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Supporting Novice Teachers in Struggling Schools: Exploring a Mentoring Program's Components

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This dissertation, directed and approved by the candidate's committee, has been accepted by the College of Graduate and Professional Studies of Abilene Christian University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

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Date 05/07/2020

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School of Educational Leadership

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of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

by

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May 2020

Dedication

   This dissertation is dedicated to my father (deceased) and mother, both of whom instilled in me the importance of obtaining an education and the power of knowledge. This dissertation is also dedicated to my only son, who encouraged me to pursue my doctoral dream instead of waiting for the right moment. I am so glad that I listened to you, Kevin, Jr. I would like to thank you all for your love, support, and encouragement.

Acknowledgments

I want to take this opportunity to thank all of my family and friends. To my deceased father and to the best mother in the world, thank you for teaching me the value of setting goals, working hard, and obtaining my dreams. I appreciate your understanding, patience, and encouragement since I began my doctoral journey. I thank you for your positivity and for believing in me no matter the circumstance. To my wonderful children, Tiffany, Zachary, Cherish, Alexandria, and Kevin, Jr., thank you for your understanding and patience. Remember to pursue your dreams and know that all things are possible if you only believe. Kevin, Jr., I will always be grateful for your motivating me to begin my doctoral journey. To my two angels, my beautiful granddaughters, Zoe, and Taylin, thank you for being so sweet and adding extra life and joy to my days. Zoe, thanks for allowing me to complete my assignments while you sat beside me and played on your computer. Now, we can do so many fun things together without my having to write papers.

To Dr. Irma Harper, my dissertation chair, thank you for guiding, supporting, and encouraging me. From the first time we spoke over the phone, I knew God had answered my prayer. I will always be grateful and appreciative for your positivity and encouragement. To my committee, Dr. Karen Maxwell and Dr. Christie Bledsoe, thank you for your sacrifice and service. You all pushed me to become a better writer by providing suggestions and insights on how to improve my writing. To Dr. Debbie Williams, my mentor professor, thank you for your guidance and encouragement. To my principal, Mr. Eric Hill, thanks for your support during this time. Last but not least, thank you Lord for being with me, especially when things were challenging. You answered every prayer, and I am blessed and eternally grateful.

Abstract

This study addressed the problem of retention for novice teachers in struggling schools. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore a mentoring program in a large school district in Louisiana. Data were collected using questionnaires derived from the teacher questionnaire of the National Teacher and Principal Survey 2015–2016 School Year, in-depth mentor and novice teacher interviews, and mentoring artifacts. Findings indicated that friendships, relationships, common planning times, modeling, feedback, reflection, and training were critical to the success of novice teachers. Additional findings revealed that the end-of-year reflection, cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity were the most effective components of the mentoring program for the mentor teachers. For novice teachers, cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity were the most effective components. It was concluded that this study's district should consider having mentors meet their novice teacher at the beginning of the school year and provide additional training on the curriculum, classroom management, and relationships. In addition, novice teachers need training on teaching special needs and English Language Learners and school processes such as providing remediation for struggling students and tracking students' progress. Mentors and novice teachers would benefit from having a schedule that allows for common planning times and availability to improve the components of classroom observations, observation feedback, and end-of-year reflection. It was recommended to increase the number of days for the induction program to reduce stress for the novice teachers.

Keywords: attrition, retention, formal mentoring program, mentor teacher, novice teacher, struggling schools, induction program, urban school

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Teaching and learning impacts thousands of teachers and students across America. Many organizations, professions, and families embrace education. Schools need quality teachers that are committed to the overall success of schools and students. In addition, mentor teachers need to be capable and willing to interact with novice teachers. According to Lejonberg and Christophersen (2015), human interaction is about the exchange of social and material resources that are driven by reciprocity. In other words, "people engage in relationships in which the benefits and the rewards are greater than the costs" (Lejonberg & Christophersen, 2015, p. 47). Novice teachers look for people who can lead and guide them in the right direction. Likewise, committed, experienced teachers impact the interactions that occur with other novice teachers and can be the driving force in building strong relationships. Novice teachers need ongoing support and feedback to grow and become successful in their schools and the teaching profession (Rodgers & Skelton, 2014).

Public education is experiencing a severe teacher shortage (Ryan et al., 2017). Ingersoll (2007) compared the recruitment and attrition of teachers to a "bucket rapidly losing water because of holes in the bottom" (p. 6). Pouring more water into the bucket will not solve the problem if the bucket is not repaired (Ingersoll, 2007). As a result, school districts attempt to retain quality teachers. Bathen (2006) explained how novice teachers and experienced teachers become frustrated with their jobs and quit. The result is a declining pool of available teachers and higher attrition in districts with poorly performing schools (Bathen, 2006). Furthermore, novice teachers should learn to balance instruction with classroom management, which can prove daunting. According to Mee and Haverback (2014), between 40% and 50% of teachers

leave the classroom within their first five years of teaching, which compromises the academic success of students.

Teacher Attrition

The number of teachers leaving the teaching profession has created a teacher shortage across the globe. The teacher shortage is prevalent in countries such as New Zealand, China, and England (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). Retiring Baby Boomers, increasing college tuition, low teacher salaries, low retention rates, school organizational problems, and school environments attribute to the teacher shortage (Beare et al., 2012; Mulholland & Wallace, 2012). Having effective teachers in the classroom is necessary to provide quality instruction for students. It is concerning that 50% of novice teachers leave the classroom within five years (Burke et al., 2013; Haj-Broussard et al., 2016). According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011), 25% of novice teachers in the U.S. leave before their third year, and almost 40% leave within the first five years.

Statement of the Problem

Across the country, over 41% of novice teachers leave the teaching profession within the first five years (Curry et al., 2016). About 9.5% of novice teachers quit before the end of their first year (Zhang & Zeller, 2016). Approximately one-third of novice teachers leave the classroom because of a lack of support from administrators and experienced teachers (Lee, 2018; Sparks et al., 2017). As a result of the high attrition, many school districts have had to hire full-time substitute teachers, which negatively impacts instruction.

Teacher attrition rates continue to rise in the state of Louisiana. Patterson Parish School District (PPSD), which a pseudonym, is one of the largest districts in Louisiana (Louisiana Believes, 2018). Patterson Parish School District consists of 10 struggling, urban, elementary schools. The attrition rate for these elementary schools in 2017-2018 was 12%, which exceeded

the state average by 3.5% (Louisiana Believes, 2018). Patterson Parish School District had never explored the support that mentors provide to novice teachers.

Effective mentoring can help retain novice teachers by reducing stress, increasing confidence, and forming relationships (Sparks et al., 2017). Researchers found that one-third of novice teachers leave the classroom because of a lack of support (Fox & Peters, 2013; Ingersoll, 2012; Lee, 2018). The statistics confirmed that 66% of novice teachers who did not receive mentoring left the teaching profession. To help retain novice teachers, PPSD utilizes a mentoring program. For this study, novice teachers were identified as those with at least one year but no more than five years of teaching experience.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the mentoring program at PPSD from the perspective of the mentors and the novice teachers. It was the intent of the study to discover if the program components were meeting the needs of the participants. The results of this study provided key information that could assist district personnel in determining if the mentoring support is adequate and effective. Information was needed from mentors and novice teachers to conduct an adequate evaluation of the mentoring program.

The goal was to have 18 participants—nine mentor teachers and nine novice teachers. Participation in the study was voluntary. The selection pool of mentors and novice teachers consisted of mentor teachers and novice teachers from nine elementary schools in PPSD that are experiencing high attrition rates of teachers. Mentor teacher qualifications included more than five years of teaching experience and completion of a formal mentor training program. Novice teacher qualification required five years or less of teaching experience and completion of the mentoring program in the last year.

To establish internal validity, I administered questionnaires, conducted interviews using audio recordings, and examined mentoring artifacts. First, I emailed the questionnaires for the participants to complete. The mentors and novice teachers received different questionnaires, and the questionnaires helped to establish a foundation for the semistructured interviews. Second, I conducted 18 semistructured interviews with each participant that were audio-recorded. The interview guide was emailed to the participants prior to the interviews, so they could become familiar with the questions. I developed an interview guide for the data collection phase, and the questions were open-ended. The guide contained predetermined questions, and additional follow-up questions were asked as needed during the interview. The questions addressed the components of the PPSD mentoring program, the support the mentors provided to the novice teachers, and if the support met the needs of the novice teachers. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, coded, and themes were developed. The mentoring program in PPSD deserved further study because district leaders need to know the perspectives from the mentors and the novice teachers to help improve the effectiveness of the mentoring program.

Research Questions

      Q1. What are the perceptions of the mentors regarding the PPSD mentoring program?

      Q2. What are the perceptions of the novice teachers regarding the PPSD mentoring program?

Definition of Key Terms

      Elementary schools. Elementary schools include schools beginning with pre-kindergarten through seventh grade (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015).

Formal mentoring. Formal mentoring occurs when a mentor provides support to a novice teacher through a structured program using guidelines set forth from a school, district, or state (Desimone et al., 2014).

Induction programs. Induction programs refer to formal, structured professional development programs that begin on the first day of school and continue for two or more years (Kutsyuruba et al., 2017). An induction program improves the performance of novice teachers and academic achievement. School districts, states, or schools can orchestrate the induction programs (Ingersoll, 2012).

Informal mentoring. Informal mentoring occurs when a novice teacher initiates a relationship with a more experienced teacher who provides instructional, emotional, and other professional support to the novice teacher (Desimone et al., 2014).

Mentor. In this study, a mentor refers to an experienced teacher who guides, observes, and provides instructional support and feedback to the novice teacher by utilizing a mentoring program (Callahan, 2016).

Mentoring. Mentoring is a practice where an experienced educator provides support, guidance, advice, and encouragement to a beginning teacher with the intended purpose of enhancing teaching and learning (Bressman et al., 2018). Mentoring involves building a nurturing relationship with the novice teacher, where the mentor guides the novice teacher (Mena et al., 2017; Polikoff et al., 2015). For this study, mentor teachers were required to have more than five years of teaching experience and completion of a formal mentor training program.

Novice teacher. For this study, novice teachers are identified as teachers with at least one year but no more than five years of teaching experience (PPSD, 2018).

Struggling schools. In this study, struggling schools are schools with low student test scores, high teacher turnover, low-income students, and students of color (Haj-Broussard et al., 2016).

Teacher attrition. Teacher attrition occurs when teachers leave the teaching profession to pursue other career opportunities or for other personal reasons (Haj-Broussard et al., 2016).

Teacher retention. Teacher retention is a set of factors that affect whether teachers remain in the teaching profession (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014).

Urban schools. Urban schools are schools located in communities near large metropolises that exhibit large cultural, linguistic, and socioeconomic diversity (Skerrett et al., 2018).

Summary

Teachers want to feel like they belong in the schools they teach. Novice teachers will remain in the classroom when they receive support, care, concern, and warmth (Ingersoll, 2012). On the other hand, when teachers do not feel supported, they are likely to leave the teaching profession (Mahboob, 2014). Moreover, the attrition of novice teachers can be reduced by 33% to 50% when implementing an effective mentoring program (Sparks et al., 2017).

The teacher attrition rate at PPSD in 2017 exceeded the state average by 3.5% (Louisiana Believes, 2018). The high attrition rate is a concern because of the need to retain quality teachers. Providing a more structured mentoring program for novice teachers in PPSD might prove beneficial. Examining the perspectives from the mentors and the novice teachers could provide district personnel with suggestions for creating and implementing a more effective mentoring program for novice teachers in PPSD.

Chapter 2 is a literature review. The literature review begins with a summary of the purpose of the study. Beneficial information is provided about the theoretical framework, teacher attrition, mentor needs, novice teacher needs, induction programs, and quality mentoring programs. In addition, Chapter 2 contains a review of the PPSD mentoring program by discussing how mentors interact with novice teachers and details about the components of the mentoring program.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The retention of novice teachers is a major concern in Patterson Parish School District (PPSD). Patterson Parish School District is a large school district in Louisiana that serves a diverse population. Although many of the schools in PPSD experience high teacher turnover, teacher attrition is more prevalent in PPSD's urban public and struggling schools. Patterson Parish School District's attrition rate exceeds the state by 3.5% (Louisiana Believes, 2018). Patterson Parish School District began a mentoring program to support novice teachers, but the district has not examined the effectiveness of the program in retaining novice teachers. Collecting data on the effectiveness of mentoring program's components from the perspective of the mentors and the novice teachers can provide district personnel with vital information to make improvements to the current mentoring program.

The PPSD attempts to reduce teacher attrition by providing support for novice teachers through its mentoring program. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the mentoring program at PPSD from the perspective of the mentors and the novice teachers. It was the intent of the study to discover if the program components were meeting the needs of the participants. Each novice teacher was assigned a mentor at the beginning of each school year. The results of the study can assist district personnel in determining if the support is adequate and effective and to make improvements to increase the retention of novice teachers.

I used the Brown Library at Abilene Christian University (ACU) to access resources through the distance-learning portal for graduate students, which provided most of the resources for this study. Searches of scholarly articles in the library databases included the words mentoring in education, mentor(s), new teachers, induction program, teacher induction, quality mentoring programs, struggling schools, teacher shortage, teacher attrition, teacher recruitment,

urban school, and social exchange theory. A thorough search of EBSCO, ProQuest Digital

Dissertations, Sage Publishing provided articles, Science Direct, research reports, and texts

related to the key terms. References within the scholarly articles provided access to additional

research. I collected sources from researchers in the field of teacher attrition, mentoring and

induction programs, teacher retention, and district support for mentors and novice teachers.

This chapter is organized as follows: the theoretical framework and teacher attrition in

struggling schools and urban public schools. The chapter includes existing studies on mentor

needs, novice teacher needs, and support for novice teachers. In addition, the chapter focuses on

the need for induction programs, components of a good induction program, the role mentoring

plays in novice teachers' support, and the importance of quality training in an induction program.

The chapter provides vital information about mentoring, quality mentoring programs, and the

PPSD mentoring program. The need for this proposed study and the accompanying methodology

is emphasized in Chapter 3.

Theoretical Framework

Mentors and novice teachers benefit from a mentoring program that allows the two

parties to work together and form conducive relationships. Costa and Garmston (1985) laid the

foundation for relationships and the importance of trust. The relationship formed between two

parties involves trust (Costa & Garmston, 1985), interactions, and commitment (Mahboob,

2014). In a relationship, each party needs to realize that trust is vital and that people are not

perfect (Costa & Garmston, 1985). For example, when the mentor and the novice teacher work

together without finding fault in each other, they can focus on important things such as growing

intellectually, learning about learning, and desiring to be better as an educator (Costa &

Garmston, 1985).

According to the social exchange theory (SET), human interaction is the "exchange of social and material resources" (Lejonberg & Christophersen, 2015, p. 47). This theory is based on the concept of reciprocity (COR)—giving and receiving. According to SET, people tend to embrace relationships in which the benefits and rewards are greater than the costs (Lejonberg & Christphersen, 2015; Ribarsky, 2013). People seek to obtain a balance in the give-and-take processes and choose to remain in relationships that are mutually satisfying (Ferguson, 2017).

According to Costa and Garmston (1985), trust is built when two parties believe in their relationship. Once trust is gained between the mentor and the novice teacher, the chances that the relationship will continue increases (Mahboob, 2014). Furthermore, trust can be built when the mentor is knowledgeable, and the mentor and the novice teacher are compatible (Polikoff et al., 2015). When there is compatibility between the mentor and the novice teacher, trust emerges in the relationship (Carr et al., 2017). Trust benefits relationships because it helps to ward off tension, miscommunication, and difficulties (Costa et al., 2016).

According to Lejonberg and Christophersen (2015), all social interactions rest on the balance between giving and receiving (Gouldner, 1960). Since exchange is essential in a mentor-mentee relationship, SET is an appropriate theory for this study. By using SET as a theoretical framework, the theory may help provide some insight into how mentors utilize their knowledge and power to influence their relationships with novice teachers (Mahboob, 2014). According to Holthausen (2013), people seek remunerations and awards and, at the same time, strive to avoid penalties. It is worth noting that the SET does not guarantee reciprocity in return for the invested costs. The only guarantee is the assumption that each party will support each other (Holthausen, 2013).

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) is one of the oldest and most analyzed theories and dates back over a century (Holthausen, 2013). Many credit the SET as being the most influential conceptual construct for understanding workplace behaviors (Mahboob, 2014). The SET assumes that relationships are developed, sustained, and ended based on the costs and benefits in the relationship (Ensher et al., 2001).

Initially, scientists believed that humans act and think rationally. However, later findings, in the 1920s, confirmed that people do not always act and think rationally (Holthausen, 2013). Holthausen found that human exchange was rooted in imperialism. Imperialism occurs when power is influenced through diplomacy or military force. From 1950 to 1960, scientists continued to modify the SET. Currently, the theory is applied in the area of anthropology, behavioral psychology, utilitarian economics, and sociology (Holthausen, 2013).

Although there is no agreement on the origin of the SET, many agree that Homans (1958) was one of the main founders. Homans associated social behavior with economic activities. Homans (1961) defined social exchange as "the exchange of activity, tangible or intangible, and more or less rewarding or costly, between at least two persons" (p. 13). In other words, exchanges between people can involve material goods such as money or resources, but exchanges can also include symbolic values such as respect or prestige (Ferguson, 2017; Holthausen, 2013; Lejonberg & Christophersen, 2015).

The SET is used in the business world as it relates to supply, demand, benefits, and costs. However, the SET can be applied to social situations and groups. The theory begins with the belief that people interact socially to maximize and minimize costs, which leads to positive effects (Holthausen, 2013). The SET, when applied to the mentor-novice teacher relationship,

can also be compared when used in economics. For example, a mentor makes the teaching profession and the school interesting and markets the teaching profession and the school to the novice teacher. The exchange between the two has to be continuous, which helps retain the novice teacher (Holthuasen, 2013). Therefore, it is vital that school leaders ensure that time is built into the schedule for mentors to support novice teachers.

The SET considers two main variables when relationships are formed. One variable is cohesiveness, which is defined as anything that attracts people to take part in a group. In other words, cohesiveness refers to the reward and encouragement people find when working together (Homans, 1958). Gouldner, an American sociologist, laid the foundation in his work in reciprocity. Reciprocity cannot exist without the art of cohesion and equilibrium (Gouldner, 1960). The other variable is communication or interaction. The communication variable is known as a frequency variable because it is a measure of the number of times valuable behavior is given. Interactions create interdependence and generate obligations between the two parties (Mahboob, 2014). The mentor is obligated to provide the novice teacher with instructional support, and the novice teacher is obligated to provide the mentor with an open-mind to learn and apply instructional strategies.

People tend to assess the value they give and receive to others in a group (Holthausen, 2013; Homans, 1958). This give-and-take leads to equilibrium in the exchanges. Individuals work to ensure that the other group members do not gain a higher profit than they do. Moreover, people enter into relationships to fulfill needs and will remain in the relationships as long as there are benefits (Ensher et al., 2001; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Ribarsky, 2013). It is essential that mentors and novice teachers benefit from the relationship and that the costs remain relatively low or else the relationship could dissolve (Mahboob, 2014).

Individuals may not see rewards in the same way, and a reward, today, may be seen as a cost at a later date (Mahboob, 2014; Ribarsky, 2013). Homans (1958) stated that individuals give much to receive much from others. The costs and benefits may often fluctuate between the mentor and the novice teacher (Ferguson, 2017). However, this fluctuation is understood and accepted by both parties (Mahboob, 2013).

It is vital to understand what mentors and novice teachers gain from their relationships. According to Lejonberg and Christophersen (2015), mentors are likely to gain strong personal development, a sense of self-worth, satisfaction, increased skills, and a positive reputation. Moreover, novice teachers are likely to gain high levels of satisfaction, a desire to help others, improved work performance, increased desire to remain in the classroom, strong management skills, and improved relationships with their students compared to novice teachers who do not receive mentoring (Lejonberg & Christophersen, 2015).

Concept of Reciprocity

Gouldner (1960) described the concept of reciprocity (COR) as a moral norm with components of moral codes. Gouldner looked at the universality of reciprocity (Sabourin, 2013). Many sociologists struggle to define reciprocity. However, many sociologists agree that reciprocity is a key societal principle (Gouldner, 1960). Reciprocity is considered a functional theory. By envisioning it as a functional theory, functionalism explains social patterns occurring in social systems (Gouldner, 1960).

According to the COR, ethical values are produced, such as respect, self-esteem, friendship, trust, and shared responsibility (Sabourin, 2013). Although reciprocity can be applied to economics, it is motivated, created, and sustained by social groups (Sabourin, 2013). Reciprocity leads to interdependence, brotherhood, and responsibility, which creates a sense of

friendship. The interdependence is what connects members in social systems (Emerson, 1962; Holthausen, 2013; Mahboob, 2013).

Effective commitment helps drive exchanges between mentors and novice teachers. The positive relationships and exchanges between mentors and novice teachers help to improve commitment to their schools and to the teaching profession (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Lejonberg & Christophersen, 2015). Furthermore, the interaction between people is rooted in reciprocity and involves both parties being mutually gratified (Gouldner, 1960; Mahmood, 2013). It is vital that mentors and novice teachers develop strong relationships with evidence of reciprocity. When there is no reciprocity, relationships end. Therefore, mentors and novice teachers should work together and have reciprocal exchanges.

Teacher Attrition

The statistics for the number of novice teachers who leave the profession is astounding. Over 50% of novice teachers leave the profession during their first five years of teaching (Burke et al., 2013; Haj-Broussard et al., 2016). Zhang and Zeller (2016) asserted that 9.5% of novice teachers quit before the end of their first year. The percentage is even higher for urban and hard-to-staff schools (Bressman et al., 2018). Experienced and novice teachers both leave the profession, but novice teachers tend to leave the profession at much higher rates than experienced teachers (Curry et al., 2016). Researchers have found that one-third of novice teachers leave the classroom because of a lack of support (Fox & Peters, 2013; Ingersoll, 2012; Lee, 2018). As a result, many schools hire teachers who are not certified.

Teacher attrition is complicated because it may be defined as a teacher moving to a different school (transfer attrition), leaving the teaching profession for an alternate occupation (exit-attrition), or leaving the labor force completely (retirement; Crandell & Howell, 2009). Haj-

Broussard et al. (2016) defined teacher attrition as teachers who leave the teaching profession to pursue other career opportunities or for other personal reasons. This attrition has caused an ongoing teacher shortage. While shortages tend to draw attention to recruitment issues, a report by Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) found that 90% of open teaching positions are created by teachers who left the profession. Some are retiring, but about two-thirds of teachers leave for other reasons, mostly due to the dissatisfaction with teaching (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Factors Contributing to Teacher Attrition

To retain teachers, it is essential to understand why teachers leave the profession. A range of factors, such as morale, accountability expectations, and salaries, contribute to the attrition problems, but stress and poor management of stressors are rated as top reasons why teachers leave the profession (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). Novice teachers also leave due to insufficient classroom resources, low pay, lack of support, and large classroom size (Sparks et al., 2017, p. 60). Other factors that are predictive of teacher attrition are lack of administrative support, sub-par salaries, school size, and the proportion of minority students (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017). To decrease the teacher attrition rate, these factors must be addressed.

Figure 1 depicts the factors that capture the many reasons why teachers say they leave the teaching profession. The major factors are personal reasons, new pursuits, accountability problems, administration support, student behavior, salary, induction and support, working conditions, school leadership, and collaborative opportunities (Podolsky et al., 2016). The figure shows the reason teachers leave along with the percentage of teachers who ranked the reason as *extremely* or *very important* in their decision to leave.

Figure 1

Why Do Teachers Leave?

Figure 1: Why Do Teachers Leave?

