AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHER TURNOVER AND MIGRATION IN AN URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT IN NORTH CAROLINA

by

Tina Sayuri Ford Johnson

A dissertation submitted to the faculty of
High Point University
In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctorate of Education

in

Educational Leadership

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We, in the School of Education in the High Point University Norcross Graduate School, are submitting a Dissertation in Professional Practice written by Tina Sayuri Ford Johnson, titled “AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHER TURNOVER AND MIGRATION IN AN URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT IN NORTH CAROLINA.” We have reviewed this copy of this dissertation for format and content, and we recommend that it be accepted in fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership.

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ABSTRACT

AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHER TURNOVER AND MIGRATION IN AN URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT IN NORTH CAROLINA

Tina Sayuri Ford Johnson
January, 2017

Doctorate in Education, Educational Leadership
School of Education
Department of

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This dissertation in practice describes a high-level problem of practice regarding teacher turnover and migration in a large, urban, public school district in North Carolina. An examination of the district’s teacher turnover rate indicates an increase in teacher turnover from 10.08% to 14.95% during the 2010–2015 timeframe. Moreover, an examination of the teacher turnover rates illuminates a trend with teachers migrating from the district to work in other North Carolina public school districts. As a result of teacher migration, the public school district’s percentage point change is higher than its four neighboring public school districts. In addition to examining the teacher turnover and migration rates, this dissertation in practice includes a strategic plan to increase teacher retention within the district. The priority area of implementation uses an empathic inquiry approach to seeking teacher narratives from resigned teachers through an online
surveys and phone interviews. Recommendations for teacher retention strategies for district implementation will be presented.

*Keywords:* teacher turnover, teacher retention, teacher migration
The faculty of the School of Education recognizes Tina Sayuri Ford Johnson for her outstanding capstone project, “AN EXPLORATION OF TEACHER TURNOVER AND MIGRATION IN AN URBAN PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT IN NORTH CAROLINA.”

This student demonstrated excellence in all capstone components, and her capstone has been awarded with distinction.

Dean of the School of Education
Dr. Mariann Tillery
DEDICATION

This dissertation is gratefully dedicated to the teachers who participated in this study. Without their consent, it would have been possible to document the teacher migration pattern and its contributing reasons. Their cumulative experiences are the essence of this research study. The ultimate desire is for public school districts to increase their capacity to retain effective teachers.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“I will give thanks to you, LORD, with all my heart; I will tell of all your wonderful deeds” (Psalm 9:1, New International Version). The completion of this dissertation is a true testimony to the power of God. At the end of this journey, I give all glory to God who surrounded me with a circle of support that sustained me during the four-year process. I remain eternally thankful for HIS many blessings and guidance and pray this achievement can be used to serve HIS purpose and will.

To my parents, William and Mitsuko Ford, this achievement would not be possible without your foundational support and love. 私はあなたを愛し、あなたが私のためにしたことすべてに感謝しています。

A heartfelt thanks to my husband, Vernon, and two children: Kenji and MayaGrace. They were amazingly understanding and patient with me while I chased this dream. I love each of you dearly and thank God for you. I pray this accomplishment will serve as an example that GOD is real and HE alone can make dreams manifest. I am excited about being able to now devote all my free time to helping each of you pursue your dreams.

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While writing this dissertation, I served as an assistant principal in an elementary school. I would like to thank my colleagues, Shayla Savage and Susan Steen, for our daily conversations about best practices. Our efforts to honor and support teachers, parents, and students not only resulted in academic gains but helped me to develop a deeper understanding of the complexities within teacher migration. I am so thankful our paths have crossed and appreciate each of you greatly, especially for your compassion while I was on this journey.

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

The researcher’s motivation for this research study was connected to personal and professional interests. As a teacher, the researcher resigned from her teaching position after five years in the classroom. As an instructional coach, the researcher tracked the resignation rate of teachers within the district. As a school administrator, the researcher sought to keep teachers satisfied to increase teacher retention. As a result of experiencing the phenomenon from three differing perspectives, this dissertation in practice serves as a study of the teacher turnover and migration phenomenon within a large, urban public school district. Ultimately, it seeks to improve teacher retention by focusing on strategies to increase teacher retention. Retention is defined broadly as continuing to teach in the same district.

Richard Ingersoll serves as the seminal researcher on teacher turnover. Ingersoll (2001) defines teacher turnover as “the departure of teachers from their teaching jobs” (p. 500). In general, reasons for teacher departures from their positions includes promotions, retirements, interim contract endings (visiting instructional faculty and lateral entry teachers), the acceptance of a non-teaching positions within the district, and the creation of a position because of a teacher’s death.

Statement of the Problem

During 2010–2015, District One experienced an increase in teacher turnover from 10.08% to 14.95%. See Figure 1. As a result of the increased teacher turnover rate from 2010–2015, District One experienced the following challenges: financial loss to the
district, increased need for recruitment, and the need to ensure high quality instruction in classrooms.

![District One’s teacher turnover rates, 2010–2015.](image)

**Context of the Problem**

Teacher turnover impacts education on national, state, and local levels. In fact, it is not unique to the U.S. (Odland, 2008). Odland (2008) wrote, “Equally serious and perhaps even more complicated than teacher turnover on the national level, but ironically less studied, is the problem of teacher turnover in international schools” (p. 41). As a result, there is no documented international teacher turnover rate. The following section will explore the teacher turnover issue from the national, state, and district perspective with the hope of developing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon. By deepening the collective understanding of the teacher phenomenon issue, educators can begin to also understand the nature of the issue, its varied impacts, and its varied causations.
National Teacher Turnover

The National Center for Education Statistics is the primary federal entity for collecting and analyzing data related to education in the nation. The organization fulfills a Congressional mandate to collect, collate, analyze, and report statistics on the condition of American education. Commissioned by the National Center for Education Statistics, Goldring, Taie, and Riddles (2014) state that out of the 3,377,900 public school teachers who were teaching during the 2011–2012 school year, 16% left their school. Conversely, Ingersoll (2001, p.515) notes the national teacher turnover rate is 11% for individual schools. While there is general acknowledgement within education that 50% of the teacher workforce ultimately leaves the profession (Gonzalez, Brown, & Slate, 2008; Greiner & Smith, 2006; Heller, 2004; Ingersoll, 2003, 2002; Kaff, 2004; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2003), there is no consensus on an annual teacher turnover rate internationally and nationally. The difficulty with the identification of a national teacher turnover rate is that every district does not produce an annual teacher turnover report to the state department of public instruction, like North Carolina. Based on the controversial findings of the national teacher turnover rate, it is challenging to pinpoint a national teacher turnover rate with accuracy.

North Carolina’s Teacher Turnover

While it is difficult to pinpoint an international or national turnover rate, it can be established within the state of North Carolina. On an annual basis, the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction produces a report examining its teacher turnover. Similar to District One, the state of North Carolina also experienced an increase in
teacher turnover. Figure 2 illustrates the increase in the teacher turnover rate in North Carolina during 2010–2015.

![Bar chart showing the increase in teacher turnover rate in North Carolina from 2010-2011 to 2014-2015.](image)


*Figure 2.* North Carolina’s teacher turnover rates, 2010–2015.

North Carolina’s five-year teacher turnover average is 13.3%. As previously noted, most of its neighboring states do not track their teacher retention rates, with the exception of South Carolina and Kentucky. South Carolina reports its teacher retention by district. It ranges from 6.9% to 34% (South Carolina Department of Education, 2015). Kentucky tracked its teacher retention from 2008–2012 as an average of 14.4% (Lochmiller, Sugimoto, & Muller, 2016). As a result of differing tracking measures employed by states, it is hard to compare the state’s progress against other states in the nation.

In addition to tracking the state’s teacher turnover rate, North Carolina also tracks the reasons that teachers exit the profession within the state. Each local education agency within the state provides an annual teacher turnover report which categorizes the reason for each resignation. The resignation reason itself is self-reported to the district by the
teacher on the district’s resignation form. See Appendix A for District One’s Resignation Form. The local education agency, in turn, provides a summary report to the state. There are 27 self-reported reasons that a local education agency may cite. Per its annual report on teacher turnover, North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (2015) summarized the five major categories of reasons for teacher departures. Table 1 provides an overview of the five categories of reasons cited for teacher departure in North Carolina (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2015). Table 2 provides a summary of the teacher’s self-reported reasons for teacher turnover within North Carolina. During 2010–2015, the most frequent reason for teacher turnover within the state was due to teachers migrating from one district to another.

The causes of North Carolina’s increased teacher turnover may be connected to its educational reform efforts and/or its teacher salaries. North Carolina’s Governor, Pat McCrory (R), took office in January 2013. Within seven months, he signed a budget passed by state legislation with significant education reforms. The resulting legislative actions created the following impacts for teachers: the reduction of state funding to schools, the elimination of the North Carolina Teaching Fellows program, the institution of a voucher program, the end of teacher tenure, the expansion of charter schools, the elimination of teacher assistants, increased funding to Teach for America, and the termination of pay for advanced degrees. Cumulatively, the aforementioned modifications led to an increased negative perception about public education in North Carolina. In addition, Governor McCrory’s Educational Reform of 2013 impacted teachers in a fiscal manner as well. Teachers experienced a loss in differential pay for Master’s Degrees, loss of longevity pay, and teachers pay did not increase from 2008–
2014. During the 2014–2015 year, teachers received a raise at approximately $27 per month. As a result, North Carolina became the 42nd in the country in its provisions for teacher salaries. Each of these state-level contextual factors impacted teachers in a personal manner and may have contributed to the state’s increased teacher turnover.

Table 1

North Carolina Department of Public Instruction’s Teacher Turnover by Reason

Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Self-Reported Reason</th>
<th>Reason Code</th>
<th>Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Resigned to teach in another NC LEA</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>Category 1 Teachers who left the LEA but remained in education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Moved to a non-teaching position in education</td>
<td>59</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Resigned to teach in a NC Charter School</td>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Resigned to teach in an NC non-public/private school</td>
<td>71</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Moved to a non-teaching position in education</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Resigned due to family responsibilities / childcare</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>Category 2 Teachers who left for personal reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Resigned to continue education / sabbatical</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Resigned due to family relocation</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Resigned to teach in another state</td>
<td>62</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Dissatisfied with teaching or career change</td>
<td>63 and 72</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Resigned due to health /disability</td>
<td>64</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Retired with reduced benefits</td>
<td>68</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Re-employed retired teacher resigned</td>
<td>73</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Dismissed</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Category 3 Teachers who were terminated by the LEA (Positive Turnover)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Non-renewal (probationary contract ended)</td>
<td>53</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Interim contract ended–not rehired</td>
<td>54</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Resigned in lieu of dismissal</td>
<td>55</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Resigned in lieu of non-renewal</td>
<td>78</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Did not obtain or maintain license</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Reduction in Force</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>Category 4 Teachers who left for reasons beyond LEA control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Retired with full benefits</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Deceased</td>
<td>67</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. End of Visiting International Faculty Term</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Resigned due to movement required by Military Orders</td>
<td>76</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. End of Teach for America Term</td>
<td>77</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Resigned for other reasons</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>Category 5 Teachers who left for other reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Resigned for unknown reasons</td>
<td>69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 2

**Top Five Self-Reported Reasons for Teacher Turnover in North Carolina, 2010–2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1st Reason</th>
<th>2nd Reason</th>
<th>3rd Reason</th>
<th>4th Reason</th>
<th>5th Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>To teach elsewhere</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Family Relocation</td>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>Family Responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td>To teach elsewhere</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Family Relocation</td>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>Stayed in LEA in a non-teaching position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td>To teach elsewhere</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Family Relocation</td>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>Contract Ended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>To teach in another NC public school system</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Family Relocation</td>
<td>Career Change</td>
<td>Moved to a Non-teaching position in the LEA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>To teach in another NC public school system</td>
<td>Retired</td>
<td>Family Relocation</td>
<td>To Teach in Another State</td>
<td>Career Change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


### District One’s Teacher Turnover

District One is a large, urban public school district in North Carolina. During 2015–2016, it served 73,407 students in 127 schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). The student demographic of District One consisted of the following subgroups: Black (41%), White (34%), Hispanic (14%), Asian (6%), Multi-racial (4%), and native American and Pacific Islander (1%). Eighteen percent of the families in the district live below the poverty line. Out of the 126 schools, there are 69 elementary schools; 23 middle schools; 28 high schools; and 10 alternative schools. The district employed 126 principals with 43% having between 0 and 3 years of experience; another 43% having between 4 and 10 years of experience, and 14% having ten plus years of experience (National Center for Education, Statistics, 2016). The principal turnover rate was 6%. The district employed 4976.47 fulltime teachers with a 15.56 student/teacher ratio. Its total revenue was $769,588,000 with $10,388 spent per student (National
Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Table 3 provides information on District One’s teacher turnover rate, as previously shared.

Table 3

**Teacher Turnover in District One, 2010–2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>District One Total Teachers</th>
<th>District One Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>District One Teacher Turnover Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>4923</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>10.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td>4950</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>11.66%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td>4960</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>4971</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>13.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>4984</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>14.95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Historical Interventions towards Improved Teacher Retention

In an effort to address the increased teacher attrition, District One made attempts to impact teacher satisfaction. In 2013, District One’s superintendent created a three-year long Strategic Plan. One of its priorities articulated in its 2016 Strategic Plan was to reduce the annual teacher turnover rate from a baseline of 11.66% to 9%. Table 4 represents turnaround strategies employed by the district during 2010–2015. This information was shared with District’s One Board of Education on February 13, 2016. Metrics to measure and evaluate each initiative were not presented. As a result, the impact of individual interventions cannot be determined at this time.
Table 4

*District One’s Historical Interventions Towards Improved Teacher Retention*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intervention</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increased Internal Engagement and Collaboration</td>
<td>Utilized principal feedback to inform recruiting and screening processes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosted Teacher Cadet Programs</td>
<td>Increased student participation in the Teacher Cadet Program. Expand to middle and elementary schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On boarded Employees</td>
<td>Oriented new employees to ensure a strong start and continued employee engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formed University Partnerships</td>
<td>Collaborated to create a teacher pipeline by recruiting District One students into local teacher education programs and providing ongoing support through their college experience and as they transition to teaching in District One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Lateral Entry Teachers</td>
<td>Recruited non-traditional candidates for critical need areas, including teacher assistants and content majors. Implemented a licensure program that provides licensing to teacher through their own in-house teacher licensure program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnered with Teach for America</td>
<td>Used non-traditional, highly successful college graduates to fill hard-to-staff positions across the district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsored Induction and Success Program</td>
<td>Provided support to new teachers; helping new teachers transition into the classroom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hosted Career Fairs</td>
<td>Held recruitment events in the district and attending college and university recruitment fairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided Early Contracts</td>
<td>Offered early contracts for hard to staff schools and positions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created STEM HBCU Partnerships</td>
<td>Collaborated with Historically Black Colleges and Universities to recruit science, technology, and math teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implemented District One Academy</td>
<td>Created Student Teacher Seminars based on feedback from teachers and principals and in collaboration with colleges and universities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transitioned to Applicant Tracking System</td>
<td>Utilized a system that makes it easier to identify and communicate with candidates</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided Professional Development</td>
<td>Tailored based on principal and teacher feedback</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Created Aspiring Administrator and Executive Leaders Program</td>
<td>Trained Leaders in areas that impact recruiting, retention, and working conditions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provided Reward and Recognition Activities</td>
<td>Hosted Teacher of the Year, Principal of the Year, District One for Le$$, Human Resources High Five</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Adapted from District One (2016). Board of Education’s Winter Retreat Presentation.*

9
One of the most successful interventions for teacher retention in District One was a program funded by the Teacher Incentive Fund. Implemented between 2006 and 2015, it sought to attract highly effective teachers for the goal of increasing student achievement in schools with critical needs. Schools with critical needs were selected to participate based on the teacher turnover rate, socio-economic factors, and adequate yearly progress. Adequate yearly progress is the expected annual achievement growth, as articulated by the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. Teachers and administrators within the program received specialized training, extensive support, reduced class sizes, recruitment and performance incentives. As a result of its combined incentives, the targeted school experienced an overall increase of 12% in teacher retention in target schools from 68% in 2006 to 80% in 2015 (District One Program Update, 2016). Without its interventions, the teacher retention rate may have increased at a higher percentage point of change. At the close of the 2015–2016 year, the teacher incentive fund program ended, due to the conclusion of federal funding.

**Causes of the Problem in Local Setting**

While the state of North Carolina’s educational reform efforts may have contributed towards increased teacher turnover in District One through its varied legislative actions in 2013, the district itself may have also influenced teachers to resign as well. The following section will explore three influences: district-based influences, school-based influences, and external influences and its potential impacts on teacher turnover. By examining the various causes of teacher turnover, the development of turnaround strategies for improved teacher retention will be in alignment with the heart of the issues.
**District-based Influences**

Systemic barriers may have inadvertently contributed towards the district’s increased teacher turnover. Barriers, such as low local supplemental pay for teachers and the implementation of regional accountability, may have created unsatisfactory working conditions for teachers. A potential result of the combined barriers is lowered teacher self-efficacy which is a contributor in teacher turnover.

**Low supplemental pay.** It is a well-documented fact that the public has recognized the teacher profession as a low-paying career (Berry, 2006). It is also well known that teacher salary affects teacher turnover rates (Feng, 2005). A comparison of local monthly supplements between the five districts explored in the “Context of the Problem” reveals that District One ranks fourth in its provision of salaries to teachers. See Table 5 for the comparison.

**Table 5**

*Comparison of Local Monthly Supplements in Districts 1–5*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District (ranked in order of provision)</th>
<th>Teacher’s Years of Experience 1–3</th>
<th>Teacher’s Years of Experience 10–14</th>
<th>Teacher’s Years of Experience 15–19</th>
<th>Teacher’s Years of Experience 20–24</th>
<th>Teacher’s Years of Experience 25–29</th>
<th>Teacher’s Years of Experience 30 plus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>District 2</td>
<td>$603.75</td>
<td>$710.00</td>
<td>$793.88</td>
<td>$871.88</td>
<td>$1,000.00</td>
<td>$1,162.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 3</td>
<td>$524.65</td>
<td>$600.80</td>
<td>$675.56</td>
<td>$745.40</td>
<td>$801.50</td>
<td>$852.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 5</td>
<td>$437.50</td>
<td>$540.00</td>
<td>$641.63</td>
<td>$744.00</td>
<td>$862.50</td>
<td>$925.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 1</td>
<td>$435.00</td>
<td>$385.00</td>
<td>$426.00</td>
<td>$454.00</td>
<td>$485.00</td>
<td>$520.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District 4</td>
<td>$292.00</td>
<td>$346.00</td>
<td>$392.00</td>
<td>$442.00</td>
<td>$501.00</td>
<td>$566.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


District One’s Exit Surveys provides further insight into teacher perception of the contributing factors that led to teacher resignations. The exit survey is administered.
online to teachers who have submitted their resignation. During August 2012 through August 2015, the district received 517 responses from resigned teachers. Of the 517 received responses, 127 responses (25%) cited the low salary as a reason for their resignation. District One’s low supplemental pay for teachers is an area of concern for teachers.

**Increased accountability.** In 2008, District One hired a new superintendent. In the following year, the superintendent created a strategic plan for the district that included major gains in academic achievement and reorganization of the district including the creation of regional superintendents. The increased accountability through the creation of regional superintendents may have contributed towards increased stress for teachers. Teaching is cited as one of the most stressful professions (Fredricks, 2005) with teachers experiencing stress and pressure from state and local accountability systems (Abrams, 2004) and due to reform efforts (Hamilton, Berends, & Stecher, 2005). High levels of stress produce emotional and physical tolls on a teacher that may impede their performance in the classroom (Neils, 2006). As a result, a teacher may feel demoralized and choose to leave the classroom (Inman & Marlow, 2004). MacBeath (2012) found stricter demands for accountability contributed towards teachers feeling dissatisfaction and failure. The district-based influences of low local supplemental pay and increased regional accountability have contributed towards teacher dissatisfaction.

**School-based Influences**

The school itself may present obstacles for improved teacher retention. Ingersoll (2001) cites that organizational factors within a school, student discipline behavior, lack of decision-making power, and lack of support from administration impact teacher’s
decision to leave the profession. Additionally, poor working conditions within a school may impact a teacher’s satisfaction (Andrews, Gilbert, & Martin, 2006; Billingsley, 2003; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003; Loeb, Darling-Hammond, & Luczak, 2005). Ingersoll (2001, 2002) cites excessive demands on teachers also contributes to teacher turnover.

The best source to gain insight about the teacher turnover issue is directly from teachers in District One. Two surveys provide insight into teacher perceptions about the district: North Carolina Teacher Working Condition Surveys and District One’s Exit Survey. The North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey is an anonymous, statewide survey distributed to teachers to assess teaching conditions within schools. More specifically, its purpose is to determine if school-based educators have the supports necessary for effective teaching in the following categories: time, facilities and resources, community support and involvement, managing student conduct, teacher leadership, school leadership, professional development, instructional practices and support, and new teacher support. Results are disaggregated by the district and also by individual schools. District One’s survey results for the North Carolina Teacher Working Condition were examined for the 2012 and 2014 years. In 2012, 89.46% (4960 teachers) of District One’s teacher workforce participated in the North Carolina Teacher Working Condition survey. In 2014, 95.34% (4947 teachers) of District One’s teacher workforce participated in the survey. Under the category of school leadership, the lowest rated answer by District One’s teachers consecutively for the past two administrations of the survey was in response to question 71c - Teachers feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them (North Carolina Teacher Working Condition Survey, 2016). In 2012, 65% (3,292 teachers) agreed with this statement and in 2014, 66.5% (3245
teachers) also agreed. Within the two survey administration years, 3,370 teachers were not comfortable raising issues and concerns that were important to them. See Appendix B for District One’s 2012 and 2015 North Carolina Teacher Working Condition Survey Results.

