

Principal and Teacher Perceptions on Practices that Impact Teacher Job
Satisfaction and Retention in Title I Elementary Schools with High Teacher
Retention Rates in a Large Suburban Central Virginia School Division

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ABSTRACT

Teacher shortages throughout the country have been an issue for school divisions and leaders. The demand for teachers has increased, while the number of teachers entering and graduating from teacher preparation programs is decreasing (Sutcher et al., 2016). Increased teacher demands by school divisions, schools, families, and testing requirements have contributed to declining teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention. Teachers are leaving high poverty, high minority schools for more affluent schools (Hanushek et al., 2004). The challenge of retaining quality teachers affects schools with diverse populations and high poverty, thus contributing to achievement gaps between minority and non-minority groups (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Teachers in high poverty or high minority schools, mostly categorized as Title I schools, report low teacher job satisfaction levels, translating into high teacher turnover.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify principal practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The researcher sought to gain insight from Title I elementary teachers on the factors that they identified as impacting their job satisfaction and retention in their Title I elementary school. Title I elementary principals were interviewed and asked to identify their practices that they perceived to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. The researcher sought to identify common factors identified by both Title I elementary principals and teachers in impacting teacher job satisfaction and retention. The intended outcome of this study was to provide Title I elementary principals and school division leaders with qualitative data to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools.

Data collection included five principal interviews and five teacher focus groups with 16 teachers in Title I elementary schools. An analysis of the data indicated that both teachers and principals perceived support, professional respect, relationships, climate, community, and collaboration to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools. It is anticipated that this study's results could help Title I elementary principals and school divisions

with high teacher turnover implement practices to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention in Title I elementary schools; thereby improving consistent, quality instruction and student achievement.

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GENERAL AUDIENCE ABSTRACT

Teacher shortages throughout the country have been an issue for school divisions and leaders. The demand for teachers has increased, while the number of teachers entering and graduating from teacher preparation programs, and remaining in the profession is decreasing. High poverty, high minority schools, and/or Title I schools are impacted more severely by the teacher retention challenges (Garcia & Weiss, 2019; Sutchter et al., 2016). The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify principal practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The researcher sought to gain insight from Title I elementary teachers on the factors that they identified as impacting their job satisfaction and retention in their Title I elementary school. Title I elementary principals were interviewed and asked to identify their practices that they perceived to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. The researcher sought to identify common factors identified by both Title I elementary principals and teachers in impacting teacher job satisfaction and retention. The intended outcome of this study was to provide Title I elementary principals and school division leaders with qualitative data to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools.

Data were collected from five principal interviews and five teacher focus groups with 16 teachers in Title I elementary schools. An analysis of the data indicated that both teachers and principals perceived support, professional respect, relationships, climate, community, and collaboration to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools. It is anticipated that this study's results could help Title I elementary principals and school divisions with high teacher turnover implement practices to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention in Title I elementary schools; thereby improving consistent, quality instruction and student achievement.

Dedication

This research study is dedicated to my family. My husband, Michael, who supported me throughout the process. He took on a lot of extra family responsibilities to allow me to focus on my research. When I was struggling, he gave me the extra push I needed to read or write a little longer because he had everything else covered. He also gave me little gifts along the way to keep my eye on the prize. I love him with all my heart, and I could not have completed this study without him. I want to thank my daughters, Kamryn and Camille, who understood that it was important for their mom to pursue this journey. They encouraged me to keep going on those days when I just wanted to sit and spend time with them. Their negotiating family time with me helped me to find some balance.

I want to dedicate this to my mom, Claudette, who always shared how proud she was of me for pursuing my dream. She encouraged me to work and also to take care of myself all along the journey.

Lastly, I want to dedicate this study to my late grandfather, Clark J. Simmons, a Pearl Harbor Survivor. As a Navy Veteran, he recognized and appreciated hard work. He knew before I did, even as an undergraduate student, that I would end up at this point. He was with me when I started the journey, but unfortunately passed in 2017 before I finished. My Papa was always interested in my educational and career aspirations and took great pride in my successes. I dedicate this to him, because he believed before I could.

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Chapter One

Introduction

A child's education depends on the quality of the teachers he/she will have in his/her school setting. The quality of teachers depends on a school's ability to attract and retain quality teachers. (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). The topic of teacher retention has been researched for many years. School leaders are faced with the challenge of hiring and retaining quality teachers at all levels. Students in high poverty, high minority schools, and school divisions are hit the hardest with this issue (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Research has found that 35% fewer teachers enrolled in teacher preparation programs and 23% fewer graduated from these programs (Sutcher et al., 2016). School leaders and teachers are responsible for student progress based on high stakes testing accountability standards. These added responsibilities of teachers and school leaders contribute to low teacher job satisfaction and low teacher retention rates (Brown & Wynn, 2009). The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify principal practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The researcher sought to gain insight from Title I elementary teachers on the factors that they identified as impacting their job satisfaction and retention in their Title I elementary schools. Title I elementary principals were interviewed and asked to identify their practices that they perceived to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. The researcher sought to identify common factors identified by both Title I elementary principals and teachers in impacting teacher job satisfaction and retention. The intended outcome of this study was to provide Title I elementary principals and school division leaders with qualitative data to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools.

Overview of the Study

The researcher conducted a qualitative study utilizing teachers and principals in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The study included interviews with principals of Title I elementary schools with high teacher retention rates. The Title I elementary schools had diverse populations with at least 50% of their students receiving free or reduced lunch. The teacher focus groups were conducted with teachers with a minimum of two years of experience in their current Title I elementary school. The teachers were chosen from the school of the interviewed principal with the high teacher retention rates. Principals and

teachers were asked open-ended questions related to their perceptions of principal behaviors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction and teacher decisions to remain in their current school. The researcher collected participant demographic information. Teachers and principals were also asked to identify factors beyond principal behaviors that they perceived contributed to teacher job satisfaction and teachers' decisions to stay at their current Title I elementary school.

Historical Perspective

With the reauthorizations of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001, and Every Student Succeed Act (ESSA) in 2015, teacher and school performance is measured by achievement on standardized tests; which have job implications for teachers (Ryan et al., 2017). Teachers and schools around the country are experiencing an increase in the needs of students. More students come to school from homes with two working parents where English is not their first language, exhibiting behavior problems or requiring special services, and teachers report that this creates a stressful environment for them (Lambert et al., 2006). In a study by Lambert et al. (2009), teachers were found to have exhibited high levels of stress and exhaustion. Teachers in urban schools were found to attribute working conditions, school leadership, peer relationships, and school culture as reasons for low job satisfaction (Boyd et al., 2011).

Teacher supply and demand trends indicated that teacher demand is growing, but teacher supply does not meet the demand. It is predicted that by 2025 teacher demand will reach 316,000 per year, which will create a gap of almost 200,000 teachers by the 2024-2025 school year (Sutcher et al., 2016). Garcia and Weiss (2019) found that schools in high poverty areas have challenges retaining quality teachers and are severely impacted by teacher turnover and teacher shortages. The research shows that the most vulnerable students have teachers with the least amount of experience and their schools experience the most turnover. Teachers are leaving at a rate of 50% at schools serving large populations of low-income high minority students (Ingersoll, 2011). Research has found that many teachers leave their urban schools because they are “favoring higher-achieving, non-minority, non-low-income students” (Hanushek et al., 2004, p. 337). When teachers leave urban schools at higher rates, they leave the schools struggling to find, develop, and retain quality teachers (Grissom, 2011). Without the ability to retain quality teachers, this “threatens students’ ability to learn” (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Grissom (2011) found that teachers’ perception of school leadership affects their job satisfaction. This is an

essential factor as “principals are the second most important school-level factor” (Levin & Bradley, 2019 p. 7). Researchers report higher commitment levels when school leaders provide professional development and opportunities for staff members to be involved (Bogler, 2001). Thus, principal behavior is an essential factor that impacts teacher job satisfaction and commitment.

Statement of the Problem

The demand for teachers is increasing, while the supply of teachers is decreasing, as reflected in enrollment and graduation from teacher preparation programs (Sutcher et al., 2016). School divisions across the country faced difficulties retaining quality teachers in high minority, high poverty schools (Simon & Johnson, 2013). Teachers are leaving the profession before retirement age, increasing the need for qualified teachers in schools. This impact is most notable in hard to staff schools, such as high minority and high poverty schools.

The high turnover rates in hard to staff schools impact student achievement. Schools and school divisions take on high costs for the continued expense of recruiting, hiring, and developing new teachers. Research has shown that teacher turnover negatively impacts students in the high minority, high poverty schools compared to low poverty, low minority schools (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). The teacher turnover leads to the reallocation of funds needed in closing the achievement gaps to recruitment efforts, thus widening the gaps between affluent and high poverty schools (Grissom, 2011). It has been found that students in high poverty schools with high turnover are more likely to be taught by less experienced teachers and inconsistent staffing (Hanushek et al., 2004).

Significance of the Study

In “*A Nation at Risk*,” it was found that inadequate teaching salaries, poor teaching preparation programs, and quickly declining test scores led to high teacher turnover rates (Gardner, 1983). This report called for the reform of teacher education programs and teaching standards to support educators in meeting the state and local school division requirements and raising student performance. The research found that “teacher turnover has a significant and negative impact on student achievement in both math and ELA [English Language Arts]. Moreover, teacher turnover is particularly harmful to the achievement of students in schools with large populations of low-performing and Black students” (Ronfeldt et al., 2013, p. 30). It was

also found that teacher turnover resulted in teacher knowledge loss, which impacted instruction and student achievement (Ronfeldt et al., 2013).

In data from the 2011-2012 to 2012-2013 school years, high poverty schools reported 12% of their teachers leaving their schools compared to low poverty schools, which reported a 6% teacher loss. Seventy percent of the teachers who left their schools reported the most common reasons for leaving as voluntary (30%), school factors (23%), or personal reasons (23%). A 2015-2016 National Teacher and Principal Survey showed that 78.9% of high poverty schools reported vacancies, with 10.5% of the schools being unable to fill a vacancy in at least one field and 36.8% of the schools sharing it was challenging to fill a vacancy in at least one field (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Adding to the difficulty of retaining teachers, research showed that high poverty schools have higher percentages of new teachers on their staff at 39.8%, compared to 33.8% at low poverty schools (Garcia & Weiss, 2019).

Data in a 2017-2018 report shows the Top Ten Critical Shortage teaching endorsement areas in Virginia with Elementary Education PreK-6 positions being listed as number two on the list (Virginia Department of Education [VDOE], 2018). This research highlights teacher shortages and effects on student achievement in high poverty schools. In order to close achievement gaps that exist in high poverty, high minority schools, additional research is needed on how to retain teachers in these schools to maintain quality instruction and improve student achievement as compared to low poverty, low minority schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify principal practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The researcher sought to gain insight from Title I elementary teachers on the factors that they identified as impacting their job satisfaction and retention in their Title I elementary school. Title I elementary principals were interviewed and asked to identify their practices that they perceived to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. The researcher sought to identify common factors identified by both Title I elementary principals and teachers in impacting teacher job satisfaction and retention. The intended outcome of this study was to provide Title I elementary principals and school division leaders with qualitative data to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools.

The researcher examined teacher retention data in Title I elementary schools with high teacher retention rates in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The data collected for this research study included retention rates for the top five Title I elementary schools and necessary demographic information that describes the sample population of teacher and principal participants. Data were collected from Title I elementary principals and teachers through interviews and focus groups regarding their perceptions on factors that impact teacher job satisfaction and their decisions to stay in the profession or their current Title I elementary schools. The researcher sought to ascertain the similarities in the principals' and teachers' perceptions of practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and job retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division.

Justification of the Study

High teacher turnover rates and increasing demand for teachers in urban, hard-to-staff schools, lead schools and school divisions to investigate potential solutions (Garcia & Weiss, 2019, Sutchter et al., 2016). This disheartening turnover data lead school divisions to examine principal behaviors and the principals' influence on retaining a stable workforce (Grissom, 2011). In conducting this study, the researcher examined teachers' and principals' perceptions of principal behaviors and their impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools. The intended outcome of the study was to identify common principal behaviors that will impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention in Title I elementary schools. Having a stable workforce in Title I elementary schools will allow schools to hire and retain quality teachers, improve the quality of consistent instruction, and close the achievement gaps created by high teacher turnover rates.

Research Questions

The questions for this research study were as follows:

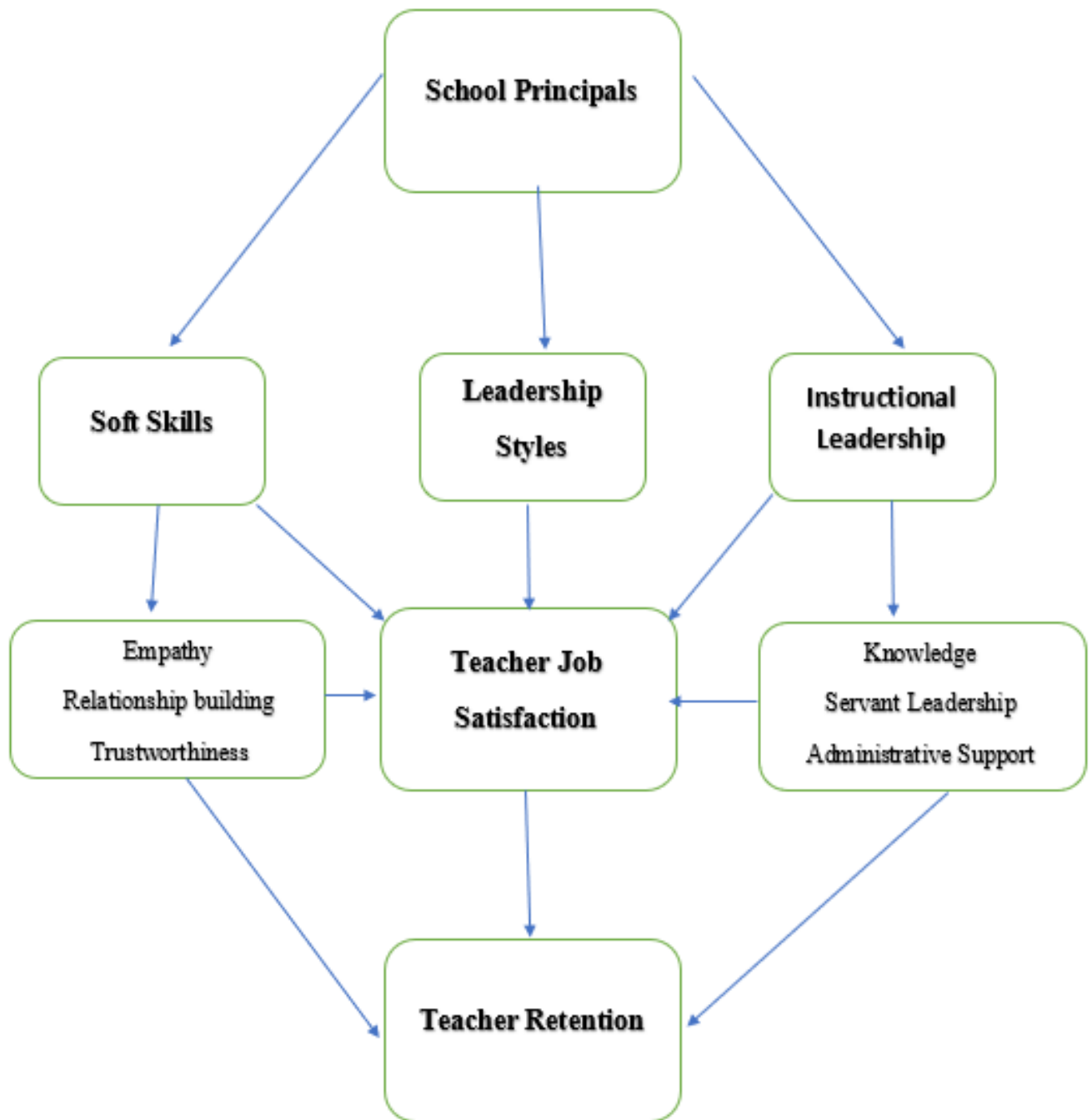
1. What practices do Title I elementary principals implement to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?
2. What practices do teachers perceive Title I elementary principals implement that impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?

Conceptual Framework

The researcher examined teachers' and principals' perceptions of the practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. Prior research has shown that several factors influence teacher job satisfaction and retention such as salary, working conditions, and administrative support. The researcher focused this study on teacher and principal perceptions of principal behaviors that impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention. The conceptual framework for this study, Figure 1, provides an overview of the factors illustrated in the research that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention related to principal behaviors.

Figure 1

Conceptual Framework – The Relationship Between School Principals and Teacher Retention



Definition of Terms

The following are key terms that will be used throughout this study. They are defined to help facilitate understanding of the research included.

Administrative support. *Administrative support* refers to how school leaders make improvements to support making teachers' work easier (Boyd et al., 2011).

Critical shortage. *Critical shortage* in Virginia, may be defined in two ways: (1) shortages by subject matter as designated from the top ten academic disciplines identified in an annual survey of school divisions; or, (2) a school personnel vacancy for which a school division receives three or fewer qualified candidates for a position. (VDOE, 2019)

Hard-to-staff schools. *Hard-to-staff schools* refer to schools in high poverty, inner-city, or rural areas that have challenges hiring and retaining teachers due to their socioeconomics or location. These schools typically have high turnover and struggle to support the number of new teachers (VDOE, 2011).

Teacher attrition. *Teacher attrition* refers to teachers leaving the teaching profession due to retirement or choosing another profession (Ingersoll, 2011).

Teacher shortage. *Teacher shortage* refers to the "inability to staff vacancies at current wages with individuals qualified to teach in the fields needed" (Sutcher et al., 2016, p. 1).

Teacher job satisfaction. *Teacher job satisfaction* refers to the "attitude of an employee toward a job, sometimes expressed as a hedonic response of liking or disliking the work itself, the rewards pay, promotions, recognition or the context working conditions, benefits" (Corsini, 1999, p. 516).

Teacher retention. *Teacher retention* is the act of teachers remaining in teaching at their current schools (Ingersoll, 2011).

Teacher turnover. *Teacher turnover* refers to teachers transferring to another school or leaving the teaching profession (Ingersoll, 2011).

Title I schools. Title I is a federal program. *Title I schools* enroll at least 40% of their students from low-income families or schools with schoolwide eligibility. They receive additional federal

funds, based on the percentage of students eligible for free or reduced meals, for staff and resources to meet the school community's needs. (VDOE, 2018)

Limitations

The researcher studied principal and teacher perceptions of the impact of principal behaviors, strategies, actions and other outside factors on teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. According to Creswell (2007), limitations are factors that the researcher cannot control. The following were limitations of the research study:

1. A potential bias may exist as the researcher is employed by the selected large suburban Central Virginia school division where the participants are located.
2. An additional potential bias is that the researcher serves as a Title I elementary school principal in the selected Central Virginia school division.
3. The researcher assumes all participants will answer interview and focus group questions honestly.
4. The researcher has no control over the participants' understanding of perception and reality.
5. The interviews and focus groups were conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, and principal and teacher availability was limited due to navigating new school challenges such as changing school schedules.
6. Lastly, a potential bias may be that the researcher cannot control the effect or influence of “groupthink or pressure” during the teacher focus group.

