger (2003), explained "teaching events are the concerns, problems, occurrences and non-occurrences, and challenges that affect the experience of the teacher" (p. 54).

According to Joerger and Bremer (2001), the Teacher Proximity Continuum

was initially used to classify the problems, concerns, experiences, and challenges of beginning career and technical education teachers into eight categories (see Figure 2):

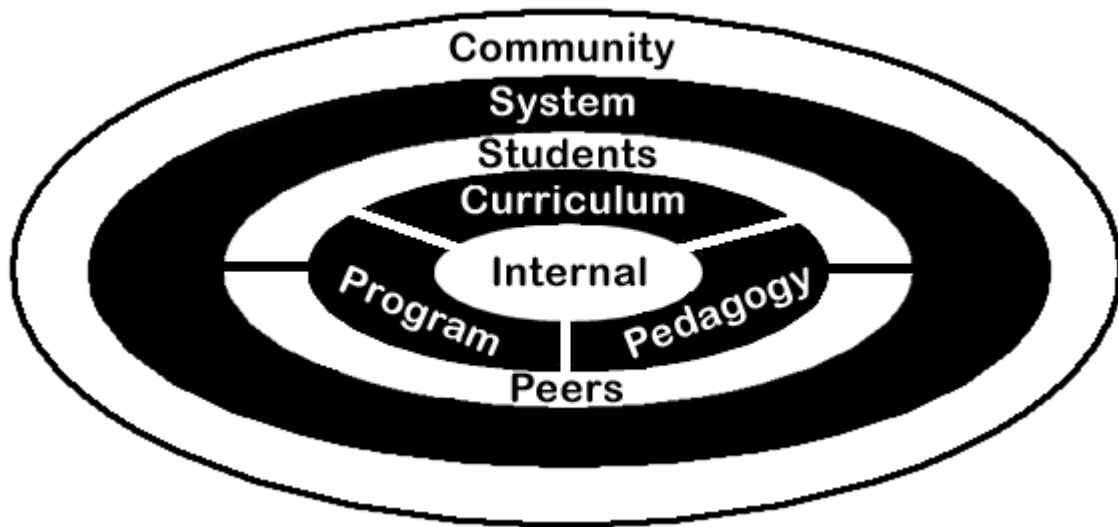
- *Internal* needs and challenges that arise within the teacher, such as personality variables
- *Pedagogy* experiences related to short-term planning, delivery, evaluation, and improvement of instruction
- *Curriculum* experiences related to the intermediate planning of course content and preparation for instruction
- *Program* experiences that arise in long-term planning and operation of the department or program
- *Student* experiences that result from exchanges with students
- *Peer* experiences that arise from contacts and exchanges that arise with co-workers
- *System* experiences that arise from individuals and forces within the educational system that require compliance
- *Community* experiences that arise from outside the administrative and physical bounds of the educational system. (p. 13)

The use of these eight categories is a foundation of previous research to compare the data gathered from the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process within the data analysis stage. These categories were used to

bring potential meaning and understanding to the reasons teachers identify as factors in their decision to leave the profession.

Figure 2

Teacher Proximity Continuum



(Adapted from Heath-Camp, Camp, Adams-Casemus, Talbert, & Barber, 1992)

Rationale for Using the Teacher Proximity Continuum

The rationale for using the Teacher Proximity Continuum is two-fold. First little research was found specific to the field of *CareerTech* teachers and Heath-Camp and Camp's continuum was created specifically for *CareerTech* teachers. The second reason the Teacher Proximity Continuum was chosen as a theoretical lens was based upon its use in recent research. According to Joerger (2003),

Heath-Camp, Camp, Adams-Casemus, Talbert, and Barber (1992) used the Teacher Proximity Continuum to structure the findings of a study

designed to understand the events that influenced the experience of beginning career and technical education teachers in which they found the student, system, and program categories were the proximity categories associated with the greatest proportion of significant events. (p. 54)

Joerger and Boettcher (2000) collected data regarding teaching events that affected beginning agricultural education teachers and deductively compared their findings with the Teacher Proximity Continuum. Also, Joerger and Bremer (2001) used the Teacher Proximity Continuum in their research presented in *Teacher Induction Programs: A Strategy for Improving the Professional Experience of Beginning Career and Technical Education Teachers*.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present a foundation of literature which is available on the issue of teacher retention. Specifically, literature was cited that explored why teacher retention was a problem, factors and issues that lead to teacher turnover and what could be done to lower teacher turnover. The limited research found specifically for the Oklahoma CareerTech New Teacher Induction Process was presented as well as Heath-Camp and Camp's (1992) Teacher Proximity Continuum, which served as the theoretical lens for this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe the effect of the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process on teacher retention for the last six years. This study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the cumulative retention rate for participants in the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process? What is the retention rate for each individual cohort, occupational division, and gender?
2. For participants who left teaching, why did they leave? What were the factors that contributed to their exits from teaching?
3. Do the factors for departure from teaching align with the theoretical framework of the Teacher Proximity Continuum created by William Camp and Betty Heath-Camp?

In this chapter the rationale for mixed method research design, the population, data collection, data analysis procedures and summary are provided.

Research Design

The questions in this study were best answered by the use of mixed methods research. According to Teddlie and Tashakkori (2003), mixed methods research is used for researchers that “want to simultaneously accomplish two goals: (a) demonstrate that a particular variable will have a predicted relationship with another and (b) answer exploratory questions about how that predicted (or some other related) relationship actually happens” (p. 15). In particular for this study, the research questions indicate the relationship between participation in the *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process and teacher retention were the two variables to be researched as well as to answer the exploratory question of “why” participants left teaching.

The use of mixed methods in this study advocated a philosophy that has been called “the ‘third wave’ or third research movement, a movement that moves past the paradigm wars by offering a logical and practical alternative” (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17). This “third wave” has been a move towards mixed methods research. The blending of two paradigms also combined the use of qualitative and quantitative research methods within this study. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie explained this blending as “an attempt to legitimize the use of multiple approaches in answering research questions, rather than restricting or constraining researchers’ choices. It has been an expansive and creative form of research, not a limiting form of research.” (2004, p. 17). The use of methods from the objectivist and interpretivist paradigm, which has been the mix of qualitative and quantitative methods, has allowed many truths to be found,

constructed, and/or illuminated on this very important question for new teacher retention research.

Objectivist Paradigm

According to Crotty (2004), “objectivism is the epistemological view that things exist as meaningful entities independently of consciousness and experience, that they have truth and meaning residing in them as objects, and that careful research can attain that objective truth and reasoning” (p. 5-6). To address the research questions presented in this study, there was a need for specific, descriptive, demographical information. The use of a data collection instrument allowed the gathering of this information, from the entire population, in a timely and precise manner. The reporting of the descriptive data in Chapter 4 follows the quantitative tradition of presenting concrete numbers and statistical representations to report the effect the induction process had on teacher retention.

Strengths and weaknesses. The use of the objectivist paradigm allowed for findings that were concrete, quantifiable, and generalizable. Additionally, the use of a data collection instrument was a relatively quick and less cumbersome type of research to utilize than methods from other research traditions. For certain situations, such as when administrators are asked to allocate funds for their new teachers to participate in the induction process, empirical data is many times relied upon as a justification for the expenditure. This empirical data

provides concrete evidence to support the administrator's decision to allocate funds for the training.

However, numbers do not always tell the whole "story". For example, relying on the findings of the survey alone could lead to inaccurate assumptions regarding the success or ineffectiveness of the induction process at increasing teacher retention. An inaccurate assumption could be drawn, and the induction process seen as a failure in teacher retention, if the differentiating reasons, systemic or personal, for leaving are not identified. Without additional information on teachers' experiences and reasons for staying or leaving, an incorrect assumption could not be refuted. By hearing the teacher's experience, it may become evident that the induction process experience did or did not have an influence upon the new teacher's decision to stay or leave the career field. Without further qualitative inquiry, this data would not be uncovered.

Interpretivist Paradigm

When answering the question, "What is Phenomenology", George Willis (1991) wrote, "it is that form of interpretive inquiry which focuses on human perceptions, particularly on the aesthetic qualities of human experience" (p. 173). This study used an interpretive research method to adequately address the portion of the research questions which tried to alleviate incorrect assumptions. An interpretive research method with the participants of the induction process is needed. More specifically, a phenomenological approach to "hear" the first-hand

“lived experience” of the participants is needed. As Patton (2002) describes phenomenology it is,

thoroughly capturing and describing how people experience some phenomenon---how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others. To gather such data, one must undertake in-depth interviews with people who have directly experienced the phenomenon of interest; that is, they have “lived experience” as opposed to secondhand experience. (p. 104)

By hearing the stories of the new teachers who have participated in the induction process the researcher will give voice to their experiences, as they lived through them. The researcher will be able to see into the connection between the experience of the new teacher induction process and the new teacher’s retention status.

Strengths and weaknesses. The use of phenomenology from an interpretivist perspective allows the researcher to make the meaning and essence of individual experience a primary focus. The role of personal loss is a critical component within the larger issue of systemic loss. Each participant’s experience is different and based on their past experiences and individual philosophical stance. By including this research strategy as part of a mixed method, the researcher will catch a glimpse into the emic experience and essence of the induction process. The use of the interpretivist perspective served this research as a way to hear the lived experience of new *CareerTech* teachers. According to Rubin & Rubin (2005),

Interpretive constructionist researchers work to figure out what the shared meanings are in some particular group, recognizing that though each person interprets the events he or she encounters in a somewhat distinct manner, he or she is likely, at the same time, to bring to bear the understandings held by peers, family, friends, coreligionists, or members of other groups to which he or she belongs. (p. 29)

Through the interviewing of new *CareerTech* teachers, this research has “brought to bear the understandings” of these teachers experiences in their first years of teaching.

However, this type of research is time consuming. It is not feasible to interview all 299 participants; therefore, a small, purposeful sample of 12 was interviewed. It is imperative to acknowledge that in the interpretive research tradition of qualitative work, researcher bias and position as an insider/outsider must be recognized. Researcher reflexivity must be presented so that the reader can take that perspective into consideration as a possible influence in the analysis of the data. Finally it must be considered that the degree that interpretive research may be generalized to the larger population is for the reader to determine. However, even a small representative sample lends additional insight into the impact of the induction process on teacher retention.

The theory base for this research used an interpretivist perspective based on the philosophy of pragmatism which guided the use of mixed methods research for this study. The idea of interpretivism can be historically traced back to the thought of Max Weber (1864-1920) who introduced the idea that “human

sciences are concerned with *Verstehen* (understanding)... [in opposition to] *Erklaren* (explaining) [which is] focused on causality ...found in the natural sciences" (Crotty, 2003, p. 67). This dichotomy has not only been a foundation for interpretive research, it has also been credited with the introduction of the fundamental differences between quantitative and qualitative research methods which have been used in this study.

It is the "quintessential American philosophy", pragmatism, which led to the use of mixed-methods research (Crotty, 2003, p. 72). Quintessential, as defined by Merriam-Webster, is 1: the fifth and highest element in ancient and medieval philosophy that permeates all nature and is the substance composing the celestial bodies, 2: the essence of a thing in its purest and most concentrated form, 3: the most typical example or representative. One of the earliest scholars to introduce pragmatism as a critical philosophy was Charles Sanders Peirce. Although Peirce's work is not as well-known as the popular work of William James and John Dewey, Peirce introduced the thought "pragmatism is a method of reflexion having for its purpose to render ideas clear" (Crotty, p. 73). This practical approach indicates the need to use a method which enables the researcher to understand the ideas.

Population

The population for this study was the 299 participants in the Oklahoma Career/Tech New Teacher Induction Process during the years 2000-2006. These

participants represent 27 of 29 *CareerTech* Centers in the state. Two *CareerTech* Centers do not participate in the induction process.

As indicated in Chapter 1, the population was divided into six cohort groups identified by their first year of participation in the induction process. Table 2 shows the increasing number of teachers who entered the induction process though each of the six years. Twelve new teachers participated in the induction process for two consecutive years; however, they are only counted in their first year of service. If a participant was hired after the first day of school, but before January, that participant was included in that school year's cohort. If the new teacher was hired January 1 or later, they were counted in the next school year's cohort.

Table 2

Number of Participants by Cohort

Cohort #	Induction Year	# of participants
1	2000-2001	21
2	2001-2002	45
3	2002-2003	49
4	2003-2004	55
5	2004-2005	67
6	2005-2006	62
Total		299

Data Collection

The data collection for this study was two-fold, the gathering of descriptive demographic data on the entire population and in-depth interviews with a purposeful criterion based sample. Following the methodology of mixed-methods

research, the findings of the descriptive demographic data led to the need for and selection of the interview sample.

Descriptive Demographic Data

Descriptive data were gathered for the entire population of 299 teachers, which includes all induction process participants from 2000-2006. To determine the comprehensive new teacher retention rate for the induction process, each of the 27 *CareerTech* Centers that participated in the induction process was contacted through the mail using the US Postal Service. As noted previously, two Centers chose not to send new teachers through the induction process and, therefore, were not contacted for descriptive data.

Explanatory letters were addressed to 68 *CareerTech* Center superintendents and campus directors (Appendix B). Enclosed with the letter was a customized data collection instrument listing each new teacher from that school who had participated in the induction process (Appendix C) from 2000 to 2006. A stamped, addressed return envelope was also included. Each customized instrument listed the participants' names, the year they participated in the induction process, and their program areas. The information that was requested about each participant was if they were still teaching and the number of years they have taught thus far. If participants were no longer teaching, their last known address, phone number, and employer was also requested. A completed data collection instrument was received from 24 schools within 14 days. A second notice was sent to the remaining three schools via email. Each

of the three remaining schools responded with the information within 7 days. This resulted in a response rate for the descriptive data collection effort of 100%. The 100% return of the requested information allowed this study to report findings based on the entire population of induction process participants.

In-depth Interviews

In order to understand the individual reasons teachers left the profession, in-depth, one-on-one interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of the population who met pre-determined criteria.