The second data source where teacher perceptions were examined was District One’s Exit Surveys. The survey is administered online to certified teachers who have tendered their resignation. The survey consists of the following questions:

1. What was your last position?
2. What is your primary reason for leaving?
3. What, if any, factors led to your decision to leave?

During August 2012 through August 2015, the district received 517 responses from resigned teachers. Of the 517 received responses, 49% (254 teachers) noted the lack of administrative support as a factor in their decision to resign from their position. Both surveys, North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions surveys from 2010 and 2012 and District One’s Exit Surveys highlight teacher dissatisfaction with administrative support.

Darling-Hammond (2010) cites that surveys of teachers have long shown that working conditions play a role in the decision to stay or leave the profession. The results from the North Carolina Teacher Working Condition surveys and the Exit Survey follow Darling-Hammond’s (2010) assertion. Both survey results reveal issues with working conditions within the respective schools during the 2012–2015 timeframe.

**External Influences**

As District One’s teacher turnover increased, other public school districts outside of North Carolina seized the opportunity to recruit for their vacant positions. Districts
like, Houston Independent School District from Texas and Roanoke City Schools in Virginia, hosted recruitment fairs across the state of North Carolina. Roanoke City Schools offered North Carolina teachers sign-on bonuses ranging from $2,000-$10,000. Houston Independent School District offered higher pay and benefits to teachers whose salaries were among the lowest in the nation. At the job fair, Houston Independent School District representatives were prepared to make job offers to teachers certified in any of four “critical shortage areas”: secondary math, secondary science, bilingual education, and special education. “It’s easy pickings to go to North Carolina,” said Gayle Fallon, president of the Houston Federation of Teachers. “The salary scale looks phenomenal to them.” Fallon further shared the following advice to North Carolina legislators,

The active recruitment efforts should send a message to North Carolina’s elected officials. You better get your salaries in line and treat your teachers a little better because I’m sure if we get a lot of luck recruiting, we won’t be the only school district down there.

Each of the three influences (district-based, school-based, and external) reveals an authentic need for the diagnostic exploration of the root cause for teacher turnover in District One’s teacher turnover. While each present a glimpse into what may be a contributing factor, further query of teachers is required to effectively identify its causation. To that end, it is fair to state the teacher turnover in District One is ripe for further investigation. The following section will provide justification for how the vision for improvement is worthy for action in District One.

**Significance of District One’s Teacher Turnover Resolution**

The impacts of teacher turnover are well documented. Darling-Hammond (2010) stated, “Teacher turnover creates large inefficiencies in the nation’s human capital system
and unnecessary failure for students” (p. 4). As a result of teachers exiting the profession, districts are required to address factors, such as student enrollment, class size policies, curriculum requirements, fiscal capacity, priorities, and teacher salaries, before filling the position (Murnane & Steele, 2007).

**Impact on Student Achievement**

There is broad consensus citing one of the primary causes of poor student performance is the inability to adequately staff classrooms with qualified teachers (Ingersoll, 2001). Hanushek (1992) cited the difference between being taught by a highly capable and a less than capable teacher can delay a student’s academic progress by a full grade level of achievement in a single year. Futernick (2007) and Ingersoll (2007) cite rising turnover is a catalyst for classes being staffed with less qualified teachers. Due to the increase in teacher turnover, less qualified teachers staff classroom at the start of the year (Futernick, 2007). While it is widely accepted that instructional intensity may be reduced when the teacher is absent (Bayard, 2003; Cantrell, 2003; Varlas, 2001), there is little research on the causal effect of teacher turnover on student achievement (Guin, 2004; Ingersoll, 2001). A review of District’s One’s graduation rate from 2006 until 2015 reveals a 15.3% increase with its graduation rate (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2016). See Figure 3. Based on the graduation rate alone, the district’s increased turnover rate did not negatively impact its graduation rate. However, when students are instructed by a less qualified teacher, student achievement decreases (Fletcher, Strong, & Villar, 2005).
Figure 3. Graduation rates over time.

Impact on the Teaching Profession

Ingersoll (2001) found teacher shortages in public schools are attributed to new teachers leaving the profession within five years and not because of teachers retiring. Ravitch (2009) wrote that the shortage is attributed to dismissal teacher pay. In contrast, Ingersoll (2001) stated teacher migration is a component of teacher turnover but it does not reduce the overall supply of teachers (p. 514). The National Commission on Teaching & America’s Future was founded in 1994 as a bipartisan effort to engage education policymakers and practitioners to address the national challenge of recruiting, developing, and retaining teachers. In its report, it identified teacher turnover as a significant factor in our nation’s teacher shortage (National Commission on Teaching & America’s Future, 2007). Declining enrollment numbers in teacher education programs plays a significant role within North Carolina’s teacher shortage issue. Since 2010, North Carolina’s education programs experienced declining enrollment numbers in the state’s 15 public teacher education programs. More specifically, from 2010 to 2014, its
undergraduate and graduate teaching programs experienced a 27% drop (University of North Carolina, 2015).

While there are numerous theories about contributing factors of the teacher shortage phenomenon, Flynt and Morton (2009) believe a teacher shortage claim cannot be confirmed. Flynt and Morton (2009) state, “A closer look at the myriad of migration factors reveals a complex situation that makes it difficult to arrive at a simple, straightforward solution” (p. 2). The data appear to indicate that, overall, there are more than enough teachers produced per year (Ingersoll, 2003). However, there are some limitations within the data on whether or not a sufficient quantity of as math, science, and special education teacher exist (Ingersoll, 2003). Similar to the determination of the national teacher rate, a national teacher shortage cannot be conclusively confirmed.

**Impact on District Finances**

The high cost of teacher turnover is a challenge for districts. On a national level, Darling-Hammond (2003) claims teacher turnover is costing the nation hundreds of millions of dollars every year. H. Smith and Watkins (1978) were early researchers to address the actual costs related to teacher turnover and stated “a practical measurement process must be utilized for analyzing the costs of personnel” (p. 46). Their research considered three major cost categories: separation costs, replacement costs, and training costs (H. Smith & Watkins, 1978). The National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future conducted a pilot study in five school districts and found that a singular teacher resignation costs the district thousands of dollars (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2007). For larger districts, it costs $17,812 to replace a
teacher and $4,366 in small rural districts (National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2007).

Teacher turnover is costly. In 2008, NC’s teacher turnover rate of 13.85% cost the state between $29 million and $63 million. Corbell (2009) estimated that replacing teachers in North Carolina costs more than $84.5 million annually. In North Carolina, the average cost per resigned teacher was $9,875 (National Commission on Teaching America’s Future, 2007). Using the National Commission on Teaching America’s Future’s (2007) estimation, in District One, during 2014–2015, 745 teachers resigned resulting in a loss of $7,356,875 to the district. Using North Carolina Department of Public Instruction’s Fact and Figures (2013), the loss of funds due to teacher turnover could have been diverted back to the district in any one of the following ways:

- Providing instructional resources for 708 students at $10,388 per student;
- Purchasing breakfast and lunch for 1,477,284 students at $4.98 per student;
- Delivering transportation for 12,180 students for the year at an annual cost of $604 per student; and
- Hiring 106 teachers at $45,938 per teacher.

The cost of teacher turnover is great when considering how diverting resources back into the schools could strengthen supports for teachers and students alike.

**Vision for Improved Teacher Retention in District One**

The issue of teacher turnover in District One is a compelling problem. The researcher’s vision is to examine the teacher turnover phenomenon using empathic inquiry to understand its causation. While the increased teacher turnover rate has not reached a critical level, there is an urgency to address the issue when considering: the
fiscal impacts, the diminished numbers of teachers produced by the teacher education program pipeline, and the external recruitment of North Carolina teachers by other states. Lastly, the findings of teacher retention strategies might be of value to districts struggling with increased teacher turnover. The researcher has received formal approval from District One and High Point University to conduct this study. See Appendix C, Memorandum of Understanding #1 and #2, and Appendix D, District One’s Research Summary Approval and IRB Exemption.

If teacher turnover is no longer an issue within public education, students will experience a full year of academics with the same teacher of record. Teachers will have higher self-efficacy with opportunities for distributed leadership. Principals will increase their capacity to retain effective teachers. Schools will experience fewer vacancies. Community members will experience increased satisfaction with the school. The status quo will be revamped with an increased trust in public schools. The ultimate goal for addressing teacher turnover is to ensure that all students in District One receive a high quality, sound and basic education that will enable them to effectively meet the demands of college, the workplace and life.

**Literature Review**

This section of the dissertation in professional practice focuses on the research surrounding the teacher turnover issue. More specifically, the following two research questions guided this literature review:

1. What are the trends in teacher turnover?

2. What is teacher migration?
Trends in Teacher Turnover

There are a multitude of reasons why teachers leave the profession. Research has noted the following reasons: salaries, management issue, working conditions, and personal issues (Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2008; Ingersoll, 2003; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Mihans, 2009; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2002; Williams, 2003). The following trends in teacher turnover are explored in an attempt to understand the nature of the phenomenon: beginning versus career status teachers, content matter and teacher turnover, teacher gender and teacher turnover, and self-efficacy and teacher turnover.

Beginning versus career status teacher turnover. In the state of North Carolina, beginning teachers do not hold a clear license for their first three years of teaching. After three consecutive years of full-time service and satisfactory evaluations, a teacher is granted a Standard Professional 2 (SP2) Professional Educator’s License. The license is valid for five years. Teachers who are fully licensed and “Highly Qualified” in another state who have three or more years of teaching experience in another state and who meet NC State Board of Education approved licensure exam requirements or have National Board Certification are issued the SP2 Professional Educator’s license. Per North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (2015), “Career status teachers make up 80.28% of the total teaching workforce in NC” (p. 2).

There is an abundance of research that claims more than half of teachers leave the profession with their first five years (Corbell, 2009; Greiner & Smith, 2006; Heller, 2004; Ingersoll, 2002, 2003; Kaff, 2004; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2003, 2007; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). This finding was noted in
Grissmer and Kirby’s (1987) early work. Grissmer and Kirby (1987) assert the teacher career trajectory follows a U-shaped distribution pattern with the highest turnover occurring in the early and later stages of a teacher’s career as illustrated in Figure 4.

Figure 4. Teacher turnover pattern for beginning and career status teachers.

In opposition, Borman and Dowling (2008) refuted the U-shaped pattern may be a misrepresentation of a linear relationship between age and experience and should be interpreted with caution. Regarding the trends in teacher turnover, Borman and Dowling (2008) stated, “We need truly longitudinal data with more than two time points to capture more nuanced pictures of teachers’ career trajectories” (p. 399). North Carolina’s Department of Public Instruction began comparing its teacher turnover rate between its beginning and career status teachers in 2013. Table 6 displays the trend with the two subgroups of teachers in the 2013–2015 years. For a fair comparison between beginning and career status teacher resignations, the resignation rate within the same role alike category was compared. This comparison revealed more beginning teachers resigned
from the profession in North Carolina within the 2013–2015 years (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2015).

Table 6


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Resignations</th>
<th>Total of Beginning Teachers</th>
<th># of Beginning Teachers Resignations</th>
<th>Turnover as % of All BTs Resignations</th>
<th>Turnover as % of All State Teachers Resignations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>13,557</td>
<td>15,552</td>
<td>3,143</td>
<td>20.21%</td>
<td>23.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>14,255</td>
<td>18,944</td>
<td>3,942</td>
<td>20.81%</td>
<td>4.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Resignations</th>
<th>Total of Career Status Teachers</th>
<th># of Career Status Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>Turnover as % of All Career Status Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>Turnover as % of All Career Status Teacher Resignations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>13,557</td>
<td>59,764</td>
<td>5,107</td>
<td>8.55%</td>
<td>37.67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>14,255</td>
<td>77,137</td>
<td>10,313</td>
<td>13.37%</td>
<td>10.73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Content matter and teacher turnover.** Teachers who teach in critical shortage areas: exceptional children, mathematics, and science tend to have the highest teacher turnover (Henke, Zahn, & Carroll, 2001; McCoy, 2012; Ingersoll and Perda, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). Furthermore, Ingersoll and Perda (2010) hypothesized mathematics and science teachers leave at a higher rate because of career option in the business, technology, and technical sectors. There is little empirical research on where mathematics and science teachers go after departing from teaching (Ingersoll, 2012). The Public Schools of North Carolina 2013–2014 Annual Report on Teachers Leaving the Profession confirmed that for the past three years the state has experienced a critical shortage in math, science, and special education (North Carolina Department of Public
Instruction, 2014). Since 2008, District One has had difficulty staffing math, science, and special education teaching positions, like the rest of North Carolina. Thus, North Carolina was in alignment with the assertion that math, science, and special education are experiencing critical shortages.

**Teacher ethnicity and teacher turnover.** Allen (2005) found that white teachers have greater rates of attrition than either Black or Hispanic teachers. In contrast, Ingersoll and May (2011a) contend that minority teachers depart at higher rates to obtain a better job or due to dissatisfaction with teaching. As a result of the varied research conclusion, it cannot be determined which ethnic group has the highest turnover rate. Moreover, the state of North Carolina does not track this data so it cannot be examined at the state level.

The Public Schools of North Carolina 2014–2015 Annual Report on Teachers Leaving the Profession does not track the ethnicity of teachers leaving the profession within the state. As a result, it cannot be determined if the state follows the trend of minority teachers as frequently exiting the profession as documented in research literature.

**Teacher gender and teacher turnover.** Teaching is a female dominated occupation. As a result of pregnancy and family caregiving needs, Stinebrickner (2002, 1998) opines that female teachers experience higher turnover. The Public Schools of North Carolina 2014–2015 Annual Report on Teachers Leaving the Profession does not track the gender of teachers leaving the profession within the state. As a result, it cannot be determined if the state follows the trend of female teachers frequently exiting the profession as documented in research literature.
**Self-efficacy and teacher turnover.** A teacher’s self-efficacy and resilience may also influence their ability to remain in the profession. Bandura (1977) describes self-efficacy as one’s perception “to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments” (p. 3). These beliefs influence what people choose to do in challenging times. There are four types of teacher self-efficacy which impact a teacher’s will to stay in the classroom: behavioral self-efficacy, cognitive self-efficacy, emotional self-efficacy, and the cultural self-efficacy (Gibbs, 2003). The concept of self-efficacy does not indicate the actual skills that a person may have, but the degree of his/her faith in them (Gkolia, Belias, & Koustelios, 2014, p. 321). High expectations, meaningful participation, and provided care and support are the most commonly stated protective factors in creating a resilient climate for teachers (Mallory & Allen, 2007). Goldhaber, Gross, and Player (2007) found that effective, resilient teachers remain in the classroom longer than the least effective teachers based on their job satisfaction. Thus, job satisfaction and efficacy are critical key factors in teacher retention (Nguni, Sleeers, & Denessen, 2006).

**Teacher Migration**

Ingersoll and Smith (2003) asserted that “total teacher turnover is fairly evenly split between two components: attrition (those who leave teaching altogether); and migration (those who move to teaching jobs in other schools)” (p. 2). Teacher migration is a phenomenon within teacher turnover. Ingersoll and Smith (2003) state that teacher migration occurs when a teacher moves from one teaching job to another job (p. 2). This includes teacher transfers between schools and districts in and out of state (Boe, Bobbitt, & Cook, 1997; Ingersoll, 2001). According to Ingersoll (2001), teacher migration “has
been largely de-emphasized as a component of teacher turnover because it does not
decrease the overall supply of teachers” (p. 2). In his early research, Ingersoll (2001)
asserted roughly half of teacher turnover is due to teachers leaving the profession. The
other half is due to teachers migrating to another school but not leaving the profession
altogether (Ingersoll 1995, pp. 4–9; Ingersoll, 2001). A limited number of studies have
examined teacher migration (Boe, Bobbitt, Cook, Barkanic, & Mailsin, 1998; Grissmer &
Kirby, 1987, 1992; Murnane, 1975; Rollefson & Broughman, 1995). This is largely due
to the difficulty in distinguishing between teacher attrition and teacher migration
(Ingersoll, 2001, p.504). While there is limited research on this phenomenon, Ronfeldt,
Lankford, Loeb, and Wyckoff (2011) assert teacher migration may result in the infusion
of new ideas into the profession and may help raise student achievement (p. 3). In
closing, Ingersoll (2001) states, “However, many assume migration is a less significant
form of turnover because it does not increase or decrease the overall supply of teachers,
as do retirements and career changes, and thus, does not contribute to overall systemic
shortages.” (p. 503). As previously discussed in Chapter I, during 2010–2015, the most
frequent reason for teacher turnover within the state of North Carolina was due to
teachers migrating from one district to another.
CHAPTER II

The Strategic Planning Process

Chapter I provided an introduction to the teacher turnover issue by providing the percentage of change, putting the problem of practice in content with the nation and state turnover rates, and by examining research on the phenomenon. This prepared the researcher to lead a strategic planning process. Chapter Two explains the strategic planning process utilized by the researcher in coordination with key district personnel in an effort to examine the district’s teacher turnover trends. Chapter Two is comprised of six sections. Section One provides a description of the strategic planning team. Section Two describes the needs assessment and its findings. Section Three explains the focus of the research study. Section Four provides the goals, strategies and theoretical framework of change for the research study. Section Five describes the priority area for implementation. Lastly, Section Six provides a reflection on the researcher’s leadership of the strategic planning team and reflections about the research study itself.

The Strategic Planning Team

Purpose. Albert Einstein once stated, “We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used to create them.” To reverse the rising teacher turnover rate, a strategic planning team was created. The ultimate goal of the committee was to develop goals and strategies to reverse the growing teacher attrition trend.

Team members and rationale for selection. The Chief Executive Officer of Human Resources, Executive Director of Talent Development and the researcher met to identify key personnel for the initiative. Six key district leaders were invited to serve on
the strategic planning committee. Table 7 provides information about each team member, their role within the district, and their expertise in relation to teacher turnover.

### Table 7

**Strategic Planning Committee Members’ Expertise with Teacher Turnover**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Role Within District One</th>
<th>Expertise Regarding Teacher Turnover</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chief Executive Officer of Human Resources</td>
<td>Experienced with district wide leadership which includes navigating positive relationships with the superintendent and the Board of Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director of Talent Development</td>
<td>Experienced with recruitment, professional development of teachers and principals, and teacher incentive programs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director of Human Resources</td>
<td>Experienced with recruitment and staffing issues within the district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Director of Employee Relations</td>
<td>Experienced with historical and current employee morale issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Director of Human Resources Operations</td>
<td>Reports on teacher data within the district. Experience HR operations, position management, salary structures core data systems and benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Experienced school leader with developing positive school cultures as evidenced on the North Carolina Teacher Working Conditions Survey in 2014</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Essential strategic planning tools.** The strategic planning process began in November, 2015, and continued through April, 2016. To ensure communication was fluid, a wiki was created for all documents the committee reviewed. Documents such as meeting agendas, minutes, and information about the researcher were placed on the wiki. Confidential and sensitive documents were not shared on this open source site. See Figure 5 for a snapshot of the wiki’s homepage. The minutes from the meetings can be found in Appendix E, Strategic Planning Team Minutes–November 5, 2015; Appendix F, Strategic Planning Team Minutes–January 14, 2016; Appendix G, Strategic Planning
Deming’s (1993) Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle was used to frame the strategic planning process and its subsequent action plan. The first phase focused on developing the team’s foundational knowledge about the teacher turnover rates in District One. The district’s teacher turnover data from 2010 to 2015 was presented to the team. To begin the process of identifying causation, the planning team used Kepner and Tregoe’s (1981) situational appraisal technique. This evaluative technique provided the team with a framework to use to discuss the teacher turnover issue in a meaningful way. Figure 6 illustrates the situational appraisal process.
Focus of Inquiry: Needs Assessment and Findings

The strategic planning process began with a review of District One’s 2010–2015 teacher turnover numbers that confirmed the increased teacher turnover rate. During the review, the team inquired about the teacher migration phenomenon. To provide context for the increased teacher turnover rate, a comparison of District One’s four neighboring district’s teacher turnover rates was analyzed. Districts were selected based on their proximity to District One and their compatibility with District One’s demographics. Information such as: student enrollment numbers, total number of schools, principal turnover rate, principals’ years of experience, total number of teachers, student/teacher ratio will be presented, along with the teacher turnover data.

**District One versus District Two.** During 2015–2016, District Two served more than 153,534 students in 172 schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). The district employed 172 principals with an 8% principal turnover rate. Of the 172
principals, 33% had 0–3 years of experience; 46% had 4–10 years of experience and 21% had ten plus years of experience. The district employed 9,868.93 teachers with a student/teacher ratio of 15.56. The total revenue was $1,202,796,000 with $8119 dollars spent per student (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Its teacher turnover rates, for 2010–2015, can be found in Table 8.