Delimitations

The following were delimitations of which the researcher could control when determining the subjects and location of the proposed research study:

1. The researcher chose one school division in Central Virginia for this study.
2. Title I elementary school principals and teachers in a large suburban Central Virginia school division were selected to participate in this study.
3. The researcher focused on teacher and principal perceptions of principal behaviors, strategies, actions, and outside factors that impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher

retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division.

4. The researcher limited this study to the perceptions of Title I elementary principals in schools with high teacher retention rates and with teachers in their current Title I elementary schools for a minimum of two years.

Organization of the Study

Title I schools face the challenge of high teacher turnover, low teacher job satisfaction, and retaining quality teachers. The researcher analyzed literature to uncover the research behind the reasons for low teacher job satisfaction, high turnover rates, and the impact on teacher retention. This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter One provides an introduction/overview of the study, historical perspective on teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention, statement of the problem, the significance, purpose, and justification of the proposed study, research questions, conceptual framework, the definition of terms, limitations/delimitations, and organization of the study. Chapter Two provides a review of current literature related to the proposed topic of study. Chapter Two includes search procedures and background information on teacher attrition, shortage, retention, and teacher job satisfaction. Chapter Three details the methodology for the researcher's proposed study. This chapter includes the study's purpose, description of the research design/methodology, research design justification, research questions, site/sample selection, data collection and gathering procedures, instrument design and validation data treatment and management, analysis techniques, timeline, and summary. Chapter Four will present and analyze the study's results. Chapter Five will include the findings, implications, and recommendations for further research.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Teachers have always been responsible for teaching academic content, but their job responsibilities have grown over time. With the reauthorization of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) in 2001 and Every Student Succeeds Act ESSA (ESSA) in 2015, teachers are responsible for student performance on high stakes tests, with consequences for underperformance affecting all aspects of their jobs. In an article by Jennings and Rentner (2006) on NCLB's effects, they noted that NCLB brought more testing and accountability to schools. Schools were required to have highly qualified teachers. NCLB required more focus and involvement by local and state government on student achievement and performance gaps and provided for low-performing schools to receive greater attention (Jennings & Rentner, 2006). According to Jennings and Rentner (2006) and NCLB requirements, "schools not making adequate yearly progress for five consecutive years faced restructuring in staffing, dissolution or loss of accreditation" (p. 111). NCLB and ESSA "firmly established an 'accountability era' wherein student test scores on statewide and national educational assessments have become a national yardstick for evaluating schools, teaching quality, and school effectiveness" (Ryan et al., 2017, p. 1). Teacher performance and teacher quality began to be measured by students' performance on standardized tests that started to have teacher job implications (Ryan et al., 2017).

Lambert et al. (2006) conducted a study of 317 public and private preschool teachers from Georgia, North Carolina, and South Carolina. Lambert et al. (2006) found that teachers' role in caring for students' social and emotional needs increased as student trauma affected student daily performance in the classroom (Lambert et al, 2006). Lambert et al. (2006) noted that students came to school with less sleep, less home structure and more electronics exposure. Furthermore, Lambert et al. (2006) concluded that students were more likely to come from homes with two working parents than in past generations and in some cases where English was not the native language. The researchers also found that a cultural shift took place over the last generation whereby American parents moved away from support for and recognition of educators' authority to a posture of advocacy for their children (Lambert et al., 2006). These factors have combined to make teaching a more stressful occupation than it has ever been (McCarthy & Lambert, 2006). In addition, Lambert et al. (2006) found that "children with problem behaviors" and "other special needs" added increasing demands to teachers (p. 116).

Lambert et al. (2006) concluded that “over 30% of the present sample of teachers was identified as having a substantial risk for stress” (p. 116).

Lambert et al. (2009) conducted a study of 521 teachers in 16 elementary schools in a southeastern urban area of the United States. Their study was part of a more extensive study of 3,511 teachers from seven countries comparing teacher stress in high and low poverty schools. In the study conducted by Lambert et al. (2009), 50% of the schools were Title I schools with an average of 36.74% of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch. The participants were mostly white female teachers, who averaged 11.94 years of experience with an average of 6.24 years in their current school (Lambert et al., 2009). Lambert et al. (2009) used the Classroom Appraisal of Resources and Demands (CARD) to examine the stress among teachers. Lambert et al. (2009) found that “48.4% of teachers in the CARD stress condition scored in the high range on Emotional Exhaustion” (p. 9). Correlations were found that suggest “behavior problems in the classroom could both undermine a teacher’s sense of efficacy and lead him or her to have a more critical attitude toward their ability” (Lambert et al., 2009, p. 14). The research also found that these factors made “teaching a more stressful occupation than it has ever been” (p. 2). According to the Economic Policy Institute in an article by Garcia and Weiss (2019) entitled, *The Teacher Shortage is Real, Large and Growing, and Worse Than We Thought*, researchers found the teacher shortage is even larger when considering teacher quality which includes experience, training and certifications.

Boyd et al. (2011) administered a study to first-year teachers in New York City in 2005. The survey had a 70% response rate with 4,360 teachers completing a 300-question survey that measured working conditions such as “teacher influence, administration, staff relations, students, facilities and safety” (Boyd et al., 2011, p. 312). The research asserted that “the greater the percentage of Black or Hispanic students at a school, the lower the average ratings of working conditions” across all factors (Boyd et al., 2011, p. 321). Additionally, Boyd et al. (2011) found that leadership was the “strongest predictor of retention,” whether transferring schools or leaving the profession (p. 324). Boyd et al. (2011) acknowledged that, “teacher attrition may not be substantially higher than attrition from other professions” (p. 327) but additionally acknowledged at some schools it is high enough to “disrupt the instructional cohesion and likely disadvantage students” (p. 327). The research shows these disruptions mostly affect populations of “low performing, non-White, and low-income students” (p. 327).

According to Ingersoll and Strong (2011), “[50%] of all teachers leave within the first five years of teaching” (p. 202). This shortage of teachers leaves high poverty schools suffering the most (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). The Economic Policy Institute, along with Garcia and Weiss (2019), used data from the Schools and Staffing Survey 2011–2012, the Teacher Follow-up Survey 2012–2013, and the National Teacher and Principal Survey 2015–2016 representing schools, principals, and teachers in 50 states (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). These surveys indicated that teacher shortages reflected low teacher pay (which made teaching less attractive), rough/challenging school environments, and lack of teacher training. All of the factors adversely affected low-achieving, high-poverty schools (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Hanushek et al. (2004) found that schools in Texas that served low performing students and high minority populations had more significant challenges retaining teachers than other low minority high performing schools.

While teacher shortages and retention of effective teachers is a challenge, it is normal for some teachers to leave their positions, whether it is by choice or by dismissal (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Simon and Johnson (2013) asserted that “Modest rates of turnover might positively affect schools if the departing teachers were ineffective” (p. 6). In a New York City study of 4,000 middle school teachers, Marinell and Coca (2013) found a high rate of teacher turnover with “27 percent of middle school teachers [leaving] their school within one year of having entered, 55 percent [leaving] within three years, and 66 percent [leaving] within 5 years” (p. iv). The research of Marinell and Coca (2013) also agreed with Simon and Johnson (2013) noting that some teacher turnover could be good because it brings new ideas and skills to the school. Marinell and Coca (2013) stated that while some turnover can be constructive, “too much turnover may have a host of instructional, financial, and organizational costs” (p. iv). A closer examination of our teacher shortage and the factors influencing it, such as teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention, is warranted. This literature review will examine teacher retention and attrition, its relationship to teacher job satisfaction and the impact and implications for principals/leaders.

Search Process

A comprehensive search for relevant literature about teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention was conducted through Electronic searches in Google Scholar, Virginia Tech dissertation databases, ERIC, JSTOR, and Ebscohost. The search was conducted using the

following keywords “teacher attrition,” “teacher shortage,” “teacher job satisfaction,” “principal job satisfaction,” “roles of teachers,” “teacher stress,” and “teacher dissatisfaction.” The comprehensive search yielded various resources, and only those included in the reference section are included in the literature review. The majority of the research included in this literature review is within the last 15 years, which includes 47 references to include scholarly writing, educational journals, and research studies.

Teacher Attrition

Teacher attrition is defined by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) Institute of Statistics as the “percentage of teachers at a given level of education leaving the profession in a given school year” (para. 1). Attrition rates do not consider why teachers leave, nor do they consider if teachers change schools or leave the profession entirely. Attrition rates can vary from school level, school division, and state (UNESCO, 2019).

In an Issue Brief by Alliance for Excellent Education entitled, *Teacher Attrition: A costly loss to the nation and to the states* (2005), it was concluded in an analysis of data that “teachers reported retirement as a reason for leaving less often than because of job dissatisfaction or to pursue another job” (para. 6). Teacher attrition was found to be “50 percent higher in poor schools than in wealthier ones,” with new teachers more likely to leave than veterans (para. 7). The Alliance for Excellent Education cited common reasons teachers transfer schools, leaving their previous schools, include “lack of planning time (65 percent), too heavy a workload (60 percent), problematic student behavior (53 percent), and a lack of influence over school policy (52 percent)” (para. 7).

The research conducted in the *MetLife Survey of American Teachers* (2005) reported new teachers leaving the profession due to “stress of administrative duties, classroom management, testing responsibilities and parents” (Markow & Martin, 2005, p. 87). Mack et al. (2019), studied 2,588 teachers in 46 Texas schools. Mack et al. (2019) found low job control, low organizational commitment, poor school climate, low job involvement, and lower perceived support to be reasons why teachers were more likely to leave teaching after the first year. The study went further to identify other factors that contributed to teacher attrition, such as “poorer mental quality of life, higher levels of stress, and presence of major depression, panic disorder, anxiety disorder and somatization disorder” (Mack et al., 2019, p. 1). The results of the study by Mack et al. (2019) suggested, “stress and mental quality of life impact the intention to leave the

teaching profession” (p. 10). Furthermore, Mack et al. (2019) asserted that teachers that had “alternative certifications were 2.12 times more likely to intend to quit the profession compared to teachers certified by traditional methods” (p. 9).

A study administered to 4,360 first-year teachers in New York City, by Boyd et al. (2011) found that beginning and veteran teachers had higher retention rates than mid-level experienced teachers. Boyd et al. (2011) found “teacher perceptions of the school administration has by far the greatest influence on teacher retention decisions” (303). Boyd et al. (2011) noted “a strong relationship between teacher perceptions of their school leadership and their retention decisions” (p. 309). The study conducted by Boyd et al. (2011) provided data to support the relationship between teachers' decisions to leave and the administration's support. The researchers found it unclear what teachers considered “supportive and encouraging” (Boyd et al., 2011, p. 329).

Wynn et al. (2007) conducted a three-year study examining the teacher shortage as an issue of retention rather than an issue of recruitment. Wynn et al. (2007) included 240 first- and second-year teachers who considered leaving the teaching profession to determine the factors that influenced their decisions. Wynn et al. (2007) found eight factors used to determine teachers' decisions to leave or stay in the teaching profession. Wynn et al. (2007) asserted that most factors were “strongly associated with school climate and principal leadership” (p. 209). The most common reasons found by Wynn et al. (2007) were lack of collegiality (19 percent), personal reasons (30 percent), lack of professional prestige (31 percent), administrative support (43 percent), working conditions (38 percent), lack of parental involvement (42 percent), disruptive students (58 percent) and with the highest percent salary (82 percent) (Wynn et al., 2007).

Donaldson and Johnson (2010) completed a study of enrollees in the Teach for America program enrolled in 2000, 2001, and 2002 to study teacher retention. The sample was drawn from 3,283 teachers in the Teach for America program, with 2,069 teachers responding to the survey, with a response rate of 62% (Donaldson & Johnson, 2010). The teachers enrolled were committed to at least two years of teaching, and during this survey, the teachers would have completed 4 to 6 years in the classroom. (Donaldson & Johnson, 2010). Donaldson & Johnson (2010) asserted that “teachers with more challenging assignments had a greater risk of leaving their schools and the profession in year 1” (p. 309). Furthermore, Donaldson and Johnson (2010) also concluded that when teachers were assigned “multiple grades” (p. 311), they “were at

greater risk of voluntarily leaving their school and voluntarily transferring” (p. 311) than those with experience or teaching one grade.

Teacher Shortage

Sutcher et al. (2016) defined teacher shortages as the “inability to staff vacancies at current wages with individuals qualified to teach in the fields needed” (p. 1). The US Department of Education compiled a list of teacher shortages beginning with the 1990-1991 school year through the 2017-2018 school year. This report listed shortages in all levels of education and disciplines. While it is not a job listing and does not address reasons for shortages, it illustrates the nationwide crisis of teacher shortages across levels. Sutcher et al. (2016) found that the shortages were in the areas of special education, math, and science, teachers of color, across states and in high-poverty and high minority schools. In addition, the report found that “all but a handful of states have a higher percentage of teachers not fully certified, inexperienced, or out of field in their high-poverty and high minority schools” (Sutcher et al., 2016, p. 14).

Sutcher et al. (2016), identified four factors that contributed to the teacher shortage as “a decline in teacher preparation enrollments, district efforts to return to pre-recession pupil teacher ratios, and increasing student enrollment and high attrition” (p. 1). Sutcher et al. (2016) noted that teacher shortages were severe in low socio-economic areas, particularly in science, math, special education, and English language learners. Additionally, Sutcher et al. (2016) asserted that the “Teacher demand is growing. If current trends continue, we will see about a 20% increase in annual teacher demand from 2015 levels, reaching 316,000 teachers per year by 2025” (p. 3). Furthermore, Sutcher et al. (2016) contended that while the demand is growing, “there are not enough qualified teachers applying for teaching jobs to meet the demand in all locations and fields” (p. 3). While it was found in some states like Massachusetts that reported surplus teachers, Sutcher et al. (2016) contends that “subjects or regions within states may be experiencing shortages” (p. 5). Furthermore, Sutcher et al. (2016) found that in the “2015-2016 school year 48 states and the District of Columbia reported shortages in special education; 42 states plus DC did so in mathematics; and 40 states and DC reported teacher shortages in science” (p. 5).

According to Garcia and Weiss (2019), in an effort to support NCLB 2011 and ESSA 2015, teacher demand grew; resulting in a decreased supply. Garcia and Weiss (2019) published a report to examine teacher shortage and the conditions contributing to the shortage. They used

data from the Schools and Staffing Survey 2011-2012, The Teacher Follow-Up Survey 2012-2013, and the National Teacher and Principal Survey 2015-2016, which included teachers, principals, and schools in 50 states. Garcia and Weiss (2019) recognized multiple factors impacting the supply and demand for teachers. Garcia and Weiss (2019) found that many school divisions were hiring, but were having difficulty finding qualified candidates with the ending of the recession and teacher layoffs. Garcia and Weiss (2019) noted that the repercussions of teacher shortages are widespread. Additionally, they stated,

A shortage of teachers harms students, teachers, and the public education system as a whole. Lack of sufficient, qualified teachers and staff instability threaten students' ability to learn and reduce teachers' effectiveness, and high teacher turnover consumes economic resources that could be better deployed elsewhere. The teacher shortage makes it more difficult to build a solid reputation for teaching and to professionalize it, which further contribute to perpetuating the shortage. In addition, the fact that the shortage is distributed so unevenly among students of different socioeconomic backgrounds challenges the US education system's goal of providing a sound education equitably to all children. (Garcia & Weiss, 2019, "Why It Matters," para. 1)

Garcia and Weiss (2019) concluded that factors such as demanding school environments and low salaries made it challenging to attract and retain qualified teachers. Additionally, Garcia and Weiss (2019) found that the teacher shortage was more acute than estimated, with high poverty schools impacted more severely and factoring in teacher credentials in those schools. Garcia and Weiss (2019) stated further that high-quality teachers had more options and often went to low poverty school divisions with more choice, support and better working conditions. This increased the severity of the teacher shortage in high poverty schools and school divisions (Garcia & Weiss, 2019). Garcia and Weiss (2019) asserted "when issues such as teacher quality and the unequal distribution of highly qualified teachers across schools serving different concentrations of low-income students are taken into consideration, the teacher shortage problem is much more severe than previously recognized" ("The teacher shortage is real," para. 6).

According to the research by Sutchter et al. (2016), 8% percent of teachers were leaving the profession before retirement, because of issues related to job satisfaction and working conditions. They noted there were 35% fewer teachers enrolled in teacher preparation programs. Sutchter et al. (2016) also noted a decrease in teacher graduates by 23%. In addition, Sutchter et

al. (2016) projected, based on the trends, a significant gap of almost 200,000 teachers between the anticipated demand for teachers and the expected supply of teachers by the 2024-2025 school year (Sutcher et al., 2016).

Ingersoll (2011) used previous research on teacher retention and found that organizational characteristics had more to do with teacher turnover than teacher retirement. Ingersoll used data from the Schools and Staffing Survey and the Teacher Follow Up Survey (TFS) to shed new light on teacher shortages. Ingersoll (2011) contended that “school staffing problems are primarily due to excess demand resulting from a ‘revolving door’ where large numbers of qualified teachers depart their jobs for reasons other than retirement” (p. 501). In addition, Ingersoll (2011) found, similar to the previously mentioned research, that “teacher job dissatisfaction and teachers pursuing other jobs” (p. 501) accounted for more teacher turnover than retirement.

Ingersoll et al. (2019) used data from the “National Center for Education Statistics’ (NCES) nationally representative Schools and Staffing Survey and its supplement, the Teacher Follow Up Survey (TFS)” (p. 6) to analyze minority teacher turnover. Ingersoll et al. (2019) noted, that “minority teachers departed at higher rates because the schools in which they were employed tended to have less positive organizational structure” (p. 31). Ingersoll et al. (2019) found that “minority teachers are overwhelmingly employed in public schools serving high-poverty, high-minority, and urban communities. Minority teachers are two or three times more likely than non-minority teachers to work in such hard-to-staff schools” (Ingersoll, 2019 p. 31).

Gray and Taie (2015) conducted a longitudinal study that included 1,900 teachers with follow up written and verbal contact. They researched nationwide trends during the five-year period of 2007-08 through 2011-12. Gray and Taie (2015) found that the percentage of teachers not returning increased each year among teachers beginning in the 2007-2008 school from 10 percent to 17 percent in the 2011-2012 school year. In addition, Gray and Taie (2015) contended that only “5 percent were working in the field of education but not as regular K-12 classroom teachers” (p. 3). Moreover, Gray and Taie (2015) found “the percentage of beginning teachers who continued to teach after the first year varied by first-year salary level” (p. 3).