Identifying participants for interviews. According to Patton (2002), “the logic of criterion sampling is to review and study all cases that meet some predetermined criterion of importance” (p. 238). In order to be included in the interview sample, participants must: (1) have participated in the new teacher induction process for at least one year from 2000-2006, and (2) no longer be teaching. Patton goes on to say “criterion sampling also can be used to identify cases from standardized questionnaires for in-depth follow-up” (p. 238), a process that fits well within a mixed methods research plan. This study utilized the information collected by the customized data collection instruments that were distributed to each of the *CareerTech* Centers who enrolled new teachers in the induction process.

Of the 299 induction process participants, 91 fit the criteria for the purposeful sample selection (see Table 3). In order to represent the population,

two participants from each of the six cohorts were selected for the in-depth interview sample.

Table 3

Number of Sample Population by Cohort

Cohort Number	Number of original participants	Number of Participants in Sample Pool	Number in Sample
1	21	10	2
2	45	21	2
3	49	21	2
4	55	19	2
5	67	12	2
6	62	8	2
Total	299	91	12

Contacting potential interview participants. Gathering contact information for participants selected for interviews from Cohort 1 proved difficult. After extensive research, one participant from Cohort 1 was located several states away but agreed to an interview over the phone. Contacting the other participants proved to be challenging due to individual schedules. Additionally, since the contact numbers available tended to be home numbers, it was necessary to make contact in the evenings and on weekends.

The phone script which was approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB) was used when contact was made with a potential interviewee (Appendix

D). After explaining the purpose of the research, the induction participants were asked if they would be willing to engage in an interview at a time and location of their choice. The interviews were conducted in February and March, 2007. At the beginning of each interview, the informed consent form was explained and signed by the participant and the researcher. As part of the informed consent process, each participant was told that the interview would be recorded and transcribed for use in the researcher's dissertation. Each interview followed a general guide of interview questions (Appendix E). However, as each interview took place, additional individualized probing questions were used to gather more in-depth stories and a deeper understanding of the interviewee's experience. Each interview was transcribed verbatim with pseudonyms assigned and all identifying information removed.

Data Analysis

This information was entered into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and then copied into SPSS, originally Statistical Package for Social Science, (version 15) computer program. Through the SPSS program, calculations of mean scores (averages), and proportions (percentages) were completed. Confidence level calculations were not needed since the data collected represented the entire population.

A cumulative retention rate for the induction process was also determined. However, this numerical identification could not represent all that could be known about retaining new teachers. After transcribing the interviews verbatim, reading

and then re-reading the interview transcripts for complete immersion, the process of content analysis was completed. Content analysis “is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings” (Patton, 2002, p. 453). The “volume” of interview transcripts for this study followed Patton’s further explanation that “core meanings found through content analysis are often called patterns or themes” (p. 453). The qualitative data were then carefully sorted allowing emic themes to inductively emerge.

Summary

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) discuss the benefits of mixed methods for research findings. They indicate that “If findings are corroborated across different approaches then greater confidence can be held; if the findings conflict then the researcher has greater knowledge and can modify interpretations and conclusions accordingly” (2004, p. 19). For example, the completed survey of a teacher who left teaching is statistically a case of teacher turnover. However, by combining methods and hearing the lived experience, it may be found that this teacher left due to family responsibility that necessitated a geographical move. This would indicate personal reasons for loss, not systemic reasons for loss. As Johnson and Onwuegbuzie indicate, this finding provides “greater knowledge” than one form of inquiry alone.

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

Introduction

Of the 27 *CareerTech* schools available for this study, 27 responded. This resulted in a 100% participation rate which provided data for all 299 participants. Data presented in this chapter are a result of individualized data collection instruments that sought to identify the current teaching status of all teachers who entered the induction process during one of the six cohort years. Additionally, 12 one-on-one interviews were conducted to uncover the individual experiences of a sample of those who chose to leave teaching.

As indicated earlier, the use of pseudonyms for participant names and the removal of school names and program areas were used to protect each participant's identity. Several types of nomenclature could have been used to identify participants such as numbers, or letters. However, pseudonyms were chosen to personalize the issues and frame the stories told by these teachers in a very human way. For ease in reading portions of the individual interviews, false starts and repeated words as well as extraneous interjections have been removed. The additions of words to clarify understanding or preserve participant

anonymity are signified with brackets, and the removal of a few words is indicated by three dots.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 4 presents the total set of data that was gathered from 27 *CareerTech* Centers on the 299 teachers who participated in the New Teacher Induction Process (a 100% response rate). These data were gathered to answer the first research question,

What is the cumulative retention rate for participants in the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process? What is the retention rate for each individual cohort, occupational division, and gender?

Descriptive data regarding the current teaching status of each participant, the teacher's occupational division, and gender are presented for each cohort. Confidence level calculations were not needed since the entire population is represented. The information in Table 4, which was initially presented in Chapter I showing only first year retention rates, was completed with the new data collected. This resulted in a cumulative retention rate of 70% for the induction process, which includes from one (Cohort 6) to six years (Cohort 1) after participation in the induction process. The retention rates are based upon the original number of teachers who participated in the induction process by cohort and represent an absolute retention rate.

Table 4

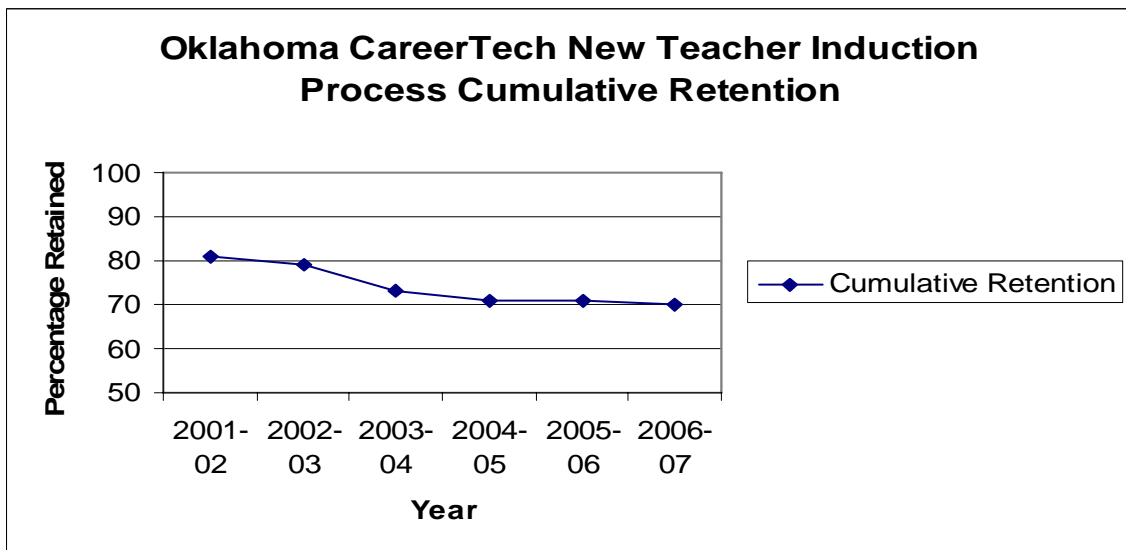
New Teacher Retention Numbers and Percentages per Year by Cohort Group

Cohort/ Years in Induction	# of participants	2000-01	2001-02 # / %		2002-03 # / %		2003-04 # / %		2004-05 # / %		2005-06 # / %		2006-07 # / %	
1 6 years	21	Induction Year	17	81%	15	71%	12	57%	11	52%	11	52%	11	52%
2 5 years	45		Induction Year		37	82%	30	67%	27	60%	26	58%	24	53%
3 4 years	49				Induction Year		42	86%	37	76%	34	69%	28	57%
4 3 years	55						Induction Year		46	84%	40	73%	33	60%
5 2 years	67								Induction Year		58	87%	54	81%
6 1 year	62										Induction Year		54	87%
Total Cumulative Retention	299		81%		79%		73%		71%		71%		70%	

Cumulative Teacher Retention

The cumulative retention rate for each year; 81%, 79%, 73%, 71%, 71%, and 70%, of the induction process is graphed in Figure 3. This figure visually shows a moderate decline in cumulative retention rate for the induction process reaching a leveling off point after year three around 70-71%. This is to be expected due the increasing number of participants for each year. The largest decrease occurs between years two and three. The first year retention of 81% represents both the cohort retention rate and the induction processes cumulative rate based upon this being the starting year of the program.

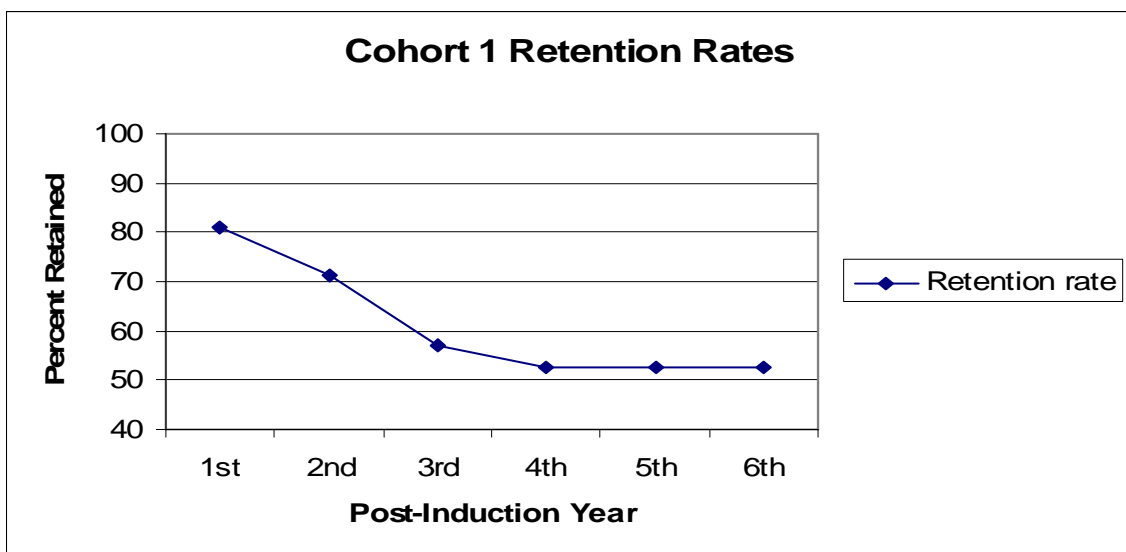
Figure 3



Cumulative Retention Rate per Cohort

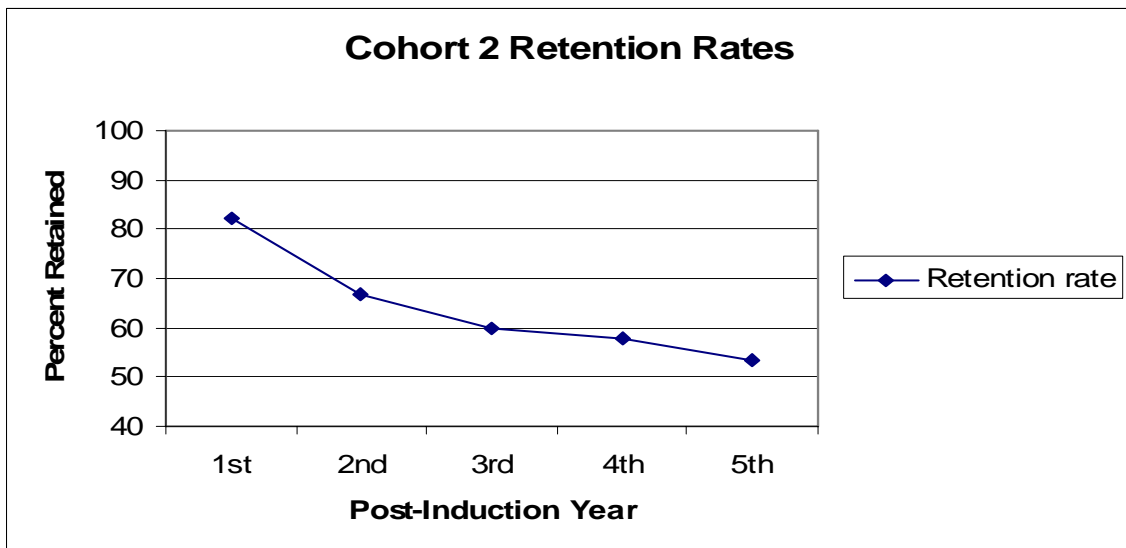
Cohort 1. The six year retention rate for Cohort 1, shown in Figure 4, is 81%, 71%, 57%, 52%, 52%, and 52%. The largest drop in retention rate is between years two and three. Although numerically not equal, the overall cumulative retention rate also had the greatest decrease between years two and three, 79% to 73%. This cohort's retention rates also mimics the overall retention with the leveling off after year three.

Figure 4



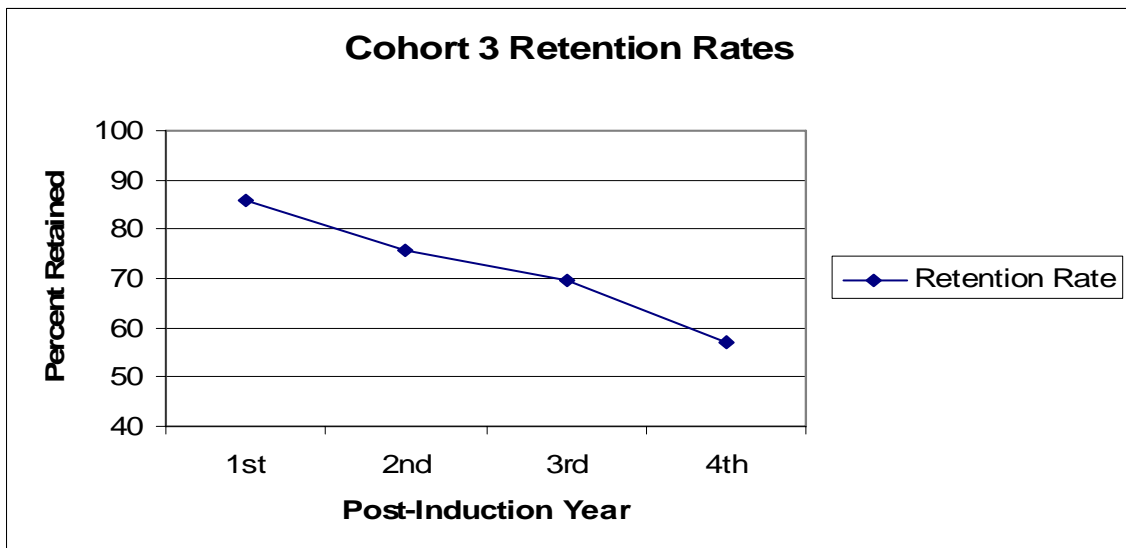
Cohort 2. Five years of retention rates for Cohort 2; 82%, 67%, 60%, 58%, 53%, as shown in Figure 5 deviate from the overall cumulative retention rates and Cohort One's pattern of the greatest decrease between years two and three. For this cohort, the greatest decrease occurred between years one and two. Additionally, Cohort 2 has not shown a leveling off point after year three. Year three and four initially appear to start a trend toward a plateau but year five has a five percent decrease, which is greater than the previous cohort.