Table 8

*Teacher Turnover in District One versus District Two, 2010–2015*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>District One Total Teachers</th>
<th>District One Total Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>District One Teacher Percentage</th>
<th>District Two Total Teachers</th>
<th>District Two Total Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>District Two Teacher Turnover Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>4923</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>10.08%</td>
<td>9202</td>
<td>1023</td>
<td>11.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td>4950</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>11.66%</td>
<td>9374</td>
<td>1088</td>
<td>11.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td>4960</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>9670</td>
<td>1170</td>
<td>12.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>4971</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>13.24%</td>
<td>9858</td>
<td>1135</td>
<td>11.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>4984</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>14.95%</td>
<td>10144</td>
<td>1355</td>
<td>13.36%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The comparison reveals District Two has also experienced an increase in its teacher turnover rate by 2.24%. However, District One’s increase was larger with an increase of 4.87% within the same time period. Thus, District One’s percentage point change with its teacher turnover rate was higher than District Two.

**District One versus District Three.** During the 2015–2016, District Three served more than 142,991 students in 165 schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Of the 165 principals, 43% had between 0–3 years of experience; 48% had between 4–10 years of experience and 10% had ten or more years of experience. Its principal turnover rate was 9%. The district employed 8,662.42 teachers with a
student/teacher ratio of 16.51. Its total revenue was $1,209,892,000 with $8,537 spent per student. Its teacher turnover rates for, 2010–2015, can be found below in Table 9.

Table 9

**Teacher Turnover in District One versus District Three, 2010–2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>District One Total Teachers</th>
<th>District One Total Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>District One Teacher Percentage</th>
<th>District Three Total Teachers</th>
<th>District Three Total Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>District Three Teacher Turnover Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>4923</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>10.08%</td>
<td>8635</td>
<td>1215</td>
<td>14.07%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td>4950</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>11.66%</td>
<td>8199</td>
<td>1177</td>
<td>14.36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td>4960</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>8309</td>
<td>1329</td>
<td>15.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>4971</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>13.24%</td>
<td>8586</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>15.14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>4984</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>14.95%</td>
<td>8609</td>
<td>1420</td>
<td>16.49%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


District Three has also experienced an increase in its teacher turnover rate by 2.42%. However, District One’s increase was larger with an increase of 4.87% within the same time period. Thus, District One’s percentage point change with its teacher turnover rate was higher than District Three and District Two.

**District One versus District Four.** During the 2015–2016, District Four served 53,413 students in 81 schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Of the 81 principals, 18% had between 0–3 years of experience; 5% had between 4–10 years of experience; and 28% had ten or more years of experience. The district employed 3,714.20 teachers with a student/teacher ratio of 14.38. The total revenue for the district was $462,134,000 with $8,664 spent per student. Its teacher turnover rates for, 2010–2015, can be found in Table 10.
Table 10

*Teacher Turnover in District One versus District Four, 2010–2015*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>District One Total Teachers</th>
<th>District One Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>District One Teacher Percentage</th>
<th>District Four Total Teachers</th>
<th>District Four Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>District Four Teacher Turnover Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>4923</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>10.08%</td>
<td>3998</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>11.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td>4950</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>11.66%</td>
<td>3938</td>
<td>564</td>
<td>14.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td>4960</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>3718</td>
<td>465</td>
<td>12.51%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>4971</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>13.24%</td>
<td>3749</td>
<td>466</td>
<td>12.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>4984</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>14.95%</td>
<td>3826</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>12.34%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


District Four has also experienced an increase in its teacher turnover rate by 0.58%. However, its increase was limited to the years 2011–2014, since the trend reversed in 2014–2015. District One’s increase was larger with an increase of 4.87% within 2010–2015. Thus, District One’s teacher turnover rate is higher than District Two, District Three, and District Four.

**District One versus District Five.** During the 2015–2016, District Five served 33,349 students in 56 schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). Of the 56 principals, 30% had between 0–3 years of experience; 54% had between 4–10 years of experience; and 17% had ten or more years of experience. The district employed 2,290.51 teachers with a student/teacher ratio of 14.56. (National Center for Education Statistics, 2016). The district’s total revenue was $349,845,000 with $10,520 spent per student. Its teacher turnover rates for 2010–2015 can be found below in Table 11.
Table 11

*Teacher Turnover in District One District Five, 2010–2015*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>District One Total Teachers</th>
<th>District One Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>District One Teacher Percentage</th>
<th>District Five Total Teachers</th>
<th>District Five Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>District Five Teacher Turnover Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>4923</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>10.08%</td>
<td>2238</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td>4950</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>11.66%</td>
<td>2181</td>
<td>398</td>
<td>18.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td>4960</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>2287</td>
<td>461</td>
<td>20.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>4971</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>13.24%</td>
<td>2326</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>20.21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>4984</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>14.95%</td>
<td>2389</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>20.43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


District Five has also experienced an increase in its teacher turnover rate by 2.3% with minimal increases in 2012–2015. District One’s increase was larger with an increase of 4.87% within 2010–2015. Thus, District One’s percentage point change with its teacher turnover rate was higher than District Two, District Three, District Four, and District Five.

The comparison of District One’s teacher turnover rate against its four neighboring districts illuminates a trend. Similarly, all five districts experienced increased teacher turnover within the 2010–2015 timeframe, like many other districts in the state (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2015). Conversely, District One’s percentage point change with its teacher turnover rate experienced the highest increase during 2010–2015. Figure 7 illustrates the percentage point change for each district. Table 12 summarizes the demographics of each district.
Figure 7. District One’s teacher turnover percentage point change 2010–2015.
Table 12

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Metric</th>
<th>District One</th>
<th>District Two</th>
<th>District Three</th>
<th>District Four</th>
<th>District Five</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Enrollment</td>
<td>72,081</td>
<td>153,534</td>
<td>142,991</td>
<td>53,413</td>
<td>33,349</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Schools</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal Turnover Rate</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals’ Average Years of Experience</td>
<td>43% with 0–3 years of experience and 43% with 4–10 years of experience</td>
<td>46% with 4–10 years of experience</td>
<td>48% with 4–10 years of experience</td>
<td>28% with 10 plus years of experience</td>
<td>54% with 4–10 years of experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total # of Teachers</td>
<td>4,976</td>
<td>9,869</td>
<td>8,662</td>
<td>3,714</td>
<td>2,290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student /Teacher Ratio</td>
<td>16 students per teacher</td>
<td>16 students per teacher</td>
<td>16 students per teacher</td>
<td>14 students per teacher</td>
<td>15 students per teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dollars Spent Per Student</td>
<td>$10,388 per student</td>
<td>$8,119 per student</td>
<td>$8,537 per student</td>
<td>$8,664 per student</td>
<td>$10,520 per student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-year Teacher Turnover Rate</td>
<td>12.56%</td>
<td>11.94%</td>
<td>15.21%</td>
<td>12.67%</td>
<td>19.43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-year Percentage Point Change with Teacher Turnover Rate</td>
<td>+4.87%</td>
<td>+2.24%</td>
<td>+2.42%</td>
<td>+0.58%</td>
<td>+2.33%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Teacher turnover with beginning and career teachers.** District One experienced a high percentage point change during 2010–2015 with teacher resignations. To understand the nature of the phenomenon, it is important to know which population is leaving the district at a more frequent percentage. Tables 13 and 14 document the rate of
each population’s departure from District One. A review of the resignations from the past five years’ reveals beginning teachers are experiencing more turnover than their career counterparts.

Table 13

*Begi**ning Teacher Turnover in District One, 2010–2015*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Resignations</th>
<th>Total of Beginning Teachers</th>
<th># of Beginning Teachers Resignations</th>
<th>Turnover as % of All BTs Resignations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>585</td>
<td>446</td>
<td>76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>286</td>
<td>55%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>594</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>157</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>1015</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 14

**Career Teacher Turnover in District One, 2010–2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Total Resignations</th>
<th>Total of Career Status Teachers</th>
<th># of Career Status Teacher Resignations</th>
<th>Turnover as % of All Career Status Teacher Resignations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010–2011</td>
<td>496</td>
<td>4597</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011–2012</td>
<td>577</td>
<td>4703</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>62%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td>640</td>
<td>4581</td>
<td>346</td>
<td>75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013–2014</td>
<td>658</td>
<td>4048</td>
<td>501</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>3951</td>
<td>534</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Teacher resignation reasons.** Chapter I explored the resignation reasons for teachers within North Carolina. During 2010–2015, the most frequent reason for teacher
turnover within the state was due to teachers migrating from one district to another. See Table 2. A review of the resignation reasons for the district reveals a growing pattern in teacher migration away from the district into other North Carolina public school districts. Table 15 shares the results about the top three resignation reasons reported by teachers on their District One resignation forms. See Appendix A for District One’s Resignation Form. The top three reasons for the five-year period are family relocation, to teach in another NC public school, and retirement. Figure 8 charts the growth of each resignation reason per year.

![Figure 8. District One’s Top Three Resignations Reasons, 2010–2015.](image)

**Renewed Focus of Inquiry: Shift from Teacher Turnover to Teacher Migration**

During 2010–2015, 24,788 teachers were employed in District One. Out of the 24,788 teachers, 3,116 (13%) of the teaching workforce has left the district. Of the 3,116 who have left the district, 2,351 were teacher resignations as opposed to position transfers.
or contract terminations. Out of 2,351 resignations, 691 teachers (29%) migrated to work in another North Carolina public school district. Five out of six committee members were employed with District One’s Human Resources Department. As such, they were familiar with the teacher turnover trends within the district. Even so, the numbers of teachers leaving the district to work in other North Carolina public school district sparked concern. As a result of the needs assessment, the teacher turnover issue became narrowly focused on District One’s teacher migration. The committee narrowed the research question to, “Why did teachers leave District One to teach in other North Carolina public schools during 2010–2015?” The main limitation of the needs assessment was the inability to communicate with resigned teachers to ascertain why they left District One to teach in another North Carolina public school. Per the district’s institutional review board policy (IRB), the researcher was not permitted to talk to resigned teachers in this phase of the research study.

**Research Question**

The research question for this qualitative study is “Why did teachers leave District One to teach in other North Carolina public schools during 2010–2015?”

**The Strategic Plan**

**Goals and strategies.** Once the committee reviewed the second phase of data, the committee developed three goals and accompanying turnaround strategies toward improved teacher retention. The goal of the research study is to identify strategies to decrease teacher turnover in District One. Table 15 summarizes the goals and the turnaround strategies.
Table 15

*District One’s Selected Goals & Turnaround Strategies for Improved Teacher Retention*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long Term Goal: To reduce the annual teacher migration rate from District One from the baseline percentage of 14.95%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

| Short Term Goal 1: To understand why teachers are leaving District One for employment in other NC public schools through the use of empathic inquiry | Using empathic inquiry, administer a survey and conduct telephone interviews to capture teacher narratives about their perceived obstacles with District One |
|---|

| | Compare District One 2016 Teacher Working Condition results against District Two–Five to further understand the nature of the problem; and |
|---|

| | Based on resigned teacher narratives from surveys and telephone interviews, communicate recommendations for turnaround strategies to district leaders. |

| Short Term Goal 2: To share research-based practices with principals on intervening strategies for improved teacher retention | Inform principals on the teacher migration phenomenon and its intervening strategies. |
|---|

| Short Term Goal 3: To proactively address critical shortages of teachers through active recruitment and retention activities of teachers in the identified shortage areas. | Conduct a regression analysis to identify critical teaching areas five years out. |
|---|

| | Create a teacher pipeline with teacher education programs to ensure teachers are identified and connected to District One early in their career and view District One as a district of choice |

| | Continue to provide early contracts to teachers of critical shortage areas |

**Theoretical framework of change.** The theoretical framework for the research study is anchored in the need to understand the teacher narrative of resigned teachers.
Using an online survey and phone interviews, the empathic inquiry approach will be utilized to gather data. Empathic inquiry seeks to see an experience from another’s perspective. Through empathic listening, the listener encourages the speaker to fully express their perceptions (Stern, 2003) and the researcher will identify three common factors that impact teacher retention. The identification of root causes will lead to the identification of retention strategies for improved teacher retention. Figure 9 presents the theoretical framework for change with this effort.

**Figure 9.** Theoretical framework for change with District One’s teacher retention.

**Priority selection for immediate implementation.** The immediate priority was to determine why teachers are leaving District One to teach in other NC public school districts (Short Term Goal #1). Using the empathic inquiry approach, the researcher will conduct surveys and telephone interviews with resigned teachers from District One during the 2010–2015 years. Time and effort of the following personnel was required to begin the scope of work: the researcher, High Point University District Chair, consent
from High Point University’s Institutional Review Board, District One’s Human Resources staff, consent from participants to engage in the study. The following technology tools are required to complete this research study:

1. Qualtrics Survey Software—to distribute an online survey to resigned teachers;
2. Phone—to conduct phone interviews;
3. Rev—to record and transcribe teacher interviews; and
4. Saturate—to code teacher narratives from teacher interviews.

To date there is no allocation of funds for this effort as it is a voluntary task. Participants will not be compensated for their participation in the research study.

The qualitative research study will collect and analyze data from (a) participants’ responses to an online survey, and (b) participants’ responses during a recorded telephone interview. Participants will be recruited to participate in the research study and/or a telephone interview via an email distributed through Qualtrics Survey Software. See Appendix I, Consent Email to Participants. Inclusion criteria for participants requires employment with District One as a teacher of record during 2010–2015 and a resignation from the teacher of record position during 2010–2015 from the district. The email will provide participants with information on the nature of the research study. The participants will experience minimal risk with the research study since they are no longer employed within District One and participation is voluntary and may be terminated at any time during the research study. If participants consent to participate, they will take an 11-question survey on Qualtric’s platform. None of the survey questions require a forced answer. The survey responses are anonymous, unless the teacher wishes to participate in
the telephone interview to provide additional narrative about their experience. Their identifying information will be redacted and password protected. This information will not be shared with any other person except the faculty mentor. After the survey administration period closes, the researcher used coding to identify emergent themes. See Appendix J for the survey questions. If the teacher consents to provide additional information after the survey in a telephone interview, a telephone interview will be scheduled and recorded on Rev. Within 48 hours, Rev will provide the researcher with a transcription of the conversation. The researcher will use Saturate to code teacher narratives. See Appendix K for the telephone script. The researcher hopes to receive a 7% response rate (218 survey responses) from 3116 potential resigned teachers with a goal of 15 teacher interviews (0.05% response rate).

The ultimate purpose of the survey and the telephone interview is to identify obstacles for teachers and potential strategies towards increased teacher retention within District One. Moreover, the results of this study will contribute to the generalized knowledge about teacher retention. Prior to the implementation of the research study, High Point University will grant the research consent to perform the aforementioned activities. and/or a telephone interview via an email distributed through Qualtrics Survey Software. See Appendix I for the Consent Email to Participants. Inclusion criteria for participants requires employment with District One as a teacher of record during 2010–2015 and a resignation from the teacher of record position during 2010–2015 from the district. The email will provide participants with information on the nature of the research study. The participants will experience minimal risk with the research study since they are no longer employed within District One and participation is voluntary and
may be terminated at any time during the research study. If participants consent to participate, they will take an 11-question survey on Qualtric’s platform. None of the survey questions require a forced answer. The survey responses are anonymous, unless the teacher wishes to participate in the telephone interview to provide additional narrative about their experience. Their identifying information will be redacted and password protected. This information will not be shared with any other person except the faculty mentor. After the survey administration period closes, the researcher will use SPSS to analyze the data. See Appendix J for the survey questions. If the teacher consents to provide additional information after the survey in a telephone interview, a telephone interview will be scheduled and recorded on Rev. Within 48 hours, Rev will provide the researcher with a transcription of the conversation. The researcher will use Saturate to code teacher narratives. See Appendix K for the telephone script. The researcher hopes to receive a 7% response rate (218 survey responses) from 3116 potential resigned teachers with a goal of 15 teacher interviews (0.05% response rate).

The ultimate purpose of the survey and the telephone interview is to identify obstacles for teachers and potential strategies towards increased teacher retention within District One. Moreover, the results of this study will contribute to the generalized knowledge about teacher retention. Prior to the implementation of the research study, High Point University will grant the research consent to perform the aforementioned activities. The qualitative research study will collect and analyze data from (1) participants’ responses to an online survey and (2) participants’ responses during a recorded telephone interview. Participants will be recruited to participate in the research study. Table 16 describes the timeline for this priority turnaround strategy.
Table 16

*Priority Plan for Improved Teacher Retention in District One*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>Conducting Surveys and Telephone Interviews with Resigned Teachers</td>
<td>IRB Approval from High Point University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Qualtrics Rev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2016</td>
<td>Conducting Surveys and Telephone Interviews with Resigned Teachers</td>
<td>Qualtrics Rev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Survey Administration ends on August 31st</td>
<td>Rev</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| September 2016 | Begin data entry and analysis  
• Coding                               | Qualtrics Rev and Saturate               |
| Mid-October 2016 | Share recommendations for improved teacher retention  
with District One          |                                          |

By mid-October 2016, the researcher will provide insights into the reasons why teachers have migrated from District One to other North Carolina public schools and also provide suggestions from resigned teachers on how to increase teacher retention with its current workforce. See Table 17 for the logic model for this research study.
Table 17

*Logic Model for Priority Implementation of the Strategic Plan for Improved Teacher Retention*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Implementation Outcome</th>
<th>Impact Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Staff</td>
<td>Conduct online surveys with teachers who have resigned from 2010 to 2015</td>
<td>Thirty percent teacher participation in online survey</td>
<td>Identification of three common factors which lead to teacher attrition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Human Resource Resignations Sheets &amp; Data</td>
<td>Conduct telephone interviews with teachers who have resigned from 2010 to 2015</td>
<td>Fifteen phone interviews with teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Technology Resources (Qualtrics, Rev, Saturate)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Reflections**

Serving as the researcher of this effort has provided many leadership lessons. Leading a change effort comes with deliberation and distributive leadership. It requires transparency, a commitment to understand, and the ability to motivate a team to follow the vision. Since the strategic planning team’s inception, the team was high functioning due to the fact that there were established positive working relationships before the existence of the strategic planning committee. As Covey and Merrill (2006) noted, trust accelerates progress. The effect of the team’s established positive working relationship smoothed the way for the group’s ability to discuss our shared visions, core concepts and beliefs, and ultimately impacted the ability to make shared decisions. Due to the positive working relationships and trust among the strategic planning team members, communication during the team meetings was effective with shared opportunities for dialogue with members honoring one another’s equity of voice. Discussions about
teacher turnover occurred during formal and informal settings. When members could not attend the meetings, the agenda, minutes, and documents were placed on a wiki exclusively for the team review. This strategy proved helpful in serving as an information clearinghouse when members could not attend. Upon the conclusion of the work together on this effort, strategic planning team members were surveyed about their participation. Appendix L, Strategic Planning Team Survey Responses, provides insights into four of the six team members’ perceptions about the experience. Table 18 represents entries from the researcher’s leadership journal and highlights some of the researcher’s thoughts while working with the strategic planning team.

Table 18

Researcher’s Leadership Journal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2015</td>
<td>At the onset of the formation of the Strategic Planning Team, I am keenly aware that all invited team members are busy within their own work. Therefore, in scheduling the first meeting, I used the resource of “Doodle” to manage its scheduling. Going forward, I believe it is paramount for me to continue to remain organized and to reduce any inefficiency that will allow team members to come ready to discuss teacher turnover in District One.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Competency: Organizational ability*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Entry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November 2015</td>
<td>This month had a heavy emphasis on communication. The first meeting of the Strategic Planning team required me to effectively present the scope of work to the Strategic Planning Team. Clear communication at the onset ensured full understanding and agreement from each team member. By doing so, it paved the way to begin our efforts to achieve district objectives with teacher turnover.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Competency: Communication*
Table 18

Cont.

| December 2015 - February 2016 | Serving as a leader of change comes with much collaboration, data analysis, and the ability to understand “systems thinking.” During December through January, I had two meetings with stakeholders in an attempt to elicit a change within a public school district and private university settings. While both systems are different in its compositions and concerns, both required pre-planning, understanding of data, and an understanding of stakeholders’ needs. By taking time to do the preliminary work, both meetings established a positive tone for future meetings and shared interest in the work. As a district leader, I think this is an important skill for being successful in navigating micro political and external leadership. |
| Competency: Systems Thinking |

| March 2016 | This month had me thinking about the teacher problem from a variety of levels: national, state, and district. Analyzing data on the teacher turnover rates during the National Association for Alternative Certification conference, reviewing North Carolina’s newly released teacher results, and examining district trends helped me to understand that this issue is not unique to North Carolina. Instead, the issue gives birth to claims of teacher shortages and the lack of public support teachers. The teacher issue is a high problem of practice ripe for intervention on many levels. I hope our locally proposed solutions may serve as a viable solution for the district. |
| Competency: Systems Thinking |

Due to the survey’s administration beginning in the summer months, there is limited concern that teachers may not check their emails as readily as during the school year. The researcher hopes to receive a 7% response rate with the online survey with a goal of 15 teacher interviews.
Methodology

Chapter II provided information on the strategic planning process focused on the exploration of teacher migration in District One. Gaining a better understanding of the phenomenon would allow district leaders to proceed from a more informed perspective on their teacher retention efforts. Due to the need to develop a deep understanding of the perceptions held by migrated teachers, qualitative methodology was used to interpret and understand the phenomenology. In turn, Chapter Three describes the study’s research methodology and includes the following discussions: (a) research question, (b) research design, (c) setting for the study, (d) research sample, (e) instrumentation, (f) procedures of data collection, (g) significant findings of the study, and (h) limitations of the study.