Reason	Percentage
Personal life reasons (pregnancy, child care, other)	37%
Pursue a different position	28%
Dissatisfied with school assessment/accountability policies	25%
Dissatisfied with administration	21%
Dissatisfied with teaching as a career	21%
Too many classroom intrusions	18%
Student discipline problems	17%
Dissatisfied with support for student assessment	17%
Lack of autonomy	14%
Want or need higher salary	13%
Lack of influence over school policies	13%
Enrolled in courses to improve career opportunities	13%
Dissatisfied with job assignment	12%
Moved or geography issues	11%

The percentage of voluntary leavers who rated the factor as extremely or very important in their decision to leave. Percentages do not add to 100 because teachers can select multiple factors.

Source: LPI analysis of the Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS), 2013, from the Schools and Staffing Surveys, National Center for Education Statistics.

Podolsky, A., Kini, T., Bishop, J., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). *Solving the teacher shortage: How to attract and retain excellent educators* (brief). Learning Policy Institute. Reprinted with Permission.

Teacher attrition factors are different across the country. In California, the factors are race, income, salaries, and working conditions. In Chicago, the factors are low student test scores, and in North Carolina, teacher perceptions of school leadership are the factors (Haj-Broussard et al., 2016). In Louisiana, where PPSD is located, the attrition factors are issues with student discipline, school leadership, salary, quality of life, and teaching disillusionment (Frantz, 1994). As a result, every state uses a different approach to address the teacher shortage. Teacher attrition appears to be more severe with minority teachers. Ingersoll and May (2011) stated,

While minorities have entered teaching at higher rates than whites over the past two

decades, minority teachers also have left schools at higher rates. Overall, the data show

that minority teachers' careers have been less stable than those of white teachers, and

included more job transitioning. In recent years, minority teachers were more likely to

migrate from one school to another or to leave teaching altogether. The migration was

especially true for male minority teachers. (p. 63)

The minority teacher population is growing, but so is their attrition. Ingersoll (2014)

stated, "In effect, this growth in the numbers of minority teachers is all the more remarkable

because it's in spite of the fact of the high quit rates" (n.p.). Though recruiting minority teachers

is crucial, efforts need to address the sustainability of these teachers.

Urban schools with high poverty rates are heavily affected by teacher attrition. Many

school districts place novice teachers in challenging schools and in demanding classrooms

because of the need for certified teachers is high in these schools (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Zhang and Zeller (2016) stated that at-risk schools experience the "revolving door effect". This

effect involves the constant search for new teachers to replace the novice teachers that have left.

Novice teachers are continually coming into the profession and then leaving. As a result,

struggling schools' climates and academics suffer (Morettini, 2016; Ryan et al., 2017).

Furthermore, most urban, high poverty schools have a large population of minority students from

disadvantaged backgrounds (Dupriez et al., 2016). Although higher-performing schools suffer

from novice teachers leaving the profession, the attrition rate for novice teachers is higher in

struggling schools than in higher-performing schools (Gaikhorst et al., 2014; Morettini, 2016).

Most urban schools prove to be challenging because of cultural diversity issues and

violence (Gaikhorst et al., 2014). In regards to teacher retention, a higher salary is not enough for

teachers who work in struggling schools (Morettini, 2016). Haj-Broussard et al. (2016) indicated

that teachers prefer to work in schools with higher-achieving students and lower levels of

poverty. It is not surprising that novice teachers are more likely to leave urban and suburban schools with high minority and low achieving students (Lindqvist et al., 2014).

School districts pay an enormous price for teacher attrition and pay an even higher price for student achievement (Carr et al., 2017; Darling-Hammond, 1984). As a result of the high attrition rates, academic achievement is impacted negatively (Callahan, 2016). Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) reinforced that retaining teachers is critical to ensure that there are enough well-prepared and experienced teachers in the classrooms to effectively serve all students. They continue by saying, "High turnover rates reduce achievement for students whose classrooms are directly affected, as well as for other students in the school" (p.v.). Approximately 1,000 teachers leave the teaching profession daily, and an additional 1,000 teachers look for more desirable positions or look to transfer to new schools each day (Carr et al., 2017).

Another consequence of teacher turnover is the financial costs to school districts. When teachers leave the classroom, valuable staff time and resources are depleted. An estimated 60% of novice teachers hired replace colleagues who left the classroom before their retirement (Learning Policy Institute, 2017b). Furthermore, urban school districts spend $20,000 on novice teachers to help pay for recruitment, hiring, and training. However, these investments hurt districts when teachers leave within one or two years of being hired. Most urban districts experience the highest percentage of teacher attrition (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD], 2003; Learning Policy Institute, 2017a).

The costs of teacher turnover are felt across the country. For example, Texas used an industry-based model that estimated that when school districts combine termination, hiring, screening costs, and costs to fill vacant positions, the total costs can be as high as 150% of the

leaver's salary (ASCD, 2003). Furthermore, Texas spends between 329 million to 1.59 million dollars per year due to teacher attrition (ASCD, 2003). The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) found that teacher turnover costs the country 7.3 billion dollars annually (Teacher Education, 2017). These costs include recruiting, hiring, and training. Although teacher attrition costs vary between school districts, urban schools tend to experience higher costs than rural districts (ASCD, 2003; Teacher Education, 2017). For example, NCTAF estimated that the cost of a teacher leaving a small district in Jemez, New Mexico, to be $4,366, in contrast, to a teacher leaving a public school in Chicago, cost $17, 872 (Teacher Education, 2017).

Induction Programs

One significant solution to teacher attrition is the development of induction programs. Induction programs refer to formal, structured professional development programs that begin on the first day of school and continue for two or more years (Kutsyuruba et al., 2017). The goal of these support programs is to improve the performance and retention of novice teachers, that is, to both enhance and prevent the loss of teachers' human capital, with the ultimate aim of improving the growth and learning of students (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

Schools must retain novice teachers by having a structured support system such as induction programs (Sowell, 2017). Twenty-seven states require that all novice teachers participate in some form of induction program. Fifteen states have established formal programs, and 11 states require induction and mentorship for all first and second-year teachers (California County Superintendents Educational Services Association [CCSESA], 2016). Induction programs for novice teachers increase retention and student achievement (Curry et al., 2016; Gaikhorst et al., 2014; Ingersoll, 2012; Kutsyuruba et al., 2017; Mitchell et al., 2017).

Furthermore, induction programs affect novice teachers' practice and success (Curry et al.,

2016).

      Novice teachers, the largest group of teachers in one of the largest professions in the

country, tend to leave the profession early, which suggests there is a need for induction programs

(Ingersoll, 2012). Supporting teachers with induction programs at the beginning of their career is

imperative because these years are when the greatest transformation occurs with the novice

teachers' skills (Carr et al., 2017). A study conducted by Ryan et al. (2017) found that teachers

grow when they are supported effectively at the beginning of their teaching careers. Figure 2

compares turnover percentages between novice teachers by the amount of induction that the

novice teacher received during their first year of teaching. Figure 2 indicates the predicted

turnover probabilities for teachers completing various induction packages. The packages include

no induction, basic induction, basic induction plus collaboration, and basic induction plus

collaboration plus teacher network, and extra resources (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The lighter

bars show the predicted probability of leavers; the darker bars shows the predicted probability of

movers. Teachers who received no induction had the highest probability of leaving the teaching

profession (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

Figure 2

Induction and Turnover Percentages

Percent Turnover of Beginning Teachers After One Year, by Amount of Induction Received (2000)
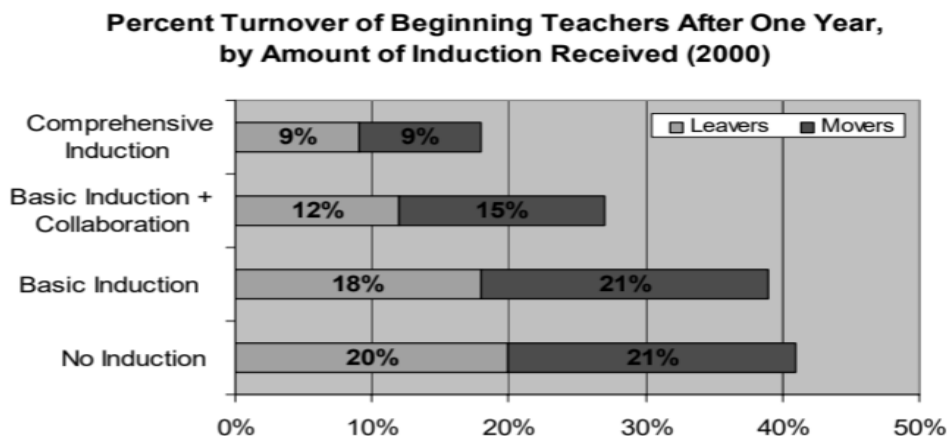
Comprehensive induction has the potential to cut new teacher turnover rates in half. Smith, T., & R. Ingersoll. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? *American Educational Research Journal*, *41*, p. 705. Reprinted with Permission.

The number of teacher induction programs over the last 20 years has soared. New teachers participating in these induction programs have increased by more than 90% from 1990 to 2011 (CCSESA, 2016). Ingersoll and Strong (2011) pioneered most of the previous work on induction programs and the impact these programs have on novice teachers. Ingersoll and Strong published 15 empirical studies and found that induction programs have consistently had a positive impact in the following areas: teacher retention, classroom instructional practices, and student achievement (CCSESA, 2016). However, Ingersoll and Strong (2011) found that the strength of the induction program depends on the depth and intensity of the induction program (as cited in CCSESA, 2016).

Comprehensive induction programs have several components. These components may vary from school to school. The California County Superintendents Educational Services Association (CCSESA) released a report in 2016, "Best Practices in Teacher and Administrator Induction Programs." Generally, induction programs have the following components:

1. Formal or Informal Orientation: Includes a review of basic school procedures and policies such as how to order supplies, how to organize a classroom, and where to find instructional resources.

2. Mentoring: Mentors and mentees are required to meet periodically to review progress and discuss challenges. Mentors conduct observations and assessments and provide feedback.

3. Professional Development: Incorporates the opportunity to engage in ongoing learning through coursework, in-service development, and/or participation in professional learning communities. (p. 6)

The scope of induction programs may vary, but most have generically common components. The most common component is mentoring (Polikoff et al., 2015).

Mentoring

A study by Polikoff et al. (2015) found that mentoring is the most common type of induction support. Many school districts implement formal mentoring programs. Polikoff et al. reported that 78% of novice teachers received mentoring support in 2007-2008. Mentoring has been shown to improve a teacher's career and job satisfaction, social skills, income, and promotion rate (Ensher et al., 2001) and to reduce attrition by 33% to 50% when implementing an effective mentoring program (Sparks et al., 2017).

Kemmis et al. (2014) claimed that mentoring could be viewed in three different ways: mentoring as supervision, mentoring as support, and mentoring as collaborative self-development. Some mentoring programs have a combination of the views. It is important to note that mentoring programs' discussions, practices, and designs will look quite different based on the view that is chosen (Kemmis et al., 2014). Beek et al. (2019) stated that formal mentoring

occurs when the mentors perform observations, engage in discussions, and provide feedback to the novice teachers.

If mentoring is to be effective, the program must have strong foundational policies, and the program must be of high quality. Mentoring quality represents how well the mentoring policies influence teacher outcomes. An effective mentoring program depends on mentoring policies, quality of implementation, and interactions between mentors and novice teachers (Polikoff et al., 2015). Mentoring policies include (a) teaching experience, (b) mentor location, (c) time during the day to meet, (d) full/part-time mentor, (e) mentor training, (f) evaluative role, (g) mentor caseload, and (h) mentor compensation (Polikoff et al., 2015, p. 78). Effective mentoring programs consist of guidelines and accountability measures. Polikoff et al. (2015) claimed that when mentoring policies lead to productive interactions between the mentor and the novice teacher that positive outcomes ensue.

In an effort to create effective mentoring programs, school districts can use a tiered process to respond to beginning teachers' needs (SREB, 2018). Novice teachers' needs can be thought of as being on three levels, and the mentors' roles differ at each level. The first tier represents low-level needs, such as logging in and using software, using the copy machine, or knowing the procedure to request a substitute. In this tier, mentors act as "information providers" (SREB, 2018, p. 8). The second tier denotes mid-level needs, such as talking about the layout of the classroom, grading and analyzing student work, and preparing for a parent conference. In this tier, mentors act as "thought partners" (SREB, 2018, p. 8). The third tier represents high-level needs, such as developing questions to support student learning, differentiating student work, and creating high-quality literacy centers. Mentors act as "skill developers while they are in this third tier" (SREB, 2018, p. 8). However, before novice teachers can engage in professional

development, coaching, and self-reflection, they need to feel comfortable in their roles and the

school environment. Therefore, having mentors begin with the low-level needs is crucial in the

mentoring process (SREB, 2018).

Quality mentoring programs consist of mentors who are committed to the mentor role.

Effective commitment positively affects work performance, job engagement, attendance, and

goal setting and achievement (Lejonberg & Christophersen, 2015). According to the SET, people

engage in relationships in which the rewards and benefits outweigh the costs (Lejonberg &

Christophersen, 2015). Exchanging information is imperative when mentors and novice teachers

interact with each other. Quality mentoring programs rest on the compatibility of the mentor and

novice teacher, mentor knowledge and ability, mentor and novice teacher's interactions, and

mentor policy (Polikoff et al., 2015). The relationship between the mentor and the novice teacher

is important for positive mentoring outcomes. The mentor and school leaders must understand

the needs of the novice teacher.

Mentor Needs

In order to be a successful mentor, school leaders need to be aware of specific needs that

mentors have. According to Sowell (2017), the specific needs should be addressed to help the

mentors be successful in their relationship with their novice teacher. Mentors need to be trained

to better serve their novice teacher. Without training and knowledge, mentors limit the success of

novice teachers (Sowell, 2017). Although little is known about mentors' professional knowledge

and their needs (Aspfors & Fransson, 2015), adequate education is essential to the mentors'

success. According to Sowell (2017), mentors have to be trained to become knowledgeable about

the most up-to-date mentoring practices to effectively support novice teachers. Without training

and knowledge, mentors limit the success of novice teachers (Sowell, 2017).

Many mentors desire ongoing training in classroom management, instructional strategies, and relationship building to be better equipped to support novice teachers (Richter et al., 2013; Sowell, 2017). Mentor education is defined as, (a) formal courses involving universities, (b) professional development such as coaching and seminars, and (c) action research involving mentors and researchers (Aspfors & Fransson, 2015, p. 76).

According to Sparks et al. (2017), mentors need the district to provide support and assistance during the school year. In addition, mentors need time to support novice teachers, which can prove challenging for most school administrators (Sparks et al., 2017). Furthermore, mentors reported that not having common planning times with their novice teachers limited time for collaboration (Sparks et al., 2017). Mentors need to be equipped to support the novice teacher.

Novice Teacher Needs

Novice teachers benefit from mentoring programs that are designed to meet their needs, which may be personal and professional. Personal needs include positive interpersonal relationships with colleagues; positive collaborations with administrators, teachers, and parents; easy access to leadership; a balanced work-life; and a positive climate and culture (Curry et al., 2016). Professional needs include orientation to professional roles, meaningful professional development, reduced workload, timely feedback through classroom observations, sensitive administrators, and formal mentoring (Curry et al., 2016; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

Rutherford (2006) stated that concentrating on the needs of others when one is struggling with personal needs can prove challenging, which is true with novice teachers. Novice teachers' personal needs must be met. Adjusting to the new experiences of teaching and starting from scratch can be physically and mentally stressful for the novice teacher.

Novice teachers need emotional support because teaching is a stressful profession (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). They need mentors who provide them with emotional support, which promotes meaningful relationships and a positive school climate and culture (SREB, 2018; Sparks et al., 2017). Novice teachers need to form strong relationships with their mentors. The relationship between the mentor and the novice teacher is important to achieve positive mentoring outcomes. Novice teachers believe that mutual respect is important, and when an interpersonal similarity exists between the mentor and the novice teacher, the mentoring relationship is enhanced (Polikoff et al., 2015). Consequently, novice teachers reported that they are more likely to remain in the classroom when their values are similar to their mentors' values (Polikoff et al., 2015).

Novice teachers need support in the form of empathy that promotes emotional health and mindset (SREB, 2018). According to Carr et al. (2017), novice teachers need mentors to advise and guide them from dependence and inexperience toward independence and proficiency. Sunde and Ulvik (2014) asserted that novice teachers benefit when their emotional and professional needs are met through a mentoring program.

The novice teacher has several needs that should be addressed by the school and their assigned mentors. If these needs are not met, the novice teacher may choose to leave the profession. According to Israel et al. (2014), novice teachers need professional support such as instructional assistance, instructional and curriculum alignment, behavior management, compliance guidance, and school policies. Most researchers agree that the following factors are necessary to keep novice teachers in the classroom: available mentors, support from school and district leaders, time for collaboration, smaller classes, required supplies, higher pay, and parental involvement (Burke et al., 2013).

Novice teachers need ongoing support. They seem to value their teaching experience more when they receive support throughout their first year (Sparks et al., 2017). The support can come from the school district's mentoring program during the school year (Sparks et al., 2017). When schools invest in ongoing professional development, this empowers teachers to make a positive difference in the lives of their students (Bressman et al., 2018).

Novice teachers need consistent and timely support. Time and availability of the mentors is an essential aspect of an effective mentoring program. The time spent consists of the mentors observing the novice teachers and vice versa, which can increase teacher retention (Beek et al., 2019; Sparks et al., 2017). The novice teachers benefit more when mentor assistance is ongoing. Burke et al. (2013) found numerous factors that may influence a teacher's decision to leave or stay; however, support of teacher-student engagement, increased teacher satisfaction, collaborative environment, and support from administrators are essential factors that may influence a teacher to remain in the profession.

Five Phases of Teaching

Although challenging, administrators and district leaders must work diligently to create time for mentors to support novice teachers on their campus. School leaders need to realize that novice teachers go through five phases during their first year of teaching (Moir, 1999), which requires school leaders to be empathetic. According to Moir (1999), the phases are anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, and reflection. Anticipation begins during the novice teacher's preparation program and continues through the first few weeks of school. In this phase, teachers have a high level of commitment. During the survival phase, teachers begin to feel overwhelmed with so much to learn in a small amount of time. Although teachers struggle to remain in control, they continue to remain optimistic. The disillusionment phase lasts about six

to eight weeks, although the length can vary depending on the teacher. Novice teachers struggle during this phase with their time and level of commitment. The rejuvenation phase occurs after the Christmas break because teachers have had a chance to rest, reflect, and organize, and teachers begin to understand the curriculum and policies. The last phase is reflection and begins in May. During this phase, teachers are able to reflect on the school year and decide what changes need to be made (Moir, 1999). Recognizing the phases that teachers go through provides administrators, mentors, and district personnel with a guide in designing an induction program to support novice teachers (Moir, 1999).

Novice Teacher and Mentor Relationship

Three primary factors influence the relationship between the mentor and the novice teacher. The factors are the mentor-mentee match, mentor knowledge and ability, and mentor-mentee interactions (Polikoff et al., 2015). The interpersonal similarity is essential in regards to personality and values. Studies reveal that knowledge and the ability to work with adults are essential for better outcomes (Polikoff et al., 2015). Through frequent and meaningful interaction, the mentor and novice teacher derive numerous professional and personal benefits from the relationship (Haines, 2003).

Mentor-Mentee Match. An initial step in creating a successful relationship with the mentor and novice teacher is the matching process. The relationship between the mentor and the new teacher is important for positive mentoring outcomes. Mentees believe that mutual respect is important. What considerations should be made when assigning a mentor, a novice teacher? The most common criteria include finding a mentor with the same role (including grade level/content area) in the same school building (Darling Hammond, 2010). According to Darling-Hammond (2010), other suggested criteria include:

1. Physical proximity within the school, to encourage frequent informal interactions

2. Aligned schedules (prep times; stop and start times)

3. Teaching styles (p. 30).

Mentor Knowledge. Having knowledgeable mentors produces positive outcomes. In addition, the mentors' knowledge should align with the novice teachers' needs and knowledge (Polikoff et al., 2015). Researchers indicated that mentors need pedagogical knowledge, content knowledge, and the ability to mentor adults (Polikoff et al., 2015). Pedagogical and content knowledge are capable of producing better mentoring outcomes.

Mentor and Novice Teacher Interactions. The mentor and novice teacher interactions consist of three components: duration, active learning, and content (Polikoff et al., 2015). Duration refers to the amount of time the mentor and novice teacher spend together. Active learning is achieved when the novice teacher has time to observe quality teaching, ask questions, and have access to help when it is needed. Content focus occurs when the novice teacher is able to use their knowledge and skills to teach the concept to the students. Mentoring interactions can occur when a mentor observes the novice teacher, the novice teacher observes the mentor, or when the mentor and the novice teacher co-plan and co-teach. The content of mentoring interactions can be instructional, psychosocial, and administrative (Polikoff et al., 2015). The amount of time the mentor and novice spend together is critical to their relationship and success. Novice teachers' satisfaction increases as the time the mentor and the novice teacher spend together increases (Polikoff et al., 2015).

Mentoring practices can be a determining factor in retaining novice teachers. Effective mentoring programs feature strong relationships, consistent support and assistance, and availability (Bressman et al., 2018). Maintaining healthy, professional, and supportive

relationships prevents novice teachers from feeling isolated (Sparks et al., 2017). Isolation can lead to apathy as novice teachers progress further into their careers (Bressman et al., 2018).

Quality Mentoring Programs

All mentoring programs are not always successful. Many programs fall along a continuum of support: no support, compliance-driven: problem-driven, and people-driven (SREB, 2018). In reality, most programs are compliance-driven or problem-driven. For mentoring programs to improve, school districts should strive to: (a) rethink program elements that affect mentors, (b) address challenges that novice teachers really face, and (c) use a tiered process to respond to needs (SREB, 2018, p. 1).

The New Teacher Center (NTC) created a report (2016), "Support from the Start: A 50 State Review of Policies on New Educator Induction and Mentoring." In a search for quality mentoring programs, they found that only three states, "Connecticut, Delaware, and Iowa require schools and districts to provide multi-year support for new teachers, require teachers to complete an induction program for a professional license, and provide dedicated funding for new teacher induction and mentoring" (p. iii). The report also stated,

> Few states have comprehensive policies to require high-quality induction for beginning teachers. Many states still lack adequate support for new school principals, quality standards for educator induction, and ongoing professional development and support for mentors, and many states have only limited mentoring for new teachers. (p. iii)

In the conclusion of the report, Goldrick (NTC Policy Director) stated, "The real test of states' prioritization of support for new educators comes from the programs and resources they devote to this area of education—and their attention to the provision of comprehensive, quality induction support" (p. viii).

One quality mentoring program is the Connecticut Beginning Educator Support and Training (BEST). Beginning Educator Support and Training is a comprehensive induction program that consists of a combination of mentoring, professional development, and formal assessments. The induction takes place within the novice teacher's first two years of teaching. Comprehensive induction programs reduce attrition rates by 50% (Alliance for Education, 2007). In addition, comprehensive induction programs include the following: high quality mentoring, common planning time, ongoing professional development, and an external network of teachers (Alliance for Education, 2007, p. 2).

The BEST induction program provides support to the novice teachers through school or district mentors and support teams who support the novice teachers as a group. The district selection committee consists of teachers and administrators who choose the mentors. The district assigns mentors to novice teachers for at least one year with a required number of meetings. Schools provide release time for the novice teachers to observe and to be observed by their assigned mentors. The BEST induction program requires 20-hours of initial training for the mentors. The training consists of Connecticut's teaching standards, portfolio assessment process, and coaching strategies (Alliance for Education, 2007).