Figure 5



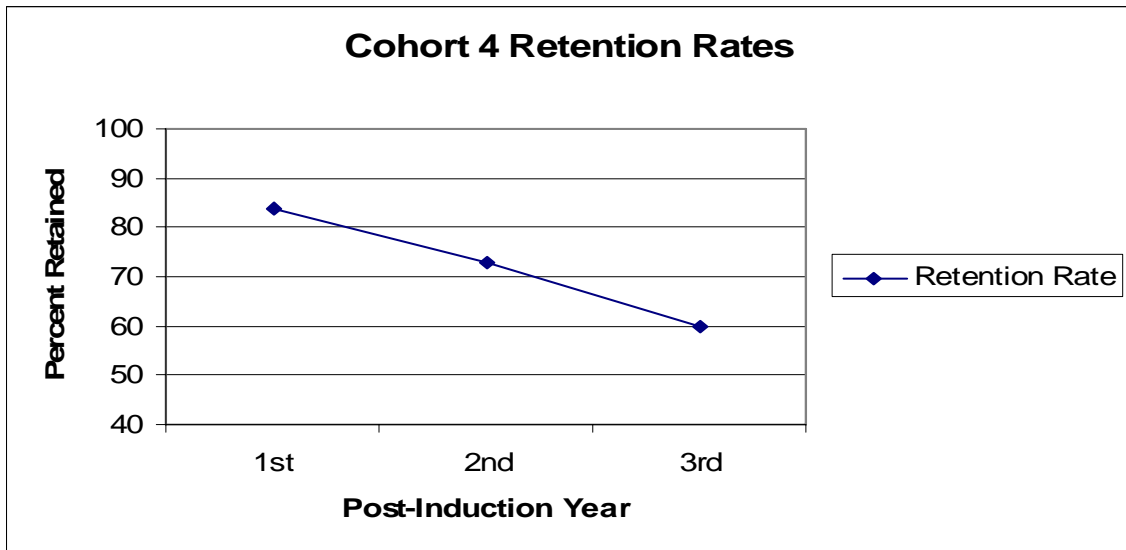
Cohort 3. The data for Cohort 3 shown below in Figure 6 indicates the following retention rates; 86%, 76%, 69%, and 57%. The data do not appear to show any trend toward a plateau of the retention rate, however, with only four years of data thus far, it is currently unknown what additional years of data would show. The greatest decrease in retention is between years three and four. However, this cohort's retention rates show a steeper decline averaging approximately 10% decrease each year.

Figure 6



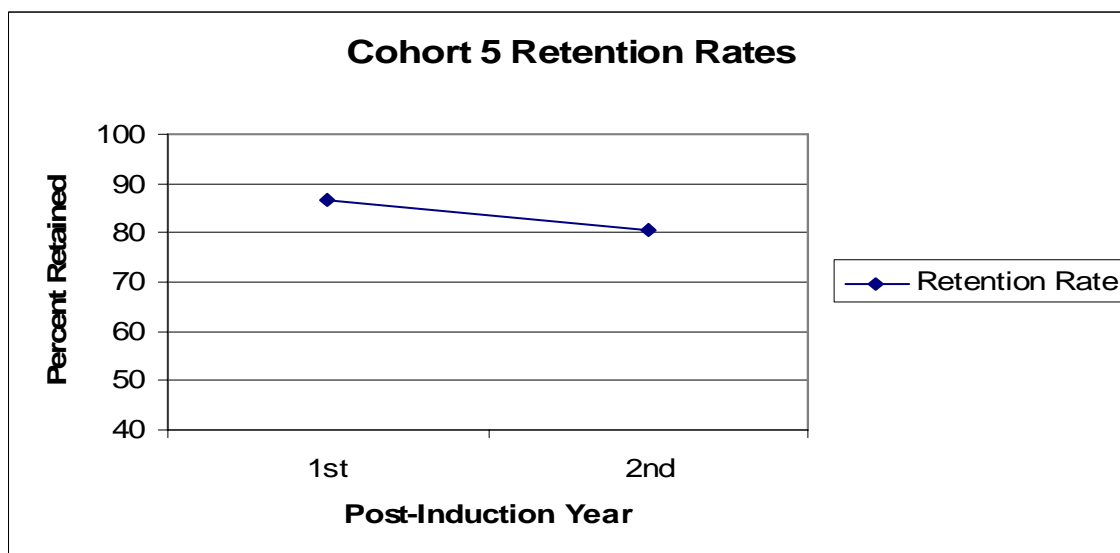
Cohort 4. The three years of retention rates for Cohort 4 as shown in Figure 7 show a sharp decrease from 84%, 73%, to 60%. Each incremental decrease is greater than 10%. The largest decrease is between years two and three, which is a difference of 13%.

Figure 7



Cohort 5. Cohort Five's retention rates are 87% and 81% as shown in Figure 8. This is the smallest decrease from year one to two for any of the cohorts. This is also the only cohort to still be in the 80% range in year two.

Figure 8



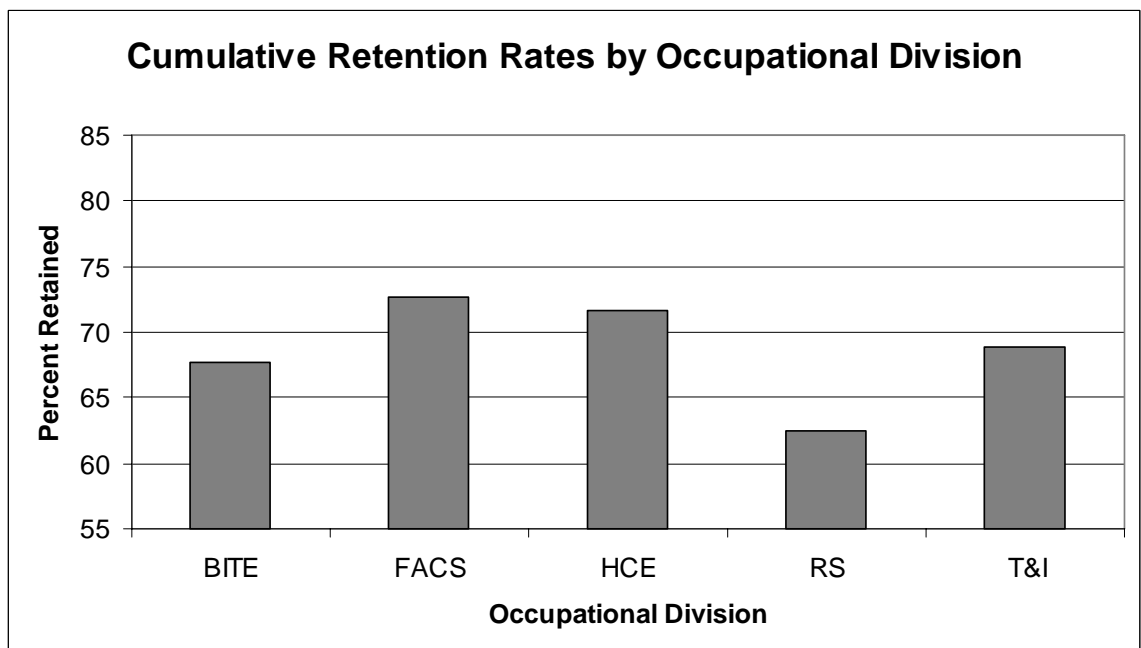
Cohort 6. Data for Cohort 6 is limited to the first year retention rate which was 87%. This is equal to Cohort Five's first year retention rate which is the highest for the entire population. This could indicate the program may be reaching a plateau level for one-year retention.

Cumulative Retention Rate per Occupational Division

The cumulative retention rate for each occupational division is reported in Figure 9. The total population of 299 induction process participants is divided into their respective occupational divisions which are Business and Information Technology Education (BITE), Family and Consumer Science Education (FACS),

Health Careers Education (HCE), Related Services (RS), and Trade and Industrial Education (T&I). The cumulative retention rate for BITE is 68% with 31 participants, FACS is 73% with 11 participants, HCE is 72% with 88 participants, RS is 63% with 8 participants, and T&I is 69% with 161 participants. The range of cumulative retention among the occupational divisions is from 63%-73%. The division (RS) with the smallest number of participants (8) has the lowest retention rate (63%). However, a division (FACS) with the second smallest number of participants (11), has the highest retention rate (73%).

Figure 9

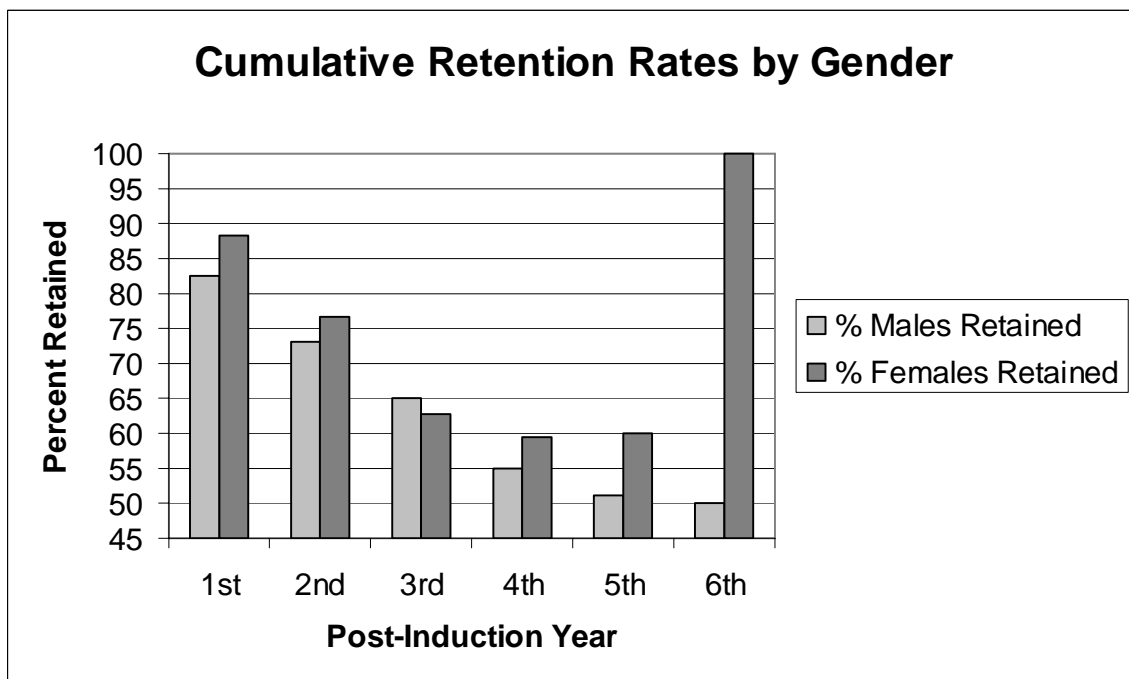


Cumulative Retention Rate by Gender

Figure 10 visually depicts the cumulative retention rate for the 172 male and 127 female induction process participants by year. The cumulative retention

rates for year one are male 83%, female 88%, year two are male 73%, female 77%, year three are male 65%, female 63%, year four are male 55%, female 60%, year five are male 51%, female 60% and year six are male 50%, female 100%. The anomaly in year six is due to only one female left in year five and when this female also remained in teaching year six, the retention rate calculated to 100%. The female retention rate was greater than the male retention every year except the year three. However, the difference in the retention rate was minimal, ranging from 2% to 9%, with the exception of year six which was explained previously.

Figure 10



Note. The reporting of female retention in the 6th year is 100% based upon only one female teaching in the 5th year. When this female was retained to the 6th year, the retention rate became 100%.

Additional data were graphed and placed into figures which present both the absolute retention rate (as has been presented above) and the relative retention rate for each of the six cohorts. These graphs are included in Appendix G for reference. The research questions for this study required the reporting of the absolute retention where N always equals the original number of participants in the cohort so a cumulative, absolute retention rate could be determined. The additional graphs in Appendix G also include the relative retention rate where n changed for each year to equal the number of participants available to be retained at that time. For example, the original number of participants in Cohort 1 was 21. Therefore for each year the absolute retention rate was calculated $N=21$ remained constant as the divisor. To calculate the relative retention rate for Cohort 1, the value of n changed each year to $n=21$, $n=17$, $n=15$, $n=12$, $n=11$, $n=11$, and $n=11$ respectively as the divisor. The findings of the absolute and relative retention rates are interesting and would benefit from further research and analysis.

Emerging Themes

Because numbers often cannot tell the whole story, one-on-one interviews were conducted with 12 participants who had experienced the new teacher induction process and then left teaching. These 12 participants represented two participants from each of the six cohorts (see Table 5). From the content analysis of the interview transcripts, seven major themes emerged from the data. The content analysis followed what Patton (2002) called

Table 5

Demographic Information for Interview Sample

Cohort #	Pseudonym	M/F	Program Area ^a	# years taught	# years previous industry experience	Education Level
1	Colby Cross	M	BITE	2	15	High School
1	Mark Davidson	M	T&I	1	25	Associate's
2	Carol Remington	F	T&I	3	5	Bachelor's
2	Wendy King	F	FACS	3	5	Bachelor's
3	Carl Lee	M	T&I	1	3	Bachelor's
3	Georgia James	F	T&I	2	4	High School
4	Nathan Ross	M	T&I	1	23	Associate's
4	Renee Reed	F	HCE	2	17	Bachelor's
5	Aaron Johnson	M	T&I	2	3	Bachelor's
5	Frank Green	M	T&I	1	16	High School
6	Chris Smith	M	T&I	1	16	Bachelor's
6	Lauren Thomas	F	HCE	1	13	Associate's

^a Business and Information Technology Education (BITE), Family and Consumer Science

Education (FACS), Health Careers Education (HCE), Related Services (RS), and Trade and Industrial Education (T&I).

inductive analysis which involves discovering patterns, themes, and categories in one's data. Findings emerge out of the data, through the analyst's interactions with the data, in contrast to *deductive analysis* where the data are analyzed according to an existing framework. (p. 453)

Deductive analysis was used in the application of the Teacher Proximity Continuum categories the inductive themes presented in this study.