Restatement of the Research Question

The research study sought to answer the question, “Why did teachers leave District One to teach in other North Carolina public schools during 2010–2015? In seeking to understand the phenomenon, teacher narrative was explored. While there are a variety of epistemologies related to teacher turnover, the exploration of teacher migration is minimal in comparison. To fully capture the nuances of teacher migration, the conceptual framework identified two categories of required information: perceptual and demographic. The perceptual information provides insight into the attitudes and beliefs about a teacher’s migration. The demographic information allows the researcher to determine if one group more susceptible to migrate. Table 19 provides an overview of information needed within the research study. Both perceptual and demographic
information combined provided insight on the causations of teacher migration in District One.

Table 19

*Overview of Information Needed for Teacher Migration Phenomenology*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Information</th>
<th>Research Data Need</th>
<th>Method Used to Obtain Data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceptual</td>
<td>Participants’ explanation of their experiences as it related to their migration</td>
<td>Online Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Semi-structured Telephone Interviews</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Document Review</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographic</td>
<td>Descriptive information regarding participants such as age, years of experience,</td>
<td>Online Survey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ethnicity, gender, school, and content taught</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Document Review</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Research Design**

The central phenomenon of this study is the teacher migration from District One to other North Carolina public school districts. To answer the questions surrounding the migration, a research approach which allowed the exploration of variables was required. Quantitative research seeks to describe a trend with explanations on how variables affect one another (Creswell, 2012). In quantitative research, the researcher relies on the mathematical analysis of data. As such, it was the researcher’s belief that quantitative methods were unlikely to elicit the data needed to address the research purposes.

In contrast, qualitative research seeks to extract and interpret the meaning of experience (Merriam, 2009). Creswell (2012) wrote, “Qualitative research is best suited
to address a research problem in which you do not know the variables and need to explore” (p. 16). Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) define qualitative methodology as the process of discovering and interpreting the meaning of experience. As a result of the exploratory nature of this study, qualitative methodology was chosen primarily for its suitability with seeking a deep understanding from the perspective of participants.

**Action research.** Within the framework of qualitative methodology, the action research genre connected well with the focus of the strategic plan for teacher retention. Action research is the systematic, collaborative, and democratic orientation toward inquiry that seeks effective solutions to complex problems that people confront in an organization (Mertler, 2012). Its primary purpose is to improve the practice of education (Creswell, 2012). The goal of action research is to open new communicative spaces to increase the effectiveness of their work (Reason & Bradbury, 2008). Action researchers engage others in a dynamic model of inquiry to identify a problem and a solution. Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) stated, “This approach is based on the assumption that all stakeholders—those who lives are affected by the problem under study—should be involved in the research process, in order to inform understanding, and subsequent action” (p. 34). Practical action research was implemented to inform the epistemology of teacher migration. This genre of educational research is cyclical because researchers cycle back and forth between data collection, focus, analysis, and interpretation (Mills, 2011). Figure 10 illustrates this spiraling of phases in action research.
Survey research. While the greater work of the strategic plan connected well with the action research philosophy, the researcher’s priority implementation goal aligned with the tenets of survey research. Survey research is defined as “the collection of information from a sample of individuals through their responses to questions” (Check & Schutt, 2012, p. 160). It is used to describe trends and uncover beliefs and attitudes of individuals (Creswell, 2012). It allows for a variety of methods to recruit participants and data collection. Survey questions were asked in a semi-structured telephone interview and in an online survey to allow the opportunity to ask sensitive questions. The following list summarizes the specific steps used to carry out the research. Detailed discussion of each step will be explored thereafter.
1. Before the actual collection of data, a literature review was conducted to study the contributions of other researchers on teacher migration.

2. IRB approval was received on July 7, 2016 following the proposal defense. This allowed the researcher to proceed with research while ensuring adherence to standards within the university and within the research study.

3. Potential research participants were contacted via email. The email contained a survey link. The survey was designed to collect demographic and perceptual data.

4. To discover the beliefs and attitudes of teachers who migrated from District One, the researcher administered a cross-sectional survey research and qualitative survey interviews with participants. The survey provided participants with an opportunity to participate in a confidential, semi-structured telephone interview.

5. Semi-structured telephone interviews were conducted with participants. Interviews were recorded.

6. The researcher adhered to semi-structured telephone interview survey design by recording answers supplied by the participant in the study. Interviews were transcribed by a third party.

7. Survey responses and interview transcripts were coded by the researcher.

8. Applying cross-sectional survey design, the researcher collected data at one point in time and compared two educational groups.
**Reduction of risks and ethical considerations.** The researcher conducted the inquiry in a manner that respected the confidentiality and care of the participants. Participation was consent-based and options to withdraw from the study were provided during multiple points of the research. To minimize risks to participants, the researcher did not overstate the benefits of participating nor guarantee any benefits to the participants. Survey responses and interview transcripts concealed the participant’s names. To minimize researcher subjectivity and bias, the researcher redacted participant’s names during the coding process to remove association with any individual.

Furthermore, results were reported in a manner that did not disclose the district’s nor the individual’s identity. Procedural fidelity was maintained throughout the duration of the study. Figure 11 represents the phases of qualitative research entailed in this phenomenon study. Table 20 summarizes efforts to minimize risks to participants.

![Figure 11. Teacher Migration Research Study Design.](image-url)
Table 20

*Reductions of Risks & Ethical Considerations to Participants in Teacher Migration Study*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Risk</th>
<th>Description of Risk</th>
<th>Mediating Efforts by Researcher</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical Harm</td>
<td>Exposure to Minor Pain</td>
<td>Physical harm was not required within the scope of the teacher migration study. No physical harm occurred whatsoever during the research study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deception</td>
<td>Participants are intentionally misled about the nature of the experiment</td>
<td>Participants were provided information in writing about the research, along with High Point University’s IRB contact and the dissertation chair’s contact information to inquire about the validity of the study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Privacy</td>
<td>Covert observations that are considered private by the participant</td>
<td>Privacy was required and upheld within the teacher migration study. No observations were conducted within the research study.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of Confidentiality</td>
<td>Data confidentiality has been breached</td>
<td>Confidentiality was required within the scope of the teacher migration study. No data breaches occurred.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychological Harm</td>
<td>Temporary anxiety or distress during the survey or telephone interview</td>
<td>Researcher reminded participants that their participation was optional and they did not have to answer any question.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social and Economic Harm</td>
<td>Loss of employment as a result of participation within the research study</td>
<td>Privacy was required and upheld within the teacher migration study. No social and economic harm was reported as a result of participation within the study.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Setting for the Study

**North Carolina.** The research study examines teacher migration in public school districts in North Carolina. Understanding unique characteristics provides context around the teacher migration phenomenology. North Carolina is bordered by South Carolina, Georgia, Tennessee, Virginia, and the Atlantic Ocean. It is in the southern region of the United States of America. North Carolina consists of three main geographic regions: the Atlantic coastal plain, the central Piedmont region, and the Mountain region in the west. District One is located in the central piedmont region within North Carolina. The state is the largest sweet potato grower in the nation and the second to largest producer of Christmas trees (North Carolina, 2016).

North Carolina’s changing demographics is equivalent to the changes within the nation. 9.9 million reside in North Carolina with 23% being younger than 18 and 14% over 65 (North Carolina, 2016). According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010), North Carolina’s racial composition is ever-evolving in comparison from 1990, 2000, and 2010 reports. Table 21 shows the nature of the changes since 1990. As a result of the changing demographics, the languages spoken within North Carolina has also transitioned. Table 22 presents the top 15 languages within the state.

North Carolina has 115 public school districts (NEA, 2016). The U.S. average public school teacher salary for 2014–2015 was $57,420 (NEA, 2016). In North Carolina, the average teacher salary in 2014–2015 was $47,985. North Carolina teachers experienced a salary decline of 10.2% which was attributed to inflation (NEA, 2016). As a result, North Carolina is one of 35 states who experienced declines in average teacher
salaries over the past decade (NEA, 2016). Table 23 presents states with the highest average teacher salary declines.

Table 21

North Carolina’s Racial Composition, 1990–2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Racial Composition</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2000</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>75.6%</td>
<td>72.1%</td>
<td>68.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>22.0%</td>
<td>21.6%</td>
<td>21.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>1.4%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Native</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pacific Islander</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other race</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>4.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two or more races</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1.3%</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Table 22

North Carolina’s Top 15 Non–English Languages, 2010

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Percentage of population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>6.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>0.32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>0.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese (including Mandarin)</td>
<td>0.27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>0.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Korean</td>
<td>0.16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>0.12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gujarati, Russian, and Hmong (tied)</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian and Japanese (tied)</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cherokee</td>
<td>0.01%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 23

States with the Highest Decline in Average Teacher Salaries, 2014–2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percentage of Decline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Illinois</td>
<td>-13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indiana</td>
<td>-11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mississippi</td>
<td>-10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Carolina</td>
<td>-10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Idaho</td>
<td>-9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arkansas</td>
<td>-9.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colorado</td>
<td>-7.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>-7.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>-7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Washington</td>
<td>-6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Georgia</td>
<td>-6.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


District One. District One is one of North Carolina’s 115 public school districts. It is located in central piedmont region of North Carolina. The district serves 11 cities and towns (District One Annual Report, 2015). The county has over 512,219 residents with an average income of $45,431 (District One Annual Report, 2015). 18.1% of its residents lives below the poverty (District One Annual Report, 2015).

District One’s mission is to ensure their students will graduate as responsible citizens prepared to succeed in higher education or in the career of their choice. During 2010–2015, the district was led by a non-partisan board. The board evaluates the district’s achievement and monitors its progress. The board works in conjunction with the superintendent to achieve the district’s mission. The superintendent was a lawyer who had experienced success with a neighboring public school district. He was also the first black superintendent in District One. During their leadership, the district received
the National District of Character Award. Additionally, the district became the first “Say Yes to Education” community in North Carolina, first outside of the Northeast, and only the third in the U.S (District One Annual Report, 2015). As a result of the district’s participation, eligible students may receive free college tuition to attend two- and four-year colleges across North Carolina and around the nation through scholarships funded locally (District One Annual Report, 2015). Additional district demographic information is shared in Table 24.

Table 24

*District One’s Demographic Information, 2015*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Schools</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Elementary Schools</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Middle Schools</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of High Schools</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Alternative Schools</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Elementary Teachers</td>
<td>2,374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Teacher Assistants</td>
<td>1,138</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Secondary Teachers</td>
<td>1,179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Other Teachers</td>
<td>1,243</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Employees</td>
<td>10,105</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Black Students</td>
<td>29,400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of White Students</td>
<td>24,660</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Hispanic Students</td>
<td>10,315</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Asian Students</td>
<td>4,265</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Multi-Race Students</td>
<td>2,828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Native American Students</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Number of Pacific Islander</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Poverty Level</td>
<td>67%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student Languages Spoken</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note.* Adapted from District One Annual Report (2015).
**Consent and access.** The exploratory nature of the research study was to investigate the attitudes of teachers who resigned and migrated from District One. Due to the fact that the teachers were no longer employed with District One, consent nor access was required from District One. See Appendix D–District One’s Research Summary Approval and IRB Exemption. Even so, the researcher provided regular updates to the district, by way of the strategic planning team, on the status of the research study, as a courtesy to the district. See Appendix O–Update to Strategic Planning Team.

**Research Sample**

The overall target population of this study were District One’s resigned teachers during 2010–2015. Criterion sampling was used with the selection of target participants. Criterion sampling involves selecting participants that meet a predetermined criterion of importance (Patton, 2001, p. 238). It works well when all the individuals studied represents people who have experienced the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2012, p.104). During 2010–2015, District One employed 24,788 teachers. Within the same period, 2,351 teachers resigned District One. For the online survey, the criteria for selection of participants were as follows:

- Teachers who were employed with District One during 2010–2015; and
- Teachers who submitted a resignation from District One during 2010–2015.

For the semi-structured telephone interviews, the criteria slightly changed. Out of the 2,351 teachers, 691 (29.4%) teachers left to work in another North Carolina public school. The criterion sampling focused on the teacher’s migration from District One in 2010–2015 to another North Carolina public school. With this in mind, the target population for the teacher migration study were the 691 teachers who migrated to another
North Carolina public school in 2010–2015. More specifically, the criteria for selection of participants were as follows:

- Teachers who were employed with District One during 2010–2015;
- Teachers who submitted a resignation from District One during 2010–2015;
- After resigning from District One, teachers were employed with another North Carolina public school district.

**Online survey participant demographics.** Three hundred forty-one resigned teachers participated in the survey. Figure 12 displays participant gender with this data collection method. Figure 13 displays participants’ ethnicity in the teacher migration study. Figure 14 shows participant’s teaching experience level at the time of resignation. Figure 15 presents participants’ school status at the time of resignation.

*Figure 12. Online survey participants’ demographics: Gender.*
Figure 13. Online survey participants’ demographics: Ethnicity.

Figure 14. Online survey participants’ teaching level at the time of resignation.
Figure 15. Online survey participants’ school status at time of resignation.

Semi-structured interview participant demographics. Thirty migrating teachers participated in the semi-structured interviews. Figure 16 displays participants’ gender in this data collection method. Figure 17 displays the semi-structured interview participants’ ethnicity. Figure 18 shows participant’s teaching experience level at the time of resignation. Figure 19 presents semi-structured interview participant’s school status at the time of resignation.
Figure 16. Semi-structured interview participants’ demographics: Gender.

Figure 17. Semi-structured interview participants’ demographics: Ethnicity.
Figure 18. Semi-structured interview participants’ demographics: Teaching level at the time of resignation.

Figure 19. Semi-structured interview participants’ demographics: School status at the time of resignation.
**Participant confidentiality.** Participant’s confidentiality was a main priority throughout all phases of the research study, particularly since the study was connected to participant’s professional experiences. While there were minimal risks presented to participants, the following preventative precautions were employed throughout the entire study:

- Informed consent was provided during all phases of data collection;
- Passwords to the survey site were not shared;
- Portable equipment such as USB drives were stored in an appropriately access limited location;
- Computer equipment and USB drivers were not left unattended;
- Strong authentication passwords were required for all computer systems; and
- All sensitive data were kept secure from unauthorized access.

During the life of this research study, there were no data breaches. Participant information was kept secure and confidential. Pursuant to High Point University’s IRB requirements, all data will be kept secure for three years (2020). See Appendix R for the IRB Approval Form.

**Instrumentation**

The use of multiple methods is required to achieve triangulation and saturation within the research study. By doing so, the study will be able to provide corroborative evidence of the data obtained (Creswell, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The teacher migration study utilized three instruments to explore the teacher migration phenomenon: document review, online surveys, and semi-structured telephone interview. Each
instrument was carefully selected to ensure its compatibility with the research purpose. A description of each instrument is provided below.

**Document review.** Document review is related to the analysis of documents for meaning in relation to a specific phenomenon (Lunenburg & Irby, 2008, p. 94). It required data examination and interpretation in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007). For the purpose of this research study, the resignation reasons and demographics of resigned teachers during 2010–2015 were examined. The documentation was ultimately retrieved from North Carolina’s Human Resource Management Software listing. The information provided to North Carolina Department of Public Instruction was derived from the teacher’s resignation form. See Appendix A for District One’s Resignation Form.

**Online survey.** Having identified the research purpose and the participants, the next step was to capture the attitudes and beliefs of the migrated teachers. Since a validated, online survey instrument had not been developed, the need arose to devise an operational measure of teacher perceptions. The benefit of an online qualitative survey was that it allowed the researcher to sample participants that would otherwise be difficult to contact (Reppel, Gruber, Szmigin, & Voss, 2007). Participants who spend a lot of their free time online may not be willing to have personal face-to-face interviews with researchers but may be interested in an online survey (Reppel et al., 2007). Miller and Dickson (2001) support this view by saying that online qualitative research is appropriate “when the target population is small, very specialized in its skills, and difficult to find and recruit” (p. 146). According to Joinson (2001), respondents reveal more personal
information in online communication due to anonymity and higher levels of private self-awareness. Similarly, Hanna, Weinberg, Rajiv, and Berger (2005) found that participants are more likely to express their innermost feelings in an online environment than during traditional interviews.

The construction of the online survey began by drafting questions which aligned with the research need to gather demographic and perceptual data, connected to teacher dissatisfaction concepts as identified in the literature review, and from suggesting from practicing school administrators. The items were screened for ambiguity, wording, and content overlap. As a result of this initial work with the instrument, an 11-item survey was developed. Five of the survey items were multiple choice and required participants to provide demographic information. Six of the survey items were open-ended to allow participants to expand as much or as little on their experiences, perceptions, and beliefs regarding their teacher migration. None of the online survey questions required an answer to proceed with the next survey item. The 11 survey items are presented below. See Appendix L for the full view of the survey.

1. What is your gender?
2. What is your ethnicity?
3. What was your age when you submitted your resignation with District One?
4. What was your teaching status when you submitted your resignation with District One?
5. During your resignation year, was your school designated as a Title I school?
6. During your resignation year, what did you teach?
7. What was your reason for leaving District One?
8. Based on your experience, how can District One improve teacher satisfaction?

9. Did you leave District One to work in another North Carolina public school district? If yes, please write the name of the district below.

10. If you left District One to work in another North Carolina public school district, what attracted you to that district?

11. If you left District One to work in another North Carolina public school district during 2010–2015 and are willing to participate in a short telephone interview, please note your name and phone number. Your responses will remain confidential.

**Semi-structured telephone interviews.** If a participant agreed to do participate in the semi-structured telephone interview, they were asked to provide their name and phone number. Soon thereafter, a semi-structured, telephone interview was scheduled. Semi-structured interviews are a form of qualitative interview. According to Bernard (1988), it is best used when researchers will not get more than one opportunity to interview a participant. Semi-structured interviews provide a clear set of instructions for the interviewer and can provide reliable, comparable qualitative data (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Moreover, the inclusion of open-ended questions provided the opportunity for identifying new ways of seeing and understanding the subject at hand (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). See Appendix K for a Sample Telephone Interview Transcript.

The focus of the interview was to explore the participant’s point of view. Using open-ended questions and empathic listening, the researcher established a rapport with the participant and asked questions when the researcher felt it was appropriate to ask
them. The five questions asked were the perceptual questions from the interview. The researcher asked the five prepared questions and asked questions that arose from the nature of the conversation. As such, the wording of questions was not necessarily the same for all respondents. The five telephone interview questions are presented below. See Appendix M for the telephone interview script for the full telephone script.

1. What were your reasons for leaving District One?
2. What could District One have done to encourage you to remain in the district?
3. What was your primary reason for selecting the North Carolina public school district that you worked in after District One?
4. What district did you transfer to?
5. When you compare both districts, what teacher satisfaction strategies can District One learn from the district you transferred to?

Validity and reliability. The psychometric adequacy of the research study greatly depended on the ability to consistently measure both the demographics and perceptions of migrating teachers. Survey items for both the online survey and the telephone interview were chosen to support the research purpose. By doing so, content validity was tightly aligned to the research’s exploratory needs regarding the participant’s demographics and perceptions. According to Anastasi and Urbina (1997), the careful selection of survey items assures content validity. Foxcroft, Paterson, le Roux, and Herbst (2004) note that by piloting the survey’s selection of items the content validity of a survey can be improved (p. 49). The online survey was piloted by 10 teachers who left the public school district after 2015. As a result, two questions which were not connected to the participant’s demographics nor perceptions were removed from the survey.
Inter-rater reliability refers to the extent to which the way information being collected is in a consistent manner (Keyton et al., 2004). A systematic coding process was used by a single coder to ensure consistency throughout data collection and analysis. This process allowed the data to be used as a reliable source of information as opposed to being thrown out (Krippendorf, 2004). Due to the large amount of data which required coding, the researcher spent a month and half on the coding of data to avoid fatigue and/or the possibility of coding errors (Keyton et al., 2004).

Data Collection

Phase I: Performing document reviews. The first phase was dedicated to document review. For both the online survey and the semi-structured interviews, the first step involved receiving the list of resigned employees from District One’s Human Resources Department. This list included teacher names, email addresses, gender, race, content taught, school placement, resignation reasons and whether or not they were employed as a teacher in another public school district in North Carolina. The list was generated from North Carolina Department of Public Instruction’s Human Resource Management System (HRMS). HRMS is a combination of systems and processes that connect human resource management and information technology through HR software. The HRMS list identified teachers who experienced turnover within their position. The review provided insight into demographics of resigning teachers, why they left, and in some cases what district they were employed in after leaving District One.

Phase II: Administering the online survey. The second phase was dedicated to administering the online survey. Once the email addresses of resigned teachers were obtained, the survey was entered into Qualtrics. The online survey was created and field
tested with ten resigned teachers prior to the data collection process. The 11-item survey was input into Qualtrics. Qualtrics is an online survey platform (https://www.qualtrics.com) which allows researchers to conduct research and collaborate. The survey was password protected with only the researcher and the dissertation chair having access to the information. Once the survey was created in Qualtrics, the potential participant email addresses were imported into Qualtrics. On August 15, 2016 at 8 AM, the survey was sent to 2,828 potential participants. See Appendix J for the Survey Invitation via Email.