Another strong mentoring program is the Santa Cruz New Teacher Project (SCNTP). The SCNTP is one of the programs that has received growing national consensus about the key elements of effective teacher induction programs. It provides new teachers with an intensive, two-year support program that is systematic and standards-based, and the program includes support from trained mentors using a systematic formative assessment system. The program connects mentors with novice teachers to a network of peers. The SCNTP document revealed

positive effects on student learning, teacher development, and retention (Alliance for Education, 2007).

The SCNTP consists of five major interconnected components: teacher development and reflective learning, support from district and school administrators, dependence on the expertise from experienced teachers, induction based on professional teaching standards, and classrooms that demonstrate equitable learning for all students (Alliance for Education, p. 36). In 2003, the program provided induction for 30 school districts and served over 700 new teachers (Alliance for Education, 2007).

A third strong mentoring program is the Framework for Inducting, Retaining, and Supporting Teachers (FIRST) utilized by Tangipahoa, a rural school district, in Louisiana. The Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE) funds the program and provides a systematic approach in supporting and developing new teachers (Alliance for Education, 2007). The FIRST provides new teachers with full-time mentors who model effective classroom teaching strategies. In addition, the program provides a comprehensive preservice and ongoing professional development that meets the needs of the novice teachers (Alliance for Education, 2007).

Another strong mentoring program also in Louisiana is the Louisiana Teacher Assistance and Assessment Program (LaTAAP). The program serves every novice teacher, connects to high-quality teaching standards, and supports teachers with well-trained mentors. Furthermore, the components of the LaTAAP are broad, and they provide much of the assistance new teachers need.

A fifth strong mentoring program, the Toledo Plan, is used by Toledo Public Schools in Toledo, Ohio. The Toledo Plan is nationally known for its teacher mentoring program. The Toledo Plan is a cooperative union/management induction program focused on teacher

mentoring and evaluation. The program is designed to improve teacher performance by outlining

a set of four performance standards in which all teachers are held accountable. In addition, the

Toledo Plan establishes a support system for teachers to ensure that they achieve those standards.

The Toledo Plan focuses on improving teacher performance by pairing teachers with more

experienced peers/mentors (Alliance for Education, 2007).

Toledo Public Schools recognizes teaching as a learning process and allows novice

teachers time to develop their skills and techniques with the support of a trained professional.

Cooperation between labor and management is also a major factor in the program's success,

making induction an essential part of the teaching culture. Toledo's comprehensive induction not

only builds an individual teacher's skills, but also contributes to the development of a

community of teachers who are learners themselves. In the end, induction creates teachers who

work in cooperation toward two common goals: the establishment and maintenance of high-

quality educators and the success of their students (Alliance for Education, 2007).

Manchester School District utilizes an induction program called Teacher Education and

Mentoring (TEAM) program, which is a two-year program where trained mentors work with

novice teachers. Novice teachers are required to participate in professional development. The

program consists of five modules that are aligned to the Connecticut Common Core Teaching.

The five modules are classroom environment, planning, instruction, assessment, and professional

responsibility (MSD, 2019).

With TEAM, the mentor and the novice teacher work together to identify a need or an

opportunity for professional growth based on Common Core Teaching performance profile. The

mentor and novice teacher work together to establish a goal, to develop an action plan, and to

implement and reflect. The process takes about 8-10 weeks. Once each module is completed, the

novice teacher writes a paper documenting the new teacher learning, changes in teaching practices, and positive outcomes for students. The paper must be submitted to the district, and successful completion of the program is required to move from Initial Educator Certificate to a Provisional Education Certification (MSD, 2019).

Mentoring in PPSD

Novice teachers who come from universities partnered with school districts reported that the teachers are prepared for instruction and classroom management (Beare et al., 2012). Patterson Parish School District partners with a local university that helps novice teachers transition from university into the classroom. Since many novice teachers need support, the district has a mentoring program to help assist novice teachers. An outside educational organization facilitates and subsidizes the mentoring program, which is typical for some school districts (Bressman et al., 2018).

Mentoring programs can be informal or formal, and novice teachers can participate in both types. Informal mentoring occurs when the novice teacher initiates help from more experienced teachers. Formal mentoring has more specific training and requirements, and the mentors adhere to state and district policies and guidelines (Desimone et al., 2014). PPSD utilizes a formal mentoring program through an outside educational organization called the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET).

The mentoring program is a three-year initiative that began in 2017. According to NIET (2019), the single most important factor in student achievement is the quality of instruction. National Institute for Excellence in Teaching began a program to help support all teachers—experienced and novice teachers. The program includes four interrelated components: (a) multiple career paths, (b) ongoing applied professional growth, (c) instructional focused

accountability, and (d) performance-based compensation (NIET, 2019, p. 2). The NIET's mentoring program is highly structured, which involves frequent meetings for mentors over a two-year period (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; NIET, 2019). Mentoring programs need to ensure that the mentor's support facilitates the acquisition of new learning (Mena et al., 2017).

Patterson Parish School District mentoring program consists of five components (PPSD, 2018). One component is that mentors attend an initial, formal 10-day training program. The second component is classroom observations where mentors and novice teachers observe each other teaching lessons. A third component is the observation feedback meeting where the mentors meet with the novice teachers and provide feedback. The fourth component is the end-of-year reflection where mentors and novice teachers have time to reflect on the school year. The fifth component is relationships. Mentors and novice teachers work together, and as a result, relationships are formed and built. Administrators create release time for mentors to support novice teachers, which can be challenging since mentors have their own classrooms as well. Mentors and novice teachers can receive compensation based on their performance and evaluations.

Mentor teachers must have expert knowledge about the curriculum, outstanding instructional skills, ability to work with adults, and the ability to handle additional responsibilities (NIET, 2019). Mentors are part of the leadership team and are responsible for setting specific school goals. In addition, they provide individual and group support to novice teachers. The mentors serve as a liaison between the administration and the novice teacher to ensure that the novice teachers receive the necessary support (NIET, 2019).

The NIET mentoring program provides formal and informal support for the mentors. The mentors have an opportunity to attend presentations and training throughout the school year. In

addition, all mentors are required to attend an eight-day training. Mentors have an opportunity to participate in more formal training at the national professional development conference, national conference, and summer institute. In addition, mentors have an opportunity to receive compensation for their work and performance (NIET, 2019). The length and depth can vary based on grants and other district and state funding. For this reason, some school districts' level of mentor training may not look the same.

Mentors in PPSD undergo a competitive, rigorous performance-based selection process. Teachers must meet a set of qualifications to become a mentor teacher. Mentor teachers must possess at least a bachelor's degree with at least two years of teaching experience. Mentors must have a proven track record of success in high student achievement by demonstrating instructional excellence. Principals, district supervisors, master teachers, or mentors can recommend teachers to work as a mentor (NIET, 2019).

Sparks et al. (2017) found that effective mentoring programs were recommended to help increase teacher retention. While Dupriez et al. (2016) noted the inability of struggling schools to retain novice teachers, Sowell (2017) found that a poorly designed program can have adverse effects. Investigating and understanding the support that mentors receive from PPSD and provide to novice teachers might provide some insight into any changes that the district may need to make with the current mentoring program.

Summary

The teacher shortage is a major problem due to high rates of teacher attrition. PPSD utilizes a mentoring program to help retain novice teachers. Teacher turnover is 30% higher than in other professions. The turnover percentages for other professions are as follows: engineers (6%), pharmacists (14%), nurses (19%), attorneys (19%), architects (23%), and police officers

(28%; Rumschlag, 2017). Unfortunately, school districts and the students pay the highest price for teacher attrition because novice teachers struggle the most during their first year and are not as effective as experienced teachers (Lindqvist et al., 2014; Ryan et al., 2017).

School districts must do more to retain novice teachers, to help combat the number of teachers leaving the classroom. A study by Gaikhorst et al. (2014) reported that novice teachers remain in the profession when they have the necessary supports. Novice teachers need instructional and emotional support to be successful. As a result, PPSD implements a mentoring program where mentors provide support to novice teachers throughout the school year.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the mentoring program at PPSD from the perspective of the mentors and the novice teachers. It was the intent of the study to discover if the program components are meeting the needs of the participants. The results of the study could provide information to assist district personnel in determining if the mentoring support is adequate and effective. Information is needed from mentors and novice teachers to conduct an adequate exploration of the mentoring program.

The research method is presented in Chapter 3. The research method begins with a summary of the purpose of the study. Chapter 3 includes essential information about the research design and method, population, sample, materials and instruments, data collection, and analysis. In addition, the methods for establishing trustworthiness, researcher's role, ethical considerations, assumptions, limitations, and delimitations will be explained in Chapter 3. The chapter concludes with a brief summary.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The teacher shortage is problematic for many school districts across the country. The teacher shortage can be attributed to the number of novice teachers who leave the profession during their first year (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014). It is all too common for 40% to 50% of novice teachers to leave the profession within five years (Gallant & Riley, 2014; Mee & Haverback, 2014). Patterson Parish School District (PPSD) is a large school district located in Louisiana with over 40,000 students (Louisiana Believes, 2019). The PPSD is experiencing issues with teacher attrition like other school districts across the United States and other countries. The percentage of novice teachers who left the profession in PPSD was 10% in 2016 and 12% in 2015. The percentage was 11% in 2017, which exceeded the state average by 3.5% (Louisiana Believes, 2018). The school attempts to combat teacher attrition by utilizing a mentoring program and assigning mentors to support novice teachers. However, the district hires approximately 200 novice teachers each year (PPSD, 2018).

Teacher attrition is problematic for many school districts and causes many school districts to implement mentoring programs to help retain novice teachers (Curry et al., 2016). The problem is that PPSD is experiencing high attrition rates for novice teachers, especially in struggling schools. However, PPSD does not know if the mentoring program is effective in helping to retain novice teachers.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the mentoring program at PPSD from the perspective of the mentors and the novice teachers. The intent of the study was to discover if the components of the mentoring program are meeting the needs of the participants. The results could provide key information and assist PPSD in determining if any improvements are required. The PPSD could benefit from the study that explored both perspectives because the

mentoring program involved mentors and novice teachers, and information was needed from the two groups of teachers to conduct an adequate exploration of the mentoring program.

In this chapter, I explain how this case study research explored the support that mentors provide to novice teachers in PPSD according to the perspectives of the mentor and the novice teachers. The two main research questions were:

Q1. What are the perceptions of the mentors regarding the PPSD mentoring program?

Q2. What are the perceptions of the novice teachers regarding the PPSD mentoring program? This chapter has the following subsections, research design and method, population, sample, materials/instruments, data collection and analysis procedures, ethical considerations, assumptions, limitations, delimitations, and summary.

Research Design and Method

The qualitative case study explored the mentoring program in a large urban school district in Louisiana. Qualitative research collects text-based data by exploring, describing, and explaining (Terrell, 2016). It involves inductive reasoning, interviews, small samples, discovering, exploring, and naturalistic designs (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Therefore, I used a single case study approach to gather the data. The case study design was appropriate because it lent itself to the collection of rich data about the mentoring program in PPSD and allowed for the exploration of the mentoring program from a variety of lenses (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Simmons, 2009). The approach was conducive for this study because I was able to ask and answer questions specifically about the PPSD mentoring program from the perspectives of mentors and novice teachers (Mills et al., 2010; Stake, 1995; Terrell, 2016).

Rationale for Qualitative Method

Qualitative research was more appropriate than quantitative research for the study because qualitative research allowed me to explore the experiences of the mentors and novice teachers in regard to the PPSD mentoring program. Quantitative research focuses on explanation and control, whereas qualitative research focuses on understanding complex interrelationships in society (Stake, 1995). Furthermore, qualitative research helps to generate meaning when researchers wish to explore, describe, or explain the phenomenon (Leavy, 2017). On the other hand, quantitative research gathers data through surveys and testing hypotheses using an experimental and a control group (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Since quantitative studies rely mostly on numbers, utilizing numbers to answer the research questions for this study was inappropriate. Instead, I collected data by utilizing questionnaires, conducting in-depth interviews, and examining mentoring artifacts (Roberts, 2010). According to Stake (2010), qualitative research can help capture stories about individuals and organizations, which made qualitative the more appropriate research design for this study.

One goal of this proposed qualitative study was to gain insight into the quality of the support that mentors provided to novice teachers in PPSD. The data collected from a qualitative study does not use numbers but rather use people's knowledge, opinions, perceptions, and feelings. In addition, the qualitative study used detailed descriptions of people's actions, behaviors, activities, and interpersonal interactions (Roberts, 2010).

Qualitative studies require the interviewer to guide the interviewee through a series of carefully organized questions about mentoring. The questions for the study were open-ended to learn the participants' understanding and meaning from what was being asked (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Moreover, the purpose of conducting qualitative research is the following: (a) to

understand the researcher's convictions, (b) to learn the nature of the research problem, (c) to

understand the phenomenon, (d) to gain a deeper understanding about what is known, and (e) to

provide rich details about a phenomenon (Roberts, 2010, p. 143). As a result, the strengths and

weaknesses of the PPSD mentoring program were revealed to improve the mentoring program.

A Case Study Approach

I used a single case study approach in an attempt to answer the proposed research

questions. According to Terrell (2016), case study research focuses on actual events that happen

to people or a group of people at a specific point in time (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Yazan

(2015) asserted that case studies are the most frequently used research methodologies for

qualitative studies and help provide information about individuals and groups. Information from

case studies can lead to further research (Stewart, 2014). Furthermore, qualitative research is

about the lived experiences and uses mainly interviews to determine how participants derive

meaning from the existence and meaning of things (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Participants

shared information about the following: training, classroom observations, observation feedback,

end-of-year reflection, communication, cohesiveness, and reciprocity.

This qualitative case study approach explored a phenomenon within its context using

multiple data sources (Baxter & Jack, 2008). The phenomenon in this study was the effectiveness

of the PPSD mentoring program. Although case study designs are used quite frequently in

qualitative research, there is not a general consensus or well-defined structure for protocols

(Yazan, 2015). Therefore, it was imperative that I understood the various views on designing and

implementing a case study. Yin (2018) stated that a case study has its own specific logic of

design, analysis, and data collection techniques. "Case study is a design of inquiry found in many

fields, especially evaluation, in which the researcher develops an in-depth analysis of a case,

often a program, event, activity, process, or on one or more individuals" (Creswell, 2014). A single case study design was chosen to explore the PPSD mentoring program. I explored the effectiveness of the mentoring components and the intent of the program according from the perspective of the program participants.

This study utilized Stake's case study model because his view is "beneficial when studying programs and people and less beneficial when studying events and processes" (Yazan, 2015, p. 139). Stake operates within the paradigm of interpretivism or constructivism, where the case study involves a particular single case defined by interpretive interrelationships. Stake (1995) asserted that everything could be viewed as a case. However, a true case study involves specificity around a complex phenomenon with the purpose of understanding a particular thing. In a case study, the researcher needs easy access to the participants to answer the research questions (Stake, 1995). Researchers have to be patient, reflective, and open to multiple views (Stake, 1995).

According to Leavy (2017), "qualitative research focuses on holistic approaches that are informed by philosophical belief systems" (p. 128). However, Stake defined his view as interpretive because it looks at the relationship between the researcher and the participants (Yazan, 2015). When designing and implementing a case study design, the case study must have the following criteria: the commitment to a paradigm, the definition of the case study, design of the case study, data collection, data analysis, and data validation. The criteria are presented in the upcoming sections. Furthermore, the defining characteristics of the proposed study were interpretive because I rested on my intuition and saw the research as a researcher-participant interaction (Yazan, 2015).

Data collection consisted of three phases—questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and an examination of mentoring artifacts collected from mentors and novice teachers from the 2018-2019 school year. The first phase began with two separate questionnaires that were emailed to the mentors and novice teachers to complete. The questionnaires helped lay the foundation for the interviews by asking mentors and novice teachers about the mentors' preparation and support that they provided to the novice teachers. The second phase of the data collection began with a review of the data collected from the questionnaires and followed by open-ended and follow-up questions (Yazan, 2015). The interviews afforded me the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of mentor support from the perspective of the mentor and the novice teacher. The third phase consisted of artifacts from the previous year that were collected from the mentors and novice teachers. The artifacts consist of mentor responsibility surveys and novice teacher responsibility surveys. These artifacts provided useful information about the mentoring program and the impact on the novice teachers.

Population

Patterson Parish School District is located in Louisiana and is comprised of 76 schools with 38,596 students (PPSD, 2018). The district has a diverse student population with approximately 13,706 White, 26,539 Black, 678 Hispanic, 482 Asian, and 107 American Indian/Alaska Native students (PPSD, 2018). The district hired 165 novice teachers in 2019, 187 in 2018, 167 in 2017, 174 in 2016, and 200 in 2015. The percentage of novice teachers who left the profession was 11% in 2017, 10% in 2016, and 12% in 2015 (PPSD, 2018).

Elementary schools were the focus of the study. Patterson Parish School District has nine elementary schools that are implementing the mentoring program. The nine schools consisted of 200 teachers, which included 37 mentor teachers and 57 novice teachers. Using 2018 data, I

contacted the district's executive master teacher and district coach for a list of mentors and novice teachers who had participated in the mentoring program for at least one year. For the purpose of this study, mentor teachers were identified as teachers who had been teaching for more than five years and had completed an initial formal mentoring training. In addition, novice teachers were defined as teachers that have been teaching for five years or less and had participated in the mentoring program for at least one year.

Sample Population

To create the sample population, the participants were selected through purposeful sampling, which was a targeted selection that addressed a particular population and demographics in the PPSD mentoring program (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Most qualitative research utilizes purposeful sampling (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). Leavy (2017) reiterated that using purposeful sampling is important because it helps find the best participants, which yields the best data. Purposeful sampling allowed the participants to provide insight into mentoring practices, policies, and quality. According to Creswell (2014), purposeful sampling selection supports the researcher in understanding the problem and research questions and focuses on characteristics of particular subgroups of interest and facilitates comparisons (Patton, 2001).

There are several different purposeful sampling strategies. Criterion sampling appears to be used most commonly in implementation research (Palinkas et al., 2015). The purpose of criterion sampling is to identify participants that meet some predetermined criterion of importance (Palinkas et al., 2015). The criteria for program participation were elementary mentors and novice teachers who were in the PPSD mentoring program during the 2018-2019 school year. In order to become a mentor in the program, mentors were required to have taught for more than five years, have exemplified effective teaching practices, and have participated in

the mentoring program last year. Novice teachers became a part of the PPSD mentoring program because they were new to the field of teaching. Since the participants were mentors and novice teachers, it was hoped that data collected from nine participants in each group would provide enough information to convey the mentors' and the novice teachers' perspectives about the mentoring program.

The first step in selecting the sample population was sending an email to participants who met the criteria asking them if they would like to participate in the study. The goal was to have 18 participants—nine mentors and nine novice teachers. It was ideal to have equal representation from the nine elementary schools, which equated to two participants—one mentor and one novice teacher from each of the nine schools. I selected the first nine mentors and the first nine novice teachers who responded that they would like to participate with a focus on having equal representation. I received more than nine mentors and nine novice teachers that wanted to participate. I notified the extra participants that I would use them in the study if I needed to collect additional data or if other participants decided not to participate.

Materials and Instruments

The data collection process involved multiple sources of data. These sources were questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and mentoring artifacts collected from mentors and novice teachers from the 2018-2019 school year. It was the intent that these sources would allow for an in-depth understanding of the PPSD mentoring program.

Questionnaires

The first stage of the data collection process was the implementation of questionnaires. The questionnaires served three purposes. First, the questionnaires helped create a baseline for the interviews. Second, the questionnaires helped prepare the participants for the interviews by

helping them feel more comfortable when answering the interview questions. Third, the questionnaires were used to make modifications to the interview questions based on the participants' responses.

During this phase, I used two separate questionnaires—one for the mentors and one for the novice teachers. The questionnaires consisted of four questions taken from the Teacher Questionnaire of the National Teacher and Principal Survey 2015-2016 School Year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016).

The first question on the mentor questionnaire asked about the mentor's level of preparedness in various aspects of teaching. Questions 2 and 3 asked mentors to compare the novice teacher's level of preparedness in various aspects of teaching at the beginning of the school year and at the end of the school year. The fourth question asked mentors to identify specific support that they provided to the novice teachers.

The questionnaire for the novice teachers included four questions as well. However, their questions were slightly different from the mentors' questions. The first two questions asked novice teachers to rate their level of preparedness in classroom management at the beginning of the previous school year and at the end of the previous school year. Questions 3 and 4 asked the novice teachers about the different types of support they received from the school and from the mentors.

Semistructured Interviews

During the second phase, I used semistructured interviews to collect rich details (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018), which consisted of well-thought-out, open-ended questions, and follow-up questions. Rosenthal (2016) stated that in-depth interview questions should be about one topic, open-ended, neutral, and clear.

The interview guide consisted of two parts and was emailed to the participants prior to the interviews taking place to help prepare the participants for the interviews. The first part gave the participants an opportunity to talk about the initial questionnaire if they chose. This allowed me to delve deeper into the program. Open-ended questions allowed participants to use their voice, provide rich and detailed responses, and to move in any direction they desired when responding to the questions (Leavy, 2017). The second part of the interview guide was developed to help answer the two research questions by focusing on the components of the mentoring program and the possible connections to the theoretical framework (See Appendix A & B). It was important to note that follow-up questions on the guide could change due to the information gained in the interview and also from the questionnaires administered to the participants prior to the interviews.

Saldaña and Omasta (2018) recommended beginning with simple questions to help acclimate the participant to the interview and build rapport with the interviewer before asking complex, detailed, and sensitive questions. The interview guide for the mentor and the novice teacher was divided into the five components of the mentoring program: mentor training, classroom observations, observation feedback, end-of-the-year reflection, cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity. The first component addressed was training. The mentors and novice teachers elaborated on the training that they received. The second component addressed was classroom observations. The mentors and novice teachers talked about the classroom observations. The third component addressed was the observation feedback meeting. The mentors and novice teachers discussed the observation sessions they experienced. The fourth component addressed was the end-of-the-year reflection. The mentors and novice teachers expressed their thoughts about the end-of-the-year reflection meetings. The final component

addressed was cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity. The mentors and novice teachers discussed their relationships, and if cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity were present. After each question was asked, sub-questions followed according to the participant's responses.

To validate the questionnaire and the interview protocol, field testing was performed. Field-testing is necessary when developing the interview guide because the guide leads interviewers through each stage of the interactions with participants from the moment they meet until the interview is completed. Field testing is also important when creating or modifying an existing instrument (Roberts, 2010). The field testing group involved three educators who were nonparticipants in the study. After the field testing was completed, I made any necessary revisions based on feedback from the field-testing respondents (Robert, 2010).

Mentoring Program Artifacts

During the third phase, I used artifacts that were collected at the end-of-the 2018-2019 school year. The artifacts consisted of mentor responsibility surveys and novice teacher responsibility surveys. These artifacts provided additional data that could be used to help answer the two research questions about the effectiveness of the PPSD mentoring program has on novice teachers.

Data Collection

To begin the data collection phase of the study, I sent an email to the teachers who met the criteria of the study and asked for their participation. My goal was to have 18 participants— nine mentors and nine novice teachers from the nine schools with equal representation. Equal representation equated to two teachers from each of the nine schools—one mentor and one novice teacher. Once the responses were received, the purposeful sampling began. The participants who agreed to the interviews received consent forms explaining the purpose of the

research, the interview process, and the required procedures for ethical considerations. Participants signed the consent forms and returned electronically to me. After I received the signed consent forms, I emailed the mentors and novice teachers the four-question questionnaire. Then, I arranged interviews through video conferencing (GoToMeeting) to obtain information about the components of the mentoring program: mentor training, classroom observations, observation feedback, end-of-the-year reflection, communication, cohesiveness, and reciprocity.