In the Lambert et al. (2006) study of 317 public and private preschool teachers, researchers acknowledged that “teaching has been recognized as an emotionally taxing and potentially frustrating occupation for centuries” (p. 105) with working conditions presenting a

“high risk for burnout” (p. 106). Many teachers choose to leave schools with large populations of low-income, low-performing students as well as those with high minority populations. In Boyd et al. (2011) study of 4,360 New York City teachers, they examined the relationship between teacher turnover and school factors. Boyd et al. (2011) asserted that “teacher influence over school policy, the effectiveness of the school administration, staff relations, student behavior, facilities and safety” contributed to teachers’ decision to leave the profession (Boyd, et al., 2011 p. 304). Alliance for Excellent Education (2008) reported that 84 percent of teachers transferred out of schools or left the profession.

In a North Carolina analysis of school climate, Ladd (2011) found “working conditions as perceived by teachers is highly predictive of individual teachers’ intentions to leave their current schools” (p. 253). It was also stated that “the higher the perceived quality of school leadership, the less likely teachers are either to plan to leave or actually leave the school” (Ladd, 2011 p. 256). The research found teachers’ perceptions of working conditions and leadership matter (Ladd, 2011).

Teacher Retention

In a literature review on teacher retention by the Harvard Graduate School of Education, it was found that “teachers’ decisions to remain in their schools ... are influenced by a combination of the intrinsic and extrinsic rewards that they receive in their work” (Johnson et al., 2005 p. 1). Johnson et al. (2005) contended that these rewards could interact and were different for each teacher. Johnson et al. (2005) also noted that teachers who reported feeling effective, found that to be an important intrinsic motivator. Furthermore, Johnson et al. (2005) found that, “if working conditions make it impossible for them to achieve the intrinsic rewards for which they entered teaching, they are likely to leave the classroom or withdraw psychologically” (p. 2). Johnson et al. (2005) also suggested that many factors that influenced teacher retention. The Harvard researchers did not recommend focusing solely on retaining teachers, as student achievement is most important and low performing teachers should not be retained. Researchers agree that some attrition is necessary (Johnson et al, 2005; Marinell & Coca, 2013; Simon & Johnson, 2013). Moreover, Johnson et al. (2005) also acknowledged that the reasons why teachers left the teaching profession varied between men and women, race, teaching level, stage of life, stage in teaching, social economics, and school demands and facilities (Johnson et al., 2005).

Johnson et al. (2005) stated that continued research must contain carefully designed “qualitative studies that are designed to provide telling comparisons of groups and contexts” (p. 102). The Harvard literature review concluded that two major outcomes regarding teacher retention were the decisions that teachers made to remain in a school/transfer schools or leave the teaching profession. These decisions require longitudinal studies that are difficult to conduct. The other primary outcome identified by these researchers was student achievement, which must be considered in future discussions of teacher retention (Johnson et al., 2005).

Sutcher et al. (2016) found four major factors impacting teacher recruitment and retention: compensation, preparation, mentoring and induction, and teaching conditions. “Beginning and veteran teachers are more likely to quit when they work in districts with lower wages and when their salaries are low relative to alternative wage opportunities” (Sutcher et al., 2016 p. 55). When teachers received little pedagogical training, they were more likely to leave teaching after their first year of teaching. Sutcher et al. (2016) found that “well designed mentoring programs improve retention rates for new teachers, as well as their attitudes, feelings of efficacy, and instructional skills” (p. 64). Furthermore, Sutcher et al. (2016) asserted that teacher perceptions about working conditions, including facilities, “administrative support, collegial opportunities and teacher input into decision making” (p. 65) were noted as reasons why teachers leave the profession.

Ingersoll et al. (2019) contended that “minority teachers have significantly higher turnover than white teachers” (p. 2). In addition, Ingersoll et al. (2019) found that in “2004-2005, 2008-2009, and 2012-2013 school years, minority turnover, was respectively, 18%, 24%, and 25% higher than nonminority teacher turnover” (p. 19). The researchers found this was also true of significant subgroups with “Blacks, Hispanics, Asians and Native American teachers each had higher rates of turnover than did non-minority teachers” (Ingersoll et al., 2019 p. 19). Furthermore, Ingersoll et al. (2019) asserted that minority teachers self-reported their top reasons for leaving their position as job dissatisfaction, family/personal reasons and/or to pursue another job. Those that left their job due to job dissatisfaction attributed this to school leadership, the effects of school assessments and accountability affecting teachers, student discipline, lack of shared decision making and teaching autonomy (Ingersoll et al., 2019). In addition, Ingersoll et al. (2019) found minority departure rates higher because teachers reported, “the schools in which they were employed tended to have less positive organizational structure” (p. 31). Ingersoll et al.

(2019) indicated that these reasons were aligned with their nonminority teacher peers' reasons for leaving the teaching profession.

Furthermore, Ingersoll et al. (2019) contended that while minority and nonminority teachers' reasons for leaving the profession were similar, they found minority teachers "slightly less likely to move from schools with higher poverty-level enrollments" (Ingersoll et al., 2019, p. 27). The researchers noted "a growing mismatch between the degree of racial/ethnic diversity in the nation's student population and the degree of diversity in the nation's elementary and secondary teaching force" (p. 30). Ingersoll et al. (2019) found in "2012, 37% of the nation's population was minority, and 44% of all elementary and secondary students were minority but only 17.3% of all elementary and secondary teachers were minority. (p. 30). Ingersoll et al. (2019) found that the low number of minority teachers nationwide and the higher rate of minority teacher turnover combined with minority teachers being "two to three times more likely than non-minority teachers to work in such hard-to-staff schools" (p. 31) contributed to high rates of teacher turnover.

In a study of over 30,000 teachers in nearly 6,000 public schools, Olsen and Huang (2018), acknowledged the link between teacher retention, job satisfaction, and school leadership. As part of their discussion, Olsen and Huang (2018) suggested educational policy makers needed to prioritize the delegation of resources to recruiting teachers that have demonstrated "capacity, ability, interest and cultural competence to become a principal" (p. 20). Olsen and Huang (2018) found that by increasing recruitment efforts and "leadership training programs for qualified individuals interested in becoming a principal, policy makers can directly influence the leadership ability of principals, which ... has shown to be potentially beneficial for increasing teacher job satisfaction" (p. 21).

Brown and Wynn (2009) conducted a study in an urban south-eastern school division. The study included 12 principals to "identify the common characteristics and strategies principals use to retain teachers" (p. 45) in a small urban school division with a high attrition rate of beginning teachers. Brown and Wynn (2009) included twelve schools with the lowest attrition rates in the school division. According to Brown and Wynn (2009), "school size, location, wealth, student composition, school grade level, and school type" (p. 39) contributed to teacher retention. Brown and Wynn (2009) found that retaining teachers started with the careful selection and support of teachers at the moment of employment and throughout their career.

Teacher Job Satisfaction

In the 2010 study by Zulfu Demirtas in ScienceDirect, Demirtas used Locke's (1976) definition of job satisfaction, as "a positive or pleasant emotional state resulting from a person's appreciation of his/her own job or experience." Demirtas (2010) surveyed ten primary schools in Elazig, Turkey during 2009-2010 with 289 surveys completed. Demirtas (2010) found many factors such as life satisfaction, service quality, performance, demographic, job and personality characteristics. Demirtas (2010) asserted that teachers' and managers' roles must be examined because of their impact on performance.

"Demirtas (2010) found that "Teaching satisfaction is a function of the perceived relation between what one wants from one's job and what one perceives each as offering or entailing" (p. 1072). Demirtas (2010) found low teacher job satisfaction connected with stress which led to burnout. While Demirtas (2010) did not find job satisfaction levels to be "increasing or decreasing parallel to age" (p. 1072), the results did illustrate low job satisfaction in the earlier years of teaching (0-5 years), with higher levels of job satisfaction within 6-10 years and the lowest in teachers serving more than 21 years (Demirtas, 2010). Moreover, Demirtas (2010) asserted that teachers with 6 to 20 years of experience had higher levels of job satisfaction because "teachers seem to have overcome the professional insufficiencies" (p. 1073). Demirtas (2010) found that "professional experience acquired after 20 years causes teachers to have a low level of job satisfaction, like in the beginning of their professional career" (p. 1073). Research by Boyd et al. (2011) also found that beginning and veteran teachers have higher levels of turnover and job dissatisfaction. Boyd et al. (2011) suggested including senior teachers in decision making, appointing them as coaches/mentors and providing professional assistance may increase job satisfaction.

Kouali (2017) researched "the instructional practice of school principals and its effect on teachers' job satisfaction" in a mixed-method quantitative study (p. 958). Kouali (2017) included 173 primary principals and 504 teachers. The study revealed that when principals addressed instructional tasks, there was no evidence of higher levels of teacher job satisfaction (Kouali, 2017). Kouali (2017) concluded that teachers appreciated a

helpful, sincere, principal who shows respect, trust and genuine interest for his/her teachers. Stress, imposed innovations/changes, control and pressure were referred as

undesirable behaviors, even when the principal's motives were considered as instructional and in favor of student's learning (Kouali, 2017, p. 968).

Kouali (2017) found that teachers were more satisfied when principals were in the traditional role of the principal as manager such as exhibiting, "characteristics of the humane coordinator, carrying through the administrative tasks of the position" (p. 968). In addition, Kouali (2017) asserted that the perception of the role of the principal was vague among teachers even when "the desire of the principals for more instructional practice couples with autocratic behavior, teachers then become even more negative" (p. 969) and less satisfied. With the increased focus on instruction by principals, teacher satisfaction decreased. Additionally, Kouali (2017) stated that changes are needed to evaluate, promote principals and principal training programs. In the research, Kouali (2017) found that "school principals must be taught different leadership styles and learn to modify their leadership behavior according to the situation and the professional maturity of their teachers. In this way, they will be able to increase the level of teachers' satisfaction" (Kouali, 2017 p. 958).

While Kouali (2017) found a connection between teacher satisfaction and principal leadership, researchers Dutta and Sahney (2016) did not. Dutta and Sahney (2016) examined the correlation between teacher satisfaction and principal leadership. Dutta and Sahney conducted a study including 306 principals and 1,539 teachers from 306 secondary schools in two metropolitan cities in India. Dutta and Sahney (2016) found no direct connection between teacher job satisfaction and principal leadership behaviors. The researchers asserted that "physical climate appeared to play a dominating role in mediating instructional leadership effects on teacher job satisfaction" (p. 952). Dutta and Sahney (2016) found that "teachers' work-related attitudes and classroom practices are more directly related to student achievement than the work of principals" (p. 951).

The definition of job satisfaction as defined by Corsini (1999) is found to be "attitude of an employee toward a job, sometimes expressed as a hedonic response of liking or disliking the work itself, the rewards pay, promotions, recognition, or the context (working conditions, benefits)" (p. 516). Research conducted by Tillman and Tillman (2008) in the *Academy of Educational Leadership Journal* included a convenience sampling of 81 certified teachers in South Carolina. Tillman and Tillman (2008) studied three factors and their correlation with teacher job satisfaction. The factors they studied were teacher length of service, teacher salary,

and supervision. Tillman and Tillman (2008) found additional research is needed to link length of service to job satisfaction, which is contradictory to what was found by Dermirtas (2010) and Boyd et al. (2011).

Furthermore, Tillman and Tillman (2008) found no correlation between teacher salary and job satisfaction. Tillman and Tillman (2008) established a positive correlation between supervision and teacher job satisfaction. They discovered that coworkers and supervisors have effects on job satisfaction. Their research concluded that coworkers and supervisors affect job satisfaction (Tillman & Tillman, 2008).

In a study by Olsen and Huang (2018), 30,670 teachers from 6,620 public schools were studied. In this study, Olsen and Huang (2018) contended that teacher cooperation, defined as “teacher interdependence” (p. 5) along with “collaboration, and collegiality” (p. 5) and principal support were significant predictors of teacher job satisfaction. Olsen and Huang (2018) found “teacher perceptions of principal support had the largest effect size... at 0.57, while teacher’s perceptions of teacher cooperation had the second largest effect size... at 0.20” (p. 19). In a two-year mixed-method study by Durksen et al. (2017) of 253 teachers, they also found that when teachers were given opportunities for cooperation and collaboration with peers; especially beginning teachers, they displayed high levels of job satisfaction.

Olsen and Huang (2018) noted that the study used teacher perceptions related to principal support and teacher cooperation. Researchers agree that additional training for leaders is needed to foster healthy teacher relationships and principal teacher relationships in order to increase job satisfaction and potentially reduce teacher turnover (Kouali, 2017; Olsen & Huang, 2018). Garrison-Wade et al. (2007) conducted a mixed-method study of 124 alumni/students from Colorado’s administrative preparation programs. Garrison-Wade et al. (2007) found that principals were not receiving the necessary preparation skills to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention positively. Garrison-Wade et al. (2007) asserted that “28% self-reported lack of skills in their ability to provide constructive feedback and mentoring and 28% reported a lack in their ability to generate options and solutions in resource management (i.e., planning time, paperwork demands and alternative scheduling)” (p. 123). These are areas that are noted in this literature review by researchers to cause high teacher turnover and low teacher job satisfaction. Garrison-Wade et al. (2007) also found that principals rarely received professional development

on strategies that would increase their leadership capabilities, increase teacher job satisfaction, or that could potentially decrease teacher turnover.

Levin and Bradley (2019) found that “principals are the second most important school-level factor associated with student achievement-right after teachers” (p. 7). While turnover, retention, and teachers’ attrition are a national concern, NASSP and NAESP note that principal turnover is also a serious issue nationwide. The national average of principalship was noted as four years as of 2016-2017 (NAESP 2013; NASSP, 2013). Thirty-five percent of the principals were found only to have served two years or less, with an even lesser percent having served ten or more years at their school (Levin & Bradley, 2019). Eighteen percent of principals are not in the same school after one year with the turnover rate being 21% at high poverty schools. Levin and Bradley (2019) cited five reasons why principals left their jobs

- inadequate preparation and professional development;
- poor working conditions
- insufficient salaries
- lack of decision-making authority
- high stakes accountability policies (Levin & Bradley (2019), p. 3)

These reasons for principal turnover are align with teacher reasons for turnover or lack of job satisfaction shared previously. As is the case regarding teacher retention, Levin and Bradley (2019) found that principals are less likely to leave if they “are viewed as more effective by teachers and supervisors” (p. 4). Levin and Bradley (2019) found that principals were less likely to leave because they felt better about their work, leading to job satisfaction. In addition, Levin and Bradley (2019) asserted that when leaders were not in stable positions in buildings, this created problems for school success and teacher retention, “principal turnover results in higher teacher turnover which, in turn, is related to lower student achievement” (p. 8).

The MetLife Survey of The American Teacher Challenges for School Leadership A Survey of Teachers and Principals published a survey in February 2013. Their research included qualitative and quantitative methods of 1,000 teachers and 500 principals. The researchers found that teacher and principal job satisfaction was declining. Teacher job satisfaction was found to have declined by 23 percentage points since 2008. Over half of teachers reported feeling stressed several days a week. The researchers found that “principals and teachers with low job

satisfaction report higher levels of stress than do other educators and are more likely to work in high-need schools” (Markow & Martin, 2005, p. XX) (MetLife Survey, 2013 p. 4).

Leadership Influence and Impact

Leithwood et al. (2008), in their review of the literature, found that “school leaders improve teaching and learning indirectly and most powerfully through their influence on staff motivation, commitment, and working conditions” (p. 3). Bogler (2001) completed a study using a quantitative questionnaire to examine the “effects of principals’ leadership style (transformational or transactional), principals’ decision-making strategy (autocratic versus participative), and teachers’ perceptions on teacher satisfaction” (p. 662). The questionnaire used a sample size of 745 out of 930 Israeli teachers. According to Bogler (2001), teachers reported job satisfaction when their work gave them “a sense of self-esteem,” provided them with “opportunities for self-development,” gave them “a feeling of success,” and allowed them “to participate in determining school practices” (p. 676). The study concluded that teacher job perceptions of occupational prestige, self-esteem, autonomy at work, and professional self-development contributed the most to job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001).

Brown and Wynn (2009) conducted a qualitative study in a small, urban, southern state with 45 schools, which served 32,00 students of diverse backgrounds with a high attrition rate of beginning teachers of 28.2 percent. Interview questions were used to uncover information about leadership styles, school culture, climate, and the principal role in recruiting, retaining, and mentoring teachers (Brown & Wynn, 2009). Brown and Wynn (2009) found common themes in retaining teachers: “looking for a fit, umbrella of support gumby philosophy and building learning communities” (p. 49). According to all 12 principals interviewed by Brown and Wynn (2009), they all agreed shared values included “a passion for kids and a commitment to excellence without excuse. In other words, good enough is not good enough” (Brown & Wynn, 2009 p. 49). Principals successful at retaining teachers were strategic in their recruitment efforts, interview questions, and in teacher classroom placements. “All twelve of the principals agreed that spending more time, providing resources, and building capacity are critical components in retaining good teachers” (Brown & Wynn, 2009 p. 51). According to Brown and Wynn (2009), the most successful principals at teacher retention

provide conditions and resources needed to support new teachers in their continuous learning, growth, and professional development. They share decision making with new teachers on substantive issues, work collaboratively with others to reach shared goals, and expand teacher leadership capacity. They model high expectations for all and keep the vision of student learning alive and at the forefront of all decisions. They maintain an open door and a visible presence throughout their schools. They encourage and support collegiality among all teachers and provide nurturance, guidance, and leadership when needed. In many ways, they actually foster unofficial professional learning communities that reduce teacher isolation, increase teacher responsibility and understanding, and improve teacher satisfaction, morale and commitment. As a result, such factors greatly influence teacher retention (Brown & Wynn, 2009 p. 58).

Summary

Researchers recognize teacher job satisfaction as a challenge for educational leadership because it has implications for teacher attrition, teacher retention, principal job satisfaction, performance, and student achievement. The research included in this chapter outlines various factors that impact teacher job satisfaction, which includes teacher mental health, school working conditions, school leadership, and high stakes testing and accountability. The research suggests that the costs of low teacher job satisfaction are high for student achievement, school divisions, and the nation. Continued research is needed to determine the relationship among all factors. Additionally, the above literature warrants more research in the role of principal preparation programs and how the issue of teacher retention and/job satisfaction is addressed.

Chapter Three

Methodology

This chapter describes the researcher's methodology and procedures to complete a qualitative study on teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The researcher determined that qualitative methodologies were credited with producing descriptive data about individuals' experiences (Patton, 2002). This chapter describes the chosen qualitative design method, including the process for collecting data in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. This chapter includes details about data collection from the school division and school levels. This chapter contains the researcher's instrument to collect data from principals and teachers in the school division and the researcher's process to validate the instrument and collect and analyze data.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify principal practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The researcher sought to gain insight from Title I elementary teachers on the factors that they identified as impacting their job satisfaction and retention in their Title I elementary school. Title I elementary principals were interviewed and asked to identify their practices that they perceived to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. The researcher sought to identify common factors identified by both Title I elementary principals and teachers in impacting teacher job satisfaction and retention. The intended outcome of this study was to provide Title I elementary principals and school division leaders with qualitative data to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools.

