THE TRANSITION OF MILITARY PERSONNEL TO PUBLIC EDUCATION

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

As early as 1958, the Department of Defense, the United States Department of Education, the United States Department of Labor, and the National Science Foundation recommended that military officers be encouraged to become public education teachers (Public Management Research Institute, 1958). During the 1980s teacher shortages and military downsizing intensified interest in military personnel becoming public education teachers. Population growth in areas such as California, Florida, and Texas caused the most drastic shortages of teachers, especially in mathematics, science, foreign language, and special education (Littleton & Lamar, 1998). Large pools of talented, highly educated individuals were entering the workforce and were interested in becoming public education teachers (Nyjordet, 1991). Recent renewed projections of teacher shortages, a desire to recruit minorities into teaching, and reforms for the improvement of teacher quality are reasons that continue to be used to attract exiting military personnel to the classroom (Feistritzer, Hill, & Willett, 1998). An estimated 2,000 retiring military personnel will be attracted to a new career in public education annually (Military Career Transition Office, personal communication, September, 1998).

The 1993 Defense Authorization Bill created the Troops to Teachers program to assist former military personnel in becoming public education teachers (Taylor, 1994). The program is managed by a Department of Defense agency called the Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Educational Support (DANTES). Since the program began in 1994, over 3,300 service members have become public education teachers in 48 states and the District of Columbia. More than 83% of the participants are still in the classroom today (U.S. Department of Education, 1999). There

are presently 24 Troops to Teachers assistance programs in states that have an interest in attracting veterans as educators. According to a recent national survey of Troops to Teachers graduates (N = 1,171), "The program has been a huge success in bringing dedicated, mature, and experienced individuals into the classroom who have proven to be not only effective teachers but also excellent role models for students" (Feistritzer, Hill, & Willett, 1998, p. 1).

In 1988 an alternative teacher certification program called the Military Career Transition Program began at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, to assist the concentrated population of military personnel located in the area in becoming teachers (MacDonald, Manning, & Gable, 1994). Alternative certification programs can be defined as anything different from the traditional university teacher certification program (Bradshaw, 1998). Since 1988, 1,200 military personnel have completed the Military Career Transition Program and are now teaching in rural and urban areas in Virginia and 47 other states. During the 1998-1999 academic year, more than 150 students received state licensure, 72 of whom were licensed in mathematics, science, or special education. The program became officially associated with the Troops to Teachers program in 1998. In the spring semester of 2000, the program director reported 1,035 teacher candidates were enrolled in the program. Sixty different courses were offered in 15 sites throughout northern and southeastern Virginia. Thirty additional televised courses were offered in the spring semester at sites throughout the United States where there is a high concentration of military personnel (R. H. MacDonald, personal communication, February 11, 2000).

Graduates from the Military Career Transition Program are often employed by one of the local public school divisions in the Hampton Roads area. The Chesapeake Public School Division is one of those local school divisions which has employed approximately 75 Military Career

Transition Program graduates since 1988. Like other public school divisions, Chesapeake has been affected by teacher shortages. The American Association for Employment in Education (1999) projects teacher shortages in special education, physics, chemistry, foreign language, and mathematics in the region of the country where Virginia is located.

According to the U.S. Department of Education (1998), 22% of all new teachers leave the profession in the first three years of teaching. Furthermore, only 44% of teachers report having a formal induction program in their schools to help retain them in the profession. The Chesapeake Public School Division has a Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program designed to support all new teachers during their first year of teaching. The program includes a three-day pre-service orientation for beginning teachers, at least one classroom observation by an instructional specialist, a beginning teacher handbook, an assigned mentor, a local school orientation, and seminars throughout the school year to address common problems.

Statement of the Problem

Graduates from the Military Career Transition Program will continue to be a source of teacher recruits for the Chesapeake Public School Division. Those who are employed may represent a unique population which may have common problems different from other beginning teachers. They may also bring unique contributions to the Chesapeake Public School Division. It is not known if the Military Career Transition Program at Old Dominion University adequately prepares them for the classroom. Furthermore, it is not known if the Chesapeake Public School Division's Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program supports their needs as they make the transition from the military environment to the classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe and explain the transition of personnel from the military to teaching in the Chesapeake Public School Division. Problems these second-career beginning teachers encounter and support they receive from both the school division and the local school were investigated. The Military Career Transition Program at Old Dominion University is examined to assess how well the program prepares participants for selected teaching components. Finally, all aspects of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program used by the Chesapeake Public School Division to assist beginning teachers were examined to determine how well these second-career teachers were supported during their first year in the classroom.

Research Questions

1. What do participants identify as factors that contributed to their transition from the military to the classroom?
2. What do participants identify as factors that hindered their transition to the classroom?
3. How does the Military Career Transition Program at Old Dominion University facilitate the transition of military personnel to the classroom?
4. How does the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program in the Chesapeake Public School Division support the needs of second-career beginning teachers during the first year of transition from the military to the classroom?

Definitions

For the purpose of this study, constitutive and operational definitions are in Table 1.

Table 1

Constitutive and Operational Definitions of the Variables in This Study

Variable	Constitutive definition	Operational definition
Problems of beginning teachers	Experiences, characteristics, or circumstances beginning teachers encountered during the first three years of their careers.	Problems were identified through the responses from participants, mentors, and principals to items 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 2.1, 2.2a through 2.2i, 2.3, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6, and 3.7 in the interview. Questions are in Appendix A.
Factors that contribute to transition	Experiences, characteristics, or circumstances the participants encountered which assisted them in becoming successful in the classroom.	Factors were identified through the responses from participants, mentors, and principals to items 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, and 1.6 in the interview. Questions are in Appendix A.
Factors that hinder transition	Experiences, characteristics, or circumstances participants encountered which were obstacles as they made the transition to the classroom.	Factors were identified through the responses from participants, mentors, and principals to items 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.5, 1. 6 in the interview. Questions are in Appendix A.
Alternative certification program	The process designed to certify candidates who have subject-matter competencies without going through a traditional teacher certification program.	The Military Career Transition Program at Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA.