By noon of August 15th, 2016, the researcher received several responses indicating that they had not “resigned” from their position. While they experienced turnover, it was considered a resignation. This turnover was due to a position transfer, retirement, an interim contract end, failure to obtain a license, or a non-renewal. In some cases, teachers had left their position and had returned back to work in District One. This required the researcher to perform a data scrub and contact each employee who was listed on the HRMS “teacher turnover” list to explain why they were not eligible to participate in the survey. Out of the 2,828 potential participants, 765 were not eligible to participate in the survey because they did not resign from the district. Out of The researcher made a second email contact during the evening on August 15th to the non-eligible 765 teachers explaining why they were not able to participate in the survey. See Appendix P–Email to Non-Eligible Survey Participants.

The online survey was live for two weeks from August 15, 2016 until August 30, 2016. During this time, the researcher monitored its progress for the rate of participation. Out of the eligible 2,351 teachers, 2,008 teachers had active email addresses. Thus, out
of 2,008 teachers who were invited to participate, 341 responses were received resulting in a 17% response rate for the online survey alone. External surveys typically receive a 15% response rate (Fryrear, 2015; Kent & Lee, 1999; C. Smith, 1997; Comley, 1997; Tse et al., 1995). Figure 20 illustrates the daily rate of participation.

![Figure 20. Survey rate of participation.](image)

**Phase III: Conducting semi-structured interviews.** The third phase was dedicated to hosting semi-structured interviews with migrating teachers. Within the online survey, participants who had migrated from the district to work in another North Carolina public school had the opportunity to consent to a telephone interview. Even so, the researcher wanted to ensure the opportunity to connect with migrating teachers. Out of the total population of 691 migrating teachers, only 668 had active email addresses. Each of the 668 teachers were sent a second email inviting them to participate in a telephone interview on September 4, 2016. See Appendix Q for the Email Invitation to Migrating Teachers. Out of the 668 migrating teachers, 30 participated in the semi-
structured interviews during August 31, 2016–September 27, 2016. As a result, the sample size for the semi-structured interview was 4.5% of the overall total population. Bryman (2012) states that it is impossible to specify the number of qualitative interviews necessary to research saturation. Adler and Adler (1987) advise graduate students to sample 30 participants as the mean.

Using an empathic inquiry approach, the researcher conducted 30 semi-structured interviews. Each of the interviews were recorded with an app called Rev (www.rev.com). This password-protected transcription service provided the venue for recording and uploading the telephone interviews for transcriptions. Within 24 hours, Rev provided a typed transcription of each of 30 interviews. See Appendix K for the Sample Telephone Interview Transcript. Having the interview in a typed format was critical for its subsequent coding and identification of themes and trends among participants. The transcriptions and recording were password protected and did not experience a security breach.

**Phase IV: Coding the data.** The fourth phase was dedicated to coding the data. Survey responses from Qualtrics, along with the transcribed interviews, were placed into an app called Saturate (http://www.saturateapp.com). Saturate is a qualitative analysis online tool that allows for collaboration in coding. The inputs were password protected. Access to the site was given to the researcher and members of the researcher’s dissertation committee.

Once both the survey responses and interview transcriptions were loaded into Saturate, the researcher began to perform causation coding. Munton, Silvester, Stratton, and Hanks (1999) stated the goal of causation coding is to locate from qualitative data,
such as interview transcripts and written survey responses, the mental model participants held about their migration from District One (pp. 5–6). Munton et al. (1999) identifies three elements of causation as: the cause, the outcome, and the link between the cause and the outcome (p. 9). Causation coding seeks combinations of antecedent and mediating variables that lead toward certain pathways (Saldana, 2013, p. 260). As such, it is appropriate for discerning motives and belief systems regarding phenomena (Saldana, 2013, p. 165).

The researcher performed first and second cycling of causation coding from September 27, 2016 until November 6, 2016 using the interpretivism approach. Interpretivism is a qualitative research method that seeks to understand the world through directly experiencing the phenomena from the participant’s perspective (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Within the first cycle of causation coding, the researcher identified high frequency codes among the survey responses and the telephone interviews. A code is a researcher-generated word or short phrase that symbolically captures a piece of data; 1,297 codes were identified in the first cycle of coding.

Within the first cycle of coding, codes were then merged into categories. Codes were systematically linked to categories to explain and consolidate meaning. In essence, categories represent clusters of coded data. From the 1297 codes, two prominent categories evolved regarding the reasons for resignations: leadership concerns and working conditions concerns.

Upon the identification of categories, the researcher entered into the second cycle of coding. In the second cycle of coding, the researcher attempted to link seemingly unrelated facts logically to develop a coherent meta-synthesis of the data (Morse, 1994, p.
5). In short, theming required the researcher to identify phrases and sentences that describe subtle processes experienced by the participants. The researcher sought statements which explained causes and explanations about resignations. The correct identification of themes required the passing of the touch test. The touch test required themes to be abstract constructs as opposed to a tangible item that one can physically touch (Richards & Morse, 2007, p. 157). The passing of the touch test requires themes to be higher ordered, abstract concepts for research considerations. This ensures the research focus is not centered around a specific individual. The results of the theming are found in the following section. Figure 21 describes the process for causation coding.

Figure 21. Causation coding process.

To reduce the likelihood of misinterpretation, this present study employed three methods of data collection for triangulation of results. Document review, online surveys, and semi-structured telephone interviews provided multiple perceptions to clarify meaning. An advantage of survey research is that it is easily administered and managed (Fowler, 1993). Alternatively, surveys can be of limited value for examining
complicated relationships (Saldana, 2013, p. 121). To address this limitation, open-ended questions were used to tap into personal experiences to highlight participants’ perceptions. Figure 22 displays the data collection phases.

Figure 22. Data collection process.

**Significant Findings of the Study**

The qualitative research study focused on the exploration of the reasons for teachers migrating from District One to another North Carolina public school district during 2010–2015. The intended outcome of the study was to identify three factors within District One which contributed to teacher migration. The research study employed three data collection methods: the administration of an online survey, conducting semi-structured interviews with migrating teachers, and performing document reviews as previously described. As a result of the data collection methods, six findings were identified.
The first data collection method performed was a document review. The intended purpose was to identify trends in the self-reported resignations reasons from migrating teachers. Chapter Two explored resignations reasons for teacher turnover overall in District One. See Table 15. The top three reasons for teacher turnover in District One were to teach in another NC Public School; retirement; and relocation (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2015). To examine the reasons for teacher turnover cited by migrating teachers in District One, the researcher performed a review of resignation reasons cited. The data source for this review was District One’s HRMS listing of resignations. A resigning teacher has 15 choices for self-reporting the reason for their resignation. See Appendix A for District One’s Resignation Form. The codes coincide with North Carolina Department of Public Instruction’s resignation codes. See Table 2 for North Carolina Department of Public Instruction’s Teacher Turnover by Reason Categories. A teacher may only select one resignation reason code.

**Finding One.** During 2010–2015, out of 15 possible reasons for resignations on District One’s resignation sheet, the four most commonly cited reasons for the 691 migrated teachers were: to teach in another North Carolina public school; relocation; other reasons; and interim contract ending. While each teacher in this sample population ultimately ended up in another teaching assignment in another North Carolina public school district following District One, the majority of them did not indicate the reason for their migration on their resignation form. As such, relocation is the second leading resignation reason cited by migrating teachers. Examples of this sentiment is shared below.

Relocation and unsupported administrative staffs. School seemed to be run by the parents rather than the administrative staffs. Parents had more voice over what
teachers can and cannot do when I was there which hindered the complete delivery my lessons.

Administration actions which led to being targeted which was unprofessional and not acceptable. Case in point, for almost a year I worked not knowing I was undergoing an allergic reaction to medicine prescribed by my doctor. I finally succumb to the reaction and was hospitalized for 10 days in an acute condition. This was during Spring Break. I informed them and they pretended the contrary. When I came back, administrative officials said my teaching skills were not unacceptable. I was forced to sign documents that have essentially Red Marked me. I am a very (Highly Qualified) teacher with multiple degrees, multiple teaching levels (6-12). When I tried to get hired in this County, I was told unofficially that I am a Red Dot. Several, 10 to be exact experienced the same. Do we are all teaching in other counties, or states. I sold my home, left a great job to come here with the promise of relocation funding. It never happened. I was recruited to come here. It was a case of poor judgement on my part. The total Administrative staff from that school were demoted, forced to retire or transferred. So, poor management, judgement, unfairly evaluated, no real teacher support, favoritism, and subsequently losing an otherwise good school save its operating team. After trying several times to get a teaching position in District One, I gave up. I have never in my teaching career been treated so unprofessionally. It is all very disappointing.

This finding is explored in detail in Table 25.

Table 25

*Migrated Teachers’ Resignation Reasons, 2010–2015*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>First Reason</th>
<th>Second Reason</th>
<th>Third Reason</th>
<th>Fourth Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>62% (48/77)</td>
<td>10% (8/77)</td>
<td>10% (8/77)</td>
<td>9% (7/77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49% (48/98)</td>
<td>14% (14/98)</td>
<td>14% (14/98)</td>
<td>8% (8/98)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 25

Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>First Reason</th>
<th>Second Reason</th>
<th>Third Reason</th>
<th>Fourth Reason</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012–2013</td>
<td>To teach in another North Carolina Public School District</td>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>Family Relocation</td>
<td>Interim Contract Ended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>66% (108/163)</td>
<td>12% (19/163)</td>
<td>12% (19/163)</td>
<td>5% (8/163)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>57% (92/162)</td>
<td>11% (18/162)</td>
<td>9% (15/162)</td>
<td>7% (12/162)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014–2015</td>
<td>To teach in another North Carolina Public School District</td>
<td>Family Relocation</td>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>Interim Contracted Ended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>54% (104/191)</td>
<td>13% (24/191)</td>
<td>11% (21/191)</td>
<td>6% (11/191)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Finding Two. The three populations which comprised the teacher turnover population within this research study include the 30 migrated teachers of District One, resigned teachers of District One, and resigned teachers of North Carolina. Figure 23 illustrates the relationships within the three populations. Based on the teachers’ self-reported resignation reasons on the resignation sheet, during 2010–2015, each of the three teaching populations cited “other reasons” as one of the top four reasons for leaving the district. For the purposes of this data collection method within the research study, three teaching population resignation trends are explored.
Overall, the resignation reasons provided by migrating teachers are congruent with the reasons provided by teachers leaving the district and North Carolina during that time frame, particularly as it relates to teaching elsewhere, relocation, and citing resigning for other reasons. See Table 2 and Table 25 to revisit the resignations reasons provided to the district and the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, respectively.

On the other hand, there are two exceptions that interrupt the congruency within the three teaching population’s citations for resignation reasons. The first is that migrating teachers more frequently cited the fact that an interim contract had ended as a
reason for resignation. The second is that District One’s resigning teachers, along with the North Carolina’s resigning teachers, more frequently cited retirement as a resignation reason as well. Table 26 delivers a comparison of the resignation reasons for the three teacher populations.

Table 26

Comparison of Resignation Reasons Among Three Teacher Populations, 2010 - 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching Population</th>
<th>Most Frequently Cited Reasons</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Migrated Teachers of District One</td>
<td>• Teach in Another North Carolina Public School District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other Reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Interim Contract End</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned Teachers of District One</td>
<td>• Teach in Another North Carolina Public School District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other Reasons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resigned Teachers of North Carolina</td>
<td>• To teach elsewhere</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Relocation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other Reasons</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Finding Three. The second data collection method performed was the administration of an online survey. Like the document review, the intended purpose was to identify trends in the self-reported resignations reasons from District One’s resigning teachers. The target population of the online survey was all teachers who resigned from District One. Thus, it was not limited to migrated teachers. 341 participants took the survey. Their responses generated 477 codes.
Out of a total of 477 codes generated from all resigned teachers in District One, the top three most frequently cited reasons by resigned teachers in District One were: relocation, school-based administration, and retirements. Table 27 provides the full listing of resignation reasons expressed by participants.

Table 27

Top Five Resignation Reasons by District One’s Teachers via Online Survey, August 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resignation Reason</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>20% (96/477)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with my school-based administration.</td>
<td>17% (82/477)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I retired.</td>
<td>7.5% (36/477)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I desired professional growth opportunities.</td>
<td>6.5% (31/477)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with teaching.</td>
<td>3.1% (15/477)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A majority of the participants indicated the need to relocate as the greatest factor in tendering their resignation. In most cases, the need for relocation was linked to subsequent issues with administration and/or salary concerns. This was expressed by participants in the following ways:

My primary reasons: Reduced pay in the upcoming year, large class sizes, disrespectful and unsupportive administration. In addition, I was already planning on leaving one school-year later to move with my husband for his military duty.

1. Teacher pay! NC was one of the worst in the nation. In District One, I was on teaching year 7, had a master degree, and was stuck on payment step #1. I worked 2-3 jobs while working in District One and working full time over the summer. It was difficult to survive. If I’m not mistaking, years 1-9 were step #1 as far as payment goes. 2. I was part of a Turn-Over school where they fired everyone . . . even the custodians. I had a job with the school system but had to find a new school to work out because of poor test scores from previous years. That was my first year at that school so the test scores had nothing to do with me. I was frustrated all together! I felt underpaid, mistreated, and unappreciated. So I went to VA and now I’m happy!
NC and District One in general do not seem to value teachers. We are not treated like the professionals our personal school debt would remind us we are and studied to be. Our paychecks are small, our judgement second guessed and the woes of our society are placed solely on our shoulders. But child rearing and education is a joint venture between teachers, parents and government. And at least two thirds of that venture often won’t take responsibility for their role in rearing our children, nor hold themselves accountable to each other. Schools have become the shark tank of too many lawyers and bad administrators. The teachers are afraid of the administrators and the administrators are afraid of the parents. And the parents are afraid of their children and the children aren’t afraid of anything.

We decided it was time to leave (my husband & I both taught in the same school in District One) when we were onto our second interim principal of the school year. It felt like a very hostile place to work, parents and community members were not working well together with the staff in our school. Teacher pay was stagnant, and it was clear that the legislators were not going to work on creating a more positive environment for the schools. I did not feel I could ever reach my leadership or career goals in North Carolina, where the cost of living was much higher, with the wages I was earning. I was burned out and ready to find employment elsewhere. I was tired of the emphasis on testing in the state of North Carolina and ultimately did not want my own children to grow up in the school system I was working in. I’d seen too many students’ love of learning be completely killed by a test score.

**Finding Four.** The third data collection method was conducting the semi-structured telephone interviews. The intended purpose was to identify trends in the self-reported resignations reasons from migrated teachers. As such, this data collection method is the only method used which exclusively targeted migrated teachers. Thirty participants participated in the interviews. Their responses generated 50 codes. Out of a total of 50 codes regarding the reason for their resignation, the top three most frequently cited reasons by the 30 migrated teachers were: school-based administration, relocation, and lack of support. Table 28 provides the full listing of resignation reasons expressed by participants.
Table 28

Resignation Reasons Cited by District One’s Migrating Teachers via Semi-Structured Interviews, August–September 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resignation Reason</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with my school-based administration</td>
<td>30% (15/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>14% (7/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the level of support I received.</td>
<td>10% (5/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was forced to resign.</td>
<td>8% (4/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I desired new growth opportunities.</td>
<td>6% (3/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was not pleased with my working conditions.</td>
<td>6% (3/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My position was cut.</td>
<td>4% (2/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced health issues.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The case load was overwhelming.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was a lack of structure in my school site.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My commute was too long.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mold in the school impacted my health.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents were non-supportive.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There were racial issues in my school.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had safety concerns.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced stress.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I did not enjoy being split between schools.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was unhappy.</td>
<td>2% (1/50)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As illustrated in Table 28, the majority of the participants (30%) indicated the principal was the greatest factor in tendering their resignation. Similar to finding three, the dissatisfaction was linked to other subsequent concerns as well. This was expressed by participants in the following ways:

I think the biggest thing is we were probably one of the most title one, but we have 99.8 free and reduced lunch. Our test scores as a whole weren’t always very
good, so of course the county blames the teachers. We would have people from the county come in and we were not allowed to speak with them. We were treated extremely poorly. We were yelled at. Our staff morale was actually pretty good amongst ourselves because we had to lean on each other. I think one of the things they could probably do is put in place an evaluation on a principal, not by superintendents, but by staff, because I think probably 90% of the issues of the school stem from our principal. I think also, we had a great deal of professional development during the day, during our planning. Three times a week we met while the kids were at specials, and 99% of that was just a waste of time. We never were able to evaluate that either. (CC)

Also, many principals seem to be downright nasty and difficult to work with. People aren’t happy. People want to leave left, right, and center because of principals and they change the principals all the time. I mean no continuity and these people have been taken away all the time. (AP)

Okay, so I was at the high school level and I loved the kids, let me say that, loved the kids, but I found administration very hard to work with. Administration micromanaged all the teachers and specifically, well, I can’t really speak if it was more so in my department but I kind of felt like in the department I was in, test scores were very low and administration just really tried to kind of micromanage us in almost to the point of kind of threatening you that things needed to be done a certain way. (CT)

Okay. I had a couple of different factors in play. For one thing I had just gotten my Master’s in Instructional Technology. I was currently teaching eighth grade [inaudible 00:02:26]. I’d been teaching at that middle school for six years and I was very happy at that middle school, it was just a middle school, I’d say it’s a diverse rather urban population. I had a student taught at that school before ultimately working there when I was a student here in CG. After that six years there was a change in administration. I was not satisfied with some of the changes and leadership style with the new administrator, so a couple of things, I was looking for a new position that coincided with my new Master’s degree, and I was able to find one in another county. I was also dissatisfied with the administrative change at the middle school that I was teaching at.” (RaS)

A cross-categorical comparison of the 30 interview participants’ resignation reasons disaggregated by school level shows the differences in experiences among migrating teachers. Moreover, the researcher wanted to determine if the resignation reason provided at the time of resignation aligned with the self-reported reason cited during the interview. Tables 29–31 provides the comparison of grade levels and the
comparisons of reason reported during resignation and during the interview. In keeping with the tradition of participant’s higher engagement in a one-on-one interview setting (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006), participants elaborated on their reasons for resignations during the interviews. Thus, the data shows more resignation reasons provided by participants during the interviews.

Table 29

Semi-Structured Interviews: Resignation Reasons of Migrating Teachers by School

Level—Elementary Level, 2010–2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resignation Reason Provided at the Time of Resignation (11 participants)</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
<th>Resignation Reason Provided During the Semi-Structured Interview</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to teach in another North Carolina public school.</td>
<td>64% (7/11)</td>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>25% (3/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the level of support I received.</td>
<td>9% (1/11)</td>
<td>I had issues with the principal.</td>
<td>16.67% (2/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contract ended.</td>
<td>9% (1/11)</td>
<td>I was traveling between two schools.</td>
<td>16.67% (2/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had family obligations.</td>
<td>9% (1/11)</td>
<td>There were racial issues in my school.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>9% (1/11)</td>
<td>My contract ended.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I experienced health issues.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I experienced harassment at my school.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I had family obligations.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Elementary teacher participants who participated in the semi-structured telephone interviews elaborated on their resignation reasons by 8%. The two instances of congruency occurred with answers being provided at the time of resignation and during
the semi-structured interviews were regarding: contract termination and family obligations.

Table 30

*Semi-Structured Interviews: Resignation Reasons of Migrating Teachers by School Level—Middle School Level, 2010–2015*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resignation Reason Provided at the Time of Resignation (Nine participants)</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
<th>Resignation Reason Provided During the Semi-Structured Interview</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to teach in another North Carolina public school.</td>
<td>33.33% (3/9)</td>
<td>I had issues with the principal.</td>
<td>25% (3/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the level of support I received</td>
<td>33.33% (3/9)</td>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the level of support I received.</td>
<td>16.7% (2/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>22.22% (2/9)</td>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to teach in another state.</td>
<td>11.11% (1/9)</td>
<td>I experienced bullying.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I was non-renewed.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>My school had no structure.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>The parents at my school were difficult.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I had family obligations.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I experienced stress.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Middle school teacher participants who participated in the semi-structured telephone interviews elaborated on their resignation reasons by 25%. The only instance of congruency occurred with answers being provided at the time of resignation and during the semi-structured interviews were regarding dissatisfaction with support provided to them.
Table 31

**Semi-Structured Interviews: Resignation Reasons of Migrating Teachers by School Level—High School Level, 2010–2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resignation Reason Provided at the Time of Resignation (Ten participants)</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
<th>Resignation Reason Provided During the Semi-Structured Interview</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I wanted to teach in another North Carolina public school.</td>
<td>40% (4/10)</td>
<td>I had issues with the principal.</td>
<td>44% (8/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>30% (3/10)</td>
<td>I was non-renewed.</td>
<td>17% (3/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contract ended.</td>
<td>20% (2/10)</td>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the level of support I received.</td>
<td>11% (2/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>10% (1/10)</td>
<td>I had family obligations.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with teaching.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the working conditions.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was non-renewed.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High school teacher participants who participated in the semi-structured telephone interviews elaborated on their resignation reasons by 44%. The only instances of congruency occurred with the same answer being provided at the time of resignation and during the semi-structured interviews were regarding the need to relocate.