Reporting of Qualitative Data

The reporting of this study's qualitative data follow Patton's (2002) guidance, "Do your very best with your full intellect to fairly represent the data

and communicate what the data reveal given the purpose of the study” (p. 433). For the purposes of this study, participant’s stories are told by themes rather than by individual case studies in order to protect anonymity and to “reveal” the data for the “given purpose” to answer the research questions. Several of the participants’ stories could fall into multiple themes; however, the best fit based upon the participants’ story was chosen. Finally, the reporting of the themes that emerged from the data presents an extensive use of actual interview quotes. This has purposefully been done in an effort to let the participants speak for themselves. According to Patton,

Concepts are never a substitute for direct experience with the descriptive data. What people actually say and the descriptions of events observed remain the essence of qualitative inquiry.... Indeed, the skilled analyst is able to get out of the way of the data to let the data tell their own story. (p. 457)

The following themes are presented with the purpose of hearing and understanding the experiences of 12 individuals who each chose to leave the profession of teaching. These are their stories.

Administration

Of the 12 participants eight participants (66%) identified issues with administration as a factor that was key to the decision to leave teaching. Within this theme of administration there were three specific areas identified by

participants: administrative politics, lack of administrative support, and management practices or personalities.

Administrative politics. As noted by Colby Cross, a Business and Information Technology Instructor who taught for two years, politics can be a pervasive presence in the work environment. Colby described his experience by saying, “At the time we had an administration that was very political. And if you didn’t play the politics with that administration, with that superintendent, you weren’t going to go anywhere in the system.” This participant, however, also experienced political issues that went to the heart of his personal beliefs, which became a much greater concern.

[Administration] asked me to do a few things that I thought were unethical during an election period and that I just won’t do. I’m not going to sniff people’s e-mail. I’m not going to do those things, so I got a little cross there. After I told [my administrator] that I wouldn’t do that, I started really getting beat up about grades and turning everything in on time.

Refusal to play the game, he believed, led to administrative retribution and eventually to his decision to leave teaching.

Another participant, Carl Lee, a Trade and Industrial instructor who taught for one year, experienced politics related to past conflicts that he was simply unaware of. He discovered that building benches for a board member who had contacted him directly could lead to trouble with his direct administration.

I found out later, that [my administrator] and [the board member] hated each other. So politics played a big role in this . . . And [my administrator]

said, “I can’t believe you did that.” And I never even got a chance to tell her I didn’t know, I had no clue. I thought I was building it for a board member. Who better to try to impress than a board member? That was a **major** issue.

Carl also cited a second example,

It was just a constant, constant battle. I can’t say anymore. It was issue after issue, same thing. But, I knew something was up when I got written up for parking in somebody’s spot. A [coworker] had been there for 12 years and had parked in that spot and how dare I park in that spot even though no one had assigned parking.

Carl mentioned several times during his interview that he “was naïve” as a new teacher in a new culture and he wished the administration would have recognized his naivety and educated him to the cultural politics of the school and “not abandoned” him.

Other participants, such as Frank Green, a T&I instructor who taught for one year, were able to cite various examples of minor politics; this resulted in his saying, “I’m not convinced that I could survive in that culture and it has nothing to do with the classroom.” Frank was very clear that reasons he left teaching were based on administrative issues and politics, not teaching issues.

Lack of administrative support. The second specific area within the administration theme was the lack of administrative support for the individual or program. This issue of administrative support is clearly identified by Carl who states, “I could just sit here and tell you instance after instance where it just felt

like I wasn't being supported, the support wasn't there." Also Lauren Thomas, a Health Careers Education instructor who taught for one year, clearly identified a lack of administrative support as an issue in her statement, "Well it was very frustrating to deal with the administration. It was an administrative issue. I did not have their support. I just felt like I did not have the support of the administration." Lauren relates her departure from teaching with problems that stemmed from this lack of support.

Carol Remington, a T&I instructor who taught for three years related her feelings that she had a lack of administrative support as being evidenced by the administration's lack of understanding and involvement with her job when she said,

There was a couple of times that I had problems with a student ...and [administrator] would say, "Well, why don't you try doing this?" And I would say, "Well, I did trying doing that and I did this" and [administrator] said, "You know when I was a teacher I used this". So when I tried doing that and it did not work, [administrator] was negative and he said "I guess you've tried it all." And it really pissed me off.

Carol went on to share that she did not feel that the administrator supported her because, "My [administrator] didn't know what I was doing out there, he was never out there." Carol indicated that the lack of administrative support was evidenced by also a lack of involvement.

Wendy King who taught Family and Consumer Science for three years had an issue with lack of administrative support that was directly tied to her

program and the inability of the administration to support her by making a critical decision. The inability of the administration to make this critical decision and provide support for Wendy's program influenced her decision to leave teaching as she indicated, "That was the reason. [Administration] was riding the fence on the issue of what the program is and better defining it." Without the administrative decision, Wendy did not feel enough support to remain as a teacher in the program.

Another participant, Lauren, explained a particular instance of her difficulty with administrative support which stemmed from initially being given permission to attend professional development activities that was later withdrawn. Lauren explained a situation that happened several times, "[Administrator] had said at one time that I could go to [professional development workshop] but then when it came down to it, I couldn't go. I **never** got to go to **anything**." Lauren's situation differed from Wendy's in that her administration would make decisions, but then they would change their minds.

Finally, Nathan Ross, a T&I instructor for one year, shared that his administration knowingly gave him difficult students, but those students did not come with an increased level of support for related, and foreseeable, issues. "I think that my [administration] was trying to get me to deal with discipline, but with everything else going on I think that I could have gotten a little more help on that, on the discipline," he said. Nathan also shared an additional frustration on the issue of "dumping" students into a program. There are administrative pressures on *CareerTech* teachers to keep their program enrollment numbers up and,

therefore, possibly overlook some needed student discipline. Nathan shared, “You feel like there is pressure on the numbers in your class because you know they want the numbers in your [program]. So then you are having to put up with discipline problems, too.”

Management practice or personality. Clashes in personalities or beliefs about appropriate management practices seemed to best capture the third specific area within this theme. This was clearly evident in the statement by Renee Reed, a Health Careers Education instructor who taught for two years, [In education] we eat our young and I definitely had a supervisor that would. [Supervisor] would put ketchup on you every morning just to be able to have it licked off by the end of the day. I might still be teaching if she had not been my boss.

The management practices of administration can be detrimental to how teachers see themselves as Renee added, “My [supervisor] would bad mouth the other instructors to me, so I knew she would bad mouth me to the other instructors also. [Supervisor] was just an old codger and she just took all your self esteem away.”

Frank shared how his treatment by the administration was “similar to being treated like **we** [teachers] were in high school”. This treatment was in stark opposition to what Frank was accustomed to in his previous industry experience. When asked to explain the difference Frank said,

[The administration] was definitely condescending and a lot of ‘handling’ techniques were used. But [administration] was so rusty that you knew

you were being handled. It seemed to me that it was more of a 'we are going to try and keep you guys in line' type thing.

Frank also shared a situation, similar to Renee, where the selected practices of the administration could have been damaging to how he viewed his worth as a teacher. Frank reported that when making a specific request, his administrator replied by saying,

We can't do that and not only can we not do that, you need to realize that you are not a special person or a special instructor. You are no different than the beauty class [teacher] or the nursing [teacher] or the culinary arts [teacher] or anyone else.

This example, which Frank considered representative of other interactions with his administration, as well as the political culture of the organization, were key factors in his decision to resign from his teaching position even before securing future employment.

Pulled in Too Many Directions/Overwhelmed

The second major theme identified by six of the 12 participants (50%) was that of being pulled in too many directions, or of being overwhelmed. Examples participants described were of their attempts to manage the many demands of being a new teacher, which are in addition to the teaching task itself. As noted by Georgia James, a T&I instructor for two years, she felt overwhelmed by the expectations placed on her that were outside the scope of teaching. This caused feelings of being pulled in multiple directions as Georgia described,

The one thing I can really remember is that first year, it seemed the new teachers were pulled in so many different directions. As a new teacher, you are trying to learn about your student organizations, you are trying to learn about going through the induction process and then taking classes. You just felt like you were pulled in so many different directions. Then your building administrators, they want you to do certain things, you have to be observed so many different times, you have to go to these meetings. You are like, “When am I going to be in my classroom?”

Georgia’s question is an indication that additional job duties may be an overwhelming factor which leads to teachers leaving the profession.

The desire for time to prepare for the classroom and receive assistance that was viewed as helpful to performing the duties of a teacher are issues that Lauren shared. All of the meetings and demands that were not directly related to teaching caused Lauren stress and physical difficulties as she shares,

There was never anytime in there that I hardly got to prepare ahead of time. There was constantly meetings or something else that really never helped with what I was supposed to do [teach]. In fact it was **so** stressful my hair fell out. I had to start wearing a wig. By October I was wearing a wig.

Another participant, Frank, also shared the effect this experience had on his physical being. Frank stated,

That kind of pressure really made it very difficult for me to be not just healthy but even be thinking about how I could do this on a long term basis because it was just a tremendous amount of pressure.

The feelings of stress and pressure which led to physical manifestations for these participants were key factors in their decisions to leave teaching.

Starting a new job and learning the skills needed to perform that job is overwhelming as several participants shared. However, many times new teachers are hired to start new programs. This complicates the role of the new teacher and splits their focus between organizing and setting up a new classroom and learning the skills needed for their new positions. Nathan shared his experience as he described being a new teacher setting up a new program by explaining,

I think there was a lot of pressure, because when the students got there I still didn't really have things fully set up in the classroom. You are trying to get tools together and a program together and of course, I'm hearing all this stuff about your students had to pass these tests and you have to teach them **all** this stuff. It gets pretty overwhelming.

Frank was also setting up a new program and shared similar feelings, "In two weeks I . . . had to become a manager, hire part time, and help order equipment that wasn't there and we are talking . . . a real wide range." Nathan's and Frank's comments indicated that starting a new program definitely created additional stress which factored into their decisions to leave the profession.

Another participant, Renee indicated similar situations to other participants but went one step further to share what would have helped her. Renee stated, “Definitely overwhelmed would be the first definition I would use. [Being a new teacher] really needs explained up front. Someone needs to sit down with you and say here’s what we’re doing and here’s why we are doing this.” Renee never felt like she understood how everything, all of her job responsibilities, fit into the big picture.

Aaron Johnson, a T&I instructor for two years, shared his experience of feeling pulled in too many directions and how he felt like administration could have eased that burden if they would have chosen. Aaron explains,

Certain [administrators] make it a lot easier on certain teachers if they want it that way. [Administration] have office help that does a lot of [paper work] or [purchasing protocol] there was something all the time. And as a technology teacher you’re in charge of purchasing, planning, teaching, all of it.

It appears Aaron felt that his administration could have helped ease some of the burden he felt as new teacher and allowed him more time to focus on the teaching aspect. While his comments have been categorized under this theme of feeling overwhelmed, the researcher recognized that they also gave further support to the earlier theme of lack of administrative support.

Lack of Student Motivation

The third major theme that emerged from the 12 interviews was a prevailing lack of student motivation; this was identified by four participants (33%). All four teachers indicated the program they were teaching had become a “dumping ground” for difficult students, or students who did not get the program of their choice. This resulted in decreased levels of motivation. Mark Davidson, a T&I instructor for one year, explained his situation,

[My] program had been used as a dumping ground, and they pretty much forewarned me that that’s what it had been used for. The kids they didn’t know what to do with or didn’t get along in other programs, they would put them there.

Nathan indicated a similar situation where administration thought his program would motivate students who were not successful in other programs. Nathan stated,

I think that [administration] brought in some kids that had previously been in other classes that probably weren’t the best of students. So they brought them to [program] thinking it might motivate them more, and it really didn’t. [Students] really were still just unmotivated. I think looking back I just would have liked to have had all new students.

Georgia shared how she finally discovered that half of her class had signed up to enroll in a different class, but since that class was full, the students were placed in her program. Georgia explained,

Because you kind of get the idea that these students are here because they wanted to be in this class and they want to be here. I got to about Thanksgiving break and realized that half of my class didn't even want to be in the class. That wasn't the class they signed up for. Half of them had signed up for a completely different class and it was full.

Georgia's approach to teaching changed once she understood the motivation or lack of motivation of the students in her program. But the changes she made were not enough to keep her in the teaching profession.

Dealing with unmotivated students was a contributing factor to several participants' decision to leave teaching. It was the number one reason Carol stated for leaving,

Dealing with the students that didn't want to be there and trust me, some of them didn't want to be there. That was my biggest problem, dealing with those people. I liked teaching, but [teaching] people that want to learn. People that are just there because there's no where else for them to be, that was the down fall. That was the number one reason for me.

Carol indicated that she felt that the administration worked from the premise of "If they have a pulse, let them in" when it came to her program's enrollment. Carol went on to say the frustration continued for her when she tried to work with the students who were difficult and when she asked the administration for help, "nobody will come right out and tell you how to handle the students, the problem students. Everybody is afraid to say this is what you do." The combination of difficult students, who are not motivated to be in the program, and a new teacher

not receiving the administrative support (a previously discussed theme), appear likely to lead to teacher turnover.

Program/Curriculum Issues

A critical issue for many new teachers can be the understanding and maneuvering between local administrative issues, state department issues, and how it affects the program and curriculum. Of the 12 participants interviewed, four (33%) indicated issues surrounding their program or curriculum were key factors to their departure from teaching.