(table continues)

Table 1 (continued)

Variable	Constitutive definition	Operational definition
Preparation for the classroom	Competence and skills to be successful in the classroom.	Preparation was identified through the responses from participants, mentors, and principals to items 2.1, 2.2, 2.2a through 2.2i, and 2.3 in the interview. Questions are in Appendix A.
New-teacher programs support	Induction efforts designed by the Chesapeake Public School Division for teachers during their first year of teaching. The programs are a three-day pre-service for beginning teachers, a beginning teacher handbook, beginning teacher in-services, observation(s) and post-observation conference(s) by an instructional specialist, an assigned mentor, and a school orientation.	The support provided through the programs was evaluated from the responses of participants, mentors, and principals to items 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, 3.5, 3.6 and 3.7 in the interview. Questions are in Appendix A.

Significance of the Study

The National Executive Service Corps (1987) surveyed 166 school superintendents to determine their reception to using retired military personnel in the classroom. Although there were some concerns expressed about regimentation and flexibility, the report suggested support for the concept. Concerns expressed by the superintendents focused on the ability of military retirees to adapt to the classroom environment based on their regimentation. Given the shortage of mathematics and science teachers, however, the superintendents favored using military retirees in the classroom.

The results from this study can be used by decision makers in the Military Career Transition Program at Old Dominion University to assist them in determining the effectiveness of the program. As a result of the findings in this study, the decision makers may initiate changes designed to prepare military service members better for the classroom.

The results may help decision makers in the Chesapeake Public School Division to determine if all the components of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program are providing support for beginning teachers who have chosen teaching as a second career after military service. They may determine if additional programs are needed to support teachers as they make the transition from the military to the classroom.

The review of the literature includes a summary of the findings of other alternative certification programs and all alternative certification programs specifically designed for existing military personnel. Furthermore, the problems encountered by beginning teachers with prior military service who were employed in the Chesapeake Public School Division are described. These findings may be useful to policy-makers who are interested in creating effective alternative certification programs for exiting military personnel who are preparing to become teachers.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited to beginning teachers who are employed in the Chesapeake Public School Division. Only beginning teachers with previous military service who are trained in an alternative certification program are included. Conclusions cannot be generalized to the population of personnel who have made the transition from the military to classrooms.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

The primary focus of the review of the literature is the preparation of military personnel for teaching. This review begins with a rationale for recruiting retired military personnel for teaching. Alternative teacher certification programs are described and discussed. Programs specifically designed to prepare military personnel to become teachers are explored. The use of teacher mentors is discussed. Data are provided on the evaluation of mentor helpfulness. There is a brief review of career changes, including career changes during mid-life. Finally, the Chesapeake Public School Division's Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program is described.

Rationale for Military Personnel to Become Teachers

Military personnel are recruited to the teaching profession because teacher shortages exist in areas such as mathematics, science, special education, and vocational education. An increase in projected student enrollment and the aging of a teacher workforce are factors that have contributed to teacher shortages (Boe, Cook, Bobbitt, & Terbanian, 1998; Grissmer & Kirby, 1997). According to Gerald and Hussar (1996), the number of teachers needed in U.S. classrooms is projected to rise from 2.96 million in 1994 to 3.43 million by 2006, and student enrollment will increase from 49.8 million in 1994 to 51.3 million by 2006. However, other factors such as changing pupil-teacher ratios, attrition rates, and early retirement plans will affect these projections (Grissmer & Kirby). Shortages are likely to be different, according to subject areas and geographical locations. Hardy (1998) argues there are actually teacher surpluses in areas of the country such as Maine and Connecticut, but shortages in other areas such as Nevada and Colorado. According to him, there are too many elementary teachers and an insufficient supply of

mathematic, science and special education teachers. He further contends that suburban districts have a surplus of teacher applicants while rural and inner city school districts are scrambling to find teachers. Boe et al. predicts an annual shortage of about 29,000 fully certified special education teachers. Weston (1997) projects a shortage of vocational education teachers for the next five to 10 years. According to a recent report by the U.S. Department of Education (1998), 56% of students in chemistry classes are taught by a teacher with neither a major nor a minor in the field.

Another reason for attracting military personnel to teaching is to increase the number of minority teachers. Minority students make up 30% of our nation's student population, but only 13% of our teachers belong to a minority group, and more than 40% of the public schools do not have a single minority faculty member (U. S. Department of Education, 1998). While minorities will continue to become a larger proportion of the student population for the next 15 years, the proportion of teachers who are from a minority group has not been increasing (Grissmer & Kirby, 1997).

According to a recent report on Washington state's Troops to Teachers program, military personnel are filling the gaps of teacher shortages in needed areas and represent a larger proportion of males and minorities than do non-Troops to Teachers participants (Feistritzer, Hill, & Willett, 1998). Feistritzer et al. (1998) compared responses from teachers who acquired teacher certification through the Troops to Teachers program on a 45-item survey ($\underline{N}$ = 1,171) with data collected by the National Center for Education Information (NCEI) regarding non-Troops to Teachers. They found 29% of the Troops to Teachers participants were from a minority or ethnic group, compared to 5 percent of the non-Troops to Teachers. Troops to Teachers were also more

likely to teach physics, physical science, and special education. A higher proportion of the Troops to Teachers participants teach in inner cities and express a willingness to teach in rural communities. Other highlights of their findings include the following:

1. Troops to Teachers participants enter teaching for the right reasons (desire to work with young people, value of education to society, and interest in the subject matter).

2. Troops to Teachers participants are in favor of higher standards for students and stricter graduation requirements.

3. Troops to Teachers participants report high levels of satisfaction with teaching.

4. Troops to Teachers participants differ from other teachers regarding attitudes about how to make teaching more of a true profession.

Alternative Certification Programs

Alternative certification programs are defined in this section. Arguments in favor of alternative certification programs are presented as well as arguments against them. Finally, research related to alternative certification participants is presented. The research includes a description of existing and past alternative certification programs.

Definition of Alternative Certification Programs

There are many types of alternative certification programs used to gain teacher certification. Feistritzer (1997) identified eight types of alternative certification programs throughout the United States. For the purpose of this study a broad and inclusive definition will be used. Alternative teacher certification programs are defined as programs that are different from the traditional university teacher certification programs (Bradshaw, 1998).

To ensure quality control of alternative certification programs, state departments of education usually require state licensure consisting of the successful completion of a written examination, a minimum competency examination, an initial probationary period, or the requirement of holding a bachelor's degree in the subject to be taught. Patton (1985) stated that the program should be rigorous and include: (a) selective admission standards, (b) a strong theoretical base, (c) stringent pedagogical training, and (d) an internship with actual classroom application.