The researcher examined teacher retention data in Title I elementary schools with low teacher turnover in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The data collected for this study included practices that lead teachers to stay in the profession and/or their current Title I elementary school. The researcher collected data from teachers on their perceptions of principal practices that contributed to teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention. The researcher sought to ascertain the similarities in principals' and teachers' perceived practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and job retention.

Research Design/Methodology

This qualitative study of Title I elementary school teachers and principals in a large suburban Central Virginia school used open-ended interview and focus group questions. Butin (2010) found that “qualitative research methods, by their very nature of attention to nuance and detail, allow for data gathering that can be extremely deep and take into consideration opinions and perspectives that may not initially be visible or obvious” (p. 76). Interview and focus group questions were developed by the researcher for this study in alignment with the research questions. According to Merriam (2009), interviews are the “most common form of data collection in qualitative studies” (p. 86). It is for this reason that the researcher conducted individual principal interviews and teacher focus groups in Title I elementary schools. Creswell (2009) asserted that conducting interviews has many advantages, such as “a) useful when participants cannot be directly observed, b) participants can provide historical data, and c) allows researcher control over the line of questioning” (p. 179). The researcher collected and analyzed the data using qualitative methodology.

The researcher obtained data from the large suburban Central Virginia school division’s Human Resources Department, which identified Title I elementary schools and their teacher retention rates for the past year. The researcher initially requested teacher retention rates for the past three years, but this information was not available due to Human Resources’ staffing changes and school closures due to the global COVID-19 pandemic. From the list provided by the school division’s Human Resources Department, the researcher ranked the schools based on highest to lowest teacher retention rates. Once the list was arranged by teacher retention rates, the researcher identified the top five Title I elementary schools with the highest teacher retention rates. The five principals associated with the schools with the highest teacher retention rates, were selected and invited by email to participate in individual interviews using questions designed for principals by the researcher. Once the principal responded he/she was sent the Information Sheet and a Meeting Bird link to sign up for an interview time and date of their convenience outside of their school hours. Each principal was asked to identify teachers currently at their school for a minimum of two years to participate in a teacher focus group. Once teachers were identified, they were sent the recruitment email and an invitation to participate in a virtual teacher focus group using the questions designed by the researcher. The responses were collected and coded to identify factors that teachers and principals identified as contributing to

teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention in Title I Elementary Schools in the large suburban Central Virginia school division. Interviews and focus groups were held virtually due to the world COVID-19 Pandemic and school closures. All interviews and focus groups were conducted after school operating hours. The researcher designed protocol (see Appendix L and M) was used to begin the interview and obtain permission to record from each participant. Upon receiving the verbal consent, the researcher recorded interviews using the electronic platform Zoom. Zoom provided transcribed copies of the recorded interview responses which the researcher used to cross check interview recordings. All recordings of interviews and focus groups were destroyed once successfully transcribed and principal member checks were completed.

Research Design Justification

A qualitative study was selected to gather information from Title I elementary teachers and principals about the factors contributing to teacher job satisfaction and retention in the high minority, low socioeconomic schools. Creswell (2009) and Merriam (2009) found that phenomenological research is best suited to study subjects' emotional and intense experiences. It was determined that interview questions would allow participants to provide their perceptions of the factors that contribute to their job satisfaction and retention. The data collected through interview questions and focus groups allowed for natural themes to occur and the opportunity to see apparent similarities and differences in teacher and principal responses.

Research Questions

1. What practices do Title I elementary principals implement to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?
2. What practices do teachers perceive Title I elementary principals implement that impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?

Site/Sample Selection

The researcher selected a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The school division was chosen due to the ease of access to participants due to the COVID-19 pandemic and school closures. The school division serves 64 schools, including 39 elementary schools, 12 middle schools, and 13 high schools. Of the 39 elementary schools in this large suburban Central

Virginia school division, 21 schools were identified as Title I serving high minority, low socioeconomic populations. Out of the 22 Title I elementary schools in the school division, the poverty measure ranged from 47% to 100%. Seven of the schools had 100% of their student populations receiving free lunch. As of Fall 2019, the school division's student membership consisted of 62,669 students. The school division's population reflected 25.4% African American, 48.3% White, 17.6% Hispanic, and 3.3% Asian. Of the 22 Title I elementary schools in the school division, the researcher used the school division's Human Resources Department's data to identify and interview principals and teachers from five elementary schools with the highest teacher retention rates serving high minority, low socioeconomic students (Title I schools).

Five elementary principals were invited to participate in individual interviews using the instrument designed by the researcher. If a principal declined to participate or did not respond to the researcher's multiple recruitment email attempts, the researcher moved to the next principal on the list that ranked the schools/principals from highest to lowest teacher retention rates. The researcher continued this process until five principals were secured for principal interviews. The researcher invited teachers that remained at each school for a minimum of two years to participate in a teacher focus group of up to five teachers using the questions designed by the researcher. The researcher used the data provided by the school division's Human Resources Department and the principal to identify the teachers meeting the minimum two-year requirement. From this list, five focus groups of up to five teachers were conducted. Each focus group represented one Title I elementary school from the top five identified schools with high teacher retention rates.

Data Collection and Gathering Procedures

Data from individual virtual principal interviews, along with the data from virtual teacher focus groups, was used for this study. A *Certificate of Completion* for training in human subject protection was obtained by the researcher and is included in Appendix A. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) Application was submitted in the Fall 2020 semester and approved. The *IRB Application Approval Letter* from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University IRB is included in Appendix B. The researcher sought and received approval from the large suburban Central Virginia school division's superintendent to complete the study. The *Cover Letter to the Division Superintendent* is included in Appendix C requesting data on Title I schools' teacher

turnover rates from the past three years. The *Division Consent Form* signed by the school division superintendent is included in Appendix D. From the list provided by the school division, five Title I elementary principals with the highest teacher retention rates were invited to participate in virtual interviews with the researcher. Participant Recruitment emails were sent to potential principal and teacher subjects. The researcher's Participant Recruitment email is included in Appendix E. Principal participants were virtually interviewed by the researcher using Principal Interview Questions included in Appendix F. The participating principals were asked to identify teachers in their building with a minimum of two years of teaching experience. The researcher chose a minimum of two years of experience to widen the potential participant sample. The researcher had knowledge that teachers in the selected school division could not transfer from the building before completing three years. Using the list provided by the school division's Human Resources Department, the researcher emailed teachers with a minimum of two years' experience and invited them to a virtual focus group using the Teacher Interview Questions created by the researcher included in Appendix G. Principals and teachers were provided an Information Sheet before participating in the virtual interview or focus group to give additional information about the study. The Virginia Tech Information Sheet is included in Appendix H. In some cases, principals preferred to send the email to their staff, and in those cases, the researcher provided the Recruitment Email and Information Sheet to the principal. Principals and teachers were asked demographic questions related to their years of administrative and teaching experience in Title I elementary schools, which is included in Appendix I and Appendix J. The data were used to describe the sample population.

Instrument Design

The researcher developed interview questions to collect data from Title I elementary teachers and principals on their perceptions of factors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction and teacher job retention. Principals were asked the Principal Interview Questions (see Appendix F). Teachers responded to questions created by the researcher in the Teacher Focus Group Interview Questions (see Appendix G). According to Merriam (2009), "the key to getting good data from interviewing is to ask good questions" (p. 95). The researcher developed the interview questions in alignment with the research questions. The data collected were used to answer the research questions of the study and uncover emerging themes from Title I elementary principal interviews and teacher focus group responses.

Figure 2, Teacher (Focus Group) Interview Questions Relevant to Research Questions, included the questions used to interview Title I elementary principals. Figure 3, Principal Interview Questions Relevant to Research Questions, included the questions used by the researcher during Title I elementary teacher focus groups.

Figure 2

Teacher (Focus Group) Interview Questions Relevant to Research Questions

Interview Questions	Research Question
1. Which of your principal’s practices do you perceive to impact your job satisfaction as a teacher?	2
2. How many of you are returning to this school next year?	2
3. What does your principal do to impact your decision to remain/return to your current school?	2
4. What would you like to see your principal do to add to your job satisfaction?	2
5. Do you have any other comments or ideas that you would like to share that you believe impact teacher job satisfaction and retention at Title I schools?	2

Figure 3

Principal Interview Questions Relevant to Research Questions

Interview Questions	Research Question
1. What practices do you implement and perceive to impact your teachers’ job satisfaction in your school?	1
2. Which of your practices do you perceive to impact your teachers’ decisions to remain at your school?	1
3. Do you have any other comments or ideas that you would like to share that you believe impact your teacher’s job satisfaction and retention in Title I schools?	1

Instrument Validation

The researcher developed an instrument to collect data from Title I elementary teachers and principals on their perceptions of teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention. The researcher created the following research questions:

1. What practices do Title I elementary principals implement to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?
2. What practices do teachers perceive Title I elementary principals implement that impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?

The research questions were used to develop interview questions for individual principal interviews and with teacher focus groups.

To test for validity, the researcher used a variety of strategies. For content validity, the researcher had educational experts (teachers and principals) review the principal and teacher interview questions and provide feedback. The researcher used their input/feedback to make necessary adjustments to the interview instruments. The researcher tested the instruments with a pool of teachers in the proposed large suburban Central Virginia school division (these teachers did not participate in the research study) to test the instruments and questions. The teacher interview questions were given to teachers to complete anonymously and provide feedback on the questions.

The researcher used the strategy of “*member checks*” also known as “respondent validation,” to assess for validity related to the individual principal interviews. Maxwell (2012) indicated, that this is an important opportunity to avoid misinterpretation of participant responses. Maxwell also asserted that member checks allows the researcher to identify their own biases and misunderstandings while analyzing participant responses. Principal participants were provided with transcribed copies of their responses and given the opportunity to review their them for accuracy and/or provide additional information to capture their perceptions. This practice is in alignment with what Merriam says in her book titled, *Qualitative Research: A Guide to Design and Implementation*, that “participants should be able to recognize their experience in your interpretation or suggest some fine-tuning to better capture their perspectives” (Merriam, 2009, p. 217). Once the transcribed responses were provided to principals, no additional information or comments were provided to the researcher; therefore, no changes were made to initial interviews.

In another attempt to create the validity of this research, the researcher used “*reflexivity*.” Lincoln and Guba (2000) define reflexivity as “the process of reflecting critically on the self as researcher, the ‘human as instrument’” (p. 183). The researcher shared her biases, assumptions, and dispositions to “allow the reader to better understand how the individual researcher might have arrived at the particular interpretations of the data (Merriam, 2009, p. 219). After the interviews were completed, the researcher sought colleague’s assistance to anonymously review teacher and principal responses (peer review) as another means of ensuring the validity of data interpretation and analysis.

Data Treatment

When conducting qualitative research, it is critical to maintain participants’ anonymity and confidentiality (Merriam, 2009). Participants were informed of the procedures/process of the study before agreeing to participate. Each participant was given the Virginia Tech Information Sheet for Participation in Research Study (see Appendix I) providing additional information about the research study and how pseudonyms would be used to maintain confidentiality along with the potential risks associated with participation. Participants were allowed to ask questions and were informed that interviews and focus groups would be recorded and transcribed before beginning. Before the researcher started each virtual principal interview and teacher focus group, verbal permission to record was obtained. No identifying information of teachers or principals was reported in the research findings.

The researcher recorded, transcribed, and printed all participant responses and coded responses using pseudonyms to maintain anonymity. Principal interview participants were allowed to review their responses by email for member checking, which offered an additional method to secure validity (Merriam, 2009). No information from principals was provided to the researcher; therefore, no changes were made to transcribed responses. All participant identifiable information and printed responses were kept locked and separate in the researchers' possession to ensure confidentiality. Once transcriptions were completed, all principal and teacher recordings were permanently destroyed.

Data Management

Once the study was approved by the Virginia Tech dissertation committee, Virginia Tech IRB, and the large suburban Central Virginia school division’s IRB committee, the researcher

began to request the needed data. The researcher collected data from the school division's Human Resource Department on Title I elementary schools' teacher retention rates. After school operating hours, virtual interviews were requested from principals with the highest teacher retention rates. Principals were asked to identify teachers with a minimum of two years of experience in their school. Those teachers were invited by email, either by the principal or the researcher, to participate in a virtual teacher focus group. Permission was secured from all participants to record, transcribe, and use quoted material without names in the final research study. All participants were notified by email explaining the study, the purpose, and the anonymous collection of their responses and informed that their participation is voluntary and they have the right to decline at any point during the study.

Each participant's responses were recorded digitally and stored in password-protected files on the researcher's personal computer. All responses were transcribed electronically on a password-protected computer and stored on a flash drive kept in the researcher's locked possession. All identifying information of the participants was kept in a separate file on the researcher's computer. The responses were coded based on recurring themes and participants' names were kept separate from responses. All participant recordings were erased after completion of transcriptions, member checks, and reviews. Participant transcriptions will be kept until the successful completion of the dissertation defense. Upon the successful completion of the dissertation defense, all copies of interview and focus group transcriptions will be destroyed.

Data Analysis Techniques

The researcher recorded participants' responses and transcribed them. Data were analyzed while being collected to avoid the data becoming "more intensive as the study progresses[d]" (Merriam, 2009, p. 169). Responses were reviewed and analyzed for developing themes. The researcher used coding. Merriam (2009) described coding as "assigning some sort of shorthand designation to various aspects of your data so that you can easily retrieve specific pieces of data... It can be words, letters, numbers, phrases, colors or combinations of these" (p. 173) to aid in the analysis of data. The researcher assigned pseudonyms to each participant. Each principal was assigned "P" and participating teachers a "T" in connection with their corresponding focus group (TFG1, TFG2, TFG3, TFG4, TFG5). Using a google sheets, the researcher included transcribed responses by participant (teacher and principal) and by question. While reading each response, the research noted emerging themes. As each theme was repeated

it was calculated (using a google sheet formula) to keep an ongoing total of the number of times the theme emerged among principal and teacher responses. Themes were added as responses were analyzed and principal and teacher responses were reviewed for the new emerging themes. The researcher looked for the themes that were in the top three of each participating group. If the themes occurred the same number of times, the theme was included in the summary of the data.

When summarizing the data in principal responses, the researcher included the top three emerging themes from all principal responses. While analyzing teacher focus group responses, the researcher included the top three themes that were included in all teacher focus groups. When looking at commonality between principal and teacher focus groups, the researcher used the themes that emerged in both participant groups. All data were summarized in tables to help the reader to easily understand the results.

Timeline

The initial drafts of the principal and teacher interview questions were developed during the Spring 2020 semester. Colleague feedback and testing of interview questions were conducted during the Spring and Summer semesters of 2020. After validating the interview questions, the instrument was submitted to the researcher's dissertation chair for review. Once the researcher secured the dissertation chair's approval, the researcher scheduled the Prospectus Exam for Fall 2020 with the committee. Upon successfully defending at Prospectus, the researcher submitted it to Virginia Tech's Institutional Review Board (IRB) in the Fall of 2020. Simultaneously the researcher secured permission through the large suburban Central Virginia school division's Office of Research and Development to conduct research. Upon IRB approval in Fall 2020, the researcher sent emails to schedule virtual interviews with principals using the Principal Interview questions. In the Fall of 2020, the researcher contacted teachers to participate in virtual teacher focus groups using the Teacher Interview Questions. The responses to the virtual principal interview questions and virtual teacher focus groups were collected, coded, and analyzed during the Winter of 2020. With the chair's approval, the researcher prepared for defense in March 2021.

Methodology Summary

The researcher conducted an open-ended, qualitative study of teachers and principals in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The data

collected was analyzed using qualitative methodology. Participants were identified by the Human Resources Department of the Virginia school division. The researcher invited teachers and principals to participate in recorded interviews and focus groups. Principals participated in individual interviews and teachers participated in focus groups. There was one focus group for each participating Title I elementary school. Responses were recorded and participants were given the opportunity to review their responses. All responses were reviewed by the researcher and a colleague, analyzed and coded for recurring themes. In Chapter 4, the researcher will share the results of this research study. The results include detailed descriptions of teacher and principal participants and the recurring themes based on their responses.

Chapter Four

Presentation and Analysis of Data

This chapter presents the data collected during the research study of teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools. This chapter introduces the themes and findings that were identified while conducting principal interviews and teacher focus groups. The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify principal practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The researcher sought to gain insight from Title I elementary teachers on the factors that they identified as impacting their job satisfaction and retention in their Title I elementary school. Title I elementary principals were interviewed and asked to identify their practices that they perceived to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. The researcher sought to identify common factors identified by both Title I elementary principals and teachers in impacting teacher job satisfaction and retention. The intended outcome of this study was to provide Title I elementary principals and school division leaders with qualitative data to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools.

The large suburban Central Virginia school division was selected due to ease of access for the researcher during the global COVID -19 pandemic. Teacher retention data were provided to the researcher by the school division's Human Resources Department. The top five elementary schools and principals in the school division with the highest teacher retention rates were interviewed. The interviews and focus groups conducted during this research study were rooted in the interview and focus group questions directly related to the research questions.

Research Questions

The investigation into the principal and teacher perceptions on practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention was based on the following research questions:

1. What practices do Title I elementary principals implement to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?
2. What practices do teachers perceive Title I elementary principals implement that impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?

Principal Interview Data

Title I elementary principals in a large suburban Central Virginia school division with high teacher retention rates were virtually interviewed for this study. Their responses reflect their perceptions on their practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. While results cannot be generalized, principals' and teachers' perceptions of practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I Elementary schools may suggest professional development for school and school division leaders.

The selected school division's Human Resource Department identified each principal and school based on their teacher retention rates. The participating principals and their schools were within the top five schools with the highest teacher retention rates, ranging from 98.1% to 94.7%. Each Title I elementary principal was sent the recruitment email. Once the principal responded, he/she was sent the Information Sheet and a Meeting Bird link to sign up for an interview time and date of their convenience. At the beginning of the interview, the researcher went over the protocol with each principal. The researcher received verbal permission to record interviews and focus groups using Zoom from each participant before recording. There were five elementary principal participants. The participating principals had between four and 13 years of experience as an administrator. The researcher selected the principal pseudonyms and they are as follows: P1, P2, P3, P4, and P5, with P representing each principal. The data collected from the participating principals shows that four principals have between 4 and 10 years of experience, and one principal has between 11 and 15 years of experience as a principal. The principals interviewed had the same number of years as principal at a Title I school as they did at their current Title I school. Table 1 summarizes the principals' gender, race, years of experience as a principal in a Title I school and their current school.

Table 1

Title I Elementary Principal Participant Description

Participants	Description				
	Gender	Race	Years of Education Leadership Experience	Years of Leadership Experience in Title I Schools	Years of Experience in Current School
P1	Female	White	5	5	5
P2	Male	White	6	6	6
P3	Female	White	8	8	8
P4	Male	White	4	4	4
P5	Female	Black	13	13	13

The principals interviewed for this study included two males and three females. One female participant was Black, and the other four were White. Each principal’s total experience as an administrator was equivalent to their experience in a Title I elementary school.