The *CareerTech* system holds in high regard the skilled professional who leaves industry to teach their profession. There are instances where the state-approved curriculum, which is required to be taught and for which students are tested, is not current with industry practices. This was an issue for Nathan as he explained,

I mean part of the curriculum said I had to teach so many hours of [specific skill]. Well, no one uses [skill] with a [tool] in [specific industry] anymore. That's twenty year old technology, but yet, according to the [state department curriculum], I had to do that and I was being told that we needed to follow this. Well, the kids after about 3 or 4 days, they get pretty bored with that, especially when they know they are never going to do it.

Lauren also shared an experience where she completed lesson plans using the textbook given to her by the school and, just before the class started, she was

told she was being required to change her curriculum because of requirements implemented by the state department. Lauren said,

I no more got all my lesson plans done, staying up there night after night, figuring how I was going to do [teach]. Then [administration] changed the textbook on me and they said, "No, you're not going to teach out of this book. You're going to use the state curriculum."

This was extremely frustrating for Lauren, but as she shared later in her interview, it got even worse. Lauren explained,

When the teacher who was in the other class [same program area] quit at Christmas time, they pulled me out of my class and had me go up there to the other students. So now, I had new students. I had to move my office, get reorganized and still teach class and grade papers and post grades and get caught up from my first class so that I could start a new class.

It was difficult to continually have program and curriculum issues being changed, each change seemed to arrive just when Lauren felt like she was becoming comfortable.

The issue of instability or indecision was key to Wendy's decision to leave her position as a teacher. The focus of her program was being questioned by the state department and the school's administration was "riding the fence" as well.

Wendy shares how it started,

[State department administrator] brought us all together at the conference and [state department administrator] told us our programs were not supposed to be special education programs. And a lot of the other

teachers like me were hired in particular. I'm a special education teacher and they hired **me** to teach the program. That tells you something about the program, right?

As noted by Wendy, the indecision by administration as well as the underlying implications regarding the desirability of Wendy's specialty area were major considerations for her when deciding to leave teaching.

The pride and ownership felt by teachers for their programs is a very important issue to understand. Frank explained his feeling regarding this issue, I think maybe I might be unique in that I would make a stand and I would not be a part of a program that was not absolutely committed to quality, period. Education is so important, it has got such an important mission and I did not see that the mission was the most important thing to my [administration].

As noted by Frank, he did not want to continue to be part of a program that was not "committed to quality". This weighed in heavily on Frank's decision to leave his position teaching.

Issues Not Related to Teaching

Three of the 12 participants (25%) shared experiences that can be traced back to a variety of non-teaching issues that have as their commonality only the fact that were perceived to be unrelated to the true purpose of the job. Two participants, Georgia and Aaron, shared feelings that they enjoyed teaching; it was the other things associated with the job that caused them difficulties.

Georgia stated, “Well I loved the teaching part. I didn’t like all of the call it administrative stuff and just BS that goes on. I mean, all of the red tape that you have got to go through.” Reflecting similar sentiments Aaron added, “The stinking paperwork. The way that they make you go through the hoops you have to jump through, it’s pretty staggering. If you can just be left alone and teach, it would be a much easier day.”

Another participant, Carl, felt like his administration used these associated tasks as a way to evaluate him, instead of focusing on his teaching. Carl indicated that he had always received strong evaluations regarding his teaching which caused him to be surprised when comments were made about his lesson plans.

The director said, ‘This has to do with lesson plans.’ And I said ‘I did the lesson plan. When you told me to do them better, I did them better.’ I said ‘I don’t understand.’ She wouldn’t really answer me. And I could tell that it wasn’t lesson plans.

Carl indicated he felt like his administration could not discount his teaching; his evaluations were good, his students scored very well on their competency tests and his program was thriving. The frustration of dealing with these associated issues, not teaching, is a strong factor in some teachers’ decisions to leave the profession.

Personal Issues

The final major theme that emerged from the review of participant interviews was personal issues. Three of the participants (25%) identified personal issues as key factors in their decision to leave teaching. For one participant, Mark, a difficult situation in his home life determined his future as a teacher. Mark explained,

the only I reason I basically left [technology center] was I went through a divorce and in the process of [the divorce] I didn't take my classes that I needed to take, so I didn't get my teaching certificate renewed. I would still be teaching to this day.

Mark went on to acknowledge it was his responsibility to get enrolled and take the courses to renew his certificate. However, Mark did express a desire for there to be additional assistance in place to guide new teachers. Mark stated,

If there was a way to make it easier, for people that do not have their degree to teach, an easier way for them to get the classes for example on-line. Because it is a little tough to get away and build your program, teach your students, do things with your students and have a family life and everything else and try to do the degree at the same time.

Another participant Wendy shared a personal issue that factored into her decision to leave teaching which was based on her family's current needs. In fact, Wendy indicates she may return to teaching when she said,

Well, I do not know that I have permanently left teaching. But for us it was just a personal decision at the time. We have a new internet business and

kind of reached a point where both of us working was not working and that it was just taking up too much of our time.

Family needs were also stated as a contributing factor for Chris Smith, a T&I instructor for one year, when he explained,

The big problem was I had to travel about 50 miles one way to the *CareerTech* center. I am a single parent and had to get back here at a certain time at night to get my child picked up.

Chris went on to share that this only became a problem when the school administration began to make requests for him to stay late. Chris said,

There started to be more and more demands and more and more requests for me to stay late. And I can't do that. It was a situation that I chose to be in, but I thought it was up front and exposed whenever I took the position that I have got to do [pick up his child].

Even though Chris had been up front about his responsibilities and family situation, he continued to feel pressure to stay late and teach an evening class.

Finally, Chris decided to leave the school as he explained,

I felt like it was best for me to leave then because I was doing all I could do and I was still requested to do more. And I would say, 'You know, I really cannot do this night class because I have got a situation at home I have to take care of.' And then the pressure was becoming greater than I wanted to withstand.

It appears that for Chris, when the pressure at work became so great, leaving the profession to return to an industry job that did not interfere with his family responsibilities was the clear choice for Chris and his family.

Incongruence between Industry and School Cultures

Two of 12 participants (17%) identified cultural issues as a reason for their departures from teaching. The teachers themselves have often been in industry and must first make the adjustments to a school's culture and way of operating before they can effectively teach students. This cultural mis-alignment between previous experience and current environment can lead to great dissatisfaction and, ultimately, teacher turnover.

For one participant, Colby, his ideas about the overall purpose of his program caused him to be reprimanded for what he thought were insignificant things. Colby stated,

These [administrators] and people were coming around whacking your knuckles for little infractions about your grade book and this, that and the other. I was thinking, 'Okay, this is not grade school.' I am here to teach these [students] how to succeed in industry; it is more like college level where you should have some flexibility.

Colby, whose industry background was in the field of Information Technology, expressed great frustration with school practices that seemed antiquated to him and did not seem to reflect whether or not he was a good teacher. As noted by Colby,

For some of us, grade books just didn't make sense. We are used to using the computer and doing things on that and writing in little funky grade books didn't make sense to me. That was one reason I didn't think I was going to make it. [Administrators] were evaluating me on my ability, they told me this, the [administrator], on my ability to have a grade book basically, keep grades, not on my ability to teach.

The conflict was so strong for Colby that this caused him to think he was not going to be able to make it as a teacher.

Another participant, Renee, became disillusioned by an educational system that sought out highly skilled professionals, yet pay was based on educational degrees. Renee stated,

Well, first of all as an [skilled professional] you can make \$65,000 to \$75,000 easily working Monday through Friday, no holidays, no call.

Teaching, the [educational system] does not put their money behind [industry experience]. The way your system is set up is all about degrees.

For Renee, going back into industry was the opportunity for more money and recognition for her industry experience and skill, something the educational system does not recognize financially. The cultural mis-alignment felt by some teachers appeared to be exacerbated by the same teacher's knowledge that the culture of the school is incongruent with the "real" working environment for which their students are being prepared.

Unique Cases

While not prevalent, two additional and unique themes were recognized and appeared to be important issues for new teacher retention. While these anomalies, *opportunity for advancement and salary* were only identified by one participant respectively, they appeared to be of significance to the teacher's decision to leave the profession. This first unique theme, opportunity for advancement, was identified by Nathan when he stated, "It is really hard to work up in the [CareerTech] system." Nathan went on to explain further what he meant when he said,

Had I been ten years older, I would have thought well I could do this for ten years and then retire. That would have been more realistic. I would have looked at [staying in teaching] a lot harder. But at my age I was kind of stuck here. Now if I was younger where I could go ahead and take school part time and go ahead and finish my bachelors and stuff like that, I would have thought about staying.

The issue of his age and his current educational level seemed to be critical factors in his decision. However, Nathan then shared a final issue, geography that seriously influenced his decision. Nathan stated,

I am tied geographically in [hometown]. So in other words, what I am trying to say is that unless I just went on and combated school like crazy to get a master's degree, which would have taken me a long time, then a job like [state department administration] or something like that would just not be available.

The issues of opportunity for advancement and his geographical ties were determining factors in Nathan's decision to leave teaching.

Only one participant specifically referenced the second unique theme of salary as the reason he left teaching. Competing with industry for highly skilled subject matter experts continues to be an obstacle for *CareerTech* to overcome. Two other participants shared that the ability to make more money in industry was an underlying factor in their decision to leave teaching. For one participant, Aaron, the thought that benefits associated with a teaching position would outweigh the dollars proved to be untrue.

I knew when I was getting into it that I would be taking a substantial cut in pay from what I was doing formally. But I thought the benefits might kind of outweigh the lower amount of money. I tried it for a couple of years, very thoroughly enjoyed it, but the money just overrode it.

Aaron recognized that one of the benefits to teaching could be more time with his family, however as he explained,

It got to where while I was teaching, I was working on the side to make ends meet and I ended up working **7 days a week**. Part of the reason I took the job was to have more time off, more time with my family.

Part of the frustration for Aaron was,

I know that the state a lot of times is strapped for money to pay teachers. But with the salary I was making as a [skilled professional] before I started teaching, it did not even compare with the salary that a [skilled professional] teacher makes.

In the final decision for Aaron it was numbers, he concluded, “The number one factor was the salary. I could put in a lot less hours and bring home twice as much.”

While Aaron identified financial issues as key to his decision to leave teaching and return to industry, he indicated that the issue of salary was exacerbated by the expense of taking courses at the university to renew his teaching certificate. Aaron emphatically discussed the issue of certification expenses, “The cost of the [certification] classes like to have killed me. On the teacher’s salary, the cost of the classes is monumental.” It appeared the cost of the classes and possibly the number of classes that Aaron needed to earn his standard teaching certificate added to the difficulties already present by the lower salary. Aaron indicated that this was an additional factor for him as he stated,

That is something that was another deciding factor for me because you just keep on taking classes and I know you [have] got to, and you will get there one day with your standard certificate and you can quit taking so many [classes]. But the cost of going to the classes, I mean, that was almost impossible to come up with the extra money to pay for classes on a [teachers] salary. I do not know if the schools need to help out with that if they can.

It appeared that the compounding of the expense of taking classes to renew his teaching certification and the lower monetary compensation he received as a teacher was too heavy of a financial burden.

Study's Themes Applied to Theoretical Lens

The seven themes presented in Chapter 4 represent the inductive reading and understanding of the stories shared by the 12 participants who agreed to an interview. There is research that suggests these new *CareerTech* teachers experiences could be compared with other reports from new *CareerTech* teachers and categorized within an established set of themes. This deductive analysis of the data is this study's attempt at using a theoretical lens through which to bring meaning to these teachers' stories.

Top Three Themes or Categories

As presented in Chapter 2, Review of Literature, Heath-Camp and Camp's (1992) Teacher Proximity Continuum was the theoretical lens used to understand and categorize their stories. This continuum was chosen because it had been used in several other studies. According to Joerger (2003) in an initial study,

Heath-Camp, Camp, Adams-Casmus, Talbert, and Barber (1992) used the Teacher Proximity Continuum to structure the findings of a study designed to understand the events that influenced the experience of beginning career and technical education teachers. They found the student, system, and program categories were the proximity categories associated with the greatest proportion of significant events. (p. 54)

In this study, the top three themes or categories of teacher's experiences were administration, pulled in too many directions/overwhelmed, and lack of student motivation.

Common Themes or Categories

Three of the themes presented from this research appear to match with three of the Teacher Proximity Continuum categories. First, the theme of Administration, which included administrative politics, lack of administrative support, and management practices and personalities, aligns well with the continuum's category of System described as "experiences that arise from individuals and forces within the educational system that require compliance" (Joerger and Bremer, 2001, p. 13). The second theme of Lack of Student Motivation appears to match well with Heath-Camp and Camp's (1992) continuum category of Student defined as "experiences that result from exchanges with students" (Joerger and Bremer, 2001, p. 13). Personal Issues is the third theme from this research that appears to relate to the continuum's category of Internal described as "needs and challenges that arise within the teacher, such as personality variables" (Joerger and Bremer, 2001, p. 13).

Differences in Themes or Categories

Finding a similar category in the Teacher Proximity Continuum for the remaining themes that emerged from this research was difficult. For example, the theme of Pulled In Too Many Directions/Overwhelmed related teachers experiences that fit into several categories including, Pedagogy, Curriculum, Program, and System. The theme of Program/Curriculum Issues had implications for Heath-Camp and Camp's (1992) categories Internal, Curriculum, Program, and System. The third theme, Issues Not Related to Teaching,

encompassed several categories including, Pedagogy, Curriculum, Program, and System. The final theme of Cultural Mis-Alignment appeared to cut across several continuum categories most significantly Internal, Pedagogy, Program, and System. Based upon the lack of agreement between the themes from this study and the categories of the Teacher Proximity Continuum, this researcher would agree with Joerger (2003) when he reported,

use of the Teacher Proximity Continuum to categorize the events [of Joerger's study] require further development before sound conclusions can be constructed... Differences in the findings of these studies may reflect the difference in the program areas and characteristics of the teachers involved. (p. 63)

Summary

The research findings reported in this chapter presented data that answered this study's research questions. First, the descriptive statistics gathered on the entire induction process population resulted in a cumulative retention rate of 70%. Additional findings were reported in relation to each cohort's retention, retention rates by occupational division and retention rates by gender.