Arguments for Alternative Certification

Lutz and Hutton (1989) maintained that alternative certification programs can improve education quality by attracting talented candidates who have in-depth knowledge of subject matter without necessarily going through formal teacher training. Shoho and Martin (1999) cited several benefits of alternative certification programs. Based on the work of Bliss, they found alternative certification programs introduce competition and reduce the monopoly of traditional teacher certification programs. Stoddart and Floden (as cited in Shoho & Martin) found alternative certification programs recruit people with stronger academic knowledge, therefore, raising the quality of teachers. According to Shen (1998b), alternative certification programs attract more minorities to teaching. Bradshaw (1998) found alternative certification programs lower the cost of teacher certification.

Arguments Against Alternative Certification

Alternative certification programs may be controversial because they initiate debate regarding what constitutes effective teacher training. Opponents argue that knowledge of subject matter alone is insufficient. Pedagogical training and professional knowledge must be grounded in

subject matter knowledge according to opponents (Otuya, 1992). McDiarmid and Wilson (1991) questioned the depth of content knowledge of alternative certification teachers. Darling-Hammond (1990) argued alternative certification programs degrade the teaching profession. Shen (1997a) argued that alternative certification routes may be a means by which some college freshmen circumvent traditional certification programs.

Research on Alternative Certification Programs

Shen (1997b) used data from the Schools and Staff Survey 1993-94 (weighted N = 800,412) to determine if the inclusion of alternative certification teachers helped reduce teacher shortages in certain areas like mathematics and science in inner-cities and rural areas, increase diversity in the teacher work force, and improve the quality of teachers. He compared the responses of alternative and traditional certification teachers on the survey and found that the percentage of minority teachers was much higher among alternative certification teachers than traditional certification teachers in elementary schools ($X^2(1) = 61.1$, $p<.001$) and in secondary schools ($X^2(1) = 8.0$, $p<.005$). He also found a higher proportion of alternative certification (AC) teachers in inner-cities than traditional certification (TC) teachers (28.9%AC v. 11.7%TC). He did not find a difference in the two groups in rural areas (20.0%AC v. 17.4%TC). Although a greater proportion of alternative certification than traditional certification graduates teach mathematics or science in secondary schools ($X^2(1) = 10.2$, $p< .001$), the difference between the two groups in the proportion that majored in mathematics, science, or engineering ($X^2(1) = 3.77$, $p >.05$) was not significant. In response to the question, Do alternative certification programs improve the quality of teachers? Shen found a significantly higher proportion of alternative certification teachers held masters' degrees in elementary schools ($X^2(3) = 77.8$, $p<.001$) and in

secondary schools ($\underline{X}^2(1) = 37.30, \underline{p}<.001$). He also found that alternative certification teachers are more likely to have had previous education-related work experience or to have worked in business or the military. However, Shen agrees these data alone do not mean alternative certification programs improve the quality of teachers. Other studies need to explore this argument further.

Teachers trained in alternative certification programs experience a higher attrition rate than teachers trained in traditional certification programs (Littleton & Lamar, 1998). This raises the question about the impact alternative certification programs have on teacher shortages. Shoho and Martin (1999) considered the possibility that alternative certification teachers may not be accepted in the school environment resulting in high levels of alienation and attrition. They used the School Alienation Scale (SAS) to compare perceptions of alienation of 142 alternative certification teachers and 86 traditional certification teachers. Both groups were involved in different master's degree programs at the same university. The instrument is a 40-item, five-point Likert scale which is used to assess levels of alienation of individuals in the school environment. The School Alienation Scale is divided into four sub-scales: isolation, normlessness, powerlessness, and meaninglessness. The alternative certification (AC) teachers reported significantly lower levels of isolation ($\underline{M} = 36.04$, $\underline{SD} = 6.63$) than traditional certification (TC) teachers ($\underline{M} = 38.30$, $\underline{SD} = 5.53$, $\underline{p} = .001$). The difference between the two groups was not significant for meaninglessness, powerlessness, or overall alienation (TC: $\underline{M} = 158.38$, $\underline{SD} = 14.63$ and AC: $\underline{M} = 154.28$, $\underline{SD} = 6.31$, $\underline{p} = .062$). The lower levels of isolation among the alternative certification teachers may be attributed to their participation in a cohort program which may have reduced the alienating effects of the school environment. It is important to note that

both groups reported high levels of alienation which may indicate institutional causes of alienation.

In 1984, the South Carolina Critical Needs Certification Program (CNCP) was established to train teachers in content areas experiencing critical teacher shortages (Million, 1987). This state-funded program designated secondary mathematics, science, library science, and foreign language as critical areas. The program was not modeled after any other program. Participants began teaching without the normally required education courses or student teaching practicum. According to Million, the Critical Needs Certification Program provided accelerated teacher training to those with strong academic credentials during and after the first year of teaching. Activities included two years of supervised on-the-job training with a pre-service two-week institute, monthly seminars with teaching specialists, and observation and evaluation by Critical Needs Certification Program staff and local mentors who were trained by the Critical Needs Certification Program staff. Participants who were judged to have made satisfactory progress and offered a new teaching contract received additional training the second year.

Although there was no empirical evidence, Million (1987) concluded from the comments of participants that the Critical Needs Certification Program validates student teaching as the most productive element in traditional teacher-training programs. He found that the overwhelming majority of those successfully completing the South Carolina program acquired genuine respect for both teaching and educators. These conclusions were drawn from anonymous surveys. Finally, he concluded teachers can be well trained in less time than is required by most traditional programs. This conclusion was based on the number of trainees who went into teaching: 56 in mathematics, 83 in science, and three in library science. The quality of the training in the program

was not verified in this study. No data were available on the trainees' performance. It is important to note this alternative certification program was able to attract candidates in areas of teacher shortages.