Interview sessions were conducted using video conferencing (GoToMeeting) and lasted approximately 30 minutes. However, to protect the anonymity of the participants, the interviews were audio-recorded but were not video-taped. I used an interview guide to ensure that all of the interviews were administered the same for all participants (Interview Guide in Appendix A and B). I explained the significance of confidentiality before the interviews began, recorded all interviews, and took detailed notes. The interview questions allowed mentors and novice teachers to share responses about the support provided to novice teachers. Participants had an opportunity to elaborate on responses and ask follow-up questions as needed. Each interview was transcribed through the GoToMeeting platform for member checking and coding purposes. At the conclusion of each interview, I shared a copy of the transcript with participants to ensure recorded responses aligned with the participant's intended responses, which is a form of member checking. I took detailed notes during the interviews with the participants' permission, and I reviewed the transcripts and the audio-recordings to check for accuracy.

Once the interviews were completed, mentoring artifacts were examined. The artifacts were obtained from the district's executive master teacher. The artifacts were from the last school year and consisted of the mentor responsibility surveys and the teacher responsibility surveys. The mentor responsibility surveys provided information about staff development,

instructional supervision, mentoring, community involvement, school responsibilities, growth and professional development, and reflection on teaching. The novice teacher responsibility surveys provided information about the growth and professional development and reflection on teaching.

Data Analysis

The Framework Method was utilized for analyzing data collected from the questionnaires, interviews, and artifacts. It is important that researchers find the analysis that works best for their study (Yazan, 2015). The Framework Method is a "tool for supporting qualitative analysis because it provides a systematic model for managing and mapping data" (Gale et al., 2013, p. 1). Furthermore, the Framework method is a form of content analysis based on Sharan Merriam's *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education* (Yazan, 2015).

The Framework Method is a seven-step process that compares data within and between cases, generates themes, and is suitable when analyzing interview data (Gale et al., 2013). The questionnaires were analyzed by identifying themes and commonalities between the participants' responses. Stake (2010) asserted that it is essential to have the proper protocols in place to gain confirmation of the credibility of the case (Yazan, 2015). The Framework Method includes the following stages:

1. The first stage was transcription, and I used a video conferencing company that recorded and transcribed the interviews. After receiving the transcripts, I went back and listened to the recordings to make sure words were captured correctly. When transcribing, it was important to know that every part of the interview does not have to be transcribed but only the most relevant parts (Foss & Waters, 2007).

2. The second stage, familiarization with the whole interview, was essential to interpretation. The researcher must decide what data is worthy of intensive analysis (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

3. The third stage was coding. I carefully read the transcript line by line and applied a label or a "code," which described the interpretation (Gale et al., 2013). Coding helps classify and compare the data set.

4. The fourth stage was applying the analytical framework, which occurs by grouping codes into categories or using a tree diagram.

5. The fifth stage was applying the analytical framework by "indexing subsequent transcripts using the existing categories and codes" (Gale et al., 2013, p. 5). Once I identified codes in the first set of interviews, I determined which codes to use for the remaining transcripts.

6. The sixth stage was charting data into the framework matrix. Charting involves summarizing and categorizing the data from each transcript (Gale et al., 2013) and helps to manage the data (Rabiee, 2004). During this stage, I developed themes, categories, descriptions, and provided evidence (Coding Matrix in Appendix C).

7. The seventh stage was interpreting the data. During this stage, I identified characteristics and differences. Interpreting data can include considering the context and frequency and extensiveness of comments, the intensity of comments, internal consistency, the specificity of responses, and big ideas (Rabiee, 2004, p. 659).

According to Rabiee (2004), analyzing qualitative data requires the development of new skills, patience, time, and practice while searching for meaning and looking for consistent patterns (Stake, 1995).

The analytic process was utilized for analyzing data collected from the artifacts, which involved making inferences and judgments (Norum, 2012). The mentoring artifacts were analyzed before and after gathering data from the interviews. By analyzing the artifacts before the interviews, it allowed for any questions that may be generated from the artifacts. The artifacts were reviewed again after the interviews. This helped clarify any information obtained from the interviews. In analyzing the artifacts, I considered questions that were pertinent to the study. These questions were: (a) What is the focus of the research, and how is this artifact related?; (b) What categories of information need to be developed?; (c) What perspectives need to be developed in light of the research purpose?; and (d) How do these data fit in with other data? To complete the analysis of the artifacts, themes and patterns were identified (Norum, 2012).

Methods for Establishing Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness speaks to the validity of a study and is needed when evaluating a study's value. Terrell (2016) wrote that trustworthiness includes four factors: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. Anderson (2017) asserted that a qualitative study includes trustworthiness and rigor. Trustworthiness leads to credibility and helps readers trust data analysis (Roberts, 2010).

One way to establish trustworthiness is through credibility using triangulation (Yazan, 2015). Credibility is the way a researcher conducts the study. According to Cope (2014) and Saldaña and Omasta (2018), triangulation is when the researcher examines data from three different sources to help ensure that there is more substance to the data (Stake, 1995). I obtained triangulation by utilizing questionnaires, semistructured interviews, and artifacts/documents gathered from two groups—mentors and novice teachers. In addition, I used member checking, where the participants viewed the final report to attest to its accuracy (Stake, 1995; Terrell, 2016;

Yates & Leggett, 2016). Member checking, also known as internal validity (Anderson, 2017), helps to determine the accuracy of the qualitative results (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

Another way to establish trustworthiness is through transferability. Transferability shows how research findings are applicable in other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Terrell, 2016). Transferability is achieved by providing a "thick description" of the results (Terrell, 2016). A thick description is a written interpretation of the nuances, complexity, and significance of people's behaviors (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). I provided detailed descriptions, which allowed the results to be transferred to other participants or situations (Terrell, 2016). When presenting the results of the study, I used direct quotations, descriptive phrases, and participants' experiences, which indicated the level of rigor (Anderson, 2017). The results of the research could not only be relevant to PPSD but to other researchers with similar topics, and researchers can replicate this study by following an in-depth description of the methodology.

Lastly, confirmability is another way to achieve trustworthiness. Confirmability is when the researcher ensures her or his neutrality in the study, and the results reflect ideas and expressions from the participants without outside influences (Terrell, 2016). Confirmability can be achieved through triangulation and also through confirmability audits, audit trails, and reflexivity. Triangulation was achieved through the use of questionnaires, interviews, and artifacts. I also reviewed documents to gain a deeper understanding of the mentoring program components and goals. In addition to using triangulation, I used reflexivity by remaining aware that my actions, such as collecting and analyzing data, can affect the outcomes of the study (Terrell, 2016). I remained neutral throughout the study. An ethical researcher should remain nonbiased, accurate, and honest throughout all phases of the dissertation (Roberts, 2010).

Ethical considerations should be provided about the reason for selecting the topic, sensitive language while interacting with participants, and intentions to use results to promote change in society or public policy (Leavy, 2017). In addition, information on the Institutional Review Board (IRB) stipulations and informed consent demonstrate the researcher's attention to ethical praxis (Leavy, 2017). Any concerns about ethical issues should be included in the proposal (Terrell, 2016). To ensure trustworthiness in this research study, I demonstrated appropriate behavior during the data collection, data analyses, and the written report phases.

Researcher's Role

In this case study, I used the data collected to help evaluate the effectiveness of the PPSD mentoring program. As a school administrator, I chose specific criteria about the mentoring program and perspectives of the mentors and novice teachers to reveal the program's strengths and weaknesses (Stake, 1995). In addition, I did not serve as an evaluator for any of the 18 participants in this study. Teacher attrition, retention, and the shortage are a real concern for me because I value teachers, students, and parents. I have developed relationships and trust with many teachers in PPSD. To sustain strong relationships, it is vital to build trust (Costa et al., 2016), which might prove beneficial during the data collection stage of the proposal. My study has afforded me the opportunity to share the results with my superintendent, chief officer of academic affairs, and other district leaders. I completed all of the required portions of the required IRB training and utilized the IRB to ensure objectivity and subjectivity. No family members participated in this research study.

Instead of using an antagonistic style of interviewing, I ensured the participants felt comfortable about responding honestly without feeling like I was judging or coercing them. Furthermore, I used the responsive approach, maintained flexibility, and accepted what the

interviewees said since the topic was personal and sensitive (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I used

reflexivity by taking time to reflect and journal my thoughts (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018).

Moreover, relationships have been built with my participants and have demonstrated honesty,

integrity, care, and concern in a nonjudgmental way (Leavy, 2017).

To prevent misconceptions, biases, and preconceptions that could weaken the research

process, I used bracketing. Bracketing is defined as the task of sorting the researcher's

experiences from the actual phenomenon, whereby "the researcher suspends his or her biases,

assumptions, theories, or previous experiences" (Tufford & Newman, 2010, p. 83). There are

several bracketing methods that researchers can use, and I chose writing memos throughout the

data collection and analysis as way for me to reflect on my connection with the data (Tufford &

Newman, 2010). According to Tufford and Newman (2010), writing memos is known as

observational comments because the researcher can explore his or her feelings about the actual

research process.

Teachers leave the classroom in PPSD due to retirement, personal reasons, and a lack of

support. Existing research on induction and mentoring programs confirmed that mentoring

programs do provide novice teachers with a level of support to help them remain in the

profession, which established the need to explore the PPSD mentoring program. As the

researcher conducting this study, I disclosed my positionality as a school administrator in PPSD.

My position with the school district benefited the study due to my understanding of the

organization. My interest in the research's benefit to the organization required that I disclose my

position for transparency (Herr & Anderson, 2015).

Ethical Consideration

For this research study, I obtained approval from Abilene Christian University (ACU) IRB before collecting data (IRB Approval Letter in Appendix F). The IRB committee exists to protect the researcher and the institution from liability by ensuring that research is conducted legally and ethically. In addition, IRB's ensure that all participants are safe and treated fairly (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018). In addition, I generated a proposal and submitted it to the Chief Officer of Academic Affairs requesting permission to conduct the research (Site Approval Letter in Appendix G). I disguised the name of the school district using a pseudonym, emailed potential participants, selected volunteers, and changed the names of participants for confidentiality. Interviews were audio-recorded and were not video-taped to promote anonymity and confidentiality for all of the participants. I securely stored data in a locked cabinet in my office and will maintain it for a minimum of three years per IRB requirements. All information that was collected on my computer was destroyed digitally to maintain confidentiality. The researcher followed all ethical guidelines. After I explained the objective of the research and the participant selection process, all potential participants received a detailed informed consent form and agreed to participate before proceeding with the research study.

Assumptions

This study was based on several assumptions. Simply stated, assumptions are things that may be true, but there is no verification (Terrell, 2016). The first assumption was that participants would respond honestly and candidly. Assigning pseudonyms to participants to maintain anonymity helped justify this assumption. The second assumption was that participants would volunteer but could withdraw consent at any time. Providing detailed explanations when sharing the overview of the research and informed consent documents helped justify this

assumption. The third assumption was that participants were appropriate for the study. Requesting documentation from the district's executive master teacher, district coaches, and principals ensured that I have access to mentors and novice teachers who participated in the mentoring program within the past year.

Limitations

This study had four possible limitations. Terrell (2016) stated that limitations are constraints out of the control of the researcher that could affect the generalizability of the findings. "This brief discussion discloses such matters as what was not addressed in the study, cautions about its findings' generalizability to broader populations, confesses any errors made during the research process, and so on" (Saldaña & Omasta, 2018, p. 168). One limitation was the use of GoToMeeting when I conducted the interviews because I was not able to capture body language that a face-to-face interview might have afforded me. A second limitation was this study may not generalized to other settings because the components of the PPSD mentoring program might not reflect other districts' mentoring programs. A third limitation was the study did not contain statistical data. A fourth limitation was the study did not look into the attrition of experienced teachers.

Delimitations

This study had four delimitations. Delimitations are additional limitations orchestrated by the researcher to control factors that might affect the results (Terrell, 2016). First, the study did not include the perspectives of administrators, district, or support personnel. Rather, the study focused on the mentors' and novice teachers' perspectives. Second, the researcher attempted to delimit the research by having one mentor and one novice teacher from each of the nine schools. Third, the study did not include middle or high schools but only elementary schools. Fourth,

there were not any first-year teachers in the study because there was no data to collect from their mentoring experiences. Therefore, all novice teachers had taught for at least one year. This was an easy achievement since the mentoring program is a three-year program.

Summary

Research is needed in all areas of society. Multiple measures exist for researchers. However, the challenge is choosing the best research method that addresses the research problem, purpose, and questions. There must be an alignment of all three. The research method dictates the design and procedures that the researcher uses to provide results and discussions at the end of the study (Anderson, 2017). Asking the correct questions leads to the appropriate research method (Terrell, 2016).

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the mentoring program at PPSD from the perspective of the mentors and the novice teachers. It was the intent of the study to discover if the program components were meeting the needs of the participants. The results of this study provided data that could assist district personnel in determining if the mentoring support is adequate and effective. Information was needed from mentors and novice teachers to conduct an adequate exploration of the mentoring program.

The two research questions were:

Q1. What are the perceptions of the mentors regarding the PPSD mentoring program?

Q2. What are the perceptions of the novice teachers regarding the PPSD mentoring program?

I interviewed participants on a voluntary basis, and participants shared information and opinions about training, classroom observations, observation feedback meetings, end-of-the-year reflection, cohesiveness, communication, reciprocity, and relationships. The study consisted of 18 voluntary participants who provided information about the mentoring program in PPSD, the

role of mentors, the needs of mentors and novice teachers, and the support that mentors provided for novice teachers. Participants included mentors with more than five years of teaching experience and novice teachers with five years or less of teaching experience. The participants were 18 teachers from nine elementary schools in PPSD that are experiencing high attrition rates of novice teachers.

I administered questionnaires to the participants via email, conducted semistructured interviews using video conferencing, and examined mentoring artifacts. I developed an interview guide for semistructured interviews. Questions for the interviews addressed the components of the mentoring program, the Social Exchange Theory (SET), and the Concept of Reciprocity (COR).

Qualitative case study research was the most appropriate design for this study because it provided direct contact with participants and circumstances associated with the mentoring program in a school setting (Parry et al., 2014). According to Yin (2014), case studies allow researchers to understand an event that occurred to a group of people at a point in time. Since the mentors and the novice teachers answered the interview questions honestly, I was able to identify themes related to the mentoring program in PPSD. The data provided vital information for PPSD personnel, administrators, and teachers, especially since the district had never explored the support that mentors provided to novice teachers. The information that participants provided regarding the mentoring program was helpful and essential to the future success of retaining novice teachers in the school district and other school districts in the state and across the country.

Chapter 4: Results

The aim of this qualitative case study was to explore the mentoring program at Patterson Parish School District (PPSD) from the perspective of the mentors and the novice teachers. The main goal of the study was to discover if the program components were meeting the needs of the participants. The results of this study could provide key information that will assist district personnel in determining if the mentoring support is adequate and effective. Information was retrieved from mentors and novice teachers to secure an adequate exploration of the mentoring program.

The setting was significant because of the high attrition rates in PPSD. A study by Ingersoll (2012) found attrition rates for novice teachers have increased by one-third in the past 20 years, which has resulted in a high number of novice teachers that are more than likely to leave the teaching profession. PPSD chose to utilize a mentoring program to help retain novice teachers. Mentoring programs have shown to positively impact novice teachers (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Therefore, PPSD decided to take a more critical approach to help ensure there are enough experienced quality teachers in the classrooms (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

A qualitative case study was used in exploring the perspective of the mentors and novice teachers. A short questionnaire was used to gather foundational information. However, the main source of data collection was semistructured interviews. After the data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for meaning, specific themes emerged related to these two research questions: (a) What are the perceptions of the mentors regarding the PPSD mentoring program? and (b) What are the perceptions of the novice teachers regarding the PPSD mentoring program?

The purpose of this chapter is to report the results of the data analysis that was obtained

from the Mentor Teacher Questionnaire, Novice Teacher Questionnaire, details from the nine

mentor teacher interviews, and details from the nine novice teacher interviews. The chapter

consists of the following: introduction, a summary of research focus and processes, analysis of

the questionnaire data, analysis of interview questions, themes that arose from the interview data,

and a summary of how the data answered the two research questions.

Summary of Research Focus and Processes

After receiving IRB approval (Appendix D), I gathered the information for the study's

population. I contacted the executive master teacher in PPSD to secure a list of the mentor

teachers and novice teachers in nine inner-city elementary schools. A focus group of experienced

educators (nonparticipants) validated the instruments. After validation was secured, I emailed 32

mentors and 50 novice teachers asking them to participate in this study. The goal was to recruit

one mentor and one novice teacher from each of the nine schools. Four additional participants

were recruited just in case any participants decided not to participate in the study.

When the first nine mentor teachers and nine novice teachers indicated an interest in

participating in the study, I emailed consent forms to the 18 participants. Once I received the

signed consent forms, the participants were emailed the four-question questionnaire from the

Teacher of the National Teacher and Principal Survey 2015–2016 School Year (National

Center for Education Statistics, 2016) to establish baseline data (Appendix A & B). When the

participants returned the questionnaires, I emailed both groups their respective interview guide.

The participants selected a date and time for the interview according to their schedules. I

conducted 18 interviews using GoToMeeting. Each of the 18 interviews were audio-recorded

and transcribed; however, none of the interviews were videotaped. The interviews averaged 30 minutes in length, and all of the interviews followed the semistructured interview guide.

Categories and themes related to the effectiveness of components of the PPSD mentoring program emerged after the interviews and coding. Connections that strengthened these themes surfaced in the baseline questionnaires. After collecting the data, I began the analysis process using these steps:

1. Interviews were transcribed. Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed as a part of the features in GoToMeeting.

2. Transcripts were reviewed. I listened to the audio recordings and the transcriptions to ensure accuracy. In addition, I also took detailed notes during the interview with the participants' permission. Furthermore, the transcriptions were emailed to each participant to review for accuracy.

3. Data were coded. First, I began with NVivo to identify keywords that stood out, directly from the participants' language. I isolated those words and notated them. Second, I identified codes and patterns within all of the interviews.

4. Data were charted into two coding matrices. I created a chart with mentor teachers' responses and a chart with novice teachers' responses by each question. I then color-coded the data according to the reoccurring phrases and created categories.

5. Codes were grouped into six categories for novice teachers and six categories for mentor teachers. Four themes emerged from the six categories (See Appendix C).

6. Data interpretation. Codes and categories helped me determine the themes.

Presentation of Findings

This qualitative case study was an exploration of a mentoring program. Qualitative research was conducted first by sending questionnaires. Upon analysis of these results, data were collected in the form of semistructured interviews. Nine novice teachers and nine mentor teachers were interviewed.

Questionnaire and Interview Validation

The purpose of the field-testing group was to aid in the validation of the questionnaires and the interview questions. I randomly selected three experienced educators from PPSD who participated in the field testing of the questionnaires and the interview questions. Once they agreed to participate, I scheduled a 45-minute meeting via GoToMeeting to discuss the questionnaires and interview questions. I emailed a copy of the instruments for them to review before the meeting. The three experienced educators had over 35 years of combined teaching and leadership experience.

During the meeting with the field-testing group, I explained that the questionnaire originated from the Teacher Questionnaire of the National Teacher and Principal Survey 2015-2016 School Year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). The field-testing group did not make any suggestions for improvement to the questionnaires and interview guides for the mentor and novice teachers. However, they suggested that I adjust my questioning, if needed, to help encourage the interviewees to elaborate more during the interviews.

Questionnaire Analysis

Nine mentor teachers and nine novice teachers completed a four-question questionnaire before responding to open-ended interview questions. The purpose of this questionnaire was to provide information to gain depth in the interviews. This information allowed me to understand

the mentoring process as well as understand the roles that the mentors and novice teachers performed.

Mentor Teachers. The mentors had four pre-interview questions on their questionnaire. The first question was regarding the preparedness of the mentor teacher. The second and third questions inquired about how well prepared the novice teacher was at the beginning of their previous year of teaching and at the end of the year. The fourth question was regarding the support that the mentors provided to the novice teacher.

The first question inquired how well prepared the mentor was since becoming a mentor, and the results are depicted in Table 1. The highest readiness area (90%) was in teaching their subject matter and using computers in their classroom. Seventy-eight percent of the mentors felt they were very well prepared in using a variety of instructional methods. The lowest area of readiness was in teaching students who were limited-English proficient (LEP) or English language learners (ELLs). Only 11% of mentors felt they were very well prepared.

Table 1

Mentor Preparedness

Question #1: Since the time you were a mentor, how well prepared were you to:	Not prepared at all	Somewhat prepared	Well prepared	Very well prepared
a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	0%	0%	44%	56%
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	0%	0%	22%	78%
c. Teach your subject matter?	0%	0%	11%	90%
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	0%	0%	11%	90%
e. Assess students?	0%	0%	33%	67%
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	0%	11%	22%	67%
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	0%	0%	44%	56%
h. Teach to the state content standards?	0%	0%	33%	67%
i. Teach students who were LEP or ELLs?	22%	33%	33%	11%
j. Teach students with special needs?	22%	22%	22%	33.3

The results from the second question, which looked at the mentors' perception of the novice teacher preparedness at the beginning of the year, are identified in Table 2. When well prepared and very well prepared were combined, the highest readiness areas were using computers in classroom instruction and assessing students (44%). Seventy-eight percent of the mentors felt the novice teachers were somewhat prepared in using a variety of instructional methods and teaching their subject matter. However, the lowest readiness areas were teaching students who were LEP or ELLs, and none of the mentors felt the novice teachers were very well prepared or well prepared.

Table 2

Mentor's Perception of Novice Teacher Preparedness: Beginning of the Year

Question #2: At the beginning of the novice teacher's previous year of teaching, how well prepared were they to:	Not prepared at all	Somewhat prepared	Well prepared	Very well prepared
a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	44%	44%	11%	0%
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	11%	78%	0%	11%
c. Teach your subject matter?	11%	78%	11%	0%
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	33%	22%	11%	33%
e. Assess students?	11%	44%	22%	22%
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	33%	56%	0%	11%
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	44%	0%	44%	11%
h. Teach to the state content standards?	22%	56%	11%	11%
i. Teach students who were LEP or ELLs?	89%	11%	0%	0%
j. Teach students with special needs?	89%	11%	0%	0%

The third question asked the mentors to rate the novice teacher preparedness at the end of the year. Table 3 depicts the results. The highest readiness area for novice teachers was teaching to the state content standards (100%) when combined with well prepared and very well prepared. At the end of the year, the mentors felt that all of the novice teachers improved to at least

somewhat prepared in all readiness areas. Although teaching students who were LEP or ELLs

and teaching students with special needs (11%) were the two lowest readiness areas, the novice

teachers did show some improvement from the beginning of the year.

Table 3

Mentor's Perception of Novice Teacher Preparedness: End of the Year

Question #3: At the end of the novice teacher's previous year of teaching, how well prepared were they to:	Not prepared at all	Somewhat prepared	Well prepared	Very well prepared
a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	0%	11%	78%	11%
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	0%	11%	78%	11%
c. Teach your subject matter?	0%	11%	78%	11%
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	0%	0%	56	44
e. Assess students?	0%	11%	78%	11%
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	0%	33%	44%	22%
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	0%	11%	89%	0%
h. Teach to the state content standards?	0%	0%	78%	22%
i. Teach students who were LEP or ELLs?	44%	44%	0%	11%
j. Teach students with special needs?	11%	67%	22%	0%

The fourth question inquired about the support that mentors provided to novice teachers,

and the results are displayed in Table 4. One-hundred percent of mentors stated that they

provided observation feedback on their teaching aimed at helping them develop and refine their

practice beyond any formal administrative observation and feedback they may have received.

The second highest area of support was providing regular supportive communication with their

principal, other administrators, or department chair (89%). The lowest area of support that the

mentors provided was providing seminars or classes for novice teachers (22%).