The researcher is presenting data from the virtual interviews by the research question, then the interview/focus group question focusing on the common themes represented in each. The themes included in this study were noted by all principals during their interviews. To follow is the data from the principal interviews related to the research and interview questions:

Research Question 1

What practices do Title I elementary principals implement to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?

Principal Interview Question 1

What practices do you implement and perceive to impact your teachers’ job satisfaction in your school? Principal responses reflected that Community, Collaboration, Professional Respect, and Professional Development were among the most common practices that principals perceived to impact teachers' job satisfaction.

Community. One hundred percent of principals shared that building community was an important practice in impacting teacher job satisfaction. Principals shared their practices in building a community that they believed worked to bring their teachers together and feel a sense

of belonging at their school. The theme of community was highlighted 44 times throughout principal interviews. P2 described his practice of establishing cross grade level teams, “vertical teams... we put together and they meet weekly on an assigned topic” (P2, 134) for sharing ideas across the building. P2 mentioned that he started this to allow teachers from different grade levels to get to know each other and work with other teachers they may not come in contact with regularly. P3 asserted that she establishes opportunities for colleague observations to help build a “feeling of teamwork family” (P3, 14) and that it gives them “an opportunity to work with others” (P3, 14). P3 continued to share that at her school, they did a “monthly breakfast potluck”. The grade levels would cover it, and it was not a faculty meeting. It wasn’t a time to discuss business. It was a time to break bread and just sit down and enjoy spending time with your colleagues” (P3, 110). In addition, P3 also gave many examples of staff outings to shop, attend dinner shows, and do crafting projects that helped to build community at her school. She shared that building, “family and friendships outside of what we do at work” (P3, 115) is important in building a community within the school. P4 commented that he does “little things... on a monthly basis” which also include parents that help the teachers and the community be “reflective of the community as a whole” (P4, 18). He shared how he works hard to hire from within the community for all positions, including teachers, which he believes adds to the newly hired teacher’s investment in the school’s growth and success. P4 asserted, “if they feel connected to the parents, the teachers, the students, they’re also willing to stay” (P4, 112). P4 developed the House System based on a well-known educator. This system groups students and teachers across grade levels and subjects to build community and support. P4 used this system to bring his teachers together across the building in the planning and implementation stages to connect students from across the building. P5 shared that she provides opportunities for teachers “to have voice and that things are not coming from top-down, that we’re in this together, we’re working together” (P5, 16) to create community in her school.

Collaboration. All five of the participating principals (100%) shared that collaboration among teachers was important in impacting teacher job satisfaction. Principals shared the theme of collaboration 28 times during their interviews as a significant factor impacting teacher job satisfaction. P2 responded that he provided “open time for them [teachers] to discuss challenges that they’re having and successes” (P2, 110). P2 shared that he works with teachers to meet their needs, both great and small, like “trash cans on the playground to deeper things like more guided

reading training or how to analyze the map scores” (P2, 113–14). P2 collaborates with teachers to use Title I funds to purchase items they want/need for their classrooms. He also works with beginning teachers to gain their input for future new teachers. P4 credits this collaborative effort for him starting his weekly Huddles. P3 shared that she provided opportunities for collaboration by making time for colleague observations, “they have to partner with another teacher that’s not on their grade level” (P3, 14). In partnering with a teacher outside of their grade level she says, “it gives teachers an opportunity to work with [someone], maybe they would never work with and gain ideas” (P3, 17). P4 shared that he allowed teachers to work together to pursue areas of interest for themselves or for the school to work with other teachers throughout the building to see a project through, like their STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) team or the implementation of the House System. Furthermore, P4 explained, “they put it together, they got it up and running, and as a result, they feel a connection to this program [and] they don’t want to leave because this is their program” (P4, 129).

Professional respect. All principal participants (100%) included professional respect as a practice they perceived to impact teacher job satisfaction. Principal responses reflecting Professional Respect included words or phrases such as trusting teachers to make the best decisions for their classroom and students and not micromanaging were responses included 23 times. P4 responses were more heavily rooted in this theme than other principals. P1 shared, “They know I trust them. I trust their judgment. I don’t micromanage them” (P1, 115-18). P2 shared that he shows his teachers professional respect by “giving teachers voice and letting them run with projects” (P2, 129). P3 demonstrates professional respect to her teachers through her practice of peer observations for professional development and honoring the talent and skill within her building to learn and grow from each other. She stated, “we have so much talent in the building that instead of going to all these outside sources for professional development, why not use what we have” (P2, 16) In this way, P2 said teachers feel they are valued as professionals and are eager to share their skills and knowledge with others. P4 shared his belief that “you hire smart people and let the smart people you hire do their job. You don’t tell them how to do it. You set the parameters, under which we have to work in but there is that expectation that they as professionals should have the ability and freedom to do their job effectively” (P4, 116-17). One example is how he has made room for his teachers to plan and implement the STEAM club and the House System at his school, entirely run by teachers. He also added that because they got

these programs “up and running, and as a result, they feel a connection to this program they don’t want to leave” (P4, 128). P5 asserted that she allowed “the staff to be a part of the decision making,” and that is how she shows them they are trusted and valued.

Professional development. Four out of five principals (80%) attributed professional development as a factor that impacts teacher job satisfaction sighting its significance 23 times during principal interviews. P2 responses highlighted this perception over the other three principals interviewed. P2 asserted that he values growing teachers and shared that he “uses a portion of our title one budget for conferences” (P2, 117). He went on to say that he sends “high performing teachers” to conferences “to incentivize and build those teachers that just crave growth” (P2, 118). In addition, P2 shared that he started what he called Huddles. His Huddles are vertical teams that meet weekly for 15 minutes to discuss guiding questions that he provides. He credits this practice as contributing to teacher professional development, collaboration, and community. P3 shared her practice of doing peer observations to contribute to professional development at her school. She shared that “we have so much talent in the building that instead of going to all these outside sources for professional development, why not use what we have” (P3, 16). In her school, teachers sign up to observe a teacher above and below their current grade. She has her teachers complete quick takeaways by responding to three questions, “What did you see that you like? What could you implement in your classroom? What questions do you have” (P3, 18)? P4 shared that he likes to “create leaders out of teachers” and provides opportunities for them to “figure out where they want to go and grow” (P4, 120).

Principal Interview Question 2

Which of your practices do you perceive to impact your teachers’ decisions to remain at your school? Principal participant responses revealed that among the top common themes for impacting teachers’ decisions to remain at their school were building a community, a positive climate, and professional respect.

Community. All principals perceived building community to impact teacher decisions to remain at their school. The theme of community emerged during principal interviews 10 times. P1 commented that she spends “a lot of time making them feel like they’re part of a special group, like this is a unique special place a special school... it’s special to be here. Look at the things that we do that are so great” (P1, 123). P2 credits his school Huddles as creating “family feeling” outside of their grade level connecting members across the school. Additionally,

P3 honors the family tradition of family generations that have attended her school by continuously inviting them in and making them a part of school events. She shared that her school's programming brings the school and the surrounding community together, "the whole community comes out. They want to see the kids" (P3, 134). She shared that this creates "a sense of belonging... they pull them in and make you feel like family" (P3, 123). Moreover, P3 said she includes community businesses to help support teachers and students and everyone is invested in the school to make sure "they succeed at the highest level" (P3, 137). P3 worked with teachers to have their input in what they felt needed to change and she built off of the teachers' strengths, "instead of coming in and changing everything" (P3, 137) she showed her teachers that she valued the school's community and would continue in that tradition.

Climate. Climate emerged as a theme impacting teacher retention nine times during principal interviews. P1 noted that she makes it a priority to celebrate everything. If teachers do not want to celebrate, she "plants people in the audience to do the celebrations" (P1, 126). She perceives it essential that all staff know and share, "the good things about the school to everybody, so they feel like they're part of something that's doing good" (P1, 124). P3 shared that she meets with teachers one on one and asks them three questions "What do you love about the school? What do you hate about the school? What would you change if you could" (P3, 130). She found that the answers among teachers were similar, and she knew "what not to change because it meant so much to them" (P3, 132). In her opinion, she felt that this helped to create an environment where teachers felt heard, respected, and that their opinions were valued.

Professional respect. During principal interviews, professional respect emerged as a theme eight times. P2 shows teachers he values teachers, especially when they are new to the school, by having early meetings with each new hire. He asks them, "what their career aspirations are so I can start getting them on track" (P2, 150). He described opportunities for providing professional days for a teacher working on additional certification and opportunities to shadow other professionals. P3 shared that at her school she tries to "hone in on what they valued and value it too" (P3, 136) to show that she values them as people and professionals. Instead of making changes or implementations in isolation, she leans on what teachers share as important to them as professionals and community members. P4 shared that he allows for "professional freedom" (P4, 141) to make decisions for their students and classroom. He acknowledged that teachers talk with teachers at other schools, and he wants his teachers to feel like they have

professional freedom because he trusts their judgment. He shared that teachers are happy if they feel respected, and they are “largely going to stay [because] that professional respect and freedom is appreciated” (P4, 146). In addition, P4 asserted that “people are happy where they are and part of being happy is feeling respected” (P4, 159).

Principal Interview Question 3

Do you have any other comments or ideas that you would like to share that you believe impact your teacher’s job satisfaction and retention in Title I schools? Principals were given an option to provide any additional factors that they perceived impacted teacher job satisfaction and retention that they had not previously addressed in the earlier questions. The emerging themes from this question reflected principals’ beliefs that supporting teachers, building community, demonstrating professional respect, collaboration, and relationships had the most significant impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention.

Support. Principals noted during interviews that providing support to teachers significantly impacted teacher job satisfaction and retention; with this theme emerging 17 times among principal responses. P1 shared that she always knows that is happening and figures out how to get teachers what they need. P1 says that she will “acknowledge... that the work that we do is hard but meaningful” (P1, 154). She shows teachers that she is thankful for them and “has their back” (P1, 167). P2 shared that he uses his Huddles and instructional people to provide support and to build teachers’ skill set. He has honest conversations with teachers about their performance, “sometimes you have to tell a teacher you can’t do that. Like that’s not quality instruction” (P2, 166). P3 shared that she allows her staff to see her as a human being. She shared that anyone that works with her knows that she is here to support them. She believes that “if I can make you better, then the kids are the winners, and if I can make you better you’re going to love what you do” (P3, 144). She shared she does anything she can to support teachers, “teach small group... go into model lessons, plan with my teachers, I want them to see me as an educator first and then follow my lead” (P3, 145-46). She shared that she does this while still holding people accountable for their teaching responsibilities. P5 shows her teachers support by getting them the needed resources. She says, “purchasing stuff and getting you things that make your job easier when you’re doing your job to help kids” (P5, 126) shows that I am supporting them.

Community. Creating a positive community was found by principals during this study to have an impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention and emerged nine times during principal interviews. P1 shared that she builds teams that are strong together and will support each other. P3 models for her teachers that the job is tough but “once we’ve helped this family and we have the resources... that’s a win” (P3, 162) celebrating all successes is what she thinks helps add to the community. P4 shared that hiring from within the community helps to build the sense of school community. He perceives that “having a shared vision” (P4, 174) and communicating that helps to build community and helps everyone to “have a vested interest in seeing us be successful” (P4, 186).

Professional respect. Principals shared that showing teachers professional respect had a significant impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention. This theme emerged nine times among principal responses. P1 believes that acknowledging the hard work that teachers do and its importance shows teachers that they are respected professionals. P2 shared that he shows his professional respect for teachers beginning in the interview process. During his interview process, P2 tells prospective teachers that “I am looking for a teacher that I have to hold back. Not a teacher that I have to push forward” (P2, 159). He lets his teachers know that they have autonomy and his support to pursue their ideas and interests. He shared that “you can’t just give them autonomy, you have to have that structure built behind it” (P2, 168). In addition, P2 perceives that “autonomy is important if we’re going to continue to bring people into the profession, especially at a Title I school” (P2, 164).

Moreover, P3 stated that she is not afraid to ask her teachers for help or advice. She shared that, “I’m going to ask you if I don’t know how to do something” (P3, 157). In this way, she is valuing their professional opinions and judgment. P4 reiterated the importance of giving teachers the freedom to review their data and student needs and make decisions based on their information. He added that listening to teachers’ ideas and being part of their conversations about their needs and wants helps them feel that their opinions are valued as professionals.

Collaboration. Collaborating with teachers was noted by all five principals as having a significant impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention with this theme emerging eight times among principal responses. P3 shared that she is willing to work with teachers to benefit students, “if you’re struggling with a kid, let me come in there and work with them. If you don’t know how to do this assessment, I’ll figure it out and we will do it together” (P3, 149). The

message she says she shares with staff is, “I’m going to hold people accountable for doing everything they need to do at the highest level, but I’m going to do it with you. Everything that you do, I’m going to do, and if I don’t know how to do it... I will sit in the trainings with you” (P3, 154).

Relationships. All five principals’ responses reflected that building relationships with teachers had a significant impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention. This theme emerged eight times during principal interviews. P4 asserted that he has modeled having positive relationships with students, which had positive effects on student behavior and teacher classroom management and community. He shared that he models for the staff that he builds relationships within the community and the school around a shared vision, which helps to unite everyone. In addition, P4 contends that he models and has developed a strong focus on “meeting students socially and emotionally as well as academically” (P4, 180), and teachers have bought into the idea of building strong relationships with students and their coworkers. He perceives that the modeling of building these relationships has decreased discipline challenges affecting teachers. Moreover, P5 shared that helping teachers understand their “personal identity” and not let it negatively affect how they support students leads to more in-depth conversations and develops relationships among the staff.

Table 2 below summarizes the emerging themes from principal virtual interviews. Each “X” represents a theme that was documented during a virtual principal interview. This table allows the reader to see emerging themes among the principals easily. It also allows the reader to see what is a priority to each principal based on their responses to the interview questions.

Table 2***Title I Elementary Principal Participant Responses***

Principal Responses	Principal Participants				
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5
Positive Attitude	X				
Support	X	X	X	X	X
Professional Respect	X	X	X	X	X
Role Model	X		X		
Relationships	X	X	X	X	X
Climate	X	X	X	X	X
Cheerleader	X				
Culture	X	X	X		X
Instructional Support		X	X	X	
Professional Development		X	X	X	X
Incentives		X			
Communication	X	X	X	X	X
Moral Boosters	X	X		X	
Staff Input		X	X	X	X
Community	X	X	X	X	X
Collaboration	X	X	X	X	X
Celebrations	X		X	X	
Leadership	X	X	X	X	X
Autonomy		X		X	

The individual responses from the principal interviews share some common themes. However, each principal response indicates differing practices that they perceive to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention in Title I elementary schools. According to the data collected during the principal interviews, 100% of principal participants perceived Support, Professional Respect, Relationships, Climate, Communication, Community and Collaboration to have an impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention. Eighty percent of participating principals perceived that Culture, Professional Development, Staff Input and Leadership impacted teacher job satisfaction and retention in their Title I elementary schools.

P1 responses indicated that she perceived having a positive attitude (9) and supporting teachers (8) to have the greatest impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention. Her responses included 14 out of 19 (74 %) of the represented themes. In addition, P1 responses indicated that she perceived that having a positive attitude had the greatest impact on her staff's job satisfaction

and retention. P2 responses indicated that Professional Development (13), Instructional Support (10) and Collaboration (10) had the greatest impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention. His responses included 16 out of 19 (84%) of the represented themes. During his interview, his responses indicated his perception that providing professional development had the greatest impact on teacher job satisfaction retention. P3 interview responses indicated that building community (18) and collaboration (14) having the greatest impact. Her responses included 13 out of 19 (68%) of the represented themes. Moreover, P3 responses during the interview indicated her perception that building community has the largest impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention at her school. P4 indicated that showing teachers Professional Respect (17) and building community to have the greatest impact at his school. His responses included 14 out of 19 (74%) of the represented themes. His responses during his interview indicated that he perceived Professional Respect to have the greatest impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention. P5 responses showed that Communication (6) and Staff Input (5) to have the greatest impact on teacher job satisfaction and retention at her school. Her responses during the interview included 11 out of 19 (58%) of the represented themes with her responses indicating her perception that Communication contributed to her teachers' job satisfaction and retention.

Teacher Focus Group Data

In addition to the individual principal interviews, the researcher conducted five virtual focus groups with teachers of the corresponding Title I Elementary schools with high teacher retention rates. All teachers with a minimum of two years of experience at their school were invited to participate. Some of the elementary principals preferred to send the recruitment email to their staff. In those cases, the researcher provided the elementary principals with the Recruitment Email and Information Sheet to send to their staff as requested. The email included the researcher's contact information and teachers responded to the researcher expressing interest to participate in the virtual teacher focus group. The researcher sent calendar invitations with a zoom link to all willing participants with the Information Sheet attached. Each teacher participant and focus group was provided with a pseudonym by the researcher, and the pseudonyms correspond with the teacher (T), Teacher Focus Group (TFG1, TFG2, TFG3, TFG4, or TFG5), and specific teacher in each group (A, B, C, or D). Each focus group was unique with varying years of experience and teaching positions. The teacher focus groups had a minimum of two teachers and a maximum of four teachers with a total of 16 teachers participating in the

virtual focus groups. The researcher was aiming for participation of up to 25 teachers with a maximum of five teachers in each focus group. Although all teachers with a minimum of two years of teaching experience at their current Title I elementary school were invited to participate, there were 16 teachers willing to participate in the researcher's study resulting in this research study having a 64% response rate.

Table 3 that follows is a summary of the sample of all Teacher Focus Groups (TFG). The table allows for the reader to easily see demographic information on the participants of the virtual focus groups. The table includes information on each participant's gender, race and teaching experience. Teachers provided information on the total number of years teaching, the number of years teaching in a Title I school and the total years teaching at their current Title I elementary school. Their total years of teaching or years in a Title I school may or may not include secondary experience. This number reflects their experience teaching and working in a Title I environment.

Table 3***Title I Elementary Teacher Focus Group Participant Description***

Teacher Focus Group Participant	Description				
	Gender	Race	Years Teaching	Years in Title I	Years in Current School
T1A	Female	White	22	22	22
T1B	Female	White	16	16	16
T1C	Female	White	15	15	15
T2A	Female	Black	4	4	4
T2B	Female	White	17	13	2
T2C	Female	White	12	5	5
T2D	Female	Hispanic	7	7	3
T3A	Female	White	9	9	3
T3B	Female	White	30	17	7
T4A	Female	White	20	4	13
T4B	Female	White	21	9	4
T4C	Female	White	6	4	6
T5A	Female	White	10	10	10
T5B	Female	White	10	10	10
T5C	Male	White	2	2	2
T5D	Male	Black	7	7	2

The teachers participating in virtual Teacher Focus Groups (TFG) can be described as follows: two teachers have between two- and five-years' experience, six have between six- and ten-years' experience, two have between 11 and 15 years of experience and six teachers have over 16 years of teaching experience. Of the 16 participating teachers, 10 (63%) reflected that all of their teaching experience was in a Title I school. Fifty-six percent (56%) of the participating teachers' total teaching experience is at their current Title I school. 14 of the 16 teachers were female, with the remaining two teachers being male teachers. The sample included two Black, one Hispanic and 13 White teachers.