In 1986 West Virginia State College, West Virginia College of Graduate Studies, and the West Virginia Institute of Technology consorted to design an alternative certification program to attract candidates to teach mathematics and science because the number of teacher candidates was adversely affected by the lure of more lucrative positions. The pilot program was designed to determine whether an alternative field-based delivery system could attract talented "second-career" adults into those fields of teaching where shortages existed. The program, known as the Field-Based Training Program (FBTP), featured eight components: (a) identification and screening of potential candidates; (b) the utilization of higher education and public school personnel teams to conduct structured group interviews; (c) pre-assessment of cognitive knowledge and perceived competency of essential teaching skills; (d) instruction in human development and learning, instructional strategies, classroom management, special education, and reading in the content areas in an accelerated block; (e) an internship with an experienced mentor teacher and college coordinator; (f) professional seminars for support and practical analyses of experiences; (g) an orientation and clarification of program roles for mentors; and (h) program evaluation by interns, mentor teachers, and program administrators (Securro, Nicholson, & Dockery, 1989).

According to Securro et al. (1989), the program was considered a success and was recommended to be continued. Six individuals with backgrounds related to mathematics and science completed the program and were employed in grades K-12. The pilot was evaluated

through the use of questionnaires followed by structured interviews of interns, interviews of participants from institutions of higher education, field visits by higher education supervisors, documentation of meetings and seminars, and document examination. The major findings concluded: (a) while a strong background in content is important, program participants agree that it must be complemented with professional knowledge; (b) age of content and compatibility of prior content with public school curricula were concerns, especially in science; (c) the interns agreed professional education courses were valuable and necessary; (d) several interns indicated that a period of observation prior to entering the internship would be valuable to help prepare them for the "cultural shock;" (e) the selection and screening process is critical and should include former participants; and (f) most placements with mentors were positive, but the program lacked control and had limited recourse when a problem did exist.

An intensive, 15-month, nontraditional, certification program for secondary teachers in the fields of mathematics, physics, chemistry, and earth sciences was implemented at Texas A & M University. Participants in the program successfully completed 36 semester hours of course work which permitted candidates to earn a Master of Education Degree. Denton and Peters (1988) evaluated the effectiveness of this program by answering five questions:

1. Is student achievement of curriculum-bound, end-of course tests affected by whether the teacher was a teaching intern in the alternative certification program or an experienced colleague of the intern?

2. Do curricular elements of the alternative certification program which emphasize findings and processes of research on teaching influence the teaching practices of teaching interns?

3. Do curricular elements of the alternative certification program which foster reflective thinking about teaching influence the ability of teaching interns to analyze and investigate instructional problems in their classrooms?

4. Do institutional structures and characteristics of individuals affect collaborative efforts between schools and the university regarding the alternative certification program?

5. What factors influence the recruitment and selection of teaching interns for an alternative certification program? (pp.11-12)

Student achievement was determined by student performance on curriculum-bound tests administered at the conclusion of the school year. To establish a reference for comparison, experienced colleagues of interns teaching in the same department were asked to administer the curriculum-bound tests to their students (10 interns and 11 colleagues). Because the number of data points was so limited, a decision was made to use non-parametric sign tests and simply record whether students of the intern or students of the intern's colleagues attained the larger mean score. Students taught by interns scored higher in earth science and physical science ($\underline{M}$=26.8, $\underline{SD}$ = 7.00) than students taught by colleagues ($\underline{M}$ =24, $\underline{SD}$ = 7.00, $\underline{p}$ =.004). However in mathematics the differences on the students' scores were not significant ($\underline{p}$ = .113). In fact, students taught by interns' colleagues performed better than students taught by interns ($\underline{M}$ = 22, $\underline{SD}$ =7.13 v. $\underline{M}$ =33, $\underline{SD}$ = 7.24). Denton and Peters (1988) concluded that student achievement was positively affected in science when students were taught by interns in the alternative certification program. However, when the mathematics results were added the advantage of being taught by the interns disappeared.

Classroom observations by trained teacher appraisers and video-recordings of class sessions were analyzed with a low-inference observation system to assess the interns' teaching skills. Denton and Peters (1988) concluded, "Interns were sufficiently influenced by the pedagogical course work preceding and accompanying the internship to effectively demonstrate desired teaching behaviors as judged by students, school district teacher appraisers, and university researchers analyzing the video recordings" (p. 72). The analysis of individual conversations and class discussions indicate that the program efforts to incorporate research findings and process were exhibited in the classroom, especially toward the end of the school year. Interns exhibited their attempts to integrate theory with instructional and curricular issues in their end of the year essays and reports.

Denton and Peters (1988) noted evidence of reflective teaching in the latter stages of the program based on written responses to essays and research reports. They argued that these written products represent the most tangible evidence that the theoretical perspective of the curriculum did influence the interns' professional development.

Collaboration between school districts and the university, was evident through the selection and recruitment of the participants in the program. Through shared decision-making between the school districts and the university, paid internships were included in the program. Through the influence of an advisory panel, participating school districts were required to have operational staff development programs for new faculty members. Participating schools and the university continued the program beyond the period when external funds were available (Denton & Peters, 1988).

Barnes et al. (1989) reviewed nine alternative teacher certification programs during the 1986-87 school year that were approved by the Texas State Board of Education. They identified common strengths and weaknesses which include:

Strengths

1. Highly motivated and enthusiastic individuals were attracted to the program.

2. Participants were usually more mature than other first-year teachers.

3. A higher percentage of alternative certification interns passed the new certification test compared to traditional-route candidates.

4. Negative feelings of principals and supervising teachers were often reversed by the end of the school year, which was attributed to interns' performance.

5. The standardized test scores of interns' classes were at least as high as those of beginning teachers entering through the traditional route.

Weaknesses

1. Communication with those who seek information about the program needed to be improved.

2. Training schedules were not adequate in some cases. This resulted in interns not being ready for a classroom assignment on the first day of school.

3. The orientation of supervising teachers to the new program and its requirements was insufficient.

Lutz and Hutton (1989) described and evaluated an alternative certification program in the Dallas Independent School District. Admission into the program required successful completion of an entrance examination of basic skills. Applicants were required to have a four-year degree

from an accredited university, a 2.8 grade point average, successful completion of a 150-word essay on a designated topic, and a signed agreement to take six semester hours in reading. Based on these criteria, 110 applicants were accepted into the program from the 691 who took the entrance examination.

Formal instruction was conducted by administrators of the program, teacher advisors, other Dallas Independent School District personnel consultants, and professors from East Texas State University. The participants also attended, new-teacher orientation sessions with other beginning teachers for one week. Twenty teacher advisors who assisted with the selection process were later assigned to observe interns, model teaching technologies, and provide orientation regarding requirements of the state, district, and school. The teacher advisors had direct and intensive involvement with the interns throughout the program. The interns were assigned to teacher supervisors in 34 of the 52 schools. The supervising teachers demonstrated good teaching, involved the interns in planning sessions, and guided them through activities such as grading papers, maintaining records, checking and reviewing homework, handling duty periods, conferring with counselors, and tutoring students.