Table 4

Mentor Support

Question #4: Did you provide support to the novice teacher on the following?	Yes	No
a. Reduced teaching schedule or number of preparations	56%	44%
b. Common planning time with teachers in your subject	78%	22%
c. Seminars or classes for novice teachers	22%	78%
d. Extra classroom assistance (e.g., teacher aides)	56%	44%
e. Regular supportive communication with your principal, other administrators, or department chair	89%	11%
f. Observation feedback on your teaching aimed at helping you develop and refine your teaching practice BEYOND any formal administrative observation and feedback you may receive	100%	0%
g. Release time to participate in support activities for novice or beginning teachers	78%%	22%

Novice Teachers. The novice teachers also had four pre-interview questions. The first and second questions inquired about how prepared the novice teacher was at the beginning of the year and at the end of the year. The third question was regarding the kinds of support that the novice teacher received during the school year. The fourth question was regarding the support novice teachers received from the mentor teacher.

Table 5 indicates the results from the first question that inquired about the novice teacher preparedness at the beginning of the year. The highest readiness area was using computers in classroom instruction (44%). There were no novice teachers who were very well prepared in assessing students and differentiating instruction in the classroom, and only 33% were well prepared. The lowest readiness areas were teaching students who were LEP or ELLs and teaching students with special needs (56%).

Table 5

Novice Teacher Preparedness: Beginning of the Year

Question #1: In your PREVIOUS year of teaching, how well prepared were you to at the beginning of the school year with the following:	Not prepared at all	Somewhat prepared	Well prepared	Very well prepared
a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	22%	22%	22%	33%
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	0%	11%	67%	22%
c. Teach your subject matter?	0%	22%	67%	11%
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	22%	11%	22%	44%
e. Assess students?	33%	33%	33%	0%
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	33%	33%	33%	0%
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	22%	44%	22%	11%
h. Teach to the state content standards?	0%	22%	44%	33%
i. Teach students who were LEP or ELLs?	44%	11%	44%	0%
j. Teach students with special needs?	56%	11%	33%	0%

The second question asked about novice teacher preparedness at the end of the year, and the results are depicted in Table 6. The readiness area that was the highest was teaching their subject matter, in which 56% were very well prepared. When combined with being well prepared, 100% of the novice teachers felt they were prepared to teach their subject matter. The novice teachers showed improvement in every readiness area except for teaching students who were LEP or ELLs. The novice teacher preparedness in teaching students who were LEP or ELLs remained the same.

Table 6

Novice Teacher Preparedness: End of the Year

Question #2: In your PREVIOUS year of teaching, how well prepared were you to at the end of the school year:	Not prepared at all	Somewhat prepared	Well prepared	Very well prepared
a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	0%	11%	44%	44%
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	0%	11%	44%	44%
c. Teach your subject matter?	0%	0%	44%	56%
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	0%	0%	56%	44%
e. Assess students?	0%	11%	67%	22%
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	0%	33%	56%	11%
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	11%	33%	56%	0%

The third question asked novice teachers about the support they received, and the results are displayed in Table 7. Eighty-nine percent of novice teachers reported that they received a reduced teaching schedule or number of preparations. Seventy-eight percent of novice teachers stated they received common planning time with teachers in their subject. However, only 44% of novice teachers said they received release time to participate in support and activities.

Table 7

Novice Teacher Support

Question #3: Did you receive the following kinds of support during the PREVIOUS school year of teaching?	Yes	No
a. Reduced teaching schedule or number of preparations	89%	11%
b. Common planning time with teachers in your subject	67%	33%
c. Seminars or classes for novice teachers	67%	33%
d. Extra classroom assistance (e.g., teacher aides)	56%	44%
e. Regular supportive communication with your principal, other administrators, or department chair	67%	33%
f. Observation feedback on your teaching aimed at helping you develop and refine your teaching practice BEYOND any formal administrative observation and feedback you may receive	78%	22%
g. Release time to participate in support activities for novice or beginning teachers	44%	56%

Table 8 identifies the results from the fourth question that asked novice teachers about the support they received from the mentors. Fifty-six of the novice teachers said the support that mentors provided the most was common planning time with teachers in their subject. The areas where novice teachers received the least support were extra classroom assistance (e.g., teacher aides) and observation feedback on their teaching aimed at helping novice teachers develop and refine their teaching beyond any formal administrative observation and feedback you may receive.

Table 8

Novice Teacher Support: Mentor

Question #4: Did a mentor provide you with the following during the PREVIOUS school year?	Yes	No
a. Reduced teaching schedule or number of preparations	11%	89%
b. Common planning time with teachers in your subject	56%	44%
c. Seminars or classes for novice teachers	44%	56%
d. Extra classroom assistance (e.g., teacher aides)	22%	78%
e. Regular supportive communication with your principal, other administrators, or department chair	44%	56%
f. Observation feedback on your teaching aimed at helping you develop and refine your teaching practice BEYOND any formal administrative observation and feedback you may receive	22%	78%
g. Release time to participate in support activities for novice or beginning teachers	33%	67%

Mentor Interview Findings

There were nine mentors who participated in the study. Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant. The participants were Meredith, Mackenzie, Melanie, Mariah, Madeline, Mia, Madison, Megan, and Melissa. The interview guide was divided into five sections, which were the five components of the mentoring program. The components were training, classroom observations, observation feedback meeting, end-of-the-year reflection, cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity.

Training. The first interview question was about the training the mentors received with the National Institute for Excellence in Teaching (NIET). Patterson Parish School District partnered with NIET to train the mentor teachers. The training consisted of learning about the history of NIET, Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) rubric, classroom observations, scripting lessons, reinforcements and refinements, and conducting pre- and postconferences. The TAP rubric was the instrument that mentors used to score the novice teacher's lesson. Mentors were

taught how to write everything that was observed during a lesson, which is referred to as scripting. Moreover, mentors were trained on how to conduct meetings that took place before the novice teacher taught their lesson (preconference) and the meeting that took place after the novice taught their lesson (postconference). Lastly, mentors learned how to conduct observation feedback meetings based on evidence that was collected while observing a lesson. The observation feedback meeting occurred after observing a novice teacher.

The interview questions were, "What was most effective about the training? Why? What was the least effective about the training? Why? Is there any other type of training that you feel you needed that would help you serve the novice teacher better?" These questions allowed the mentors to reflect on how well prepared they were to support novice teachers. In addition, the mentors reported extensive training on how to conduct pre- and postconferences, which helped them to provide timely feedback.

Mariah shared how the training taught her about the instructional indicators on the TAP rubric. Mackenzie stated the training helped her to identify the reinforcement and refinement areas. National Institute for Excellence in Teaching taught the mentors that the reinforcement was what went well in the lesson (positive feedback), and the refinement was what did not go well (negative feedback). Melissa noted how the training helped the novice teacher and she understand the importance of reflecting on lessons that had been taught. Melissa and Megan indicated that the training helped them understand their role as a mentor. Megan commented, "I learned the purpose of the mentoring program and my role as a mentor."

Four of the nine participants indicated that the most effective aspect of the training was learning to script lessons. According to Madeline, "Scripting helped me not to inflate the scores for the lessons due to the evidence that I collected while observing the novice teacher." Mia

expressed that she had to pay attention to smaller details while observing because it was important that the novice teacher received credit for everything that was involved during the lesson according to the TAP rubric. Meredith noted, "Scripting was the most effective training for me because I learned by doing, and this training was hands-on." Cheryl felt that watching videos of other teachers taught her how to script lessons. Mariah stated the scores from the lesson based on the TAP rubric were based on the instruction and not the teacher. Mackenzie and Mariah commented learning about the TAP rubric was the most effective aspect of the training. Melanie noted, "The training was ongoing because the mentors met weekly throughout the school year with the administrators to discuss any issues with the mentoring program." Madison stated that organizing the binder to use as a resource to help the novice teacher was effective for her.

Two of the nine participants felt that the trainings were effective. Four of the nine participants indicated the training was too long. Madison commented that she felt overwhelmed due to the amount of information they were given. Meredith stated, "It was too much to process." Mariah and Meredith revealed that the number of days was long, and the length of each training session was too long. Megan recalled that she needed more time to grasp the information. Madeline said that it would have been nice to meet her mentee during the novice teacher's induction program to help build a rapport. In addition, Mia indicated that learning about the history of the mentoring agency was the least effective aspect of the training.

Five of the nine participants indicated that no additional training was needed. Megan, Meredith, Melanie, Mackenzie, and Mariah shared that hands-on oriented training was the best type of training. Mariah explained that the training needed to be in a real-life setting. She said that the videos that the trainers used were displayed in unrealistic settings. Madison suggested

additional training on the ELA curriculum before working with the novice teacher would be beneficial. Melissa shared, "Additional training on classroom management and best practices would help her better support novice teachers."

Classroom Observations. Mentors were asked to talk about the second component of the mentoring program, which was the effectiveness of the classroom observations. The mentoring program required the mentor and the novice teacher to conduct classroom observations. The classroom observations consisted of the mentors observing the novice teachers and the novice teachers observing the mentors. The mentors conducted formal and informal observations on the novice teachers. Informal observations occur periodically throughout the week for no more than 20 minutes and could be conducted as deemed necessary by the mentor. On the other hand, formal observations occur three times per year for at least an hour. There were two of the formal observations that the novice teacher did not know the date and time (unannounced), and one of the formal observations that the novice teacher did know the date and time (announced).

The interview questions were, "Did you feel like you observed the novice teacher, and he/she observed you enough? Was it difficult to incorporate these observations into your daily operations as a teacher? Can you think of anything that might improve the observation process?" These questions allowed the mentors to reflect on how the classroom observations helped to support the novice teachers.

Four of the nine participants indicated that the classroom observations were effective. Melissa mentioned that the observations were very effective. Melissa felt the classroom observations were an ideal way to help build a relationship because the visibility helped her novice teacher feel more comfortable. Meredith stated, "Conducting classroom observations was

incredible because it gave me a chance to be able to see the strengths and any weaknesses of the novice teacher firsthand." Three of the nine participants indicated identifying strengths and weaknesses was effective. Madison shared how classroom observations allowed her to see the novice teacher's struggles and get a better understanding of their strengths. Mia commented, "Classroom observations were effective if the novice teacher was receptive and not afraid to make mistakes."

Four of the nine mentors revealed that they did not observe the novice teachers enough and that the novice teacher did not get to observe them enough. Melissa, Mia, Madeline, and Megan said that finding the time and scheduling the observations were issues. Madeline commented. "It was so hard for us to observe each other. Plus, I did like to get pulled out of my classroom because I was not able to deliver instruction to my students." Mia shared, "I did not have enough time to observe my novice because my classes kept me so busy." Melissa indicated, "I did not observe the novice teacher enough because I was bound to my classroom." Mackenzie and Melanie shared that there were opportunities for novice teachers and mentors to observe each other. However, Melanie had to model for the novice teachers during their weekly cluster meetings and not in the classrooms due to time constraints. According to Mackenzie, "You needed a schedule to observe novice teachers because we were so busy teaching. A schedule would help us in managing our time better." Mariah, Madison, and Meredith shared that they observed the novice teachers; however, the novice teacher did not observe them enough. Mariah stated that time was the major limitation. Meredith mentioned that instead of doing observations, that she did a lot of co-teaching with her novice teachers.

Seven of the nine mentors stated that conducting classroom observations were difficult to incorporate in their daily operations as a teacher. The seven mentors suggested that having

common planning times and a classroom observation schedule would help increase the frequency and ease of classroom observations. Meredith commented, "Observations were difficult to schedule. The process could be improved by developing a plan." Mia suggested maybe having a block schedule for mentors would help. According to Madeline, "Planning periods were not common between the mentor and their novice teacher. We would meet in the hallways while passing by." Megan revealed the days were very hectic because sometimes there was not an available staff member to cover her classroom while she was out supporting novice teachers. Megan recalled, "Administrators were challenged with the task of enlisting someone to teach my students while I am out of my classroom observing teachers."

Observation Feedback Meetings. Mentors were asked to talk about the third component of the mentoring program, which was the observation feedback meetings. Observation feedback meetings were meetings where the mentor and the novice teacher reflected on the lesson that was observed to help identify a reinforcement (strength) and a refinement (weakness). The interview questions were, "How effective were these sessions? Can you think of anything that might improve these sessions?" These questions allowed mentors to reflect on how the observation feedback meetings helped to improve the instruction of novice teachers.

Six of the nine mentors stated that the observation feedback process entailed identifying the novice teachers' reinforcements, refinements, and having the novice teacher reflect on their lesson. Melanie shared, "The observation feedback meetings allowed novice teachers to reflect on their reinforcement and refinement." Mariah noted that she used guiding questions, and the feedback was not personal. According to Mariah, the feedback was derived by observing the lesson to make the novice teacher a better teacher. Mackenzie indicated, "I attempted to help the novice teachers identify their lesson's strengths and weaknesses without my actually telling

them. This allowed them to reflect on their own lessons." Megan revealed that the novice teacher could use this time during the observation feedback meeting to ask questions about her lesson. Madeline said, "We discussed what they could work on. I explained to the novice teacher that it was not necessarily wrong, but how could the lesson be made better."

Madison and Mariah believed that the effectiveness of the observation feedback depended on how receptive the teacher was to feedback. Madison shared, "Having great relationships improved the observation feedback process." Mackenzie, Megan, Madeline, Melanie, Meredith, Mia, and Melissa stated that the observation feedback process was effective because it revealed exactly what the novice teacher needed to work on. Melissa shared, "I did not tell them because I wanted them to reflect. I allowed them to see on their own. It was totally awesome, and I did not see any problems with it." Mia indicated, "It allowed for reflection and an opportunity to learn a lot." Meredith shared that the novice teacher wanted to do better. "I attempted not to always carry a clipboard because they would get nervous." Mariah indicated that she always began with a positive comment during the observation feedback meetings. According to Madeline, "Administrators needed to provide more support for the refinement areas and go into the classrooms more to support the novice teachers."

End-of-Year Reflection. Mentors were asked to talk about the fourth component of the mentoring program, which was the end-of-the-year reflection. The end-of-year reflections occurred when the mentor and novice teachers met at the end of the year to discuss the novice teachers' lessons, overall TAP scores, and student data. The interview questions were, "Did you feel comfortable enough in this meeting to give honest responses? Did this reflection process help you in making your plans for the next school year? These questions allowed the mentors to

reflect on how the effectiveness of the end-of-the-year reflection meeting helped support their mentee.

Madison, Mia, Madeline, Megan, Mackenzie, Melissa, and Melanie indicated that the end-of-the-year reflection meeting went well and allowed everyone to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. Melanie noted that the novice teachers reflected on the reinforcement and refinement areas. Madison mentioned how the novice teacher saw the same thing that she saw as the reinforcement and the refinement areas." Melanie indicated, "It was very effective because it helped teachers to improve in the refinement areas." Meredith and Mariah revealed that the end-of-the-year meeting did not go very well. Meredith shared that she was assigned to a novice teacher, but she provided support to an entirely different novice teacher. Mariah indicated, "The meeting was bumpy at first. My novice teacher only wanted to hear feedback from the administrator." Melissa did not feel comfortable talking about the reflection meeting and declined to answer questions about the meeting.

Seven of the nine mentors indicated they felt comfortable providing honest responses during the end-of-the-year reflection. Mackenzie stated, "I felt comfortable because I had already built relationships with my novice teachers. Trust was important and knowing how to approach the novice teacher." Megan shared that the feedback was honest between the novice teacher and her. According to Melanie, she felt comfortable, and she developed really good relationships with the novice teachers. Melanie felt she knew how to relate to the novice teachers." Mia shared, "I was honest, but I was afraid I would hurt my novice teacher's feelings."

Seven of the nine participants indicated the reflection process helped them plan for the next school year. Melanie and Madison stated that the reflection process caused them to reflect on their strengths and weaknesses. Melanie stated that she reflected and provided herself with a

reinforcement area (something that she did well as a mentor) and a refinement area (something that she needed to improve on as a mentor) based on feedback from the novice teacher and administrators." Mia commented, "I wanted to develop a script where I would not hurt their feelings." Mia explained that having a prewritten script on what to say would have helped her because it would require her to think before she spoke to the novice teacher and be empathetic. According to Madeline, administrative support was not good. Meredith noted that she planned to observe the novice teacher presenting instruction during the next year.

Cohesiveness, Communication, and Reciprocity. Mentors were asked to talk about the fifth component of the mentoring program, which was cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity. This component focused on relationships that the mentors and novice teachers established with each other, the benefits they provided to each other, and the effectiveness of the communication between the two parties. These questions were, "What was the biggest benefit that you gained by working with the novice teacher? What was the biggest benefit that you provided to the novice teachers? Did the relationship with your novice teacher involve effective communication?" These questions allowed the mentors to reflect on the relationships that were formed, effective communication, and the benefits of the mentor-mentee relationship.

All of the mentors indicated that their role as a mentor helped them to develop good relationships with the novice teachers. Melissa stated, "The novice teacher felt comfortable sharing because there was trust. It was a great relationship. I adopted her because she cried every day at first." Mackenzie shared that she and the novice teacher built a friendship that was based on trust. Madeline noted that she had to open up with the novice teachers and be available. Mia stated, "We grew together." According to Mariah, the novice teacher felt comfortable coming to her, and as a result, their relationship blossomed. Melanie shared that she was really close to the

novice teachers, and felt that she related to them about classroom issues." Madison shared, "At first, the novice teacher was a little nervous. I introduced myself to her, and I told her I was a teacher just like her. I related to her." As a result, the novice teacher began to open up with Madison.

All of the mentors indicated that the novice teachers had benefited them as a mentor. Madeline, Melanie, and Madison stated the biggest benefit gained by working with the novice teachers was having a relationship. Madeline mentioned that the novice teacher and she were a family. According to Madeline, "I am like a big sister. Novice teachers rely on mentors for trust and guidance and compassion." Melanie commented that she gained a new relationship, and the novice teacher was able to open up to her in confidence." Megan, Meredith, Mariah, and Mia believed the biggest benefit for them was learning the curriculum. Megan said, "I have become a better leader, and I have become better implementing the strategies that I have learned." Meredith revealed that she learned new instructional strategies and ideas from her novice teacher. Mariah commented, "My knowledge was strengthened about the curriculum, and I gained refreshing new ideas from the novice teachers."

Five of the nine participants stated the biggest benefit that they provided to the novice teachers was curriculum knowledge. According to Megan, she provided the novice teacher with strategies. Mariah noted, "The biggest benefit I provided to her was increased knowledge of the curriculum." Mackenzie shared that she provided an innovative way of presenting the content to help students show mastery. Megan, Melissa, Madeline, Melanie, and Madison commented that they provided reliability, empathy, relatedness, compassion, trust, and confidentiality. Megan shared, "I helped novice teachers grow their students according to the English Language Arts (ELA) and math data." Madeline emphasized, "I provided a great deal of support to my novice

teacher." Madison shared, "I was available after school if my novice teacher needed me because I was so busy during the school day." Melanie and Melissa stated they were able to relate to the novice teacher because they both had classrooms.

All of the mentors indicated that the relationship with their novice teacher involved effective communication. Megan shared that at first, her mentee thought she was too hard, but when she learned more about Megan, the novice teacher saw that she was there to help. As a result, they built a relationship because Megan provided support to the novice teacher. Madeline indicated that she had an open-door policy. "You have to talk to them to build trust with them." According to Madison, her novice teacher called her on the weekend, and she helped the novice teacher; however, she could. Mariah commented, "They could talk about anything, which helped with the communication concerning the curriculum." Melanie shared, "When the novice teachers had a problem, they would text or email me for support." According to Melissa, "I had to establish the best method of communication, and I had to be very flexible when dealing with my mentees and learn to adapt to their personalities. I tried to build rapport, which resulted in trust."

Novice Teacher Interview Findings

There were also nine novice teachers who participated in the study. Pseudonyms were assigned to each participant. The participants were Nora, Natasha, Naya, Nicole, Nyla, Nina, Nancy, Nicholas, and Natalie. The interview guide was divided into five sections, training, classroom observations, observation feedback meetings, end-of-the-year reflection, and cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity.

Training. Novice teachers were asked to talk about the first component of the mentoring program, which was the training that novice teachers received. They received training during the new teacher induction on English-Language Arts (ELA) and math curriculum, grading,

insurance, retirement, and student engagement. The training lasted three days. These questions were, "What was most effective about the training? Why? What was the least effective about the training? Why? Is there any other type of training that you feel you needed that would help you be a stronger teacher?" These questions allowed novice teachers to reflect on how well prepared they were when they entered the teaching profession.

All nine of the novice teachers attended the district-wide induction program at the beginning of the school year. Natalie shared, "The induction included discussions on retirement, insurance, ELA and math curricula." Naya revealed that the training was on a school and district level. Natasha commented that she received a lot of training on the ELA and math curricula. Four of the nine participants indicated that the training included extensive curriculum training for ELA and math. Nyla said that she received a lot of training in ELA and math. Katie mentioned that the curriculum training was in-depth for math. However, Nora, Nyla, and Nina recalled how overwhelmed they felt after the new teacher induction. According to Nora, she was told good luck and was not provided with any support. Nyla shared, "I was very overwhelmed with so much information that was presented to me." Nina recalled, "I was in survival mode. Everything was thrown at me at one time. I did not have time to process the information."

Participants' responses varied regarding what was most effective and ineffective about the training. Three of the nine novice teachers expressed the curriculum training was the most effective aspect of the training. Natalie stated that the math training was very detailed from the beginning to the end and showed her exactly what she would be doing. Naya shared, "The emphasis on the curriculum helped me to master my craft." Natasha mentioned the ELA training was step-by-step, and resources were provided for the math curriculum." Nora, Nicole, and Nyla commented that the training on classroom management was effective. Nora noted, "The Kagan

training was a resource I could use for classroom management" (Kagan is a professional development program that teaches teachers how to keep all of their students engaged in the classroom). On the other hand, Nicholas and Nina noted that the Kagan training was ineffective for them. Nicholas said he did not receive enough training in his content area, and Nina shared that she was given too much information at one time.

Only one of the nine participants indicated that the overall training was effective. Nancy expressed, "The training was good and helped me. The other eight participants found that the training did not provide enough support. Naya stated, "It was without guidance." Nora mentioned that there were two math curricula going on at the same time, and support was not provided for either one. Nicholas shared, "I did not receive any training or support at all." Natasha and Nicole indicated the training did not include enough support in the area of behavior management, Individual Education Plan (IEP), Response to Intervention (RTI), and progress monitoring for students. Nina and Nyla believed that too much information was presented within the three-day training, which made the training ineffective.

All nine of the participants agreed that additional training would help them become a stronger teacher. Nancy, Nyla, Nicole, Nicholas, and Natalie agreed that additional training was needed on the ELA and math curricula. Nora revealed, "I struggled with the School Building Level Committee (SBLC) and RTI process. Who do I talk with to navigate the process?" Nora further stated, "The SBLC and the RTI process helps determine if struggling students need extra assistance in the classroom to help them become more successful, which novice teachers need to know. Natasha stated that observing teachers in other struggling schools would benefit her more and make her a better teacher.

Classroom Observation. Novice teachers were asked to talk about the second component of the mentoring program, which was the effectiveness of the classroom observations. Classroom observations included the mentors observing the novice teachers, and the novice teachers observing the mentor teach lessons. The observations could be formal or informal. These questions were, "Did you feel like you observed the mentor teacher, and they observed you enough? Was it difficult to incorporate these observations in your daily operations as a teacher? Can you think of anything that might improve the observation process?" These questions allowed novice teachers to reflect on how classroom observations helped novice teachers deliver quality lessons.

Naya, Nancy, Nina, and Nyla indicated that classroom observations allowed them to receive feedback from the mentor teacher. Nina commented, "I liked hearing the positive as well as the negative feedback." Naya believed the observations kept her on track. However, Nyla wished the observations occurred more frequently because she needed the feedback. Natalie, Nicole, Nora, Nicholas, and Natasha commented that there needed to be more observations as well. Nicholas shared, "I have not observed my mentor since last year." We have not observed each other while teaching a lesson this year. In addition, Natasha recalled that she never really observed her mentor teach a lesson, nor has her mentor observed her teaching a lesson.