At the beginning of each focus group, the researcher reminded the participants of the purpose of the study and the reason why their school was selected for the study. The researcher reviewed the information in the Information Sheet following the focus group protocol. The

researcher reiterated to the participants that their participation was voluntary and no identifying information would be included in the research and each participant would be given a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality of their responses. The participants were reminded that the focus group would be recorded and transcribed by the researcher and that all recordings would be destroyed upon transcription. All participants agreed to be recorded. All focus group questions were aligned with the following research question:

Research Question 2

What practices do teachers perceive Title I elementary principals implement that impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?

Teacher Focus Group Question 1

Which of your principal's practices do you perceive to impact your job satisfaction?

Teacher participants' responses reflected that principal support, professional respect, and relationships were the factors that had the most significant impact on their job satisfaction.

Support. Most teachers in the focus groups shared that when principals were available, listened to teachers, and provided resources, they felt supported. This theme emerged in all teacher focus group 24 times as impacting teacher job satisfaction. T1C shared that "I feel like I can go to her with any situation or problem, and she is going to hear me and support" (TFG1, 110). Support in all areas was shared as an important factor when T1B asserted that feeling, "supported with parents and supported with children... even though she's our leader and she like sets the tone, she's willing to listen and be open to other options" (TFG1, 117-18). T2A shared that "his open-door policy is really good, where you can go to him and talk about anything" (TFG2, 14). T2B contended that "I feel they're very approachable and nonjudgmental" (TFG2, 112), allowing her to feel more comfortable asking for additional support or assistance. T3B shared that whenever she asks for materials or help, "texts or whatever to help" (TFG3, 116), if it is possible her administrator makes it happen. In addition, T4B shared that the principal is available, and T4A shared that the principal goes "to bat for us a lot and filters things for us" (TFG4, 117). She noted that she felt very supported that her administrator would filter some information to protect them or lessen their stress. To T5C, administrative support was addressed in relation to parents, "she had our backs with working with parents" (TFG5, 18). We weren't left

alone to work with challenging parents or with difficult conversations if needed. T5A shared that she could “truly feel like I can go to her” (TFG5, 114).

Professional respect. When teachers spoke about their administrator related to professional respect, they included words and/phrases like valued, ownership, listens, autonomy, trust, and no micro-managing. Professional respect emerged as a theme 17 times in all teacher focus groups as a factor impacting teacher job satisfaction. T1A asserted that her “biggest job satisfaction is that I’m valued, and my opinions are valued” (TFG1, 17). T1C says the principal “instills ownership of the school by all of us and the children” (TFG1, 19), and T1B shared that she felt that she could share her opinion with her principal freely and respectfully, and she did not feel like, “the hammer is going to drop or anything... she absolutely listened... and said I see your viewpoint, I understand from your viewpoint... and she knew there wasn’t going to be retaliation...” (TFG2, 114-15). T2A shared that she is able to “explore our own options...try a different perspective or a different approach...” (TFG2, 16). Both T2B and T2D discussed being trusted and respected as professionals without micromanaging. T2B is “given autonomy to make our own schedules” (TFG2, 115), and T2D shared “that our principal... created a culture where you’re the professional, and he’s not looking over you to make sure you’re doing your professional things unless you prove to the point that you need that” (TFG2, 118). T3A stated that her principal allows for “teacher judgment and teacher creativity” (TFG3, 17). Also, T4A shared that “he listens and he values, everybody’s opinion of things before he makes a judgment call” (TFG4, 16), and T4B added, “the fact that I’m valued as an employee... where that’s not always shared with a teacher that they’re appreciated... that goes a long way for me” (TFG4, 112). T4C’s response reflected previous experiences with other administrators,

I currently feel more valued than I did. And I feel like I’m treated more like a professional than I was by other principals. I don’t feel like there’s quite the amount of micromanagement that some others have tried to have.” (TFG4, 114-15)

T4C recognized that some management needed to exist at the school and county level. However, her principal’s position is “you are the professional, you know your kids, you know what you need to do” (TFG4, 116), which adds to her feeling respected as a professional.

Relationships. Teacher participants reiterated throughout the interviews that listening, being available and being treating them like professionals contributed to their relationship with the principal and their job satisfaction. The theme of building relationships emerged among all

teacher focus groups 13 times during teacher focus groups as impacting teacher job satisfaction. T1A appreciated that her principal builds relationships with teachers and students, and the fact that the children know her shows her that all relationships are valuable. T2A values her relationship with the principal and noted that her principal “makes me more comfortable going to him when things are great or even if things are not great” (TFG2, 18). Moreover, T3B shared that part of building relationships included the school community. She shared, “our administration’s knowledge of our community helps a lot and helps build that bridge between the community and the staff” (TFG3, 19-10). T4B asserted that even when her principal disagrees with her opinion, she shared, “I believe I’m listened to... and my opinion is valued...” (TFG3, 110-11). T5B noted that the principal’s relationship with students helped build relationships with teachers, saying she “always puts the students first” (TFG5, 15). T5C shared that his principal’s strength was building relationships with students and parents, which strengthened the relationships with the teachers. His principal supported him and others in difficult conversations with his parents, which made him feel like the principal had his back.

Teacher Focus Group Question 2

How many of you are returning to this school next year? Of the 16 participating teachers, 15 out of 16 (94%) of the teachers plan to return to their current school next year. T2B reported that she is not returning because, “I am planning on retiring” (TFG2, L24). One of the participating teachers, T1B, is currently in a trailer at another school during their school’s rebuild. She is looking forward to returning saying that she is “planning on packing up the trailers again and go into the new building” (TFG1, 125). T3B shares that she plans to return, “if I don’t retire” (TFG3, 122) due to the current virtual teaching expectations from the COVID-19 school closure. She has 30 years of teaching experience. T4B does not “really intend on leaving” but shares

I will always put in for a transfer; that is something that I think I learned the hard way. And it doesn’t mean I will take a position or that I’m actively seeking, but I’m always going to keep the door open. Because if you don’t unlock the door, then you can’t step through. What if an opportunity arises? (TFG4, 126-27)

T4C stated that she would remain at her current school unless something in her life changes, “I love my kids. I feel like a part of the community there. I don’t feel like I’m going to be stepping away purposefully any time soon” (TFG4, 129). T4A has no plans to leave her school next year,

but acknowledges that she is pursuing a degree and opportunities may come “I am not seeking things out right now, but eventually I will have to leave” (TFG4, 133).

While 15 of the 16 (94%) teacher participants shared that they would be returning, two of the participants shared that they would consider leaving if an opportunity presented itself. Neither of the teacher participants were actively seeking an opportunity to leave, but recognized that this could be a growth potential, and it would be considered. Both teacher participants emphasized their leaving the school would not be related to their principal or their job satisfaction at their current school.

Teacher Focus Group Question 3

What does your principal do to impact your decision to remain/return to your current school? In all teacher focus groups, participants shared that community, relationships, support, and collaboration are principal practices that impact their decisions to remain/return to their school.

Relationships. All teacher focus groups reflected that building positive relationships with teachers impacted teacher’s decision to remain/return to their current school. This theme occurred 14 times throughout the five teacher focus groups. T1C acknowledged the importance of the relationships that her principal builds with teachers by sharing that her principal “considers all factors in our life” and that “my whole situation is being taken into account...” (TFG1, 138) which makes her feel like her principal knows her. T1A shared that her principal “loves the community around and that she takes care of not only the teacher but the children and the families” (TFG1, 140). T1B recognized her principal as the leader but said along the way, “she became our friend...” (TFG1, 136). She asserted that everyone knows their roles and responsibilities, but her principal went to “being their friend and not just a boss...” (TFG1, 136) which means a lot to her and contributes heavily to her wanting to remain at the school. In addition, T2A spoke about how her principal establishes relationships by “approaching it more of a peer to peer...” (TFG2, 139) rather than just an administrator or supervisor. T2B shared that her principal is “warm and welcoming and knows and uses your first name” (TFG2, 149). T3B noted that her principal builds relationships by recognizing her staff, “she’s always very complimentary of the staff” (TFG3, 128). Furthermore, T5B stated, “I feel a sense of loyalty to her” TFG5, 136) because of the time and effort her principal put into establishing a relationship with her.

Community. All teacher focus groups indicated that building community was a significant factor that impacted teachers' decisions to return to their school. T1B shared that her principal works alongside the teachers to support them and the students. "She's protecting the children and making sure the families are okay" (TFG1, 147). T1B spoke about the extra ways her principal is available for her teachers and students, and she perceives this to make everyone feel part of a special community they want to be a part of. T2A shared how the principal worked hard to hire people and get people of the "mindset of treating it [school] really as a family" (TFG2, 136)" and that teachers feel like they can "come together" and solve any challenges the school, teachers or students face together (TFG2, 137). Also, T4C spoke about her principal's intentional practice of being accessible to parents and teachers, which she perceived "makes it easier for them to feel that we're all on the same team" (TFG4, 141). T4A shared that her principal has built trust between teachers and the school community, where everyone "trusts that he is doing what's right for the community" (TFG4, 151). T5B spoke about how, after ten years at the school, "I still am feeling like a big part of that initiative" (TFG5, 132). She recalls her principal having a staff meeting, and she referred to it as a "kumbaya meeting" (TFG5, 132) and the principal sharing her concerns about their academic performance and her vision. Moreover, T5B asserted "that I felt at that moment, I immediately had buy-in into what her vision was for the school" (TFG5, 133) and recited the principal's motto "we don't fall we rise at the [name of school]" (TFG5, L34).

Support. During all five teacher focus groups the theme of principal support emerged 14 times with teachers stating this had an impact on their decisions to remain at their school. T1B shared that her principal is all in for the students and teachers. She stated that her principal is supporting teachers so they can support students. Additionally, T1B shared that "even in [these] virtual times... when children haven't shown up she's like we'll go to their door and knock on their door..." (TFG1, 146). T2B stated that her principal shows her support by protecting them from overwhelming information and stated "I think protect[ing] us, in a way, from things that would overwhelm us and to that I'm grateful because teachers have enough on their plates..." (TFG2, 148). T5D asserted that his principal shows him support by taking interest in his goals to grow professionally "I know I don't plan on being in a classroom forever, but I just love the fact... how [she] is big about helping us to grow professionally" (TFG5, 121). In addition, T5C shared that his principal,

took a lot of chances on me ... she sent me to Ron Clark Academy...she wants me to continue to grow... I feel like she really rides for her staff and wants to see everybody do better and better..." (TFG5, 127)

T5C spoke highly of his principal's decisions to support staff, saying, "she only brings in good staff as far as I'm seeing... she does a really good job" (TFG5, 128). He trusts her judgment and the staff that she brings in supports teachers and students, which keeps him returning to the school.

Collaboration. Collaboration emerged 12 times during all teacher focus groups as a principal behavior that impacted their decisions to return to their school. T1A shared that her principal is working alongside the teachers and the community, she's part of the outreach... "She doesn't just talk the talk, she walks the walk. She's delivering things, she's staying at packet pick up with the teachers. All of the extra things that she's asking us to do she is there" (TFG1, 140) to do them with the teachers. T2A spoke about how her principal takes great effort "so that we all feel like we're on the same page. I think he really strives hard to make sure that we all feel equal to each other and that he doesn't necessarily feel like he's more so kinda like over us..." (TFG2, 138). T2D spoke of how her principal worked with them to solve problems, "if there's an issue. Let's try to resolve it. So it doesn't linger and then people just leave..." (TFG2, 132). T4C shared that the principal's openness to the community makes her job easier "because we're all working on the same team, we're all trying to do what's best for our kids and I think it's a lot easier in many aspects, because he is so open with the parents" (TFG4, 140). T5B acknowledged that his principal works with the teachers saying that she, "gets into the trenches... she is there with us" (TFG5, 148).

Teacher Focus Group Question 4

What would you like to see your principal do to add to your job satisfaction? Teacher responses to this question were limited. Teachers were mostly satisfied with what their principal was doing and did not have many suggestions for things they thought their principal should do to add to their job satisfaction. Many teachers reiterated that they wanted their principal to continue to do the things previously mentioned. Three themes emerged from teacher participants in response to this question: (1) Nothing - teachers thought that there was nothing their principal needed to add; (2) Communication – teachers wanted communication to be timely and/or

straightforward and lastly, (3) Support – teacher participants wanted principals to continue to support teachers with their time, school resources and presence and availability in meetings.

T1C shared that any dissatisfaction she has had in her job had nothing to do with the principal but with, “not feeling like we as teachers are valued” (TFG1, 153) on a school division or national level. She reiterated that, “there’s nothing that [the principal] could have done differently” (TFG1, 154). T2C asserted that communicating in a timely manner is important. She recognized the pressures of principals, especially during the current COVID-19 pandemic but she felt like, “communication isn’t always... done in the set amount of time” (TFG2, 159). With all the demands of virtual or hybrid teaching, untimely communication presented a struggle for her with planning. T2A spoke of principal communication regarding teacher responsibilities. She preferred her principal to “address those who need to be addressed” (TFG2, 165) rather than speak to a large group. She shared that if the communication “doesn’t pertain to everybody, I think sometimes you lose a certain piece of the audience” (TFG2, 165). T2D reiterated that she appreciates her principal’s thoughtful consideration and collaboration with others. However, at times she wanted “a point-blank yes or no... I would like to see more of... yes that can happen, or no that can’t happen... just a little bit more straightforward” (TFG2, 174) communication. T4A shared the same opinion as T2D, asserting, “Don’t ponder it a while. Just give me an answer,” in response to asking her principal about moving forward with an idea or an initiative. She adds, “He always has reasons I understand he’s a big picture person, he has to ponder it, but sometimes you just gotta know an answer right away” (TFG2, 176). T2B stated, that her principal does this, but it was important to her “that the follow-through is there. I’m not saying that it isn’t. I’m just saying I feel like it’s important when someone says they’re going to get back to you that they actually do without you having to kind of pursue it again” (TFG2, 181). T3B is a reading specialist and leads the professional learning community meetings with teams, and she would like to see the principal present more in these meetings for support. T3B asserted that “I think their presence in meetings with the teams makes a big difference as to how the information I bring to the table is received” (TFG3, 146-47).

Teacher Focus Group Question 5

Do you have any other comments or ideas that you would like to share that you believe impact teacher job satisfaction and retention at Title I schools? Teachers were given an option in response to this question to provide any additional factors that they perceived impacted their

job satisfaction and retention that they had not previously addressed in the earlier questions. Teacher participant responses emerged primarily around the three themes of Community, Collaboration, and Relationships as impacting teacher job satisfaction and their decisions to remain at their Title I school.

Community. All teacher focus groups highlighted building a positive school community as impacting their job satisfaction and retention decisions. This theme emerged 25 times during teacher focus groups. T1B stated that “she would never want to be in a different school” (TFG1, 1101). Her personal children are zoned to attend another school division school, and she brings them with her to school. She says being at a Title I school, “enriches you” (TFG1, 1102). She continued to say, “we are all one, and we do not judge, we do not bully” (TFG1, 1114). These are beliefs that she perceives to create a community that she wants to work in and bring her children to daily. Additionally, T1A added that at her school, they teach “the whole child, there’s more than just book knowledge. There’s how do you treat a human being” (TFG1, 1128) that makes her school feel like a community. T2B shared that she continues to return to her school because of “strong administration and the rapport with my colleagues, so having those personal relationships with what I consider my school family” (TFG2, 187). She also stated that having a community that works hard and plays hard is vital, “it is extremely important to me when we can laugh throughout the day, and you know when its stressful and I know people have my back... that keeps me with any group” (TFG2, 189) T2A says that,

once you really found that knack of people who truly have like the same goals and ambition as you. I think that becomes really good to be something that truly keeps you there... you find that there are people who enjoy it just as much as you. I think that is one of those solid things for me...” (TFG2, 1104-105)

T3B shared the importance of community in their school, that she perceived “fun and comradery between staff members” (TFG3, 165) to add to her job satisfaction.

Collaboration. During all five focus groups teachers reiterated the importance of principal collaboration as a significant factor impacting their job satisfaction and retention decisions. The theme of collaboration emerged 15 times during teacher response to this focus group question. T1B shared that working with a diverse group of people, teachers and students keeps her coming back, “You have every walk of life... I love that... you get to interact with every walk of life child wise and adult wise and I can make connections... I like breaking down

those walls...” (TFG1, l102-103). T1C shared, “we’re all on one team working for the child” (TFG1, l106) “it’s the whole child for everyone and everyone embraces and jumps in all the time” (TFG1, l108). The fact that all the teachers work together T1C says “definitely has influenced my decision to want to stay every year, our comrades are a team approach” (TFG1, l109).

Relationships. All teacher focus groups asserted the significance of building relationships with their principal as impacting their job satisfaction and retention decisions; this theme emerged 13 times during the five teacher focus groups. T1C shared that relationships with her students added to her job satisfaction, “no matter how frustrated I am with the county board decisions... when you are with the children...that warms my heart and draws me back” (TFG1, l6). T1B stated that her principal “gets it. She knows each and every student... She knows their needs” (TFG1, l144– 145). T2D collaborates with many teachers due to their position as a Special Education teacher and says it helps her help the kids be successful,

having good relationships with them is always helpful in helping. You want to stay with them because you’re progressing and helping students together as well as relationships with the students and their family. (TFG2, l93)

T3A reiterated the impact that relationships the principal has with students saying, “One thing I love about my principal is that he’s really involved with the students themselves. And that’s actually the reason why I applied to the school in particular” (TFG3, l53). According to this teacher, her school and principal were well known for the principal’s relationships, she stated that the “perception of the school and how it was run from a parent perspective is what made me really want to be a part of the school as a teacher” (TFG3, l55).

The following Table 4 summarizes the teacher focus group responses. It allows the reader to easily see the emerging themes from each teacher focus group. Teacher Focus Group 5 (TFG5) is a school where 100% of the students receive free or reduced meals. It is also the only teacher focus group that contained male teachers. The table documents all the reoccurring themes during the focus groups.

Table 4***Title I Elementary Teacher Focus Group Summary of Responses***

Responses	Focus Groups				
	TFG1	TFG2	TFG3	TFG4	TFG5
Positive Attitude	X	X	X		X
Support	X	X	X	X	X
Professional Respect	X	X	X	X	X
Role Model	X				X
Relationships	X	X	X	X	X
Climate	X	X	X	X	X
Cheerleader			X		
Culture	X	X	X	X	X
Instructional Support	X	X	X		X
Professional Development		X			X
Incentives					
Communication	X	X		X	X
Moral Boosters			X		
Staff Input	X	X		X	X
Community	X	X	X	X	X
Collaboration	X	X	X	X	X
Celebrations	X		X		
Leadership	X	X	X		X
Autonomy		X	X		X

The above Table 4 summarizes the teacher focus group responses. In 100% of the Teacher Focus groups, teachers responded with the following themes as impacting their job satisfaction and retention decisions: Support, professional respect, relationships, climate, culture, community, and collaboration. In four out of the five teacher focus groups, 80%, of teacher participants perceived that instructional support, communication, staff input and leadership impacted their job satisfaction and decisions to remain at their schools.