The findings related to factors that influenced participants' decisions to leave teaching were reported through seven inductively analyzed themes of administration, pulled in too many directions/overwhelmed, lack of student motivation, program/curriculum issues, issues not related to teaching, personal

issues, and cultural mis-alignment. Two unique cases were also reported which were opportunity for advancement and salary/certification issues.

Finally, the inductive themes were compared to Heath-Camp and Camp's (1992) Teacher Proximity Continuum which was used as a theoretical lens.

There was not a great deal of matching between the Teacher Proximity Continuum and the themes from this study. Possibly the categories within the continuum could be expanded or sub-categories could be created and included within the larger category. Without further development, the Teacher Proximity Continuum may not be the best method to identify and categorize new *CareerTech* teacher's experiences.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe the effect of the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process on teacher retention for the last six years. First, this study determined how the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process impacted the cumulative new teacher retention for each cohort, for the cohorts' number of years. For example, Cohort One's cumulative retention rate is based on six years of data, Cohort Two's retention rate is based on five years of data, Cohort Three's retention rate is based on four years of data, Cohort Four's retention rate is based on three years of data, Cohort Five's retention rate is based on two years of data and Cohort Six's cumulative retention rate is based on one year of data. The number of years of data which is available is relative to the year the cohort started teaching which is actually from one to six years.

Second, this study uncovered factors that led to 12 teachers' decisions to leave the profession. Finally, this study applied the framework of the Teacher Proximity Continuum created by William Camp and Betty Heath-Camp (1992) and found limited congruency across the themes that emerged in this study and

the model. The usefulness of the framework for this research as well as recommendations for its future use will be discussed later in this chapter.

This study addressed the retention of new *CareerTech* teachers who participated in the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process. This study utilized both quantitative data and qualitative data to address the following research questions:

1. What is the cumulative retention rate for participants in the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process? What is the retention rate for each individual cohort, occupational division, and gender?
2. For participants who left teaching, why did they leave? What were the factors that contributed to their exits from teaching?
3. Do the factors for departure from teaching align with the theoretical framework of the Teacher Proximity Continuum created by William Camp and Betty Heath-Camp?

The research findings based on these questions as well as discussion, and recommendations are presented in this chapter.

A review of the current literature was reported. The pertinent areas covered in the review included five sections beginning with details of the teacher retention problem. The second section presented factors and issues that have been found to lead to teacher turnover and the third section explored what research indicates could be done to reduce teacher turnover. Specific references to studies that addressed teacher retention were included for both

general teacher turnover and *CareerTech* teacher turnover. The fourth section looked specifically at Oklahoma's induction process and the final section presented in detail Heath-Camp and Camp's (1992) Teacher Proximity Continuum, which was used as a theoretical lens through which deductive comparison was conducted and reported in Chapter 4.

The population for this study was the 299 participants in the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process during the years 2000-2006. These participants represented 27 of 29 *CareerTech* Centers in the state. Two *CareerTech* Centers do not participate in the induction process. The data collected for this study were two-fold, descriptive demographic data were gathered on the entire population and, using a purposeful criterion-based sample, in-depth interviews were conducted. Following the methodology of mixed-methods research, the findings of the descriptive demographic data led to the need for and selection of the interview sample.

Findings and Conclusions

Based upon the descriptive statistics and interview data gathered and the literature presented in Chapter 2, following are the key findings of the current study.

1. The overall one-year retention rate for the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process was 86%. Smith and Ingersoll (2004) reported that the retention rate for new public education teachers without induction interventions was 59%. Although the contexts

between *CareerTech* and public education may be somewhat different, they share significant similarities. This finding, therefore, suggests that participation in the induction process for *CareerTech* teachers may significantly increase the likelihood that a new teacher will return for a second year.

2. The literature suggests that 39% of new teachers leave due to personal reasons (Ingersoll, 2002), but this study found the reasons given for departing the profession to be almost solely systemic in nature.
3. Although often given by teachers as a reason for leaving the profession, salary was rarely indicated as a predominant factor in the decision for current participants. Ingersoll's (2002) study stated that out of the 26% of new teachers who identified dissatisfaction as their reason to leave teaching, salary was one of three primary reasons given. In the current study, only one person stated that he left because he could make more money in industry. Anecdotal reports of *CareerTech* administrators indicate a belief that monetary issues play a significant role in decisions of *CareerTech* teachers for leaving the profession (personal communication, Mary Jo Self, April 2007). The data reported in this study did not support that belief.
4. No differences in retention were found across occupational divisions or when comparing gender.

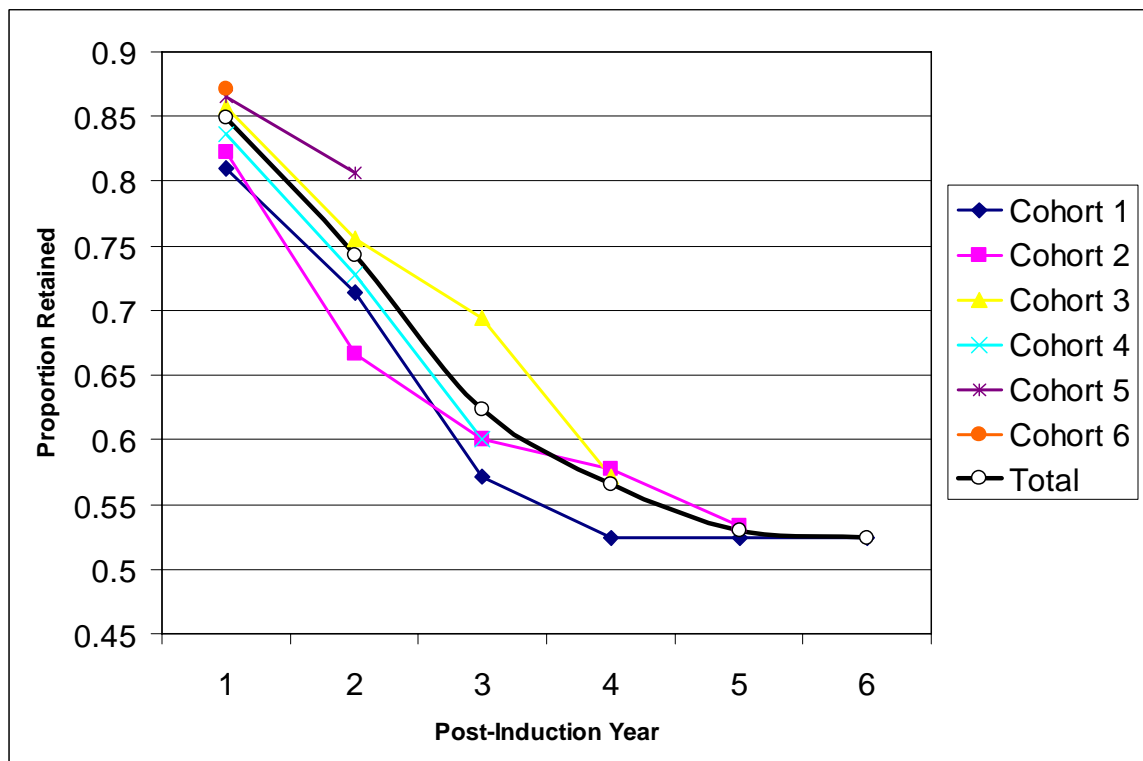
5. The role of mentors, both onsite and university-based, is important based upon literature presented in Chapter 2 and comments from several participants. None of the participants in this study identified their mentor as a reason they left, however, it would be negligent to not acknowledge that a better onsite mentor match may have helped the new teacher navigate the issues became the factors in their decision to leave the profession. Of the 12 participants, four (one-third of participants) noted that their onsite mentors were not helpful. Comments about university-based mentors were positive.
6. Administrators and a perceived lack of support from administration was stated as a key factor. Eight of the 12 participants (66%) interviewed reported issues with administration as the key factor in their decision to leave teaching. The fact that most participants reported systemic issues as the source of decisions for leaving the profession may suggest that administrators can and, in fact, do have a greater influence on retention than previously thought. Administrators are, after all, in a position to have significant influence over many systemic issues.
7. The rate of loss of new teachers, as depicted in Figure 11, begins to slow at year 3 and level further by year 4. Literature presented in Chapter 2 indicates that teacher turnover for public education (which includes *CareerTech* numbers) is reported as critical until year 5, at which point it becomes stable. It appears then, that retention within the

CareerTech system appears to be stabilizing at an earlier time. While the source of this difference cannot be fully identified, it is important to remember that one key difference may be the fully functioning teacher induction system.

8. Figure 11 is a re-presentation of individual cohort data presented in Chapter 4. However, representing the data in this format, which overlays data for all six cohorts as well as presents the average, provides additional opportunity for meaning making. In general,

Figure 11

All Six Cohort Retention Rates Overlaid



according to Figure 11, cohort retention rates appear to show a trend; toward improvement for each year. This is seen as each year of the induction process is graphed and appears to be slightly higher than the previous year in most cases. The overall graph has a downward slope, but what is being pointed out here is that each year appears to be plotting above the previous year. While sufficient data does not currently exist to make any definitive predictions, it appears possible that as the induction process ages and itself “learns,” it may be having an increasingly positive effect on teacher retention, especially in the first year. However there may be other factors such as changes in hiring practices, normal fluctuations in participant pools, and administrative differences which may account for differences. As noted in Chapter 2 the cost of replacing one teacher is anywhere from \$8,000 to \$15,000. Even small gains in retention equal large dollars for schools who struggle to allocate their minimal funding in the most useful areas.

9. The Teacher Proximity Continuum created by Heath-Camp and Camp (1992) was compared to the inductive data analysis that was conducted in this study, and the model was not found to be helpful in bringing meaning or understanding to the experiences shared by the interview participants.

Recommendations

For Practice

Recommendations for practice in the area of new *CareerTech* teacher orientation and induction are as follows:

1. The induction process should continue utilizing, maximizing and securing all needed resources. New teachers need strong support when they first begin. Retention numbers of the *CareerTech* system, and induction based system, as compared other public education averages are higher. *CareerTech* teachers, who have been recruited straight from industry and have not had traditional teacher training, need even more support when they first begin as found in the literature presented in Chapter 2. The front loading of new teacher support could be a possible way to help overcome the feelings shared by participants in this study that they were pulled in too many directions and overwhelmed. Many participants described their earliest teaching experiences as “overwhelming”, “I had no time to be in my new classroom”, “I had to go to meetings that did not help me get ready for teaching”, “I had to set up a new program which included ordering equipment, textbooks, and supplies, not to mention figuring out how and what to teach”. Dedicated time and other resources, both human and financial, could be crucial to orienting and successfully establishing a new teacher in the *CareerTech* school setting.

2. The implementation of exit interviews with teachers who leave may be useful in understanding the real reason for the teachers' departure.

There is a critical need to continue to gather on-going information regarding factors that effect teacher's decisions to leave the profession. However, it is important to consider the fact that who does the interview will affect the results. Traditional exit interviews do not typically get to the real reasons a teacher is leaving. Many times, reasons given during an exit interview are given haphazardly. The teacher is no longer personally invested in the school or interested in improving the school. Interviewers should be trained to probe beyond the easy answer of money as this study found that money was actually rarely the issue. However the ease with which money may be cited may cause efforts to retain teachers that are also focused on monetary issues. The lack of ability to increase teacher pay may cause administrators to consider themselves impotent in their abilities to impact retention (and therefore give themselves permission to stop trying). On the other hand, administrators may discover that creative non-monetary solutions may be much more effective.

3. All parties involved in the induction process should be willing to conduct and consider objective measurements and analyses of the system, as well as be willing to make necessary changes.
4. Administrators should be more prepared to help new teachers navigate the often political nature of schools. Effective ways for accomplishing

this within the culture of each school needs to be further investigated by parties within the schools.

5. Many of the current group of administrators are reaching the age of retirement. No system currently exists to increase new administrators' levels of knowledge about, or support for, the induction process.
6. Based upon the literature and the retention rates for participants between years one and two and years two and three, there may be a need to expand the induction process into a two or three year effort. This would create an opportunity for participants to have additional support in years two and three. This support could be provided during the summer, in late July, or early August. Based upon literature presented in Chapter 2, the entire process of teacher induction takes multiple years. Rather than viewing teacher induction as a one-year process, it may be helpful for it to be viewed as a multi-year process.
7. Induction support may be helpful for new *CareerTech* teachers between year 2 and 3 based on finding six discussed previously. This expansion of the current one-year induction model may need to become a part of a multi-year induction process. Otherwise, this additional support could be provided or arranged on an as needed basis. For this critical new teacher support to be successful however there must be open communication and trust between the school administration, the university-based mentor, and the new teacher. We

do not know specifically what this additional support may need to be, this is an area for further research.

8. Administrators need to make every effort to break the cycle of hiring a new teacher close to the start of school. Many times, teachers leaving the profession do so in a manner which then allows only a short window of time to hire a replacement before the school year starts. Based upon the information from participants in this study, several indicated they were hired just before the students arrived, and one participant explained he arrived in the classroom about two-weeks into the school year. This situation forces administration to hire a new teacher with minimal time to prepare. The lack of time to prepare and get established in the classroom may lead to the new teacher feeling too overwhelmed to stay, which recreates the same situation again. It is possible that breaking this cycle and bringing new teachers on board as soon as possible may allow them to develop and establish themselves in the culture and ways of the school and allow them to feel entrenched in the environment.
9. Just as teacher induction is a developmental process, so is the implementation of a collaborative teacher induction system with multiple parties and perspectives. Lessons have been learned and continue to be learned on an almost daily basis. A feedback system would be helpful in order to be sure mid-year adjustments can be made in a timely manner.

10. Administrators should make clear to the new teacher the purpose of the induction mentor and assure that performance evaluations are not a part of the relationship.
11. Schools may be able to further to build the loyalty of teachers by providing financial assistance with college course work, including scholarships, grants, or other type of financial assistance. One participant in this study expressed a great amount of frustration over his situation where he took a cut in salary, but then had the added expense of higher education coursework which was required to renew his teaching certificate.
12. The findings of this study indicate that teacher retention is improved by participation in the induction process. It may be helpful to expand the population the induction process serves to include new *CareerTech* teachers who work in the comprehensive schools.
13. Continue to study the issue of teacher retention with a focus on possible implications for practice.