Seven of the nine novice teachers revealed they did not observe their mentor enough due to scheduling issues and a lack of common planning times. Natalie expressed, "It is so difficult to get someone to hold my class." Nancy commented that more opportunities to observe would help, but it was difficult getting into her mentor's classroom. According to Nancy, "I had to rearrange my schedule." Nora revealed, "I have observed her, maybe once." Naya and Nina stated that they were able to observe their mentors enough. However, Nina commented that she

was told so many things. Nina asked, "Which one do I pick? It was information overload." Naya stated that she was able to observe her mentor enough, but she had to give up her planning period sometimes. "I had to be willing to sacrifice at times."

Six of the nine participants noted that their mentor was not able to observe them enough because of issues with common planning times and scheduling. Natalie stated that she and her mentor taught in the same grade, which made it difficult for her mentor to observe her. Nyla shared it was difficult because she and her mentor were not on the same grade level, nor did they teach the same subject. According to Nora, there was no release time for her mentor built into her schedule. Nicholas shared, "No one ever observed me." Naya shared that the administrators did not do a good job of scheduling for the observations. Nicole, Nancy, and Nina mentioned that their mentor had observed them enough.

Most of the novice teachers felt it was difficult to incorporate observations into their daily operations. In addition, most of the novice teachers indicated that having common planning times, better scheduling, and teaching the same subject might improve the observation process. Nina shared that trying to conduct classroom observations added to the stress because of scheduling issues. Natalie suggested, "A consistent schedule to help relieve mentors and novice teachers could improve the process." Nina also stated that more support and modeling was needed from the mentors. Nyla emphasized that she wanted mentors to come in and observe her lessons, although she realized that covering classes was an issue. Nyla stated that it was difficult to get staff members to cover classes because there was just not enough manpower.

Observation Feedback Meetings. Novice teachers were asked to talk about the third component of the mentoring program, which was the observation feedback meetings. The observation feedback meetings allowed the mentor and the novice teacher to reflect on the lesson

that was observed to help identify a reinforcement (strength) area and a refinement (weakness) area. These questions were, "How has the feedback from your mentor help you as a novice teacher? How effective were these sessions? Can you think of anything that might improve these sessions?" These questions allowed novice teachers to reflect on how the observation feedback meetings helped to improve their instruction.

Six of the nine novice teachers revealed that the observation feedback helped to improve their instruction. Nora, Nancy, Nina, Naya, Nicole, and Natalie noted that their mentor identified a reinforcement and a refinement area and discussed how to fix things. Nancy shared how her mentor provided her with good advice about the lesson. Nancy expressed, "My mentor was great. She was awesome at providing feedback." According to Naya, she and her mentor talked about what went well during the lesson. Naya's mentor always ended the meeting with a resource that she could use. Nicole mentioned, "The reinforcement and the refinement process helped me to set goals." On the other hand, Nicholas, Natasha, and Nyla did not receive feedback during the observation feedback meeting. Nyla emphasized that it was hard to see her mentor and that they only saw each other at school while on duty. Nicholas mentioned he received his feedback from the instructional coordinator, which was good. Most of the other feedback that he received from the principal was negative and demotivating. Natasha stated, "I never received any feedback."

Seven of the nine participants indicated that they received useful feedback during the observation feedback meeting. Nicholas was the only one who did not receive the feedback from his mentor. According to Nicholas, it took three weeks sometimes between his observation and when he received feedback. Nina and Nancy shared how their mentor provided them with reinforcement and refinement. The reinforcement helped build her confidence because she

learned the strength of her lesson, and the refinement helped improve her lessons because she knew what she needed to work on. Nicole and Natalie mentioned that the meeting allowed them to see what they needed to work on and what to fix. On the other hand, Natasha and Nyla did not receive any feedback from their mentor.

All but two of the nine novice teachers indicated various ways to improve the observation feedback meetings. Naya and Nancy reported that the observation feedback meetings did not need any improvements. Nancy expressed, "The observation feedback meetings were perfect." However, Nicole, Nyla, Nicholas, and Nina suggested having the mentors model instructional strategies for ELA and math lessons would really help improve their instruction. Nicole stated, "Show me what the lesson should like. In other words, what should my students and be doing and saying during my lessons?" Nicholas expressed, "Let me know how to fix my refinement area by modeling whatever the strategy or content that I need to help reach my students." Nina noted that she was showed how to teach her lessons and then was left alone without any mentoring support. Nina said some of the expectations that the mentor had for her were unrealistic. Nora suggested that mentors could set goals and provide action plans so novice teachers could have a guide for improvement.

End-of-Year Reflection. Novice teachers were asked to talk about the fourth component of the mentoring program, which was the end-of-the-year reflection. The end-of-year reflection occurred when mentors and novice teachers met at the end of the year to discuss the novice teachers' lessons, overall TAP scores, and student data. The interview questions were, "Did you feel comfortable enough in this meeting to give honest responses? Did this reflection process help you in making your plans for the next school year?" These questions allowed novice

teachers to reflect on how the effectiveness of end-of-year reflection meetings helped support them in the classroom.

Three of the novice teachers indicated they did not have an end-of-the-year reflection meeting with their mentor. Nicholas shared that he met with his principal. Nicholas stated, "There was not an end-of-the-year meeting with my mentor." Nyla shared that her mentor was a great classroom teacher, but she never met with her. Natalie, Nina, Nicole, and Nora expressed that they had a meeting, but the meeting was not effective. One part of the end-of-year reflection entailed completing a questionnaire, in which all mentors and novice teachers were required to complete a questionnaire about their mentoring experience. According to Natalie, there was not any verbal communication with her mentor. Nina shared, "There was an unspoken pressure to give mentors good scores during the end-of-year meeting." Nina felt she was supposed to make her mentor feel good. Nora said she was provided with her overall score and was told to sign the form. Naya and Nancy commented on how the reflection process was beneficial. According to Nancy, her mentor helped her, and she became a better teacher. Naya responded, 'It was always exciting to see how my students did as a result of my teaching practices." Natasha commented that she never met with her mentor for the reflection meeting.

Five of the nine participants stated they felt comfortable enough in the reflection meeting to give honest responses. According to Nicole, there was good communication during the meeting. Nancy stated she and her mentor were an open-book because she and her mentor shared everything with each other about their instruction, whether it was positive or negative. She shared, "The good and bad critiques helped me." Naya mentioned that the climate and culture at the school, along with the respect between the mentor and the mentee, helped the meeting because the positive environment made sharing with each other easier. Natasha revealed that she

felt comfortable during the meeting, but was disappointed because the reflection and feedback were lacking from her mentor. In addition, she stated the mentor's comments were not helpful. Nina stated that she received ineffective scores, which was very frustrating because she was awarded the teacher-of-the-year. This made her feel frustrated. Natalie explained, "I did not feel comfortable being truthful during my meeting. I did not want to hurt anyone. In addition, I did not want it to appear as if I was trying to be vindictive." Nancy and Nicholas shared they did not meet with anyone for their reflection meeting.

Six of the nine novice teachers indicated that the reflection meeting helped them in making plans for the next school year because they were able to use what they had learned from their mentor throughout the school year. Nicole stated that the reflection meeting helped her to become stronger in teaching math lessons. Nancy shared that the reflection meeting helped her set boundaries and to see what to expect because of effective lesson planning, preparation, reinforcements, and refinements. According to Naya, she was able to see what changes she needed to make to become a better teacher. Natasha noted that she learned how to annotate her lessons and how to improve her behavior management plan. Nyla stated, "I was able to understand how to better reach struggling students. I learned that students are not all the same." Nina expressed how the reflection meeting made her question if she wanted to remain in a struggling school.

Cohesiveness, Communication, and Reciprocity. Novice teachers were asked to elaborate on the fifth component of the mentoring program, which was cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity. This component focused on relationships that the mentors and novice teachers established with each other, the benefits they provided to each other, and how effective the communication was between the two parties. These questions were, "What was the

biggest benefit that you gained by working with your mentor teacher? What was the biggest benefit that you provided to your mentor teacher? Did the relationship with your mentor teacher involve effective communication?" These questions allowed the novice teachers to reflect on the relationships that were formed, effective communication, and the benefits of the mentor-mentee relationship.

Seven of the nine participants stated a relationship was formed with their mentor. According to Natalie, she ate lunch with her mentor every day, and they developed a friendship. Nancy said that she and her mentor always talked, and they became friends. Naya shared, "We formed a bond. I was able to see her expertise." Natasha stated that they hardly ever had time to sit down for discussions, but she could email and go by her mentor's room for support. Nyla revealed that her mentor provided great advice and was very knowledgeable. Nina stated she and her mentor shared a good relationship. Nina expressed, "She is my favorite person. We have connected." On the other hand, Nicholas and Nora did not develop a positive relationship with their mentor.

Seven of the nine participants indicated that support was the biggest benefit that their mentor provided to them. Natalie noted that her mentor helped her realize what she needed to work on. Nicole said her mentor was available and provided positive examples for her. Nancy recalled, "My mentor helped me solve many of my problems." Naya expressed that she received useful resources from her mentor. Natasha shared, "I asked questions, and my mentor provided me with the answers." Nyla emphasized that her mentor explained information to her. According to Nina, her mentor provided her with guidance and support with classroom management and instruction.

Six of the nine participants revealed that they provided a benefit to their mentor. Nicole, Nancy, and Nina commented that they provided new instructional strategies and ideas with their mentor. Nancy stated her mentor was receptive to her new ideas. Nina expressed, "I provided her with new ideas and tools." Naya mentioned that she provided her mentor with respect. I listened to her, and I trusted her expertise. Natalie stated she was able to help her mentor with her career path.

Six of the nine novice teachers stated the relationship with the mentor involved effective communication. Natasha recalled the communication was via email. Nancy noted she and the mentor had an open and honest relationship. According to Nancy, she and her mentor's personalities matched. Nicole shared that she and her mentor's communication took place mainly at work. However, Nina and Natalie shared that communication with their mentor took place during and after school.

Mentoring Artifacts

The executive master teacher at PPSD provided mentor responsibility surveys and novice teacher responsibility surveys from the 2018-2019 school year. I was able to analyze the actual surveys and the results. These artifacts helped provide useful information about the mentoring program and mentor and novice teacher roles.

The mentor responsibility surveys provided information about staff development, instructional supervision, mentoring, community involvement, school responsibilities, growth and professional development, and reflection on teaching. The novice teacher responsibility surveys provided information about the growth and professional development and reflection on teaching. The results from the artifacts were used to help understand the depth of the mentoring

program as well as the responsibilities of the mentor and novice teacher. This information helped reinforce the findings of the interviews.

Emerging Themes

A combination of NVivo and process coding techniques helped identify commonalities in participant responses. These commonalities created the study's themes. Four common themes emerged as the most influential factors that contributed to the components of the PPSD mentoring program from both the mentor teacher and novice teacher perspectives. The themes were bonding, observations, feedback, and preparedness (Appendix C).

Theme 1: Bonding

One common thread among participant responses was their belief in bonding (the power of connection and relationships). Participants felt bonding was one of the most important aspects of the mentoring program in PPSD. The categories that helped identify the emerging theme were friendships and relationships. The theme and categories helped to answer the research questions because they corresponded to the component of the mentoring program—cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity.

Both mentor and novice teachers indicated positive relationships and friendships were formed as a result of the mentoring program. Participants' beliefs about relationships became apparent in their answers about classroom observations, observation feedback, end-of-the-year reflection, and cohesiveness, communication, reciprocity, effectiveness, and suggestions for improvement. Words and phrases such as "stay after school to help," "build trust," "thinking about others," "we are family," and "big sister" were repeatedly stated over the course of the mentor teacher interviews. Words and phrases such as "my mentor was my rock," "eat lunch together every day," "a friendship," were repeatedly stated over the course of the novice teacher

interviews. However, not all novice teachers felt the same. Words and phrases such as "there were no sit-down discussions," "no relationship," "no benefit gained," and "no benefit provided" were repeatedly stated over the course of the interviews with some novice teachers. The combination of mentor teacher and novice teacher comments reinforced that connectedness (maintaining positive relationships and receiving ongoing support) or the lack thereof with mentors could positively or negatively influence a novice teacher's decision to remain in the classroom. Megan expressed how she built a good relationship with her novice teachers by stating,

> I never wanted my novice teacher to feel overwhelmed. I should not always have to give her a refinement area. I made sure she had my cell phone number. I let her know I was there to help her. I had to build trust with her.

Madison indicated, "We sustained a great relationship. I wanted her to know we were all human. I made myself available to her after school. My novice teacher was happy to have someone for support. She even called me on the weekend." Melissa emphasized,

> It was important to build relationships, especially if the novice teachers were struggling. That is when you will get the best from the novice teacher. Without a relationship, it is just compliance. Then, the novice teacher can feel comfortable sharing.

Mia mentioned, "If I was that teacher, how would I feel? I was careful not to hurt their feelings." Melanie shared, "I felt really close to the novice teachers. I could relate to them and help them." Novice teachers recognized the importance of mentors and novice teachers building relationships. Natalie commented, "She was not like a stranger coming into my classroom." Naya shared, "We formed a bond," Nicole commented, "There was nothing negative about our relationship. It was all positive." Nina stated,

Although I thought about if I really wanted to stay in a struggling school, my mentor and I

have connected. She was my rock. She was amazing. Her specialty was math, but she

helps me with ELA. We had a great relationship. She was my favorite person.

Nicholas was frustrated that he did not have a relationship with his mentor by saying,

I wanted to talk about my lessons. I did not know who my mentor was. I did not have a

relationship with my mentor because I never met them. I know someone was supposed to

be assigned to me.

Nora was also disappointed that she did not have a relationship with her mentor and shared,

"I do not see her much. There have not been any benefits from this program. We never

developed a relationship."

Theme 2: Observations

Mentors and novice teachers indicated that classroom observations were an important

aspect of the mentoring program in PPSD. Common planning times and modeling were

categories that were developed from the analysis. Participant beliefs about the barriers of

conducting classroom observations became apparent in their responses about classroom

observations and suggestions for improvement. Words and phrases such as "did not observe me

enough," "coverage was a problem," "not enough time," "my students were important as well,"

"my students missing out," "planning periods problematic," "need support," and "no release

time." Madeline commented, "We had classroom ourselves. The novice teachers needed us

more. Our planning periods were not common." Melanie shared, "It was so difficult to

incorporate because of different planning times." Melissa mentioned, "It depended on the role of

the mentor." Shoyla stated, "Classroom observations were very effective, but I had to conduct

the observations during my lunchtime sometimes." Madison shared, "I had to have someone

come in and hold my class and worry if they were presenting the instruction correctly." Megan stated, "I had to use videos because of scheduling issues." To help improve the classroom observations, seven of the nine mentors suggested having a schedule that would allow mentors and novice teachers to observe each other more. Nicholas suggested being able to observe effective teachers at different schools would help novice teachers. Melissa suggested maybe changing the role of the mentor, and Megan suggested maybe using videos more.

Six of the nine novice teachers believed that better scheduling and teaching the same subject would help improve the classroom observation component. Naya shared, "I had to be willing to give up my planning period." Natalie suggested, "Having a consistent schedule to relieve mentors and novice teachers would help." Nyla shared, "There were not many teachers that I could observe at my school because we were not on the same grade level or did not teach the same subject." The combination of the mentor teacher and novice teacher comments reinforced that the classroom observation component was an ineffective component of the mentoring program and might also increase the probability of novice teacher success and possibly influence novice teachers' decisions to remain in PPSD and education.

Participants' beliefs about the importance of modeling became apparent in their responses about modeling. Words and phrases such as "I needed to go into the novice teacher's classroom more," "more opportunities to model," "could have done more," "model during cluster," "no release time," "hard to get into her classroom," "scheduling conflicts," and "model for me" reinforced the need for modeling. Nora stated, "An action plan should be developed to help mentors." Mariah shared, "If I modeled a lesson, the novice teacher could watch and learn." Meredith suggested, "I would team and co-teach with my novice teacher." The combination of the mentor and novice teacher comments reinforced that modeling was beneficial for the

classroom observation component but an ineffective component of the mentoring program and may also increase the probability of novice teacher success and possibly influence the novice teacher's decisions to remain in PPSD and education.

Theme 3: Feedback

Mentors and novice teachers indicated that feedback was vital for the mentor-mentee relationship to thrive. The categories that helped identify the emerging theme was reflection. The theme and category helped to answer the two research questions for the study because they corresponded with two of the components of the mentoring program—observation feedback meetings and the end-of-year reflection.

Participants' beliefs about the barriers of conducting classroom observations became apparent in their responses about observation feedback, reflection, communication, and suggestions for improvement. Words and phrases such as "discuss strengths first," "honest feedback," "redirect conversations," "best method of communication," "receptive," "call, text, email," "open up," "listening," "always talk," and "one-to-one," were detected. Mackenzie commented, "We talked all the time." Madison shared, "I told the novice teacher that I wanted her to be honest with me." Natalie mentioned, "We communicated during and after work." Nicole, "There was nothing negative but positive." The combination of mentor teacher and novice teacher comments reinforced that communication was beneficial for the observation feedback and the end-of-the-year reflection component of the mentoring program and may also increase the probability of novice teacher success and possibly influence novice teacher's decisions to remain in PPSD and education. Each of the nine mentors suggested that effective communication with the novice teacher should involve trust, relationship building, availability, open-mindedness, receptiveness, honesty, listening, and reflection.

Theme 4: Preparedness

Being adequately prepared was a designated theme in the study. Mentors and novice teachers indicated training was crucial in preparing them for their teaching. Participants' beliefs about the need to improve training became apparent in their responses about the effectiveness of the training and the need for additional training. Words and phrases such as "needed more training," "overwhelmed," more curriculum training," "unrealistic settings," "need more hands-on," "classroom management," "no guidance," "survival mode," "observe teachers in similar schools," and "no curriculum training." Megan shared, "I needed more time to grasp." Madeline commented that going to meet novice teachers during the induction program would help. Nyla stated, "Hands-on and interactive training would be better." Nora shared, "More training on SBLC and RTI would be good." Natasha mentioned, "Training on behavior management and observing other teachers would be good." The combination of the mentor teacher and novice teacher comments reinforced that additional training would be beneficial to help better prepare mentor and novice teachers and may also increase the probability of novice teacher success and possibly influence novice teacher's decisions to remain in PPSD and education.

Summary

This chapter began with an introduction to the study and the two research questions that I investigated. I reviewed the processes used to conduct the study and provided an analysis of the mentor teacher and novice teacher questionnaire responses, one-on-one interviews, and mentoring artifacts. Furthermore, in this chapter, I discussed the four major themes and the six categories that emerged from the investigation. In addition, I indicated how the data corresponded with the SET, COR, and the five components of the mentoring program and

answered the two research questions. In Chapter 5, I provide a discussion of the summary of the

findings, implications for practice, recommendations for future research, and a conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Implications and Recommendations

The number of teachers leaving the classroom has become a global problem for public education. Statistics show that the attrition rate for novice teachers within their first five years of teaching is 50% in developed countries (Izadinia, 2015). Although experienced and novice teachers leave the profession, novice teachers leave the profession at much higher rates than experienced teachers (Curry et al., 2016). To help retain novice teachers, many school districts utilize a mentoring program to help support novice teachers. Sparkes et al. (2017) reported that an effective mentoring program could reduce teacher attrition by providing guidance and support.

Patterson Parish School District (PPSD) is one of many school districts in Louisiana where teacher attrition is problematic. The school district consists of 10 struggling, urban, elementary schools. The attrition rate for these elementary schools in 2017-2018 was 12%, which exceeded the state average by 3.5% (Louisiana Believes, 2018). The percentage of novice teachers who left the profession in PPSD was 10% in 2016 and 12% in 2015. The percentage was 11% in 2017, which exceeded the state average by 3.5% (Louisiana Believes, 2018). To help fill the void, PPSD hires approximately 200 new teachers each year (PPSD, 2018). To help retain novice teachers, PPSD implemented a mentoring program where mentors were trained to support novice teachers.

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the mentoring program at PPSD from the perspective of the mentors and the novice teachers. It was the intent of the study to discover if the program components were meeting the needs of the participants. The results of this study could provide key information that could assist district personnel in determining if the mentoring support was adequate and effective. Information was needed from mentors and novice

teachers to conduct an adequate investigation of the mentoring program for possible improvements.

The study was relevant because of the high attrition rates in PPSD. A study by Ingersoll (2012) found attrition rates for novice teachers had increased by 33% in the past 20 years, which resulted in a high number of novice teachers that are more than likely to leave the teaching profession. Patterson Parish School District chose to utilize a mentoring program to help retain their novice teachers. Research has indicated that mentoring programs positively impact novice teachers (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Therefore, PPSD decided to take a more critical approach to help ensure there are enough experienced quality teachers in the classroom (Carver-Thomas & Darling-Hammond, 2017).

Two research questions guided the study, (a) What are the perceptions of the mentors regarding the PPSD mentoring program? and (b) What are the perceptions of the novice teachers regarding the PPSD mentoring program? Nine mentor teachers and nine novice teachers received questionnaires and participated in interviews to explore the subject in detail. Mentoring artifacts were gathered from the district that provided additional data to help answer the two research questions.

Qualitative research was used to explore the perspectives of mentors and novice teachers. Qualitative research was used by collecting, analyzing, and interpreting data from the mentor and novice teachers in PPSD for the investigation of the mentoring program. Mentor teachers and novice teachers received a four-question questionnaire that was used to gather some foundational information. The questionnaires were derived from the Teacher Questionnaire of the National Teacher and Principal Survey 2015–2016 School Year (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016; See Appendix A and B). Mentoring artifacts were collected for additional data. However,

the main source of data collection was semistructured interviews. Mentors and novice teachers responded to five open-ended interview and follow-up questions that were aligned to the components of the mentoring program. After the data were transcribed, coded, and analyzed for meaning, specific themes, categories, descriptions, and evidence emerged as they related to the two research questions.

Chapter 5 focuses on the interpretation of research findings and related recommendations. The specific implications of each major theme are addressed, and recommendations for improving the mentoring program in PPSD are identified. Reflections and conclusions are also included in the chapter.

Interpretation of Findings

The central focus of the study was the effectiveness of the PPSD mentoring program from the perspective of the mentor and the novice teacher. To explore the program, it was imperative to examine the components of the program. Those components were training, classroom observations (mentor observed novice teacher and novice teacher observed mentor), observation feedback meetings, end-of-year reflection, and cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity.

Through the use of questionnaires, interviews and artifacts, the themes established were bonding, observations, feedback, and preparedness. These themes were evident in answering the research questions: What are the perceptions of the mentors regarding the PPSD mentoring program? and What are the perceptions of the novice teachers regarding the PPSD mentoring program?

Training

Training was important to the mentors and novice teachers in the study. This endorsed the theme of "preparedness." All of the mentors stated the training was extensive and focused on

things such as the Teacher Advancement Program (TAP) rubric, pre- and postconferences, reinforcements (strengths), refinements (weaknesses), and mentor role. Some mentors stated learning to script lessons was the most effective part of the training, but felt the trainings were too long. However, mentors suggested that additional training is needed for curriculum, classroom management, and relationships to better support novice teachers.

The novice teachers felt that the trainings in the content areas of ELA and math and classroom management training were the most effective trainings. Some of the novice teachers were overwhelmed with the amount of training and wished they had more support during this time to help understand and prepare for the year. Participants suggested additional training was needed for curriculum, classroom management, observing other teachers in other schools, Response to Intervention (RTI), SBLC (School Building Level Committee), and Individual Education Plan (IEP). Novice teachers indicated learning about building relationships, managing student behavior, and aligning instruction to the content standards were critical to their success as first-year teachers.