Table 5 below illustrates the themes that were common in both principal interviews and teacher focus groups. Of the nineteen emerging themes from principal interviews and teacher focus groups, 6 out of 19 (32%) are common between the teacher and principal participants. Teachers and principal responses reflect the common themes of administrative support, professional respect, building relationships, establishing a positive climate and community and

collaboration among the factors they perceive to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools.

Table 5

Summary of Title I Elementary Principal and Teacher Responses

Responses	Participant Responses	
	Principal Interviews	Teacher Focus Groups
Positive Attitude		
Support	X	X
Professional Respect	X	X
Role Model		
Relationships	X	X
Climate	X	X
Cheerleader		
Culture		
Instructional Support		
Professional Development		
Incentives		
Communication		
Moral Boosters		
Staff Input		
Community	X	X
Collaboration	X	X
Celebrations		
Leadership		
Autonomy		

Chapter 5 will provide findings, implications, a summary, and conclusions drawn from this study. It will also contain recommendations for any future studies.

Chapter Five

Findings, Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this qualitative study was to identify principal practices that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central Virginia school division. The researcher sought to gain insight from Title I elementary teachers on the factors that they identified as impacting their job satisfaction and retention in their Title I elementary school. Title I elementary principals were interviewed and asked to identify their practices that they perceived to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. The researcher sought to identify common factors identified by both Title I elementary principals and teachers in impacting teacher job satisfaction and retention. The intended outcome of this study was to provide Title I elementary principals and school division leaders with qualitative data to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools.

An analysis of principal interview and teacher focus group responses on principal practices that impact teacher satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools yielded the findings included in this chapter. A qualitative research design centered on two research questions.

1. What practices do Title I elementary principals implement to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?
2. What practices do teachers perceive Title I elementary principals implement that impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention?

Summary of Findings

Five findings emerged following a review and analysis of the data from Title I elementary principal interviews and teacher focus groups. This chapter will detail findings collected from the interview and focus group questions. The findings will be shared in the following section. Implications for practice for school and school division leaders, based on the findings, will also be included in this chapter.

Findings

According to the data presented in Chapter Four, this study's significant findings identify 19 themes that emerged among the Title I elementary principals and teachers interviewed. The study's participants shared six common perceptions that impact teacher job satisfaction and

retention. Among the common factors impacting teacher job satisfaction and retention with principals and teachers are administrative support, professional respect, relationships, a positive climate, building community, and collaboration.

Finding 1

Principals asserted that principal support, professional respect, relationships, climate, building community, and collaboration had an impact on teacher job satisfaction.

One hundred percent of Title I elementary principals interviewed asserted that principal support, professional respect, relationships, climate, building community, and collaboration impacted teacher job satisfaction. Building community and establishing a positive climate were identified by all five Title I elementary principals as having an impact on teacher satisfaction and retention. P2 shared that he established community “with vertical teams” (P2, 134) to help teachers get to know others outside of their grade level. P3 and her staff participated in events throughout each school year to build community saying that it was important to build “family and friendships outside of what we do at work” (P3, 115). One hundred percent of principals shared that they showed support to teachers in a variety of ways. P1 showed her support by being available, present and knowledgeable about the teachers’ job and needs. She figured out what her teachers needed and she provided it. Additionally, P2 shared that he showed support by having courageous conversations about teacher performance and provided the needed instructional or emotional support. All five Title I elementary principals asserted that having professional respect for their teachers has an impact on teacher job satisfaction. Principal responses reflected showing teachers that they trust them. P1 shared, “they know I trust them. I trust their judgment. I don’t micromanage them” (P1, 115-18). P5 showed her teachers trust and professional respect by making them a part of the decision-making process. While P2 gave his teachers opportunities to take leadership roles and let “them run with projects” (P2, 129); P3 honored the talent in her building by using existing staff for professional development. P4 stated that when “you hire smart people and let the smart people you hire do their job” (P4, 116-17) you are valuing their skills and knowledge, and micromanaging is not needed.

The principals’ responses are in alignment with research. Their responses indicated the importance of adapting their leadership skills to the needs of their teachers by increasing communication, allowing for opportunities for collaboration and building community among staff. This study’s data was in alignment with research by Kouali (2017) which found that school

leaders must “learn to modify their leadership behavior according to the situation and the professional maturity of their teachers. In this way, they will be able to increase the level of teachers’ satisfaction” (Kouali, 2017 p. 958). Tillman and Tillman (2008) found a positive correlation between supervision and teacher job satisfaction. They discovered that coworkers and supervisors have effects on job satisfaction. This was reiterated in principal responses that reflected the importance of building relationships, community, and positive climate. Boyd et al. (2011) suggested that including senior teachers in decision making, appointing them as coaches/mentors, and providing professional assistance may increase job satisfaction. In contradiction to what was found during this study, Dutta and Sahney (2016) found no direct connection between teacher job satisfaction and principal leadership behaviors. They asserted that “physical climate appeared to play a dominating role in mediating instructional leadership effects on teacher job satisfaction” (p. 952).

Finding 2

Principals perceived building community, establishing a positive climate, and professional respect to have an impact on teacher retention. All five Title I elementary principals perceived building community, establishing a positive climate, and professional respect had an impact on teacher retention. All the principals interviewed shared various ways they made teachers feel part of a community. P1 said she focused “a lot of time making them feel like they’re part of a special group...” (P1, /23) and P3 stated that she want[ed] her staff to have a “sense of belonging...” (P3, /23). This was demonstrated in the non-work-related activities they planned for the staff, which included the school community. P4 perceived that “having a shared vision” (P4, /74) and articulating it often helps staff to be invested in the school and its success. In this way, the principals felt that they were creating a community and culture where teachers felt like they were celebrated and their opinions and values mattered; which they perceived to impact teacher decisions to remain at the school. P1 acknowledged teachers’ accomplishments and celebrated them publicly and often. She shared that celebrating teachers created a positive community and climate when you talk about “the good things...so they feel part of something that’s doing good” (P1, /24). One hundred percent of principals interviewed implemented a variety of strategies to create a family feeling. P1 stated she used celebrations, P2 created vertical teams, P3 participated in non-work-related outings, P4 and P5 shared the school’s vision to build comradery. Principals perceived showing staff professional respect by

valuing them as professionals and allowing them to make decisions for their classroom and their professional growth added to their investment in the school community and impacted their decisions to remain at their schools. Principals shared that allowing teachers to have “professional freedom” (P4, /41) contributed to them wanting to stay at their school because they feel valued and appreciated for what they can contribute to the school. P2 perceived that investing in teachers’ professional goals early so he can “start getting them on track” (P2, /50) and supporting them in their goals impacted retention at his school.

Principal responses during the interviews were supported by other research. Brown and Wynn (2009) stated that the most successful principals at teacher retention provided conditions and resources needed to support teachers. They found that principals who shared decision making, worked collaboratively, shared goals, and provided opportunities to expand teacher leadership capacity had higher retention rates. In addition, Brown and Wynn (2009) found that principals who were successful at retaining teachers encouraged and supported collegiality among them and provided nurturance, guidance, and leadership when needed. They found that these unofficial professional learning communities reduced teacher isolation, increased teacher responsibility and understanding, and improved teacher satisfaction, morale, and commitment resulting in greatly influencing teacher retention (Brown & Wynn, 2009 p. 58). Furthermore, Brown and Wynn (2009) also found that principals successful at retaining teachers were strategic in their recruitment efforts, interview questions, and in their classroom placements. Sutchter et al. (2016) found that teacher perceptions about “administrative support, collegial opportunities and teacher input into decision making” (p. 65) were noted as important factors in teacher retention. Conversely, Sutchter et al. (2016) found that “well-designed mentoring programs improve retention rates for new teachers, as well as their attitudes, feelings of efficacy, and instructional skills” (p. 64). None of the principals interviewed in this study mentioned mentoring programs to have an impact on teacher retention. P2 was the only principal that shared the importance of having structures in place to support teachers to take risks while teaching.

Finding 3

Teachers perceived administrative support, professional respect, and relationships to have the greatest impact on teacher job satisfaction. All teacher focus groups perceived principal support to impact their job satisfaction. Teachers described this support in a variety of ways, such as being available to them, providing support with parents, or with resources. T2A

discussed the principal's "open-door policy ... you can go to him and talk about anything" (TFG2, 14), T1C shared that she could go to her principal "with any situation or problem and she is going to hear me and support" (TFG1, 110). In all teacher focus groups, teachers used words like value, ownership, autonomy, and trust to describe the professional respect they receive from their principals. T2A shared that her principal allowed her to "explore [her] own options... try different perspectives or different approach[es]..." (TFG2, 16). T1A shared that "her biggest job satisfaction is that I'm valued and my opinions are valued" (TFG1, 17). Other teachers spoke of being given "autonomy to make [their] own schedules" (TFG2, 115) and other decisions without someone micromanaging their decisions or judgments. T4A recognized the need for management but said his principal's position was "you are the professional, you know your kids, you know what you need to do" (TFG4, 116). Teachers recognized their principal's ability to build relationships with teachers, students, and the community at large. T1A shared that "the children know her" and T5B shared that the principal "always puts the students first (TFG5, 15), T3B shared that the principal's "knowledge of [the] community helps... build that bridge between the community and the staff" (TFG3, 19-10) which allowed the teachers to support each other in the work for students and the community. In all teacher focus groups it was reiterated that their principal's availability and willingness to listen to them contributed to building relationships with their principal and colleagues and their job satisfaction.

The Title I elementary teacher focus group responses are aligned with studies by Kouali (2017) and Olsen and Huang (2018). Kouali (2017) found that teachers appreciated a "helpful, sincere, principal who shows respect, trust and genuine interest for his/her teachers" (p. 968); a sentiment echoed in all teacher focus groups. Olsen and Huang (2018) found that principal support was a significant predictor of teacher job satisfaction. The researchers also found that "teacher perceptions of principal support had the largest effect size... at 0.57.." (Olsen & Huang 2018, p.19); which echoes teacher responses included in this research study.

Finding 4

Teachers perceived relationships, building a positive community, administrative support, and collaboration to impact teacher retention. In all Title I elementary teacher focus groups, teachers shared that a positive community, building relationships, principal support, and opportunities for collaboration are practices exhibited by principals that impact their decisions to remain/return to their school. Teacher responses reflected their perception of their principal as

their leader but also as a respected friend with T1B saying that along the way, her principal “became our friend” (TFG1, 136) and addressing situations “more peer to peer” (TFG2, 139) which demonstrated that the principal took an interest in teachers and students personally not just the data. These practices led T5B to share that she had a “sense of loyalty to her [principal]” (TFG5, 136). Teachers shared how their principals built community by sharing their vision for the school. One example was one principal holding a “kumbaya meeting” (TFG4, 151) and building a sense of comradery by being accessible and solving challenges together. During one teacher focus group, principal support was described as the hiring of the right people “she only brings in good staff...” (TFG5, 128), providing professional growth/leadership opportunities and protecting them “... from things that would overwhelm...” (TFG2, 148). Teachers acknowledged principals for working alongside them, “all of the extra things that she’s asking us to do she is there” (TFG1, 140), and reported that their principal “gets into the trenches...she is there with us” (TFG5, 148).

The research by Mack et al. (2019) aligns with the Title I elementary teacher focus group responses. Mack et al. (2019) found that low job control, low organizational commitment, poor school climate, low job involvement and lower perceived support to be reasons why teachers were more likely to leave teaching. In addition, Boyd et al. (2011) found “teacher perceptions of the school administration have by far the greatest influence on teacher retention decisions” (303). These researchers also noted that “a strong relationship between teacher perceptions of their school leadership and their retention decisions” (Boyd et al., 2011, p. 309) lead to teacher retention. Moreover, Wynn et al. (2007) found eight factors that were used to determine their decision to leave or stay in the teaching profession, most factors “strongly associated with school climate and principal leadership” (p. 209). In addition, Durksen, Klassen and Daniels (2017) found in a study of 253 teachers, that when teachers were given opportunities for cooperation and collaboration with peers; especially beginning teachers, they displayed high levels of job satisfaction.

Finding 5

Both principals and teachers agree that administrative support, professional respect, relationships, positive climate, community, and collaboration impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. Teachers and principals agreed on 32% of the documented themes during this research study. Of the 19 emerging themes in the Title I elementary principal

interviews and teacher focus groups; six of the 19 themes were common between teachers and principals. Principals and teachers agreed that administrative support, professional respect, building relationships, positive climate, building community, and collaboration impacted teacher job satisfaction and retention. In 100% of the principal interviews and teacher focus groups, the above themes were mentioned by each participant.

All participants were working in Title I elementary schools, which researchers Garcia and Weiss (2019) found to be more severely impacted by teacher shortages. This fact makes teacher job satisfaction and retention an important factor to consider. Sutchter, Darling-Hammond, and Carver-Thomas (2016) found that 8% percent of teachers were leaving the profession before retirement because of issues related to job satisfaction and working conditions. In addition, Johnson, Berg, and Donaldson (2005) found that “if working conditions make it impossible for them to achieve the intrinsic rewards for which they entered teaching, they are likely to leave the classroom or withdraw psychologically” (p. 2); thus, making teacher job satisfaction an important factor in teacher retention. In yet another study, Ladd (2011) found “working conditions as perceived by teachers is highly predictive of individual teachers’ intentions to leave their current schools” (p. 253). It was found during this study that working conditions included their environment, school culture, and climate. Ladd (2011) went on to note that “the higher the perceived quality of school leadership, the less likely teachers are either to plan to leave or actually leave the school” (Ladd, 2011, p. 256).

According to Bogler (2001), teachers reported job satisfaction when their work gave them “a sense of self-esteem,” provided them with “opportunities for self-development,” gave them “a feeling of success,” and allowed them “to participate in determining school practices” (p. 676). The study concluded that teacher job perceptions of occupational prestige, self-esteem, autonomy at work, and professional self-development contributed the most to job satisfaction (Bogler, 2001). The participating Title I elementary teachers all thought highly of their principals, which is indicative of the high teacher retention rates at their Title I elementary schools. Research by Ladd (2011) found that teachers’ perceptions of working conditions and leadership matter; which is in alignment with the findings from this study.

Implications of Findings

The findings of this study have implications related to the impact of principal practices on teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools in a large suburban Central

Virginia school division. The following implications are suggestions based on the findings in this study.

Implication 1

School division leaders who want to increase teacher retention and job satisfaction may consider implementing ongoing professional development for Title I elementary principals, which includes opportunities for principals to shadow and collaborate with each other. Principals with high teacher satisfaction and retention rates should be paired with others to share and implement proven best practices to strengthen school community and climate, and building positive relationships in Title I elementary schools. As noted by Garcia and Weiss (2019), Title I schools are impacted more severely than higher socio-economic schools making teacher job satisfaction and retention a priority for school divisions. Due to this impact it is important that Title I elementary principals collaborate with each other and build their professional knowledge to address this challenge proactively. This implication is in response to Findings 1 and 2, which indicate Title I elementary principals' perception of administrative support, professional respect, relationships, climate, building community, and collaboration to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention.

Implication 2

School division leaders may want to consider providing additional training for Title I elementary principals in best practices to foster healthy teacher relationships and principal teacher relationships in order to increase job satisfaction and potentially reduce teacher turnover. Garrison-Wade et al. (2007) found in a mixed study that principals were not receiving the necessary preparation skills to positively affect teacher job satisfaction and retention. The job of working long term in Title I schools, which have populations that are high minority and low socio economics, require leaders to have ongoing training in fostering healthy relationships between teachers and principals (Kouali 2017; Olsen & Huang, 2018). Ongoing and consistent training with follow-up would equip Title I elementary principals with the needed skills, resources, and supports to address this at their building level. Data from this research study supported teacher perceptions in administrative support, professional respect, and relationships to impact teacher job satisfaction and teacher desire to remain at their school. In addition, Kouali (2017) found that “school principals must be taught different leadership styles

and learn to modify their leadership behavior according to the situation and the professional maturity of their teachers. In this way, they will be able to increase the level of teachers' satisfaction" (Kouali, 2017, p. 958). When principals can adjust their leadership styles and practices to the needs of their teachers, this can improve teacher retention rates. This implication is in alignment with Finding 3 of this research study.

Implication 3

Title I elementary principals may want to engage in ongoing collaborative discussions with Title I elementary teachers on their perceptions that impact their job satisfaction and retention. Title I elementary principals should conduct regular focus groups/surveys/interviews as part of their annual school improvement efforts to collect ongoing data on teacher perceptions and commit to related action steps in their school buildings. Boyd et al. (2011) found "a strong relationship between teacher perceptions of their school leadership and their retention decisions" (p. 303). While there were some reoccurring themes between principals and teachers, there remains an opportunity to gain additional information where commonality did not exist. The data from this research study indicated that principals and teachers agreed on six out of the 19 emerging themes. This implication is in response to Findings 4 and 5 of this research study.

Implication 4

School division leaders and principals may want to consider conducting entry and exit interviews regarding job satisfaction and retention with Title I candidates.

Since it is noted that Title I schools are impacted severely by high teacher retention rates (Garcia & Weiss 2019), it is important that school division leaders and principals understand the teachers' motivations and needs at the hiring process and follow up when they leave Title I schools. School divisions should develop interview questions or surveys to be conducted/completed by each candidate upon entering and exiting the school division. Brown and Wynn (2019) found that principals successful at teacher retention were strategic in recruitment efforts. Collecting this data during the interviewing process could have an impact on teacher retention. The common responses of Title I elementary teacher and principal perceptions impacting teacher job satisfaction and retention is 32%. The data point is lower than half, and indicates that there is still room to collect data and implement practices based on the feedback

during the hiring and exiting processes from Title I elementary schools. This implication is in response to Finding 5.

Implication 5

Title I elementary principals may want to include teacher job satisfaction and retention action steps in their school improvement plans. This should be an ongoing action step for principals and school division leaders in their school improvement plans to address teacher job satisfaction and increase teacher retention rates. Sutchter et al. (2016) predicts that there will be nationwide teacher shortage of 200,000 teachers by 2025. Researchers Garcia and Weiss (2019) found that high poverty schools are more severely impacted by teacher turnover and teacher shortages. The data in this study indicated that principals and teachers only agree on six out of the 19 emerging themes; a 32% commonality rate. Given this low rate, it would be in the best interest of Title I elementary principals, schools and students to make teacher job satisfaction and retention a priority. This implication is in response to Finding 5.

Conclusions

Title I elementary principals and teachers asserted that administrative support, professional respect, relationships, a positive climate, community, and collaboration impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools. They both agreed that establishing relationships between staff members, administration, students and families contributed to a sense of community in their schools. The sense of community allowed the hard work that Title I elementary teachers do to feel more enjoyable and rewarding for them. Teachers reported a sense of belonging and loyalty when principals fostered an environment that brought teachers, students and families together; it allowed them to feel like they were part of a unique school involved in special work.