**Finding Five.** The cross-categorical analysis showed the principal was cited as one of the top two reasons for resignations for elementary, middle, and high school interview participants. Yet, this was not reflected on the participants’ resignation sheet. Semi-structured interviews provide opportunities for participants to expound on their experiences (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006). Overall, the participants expounded on their migration experience by 28% as compared to what they originally identified on their
resignation sheet. The cross-category comparison provides opportunities to identify trends among participants. On all three levels, the principal was cited as one of the top two reasons for resignations. However, it is important to note that the principal was not listed on the participant’s resignation forms by any of the 30 participants. This trend supports finding four which stated that school based leadership was a high frequency resignation reason.

Finding Six. Other than the principal serving as the leading reason for resignation, the cross-category analysis showed that relocation and family obligations were also commonly cited by interview participants. See Table 32. The identification of relocation as a contributory factor in teacher migration supports findings one and three respectively. Finding one identified the resignation reason of relocation as a high frequency reason based off the document review. Furthermore, finding three identified the resignation reason of relocation as a high frequency reason based off the semi-structured interview responses.

Table 32

Semi-Structured Interviews: A Comparison of Participant Responses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resignation Reason Provided During the Semi-Structured Interview</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to relocate</td>
<td>25% (3/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had issues with the principal</td>
<td>16.67% (2/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was traveling between two schools</td>
<td>16.67% (2/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There were racial issues in my school</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My contract ended</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced health issues</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced harassment at my school</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had family obligations</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 32

Cont.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resignation Reason Provided During the Semi-Structured Interview</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Middle School Teachers</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had issues with the principal.</td>
<td>25% (3/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the level of support I received.</td>
<td>16.7% (2/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced bullying.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was non-renewed.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My school had no structure.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The parents at my school were difficult.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had family obligations.</td>
<td>8.33% (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>High School Teachers</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had issues with the principal.</td>
<td>44% (8/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was non-renewed.</td>
<td>17% (3/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the level of support I received.</td>
<td>11% (2/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had family obligations.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with teaching.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the working conditions.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was non-renewed.</td>
<td>5.6% (1/18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Finding Seven.** A cross-categorical analysis of the 30 interview participants illustrates the resignation reasons between the genders. While there were 30 interviews, 50 codes were provided by the participants. As noted earlier within this chapter, the participants provided multiple reasons as contributing factors for their migration during the interview setting. Similar to findings three, four, and five, both male and females cite the principal as the major contributory factor for their migration. However, males cited they were forced to resign to avoid a non-renewal with the district more frequently than
females. The two citations of this finding occurred with males. See Table 33 for detailed information. A summary of the seven findings from the study are presented in Table 34.

Table 33

*Resignation Reason by Gender as Reported in the Semi-Structure Interview*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Female Resignation Reason</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
<th>Male Resignation Reason</th>
<th>Citation Frequency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with my school-based administration</td>
<td>25% (10/39)</td>
<td>I was dissatisfied with my school-based administration</td>
<td>45% (5/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>15% (6/39)</td>
<td>I had to relocate.</td>
<td>9% (1/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the level of support I received.</td>
<td>20% (8/39)</td>
<td>I was dissatisfied with the level of support I received.</td>
<td>9% (1/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I was unhappy.</td>
<td>5% (2/39)</td>
<td>I was forced to resign.</td>
<td>18% (2/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I desired new growth opportunities.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td>I was not pleased with my working conditions.</td>
<td>18% (2/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced stress.</td>
<td>18% (2/11)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced health issues.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The case load was overwhelming.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There was a lack of structure in my school site.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My commute was too long.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The mold in the school impacted my health.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents were non-supportive.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>There were racial issues in my school.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I had safety concerns.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I experienced stress.</td>
<td>3% (1/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I did not enjoy being split between schools.</td>
<td>5% (2/39)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Collection Method</td>
<td>Findings</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Document Review</td>
<td><strong>Finding 1.</strong> During 2010–2015, out of 15 possible reasons for resignations, the four most commonly cited reasons for 691 migrating teachers who submitted resignations from District One were: to teach in another North Carolina public school; relocation; other reasons; and interim contract ending.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Finding 2.</strong> During 2010–2015, each of the three teaching populations (migrating teachers, District One’s teachers and North Carolina’s teachers) cited “other reasons” as one of the top four reasons for leaving the district.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Survey</td>
<td><strong>Finding 3.</strong> Out of a total of 477 codes derived from 341 respondents regarding the reason for their resignation, the top three most frequently cited reasons by resigned teachers in District One were: relocation, school-based administration, and retirement.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Semi-Structured Telephone Interviews</td>
<td><strong>Finding 4.</strong> Out of a total of 50 codes regarding the reason for their resignation, the top three most frequently cited reasons by migrating teachers were: school-based administration, relocation, and lack of support.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Finding 5.</strong> The cross-categorical analysis of the interview responses showed the principal was cited as one of the top two reasons for resignations for elementary, middle, and high school interview participants. Yet, this was not reflected on the participants’ resignation sheet.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Finding 6.</strong> Other than the principal serving as the leading reason for resignation, the cross-category analysis of the interview responses showed that relocation and family obligations were also commonly cited by interview participants.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Finding 7.</strong> More male participants reported being forced to resign to avoid a contract renewal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Within the findings, data saturation occurred with the identification of relocation and the principal as being contributory reasons for teacher migration. See Table 35.

Table 35

*Interconnectedness within Findings*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resignation Reason</th>
<th>Finding #</th>
<th>Populations Cited By</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relocation</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>691 Migrated Teachers (Resignation Sheets)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>341 District One Resigned Teachers (Online Survey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Migrated Teachers, District One Resigned Teachers, North Carolina’s Resigned Teachers (Resignation Sheets)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>341 District One Resigned Teachers (Online Survey)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Limitations**

This study contains limiting conditions to achieve outcomes aligned with the stated research purpose. Some are related to the common critiques of qualitative research.
methodology and some are connected to the research design. As a result, careful thought and deliberation has been devoted to minimizing their impact. The limitations are as follows:

- A review of the HRMS listing obtained from District One from 2010–2015 which provided both demographic and perception information from resigned teachers reveals slight changes in how data was collected on an annual basis. As such, there were varied interpretations of the teacher turnover documentation inherent within the HRMS listing.

- The research sample was restricted to a sub-population of teachers. Because of the nature of the research study, the sample was restricted. As a result, the participants tended to express negative perceptions about their former employer–District One. This should be taken into account when reading findings in order to place the information in the appropriate context.

- A potential critique of this research might be the absence of analysis on the ethnic/racial vulnerability of teachers who may be prone to migrating from one public school district to another. Although this was not the intended goal of this study, the researcher intentionally sought to achieve transferability with teacher retention strategies as a means to circumvent both teacher migration and teacher turnover alike.

Chapter III restated the purpose of the research and presented the research question, along with the qualitative research design. The reduction of risks and ethical considerations were presented with emphasis on procedural fidelity. The setting of the research context was explored with information on consent and access. Participants were
chosen through criteria selection sample from the target population. The three instrumentations used within the research study: document review, online survey, and semi-structured interviews were presented. Following instrumentation, the four phases of data collection were shared along with response rates. Within this chapter, seven findings were identified. Results of the data analysis are presented in the following chapter.
CHAPTER IV

Evaluation of the Results of the Action Research

Chapter III described the research design, its sample, instrumentation, data collection, findings and limitations. Chapter IV will provide (a) an executive summary of the study; (b) discussion of the findings; (c) implications; (d) recommendations; and (e) reflections.

Executive Summary of the Study

During 2010–2015, District One experienced an increase in teacher turnover from 10.08% to 14.95%. See Table 1 and Figure 1. As a result of the increased teacher turnover rate from 2010–2015, District One experienced the following challenges: financial loss to the district, increased need for recruitment, and the need to ensure high quality instruction in classrooms. A review of District One’s graduation rate from 2006 until 2015 reveals a 15.3% increase with its graduation rate (North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, 2016). See Figure 3. Based on the graduation rate alone, the district’s increased turnover rate did not negatively impact its graduation rate. While the increased teacher turnover rate has not reached a critical level, there is an urgency to address the issue when considering: the fiscal impacts, the diminished numbers of teachers produced by the teacher education program pipeline, and the external recruitment of North Carolina teachers by other states. As such, this problem holds significance to internal and external stakeholders of District One.

In an effort to address the increased teacher attrition, District One made attempts to impact teacher satisfaction. In 2013, District One’s superintendent created a three-year
long Strategic Plan. One of its priorities articulated in its 2016 Strategic Plan was to reduce the annual teacher turnover rate from a baseline of 11.66% to 9%. Table 5 represents turnaround strategies employed by the district during 2010–2015. An effective teacher retention strategy employed by District One was the teacher incentive fund program. Implemented between 2006–2016, it was a comprehensive teacher incentive plan that sought to attract highly effective teachers for the goal of increasing student achievement in schools with critical needs. Schools with critical needs were selected to participate based on the teacher turnover rate, socio-economic factors, and adequate yearly progress. Without its interventions, the teacher retention rate may have increased at a higher percentage point change. At the close of the 2015-2016 year, the teacher incentive fund program ended, due to the conclusion of federal funding.

If teacher turnover is no longer an issue within public education, students will experience a full year of academics with the same teacher of record. Teachers will have higher self-efficacy with opportunities for distributed leadership. Principals will increase their capacity to retain effective teachers. Schools will experience fewer vacancies and will experience a return on their investment into the development of their teacher workforce. Community members will experience increased satisfaction with the school. The status quo will be revamped with an increased trust in public schools. The ultimate goal for addressing teacher turnover is to ensure that all students in District One receive a high quality, sound and basic education that will enable them to effectively meet the demands of college, the workplace and life. Chapter One explored the nature of the teacher turnover and teacher migration problem in detail.
Discussion of the Findings

The researcher sought to determine why teachers left District One during 2010–2015 to teach in other North Carolina public school districts. To measure the efficacy of stakeholders, the study used empathic inquiry to collect qualitative data by performing a document review, administering an online survey, and conducting semi-structured telephone interviews. To enhance the methodological validity of the study, the researcher triangulated data collection methods. By doing so, the data yielded a fuller and richer snapshot of the phenomenon under review. An additional benefit of employing triangulation with data collection methods is it contributed to the development of data saturation within the study. Data saturation is not about numbers. Instead, it focuses on the depth of the data (Burmeister & Aitken, 2012). Thus, there is a direct link between data triangulation and data saturation in this study which yielded rich data for exploration.

Using criteria sampling, the research study targeted resigned teachers from District One during 2010–2015. Participants in the study included 341 participants in the online survey and 30 participants in the semi-structured telephone interviews. Chapter III explored the data collection process and its findings.

Emergent Theme One

Upon analysis of the findings, four themes emerged. Principals served as a major influence in teacher resignation for teachers in District One during 2010–2015. This theme connects to findings three, four, and five. The overriding finding within this study revealed that participants perceived the principal to be a major influence on teacher satisfaction. Teachers often commented on their perceived disconnect from their school-
based administration. At times, this disconnect also extended to central office staff personnel as well. As a result, teachers felt there were obstacles within their classroom to being successful. An example of this teacher sentiment is expressed below.

I was treated like crap . . . Mr. Regional Superintendent would come in to our school and blame teachers for everything like low test scores (even though mine were good), yell at us and we were not allowed to speak to him. My principal was never there. She would come in late and there were times she wouldn’t come in for weeks. She treated white female teachers very poorly. She even went so far to place at least seven white teachers on action plans for no reason. Our black female and black male counterparts were not, even though their test scores were lower than ours. Our principal would lie to others that came in from the district that we were doing certain programs even though we weren’t. We were made to meet three times a week and listen other people in the district. Not once in my 12 years was I ever asked my opinion about what I thought was best for the students and never praised for high test scores. One year I had 16/18 pass the third-grade math EOG and my principal never even said anything. So basically there was a huge divide between white and black teachers that was due to my principal and county. Although the staff worked well together and at once had high moral, it was our principal that ruined the school and along with Mr. Regional Superintendent, 17 of us left that year! (Participant 309)

Failure to improve student outcomes because all resources poured into central office which cannot make teaching and learning more effective. (Participant 206)

Lack of support for our administration and teachers. The Central Office supports loud parents. (Participant 6)

THE PRINCIPAL AND NO HELP FROM CENTRAL OFFICE NONE NADA!!!! NO SUPPORT ZILCH (Participant 216)

I’m an EC teacher so I can only speak—I’m going to speak from the EC perspective. My new county does a phenomenal job with training their EC teachers on how to use intervention, informal assessments, how to use EZ IEP, which is the computer based internet program that both counties use now to write IEPs. Our EC department from our program administrators, our EC program administrators, all the way up to our Executive Director for the Exceptional Children department, are very accessible any time of the day. I can call the Director of the Exceptional Children’s Department of my new county tomorrow morning at 9 AM and he will answer the phone and speak with me directly if I have a question. That never happened in District One. You never had access to your Central Office people, support people, unlike you have here. It’s a smaller country, obviously, I understand that, but to have that type of support at any time,
District One cannot touch that. I haven’t been able to and I worked in District One for eight years. (Participant 10)

Administration was horrible. Discipline for the students barely existed so they got away with cussing at adults and many other disrespectful behaviors. Administrators would walk right by some staff and not even acknowledge them. Their behavior was completely unprofessional even throwing phones in meetings. (Code ID 287784)

**Emergent Theme Two**

Teachers relocated from District One during 2010–2015 in search of better opportunities related to their professional and personal sense of well-being.

I think one of the other things, I was trying to think of professionally growing. In Wake County you get a lot of opportunities, I mean if your principal sees something developing in you or gives you an opp—you get far more opportunities. In my five years there, got to train staff on multiple professional developments, only asked by my principal because they walked in my room and saw something. I think sometimes you don’t get that same opportunity here in District One. They don’t say, “Oh, well, hey our next PD, our next early release, these 3, these 5 teachers will be teaching on this, over something like [inaudible 00:10:47] already do.“ Which, of course, when you’re trying to do your work, you’re doing your evaluations and [inaudible 00:10:53] when it tells you, are you a leader in your school, it’s more than just being on leadership teams. It gives you opportunity to do other things. That was one thing I really liked.

It sounds funny, but it didn’t have a lot to do with District One. My wife and I were trying to have a child and her parents lived in the new county so we moved closer to them so we would have support for us when we started having a family, but it meant I was commuting an hour each way before and after work which, when your work day is 10 or 12 hours made for some very, very long days. I was leaving the house at 4 in the morning to be at work by 5 or 5:30 and then I was setting up before the school day, running the school day, doing tutoring or having meetings after the school day, grading papers, and then driving home and getting home just in time to eat dinner and go to bed, which was not conducive to having kids.

**Emergent Theme Three**

Teachers were hesitant to identify authentic reasons for their resignations when completing District One’s resignation forms. This theme connects to findings one and two and seven. While no participants expressed their sentiment about this matter, the
researcher observed that “Other Reasons” was one of the most frequently cited as resignation reason on the resignation form. However, in semi-structured phone interviews, participants cited multiple reasons for their dissatisfaction. This may be attributed to the power deferential between a teacher and a principal and teacher’s reluctance to identify their school leadership as a major contributor to their discontent, particularly if the teacher may consider returning to District One for employment. It may further be connected to the fact that teachers are offered the opportunity to resign to avoid a contract renewal. This resignation reason is not listed on the form.

I had planned to retire at the end of the school year, but by January the environment was so bad that I was forced to resign.

I don’t know what they could have done other than not, not agree with the non-renewal. Like I said, at the time when you resign in the non-renewal is on the table, they don’t flag you as an applicant other places, but they flag you. Don’t know what they could have done any different other than tell the principal at the time, after looking at the evidence that, “no, you’re not going to be allowed or not.”

I resigned because I was told they were going to non-renew me. At the time the rule was different because they just did non-renewals as a group instead of on an individual basis. They now do it on an individual basis. I resigned to keep my license in tact in other places in the state.

**Emergent Theme Four**

Within this study, teachers frequently cited multiple issues as reasons for their resignation. If a teacher experienced dissatisfaction with a convergence of one or two more factors, then teacher dissatisfaction is heightened. An example of this sentiment is expressed below.

The discipline was horrible. Student behavior was horrible. Disrespect to faculty and staff was the norm. A very toxic environment in general with most teachers in survival mode. (Code ID 287818)
Within District One, teachers named several antecedent variables which contributed towards teacher’s development of a “tipping point” mentality regarding their resignation.

Some of the antecedent variables obtained from this research study that have were not commonly cited within the research study included the following factors:

Pay:

No pay raise in 5 years, working 60–70 hours a week, no support from administration, test score expectations, discipline problems too much work for one person, school of choice, spending my own money, not appreciated, I can go on . . .

Discipline:

Too many discipline problems and not enough consequences. It took my love for teaching away because I disciplined most of the day. I understand many of our students come from difficult environments, but we need to find another outlet. Other children are suffering because they can’t learn.

Mold:

Mold issues must be taken seriously and completely remediated. Teachers’ health issues resulting from mold exposure must be treated fairly and humanely. The HR department must stop putting up obstacles to teachers requests for investigation and just treatment and compensation.

Time:

I was a teacher in District One for 30 years upon my retirement. I worked in 18 schools, for 29 principals. There are many things the district could do to improve teacher morale. Here are a few. 1. Planning time. Give teachers at least one hour of planning time during each school day. 2. Lunch without students. Allow teachers 30 minutes duty free to eat their lunches in their classrooms or the teachers’ lounge (if there is one) so that they can be with other adults/peers. 3. Provide duty-free time before and/or after-school. In my last assignment, I had to be on car duty by 7:25 each morning until 8:00. After-school, I was on car duty from dismissal (2:40) until all children were picked up (usually 3:10 or so). This meant that I had no planning time before or after school “on the clock.” When I first started teaching, students were dismissed at 2:00, giving teachers at least 45 minutes of planning time while “on the clock.” Now, teachers do all of their planning on their own time. They could at least have provided a “rotation” system for morning and after-school duties. This idea was repeatedly suggested by teachers, to no avail. 4. Infra-structure. During my retirement I have worked
part-time. For three years I was in a classroom with no working heat or air-conditioning. My principal tried in vain to get it fixed. I can’t believe this still goes on. I know of other teachers in other schools who have had the same problem. It’s truly pathetic. Teachers, parents, nor principals can do anything about these things. This puts teaching well below any other “so-called profession.”

5. Materials. All through my teaching career, I’ve had to spend my own money on supplies. In my first years of teaching my own money was used for things like aquariums, classroom animals, science equipment, etc. Now, teachers are spending their own money on copy paper, markers, rulers, compasses, pencils, etc. Parents in wealthier schools help out with this, but this is unacceptable.

6. Meetings, workshops on teachers’ time. I cannot believe how many meetings and workshops teachers have to attend during the summer or after school without any pay. These meetings, called by central office staff or principals, are often mandatory, and I find it irritating that teachers attend without pay, while the people who call the meetings are being paid. Unbelievable!

7. Who will be left to teach? While working part-time, I’ve met several young teachers who have bailed out. Why? Teaching conditions and pay! They are being treated like professionals and receive higher rates of pay. I think this is going to “bite” us and society in general. At least for those students who still attend public schools.

Too many roles within the school:

I played many roles throughout the school, not only as a teacher, but also as a coach and Communications Team Leader. I enjoyed being around my co-workers as we spent most of our day at the school, including late night games. What I found difficult was the turn-over and inconsistency within the administration, as well as individuals lacking the confidence in their employees. As most of us have similar degrees, as well as some of us with more substantial degrees, one should not feel micromanaged and incapable of making decisions for their classroom and their students. My students will never be a number, nor will I treat them as so, or be treated as so.

Paperwork:

After teaching 15 years in New York, I moved to NC. I was overwhelmed with the amount of meetings and the hectic schedule I had to keep up with. I had 30 students in each math class, plus thirty for guided reading. The amount of paperwork I had to complete in order to keep up with their progress was impossible to keep up with. I didn’t feel like I could do my job week with the limited amount of class time and planning time.

Testing:

Horrible pay, oppressive atmosphere, too much focus on test scores and not on what really matters to an educator . . . the students and their educational growth.
Table 36 provides an illustration of the alignment between themes and findings.

Table 36

*Alignment Between Findings and Emergent Themes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resignation Reason</th>
<th>Finding #</th>
<th>Data Collection Research Sample Population</th>
<th>Emergent Theme #</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Relocation</td>
<td>One</td>
<td>691 Migrated Teachers (Resignation Sheets)</td>
<td>Two—Teachers relocated from District One during 2010–2015 in search of better opportunities related to their professional and personal sense of well-being.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>341 District One Resigned Teachers (Online Survey)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Six</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Reasons</td>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Migrated Teachers, District One Resigned Teachers, North Carolina’s Resigned Teachers (Resignation Sheets)</td>
<td>Three—Teachers were hesitant to identify authentic reasons for their resignations when completing District One’s resignation forms during 2010–2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seven</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>341 District One Resigned Teachers (Online Survey)</td>
<td>One—Principals served as a major influence in teacher resignation for teachers in District One during 2010–2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Four</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Five</td>
<td>30 Migrated Teachers (Semi-Structured Interviews)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion of Findings in Relation to Previous Research on Teacher Migration

In teacher turnover, there are a multitude of reasons why teachers leave the profession. Research has noted the following reasons: salaries, management issue, working conditions, and personal issues (Boe et al., 2008; Ingersoll, 2003; Inman & Marlow, 2004; Mihans, 2009; National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future, 2002; Williams, 2003). However, job satisfaction and efficacy are critical key factors in teacher retention (Nguni, Sleegers, & Denessen, 2006). In this teacher migration study, 100% (30/30) of the interviewed participants expressed low satisfaction and/or teacher efficacy. As a result, the teacher migration research study is congruent with empirical studies on teacher turnover and its identified reasons for leaving. However, it is important to note that few research studies provided a query into the specific reasons for teacher migration as a sub-phenomenon of teacher turnover. Thus, it cannot be determined if alignment exists within teacher migration research. While minimal research exists about the teacher migration phenomenon, this study identifies the following significant influences for its epistemology.