For Future Research

Recommendations for future research which could have implications for the retention and induction of *CareerTech* teachers are as follows:

1. Additional research is needed which may create a theoretical model regarding the retention and induction of new *CareerTech* teachers that considers and accounts for the gap between theory and practice.

2. Research the usefulness of personality assessments in working with new teachers. There may be a benefit to using the current research and instruments available to assess personalities and use this as a foundation for more effectively matching of mentors as well as working one-on-one with the teachers themselves.
3. Research the effect of participation in the induction process for two years as opposed to one year. A review of the current literature in this area and the gathering of descriptive statistics, as well as in-depth interviews, would be beneficial for determining if there are any significant differences based on number of years spent in the induction process.
4. Additional research looking at the various components of the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process to determine the impact of these components separately and together as a system could assist in program evaluation and improvement.
5. Additional interviews of participants based upon the number of years they taught could provide further insight into the experiences of new teachers. It is always possible that additional interviews could uncover additional themes and/or provided anomalies not seen from this group of participants.
6. Research should be conducted using another measure of success to evaluate the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process. For the purpose of this study, only one measure of success was used to evaluate the process, cumulative teacher retention rate. There are

additional measures of success that could be used for evaluation purposes.

7. Since this research study did not gather other descriptive data on the participants such as age, acquiring this data would be an area for additional research that would allow for comparisons across possible additional demographic groupings.
8. Calculating a return on investment (ROI) evaluation on the Oklahoma CareerTech New Teacher Induction Process would generate concrete financial findings that would allow stakeholders to make more informed resource-related decisions.
9. Research designed to calculate the induction process new teacher retention rates as well as identifying indicators that would differentiate between quality teachers and others would be useful.
10. The applicability of the Teacher Proximity Continuum could be increased if the researcher duplicated the exact instrument used by Heath-Camp and Camp (1992) in their original study. This researcher believes the use of Heath-Camp and Camp's instrument may enable findings to truly be matched to the categories of the Teacher Proximity Continuum. However, due to the nature of qualitative research, which depends upon the good judgment of the researcher, there may still be too much of an opportunity for differences in perception and linguistics. These factors may continue to make direct or dependable comparisons difficult. Additionally, to "force"

the model to apply may mis-represent the data and, therefore, be a cause of more harm than good.

11. Based upon the National Science Foundation's research on induction programs in other countries, it would be interesting to examine the difference between the United States philosophical and investment commitment approach and the philosophical and investment commitment found in the other countries included in the study.

12. A neutral third party researcher(s) should be hired to specifically evaluate the effectiveness and practices of the Oklahoma *CareerTech* induction process. Currently, the Principal Investigator for the grant that funds the new teacher induction process is the researcher. This same Principal Investigator is also responsible for implementing the induction process. A neutral third party researcher(s), used every two to three years, may be more capable of looking at the data, and the system, from a fresh perspective.

13. Research evaluating the effect of both on-site and university based mentors on new teacher retention.

14. Additional research is recommended on the absolute and relative retention rates (included in Appendix G) which would explore the data to see what might be found with additional analysis.

Epilogue

Based upon the results of this study, it appears that the *CareerTech* teacher induction process does make a difference in teacher retention; however, this study is only an entry point to the total work that is needed for reaching definitive conclusions. In the end, it is important that the system be shown to be effective in retaining not just teachers, but quality teachers an issue noted by Fulton, Yoon, and Lee (2005), “that the nation needs strategies that will ensure not just greater rates of teacher retention, but also retention of great teachers” (p.2). Nothing in the current study was designed to differentiate teachers on this particular point. In the end, it will be important to show that the cost of the teacher induction process (both direct and indirect costs) is sufficiently offset by the system’s ability to (1) retain high-quality teachers and (2) save critical education dollars. Regardless of how effective the induction system may be in retaining teachers, if the cost of implementation is greater than the educational dollars saved, then the system may need to seek other less costly avenues for increasing teacher retention.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
IRB Approval

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: Thursday, January 11, 2007
IRB Application No ED06214
Proposal Title: Are They Being Retained: An Analysis of the Oklahoma Career Tech New Teacher Induction Process on Cumulative New Teacher Retention
Reviewed and Expedited
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 1/10/2008

Principal
Investigator(s)

Starla Halcomb
1102 W. Lakeridge Ave.
Stillwater, OK 74075

Mary Jo Self
207 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.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. 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 this 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 Beth McTernan in 219 Cordell North (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,



Sue C. Jacobs, Chair
Institutional Review Board

Appendix B

Letter to Superintendents

February 6, 2007

[], Superintendent
[] Technology Center
Street Address
City, OK Zip

Dear Dr., Mr. or Ms. []:

Thank you for participating in the Oklahoma Career Tech New Teacher Induction Process from its beginning in the 2000-2001 school year to our current school year. It is because of your support we are able to continue this effort to support new teachers to not just survive their first year of teaching, but thrive in their classrooms. With this purpose in mind, I am writing to ask for your help. When I visited with you back in September at the Superintendents meeting I asked for your assistance as we begin additional research focused on the induction process.

This research effort will be part of the dissertation study conducted by Starla Halcomb, a doctoral student in our program at Oklahoma State University. I am serving as her adviser and will be overseeing the research process, data analysis, and findings. All appropriate research protocol has been obtained from the Institutional Review Board at OSU. Pseudonyms will be used for each school and participant as every effort and intervention will be used to ensure confidentiality and anonymity for all participants.

We have maintained a year to year retention record. For example, we know if a teacher we worked with in 2000-2001 school year returned for the 2001-2002 school year. Our overall retention rate is 82.6%. We are now investigating the long-term retention rate. In other words, are the 2000-2001 teachers who returned for the '01-'02 school year still teaching today? We are collecting data from '00-'01 through the '05-'06 school year.

Based on our records, the enclosed form includes all the teachers from your technology center who have participated in the induction process. We are interested in whether the teacher is still teaching at your school. If they are not, we would like to know how long they did teach at your school and any contact information you may have. Additionally, any information you could provide such as a program closure, a move back to into industry, or a move to another campus

or school district would be very helpful. Any corrections to our information you have would be greatly appreciated.

Again, thank you for your continued support of our induction process and your assistance with this information is appreciated. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact us by phone or email. We look forward to our continued partnership.

Sincerely,

Mary Jo Self, Ed.D.
Assistant Professor, OCED
Oklahoma State University
405-744-9191 maryjo.self@okstate.edu

Starla Halcomb
Doctoral Candidate, OCED
Oklahoma State University
580-977-8523
starla.fields@okstate.edu

Enclosures

cc: [other administrator]

Appendix C
Data Collection Sheet

[] Technology Center
Oklahoma CareerTech New Teacher Induction Process

Please make any corrections to the information provided below. If there are additional teachers who have participated in the induction process that are not listed, please add their information. We have included a return envelop for the completed form. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact Dr. Mary Jo Self at 405-744-9191 or by email at maryjo.self@okstate.edu. Thank you for assistance with this information your help is greatly appreciated.

						If left teaching, last known		
Last Name	First Name	Program Area	1st year taught	Still teaching Y/N	# of years taught	Address	Phone number	Employer
		Medical Office Technology	2001-2002					
		Health Careers Certification	2003-2004					

Appendix D

Phone Script

Phone Script

Hello, this is Starla Halcomb with Oklahoma State University. May I speak with _____?

This is Starla Halcomb, a doctoral student at OSU. I am conducting a research study regarding the Oklahoma Career Tech New Teacher Induction Process. My information indicates you participated in the induction process in _____(year of participation).

Is this correct?

(if yes, proceed with script; If no, thank them for their time and terminate the call)

Are you currently teaching?

(if no, proceed with script; if yes, thank them for their time and terminate the call)

I would like to ask you to meet with me for a face-to-face interview about your experiences as new teacher and your experience in the induction process. The interview would take approximately 1 hour. With your permission I will audiotape the interview and transcribe it. You would have the opportunity to review the transcription and make any needed changes. All of your answers will be kept confidential and I will use a pseudonym in the transcript to protect your identity. I would be willing to meet you at a convenient location on a date and at a time that would fit into your schedule.

Do you have any questions?

Are you willing to be interviewed?

What time frame fits your schedule, evenings, weekends?

Would this _____ at _____work for you?

What is a good location for you?

Thank you for your willingness to participate. I look forward to visiting with you next _____!

Appendix E
Interview Protocol

Interview Questions- Left teaching

As we start the interview, I would like to reiterate some items included in the informed consent document you signed. As a participant in this research, you are entitled to know the nature of the research. This interview will be audio taped and a verbatim transcription will be prepared. You will be provided a copy of the transcript for your review and correction or clarification. You are free to decline to participate, and you are free to stop the interview or withdraw from the study at any time. No penalty exists for withdrawing your participation. Feel free to ask any questions at any time about the nature of this research project and the methods I am using. Your suggestions and concerns are important to me.

Let's start our interview with some background information.

What is your professional background? How many years in this profession?

How long were you a teacher?

Can you tell me what made you want to become a teacher?

I really want to understand your experiences as a new teacher...

Could you share with me a few of your experiences as a new teacher in your building?

Could you share with me a story about your best moment as a teacher?

Could you share with me the very best part of your day as a teacher?

Now, can you share with me the most challenging part of your day as a teacher?

If you were able to go back in time, what would you change about your first year of teaching?

Again, if you were able to go back in time, what would you keep the very same?

What advice would you give to a new teacher based on your personal experience?

School buildings are very different, as well as the personalities and work cultures they become. Keeping this in mind...

How would you describe your relationship with your mentor teacher?

Would you recommend this mentor to other new teachers? Why or why not?

Who would you recommend as a mentor teacher? Why?

How would you describe your relationship with your OSU induction mentor?

How would you describe your relationship with your school administration?

How would you describe your relationship with other faculty members of your school?

What are the key factors or reasons that you left teaching?

Do you think you will ever return to teaching?

This concludes my prepared questions, do you have any additional thoughts you would like to share?

Appendix F
Informed Consent



Informed Consent Document

Project Title: Are They Being Retained: An Analysis of the Oklahoma Career Tech New Teacher Induction Process

Name of student researcher: Starla Halcomb
Address: 209 Willard Hall
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078
Telephone number: 405-744-7741
Email address: starla.fields@okstate.edu

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this dissertation research for the above student researcher, a graduate student at Oklahoma State University. This form outlines the purposes of this research project and provides a description of your involvement and rights as a participant.

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to describe the effect of the Oklahoma Career Tech New Teacher Induction Process on teacher retention for the last six years. First, this study will determine what effect the Oklahoma Career Tech New Teacher Induction Process has had on the overall cumulative new teacher retention of these participants in the first six years. Second, this study will determine the factors that induction process participants identify as reasons they left the teaching profession. The interview questions will focus on the above two purpose statements. You participated in the Oklahoma Career Tech New Teacher Induction Process in a previous year. With your input into the reasons you personally left teaching, the process can be improved for future generations of teachers.

Procedures: You are invited to participate in this study by agreeing to a one-on-one interview for approximately 1 hour. I will audiotape our interview with your permission and transcribe the tape for the purpose of accuracy. I will give you a copy of the transcript so that you may see that I have captured your words correctly. At the end of the study, the tapes will be destroyed. I will assign a fictitious name on the transcript or you may choose one yourself. Your real name will not be used nor will identifying information be used in any form in the preparation of the dissertation or in possible manuscripts prepared for publication in scholarly journals.

Risks of Participation: There are no known risks associated with this project which are greater than those ordinarily encountered in daily life. Some participants may consider the subject matter to be of a sensitive nature.

Benefits: Possible benefits of this study include: a) identifying possible factors that lead to new teachers leaving the profession; b) gathering information that is not known regarding the cumulative retention rate of new teachers who participate in the induction process; c) an opportunity for individuals who have left teaching to reflect and share their experience in a safe environment; and d) and increased understanding of factors that contribute to teacher turnover.

Confidentiality: Participant names will not be used in the research study and all data will be kept confidential. In order to protect the identity of the participants, pseudonyms will be used. The data, including the list that matches the participant with their pseudonym, will be kept in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office. The data will be kept for five years at which point paper documents will be shredded and tapes will be destroyed. The study may result in published articles, dissertation, and/or presentations at professional conferences. Any reporting that arises from this research study will not identify individuals, places, names or specific events.

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.

Contacts: At any time, participants may contact the researcher, Starla Halcomb, Doctoral Candidate, Oklahoma State University at 405-744-7741 or starla.fields@okstate.edu. Additionally, participants may contact Dr. Mary Jo Self, Dissertation Advisor, Oklahoma State University at 405-744-9191 or maryjo.self@okstate.edu. If you have questions about the research and your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact Dr. Sue C. Jacobs, IRB Chair, 219 Cordell North, Stillwater, OK 74078, 405-744-1676 or irb@okstate.edu.

Participants Rights: As a participant in this research, you are entitled to know the nature of the research. You are free to decline to participate, and you are free to stop the interview or withdraw from the study at any time. No penalty exists for withdrawing your participation. Feel free to ask any questions at any time about the nature of this research project and the methods I am using. Your suggestions and concerns are important to me.

Signatures: Please indicate your willingness to participate in this research process by providing your signature below. The signatures below indicate an acknowledgment of the terms described above.