Teachers reported that when they were provided opportunities to collaborate with their colleagues and with principals, their happiness and job satisfaction were positively impacted. In addition, teachers shared feelings of being valued when they were allowed to be a part of decision making and had autonomy within their classrooms. Many teachers and principals spoke about teachers having opportunities to “run with projects” and lead their colleagues in various ways to serve the students and their school communities. Principals and teachers recognized the support that administration provides to teachers to be critical in teacher job satisfaction and

retention. Teachers wanted principals to support with resources, collaboration, and opportunities for growth. Principals and teachers recognized that it was also critical to trust teachers' decision making and allow them autonomy in their roles.

Finally, when teachers felt satisfied at their school, they were more likely to stay. Teacher job satisfaction was strongly connected to the principal's ability to provide support to teachers, demonstrate professional respect for teacher experience and skill, build relationships, create a positive climate and community, and provide opportunities for collaboration. Many of the participating teachers reported that their heart was in a Title I school and that their work was an intrinsic motivator, but their principal's leadership and ability to create an environment that allowed for autonomy, community, and collaboration added to their decisions to remain at their current school.

Suggestions for Future Studies

The findings of this study have several implications for further research. This section will outline suggestions for future research on the topic of Principal and Teacher Perceptions on Factors that impact teacher job satisfaction and retention in Title I elementary schools.

1. Future research using a qualitative methodology from a larger sample of Title I elementary school teachers and principals would provide more data to allow for wider generalization.
2. Future research using a qualitative methodology from a larger sample of Title I schools to include middle and high schools would provide more data to allow for wider generalization throughout a school division.
3. Future research using a quantitative methodology from a larger sample of elementary, middle, and high school teachers and principals in Title I schools would provide more data to allow for wider generalization. A quantitative study would also provide statistical data analysis to draw correlations between principal leadership practices and teacher retention.

Personal Reflections

This study was an interesting experience for me. The topic was born out of my experience as a beginning Title I elementary principal and my struggles with retaining quality teachers at my school. At the beginning of this study I was in my second year as a principal with

over 20 years of experience working in Title I elementary schools in various positions in two school divisions. Entering in the administrative position, I was doing a lot of interviewing and hiring. I found that this was common with many of my Title I peers and thus I began my journey into conducting this study.

The research I found, put a lot of responsibility on the principal to impact teacher job satisfaction and retention. While obtaining my Masters in Educational Leadership, I do not recall getting training on these strategies, and the research included in this study confirmed that this was lacking from leadership preparation programs. This study provided me the opportunity to spend more time with my colleagues, both principals and teachers, and hear their perceptions in relation to this topic.

While conducting the principal interviews and teacher focus groups it was interesting to hear the emerging themes from the participants. The focus groups were put together with teachers from the same school. As an elementary Title I principal and researcher, it was affirming to hear common themes, from the principal and teachers of the same school. It was apparent that the participants in this study were of like minds when it came to what impacted teacher job satisfaction and decisions to remain at their school. I was not expecting such a strong, direct connection, but it reaffirmed why the chosen schools had the highest rates of teacher retention in the selected school division. While the emerging themes were not a surprise, it was disappointing that when asked for specific examples from many teachers, participants often repeated answers without depth. As a principal it would be helpful to get as many specific examples from teachers to use to increase teacher job satisfaction and retention.

While retaining teachers is challenging for schools around the country, it is extremely hard in Title I elementary schools. It was affirming that while many teachers leave Title I schools, those that stay are there for the right reasons. The teachers I interviewed recognized what I always knew and believed, that the work is hard but the reward is worth it. They reiterated that the impact they have with their students, families and the comradery with their colleagues is something that is special and cannot be duplicated in other school settings. I recognize that is important for our students' success to retain teachers, but it is even more important to retain teachers that want to work with students who need them the most. This study reaffirmed for me, as a practicing principal at a Title I elementary school, the importance of the continued work that needs to be done in collaboration with teachers and principals. Implementation of a variety of

strategies is needed to add satisfaction to a demanding profession, in the hopes of impacting teacher retention in our most needy population of students in Title I elementary schools.

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Appendix A
CITI Certificate of Completion



Appendix B

IRB Approval Letter (IRB #20-686)



Division of Scholarly Integrity and
Research Compliance
Institutional Review Board
North End Center, Suite 4100 (MC 049T)
600 Turner Street NW
Blacksburg, Virginia 26061
540/267-6733
ir@vt.edu
<http://www.research.vt.edu/irb/hrpp>

MEMORANDUM

DATE: September 28, 2020
TO: Carol B. Cash, Kenya Simmons Batts
FROM: Virginia Tech Institutional Review Board (FW/A00000672, expires October 28, 2024)
PROTOCOL TITLE: Principal and Teacher Perceptions on Practices that Impact Teacher Job Satisfaction and Retention in Title I Schools in a Central Virginia School Division
IRB NUMBER: 20-686

Effective September 28, 2020, the Virginia Tech Human Research Protection Program (HRPP) determined that this protocol meets the criteria for exemption from IRB review under 45 CFR 46.104 (d) category(ies) 2(ii).

Ongoing IRB review and approval by this organization is not required. This determination applies only to the activities described in the IRB submission and does not apply should any changes be made. If changes are made and there are questions about whether these activities impact the exempt determination, please submit an amendment to the HRPP for a determination.

This exempt determination does not apply to any collaborating institution(s). The Virginia Tech HRPP and IRB cannot provide an exemption that overrides the jurisdiction of a local IRB or other institutional mechanism for determining exemptions.

All investigators (listed above) are required to comply with the researcher requirements outlined at: <https://secure.research.vt.edu/external/irb/responsibilities.htm>
(Please review responsibilities before beginning your research.)

PROTOCOL INFORMATION:

Determined As: Exempt, under 45 CFR 46.104(d) category(ies) 2(ii)
Protocol Determination Date: September 28, 2020

ASSOCIATED FUNDING:

The table on the following page indicates whether grant proposals are related to this protocol, and which of the listed proposals, if any, have been compared to this protocol, if required.

— *Lead the Future* —

VIRGINIA POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE AND STATE UNIVERSITY
An equal opportunity, affirmative action institution

Date*	OSP Number	Sponsor	Grant Comparison Conducted?

* Date this proposal number was compared, assessed as not requiring comparison, or comparison information was revised.

If this protocol is to cover any other grant proposals, please contact the IRB office (irb@vt.edu) immediately.

Appendix C
Cover Letter to School Division Superintendent

Dear Superintendent of Schools:

Teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention is a challenge in Title I schools. With Title I schools serving high populations of English Learners (ELs), high poverty and high minority students, retention of quality teachers is critical. According to research, schools with high turnover rates face additional challenges than those of non-minority or low poverty schools; challenges that costs school divisions, additional funds and increased performance gaps.

School administrators are key in ensuring success for all students, particularly for our most vulnerable students in high poverty, high minority schools (Title I Schools). Research also indicates that building administrators have the second highest impact on school performance. The purpose of this qualitative study is to identify teacher and principal perceptions on principal behaviors and other factors that contribute to teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention in Title I schools.

We are asking for your support to conduct this study within your school division. The researcher principal interview questions and teacher focus group questions. The interviews will be conducted virtually and outside of school work hours. The data collected from this study might be helpful to determine best practices for principals and school division leaders with retaining teachers in Title I schools. Additionally, may provide some information on potential professional development needed for principals in Title I schools within your school division.

All information will be kept confidential. We will be willing and available to answer any questions that you may have about this study. We can be contacted by email at kenyab@vt.edu or by phone at (804) 475-2472.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Respectfully,

Kenya S. Batts, Ed.S.
Graduate Student
Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University

Dr. Carol Cash
Clinical Professor
Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University

Appendix D
School Division Consent Form

Dear Superintendent of Schools:

Thank you for your support of Kenya S. Batts in efforts to obtain the doctoral degree in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies from Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University. Your signature below serves as official approval for Mrs. Batts to collect and analyze all data collected in the study titled “Principal and Teacher Perceptions on Practices that Impact Teacher Job Satisfaction and Retention in Title I Schools in a large Suburban Central Virginia School Division” The purpose of this study is to identify principal and teacher principals to increase teacher retention and teacher job satisfaction in Title I schools.

Thank you for your approval and support in this endeavor. It is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully,

Kenya S. Batts, Ed.S
Doctoral Candidate
Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University

Dr. Carol Cash
Clinical Professor
Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University

Dr. Mervin Daugherty
Division Superintendent

Appendix E

Division Approval Letter

Delivered via email on December 17, 2020

September 15, 2020 Approval Date
Kenya Batts
Ed.D. Candidate
Department of Educational Leadership
Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University

Dear Ms. Kenya Batts,

I am pleased to inform you that the Review Committee has approved your proposed research study entitled *Principal and Teacher Perceptions on Practices that Impact Teacher Job Satisfaction and Retention in Title I Schools in a Central Virginia School Division*. We are pleased to work with you on this project and appreciate the opportunity to work together for the benefit of our teachers and students. The study has been approved for Elementary Title I schools with high teacher retention. The Office of Research & Evaluation will work with Human Resources to provide you a list of schools to choose from.

As a reminder, by submitting your application, you understood and agreed that:

- acceptance of this request for approval of a research proposal in no way obligates Chesterfield County Public Schools to participate in this research,
- approval does not constitute commitment of resources or endorsement of the study or its findings by the school system or by the School Board,
- participation in research studies by students, parents, and school staff is voluntary,
- the anonymity of all participants including individuals, schools and the school system will be protected by not revealing the identity or including identifiable characteristics without written permission, and
- research shall be conducted within the policies and regulations of CCPS and any stipulations accompanying this letter of approval, and
- upon completion of the study, a copy of the written report will be shared with CCPS.

If you have any questions regarding this approval or if I may assist you in any way, please contact me at antionette_stroter@ccpsnet.net or (804) 639-8717 ext. 1104

Sincerely,

Antionette Stroter, Ph.D.
Research & Evaluation Specialist

CC: Patricia Fox, Coordinator of Research & Evaluation, & Tinkhani White, Director of the Department of School Improvement

Appendix F
Participant/Teacher Recruitment Email

[Emailed to Each Principal/Teacher Participant]

Hi there!

My name is Kenya Batts and I am a doctoral student in the Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Program at Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University. I am writing a dissertation titled, “Principal and Teacher Perceptions on Factors that Contribute to Teacher Job Satisfaction and Retention in Title I Schools in a large suburban Central Virginia School Division.”

The purpose of this qualitative study is to identify the principal behaviors/actions/strategies and outside factors that elementary teachers and principals perceive to affect teacher job satisfaction and teacher retention. It is anticipated that the results of this study could help Title I principals and school division with high turnover implement practices to help with teacher job satisfaction and retention. Your participation in this study is appreciated and completely voluntary. If you choose not to participate in this study, it will not have any adverse effect on your status in the school division. The results will be used in the researcher’s dissertation and shared with the school division

It is my hope that you will agree to participate in a *virtual interview with researcher [principal]* or *virtual teacher focus group* which will take approximately 30 minutes of your time.

All participation is anonymous and confidential. No identifying information will be collected or used in the dissertation. Please respond to this email with “I agree to participate. Once I receive your response, you will be sent a calendar invite to participate in a virtual interview/focus group.

As an educator and administrator, I understand that your time is valuable. I appreciate greatly your consideration for participating in this study.

Respectfully,

Kenya S. Batts
Doctoral Candidate
Virginia Polytechnical Institute and State University

Appendix G
Principal Interview Questions (IRB #20-686)

Principal Interview Questions Relevant to Research Questions

1. What practices do you implement and perceive to impact your teachers' job satisfaction in your school?
2. Which of your practices do you perceive to impact your teachers' decisions to remain at your school?
3. Do you have any other comments or ideas that you would like to share that you believe would contribute to your teachers' job satisfaction and retention in Title I schools?

Appendix H
Teacher Focus Group Questions (IRB #20-686)

Teacher Focus Group Interview Questions Relevant to Research Questions

1. Which of your principal's practices do you perceive to impact teacher job satisfaction?
2. How many of you are returning to this school next year?
3. What does your principal do to impact your decision to remain/return to your current school?
4. What would you like to see your principal do to add to your job satisfaction?
5. Do you have any other comments or ideas that you would like to share that you believe would contribute to teacher job satisfaction and retention at Title I schools?

Appendix I

Information Sheet for Participation in Research Study (IRB #20-686)



Information Sheet for Participation in a Research Study

Principal Investigator: Dr. Carol Cash (804) 836-3611 or ccash48@vt.edu

Kenya Batts, Doctoral Candidate, (804) 475-2472 or kenyab@vt.edu

IRB# 20-686 and Title of Study:

Principal and Teacher Perceptions on Factors that Impact Teacher Job Satisfaction and Retention in Title I Schools in a large Suburban Central Virginia School District

You are invited to participate in a research study. This form includes information about the study and contact information if you have any questions. I am a graduate student at Virginia Tech, and I am conducting this research as part of my course work.

WHAT SHOULD I KNOW?

If you decide to participate in this study, you will participate in a principal interview or teacher focus group. As part of the study, you will participate in virtual recorded interviews and focus groups with the researcher using Principal Interview and Teacher Focus Group questions. The questions will be related to principal behaviors that effect teacher job satisfaction and job retention in Title I elementary schools. Interviews and focus groups will be approximately 30 minutes. Teachers will participate in virtual focus groups with up to 5 teachers. Each participant will be asked demographic information related to teaching experience. Principals and teachers will have an opportunity to review their transcribed responses for accuracy and provide corrections or additions as necessary. Recorded interviews and focus groups will be destroyed once transcribed. Transcriptions will be kept in researcher's possession for 3 years.

You will be asked questions related to principal behaviors that impact your job satisfaction as a teacher and impact your decisions to remain at your current school. Principals and teachers will not be in the same focus groups. There will be no personal questions asked about you or your principal. Your responses will not be shared with principals or school division leaders. There is a potential risk of breach of confidentiality. The researcher is taking steps to mitigate risks as noted

below (using code names, destroying recordings once transcribed and keeping transcriptions in locked possession of researcher.

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

CONFIDENTIALITY

We will do our best to protect the confidentiality of the information we gather from you, but we cannot guarantee 100% confidentiality.

Any data collected during this research study will be kept confidential by the researchers. Your interview will be audio-recorded using a digital recorder and then transcribed. The researchers will code the transcripts using a pseudonym (false name). The recordings will be uploaded to a secure password-protected computer in the researcher's office. The researchers will maintain a list that includes a key to the code. The master key and the recordings will be stored for 3 years after the study has been completed and then destroyed.

WHO CAN I TALK TO?

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Kenya Batts at kenyab@vt.edu OR Dr. Carol Cash at ccash48@vt.edu. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact the Virginia Tech HRPP Office at 540-231-3732 (irb@vt.edu).

Please print out a copy of this information sheet for your records.

Appendix J
Principal Demographic Questions (IRB #20-686)

Question	Response
How many years have you been a principal?	0-3 years 4-10 years 11- 15 years 16 - 20 years 21 or more years
How many years have you been a principal in a Title I school?	0-3 years 4-10 years 11- 15 years 16 - 20 years 21 or more years
How many years at your current school?	0-3 years 4-10 years 11- 15 years 16 - 20 years 21 or more years

Appendix K
Teacher Demographic Questions (IRB #20-686)

Question	Response
How many years have you been teaching?	2 - 5 years 6 - 10 years 11 - 15 years 15 or more years
How many years have you been teaching in a Title I school?	2 - 5 years 6 - 10 years 11 - 15 years 15 or more years
How many years at your current school?	2 - 5 years 6 - 10 years 11 - 15 years 15 or more years

Appendix L
Principal Protocol (IRB #20-686)

OPENING REMARKS:

Researcher: Good morning/afternoon/evening. Thank you for joining me today to participate in this interview for my research study and providing some information about your experience being a principal at a Title I school.

As you know, school districts are experiencing challenging times finding and retaining quality teachers. According to the 2019 Annual Report On the Condition and Needs of Public Schools in Virginia, the state continues to face a growing shortage of high-quality educators entering and remaining in the classroom. The number of unfilled positions was as high as 1,000 during the 2016-2017 school year. Right now, there are nearly 900 unfilled positions. This problem is often exasperated in Title I or hard to staff schools.

I am interviewing principals to find out about their perspectives regarding factors that impact teacher satisfaction and job retention. The information you provide in this interview will be used for my dissertation. I am interested in learning from your experiences in working with teachers in your Title I school.

The interview takes approximately 30 minutes and will focus on teacher satisfaction as it relates to retention. Do you have any questions about the information I shared or the information in the Information Sheet that was sent to you earlier. As a reminder, the interview will be recorded. Once your responses are transcribed you will have an opportunity to review your responses for accuracy. All recordings will be destroyed and no identifying information will be included.

Do I have your permission to proceed with the interview and record your responses (wait for verbal responses)? Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. *[Researcher asks the questions below and participants respond.]*

1. What practices do you implement and perceive to impact your teachers' job satisfaction in your school?
2. Which of your practices do you perceive to impact your teachers' decisions to remain at your school?
3. Do you have any other comments or ideas that you would like to share that you believe impact your teacher's job satisfaction and retention in Title I schools?

CLOSING REMARKS: Researcher: Again, thank you for your participation. You will receive a transcribed copy of your responses within two weeks. Please review and provide any revisions that will help me capture your responses accurately. Thank you!

Appendix M
Teacher Focus Group Protocol (IRB #20-686)

OPENING REMARKS:

Researcher: Good morning/afternoon/evening. Thank you for joining me today to participate in this Teacher Focus group and providing some information about your teaching experience. As you may know, school districts are experiencing challenging times finding and retaining quality teachers. According to the 2019 Annual Report On the Condition and Needs of Public Schools in Virginia, the state continues to face a growing shortage of high-quality educators entering and remaining in the classroom.

I am interviewing teachers to find out about their perspectives regarding factors that impact their job satisfaction and retention in Title I schools. The information you provide during this focus group will be used for my dissertation. I am interested in learning from your experiences in working in a Title I school with principals, students and families.

The focus group will take approximately 30 minutes and will focus on teacher satisfaction as it relates to retention. Do you have any questions about the information I shared or the information in the Information Sheet that was sent to you earlier? As a reminder, the interview will be recorded. Once your responses are transcribed you will have an opportunity to review your responses for accuracy. All recordings will be destroyed and no identifying information will be included.

Do I have your permission to proceed with the focus group and record your responses (wait for verbal responses). Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research study. *[Researcher asks the questions below and participants respond.]*

1. Which of your principal's practices do you perceive to impact teacher job satisfaction?
2. How many of you are returning to this school next year?
3. What does your principal do to impact your decision to remain/return to your current school?
4. What would you like to see your principal do to add to your job satisfaction?
5. Do you have any other comments or ideas that you would like to share that you believe impact teacher job satisfaction and retention at Title I schools?

CLOSING REMARKS:

Researcher: Again, thank you for your participation. You will receive a transcribed copy of your responses within two weeks. Please review and provide any revisions that will help me capture your responses accurately. Thank you!