1. Like teacher turnover, the principal pays a critical role in teacher’s decision to remain at a school site in teacher migration.
2. Like teacher turnover, teacher migration is connected to the teachers’ desire for a better opportunity albeit professionally or personally.
3. Like teacher turnover, the reasons for teacher resignations are often not shared. It may be possible that migrating teachers are even more so hesitant to identify their resignation reasons, due to the likelihood the teacher may return back to the district for employment.
4. Unlike teacher turnover, when a teacher migrates, they are remaining in the profession. Within teacher turnover, some teachers elect to exit the profession.

**Implications for Practitioners**

The following four implications derive from the findings and emerging themes identified within this teacher migration study:

1. Considering the findings from the teacher migration study, an implication for the State Department of Public Instruction to study is the lack of preparation of principals regarding teacher retention;

2. Considering the findings from the teacher migration study, an implication for district-based leadership to study is the ineffective leadership behaviors of principals regarding teacher retention strategies which contributed to the low-trust perceptions of migrating teachers;

3. Considering the findings from the teacher migration study, an implication for district-based leadership to determine whether more males are being forced to resign than their female counterparts; and

4. Considering the findings from the teacher migration study, an implication for school-based leadership to reflect upon is the lack of awareness of climate and culture issues within their own school environment.

**Implications for Future Research**

The researcher recommends further studies to be conducted to develop a larger database of information to gain a deeper understanding of teacher migration. In light of this, the three following proposed research areas should be considered.
1. Based on the limitations of the current study, a larger sample size of resigned teachers in North Carolina should be conducted to ascertain if the results are parallel to District One’s findings.

2. To determine if racial vulnerability is a factor in teacher migration, a similar study using the same criteria should be undertaken to determine if teacher migration is impacted by teacher’s race/ethnic composition.

3. Using the same criteria, a study should be undertaken to determine if positive teacher migration exists, like positive teacher turnover exists.

**Revised District One Strategic Plan**

In an era of high teacher mobility, there are some factors that a district cannot influence. Even so, the district does have the ability to influence aspects of teacher satisfaction. Based on data collected from 2010–2015, the identification of contributory factors paves the way for the identification of retention strategies. In short, the data supports the need for interventions based on the compelling argument presented for keeping effective teachers within the district. Thus, the research study’s trinity informs the greater strategic plan, culture and climate of the district. As a result, the strategic plan presented in Chapter Two remains relevant to address the teacher migration trend. See Table 15. However, to address trends and implications, turnaround strategies have been added. See Table 37. The plan itself, its progress monitoring, and results will be shared with key stakeholders on a quarterly basis through a regularly updated, quarterly report.
Revised District One Selected Goals & Turnaround Strategies for Improved Teacher Retention

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long Term Goal:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To reduce the annual teacher migration rate from District One from the baseline percentage of 14.95%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term Goal 1: To understand why teachers are leaving District One for employment in other NC public schools through the use of empathic inquiry</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Administer a district created online survey to teachers
• mid-year to determine their perceptions about culture, climate, and trust regarding both the district and their school.
• Host focus groups in each of the regions twice a semester to discuss teacher concerns
• Compare District One 2016 Teacher Working Condition results against District Two–Five to further understand the nature of the problem; and
• Revise resignation sheets to specifically capture why teachers are leaving the district to teach in other NC public schools |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term Goal 2: To share research-based practices with principals on intervening strategies for improved teacher retention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Inform principals on the teacher migration phenomenon and its intervening strategies.
• Provide principals with mentors and coaching focused on teacher retention assessments and activities. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Short Term Goal 3: To proactively address critical shortages of teachers through active recruitment and retention activities of teachers in the identified shortage areas.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Conduct a regression analysis to identify critical teaching areas five years out.
Create a teacher pipeline with teacher education programs to ensure teachers are identified and connected to District One early in their career and view District One as a district of choice
Continue to provide early contracts to teachers of critical shortage areas |

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Short Term Goal 4: To develop a conflict management system</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Develop a conflict management process which teachers can systematically use for mediation issues with their principal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Previous researchers studied teacher turnover and its phenomena extensively. Yet, minimal research is available on the affect and predictive nature of
teacher migration. The researcher’s goal was to inform the teacher migration epistemology by exploring reasons for teacher migration in an effort to provide effective strategies for teacher retention. It is anticipated that the findings of this present study have implications for educators. It identified links between teacher efficacy and migration by offering insight into the resignation reasons of migrating teachers. Understanding the narrative popular regarding teacher migration can directly impact the quality of instruction for P-12 learners in the classroom.

**Recommendations to Future Scholar Practitioners**

The New Teacher Project (TNTP) is a national teaching organization committed to ending the injustice of educational inequality by providing excellent teachers to the students who need them most and by advancing policies and practices that ensure effective teaching in every classroom. In its publication titled “The Irreplaceables: Understanding the Real Retention Crisis in America’s Urban Schools” (Jacob, Vidyarhi, & Carroll, 2012), the teacher turnover phenomenon is examined. The article identifies the real teacher retention crisis as a failure to retain the right teachers. Jacob et al. (2012) label the right teachers as “Irreplaceables” because they are so successful that they are nearly impossible to replace. This notion is supported by Ingersoll and May (2011b). Ingersoll and May (2011b), wrote, “Some turnover and departure of teachers from their jobs, of course, is normal, inevitable, and beneficial. For individuals, departures that lead to better jobs—in teaching or not—are a source of upward mobility. For schools, departures of low-performing employees can enhance school performance” (p. 64). Smart teacher retention is the district’s intentional effort to retain high-performing teachers while reducing the number of low-performing teachers. Jacob et al. (2012)
identify the goal of smart retention as “The solution is to improve retention, not to blindly increase it. Schools must retain more ‘Irreplaceables’ while simultaneously raising expectations for teachers and retaining fewer of those who consistently perform poorly” (p. 6). To this end, Jacob et al. (2012) conducted research in urban districts to identify smart retention strategies. The study found that teachers who experienced two or more different turnaround strategies, such as advancement opportunities, regular performance feedback, and public recognition, planned to stay at their schools nearly twice as long as other teachers. Furthermore, “Irreplaceable” teachers were likely to stay at schools with a strong instructional culture in which principals set strong performance expectations for them (Jacob et al., 2012).

Additional researchers have focused on reasons teachers stay in the classroom. Boyd et al. (2009) looked at teacher retention factors in various states. Boyd et al. (2009) found that in North Carolina teacher perceptions of school leadership are predictive of intention to remain in the school. Johnson (2006) states teachers stay and are successful if they have a number of supports. These supports include:

- matching teaching assignments to the teacher’s field of expertise;
- a flexible curriculum that allows for meaningful accountability;
- job-embedded professional development;
- career opportunities for growth and influence beyond their classroom;
- supportive colleagues at all levels of experience;
- support providers in working with students;
- safe facilities; and finally,
- parental involvement.
Given that there are multiple factors that affect teacher retention rates and acknowledging that these vary from teacher to teacher, the recommendations provided below should be tailored to meet the need of the school and/or district. The following recommendations are provided as a means to encourage the district to implement smart teacher retention strategies with the goal of retaining highly effective teachers. The state department of public education is recommended to:

1. Investigate alternative means to increase teacher salary;
2. Provide leadership coaching and support to principals focused on student achievement and teacher retention strategies. The intended goal is to increase the principal’s effectiveness as a school leader.
3. Delete the resignation reason of “other reasons” on the resignation form and require teachers to identify the resignation reason. By doing so, the state can track resignation trends and share this data with legislators when education reform efforts are underway.

The district is recommended to:

1. Apply for teacher incentive funding grants to continue to build upon the successful teacher retention strategies implemented by the scope of work in the first and second phases of the grant and grant financial compensation for instructional effectiveness;
2. Seek alternative methods of raising local supplemental pay;
3. Develop and implement a conflict management system will seek to restore high trust within the district and even within the school. The intended goal is
to increase the district’s capacity to resolve issues and retain effective teachers.

4. Develop an attraction culture to your organization by offering supports that will increase teacher satisfaction;

5. Develop an opportunity culture for teachers to continue their own growth and development;

6. Investigate business practices on successful employee engagement;

7. Model a growth mindset about smart retention strategies to ensure teacher retention of effective teachers through training and/or a mentoring/coaching relationship;

8. Conduct ongoing assessments of teacher perceptions by way of surveys, focus groups;

9. Consider mediating variables when teachers identify dissatisfying working conditions;

10. Consistently host exit interviews as teachers leave the school; and

11. Accurately track resignation reasons and analyze resignation reasons to identify trends.

The principal is recommended to:

1. Conduct regular formative assessments on the climate and culture of the school by way of surveys, focus groups;

2. Reflect on leadership behaviors that increase / decrease teacher satisfaction; and

3. Host exit interviews as teachers leave the school.
Reflections

At the onset of the research study, the researcher opined the following factors may have influenced District One’s increased teacher retention rates:

1. The increased teacher retention rate was impacted by classroom management issues resulting in unsafe environments which are often attributed to urban school districts. As a result of low efficacy regarding safety and classroom management concerns, teachers resigned from their positions to migrate to smaller school districts.

2. The adaption of Common Core required teachers to adapt to new curriculum. Teachers migrated to districts where more support and resources were provided.

3. Teachers migrated to school in other districts who achieved higher parent engagement.

4. Teachers resigned to work in other districts with a local salary supplement that was higher.

The actual findings from the research study did not connect with the researcher’s hypothesis on the level anticipated. See Table 34 in Chapter III for a summary of the seven findings.

While the researcher’s hypothesis were contributory factors for teachers, none of them were cited frequently by participants. The researcher’s hypothesis about teacher migration reasons in District One aligned with the reasons for teacher turnover. These assumptions represent the researcher’s hidden assumptions about migration which were anchored in the researcher’s backgrounds and professional experiences. While there are
similarities between both phenomena, the reasons for teacher migration are distinctively different.

    As a former teacher who resigned from their position seeking more pay, the researcher intimately identified with the reasons cited by teachers. As a parent, the researcher has had a child in a classroom where the teacher left in the middle of a year resulting in subs for the remained of her year. Thus, the researcher understands the impacts to students from a personal level. As the wife of a 25-year veteran teacher, the impacts of teacher departure are observed by the researcher when her husband comes home and discusses the impact on colleagues and students by a sudden, teacher resignation. As an instructional coach, the impacts of a teacher departure are also experienced by the researcher. The loss of the return on investment is staggering when one considered the resources invested into each teacher. As a current assistant principal, the researcher was shocked at the multiple expressions of discontent with principals and the leadership behaviors cited by teachers. The intent of this research study is to simply inform educators on the multitude reasons for teacher migration with the hopes that central office personnel and principals will embrace leadership practices which support and empower teachers. In turn, teachers will support and empower students.
References


Covey, S., & Merrill, R. (2006). *The speed of trust: The one thing that changes everything*.


District One. (2012). *Education matters in District One.*


National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory Appalachia.


# APPENDIX A: DISTRICT ONE’S RESIGNATION FORM

**Resignation Form**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Social Security Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Address</td>
<td>Phone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City/State/Zip Code</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**All Current Positions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hours per Day</th>
<th>School/Department</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**NOTE:** Submit to Human Resources immediately upon completion and signature. Do not hold/retain. Late submission can result in delays in acceptance. As a rule, resignations can only become effective once received in the Human Resources Office. Once submitted, the employee cannot rescind a resignation.

I hereby resign my position with the [Redacted] effective at the end of the day on [Date].

**List position(s) resigning:**

- [Redacted]

**EXPECTED/REQUIRED NOTICE:**

**Classified Positions:** At least fourteen (14) calendar days’ notice is expected. Less notice will be included as part of the personnel record of the employee and may influence future district employment.

**Licensed Positions:** State law stipulates at least thirty (30) calendar days’ notice. License revocation is allowable when acceptable notice is not given.

**REASON FOR RESIGNATION:** Check One (The numbers below represent state codes only)

- Retirement (65 or 68)
- To Teach in Another NC System (58)
- To Teach in a NC Charter School (70)
- To Teach in a NC Non-Public/Private School (71)
- To Teach in Another State (62)
- Health (Personal or Family) (64)
- To Accept a Non-Teaching Position in Education (59)
- Other (65)

I wish to state that I have no claims or grounds for any claims against my employer based upon my time of employment with the [Redacted] and am submitting this resignation of my own free will.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employee’s Signature</th>
<th>Date Signed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Witness to Signature</th>
<th>Date Signed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- [ ] Initial this box to request an exit interview.

- [ ] Initial this box if you are retiring and do not wish your name released to any group wishing to recognize retirees.

**FOR HUMAN RESOURCES USE ONLY**

Resignation Accepted By: [Name]

Date: [Date]

Effective Date of Resignation: [Date]

Retirement Date: [Date]

S E Comment: [Comment]

HUM-F005 Revised July 2002 – JH Please destroy all previous editions
## School Leadership

Q7.1 Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements about school leadership in your school.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. The faculty and staff have a shared vision.</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
<td>80.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. There is an atmosphere of trust and mutual respect in this school.</td>
<td>67.3%</td>
<td>66.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Teachers feel comfortable raising issues and concerns that are important to them.</td>
<td>66.5%</td>
<td>65.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. The school leadership consistently supports teachers.</td>
<td>77.4%</td>
<td>75.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Teachers are held to high professional standards for delivering instruction.</td>
<td>93.3%</td>
<td>93.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. The school leadership facilitates using data to improve student learning.</td>
<td>94.2%</td>
<td>93.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Teacher performance is assessed objectively.</td>
<td>83.4%</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Teachers receive feedback that can help them improve teaching.</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>84.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. The procedures for teacher evaluation are consistent.</td>
<td>82.3%</td>
<td>84.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. The school improvement team provides effective leadership at this school.</td>
<td>82.1%</td>
<td>80.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. The faculty are recognized for accomplishments.</td>
<td>84.4%</td>
<td>83.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY
Norcross Graduate School
Ed.D. in Educational Leadership

Memorandum of Understanding

Candidate Name: Tina S. Johnson
Organization Name: 

Candidate's Organizational Position: 

High Point University is offering a Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.) which is designed to develop the leadership capacity of candidates from a variety of organizational positions and roles. The focus of this program will be to solve problems of practice by combining the latest research findings with the cultural, political, and demographic context of your organization. The desired outcomes of this program are to develop the potential of our graduates and provide a body of work that addresses the everyday issues faced by leaders in your organization.

The above candidate is applying for the Doctoral Degree Program in Educational Leadership at High Point University. This program will span approximately 3-4 years and require the candidate to attend some weekend (Friday/Saturday) classes each semester that focus on varied aspects of educational leadership. At the end of the third year, the candidate will complete an internship experience which exposes him/her to many facets of leadership within your organization. In addition, the candidate will complete a capstone project which will be designed to solve a problem of practice within your organization. This will require the candidate to develop a comprehensive strategic plan based on the most current research findings and designed to accommodate the variables/demographics which are unique to your organization.

This candidate will be applying for one of approximately 20 positions open in an upcoming cohort. Each applicant will be considered based on several variables which include: knowledge and skills; leadership experience; leadership disposition; and professional support. A significant indicator for future success will include the organization's willingness to support the candidate by:

- Allowing the candidate to engage in an internship designed to provide observational opportunities and interactive relationships with varied organizational leaders
- Allowing the candidate to determine a problem of practice pertinent to your organization and complete a review of the literature based on relevant research findings
- Serving (or appointing a designee to serve) on the candidate's capstone committee at the conclusion of their doctoral work
• Allowing the candidate to develop a proposal for the development of a strategic plan that addresses the problem of practice (This proposal must be approved by the candidate's capstone project committee which will include you or your designee.)
• Allowing the candidate to interact with district employees to gain sufficient data for the development of a strategic plan to address the organizational problem of practice
• Serving (or appointing a designee to serve) on the final committee review of the candidate's strategic plan; this offers an opportunity to hear how the most current literature might help construct a legitimate problem of practice in your organization and some of the variables considered in the development of a strategic plan

Please Note
Ideally, the development of this strategic plan may provide new ideas that help your organization. The development of this strategic plan, however, in no way obligates the organization to adopt any portion of this plan. The primary purpose is to provide an opportunity for the candidate to lead the development of a research-based strategic plan.

Organizational CEO Statement of Support

I have read the above candidate requirements for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at High Point University. At the conclusion of his/her course of study, I agree to allow the candidate listed above to complete an internship experience under the supervision of a university advisor. This internship will be mutually developed and approved by the university supervisor and my organizational designee. I also agree to allow the candidate to complete a capstone project based on the need to solve a problem of practice within the organization. This capstone project will be the development of a comprehensive strategic plan that will be designed by the student with the approval of the university committee and my designee.

[Signature]
Name and Title – Organizational CEO

[Signature]
Signature – Organizational CEO

Date

Note to Student: Once the MOU is complete, submit both pages to either:

The Norcross Graduate School
High Point University
833 Montlieu Avenue
Owensboro, NC 27262

Suite 124 in the Norcross Graduate School building

High Point University - Memorandum of Understanding: Ed.D. Fall 2013

2
HIGH POINT UNIVERSITY
Norcross Graduate School
Ed.D. in Educational Leadership
Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)

Candidate Name: Tina S. Johnson

Name of Organization: [Redacted]

Candidate's Position/Title in the Organization: [Redacted]

High Point University offers a Doctoral Degree in Educational Leadership (Ed.D.), which is designed to develop the leadership capacity of candidates from a variety of organizational leadership positions and roles. The focus of the scholarly, practitioner Program is "to solve problems of practice" by combining the latest research findings within cultural, political, and demographic context of the candidate's organization. The desired outcomes of this program are to develop the leadership capacity of our graduates and to provide a body of work that addresses everyday issues faced by leaders in educational organizations with potential resolutions to problems in context.

The candidate enrolled in the Doctoral Degree Program in Educational Leadership at High Point University needs your support and commitment to assist in his or her leadership development. The Program spans approximately 3-4 years and requires the candidate to attend weekend (Friday/Saturday) classes each semester that focus on varied aspects of educational leadership. At the beginning of the third year, the candidate will complete an internship experience, which engages him/her in many facets of executive-level leadership activities within your organization. In addition, the candidate will complete a dissertation in professional practice (DiPP), which is designed as a major culminating requirement of the Ed.D. Program. The DiPP requires the Ed.D. candidate to solve a problem of practice within the organization by identifying a major problem (or opportunity), defining the problem, and leading a strategic planning process that will resolve the problem, if implemented. The candidate is required to lead the implementation of an action plan emanating from the strategic plan. The process requires the candidate to develop a comprehensive strategic plan from a scholarly, practitioner perspective, using the most current research findings and designed to accommodate the variables/demographics, which are unique to your organization.

A significant indicator for future success of the candidate (named above) includes the organization's willingness to support the candidate by:

• Serving (or appointing a designee to serve) on the candidate's Dissertation in Professional Practice (DiPP) University Doctoral Committee during the internship and subsequent phase of implementation and evaluation.
• Allowing the candidate to determine a problem of practice pertinent to your organization and complete a review of the literature based on relevant research findings.

• Allowing the candidate to engage in an internship designed to provide observational opportunities and interactive relationships with varied organizational leaders to develop a strategic plan (This problem proposal must be approved by the EdD faculty and have approval and support from the organization.)

• Allowing the candidate to interact with district/organization employees to gain sufficient data for the development of a strategic plan to address the organizational problem of practice.

Please Note:

Ideally, the development of this strategic plan may provide new ideas that have potential to change/improve/make better the organization. The development of this strategic plan, however, in no way obligates the organization to implement the comprehensive plan, but will allow the candidate to implement an action plan emanating from it. The primary purpose is to provide an opportunity for the candidate to lead the development of a research-based strategic planning process and to implement short-term interventions (initiatives) designed to provide data for future discussion.

Organizational CEO Statement of Support

I have read the above candidate requirements for the Ed.D. in Educational Leadership at High Point University. During enrollment in his/her course of study, I agree to allow the candidate listed above to complete an internship experience under the supervision of a leader in the organization, who will be compensated with a stipend from the university. Internship experiences will include leading a strategic planning process and may include other leadership activities requested by the organization and approved by the university internship coordinator. I also agree to allow the candidate to complete a DIPP based on the need to solve a problem of practice within the organization. This DIPP will be the development of a comprehensive strategic plan designed by the candidate with the approval of the university doctoral committee (UDC), whose membership includes an organizational leader. The organizational leader (who is provided a stipend by the University) will serve a dual role as the internship coach and member of the UDC.