When Lutz and Hutton (1989) compared the interns with other first-year teachers, they determined about 33% of the interns selected teaching because of low employment opportunities in their first career, compared to 96% of the other first-year teachers. They found that both groups liked interacting with students more than they had expected and liked managing behavior problems, grading papers, and planning lessons less than they had expected as measured by a Teacher Expectation Scale. They reported that a majority of the first-year teachers (72%) indicated a long-term commitment to teaching, compared with only 40% of the interns. Interns'

performance as teachers was measured with the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS) and a subject-area test called ExCET administered by the state education agency. Almost all of the interns who completed the program met or exceeded the standard of the Texas Teacher Appraisal System (TTAS). When the interns' scores on ExCET were compared to teachers state-wide, the interns fared well. The interns had a higher mean score on all seven subtests. Specific information is included in Table 2.

Table 2

Alternative Certification Intern and Statewide Means for ExCET Exams in Texas

	Intern				Statewide	
ExCET exam	N	Score range	% pass	M	% pass	M
Elementary	60	65-92	92	80	83	77
ESL	13	68-93	92	80	64	73
Bilingual	27	77-95	100	80	85	79
English	2	78-95	100	82	91	81
Mathematics	14	55-97	86	82	91	81
Physical science	4	65-97	75	86	78	78
Physics	1	89	100	89	76	80

Note. ExCET = state-mandated exit tests for teachers in Texas; ESL = English as a second language. From "Alternative Teacher Certification: Its Policy Implications for Classroom and Personnel Practice," by F. W. Lutz and J. B. Hutton, 1989, Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis, 11, p. 248. Authors did not report standard deviations. The number of participants in the statewide ExCET exams was not reported by the authors.

Comments and surveys from principals, teacher advisors, and interns indicated enthusiastic support for the alternative certification program. According to Lutz and Hutton (1989), 63% of the principals indicated they would participate again, while 17% were uncertain. Although it was not stated, the assumption is that the remaining 20% of the principals would not participate again. A visiting team appointed by the Texas Education Agency cited the interns as a strength of this program. What minimal resistance existed in the beginning of the program from the supervising teachers was due to the lack or inaccuracy of information.

The program provided the Dallas Independent School District with quality teachers according to Lutz and Hutton (1989). They indicated that the number of interns from this program (94) represents only 8% of the needed teachers. They said, "If the DISD [Dallas Independent School District] hires the same number of new teachers during the next school year, the optimistic estimate of 94 alternative certification (AC) interns as returning teachers (about 8% of 1,206) is hardly enough to promote AC [alternative certification] as the answer to the teacher shortage" (p. 251). It was further stated that the number of interns in alternative certification programs is declining in Dallas which may be attributed to the decreasing number of qualified applicants or the higher financial costs of these programs which are funded by the local school district.

Miller, M. C. McKenna, and B. A. McKenna, (1998) compared 41 alternative certification teachers and 41 traditional certification teachers who had three years of teaching experience. Comparisons were made between teachers who taught the same subjects, at the same grade level at the same school. The alternative certification program teachers completed a program at Georgia Southern University which required condensed course-work to meet provisional

certification standards, an induction mentor program, and ongoing course work to meet minimal state certification guidelines. During their first year they took a biweekly class taught by university supervisors that focused on common problems. University supervisors observed each teacher eight times and met with mentors to ensure the success of the teacher-mentor relationship. The traditional certification teachers graduated from varying public and private institutions. Trained observers, who did not know which of the 41 participants had an alternative or traditional certification, rated the teachers' use of effective lessons and pupil-teacher interactions. The instrument used had two sub-scales: Effective Lesson Components (9 items) and Effective Pupil-Teacher Interaction Components (6 items).

The two groups did not significantly differ on the two subscales. The Effective Lessons sub-scale results for traditional certification teachers ($N = 41$, $M = 27.9$, $SD = 4.4$) and alternative certification teachers ($N = 41$, $M = 26.8$, $SD = 4.2$) revealed no significant difference in teaching behavior. The Interaction sub-scale results for traditional certification teachers ($N = 41$, $M = 18.7$, $SD = 2.6$) and alternative certification teachers ($N = 41$ $M = 18.2$, $SD = 2.6$) revealed no significant difference in the six pupil interaction teacher behaviors. Three separate multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAS) were done to determine if the small sample differences between the two groups reflected differences in population or was due to sampling variability. They first used the Effective Lesson Component and the Effective Pupil-Teacher Interaction sub-scales as dependent variables (Wilks' lambda = .98, $F(2,31) = 0.4$, $p = .69$). There were no group differences on the two sub-scales. When the two sub-scales were used as dependent variables separately the differences were not significant. The authors concluded

alternative certification did not lead to inferior practice among teachers evaluated three years into their careers.

Using the same population, 18 self-contained alternative certification teachers and 18 self-contained traditional certification teachers were selected to examine the effects of certification methods on student achievement. They selected students in self-contained classes because there is only one teacher providing instruction in the academic areas. Students took the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS) as a post-test at the conclusion of the academic year. Miller, M., McKenna, M.C., and McKenna, B.A. (1998) found the differences in average student achievement test scores to be not statistically significant . Students who were taught by alternative certification teachers ($N = 188$, $M = 46.9$, $SD = 19.1$) scored equally well on total mathematics as students taught by traditional certification teachers ($N = 157$, $M = 47.6$, $SD = 18.4$). Students who were taught by alternative certification teachers ($N = 188$, $M = 45.9$, $SD = 16.1$) scored equally as well as students taught by traditional certification teachers in reading ($N = 157$, $M = 44.5$, $SD = 16.2$). Collective student test score means were analyzed by using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) which resulted in a non-significant Wilks' lambda ($F(1,158) = .99$, $p = .83$).

Miller, M., McKenna, M.C., and McKenna, B.A. (1998) interviewed the same 41 alternative certification teachers and the 41 traditional certification teachers from Georgia Southern University to gain insight into the teachers' perceptions of their teaching abilities. They concluded neither group felt well prepared and they were unsure of themselves when they began their teaching experience. However, both groups felt competent after having had three years of teaching experience. Both groups cited dealing with special education students, working with emerging technologies, and dealing with parents as problem areas with equal frequency. The

induction program and mentor relations were credited with helping alternative certification teachers to overcome initial difficulties.