The literature endorses the findings by confirming that a quality mentoring program must have a strong training component. According to Sowell (2017), training helps mentors achieve success in supporting novice teachers. A study by Polikoff et al. (2015) stated that effective mentoring programs have training as one of the mentoring policies. The mentors and the novice teachers agreed that additional training is needed in classroom management and curriculum. Two studies confirmed that mentors and novice teachers desire training in classroom management and instructional strategies that is ongoing (Richter et al., 2013; Sowell, 2017). Without training and knowledge, the mentors' success in supporting the novice teacher is limited (Sowell, 2017). Furthermore, mentors and novice teachers agreed that training should occur throughout the

school year (Sparks et al., 2017). School districts must retain novice teachers by providing a structured support system such as induction programs (Sowell, 2017). Consequently, the length of the PPSD induction program is three days for novice teachers. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) found that the strength of an induction program depends on the depth and intensity of the induction program (as cited in CCSESA, 2016).

Classroom Observations

The themes "observation" and "bonding" were apparent in the novice teacher and mentor's response regarding the classroom observations. Mentors expressed the importance of the classroom observation component for building stronger teachers. The mentors believed this component helped build relationships with the novice teachers, but they were mixed on their feelings regarding if the program required enough classroom observations. They mentioned several obstacles that made it difficult to conduct these observations. However, a lack of common planning times, coverage issues, and scheduling issues made it difficult to incorporate observations into their daily schedules. Participants suggested having a schedule, common planning times, and teaching the same subject might help improve the classroom observation component.

Novice teachers expressed the importance of the classroom observation component as being vital to their success in the classroom. Novice teachers felt that they did not observe the mentor teacher enough, nor did the mentor observe them enough. Participants suggested having a schedule, common planning times, and teaching the same subject would help improve the classroom observation component.

Research validates the findings because mentors and novice teachers need to have time to observe each other teaching lessons in the classroom. However, building this time into the

teachers' schedules can prove challenging for administrators (Sparks et al., 2017). Both groups

of teachers agreed that a lack of common planning times inhibited the observation classroom

component (Sparks et al., 2017). Since PPSD is a formal mentoring program, mentors and novice

teachers must have time to collaborate. Therefore, the district needs to find ways to better

support school administrators in developing schedules that create time for mentors and novice

teachers. According to Beek et al. (2019), a formal mentoring program consists of mentors

performing observations, engaging in discussions, and providing feedback to the novice teachers.

Polikoff et al. (2015) found that the observations conducted by mentors and novice teachers is an

example of spending time together, which produces satisfaction for both parties.

Observation Feedback Meeting

This component of the mentoring program generated and supported the themes of

"feedback" and "bonding." Most of the mentors indicated that the observation feedback meetings

helped novice teachers identify their strengths (reinforcements) and weaknesses (refinements).

Mentors reported that the observation feedback meetings provided novice teachers with an

opportunity to reflect on their lessons. They revealed the observation feedback meetings were

effective if the novice teacher was receptive. The mentors stated the meeting helped novice

teachers realize what they needed to work on. Mentors suggested starting out with a positive and

having administration provide more support as the recommended improvements.

The novice teachers indicated that the feedback they received during the observation

feedback meeting was useful. Most of the novice teachers reported that receiving a reinforcement

and a refinement helped them to focus and improve their lessons. Novice teachers suggested that

creating schedules for mentors to model and developing action plans for novice teachers to

follow would help improve the observation feedback meeting component.

Most researchers agree that support from school districts, time for collaboration, and the availability of mentors are important factors to help retain novice teachers (Burke et al., 2013). Mentors and novice teachers established that a lack of time affected the effectiveness of the observation feedback meetings. Time and availability of the mentors is an essential aspect of an effective mentoring program (Beek et al., 2019; Sparks et al., 2017). Furthermore, novice teachers benefit more when mentor support is ongoing. Many of the mentors and novice teachers shared how a lack of common planning time and teaching in different grades and content areas prevented them from meeting with each other. School districts and administrators need to ensure that mentor and novice teachers have the same role (including grade level/content area), teach in the same school building, housed in close proximity of each other, and have the same schedules (Darling Hammond, 2010).

End-of-Year Reflection

According to the mentors, the end-of-the-year reflection component was another important component of the mentoring program. The mentors reported that the reflection meeting went well because there was an opportunity for mentors and novice teachers to reflect on the reinforcements and refinements. In addition, the meeting allowed novice teachers to improve in the refinement area. Most of the mentors indicated they felt comfortable in providing honest responses during the meeting because of the strong relationships that had been built. This relationship-building supports the theme of "bonding."

According to novice teachers, the end-of-the-year reflection component was another important component of the mentoring program. They felt comfortable in providing honest responses during the meeting and reflecting on how their experiences influenced their teaching.

They also stated that the reflection meeting helped them to identify what they needed to work on for the next school year. This supported the theme of "preparedness."

Mentors and novice teachers need to have time to reflect, especially at the end of the school year. Interactions should have been taking place throughout the school year, which makes reflecting much easier for both groups of teachers and produces positive outcomes (Polikoff et al., 2015). However, school leaders need to realize that before novice teachers can engage in self-reflection, they need to feel comfortable in their roles and in the school environment (SREB, 2018). Therefore, mentors and novice teachers need to meet frequently throughout the school year so that each party feels comfortable. Some of the mentor and novice teachers stated they did not feel comfortable during the end-of-year reflection, and two novice teachers did not know who their assigned mentor was.

Cohesiveness, Communication, and Reciprocity

All of the mentors and novice teachers indicated that forming relationships, communication, and reciprocity were important components of the mentoring program. In addition, all of the mentors believed the mentoring program enabled them to develop strong relationships and bond with novice teachers. In each of the five components, bonding and relationships surfaced as being essential for the teachers. Mentor teachers believed that novice teachers provided many benefits to them such as relationships, a sense of family, increased curriculum knowledge, instructional strategies, and improved leadership. The majority of the mentors indicated they provided benefits to the novice teacher, such as curriculum knowledge, instructional strategies, support, empathy and compassion, trust and confidentiality, and availability. All of the mentors believed the relationship with the novice teacher involved

effective communication such as frequent conversations, texting and emailing, availability, listening, face-to-face meetings, and having an open-door policy.

Most of the novice teachers shared they had developed a strong relationship and a friendship with their mentor. They believed the biggest benefit they received from their mentor is support. The novice teachers indicated that new ideas, new strategies, and help with career goals were the main benefits they provided to the mentors. The majority of the novice teachers indicated the relationship with their mentor involved effective communication such as emails, texts, and face-to-face meetings. This "bonding" between the mentor and novice teacher helped provide needed support for the novice teacher.

Cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity was the only component that novice teachers felt was effective. In addition, mentor teachers felt the component was one of the most effective components also. The relationship between the mentor and the novice teacher is important for positive mentoring outcomes. Therefore, the mentor and school leaders must understand the needs of the novice teacher. Novice teachers need emotional support because teaching is a stressful profession (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011). They need mentors who provide them with emotional support, which promotes meaningful relationships and a positive school climate and culture (SREB, 2018; Sparks et al., 2017). Forming strong relationships with novice teachers is essential for mentors. In addition, both groups of teachers believed in the importance of mutual respect. Mutual respect leads to a strong relationship between the mentor and novice teacher (Polikoff et al., 2015). Consequently, good relationships provide educational and personal benefits. According to the mentors and novice teachers, they provided each other with curriculum knowledge, respect, compassion, trust, support, and empathy. Through frequent and

meaningful interactions, the mentor and novice teacher derive numerous professional and personal benefits from the relationship (Haines, 2003).

Implications of the Theoretical Framework

Patterson Parish School District leaders had never explored the mentoring program in PPSD from the perspectives of the mentor and novice teachers. Effective mentoring programs consist of strong relationships, support, guidance, and availability (Bressman et al., 2018). Developing strong relationships is vital for mentors and novice teachers. According to Mahboob (2014), trust helps sustain relationships. Therefore, it is vital that mentors and novice teachers build relationships that have trust as a foundation.

This study was guided and framed by the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the concept of reciprocity (COR). According to the SET, people tend to form and remain in relationships where both parties receive some type of benefit. The bond between the novice teacher and mentor increased when the mentor exchanged knowledge and experience with the novice teacher. One participant stated, "We grew together." One mentor mentioned that she learned new instructional strategies and ideas from her novice teacher. This "exchange" was mutual for both the mentor and the novice teacher. One novice teacher mentioned that her mentor was "receptive" to her new ideas. This receptiveness created a successful social exchange. Ferguson (2017) stated that generally, people tend to gravitate and remain in relationships that are mutually satisfying.

According to Sabourin (2013), mutual satisfaction, known as reciprocity, leads to friendships. Cohesiveness and communication are vital for relationships. The novice teachers reflected on the need for strong communication with their mentors. Most of the communication took place at school when the time was available. However, the more successful mentoring

experience involved communication during and after school hours. This communication level helped create an "open and honest" relationship between the teachers. Homans (1961), who was one of the founding scholars in COR, stated, "Cohesiveness is the reward and motivation that people receive from working together" (p. 1).

Implications for Practice

The findings of this study have the following implications in making improvements to the mentoring program. First, PPSD leaders should revise the training for mentors and novice teachers to ensure that both groups of teachers receive the necessary curriculum training before the beginning of each school year. Many of the mentors and novice teachers expressed that additional training on classroom management would be beneficial, which supports one finding that many mentors desire training in classroom management, instructional strategies, and relationship building (Richter et al., 2013). Furthermore, novice teachers expressed having an opportunity to travel to other schools and observe other effective teachers. Many novice teachers may benefit from a longer induction program. Allowing it to be five days instead of three days will help novice teachers from feeling so stressed and overwhelmed. In addition, allowing mentors to attend trainings throughout the school year with their assigned novice teacher might help strengthen the five components of the mentoring program.

Second, PPSD should assist principals in developing schedules that allow for release time and common planning times, so mentors and novice teachers can observe each other. Mentors and novice teachers expressed the importance of modeling but noted how scheduling issues and conflicting planning times hinder conducting classroom observations. Having a schedule would not only help improve classroom observations but would also help improve the observation feedback meetings and the end-of-the-year reflection meeting. One mentor used videos to help

with modeling, and another mentor modeled during the cluster meeting because of time limitations. Moreover, principals need to ensure that all novice teachers know who their assigned mentor is at the beginning of the school year to help form relationships early. Two novice teachers stated they did not know who their mentor was.

Third, PPSD should encourage mentors to continue to provide timely feedback with identified reinforcements and refinements. Mentors need to be encouraged to continue to begin with the reinforcement to help encourage the novice teacher. Many novice teachers would benefit more if the mentors not only told them what to correct but also modeled how to teach various instructional strategies correctly. Mentors stated administrators need to provide more support for them and the novice teachers. According to Ingersoll and Strong (2011), some novice teachers reported a lack of support from administrators was one of the main reasons they leave the classroom. Furthermore, novice teachers even stated having an action plan for them to work from would help them remain focused.

Fourth, PPSD should ensure that mentors and novice teachers have enough time to reflect throughout the school year, especially at the end of the school year. According to Sparks et al. (2017), mentors need time to support novice teachers. Mentors and novice teachers shared that the reflection meetings are easier and more effective when the mentor and the novice teacher have developed a relationship with each other. In addition, PPSD needs to assist principals in understanding the importance of mentors and novice teachers spending quality time together.

Finally, PPSD should continue to provide opportunities for mentors and novice teachers to communicate and build relationships. The theme of "bonding" was echoed by mentors and novice teachers throughout the interviews. Mahbood (2014) stated that relationships last longer when trust is present. Interestingly, mentors and novice teachers indicated how they wanted to

have more opportunities to meet with each other during and after school. Novice teachers'

satisfaction increases when the amount of time the mentor and the novice teacher spend together

increases (Polikoff et al., 2015).

Limitations

One limitation of this research study was the ability to generalize results from exploring

this mentoring program with other research about other mentoring programs. Even though this

study was conducted in one school district in Louisiana, many school districts utilize mentoring

to support novice teachers, but the components of those mentoring programs may not reflect the

exact components of the mentoring program in PPSD. The second limitation of this study was

focusing solely on novice teachers in PPSD. Looking at the attrition of experienced teachers in

PPSD and in other school districts and how they utilize mentoring programs to support their

experienced teachers could contribute further to the research. Participants providing honest

responses was the third limitation. Throughout the entire process, I reassured participants about

anonymity and confidentiality and encouraged them to respond honestly to questions.

Furthermore, participants were reminded their participation was voluntary, and they could

withdraw at any time without hesitation. In addition, participants were reminded they did not

have to answer any questions if they did not feel comfortable. Finally, researcher bias was the

fourth limitation. This limitation required me to remain receptive to feedback and use evidence

from participants to answer the two research questions instead of personal experience.

Recommendations for Further Study

Based on the findings and limitations of this study, there are several recommendations for

additional research in this area. First, since the study focused on the retention of novice teachers,

researchers could expand this study to experienced teachers (teachers with more than five years

of teaching experience). Experienced teachers can explain why they chose to stay in the profession. They could explore what tenets of support they feel are critical in helping a novice teacher stay in the profession.

The second recommendation is that researchers might wish to expand this study to include feedback from mentor/novice teacher pairs. This study selected mentors and novice teachers, so mentors and novice teachers were not paired. Having mentors and novice teachers chosen according to their actual partnership might provide additional information about the successes and challenges of the relationship.

The third recommendation is that researchers might expand this study to explore mentoring programs in other school districts in Louisiana and in other states. Since many school districts use other mentoring programs, exploring their mentoring program may provide insight into improvements for PPSD. In addition, exploring other mentoring programs in school districts in Louisiana who have partnered with NIET might provide some insight on the effectiveness of the mentoring components in those districts that could help PPSD.

Researchers could also select higher-performing school districts and schools within the state to help identify any additional support those districts provide to support novice teachers. Exploring the attrition and retention of novice teachers in the schools might provide vital information about why their novice teachers decide to leave or remain in the classroom. As a result, PPSD could use that information as recommendations for improvement.

Another recommendation would be to conduct a quantitative study that determines the factors that cause teachers to stay or leave the profession. This study would allow for a determination of what factors have the most influence in contributing to a teacher's decision to

stay or not. This "ranking" of factors could be a tool in planning and implementing mentoring programs.

The final recommendation is that researchers might wish to expand the research to include principals' perceptions of the mentoring program. Principals sometimes assign mentors to work with novice teachers based on the mentor's expertise and the needs of the novice teacher. Since many principals have access to information about the strengths and weaknesses of both groups of teachers, principals could make recommendations about how to improve the mentoring program.

Researcher's Reflection

Over 10 years ago, I was a novice teacher who experienced some struggles. However, experienced teachers and administrators provided support for me that helped me remain in the classroom. Since then, I have been fortunate to have had an opportunity to mentor and support novice teachers. In addition, I have seen many novice teachers struggle just like I did. I have witnessed novice teachers who were receptive to feedback and some who were not so receptive. My passion for children to receive a quality education and for empowering teachers inspired me to learn more about how to retain quality teachers to deliver effective instruction. I invested much of my time listening and having conversations with mentor teachers and novice teachers. Although I have witnessed novice teachers come and go in the teaching profession, all of the participants were eager to learn how to improve their instruction to reach all of their students. Mentors desired to provide better support for the novice teachers, and the novice teachers longed for feedback from their mentors to improve their craft. Both groups of teachers confirmed just how crucial building strong relationships is for mentors and novice teachers. I was amazed by

how each participant desired to improve the lives of their students, and I am grateful that I was afforded the opportunity to interact with all 18 of the participants.

Mentor and novice teachers shared their experiences and truths about their teaching careers in PPSD. In addition, mentors and novice teachers reflected on their beginning years as a teacher. They were honest about positive experiences that made them smile as well as challenging situations that caused them to want to give up. Furthermore, they willingly and eagerly answered follow-up questions and expressed gratitude for being asked to participate in the study.

As an educator, I remember what it was like as a novice teacher in PPSD. However, I followed protocols and maintained the integrity of the questionnaire, interview questions, and artifacts. To prevent misconceptions, biases, and preconceptions that could weaken the research process, I used bracketing by writing memos throughout the data collection and analysis as a way for me to reflect on my connection with the data (Tufford & Newman, 2010). I felt the passion and motivation of the participants and learned a great deal from each mentor and novice teacher. This experience reminded me of why I enjoy my profession as an educator and how the experience has allowed me to explore mentoring that has the potential to retain novice teachers.

Conclusion

Through this study, I attempted to contribute to a wide body of literature on how mentoring can help retain novice teachers in struggling schools. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore the mentoring program at Patterson Parish School District (PPSD) from the perspective of the mentors and the novice teachers. The main goal of the study was to discover if the program components were meeting the needs of the participants. Findings indicated the two most effective components of the PPSD mentoring program for mentors were

the end-of-the-year reflection and cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity. However, for novice teachers, the most effective component was cohesiveness, communication, and reciprocity. Therefore, this underscores the importance of mentors and novice teachers building strong relationships with effective communication that is beneficial for both parties.

For mentors, I suggest PPSD provide additional training and support on mentoring, classroom management, curriculum, and relationships. In addition, PPSD should assist principals in developing schedules that will afford mentors and novice teachers with the opportunity to observe each other and to collaborate. Furthermore, PPSD might consider hiring retired teachers to cover classrooms for mentors and novice teachers so there is additional time to conduct observations to collaborate.

For novice teachers, I suggest PPSD revamp the new teacher induction program by providing more focused training on curriculum, classroom management, and relationships. Allowing mentors and novice teachers to meet at the beginning of the school year and increasing the length of the induction program from three days to five days might prove beneficial for the novice teachers. Both groups of teachers felt strongly about having time built into their schedules to provide time for reflection and feedback. Both participant groups strongly believed in the power of modeling and felt modeling is one of the best ways to help grow novice teachers. To ensure that mentors are meeting with novice teachers, I suggest that PPSD prepare a documentation log for mentors and novice teachers to sign, date, and record the nature of the meeting. Furthermore, mentors and novice teachers stressed the importance of principals being more engaged with the mentoring program. I suggest that PPSD provide many opportunities in providing principals and teachers with more job-embedded professional development (PD), observing mentors and novice teachers, providing timely feedback, allowing time for reflection,

building stronger relationships, and increasing collaboration with district leaders and teachers. To help strengthen the mentoring program in PPSD, I embrace the opportunity to present my findings to district leaders, administrators, and teachers. As a result, hopefully, more novice teachers can remain in the classroom in PPSD and other districts across the United Sates, so all of our children can achieve the best education.

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Appendix A: Mentor Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Questions

Part I: These questions were created to be used in conjunction with the Novice Teacher Questionnaire. These questions are based on the Teacher Questionnaire National Teacher and Principal Survey 2015-2016 School Year from the U.S. Department of Education. (These questions will be sent in advance for the participant to complete before the interview and will be used as a foundation for the interview.)

1. Since the time you have been a mentor, how well prepared were you to:
1 = Not prepared at all, 2 = Somewhat prepared, 3 = Well prepared, or 4 = Very well prepared

a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	1	2	3	4
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	1	2	3	4
c. Teach your subject matter?	1	2	3	4
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	1	2	3	4
e. Assess students?	1	2	3	4
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	1	2	3	4
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	1	2	3	4
h. Teach to the state content standards?	1	2	3	4
i. Teach students who were limited-English proficient (LEP) or English language learners (ELLs)?	1	2	3	4
j. Teach students with special needs?	1	2	3	4

2. At the beginning of the novice teacher's previous year of teaching, how well prepared were they to:

a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	1	2	3	4
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	1	2	3	4
c. Teach your subject matter?	1	2	3	4
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	1	2	3	4
e. Assess students?	1	2	3	4
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	1	2	3	4
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	1	2	3	4
h. Teach to the state content standards?	1	2	3	4
i. Teach students who were limited-English proficient (LEP) or English language learners (ELLs)?	1	2	3	4
j. Teach students with special needs?	1	2	3	4

3. At the end of the novice teacher's previous year of teaching, how well prepared were they to:

a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	1	2	3	4
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	1	2	3	4
c. Teach your subject matter?	1	2	3	4
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	1	2	3	4
e. Assess students?	1	2	3	4
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	1	2	3	4
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	1	2	3	4
h. Teach to the state content standards?	1	2	3	4
i. Teach students who were limited-English proficient (LEP) or English language learners (ELLs)?	1	2	3	4
j. Teach students with special needs?	1	2	3	4

4. Did you provide support to the novice teacher on the following?

a. Reduced teaching schedule or number of preparations	Yes	No
b. Common planning time with teachers in your subject	Yes	No
c. Seminars or classes for novice teachers	Yes	No
d. Extra classroom assistance (e.g., teacher aides)	Yes	No
e. Regular supportive communication with your principal, other administrators, or department chair	Yes	No
f. Observation feedback on your teaching aimed at helping you develop and refine your teaching practice BEYOND any formal administrative observation and feedback you may receive	Yes	No
g. Release time to participate in support activities for novice or beginning teachers	Yes	No

Mentor Teacher Interview Questions

Part II

I will be asking you some open-ended questions regarding the four components of the PPSD mentoring program. These components are: training, classroom observations, observation feedback meetings, and end-of-year reflections. I will also answer some general questions about your relationship with your mentee.

You were given a questionnaire prior to this interview regarding your experiences with your novice teacher. I may ask you some specific questions to help clarify your responses.

****

Mentor Training:

Tell me about the training you received as a mentor.

Possible follow-up questions:

- What was most effective about the training? Why?
- What was least effective about the training? Why?
- Is there any other type of training that you feel you needed that would help you serve your novice teacher better?

Classroom Observations:

Tell me about the effectiveness of the classroom observations.

Possible follow-up questions:

- Did you feel like you observed the novice teacher and he/she observed you enough?
- Was it difficult to incorporate these observations in your daily operations as a teacher?
- Can you think of anything that might improve the observation process?

Observation Feedback Meetings:

Tell me about the observation feedback sessions with your novice teachers.

Possible follow-up questions:

- How effective were these sessions?
- Can you think of anything that might improve these sessions?

End of Year Reflection:

Tell me about the end-of-the year reflection meeting.

Possible follow-up questions:

- Did you feel comfortable enough in this meeting to give honest responses?
- Did this reflection process help you in making your plans for your next year mentee?

Cohesiveness, Communication and Reciprocity

Tell me about your relationship that was built between you and the novice teacher.

Possible follow-up questions:

- What was the biggest benefit that you gained by working with the novice teachers?
- What was the biggest benefit that you provided to the novice teachers?
- Did the relationship with your novice teacher involve effective communication?

Appendix B: Novice Teacher Questionnaire and Interview Questions

Part I: These questions were created to be used in conjunction with the Novice Teacher Questionnaire. These questions are based on the Teacher Questionnaire National Teacher and Principal Survey 2015-2016 School Year from the U.S. Department of Education. (These questions will be sent in advance for the participant to complete before the interview and will be used as a foundation for the interview.)