[Signature]

Signature of Organization's CEO

[Title of CEO]

[Redacted]

Date October 2, 2015

[Signature]

Signature of Ed.D. Program Coordinator
APPENDIX D: DISTRICT ONE'S RESEARCH SUMMARY APPROVAL AND IRB EXEMPTION

From: [Redacted]
Sent: Tuesday, April 5, 2016 11:22 AM
To: Johnson, Tina
Subject: Data request

Tina,

Your data request for *An Exploration of Teacher Retention in an Urban Public School District* has been approved. When ready to proceed to the next stage of your dissertation, you will need to complete the full Research Review process. Thank you.

Carolyn

[Redacted] Ph.D.
Director-Data & Evaluation

---

From: Johnson, Tina
Sent: Saturday, April 30, 2016 10:59 AM
To: [Redacted]
Cc: Davis, James
Subject: IRB for GCS Resigned Teachers

Dr. [Redacted] as a confirmation of our conversation on Thursday, April 28th, you shared with me that I would not need to do an IRB for [Redacted] Schools because the research study participants are no longer employees of the district.

If you would be so kind, please confirm this understanding. By doing so, I am able to provide my university with documentation. To this end, I have copied my High Point University dissertation chair - Dr. James Davis - on this email.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,
Tina
The meeting began at 3:45 PM. Four of the seven committee members were present.

What is a dissertation in practice?

The Dissertation in Practice is a scholarly endeavor that impacts a complex problem of practice. The candidate will embark on action research with a district level problem.

What is the purpose of this committee?

The committee purpose is aligned to the Strategic Plan 2016. It is to reduce the annual teacher turnover rate as measured and reported to NCDPI.

What is the data on teacher turnover in District One?

District One has experienced an increase in teacher turnover. From 2009–2015, we experienced a steady increase in teacher turnover from 10.41% to 14.95%. The Strategic Plan 2016 sets a goal of 9% by 2016.

What is the scope of the committee work?

The Strategic Planning Committee will work in three phases. The first is to understand the issues within teacher turnover. The second is to identify and implement a strategy to reduce teacher turnover. The third is to evaluate the strategies effectiveness.

As an individual committee member, what is the time and work commitment?

Committee members were invited on this Strategic Planning team for their expertise about issues related to teacher turnover. Committee members are asked to participate in a thought partnership with Tina to ensure the teacher turnover issues are fully explored before identifying a strategy to increase teacher turnover. To do so, committee members are asked to attend meetings on second Thursdays of the month from 3:30–5 PM.

What is our next step?

- Please save the dates for our future meetings.
- Carla will give Tina access to exit interview data on K12 insight.
- Tina will analyze data from District One since 2009 regarding teacher turnover.
The meeting began at 3:30 PM. Five of the seven committee members were present.

For this semester, the goal is to develop a strategic plan focused on increasing teacher turnover in District One. The topics for each meeting are found below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Who is leaving?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Why are they leaving?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>What research-based practices support teacher?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Development of Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A wiki site has been created exclusively for the strategic planning commitment. It is an open source site that requires a link to access. Confidential documents will not be placed on the wiki. However, please do not forward the link to anyone outside of the committee.

Data was presented on teacher turnover. Data were obtained from District One’s resignations received since 2009–2015. The resignation report covers data obtain from March–March during the academic year. See separate document.

After a review of the data, additional information is required for analysis and granularity. Tina will contact Stephen for more teacher data (BT status, gender, ethnicity, full time / part time) and Judy Penny to assist with a regression analysis. A regression analysis may reveal the most fragile group of teachers by predicting the migration trend in five years.

The group performed a TREGO Situation Appraisal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>See the Issue</th>
<th>What threats and opportunities do we face?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Losing teachers to charter schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• District One may not be considered as</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a great place to work within the state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lowered parent and community confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Opportunities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Making sure younger teachers understand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>retirement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Changing the culture—following the “on</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>boarding” tradition within the district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Increased employee engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarify the Issue</td>
<td>What else about the issue is of concern to you?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What are we doing in the district to f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>foster teacher? There is much that we c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>annot change within the state and its l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>egislation. But, as a district, we can c</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>hange affect change in the culture.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assess Priorities</td>
<td>What is the urgency of this issue?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• EC teachers tend to leave the district</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>in the fastest rate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name Next Steps</td>
<td>What decisions do we need to make?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Examine more data about the numbers o</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>f teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Next meeting, we will review the reas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sons why teachers leave</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Closure & Next Steps:

- Tina will review the following data sources for resignation Reasons:
  - Past seven years of submitted resignation codes
  - District One Exit interviews from August 2012–Dec 2015
  - District One Teacher Working Conditions Survey 2010 & 2012
  - NC Annual Teacher Turnover Report 2015

- Tina will contact Stephen about additional teacher data.

- Tina will contact Judy to assist with regression analysis.

Our next meeting is Thursday, February 11th at 3:30 PM.
Four out of seven committee members were present.

1) **Scope of Work for the Committee**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>Overview of District One Teacher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>Who is leaving?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Why are they leaving?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What are the short-term and long-term goals?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Brainstorming Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Development of Strategic Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2) **Update on Revised Data on Teacher Demographics**

   The committee reviewed the revised data points on who is leaving the district. The updated data is contained in the PowerPoint.

3) **Review Reasons for Teacher Turnover**

   The committee reviewed data regarding resignations and teachers’ satisfaction from the following three sources:
   c. Exit Interviews 2012 - 2015

4) **3 Short Term Goals Towards Improved Teacher**

   Based on the available resources (time, budget, and personnel) and the data gleaned from teacher demographics and cited reasons for teacher resignations, the committee identified the following goals for the dissertation in practice:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long Term Goal as noted in the Strategic Plan</td>
<td>Reduce the annual teacher turnover rate as measured/reported by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) from the 2012 baseline: 11.66 percent to the 2016 measure: 9 percent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Term Goal 1</td>
<td>To understand why teachers are leaving to go to other districts by:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| (Addresses the Current Status of District One Teacher Turnover) | • conducting focus groups;  
• comparing District One Teacher Working Condition Results to other districts; and  
• revising resignation sheets.  
1. |
| Short Term Goal 2 | Conduct a regression analysis to determine which teaching population in District One is mostly likely to be a critical need within the next five years |
| (Addresses the Future Needs of the Teacher Turnover Issue) | |
| Short Term Goal 3 | Increase principal understanding of the teacher issue and provide strategies to increase teacher |
| (Addresses an Intervention for Improved Teacher Turnover) | |

5) Closure & Next Steps:

We will meet on April 7\textsuperscript{th} at 3:30 PM to review the strategic plan.
The meeting began at 3:30 PM. Five out of seven committee members were present.

The committee reviewed the logic model and strategic plan and provided final comments as represented below. The following chart represents goals for the dissertation in practice.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Long Term Goal</strong></td>
<td>To reduce the annual teacher turnover rate as measured/reported by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) from the 2016 baseline: 14.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short Term Goal 1 &amp; Strategy</strong></td>
<td>To understand why teachers are leaving District One for employment in other NC public schools by:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Addresses the Current Status of District One Teacher Turnover)</td>
<td>• Conducting focus groups/ telephone interviews/surveys;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Comparing District One 2016 Teacher Working Condition results against three neighboring districts; and</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Revising resignation sheets to specifically capture why teachers are leaving the district to teach in other NC public schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Short Term Goal 3 &amp; Strategy</strong></td>
<td>To increase school-based administration’s understanding of the teacher turnover issue, professional development will be conducted on the teacher turnover trends, distributive leadership, and strategies for increased teacher attrition. Hard-to-staff content specialists will also co-present to share strategies for increasing teacher satisfaction.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The following chart represents the logic model for the scope of work.

Below is a timeline for the proposed work.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Resources Needed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 2016</td>
<td>Presenting PD to Principals on Teacher</td>
<td>Resigned Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conducting Surveys/Focus Groups and Interviews with Resigned Teachers</td>
<td>IRB from High Point University and District One</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Approval to Present at a Principal’s Meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August 2016</td>
<td>Revising Resignations Sheets</td>
<td>Human Resources Approval</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conducting Surveys/Focus Groups and Interviews with Resigned Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Progress Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September 2016</td>
<td>Comparing District One’s North Carolina Teacher Working Condition Results against Districts 2, 3, 4, and 5 results</td>
<td>NC Teacher Working Condition Results</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conducting Surveys/Focus Groups and Interviews with Resigned Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Progress Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Month</td>
<td>Activity</td>
<td>Resources Needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October - November 2016</td>
<td>Conducting Surveys/Focus Groups and Interviews with Resigned Teachers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Progress Monitoring</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Evaluation of the work will occur by measuring the migration rate at the conclusion of the work against the past migration rates.

No further meetings are scheduled at this point. Email communications will be provided to update you on progress.

Thank you for your thoughtful partnership!
The meeting ended at 4:20 PM.
APPENDIX I: CONSENT EMAIL TO PARTICIPANTS

Dear Former ---- County Schools Teacher:

I am a High Point University doctoral student conducting research on teacher turnover in ---- County Schools. During 2010–2015, you were employed with the district and submitted a resignation. Because of your tendered resignation during that time, you have been selected to participate in this research study.

The research study seeks to determine the contributing factors why teachers have left ---- County Schools during 2010–2015. By participating in this 11 question survey, you will be assisting ---- County Schools to identify employment obstacles for teachers and provide suggestions for improved teacher satisfaction. Within the survey, you will have an opportunity to indicate if you would like to participate in a telephone interview to provide further information about your experience with ---- County Schools.

**Important Things to Know about Being Part of the Study**

1. **You don’t have to do this.** Participation is completely voluntary.

2. **Pay.** There is none for doing this. You are doing it for free.

3. **Risks to you.** Since you are no longer an employee of District One, there are no risks to you.

4. **Your responses will be kept confidential.** Your survey responses are anonymous and will remain so unless you indicate that you wish to participate in the telephone interview and provide your name and number. In this case, only the researchers will have access to your responses and will keep the information confidential.

5. **If you have questions about the study.** Please contact Tina Johnson at johns011@highpoint.edu / (336) 549-0739 or Dr. James Davis at jdavis@highpoint.edu / (336)841-9237.

6. **If you have questions regarding your rights as a subject in this study.** You may contact Dr. Kimberly Wear, High Point University’s IRB Chair, (336) 841-9246, kwear@highpoint.edu.

To participate in the survey, please visit:

Thank you in advance.

Tina Johnson
Dear Former District One Teacher:

Happy Summer! I am a High Point University doctoral student conducting research on teacher turnover in District one. During 2010–2015, you were employed with the district and submitted a resignation. Because of your resignation to the district during that time, you have been selected to participate in this research study. The research study seeks to determine why teachers have left District One to teach in other North Carolina public school districts during 2010 - 2015. By participating in this 11 question survey, you will be assisting District One to identify employment obstacles for teachers and provide suggestions for improved teacher satisfaction. After the completion of the 11 questions, you will have an opportunity to indicate if you would like to participate in a telephone interview to provide further information about your experience with District One. The link is at the bottom of this email.

**Important Things to Know about Being Part of the Study**

1. **You don’t have to do this.** Participation is completely voluntary.
2. **Pay.** There is none for doing this. You are doing it for free.
3. **Risks to you.** Since you are no longer an employee of District One, there are no risks to you.
4. **Your responses will be kept confidential.** Your survey responses are anonymous and will remain so unless you indicate that you wish to participate in the telephone interview and provide your name and number. In this case, only the researchers will have access to your responses and will keep the information confidential.
5. **If you have questions about the study.** Please contact Tina Johnson at johns011@highpoint.edu or Dr. James Davis at jdavis@highpoint.edu.
6. **If you have questions regarding your rights as a subject in this study.** You may contact Dr. Kimberly Wear, High Point University’s IRB Chair, (336) 841-9246, kwear@highpoint.edu.
APPENDIX K: SAMPLE TELEPHONE INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Tina: The first question is can you tell me your reason for leaving District One schools?

AF: Absolutely horrible principal.

Tina: Okay. Can you tell about what the principal, what behavior was the principal doing that drove you away from the school and the district?

AF: Didn’t support the teachers, he kept demanding without giving.

Tina: Okay.

AF: He lied so consistently that if he told me that the sky was blue. If I wasn’t sitting near a window, I wouldn’t have believed it.

Tina: Okay. What could the district have done to intervene and if there is anything. Is there anything that the district could of done to help you to stay in the district, in regards to working with your principal?

AF: I don’t know, I’d never been in that situation before. I think the district is so focused on trying to deal with a changing clientele [inaudible 00:02:15] my background, I taught in a city in one of the worst schools in the country before I moved out here.

Tina: Okay.

AF: They’re struggling with trying to make things improve without necessarily knowing how. It’s not [you need 00:02:33] District One. I think it’s essentially a nation of wide problem.

Tina: Okay.

AF: There’s a lot of fits and starts with no directed plan I think.

Tina: Okay and so after you left District One, what district did you go to?

AF: Johnson District

Tina: Is that where you still currently teach?

AF: Yes.
AF: I think I would just support them openly and honestly. They wanted you to see teacher evaluation system, it should be used as a tool and constructively and I didn’t think that was happening in District One.

Tina: Okay. Do you feel like that happens where you are now, do you feel like it’s done, it’s used as a way to support teachers?

AF: Absolutely.

Tina: Okay. That’s good-

AF: [inaudible 00:03:42]. I got the administrators that I work with, I have a hundred percent support of and so does the other teachers. There’s very little in the way of what you would, what would constitute an adversary relationship.

Tina: Okay. The last question is, are there any other recommendation you would like District One schools to consider?

AF: The only thing I can recommend would be, pick a plan for teachers. Pick a plan for the students and focus on both.

Tina: Okay.

AF: Students are the product, you have to have a key quality people to deliver the product.

Tina: Okay.

AF: If you’re in a struggling school for example, definitely was the one I was at. In the enrichment region. You’re not dealing with the same kids for example as I see in Johnson District. You start to tailor things to their needs and I’m not saying lower the bar. In fact I’m saying the exact opposite.
APPENDIX L: SURVEY

1. What is your gender?
   - Male
   - Female

2. What is your ethnicity?
   - White / Caucasian
   - Black / African American
   - Hispanic / Latino
   - Native American / American Indian
   - Asian / Pacific Islander
   - Other

3. What was your age when you submitted your resignation with ----- County Schools?
   - 21–30
   - 31–40
   - 41–50
   - 51–60
   - 61–70

4. What was your teaching status when you submitted your resignation with ----- County Schools?
   - Lateral Entry
5. During your resignation year, was your school designated as a Title I school?
   - Yes, my school was a Title I school when I resigned.
   - No, my school was not a Title I school when I resigned.
   - I am not sure if my school was Title I or not.

6. During your resignation year, what did you teach?

7. What was your reason for leaving ---- County Schools?

8. Based on your experience, how can ---- County Schools’ improve teacher satisfaction?

9. Did you leave ---- County Schools to work in another North Carolina public school district? If yes, please write the name of the district below.
10. If you left ---- County Schools to work in another North Carolina public school district, what attracted you to that district?

11. If you left ---- County Schools to work in another NC public school district during 2010–2015 and are willing to participate in a short telephone interview, please note your name and phone number. Your responses will remain confidential.
APPENDIX M: TELEPHONE INTERVIEW

An Exploration of Teacher Turnover and Migration in an Urban District

Telephone Interview Script

Hello. My name is Tina Johnson and I am a doctoral student at High Point University. I am conducting research on ---- County School’s teacher turnover. This research will fulfill the requirements for my doctorate degree. It seeks to determine why teachers have left ---- County Schools during 2010–2015 for teaching opportunities in other North Carolina public school districts. By participating in this interview, you will be assisting ---- County Schools to identify employment obstacles and suggest strategies for improved teacher satisfaction.

I anticipate this interview will take less than 20 minutes to complete. There is no compensation for responding nor is there any known risk. In order to ensure that all information will remain confidential, I will not record your name. Participation is strictly voluntary and you may refuse to participate at any time.

I appreciate your willingness to help with my project. The data collected will provide useful information regarding teacher retention. If you would like a summary copy of this study, please let me know at the end of the interview.

If you have questions, please contact me at (336) 549.0739. My faculty monitor is Dr. James Davis and he can be reached at (336) 841.9237. Should you have any concerns, you may also contact High Point University’s, Dr. Kimberly Wear, at (336) 841-9246.

Let’s begin with the five questions.

1. What were your reasons for leaving ---- County Schools?
2. What could ---- County Schools have done to encourage you to remain in the district?
3. What was your primary reason for selecting the North Carolina public district that you worked in after ---- County Schools?
4. What district did you transfer to?
5. When you compare both districts, what teacher satisfaction strategies can ---- County Schools learn from the district you transferred to?
APPENDIX N: STRATEGIC PLANNING TEAM SURVEY RESPONSES

What was the strength of the leadership of the strategic planning team? (4 responses)

- The meetings were very well organized, leaving time to focus on the discussion and generation of ideas. Diverse perspectives were represented.
- Very Strong and focused.
- Very strong
- Very organized and well structured.

What could have improved your experience on the strategic planning team? (4 responses)

- Nothing. Everything was perfect.
- Being able to communicate and share information in an electronic format would be nice.
- Can't think of anything
- Nothing noted.

Do you believe the goals and strategic plan developed by the strategic planning team will positively impact teacher turnover within our district? (4 responses)

- 75%
- 25%

- Yes, I believe the goals and strategic plan will positively impact teacher turnover in our district.
- No, I do not believe the goals and strategic plan will positively impact teacher turnover in GCS.
- At this time, I am not sure if the goals and strategic plan will posi...
Good morning. Hope you are doing well. I wanted to provide you with an update on my progress.

- The survey to former District One teachers who resigned during 2010 - 2015 has been administered. I received 341 responses.
- I also conducted 30 interviews with teachers who left District One to work in another NC public school district.

In my previous update to you, I shared the questions that I asked in both formats.

Currently, I am in the process of analyzing the data from both sources by looking for themes. I would like to land on three recommendations for improved teacher retention. As I make progress, I will continue to share.

Make it a great day!
Tina
**APPENDIX P: EMAIL TO NON-ELIGIBLE SURVEY PARTICIPANTS**

**From:** Johnson, Tina  
**Sent:** Monday, August 15, 2016 8:28 PM  
**To:** Johnson, Tina  
**Subject:** RE: Survey Request Regarding Your Experience with District One

Greetings. This morning, you received an invitation to participate in a survey about your experience as a resigned teacher from District One. Regrettably, the survey invitation was sent to you in error. Please know that District One does not have you listed as a resigned teacher. During the 2010–2015 years, you experienced some movement with your employment within the district (position transfer, retirement, and/or interim contract end). As a result, your name was on the teacher turnover list for this time period. Again, this does not constitute a resignation. I hope this error did not present you with any inconvenience or alarm you in anyway. Because you did not submit a resignation, you are not eligible to complete the survey. However, I do appreciate your attention to my request.

Feel free to contact me with any further questions/concerns.

My sincere apologies and best wishes to you.
Tina

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Tina S. Johnson  
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership  
Email: johns011@highpoint.edu
From: Johnson, Tina
Sent: Sunday, September 04, 2016 3:25 PM
To: Johnson, Tina
Subject: Phone Interview Request | Regarding Your Experience with District One

Happy Labor Day Weekend! Hope this email finds you doing well. My name is Tina Johnson. I am a doctoral student at High Point University and I am researching District One’s teacher resignation rates between 2010 - 2015. On August 15th, I contacted you with an invitation to participate in an online survey - see the email below. If you had the opportunity to complete it, I appreciate it greatly. I am looking to talk to teachers who resigned from District One during the years of 2010 - 2015 and then went to work in another NC public school district. The purpose of my research is to provide District One with recommendations for improved teacher retention and satisfaction.

If you are willing to participate in a phone interview about 10–15 minutes regarding your experience with District One, please reply with your name and cell number to this email. Phone interviews are optional and will remain anonymous.

Thank you for reading this email. Enjoy your time off this weekend!
Tina

Tina S. Johnson
Doctoral Candidate, Educational Leadership
Email: johns011@highpoint.edu
APPENDIX R: IRB APPROVAL

July 7, 2016

Protocol #: 201606-493
Title of Research: An Exploration of Teacher Turnover and Migration in an Urban District in North Carolina
Primary Investigator: Tina Johnson, Graduate Student, School of Education
Faculty Supervisor: James Davis, School of Education

The High Point University Institutional Review Board (IRB) has reviewed and approved this research protocol under an exempt review (rules 1 & 2) in accordance with Title 45 CFR 46.110.

If you require any modifications that alter methodology in a substantial way, change the Principal Investigator (PI) or Co-Investigator(s), or any changes in the selection of your participants, you must notify the IRB before implementing the modifications as required by Title 45 CFR 46.103 (b) 4(iii). To report changes, you must submit a protocol modification form for review.

The project is approved for seven months. You must submit a study completion report to the IRB by January 7, 2017.

The IRB approved the waiver of signed, written consent due to the nature of the protocol (anonymous online survey). The consent form information must be presented and available to all human subjects in this study.

All investigators listed in this protocol must maintain current human subjects training certificates for the duration of the study.

If you have any questions related to this research or to the IRB, you may contact me at (336) 841-9246.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Dr. Kimberly Wear
Associate Professor of Psychology
IRB Chair