Teacher Preparation Programs for Military Personnel

Alternative certification programs seem to be the preferred routes to attract qualified military personnel to the teaching profession. Over half (53%) of the Troops to Teachers participants entered teaching through alternative certification programs, while the other 47% complete traditional certification programs (Feistritzer, Hill, & Willett, 1998). Other second-career teachers who did not participate in the Troops to Teachers program may have served in the military, but there is no current national database that tracks the number of teachers who once served in the military, and there is little evidence of their success (Celes, 1992).

Legislation that gave incentives to military personnel for entering teaching will be discussed. Past alterative certification programs that were specifically designed for military personnel entering teaching will also be discussed. Included in this review are studies that have examined military personnel's performance after entering teaching and descriptions of the programs that prepared them for teaching.

Legislation

Since 1987, the Department of Defense issued directives that facilitated voluntary education programs for each branch of the armed forces. Through the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1993 (Public Law 102-484) Title XLIV, Subtitle D, the Troops to Teachers program was created. The program assisted eligible members of the armed forces, after their separation from active duty, to obtain elementary or secondary teacher licensure. It was also designed to assist eligible members to obtain credentials necessary to serve as teacher aides.

The program assisted public schools in obtaining a pool of candidates in areas where they are experiencing a shortage of teachers and teacher aides (Taylor, 1994).

Candidates must have had at least six years of continuous active duty, they must have been displaced from the Department of Defense and Energy, they were required to hold a bachelor's degree or higher, and they must have been seeking teacher certification. This legislation allocated a $5,000 stipend. Those seeking credentials as a teacher's aide must have held at least an associate's degree. Recipients who did not hold a degree and earn a baccalaureate within five years after their discharge may have also qualified for the stipend.

According to Taylor (1994), participants must have acquired credentials within two years of their separation from the military and accepted full-time employment for five consecutive years in schools that received federal funds under Chapter 1 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The Department of Defense awarded additional funds to schools who were receiving these funds and experiencing shortages of qualified teachers in science, mathematics, or engineering. Fifty-thousand dollars awarded in declining increments over a five-year period was awarded for salaries of these teachers or teacher aides according to Taylor. Individual stipends and incentive grants to schools would have to be returned should the recipient leave the district before the five-year term is completed.

Taylor stated that the Troops to Teachers program was reappropriated $65 million for a four-year period (1993 to 1997). A proposal to continue funding for Troops to Teachers, the Defense Authorization Bill, was signed by President Clinton in October 1999. The bill has provisions to award $2,000 stipends for participants, award $2,000 to school districts who employ them, award grants to Troops to Teachers assistance offices, and award grants to

establish model teacher certification programs on or near major concentrations of military bases to consortiums and institutions of higher learning (Defense Activity for Non-Traditional Education Support, personal communication, e-mail, February 18, 2000).

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (1996) administers funds for alternative teacher certification to be used for veterans, service personnel, eligible dependents, and members of the Selected Reserve through the Montgomery GI Bill--Active Duty and Montgomery GI Bill--Selected Reserve. Some of these recipients pursue training to become teachers.

The U.S. Education Department awarded 20 grants under the Mid-career Teacher Training Program in 1990 and 1991. Institutions of higher education with schools or departments of education who developed mid-career teacher training programs were eligible to apply. The project emphasized recruiting minorities into teaching, serving at-risk children, and meeting critical shortages in teacher supply (U. S. Department of Education, 1994). This program was authorized by the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Past Programs

A training program called Lateral Entry Program (LEP) for exiting military personnel for teaching was developed at East Carolina University in the School of Education (Hawk & Schmidt, 1989). This was an attempt to reduce shortages in mathematics and science teachers in schools in rural areas. There are two large Marine Corps bases located near the university from which candidates could be attracted.

Entry into the Lateral Entry Program was based on:

1. A grade point average of 2.2 or better in their major field of study and academic preparation in at least one science or mathematics class.

2. References from previous work experiences to determine competencies in non-academic environments.

3. The recommendation of an interview panel which consisted of three or more university professors from the School of Education or their department of study (Hawk & Schmidt, 1989).

The program consisted of three components to be completed in a 12-month period (Hawk & Schmidt, 1989). The first component included training in essential teaching skills which lasted six weeks. Participants were provided with information in the seven following areas: (a) the nature of the learner, (b) management of instructional time, (c) management of student behavior, (d) instructional planning and presentation, (e) instructional monitoring and feedback, (f) students with exceptionalities, and (g) interaction in the educational environment. The second component was an internship with an assigned mentor in a rural public school. Participants in the program taught a minimum of three classes, observed other teachers, and participated in other school-related activities. The third component was one-week of synthesizing activities held on the university campus that included workshops on thinking skills and classroom management. Presentations were made by representatives of professional educational organizations. The participants evaluated the Lateral Entry Program during that week.

Hawk and Schmidt (1989) compared scores on the National Teachers Examination of participants in the Lateral Entry Program with those prepared in traditional certification programs. The mean score for the 11 Lateral Entry Program (LEP) participants who took the National Teachers Area Examination in geology and science was 677.5. The mean score for 35 first-year math and science teachers from the same university who took the examination the same year was 664.4. The difference was not statistically significant ($t = 1.36$, $p < .09$). There was also no

difference between the two groups on the mathematics National Teachers Area Examination. Finally, the two groups' scores at the university were compared on the Core Battery III, Professional Knowledge, test of the National Teachers Examination, and the difference was not statistically significant ($\underline{t} = .404$, $\underline{p} < .34$). The mean score for the lateral entry students ($\underline{N} = 11$) was 666.3. The mean score for the other math and science students ($\underline{N} = 35$) was 664.3.