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 RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

DATE

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

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

DATE

(The participant signs two copies; the participant receives a copy, and the student researcher retains a copy)



Appendix G

Absolute and Relative Retention Rate Figures

Figure G1

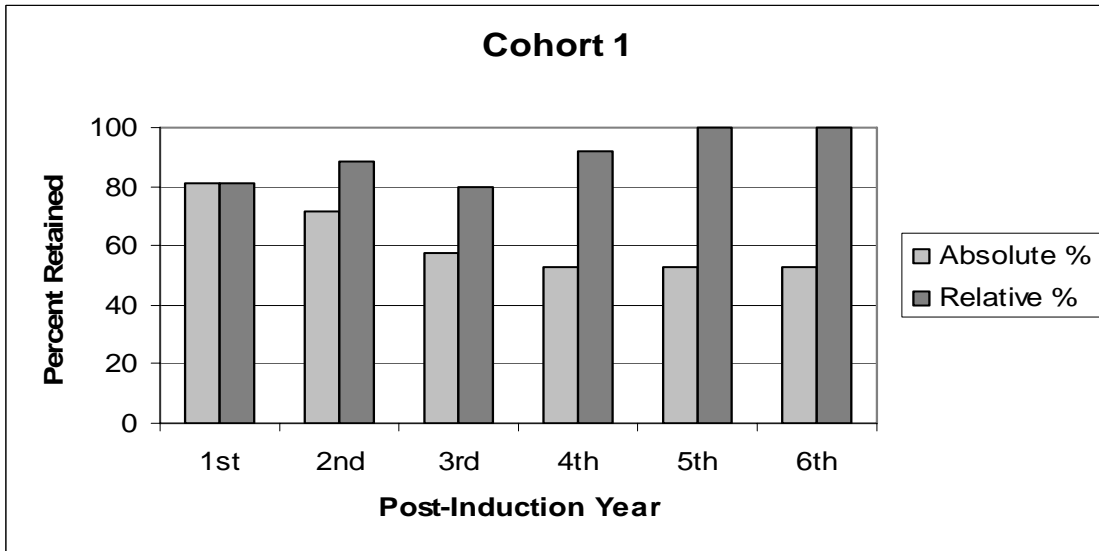


Figure G2

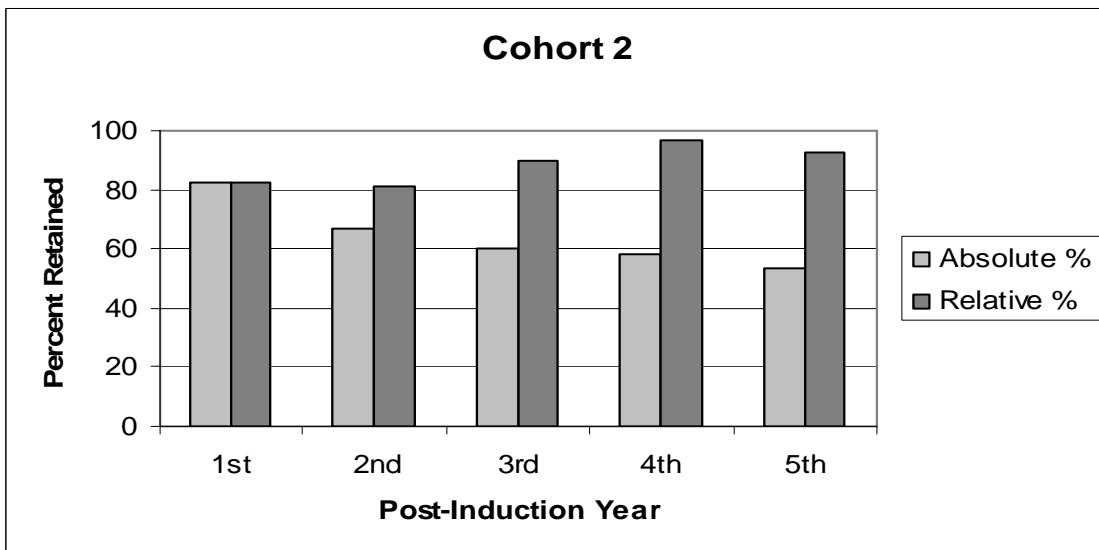


Figure G3

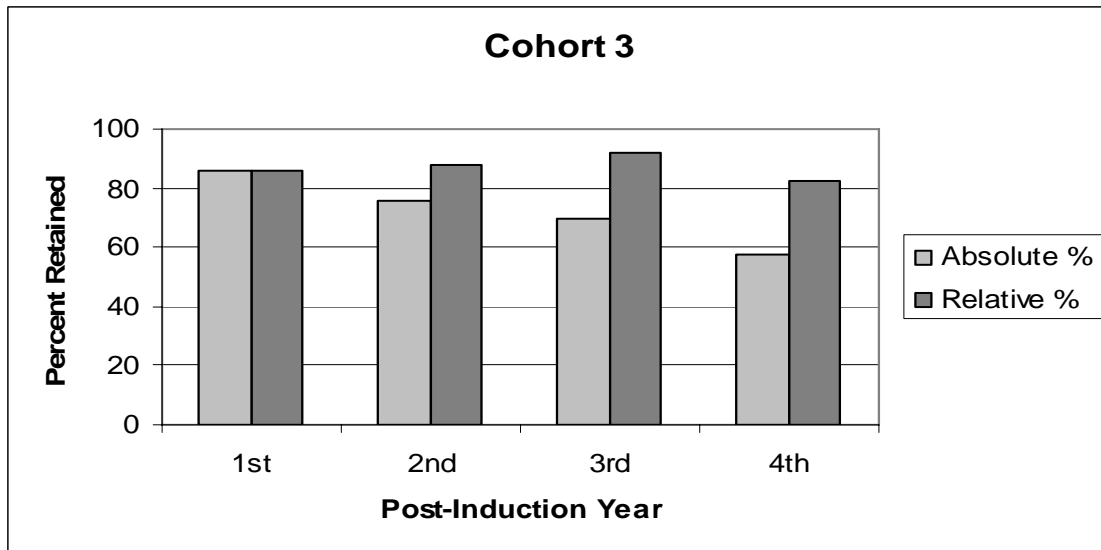


Figure G4

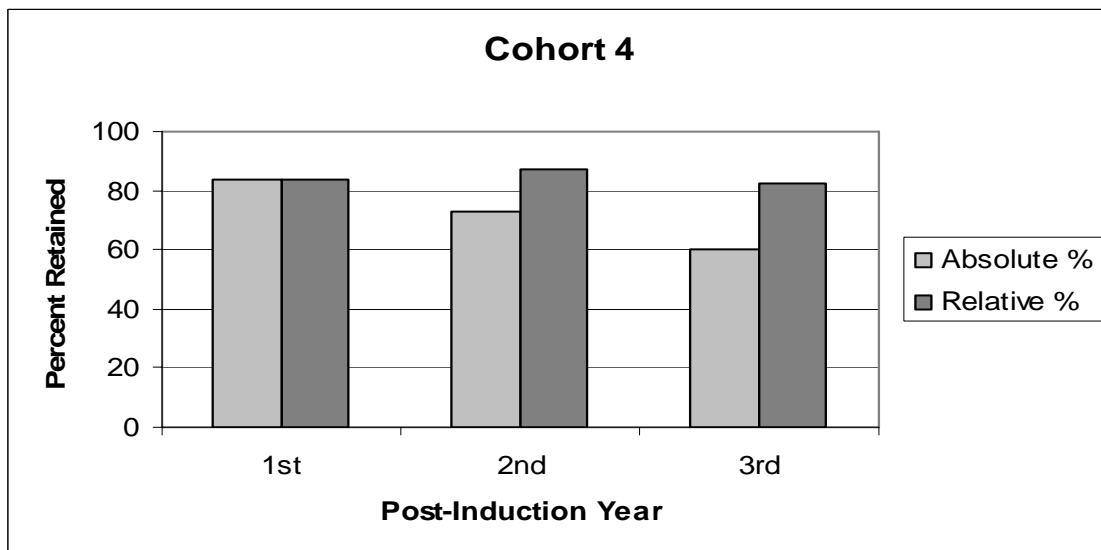


Figure G5

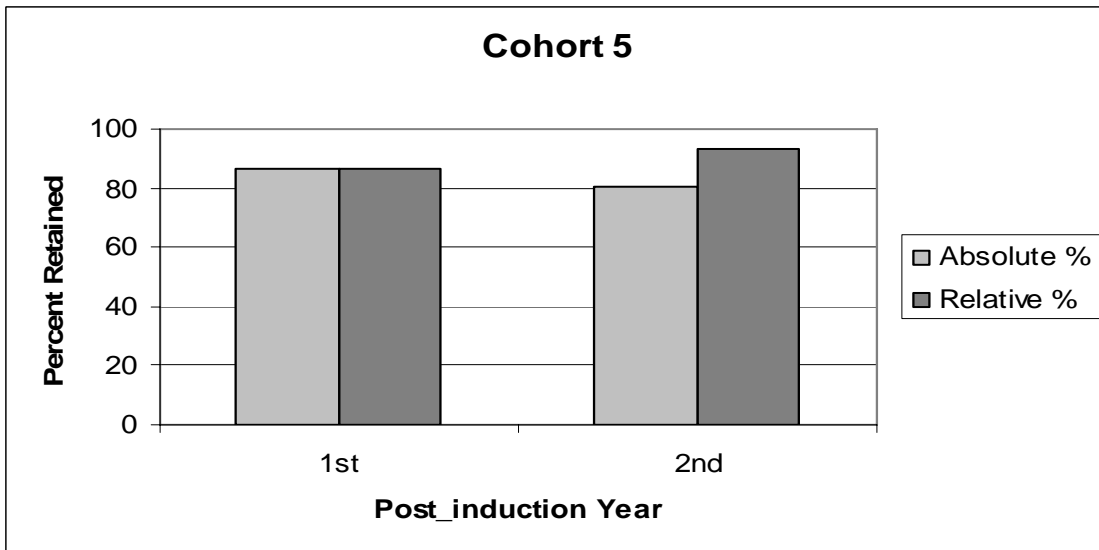
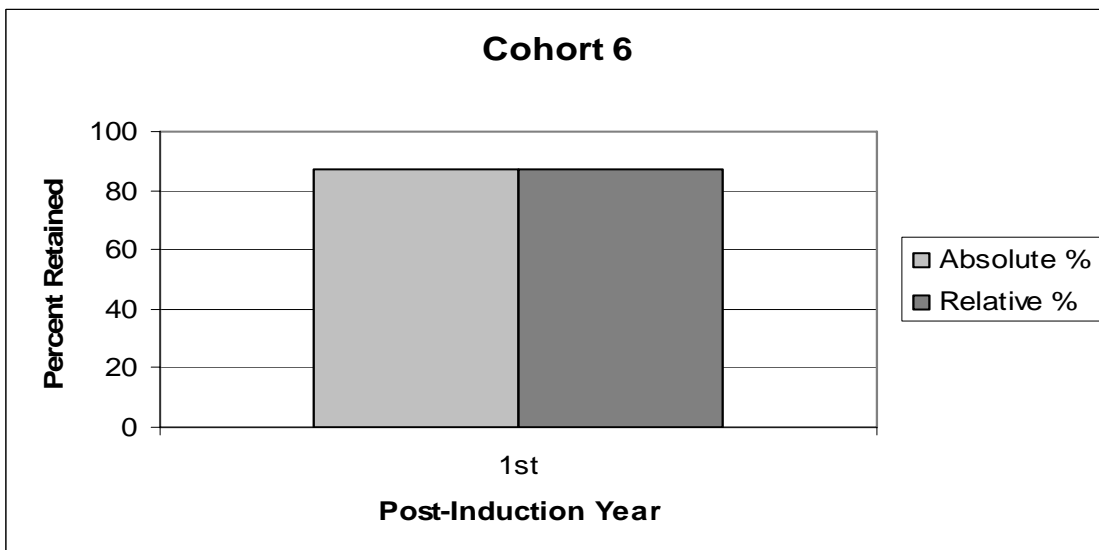


Figure G6



VITA

Starla Lynn Halcomb

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Thesis: ARE THEY BEING RETAINED: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT ON
THE CUMULATIVE NEW TEACHER RETENTION RATE OF THE
OKLAHOMA CAREERTECH NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROCESS

Major Field: Occupational Education Studies

Biographical:

Education: Graduated from East Central High School, Tulsa, Oklahoma, in May 1988; received Bachelor of Science in Secondary Education with emphasis in Marketing Education from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, in May 1992; received Master of Science in Occupational and Adult Education from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, in May 1997; completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Education with emphasis in Occupational Education Studies from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma, in July, 2007.

Experience: Worked at Nathan Hale High, Tulsa Oklahoma from 1992-1997, teaching Marketing and Management. Employed by Autry Technology Center, Enid, Oklahoma from 1997-1999 as an administrative intern. Served as Middle School Principal for Chisholm Middle School, Enid, Oklahoma, from 1999-2004. Worked as a Graduate Research Assistant at Oklahoma State University from 2005-2007 and as part-time faculty for OSU from 2007 to the present.

Professional Memberships: American Educational Research Association (AERA); National Association of Industrial and Technical Teacher Education (NAITTE); American Association for Teaching and Curriculum (AATC); Rocky Mountain Educational Research Association (RMERA); Omicron Tau Theta (OTT).

Name: Starla Lynn Halcomb

Date of Degree: July, 2007

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Stillwater, Oklahoma

Title of Study: ARE THEY BEING RETAINED: AN ANALYSIS OF THE EFFECT ON THE CUMULATIVE NEW TEACHER RETENTION RATE OF THE OKLAHOMA *CAREERTECH* NEW TEACHER INDUCTION PROCESS

Pages in Study: 144

Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Major Field: Occupational Education Studies

Scope and Method of Study: The scope of this study included the 299 new *CareerTech* teachers, from 27 *CareerTech* Schools in Oklahoma, which participated in the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process from 2000-2006. The methodology employed by this study was a mixed-methods approach. This included distributing individual data collection instruments to each of the 27 *CareerTech* schools requesting descriptive information on the teaching status of induction process participants and 12 in-depth qualitative interviews of participants who had left teaching.

Findings and Conclusions: The findings and conclusions for this study include the cumulative retention rate for the Oklahoma *CareerTech* New Teacher Induction Process from 2000-2006 is 70%. The overall one-year retention rate for the induction process is 86%. The 12 in-depth interviews of induction process participants who had left teaching uncovered seven inductive themes. Administrators and a perceived lack of support from administration was stated as a key factor. Eight of the 12 participants (66%) interviewed reported issues with administration as the key factor in their decision to leave teaching. The fact that most participants reported systemic issues as the source of decisions for leaving the profession may suggest that administrators can and, in fact, do have a greater influence on retention than previously thought. Administrators are, after all, in a position to have significant influence over many systemic issues. This study found the reasons given by these participants for departing the profession to be almost solely systemic in nature.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Mary Jo Self