1. In your PREVIOUS year of teaching, how well prepared were you to at the beginning of the school year with the following:
1 = Not prepared at all, 2 = Somewhat prepared, 3 = Well prepared, or 4 = Very well prepared

a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	1	2	3	4
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	1	2	3	4
c. Teach your subject matter?	1	2	3	4
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	1	2	3	4
e. Assess students?	1	2	3	4
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	1	2	3	4
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	1	2	3	4
h. Teach to the state content standards?	1	2	3	4
i. Teach students who were limited-English proficient (LEP) or English language learners (ELLs)?	1	2	3	4
j. Teach students with special needs?	1	2	3	4

2. In your PREVIOUS year of teaching, how well prepared were you to at the end of the school year:
1 = Not prepared at all, 2 = Somewhat prepared, 3 = Well prepared, or 4 = Very well prepared

a. Handle a variety of classroom management or discipline issues?	1	2	3	4
b. Use a variety of instructional methods?	1	2	3	4
c. Teach your subject matter?	1	2	3	4
d. Use computers in classroom instruction?	1	2	3	4
e. Assess students?	1	2	3	4
f. Differentiate instruction in the classroom?	1	2	3	4
g. Use data from student assessments to inform instruction?	1	2	3	4
h. Teach to the state content standards?	1	2	3	4
i. Teach students who were limited-English proficient (LEP) or English language learners (ELLs)?	1	2	3	4
j. Teach students with special needs?	1	2	3	4

3. Did you receive the following kinds of support during the PREVIOUS school year of teaching?

a. Reduced teaching schedule or number of preparations	Yes	No
b. Common planning time with teachers in your subject	Yes	No
c. Seminars or classes for novice teachers	Yes	No
d. Extra classroom assistance (e.g., teacher aides)	Yes	No
e. Regular supportive communication with your principal, other administrators, or department chair	Yes	No
f. Observation feedback on your teaching aimed at helping you develop and refine your teaching practice BEYOND any formal administrative observation and feedback you may receive	Yes	No
g. Release time to participate in support activities for novice or beginning teachers	Yes	No

4. Did a mentor provide you with the following during the PREVIOUS school year?

a. Reduced teaching schedule or number of preparations	Yes	No
b. Common planning time with teachers in your subject	Yes	No
c. Seminars or classes for novice teachers	Yes	No
d. Extra classroom assistance (e.g., teacher aides)	Yes	No
e. Regular supportive communication with your principal, other administrators, or department chair	Yes	No
f. Observation feedback on your teaching aimed at helping you develop and refine your teaching practice BEYOND any formal administrative observation and feedback you may receive	Yes	No
g. Release time to participate in support activities for novice or beginning teachers	Yes	No

Novice Teacher Interview Questions

Part II

I will be asking you some open-ended questions regarding the four components of the PPSD mentoring program. These components are: training, classroom observations, observation feedback meetings, and end-of-year reflections. I will also answer some general questions about your relationship with your mentee.

You were given a questionnaire prior to this interview regarding your experiences with your mentor. I may ask you some specific questions to help clarify your responses.

****

Novice Teacher Training:

Tell me about the training you received as a novice teacher.

Possible follow-up questions:

- What was most effective about the training? Why?
- What was least effective about the training? Why?
- Is there any other type of training that you feel you needed that would help you be a stronger teacher?

Classroom Observations:

Tell me about the effectiveness of the classroom observations.

Possible follow-up questions:

- Did you feel like you observed the mentor teacher and he/she observed you enough?
- Was it difficult to incorporate these observations in your daily operations as a teacher?
- Can you think of anything that might improve the observation process?

Observation Feedback Meetings:

Tell me about the observation feedback sessions with your mentor teachers.

Possible follow-up questions:

- How has the feedback from your mentor help you as a novice teacher?
- How effective were these sessions?
- Can you think of anything that might improve these sessions?

End of Year Reflection:

Tell me about the end-of-the year reflection meeting.

Possible follow-up questions:

- Did you feel comfortable enough in this meeting to give honest responses?
- Did this reflection process help you in making your plans for your next year of teaching?

Cohesiveness, Communication and Reciprocity

Tell me about your relationship that was built between you and your mentor teacher.

Possible follow-up questions:

- What was the biggest benefit that you gained by working with your mentor teacher?
- What was the biggest benefit that you provided to your mentor teacher?
- Did the relationship with your mentor teacher involve effective communication?

Appendix C: Coding Matrix

Research Question #1: What are the perceptions of the mentors regarding the PPSD mentoring program? Research Question #2: What are the perceptions of the novice teachers regarding the PPSD mentoring program?			
Themes	Categories	Descriptions	Evidence and Subcategories
Bonding	Friendships	Mentors established friendships with the novice teachers by being trustworthy, showing care, and being empathetic.	-The teacher felt comfortable coming to me -They can talk about anything -Information is confidential -I gave the new teacher my cell phone number -We are family -I'm the big sister -Novice teacher will text or email me for support Novice teacher came to me for personal advice -We both are teachers -I am friends with the novice teachers -I adopted her -I will show my face and check on you -Fellowshipping with the craft of teaching -There were no sit down discussions -My mentor is my rock. -We are connected -My mentor is my favorite person -We eat lunch together every day -It's like a friendship

			-I guide them and try not to beat them down -I did not want to hurt their feelings -I will show my face and check on you -Novice teacher called me on the weekend. -I helped however I could
		Mentors established friendships with the novice teachers by providing instructional support	-I stayed after school to help -I presented content to students to show mastery and differentiate instruction -We discuss how to make it better -Most are quick fixes -Novice teachers have to be receptive -My mentor explained information to me and helped me plan my lessons -My mentor provided examples for me -There have been no benefits as a result of my mentor and me -My mentor provided me with resources -She helped me with classroom management, guidance, and support -My mentor helped me with what I needed to work on

	Relationships	Mentors developed relationships with novice teachers by being open, available, and loyal	-Relationship is getting stronger -We built a relationship -You have to show loyalty -I gained a relationship -I do not have a relationship with my mentor -I think someone was supposed to be assigned to me -There was no relationship with my mentor -We built a relationship by providing the support that she needed -I helped the mentor with her career path -The relationship is great
Observations	Common planning time	Mentors and novice teachers struggle observing each other because of a lack of common planning time	-Novice teacher did not observe me enough -Novice teacher has her own class -I had to use videos -We were on the same schedule -Coverage is a problem -I had to model during Cluster meetings -It depends on what am I teaching

			-It is not enough time to observe the novice teachers -I do not like to get pulled out of my classroom -My students are just as important -Block scheduling might help the mentor -My students are missing out when I leave them -I am bound to my classroom -Planning period and time is a problem -Time is a factor -Administrators need to give mentors autonomy to make their schedules -It is hard for mentors to schedule observations -Mentors are assigned but do not support -I observed my novice teacher quite a bit -My role changed, which helped me to better support the novice teacher -I have to skip my lunch to support the novice teacher sometimes -I need support -It is difficult because of grade level or teach the same subject

			-I have not observed my mentor -My mentor has observe me a lot -I have not observed my mentor, and my mentor has not observed me -There is no release time for me to observe my mentor -Administration does not provide a schedule -Too much information was overwhelming
	Modeling	Mentors modeled for novice teachers as often as their schedules allowed them	-I could have done more -So many people going in the novice teacher's classroom daily -I modeled during cluster meetings -I helped and showed the novice teacher -I video-taped the novice teacher -I want the mentor to model for me, sit down and show me -You should not show and leave alone -Too much information -Kind of released me when I was doing good -Model for me to show what it looks like and what

			students should be doing
			-I wished there was more mentoring.
			-As a novice teacher, I have been mentoring another novice teacher
			-Let me show you
			-If I model, the novice teacher can learn
			-I provide a clear model
			-Team and co-teaching
Feedback	Reflection	Mentors and novice reflected on the lesson. The mentor provided instructional feedback to the novice teachers.	-I provide a reinforcement and a refinement to help the teacher get better faster
			-We discuss strengths first
			-It is not wrong, but how can we make it better
			-Novice teachers need to be taught the observation feedback process in college
			-It is tough having the hard conversations
			-Great relationships help with the feedback process
			-You must practice humility
			-Novice teachers are hungry and want to do better
			-I use the guiding questions

			-Novice teachers should not take it personal -Relate feedback back to the evaluation rubric -Receptive to advice -Feedback needs to be honest -The novice teachers are very coachable -I understand that I am coach -I have to redirect conversations -I see growth with teachers over time -Surveys helped me to see if I was doing my job -Novice teachers can reflect on their reinforcement and refinement -My personal reflection included a reinforcement and a refinement -How to not demotivate the novice teacher -Novice teacher have an opportunity to reflect on the school year -I reflect after I observe the novice teacher -Did not feel comfortable -No conversations at the end-of-the year

Preparedness	Training	Mentors and novice teachers have to be prepared to provide effective instruction	-Reflection helped me to know what to tweak -I felt pressured to give mentors positive scores -Mentors received training on TAP rubric -Unrealistic settings for training sessions -Need more training for mentors each year -Hands-on is the best training -Needed more time to understand the mentoring program -Training was not hands-on -Scripting was effective -Need to meet novice teachers during the induction -Overwhelmed -Shadow another mentor for at least a month -I learned my role as a mentor -Training was too long -I learned how to conduct pre- and post-conference -I did not receive a lot of curriculum training -Kagan training helped me with classroom management

			-Novice teachers need additional training on RTI and SBLC, IEP, behavior management, and progress monitoring -Novice teachers need more one-on-one training -Induction for novice teachers was very overwhelming -More observations before actually teaching -Zearn and CKLA training helped novice teachers in the beginning of the year

Appendix D: Mentor Teachers' Clustered Bar Graph

Novice Teacher's Preparedness at the Beginning- of-Year and the End-of-Year from the Perspective of the Mentor Teachers

Mentor Ratings of Novice Teacher as Not Prepared At All

Category	EOY	BOY
Teach Students With Special Needs	11%	89%
Teach LEP and ELL Students	44%	89%
Teach to the State Content Standards	0%	22%
Use Data to Inform Instruction	0%	44%
Differentiate Instruction	0%	33%
Assess Students	11%	11%
Use Computers in Classroom Instruction	0%	33%
Teach Your Subject Matter	0%	11%
Use a Variety of Instructional Methods	11%	11%
Handle a Variety of Discipline Issues	0%	44%

Mentor Ratings of Novice Teacher as Somewhat Prepared

Category	EOY	BOY
Teach Students With Special Needs	67%	11%
Teach LEP and ELL Students	44%	11%
Teach to the State Content Standards	0%	56%
Use Data to Inform Instruction	11%	44%
Differentiate Instruction	33%	56%
Assess Students	0%	44%
Use Computers in Classroom Instruction	0%	22%
Teach Your Subject Matter	11%	78%
Use a Variety of Instructional Methods	11%	78%
Handle a Variety of Discipline Issues	11%	44%

Mentor Ratings of Novice Teacher as Well Prepared

Category	BOY	EOY
Teach Students With Special Needs	0%	22%
Teach LEP and ELL Students	0%	0%
Teach to the State Content Standards	11%	78%
Use Data to Inform Instruction	0%	89%
Differentiate Instruction	0%	44%
Assess Students	22%	78%
Use Computers in Classroom Instruction	11%	56%
Teach Your Subject Matter	0%	78%
Use a Variety of Instructional Methods	0%	78%
Handle a Variety of Discipline Issues	0%	78%

Mentor Ratings of Novice Teacher as Very Well Prepared

Category	BOY	EOY
Teach Students With Special Needs	0%	0%
Teach LEP and ELL Students	0%	11%
Teach to the State Content Standards	11%	22%
Use Data to Inform Instruction	11%	0%
Differentiate Instruction	11%	22%
Assess Students	22%	11%
Use Computers in Classroom Instruction	33%	44%
Teach Your Subject Matter	11%	11%
Use a Variety of Instructional Methods	11%	11%
Handle a Variety of Discipline Issues	11%	11%

Appendix E: Novice Teachers' Clustered Bar Graph

Novice Teacher's Preparedness at the Beginning- of-Year and the End-of-Year from the Perspective of the Novice Teachers

Novice Teachers'Ratings of Themselves as Not Prepared at All

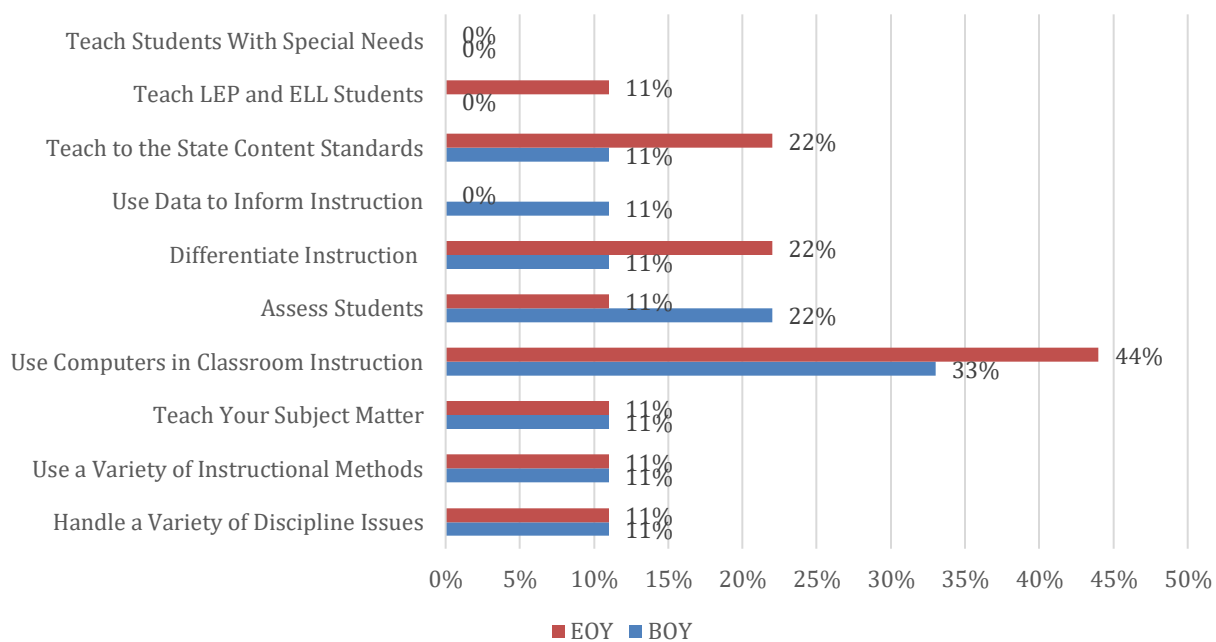| Category	EOY	BOY
Teach Students With Special Needs	22%	55%
Teach LEP and ELL Students	44%	44%
Teach to the State Content Standards	0%	0%
Use Data to Inform Instruction	11%	22%
Differentiate Instruction	0%	33%
Assess Students	0%	22%
Use Computers in Classroom Instruction	0%	22%
Teach Your Subject Matter	0%	0%
Use a Variety of Instructional Methods	0%	0%
Handle a Variety of Discipline Issues	0%	23%

Novice Teachers'Ratings of Themselves as Somewhat Prepared

Category	EOY	BOY
Teach Students With Special Needs	44%	11%
Teach LEP and ELL Students	11%	11%
Teach to the State Content Standards	22%	22%
Use Data to Inform Instruction	33%	44%
Differentiate Instruction	33%	33%
Assess Students	11%	11%
Use Computers in Classroom Instruction	0%	11%
Teach Your Subject Matter	0%	22%
Use a Variety of Instructional Methods	11%	11%
Handle a Variety of Discipline Issues	11%	22%

Novice Teachers'Ratings of Themselves as Well Prepared

Category	EOY	BOY
Teach Students With Special Needs	33%	33%
Teach LEP and ELL Students	44%	44%
Teach to the State Content Standards	44%	44%
Use Data to Inform Instruction	56%	22%
Differentiate Instruction	56%	33%
Assess Students	67%	33%
Use Computers in Classroom Instruction	56%	22%
Teach Your Subject Matter	44%	67%
Use a Variety of Instructional Methods	44%	67%
Handle a Variety of Discipline Issues	44%	22%

■ EOY ■ BOY

Novice Teachers'Ratings of Themselves as Very Well Prepared

Category	EOY	BOY
Teach Students With Special Needs	11%	0%
Teach LEP and ELL Students	0%	0%
Teach to the State Content Standards	33%	33%
Use Data to Inform Instruction	0%	11%
Differentiate Instruction	11%	0%
Assess Students	22%	0%
Use Computers in Classroom Instruction	44%	44%
Teach Your Subject Matter	56%	11%
Use a Variety of Instructional Methods	44%	22%
Handle a Variety of Discipline Issues	44%	33%

■ EOY ■ BOY

Appendix F: IRB Approval

ABILENE CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY

Educating Students for Christian Service and Leadership Throughout the World

Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
320 Hardin Administration Building, ACU Box 29103, Abilene, Texas 79699-9103
325-674-2885

Dear Geneva,

On behalf of the Institutional Review Board, I am pleased to inform you that your project titled

(IRB# 20-009   ) is exempt from review under Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects.

If at any time the details of this project change, please resubmit to the IRB so the committee can determine whether or not the exempt status is still applicable.

I wish you well with your work.

Sincerely,

Megan Roth

Megan Roth, Ph.D.
Director of Research and Sponsored Programs

Additional Approvals/Instructions:

The following are all responsibilities of the Primary Investigator (PI). Violation of these responsibilities may result in suspension or termination of research by the Institutional Review Board. If the Primary Investigator is a student and fails to fulfil any of these responsibilities, the Faculty Advisor then becomes responsible for completing or upholding any and all of the following:

- If there are any changes in the research (including but not limited to change in location, members of the research team, research procedures, number of participants, target population of participants, compensation, or risk), these changes must be approved by the IRB prior to implementation.

- Report any protocol deviations or unanticipated problems to the IRB promptly according to IRB policy.

- Should the research continue past the expiration date, submit a Continuing Review Form, along with a copy of the current consent form and a *new* Signature Assurance Form approximately 30 days before the expiration date.

- When the research is completed, inform the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs. If your study is Expedited or Full Board, submit an Inactivation Request Form and a *new* Signature Assurance Form. If your study is Exempt, Non-Research, or Non-Human Research, email orsp@acu.edu to indicate that the research has finished.

- According to ACU policy, research data must be stored on ACU campus (or electronically) for 3 years from inactivation of the study, in a manner that is secure b

Appendix G: School District Approval

██

████████████

December 19, 2019

██

Doctoral Candidate at Abilene Christian University (ACU)

Dear Mrs. Feaster:

I commend you on your efforts to pursue an advanced degree. Your dissertation entitled *"Supporting Novice Teachers in Struggling Schools: Exploring a Mentoring Program's* Components" (conduct research at nine elementary schools in the Zone: ████████████████ ███ ████████████████████████████████████ has been approved.

Your project will be coordinated through the office of ██████████ Director-Accountability Data and Grants, via e-mail at mmainiero@caddoschools.org.

Research participation of XXXXXXX employees is strictly on a voluntary basis.

Approval of the research study does not mandate/require ██████employees to participate.

Thank you.

Sincerely

████████

Chief Academic Officer

████████████ District Transformation & Innovation Officer
Elementary School Principals
████████████, Director-Accountability, Data and Grants

Appendix H: Permission to Reprint Figure 1

Geneva J. Feaster
Assistant Principal
█████████
MEDL
Sowing seeds into children today so they can reap a harvest tomorrowl

---

Mandy Rodrigues <mrodrigues@learningpolicyinstitute.org>   Tue, Nov 5, 2019 at 4:04 PM
  To: Geneva Feaster <XXXXXXXXX>
  Hi Geneva,
  That brief is also licensed under Creative Commons so you are free to use w/attribution for
  non-commercial purposes.
  Thanks again for checking!
  Mandy
  From: Geneva Feaster <XXXXXXXXXX>
  Sent: Monday, November 4, 2019 7:24 PM
  To: Mandy Rodrigues <mrodrigues@earningpolicyinstitute.org> Subject: Re: FW:
  Permission to use

  Thank you for permission. I actually had the wrong figure and brief. It is the following:
  Podolsky, A., Kini, T., Bishop, J., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). Solving the teacher
  shortage: How to attract and retain excellent educators (brief). Palo Alto, CA: Learning
  Policy Institute. Reprinted with Permission.

  It is Figure 1 and Page 2.

  Sorry for any inconvenience. Thanks.

  On Mon, Nov 4, 2019:at 9:38 AM Mandy Rodrigug
  <mrodrigues@learningpolicyinstitute.org> wrote:

  Dear Geneva,

  The brief is published under the Creative Commons Attribution-Non CommerciaI 4.0
  International license so you are welcome to use the figure you referenced with proper
  attribution for non-commercial purposes.

Geneva Feaster <XXXXXXXXXX>   Wed, Nov 6, 2019 at 5:32 AM
  To: Mandy Rodrigues <mrodrigues@learningpolicyinstitute.org>

Thank You. Can you attach a letter stating that it is okay to use? My dissertation committee just want to make sure that I am covered. Thank you so much for responding!

On Tuesday, November 5, 2019, Mandy Rodrigues
<mrodrigues@learningpolicyinstitute.org> wrote:

Hi Geneva,
That brief is also licensed under Creative Commons so you are free to use w/attribution for non-commercial purposes.
Thanks again for checking!

Mandy
From: Geneva Feaster XXXXXXXXXXX
Sent: Monday, November 4, 2019 7:24 PM
To: Mandy Rodrigues<mrodrigues@learningpolicyinstitute.org>
Subject: Re: FW: Permission-to use
Thank you for permission. I actually had the wrong figure and brief. It is the following: Podolsky, A., Kini, T., Bishop, J., & Darling-Hammond, L. (2016). Solving the teacher shortage: How to attract and retain excellent educators (brief). Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute. Reprinted with Permission.

It is Figure 1 and Page 2.

Sorry for any inconvenience. Thanks.

On Mon, Nov 4, 2019 at 9:38 AM Mandy Rodrigues
<mrodrigues@learningpolicyinstitute.org> wrote:
 Dear Geneva,
 The brief is published under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International license so you are welcome to use the figure you referenced with proper attribution for non-commercial purposes.
 We understand you may change it, but our suggested citation is, "Carver-Thomas, D. & Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher turnover: Why it matters and what we can do about it (brief). Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute."
 Thanks for letting us know!
 Mandy
 -------- Original message ---_____
 From: Geneva Feaster <XXXXXXXXXX>

Appendix I: Permission to Reprint Figure 2

FW: Permission to Use

permissions (US) <permissions@sagepub.com> Tue, Nov 19, 2019 at 9:45 AM To: "XXXXXXXXX" <XXXXXXXXXX>

Dear Geneva Feaster,

Thank you for your request. I am pleased to report we can grant your request without a fee as part of your thesis or dissertation.

Please accept this email as permission for your request as you've detailed below. Permission is granted for the life of the edition on a non-exclusive basis, in the English language, throughout the world in all formats provided full citation is made to the original SAGE publication. Permission does not include any third-party material found within the work. Please contact us for any further usage of the material.

If you have any questions, or if we may be of further assistance, please let us know.

Kind Regards,

Mary Ann Price

Rights Coordinator

SAGE Publishing

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From: Veronica Romo <journals@sagepub.com>
Sent: Monday, November 4, 2019 4:59 PM
To: permissions (US) <permissions@sagepub.com>
Subject: Fwd: Permission to Use

SAGE Support Ticket Number 443887

Thank you,

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/O?ik=debOf9ccca&view=pt&search=aIi&permmsgid=msg-
f%3A1650645631751287977&simpl=msg-f%3A16506456317...   1/2 11/12!2.019   myAClJ Mail - FW: Permission to Use

Veronica Romo
Customer Service Rep
SAGE Publications, Inc.
XXXXXXXXXXXX
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX
████████

Please let us know how we're doing with a quick survey here.

On Sun, 3 Nov at 10:52 AM , Geneva Feaster <XXXXXXXXXXX> wrote:

[EXTERNAL I

I am a doctoral student at Abilene Christian University, and I am needing to use one of your figures for my dissertation.

Smith, T. M., & Ingersoll, R. M. (2004). What are the effects of induction and mentoring on beginning teacher turnover? American Educational Research Journal, 41, 681-714. Retrieved from https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.3102/00028312041003681 ____

Figure 4 Page 705 (This is the figure that I need). Thanks.

Contact # is ████████████

Geneva J. Feaster Assistant Principal

████████

MEDL

Sowing seeds into children today so they can reap a harvest tomorrow!