Twenty-eight observable teaching practices were assessed throughout the school year using the Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument (TPAI). The practices were categorized into five major teaching functions. Sixteen lateral entry students and 53 other first-year teachers were rated. The traditionally prepared group included 35 students from the same university as the lateral entry students and 18 others from different universities. The percentages of participants in both groups rated "below standard," "at standard," and "above standard" in the five functions are in Table 3. Hawk and Schmidt (1989) found the percentage of both groups that scored "below standard" was similar. The difference ranged from 0 to 6 percentage points. A higher percentage of traditionally prepared teachers (TPT) than lateral entry program teachers (LEP) scored "above standard" on all essential teaching skills except instructional monitoring. The range of difference was from 10 to 28 percentage points. Hawk and Schmidt concluded, "These percentages favored TPTs [traditionally prepared teachers] except in Function 4 (Instructional Monitoring) and showed that the LEP [Lateral Entry Program] provided primarily 'At Standard' teachers" (pp. 56-57). They attributed the differences in these classroom functions to the preparation process, particularly to differences in the number of clock hours allocated to teaching essential skills and the lack of prior teaching experiences of the Lateral Entry Program participants. As a result, fewer

Lateral Entry Program participants received “above standard” ratings in management of time, management of students, instructional presentation, and instructional feedback.

Table 3

Percentage of Lateral Entry Participants and Traditionally Prepared Teachers Receiving Below Standard, at Standard, or Above Standard Ratings on the Teacher Performance Appraisal Instrument, N = 16 Lateral Entry Teachers and N = 53 Traditionally Prepared Teachers

Function	Essential teaching skills	Type of program	Below standard	At standard	Above standard
Function 1	Management of time	LEP	6	56	38
		TPT	6	45	49
Function 2	Management of students	LEP	13	63	25
		TPT	13	34	53
Function 3	Instructional presentation	LEP	6	63	31
		TPT	4	55	41
Function 4	Instructional monitoring	LEP	0	13	87
		TPT	6	30	64
Function 5	Instructional feedback	LEP	0	63	37
		TPT	0	49	51

Note. LEP = Lateral Entry Participants; TPT = Traditionally Prepared Teachers. From "Teacher Preparation: A Comparison of Traditional and Alternative Programs," by P. P. Hawk and M. W. Schmidt, 1989, Journal of Teacher Education, 40, p. 56. Adapted with permission of the author.

Hawk and Schmidt (1989) concluded that the Lateral Entry Program participants prepared competent, "at standard" teachers whose National Teachers Examination scores were equal to those of traditionally prepared teachers. And they were prepared in a short period of time (12 months) to enter teaching areas that traditionally experience shortages. They attribute the success

of the program to several factors. First, the entire Lateral Entry Program was developed by a committee of faculty members from all departments involved in the professional education of mathematics and science pre-service teachers. This approach provided continuity of subject matter because the participants were forced to take the courses in the sequence in which they were designed. The Lateral Entry Program participants knew they were going to be in the classroom with full teaching responsibilities two months after the start of the program. This would command their attention to learning how to survive in the classroom. The maturity level of the candidates may also have contributed to their success; their mean age was 31.6. Finally, the support within the group may have been a factor that led to the success of the program. The participants were together since the orientation of the program. They attended classes together in the summer and throughout the year at which time they provided feedback and support to one another.

The public schools in San Diego developed an alternative certification program to attract candidates with strong academic mathematics and science backgrounds due to shortages of mathematics and science teachers (Dessel & Mehaffy, 1989). The Fast Track Program was a collaborative effort of the U.S. Navy, San Diego State University, and the San Diego Unified Public Schools. U.S. Navy officers near retirement who had completed degrees in engineering, mathematics, or physical science were potential candidates. The program was sponsored by the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education (FIPSE), U.S. Department of Education (Dessel & Mehaffy).

Several factors that make naval officers potential candidates for mathematics and science teaching positions were identified by Dessell and Mehaffy (1989). They are as follows: (a) naval officers usually retire after 20 years to begin a second career while still in their mid-40s; (b) many

officers stay in teaching as long as their health permits, giving approximately 20 years of service; (c) teaching as a second career is attractive because with retirement pay officers can accept lower-paying second careers; and (d) they have typically brought superior leadership and organizational ability to their schools in addition to a strong academic preparation.

The program focused much of the course work on pedagogical content knowledge based on research done at Stanford University by Lee Shulman. Public school practitioners assisted the participants. Counseling was provided early in the program, release time was permitted during the final years of their military career for course work, and a reduced training period was followed by one year of paid internship (Dessel & Mehaffy, 1989).

Dessel and Mehaffy (1989) concluded that the project attracted some quality candidates to the profession, but the number of participants was disappointing. Only five recruits completed the program, causing concern about the cost-benefit ratio of a very expensive process. They further asserted that the participants required intensive contacts with university and public school supervisors as they made the transition from the predictable world of the military to the unpredictable world of higher education.

Parker (1992) conducted a non-experimental expo-facto study and survey to compare the performance of military retirees who began teaching as a second career with the performance of first-career beginning teachers who received their training through traditional programs. He also sought to determine the level of satisfaction of employers of these second-career beginning teachers. Finally, he wanted to identify any special problems encountered by group members during their beginning years as teachers in urban and suburban schools. The military retirees consisted of those who received their teacher training through the Military Career Transition

Program (MCTP) between 1989 and 1991 at Old Dominion University in Norfolk, Virginia, and who were employed as beginning teachers in schools located in the Hampton Roads area of Virginia. The participants were senior enlisted personnel and senior officers at the time of their retirement.

The performance of the participants was determined by area supervisors who ranked them on 27 teaching competencies (Parker, 1992). The participants and other beginning teachers were compared on each competency, and t-tests were used to determine significant differences. Table 4 is a display of Parker's comparisons. The differences between the means were not statistically different on 24 of the competencies, while on three competencies military transition teachers scored higher than other beginning teachers. These were (a) identifies long term goals, (b) utilizes effective record systems, and (c) interacts with other teachers, staff, and administration.

Table 4

Response Means and t-Values for Differences in Competencies of Military Retirees and Other Beginning Teachers

Survey item	[a]O.B.T. M	[b]M.R. M	t
1. Knowledge of subject matter	7.67	7.79	-0.40
2. Knowledge of physical, social, and academic patterns	6.61	6.55	0.13
3. Knowledge of individual differences	6.91	6.61	0.83
4. Enhances students' feelings	7.15	7.33	-0.71
5. Manages the physical environment	7.00	7.15	-0.54
6. Recognizes signs of severe emotional distress	6.51	6.21	0.65
7. Awareness of appropriate intervention for severe emotional distress	5.88	5.55	0.54
8. Recognizes signs of alcohol and drug abuse in students	5.27	5.52	-0.36
9. Awareness of appropriate intervention for alcohol or drug abuse	5.36	5.46	-0.14
10. Formulates standards for student behavior	6.87	7.09	-0.66
11. Deals with misconduct; promotes instructional momentum	6.21	6.82	-1.57
12. Identifies long-term goals	6.79	7.33	-2.14*
13. Selects, develops, and sequences learning activities	6.88	6.79	0.26
14. Uses class time efficiently	6.97	7.30	1.48
15. Communicates effectively	7.21	7.52	-1.20
16. Maintains focus by using motivational devices	7.00	7.09	-0.33
17. Stimulates and directs student thinking	6.76	6.94	-0.67
18. Checks student comprehension	6.61	6.79	-0.59

(table continues)

Table 4 (continued)

Survey item	[a]O.B.T. M	[b]M.R. M	t
19. Provides appropriate practice	6.91	7.00	-0.35
20. Encourages students' participation and maintains academic focus	6.71	6.77	-0.20
21. Uses feedback procedures	6.67	6.70	-0.10
22. Constructs tests and tasks to measure students' progress	6.88	6.85	0.10
23. Establishes testing environment for valid performance	7.06	7.03	0.10
24. Utilizes effective record system	7.15	7.70	-2.64*
Indicators of adaptability			
25. Overall teaching performance	7.15	7.36	-0.92
26. Interaction with other teachers, staff, and administration	7.36	7.91	-2.79*
27. Adjustment to school environment	7.27	7.64	-1.48

Note. N = 33; df = 62. Adapted with permission of the author from "An Evaluation of the Performance of Retired Military Personnel Who Begin Teaching as a Second Career," by W. E. Parker, 1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 54-05A, p. 80. Signs were added to the t-values to show direction of differences (OBT- MR). Standard deviations were not reported. An error was possibly reported in the degrees of freedom (df = 62). The number of subjects in each group is not clear. Parker reported N of 33.

[a]O.B.T. = Other Beginning Teachers. [b]M.R. = Military Retirees.

*$p < .05$.

To ascertain employers' level of satisfaction, supervisors were asked to rate their level of overall satisfaction with the performance of the retired military teachers. The scale values,

frequency of responses, and mean level of satisfaction with the retired participants are in Table 5. Employers were "very satisfied" with the performance of the retired military teachers.

Table 5

Response Frequencies and Scale Values for Levels of Satisfaction With Retired Military Teachers

Levels of satisfaction	Scale values	x	Number of responses	=	Total value
Extremely satisfied	5		12		60
Very satisfied	4		10		40.5
Satisfied	3		8		24
Somewhat dissatisfied	2		3		6
Very dissatisfied	1		0		0
Total			33		130.5

Note. The mean value for level of satisfaction = 3.95. From "An Evaluation of the Performance of Retired Military Personnel Who Begin Teaching as a Second Career," by W. E. Parker, 1992, Dissertation Abstracts International, 54-05A, p. 80. Adapted with permission of the author. The total value of those "very satisfied" is reported in error (total value = 40). Standard deviations were not reported.

To determine the special problems encountered by the participants, Parker (1992) solicited written responses from supervisors in four areas. The four areas were: (a) professional knowledge, (b) adaptability to school environment, (c) teacher training or education, and (d) relationship with peers. Fifteen supervisors responded in one or more of the four areas. Parker stated the comments were too few in number to determine whether the participants encountered special problems. The comments made by the supervisors indicated some of the participants had difficulty relating to

students at their appropriate developmental level. Two comments indicated the participants were condescending to younger female colleagues or had problems taking directions from younger teachers.

White (1997) conducted a qualitative study of eight former military men from the Troops to Teachers program. These men were employed to fill areas of teacher shortages by Bedford County Public Schools in Bedford County, Virginia. White's purpose was to determine the needs of the first-year teachers from Troops to Teachers while they were in their transition from the military to teaching. She found that these men experienced many of the same problems as other first-year teachers. She also found they experienced other problems unique to these participants. Some of the problems they experienced were placed into the following categories: (a) adjustment to education, (b) adjustment to students, (c) adjustment to instruction, (d) resentment from colleagues and community, and (e) lack of preparatory time before the start of school.

Resentment from staff and community was unique to these participants because seven of the eight participants did not complete a teacher-preparation program prior to their teaching experience. Other staff members and parents questioned their competence. Misinformation about the Troops to Teachers program was rampant, largely due to a letter to the editor in a local newspaper. The school system did little to provide correct information about the program prior to employing these teachers. It is important to note that the one participant who had completed a teacher-preparation program did not experience these same resentments and was more readily accepted.

A Summary of Alternative Certification Programs

Eight programs throughout the United States that provided alternative routes to certification for teaching in the public schools were reviewed. Three programs were designed to attract candidates who had previous military experience. All programs were designed to attract qualified candidates in areas of teacher shortages such as mathematics, science, and special education. There were similarities and differences among the programs. Characteristics of the programs are categorized and displayed in Table 6. The categories are: (a) requirements, (b) internship, (c) course work, (d) seminars, (e) unique components, and (f) findings.

Some of these programs required a bachelor's degree prior to entrance in the program. Four of the programs included a screening process which involved an interview, a certain grade point average, or a formal cognitive assessment. The length and nature of the internship varied in each of the programs. Four programs had a paid internship of six weeks to two years. The length of the internship varied from six weeks of student teaching to a two-year period. Participants were trained through college courses, activities on campus, seminars, and classroom observations. The number of participants who entered the teaching profession varied greatly. Some of the programs included unique characteristics such as partnerships and involvement of mentors in the selection of the participants into the program.

The findings from these programs are valuable for consideration as higher education continues to develop alternative certification programs to address the needs created by teacher shortages. Although the cost of alternative certification must be carefully considered, there was overall satisfaction with the results. Participants in these alternative certification programs scored as well as traditionally prepared teachers on entrance tests, teacher appraisal instruments, and

employee satisfaction instruments. Some participants in these programs expressed an appreciation for courses or activities that offer pedagogy and opportunities to observe in the classroom. Only two studies included an examination of the effects of alternative certification on student achievement. The results indicated no differences between teachers from alternative preparation programs and traditional programs in how students score on curriculum-bound tests.

Table 6

Summary of Alternative Certification Programs

Alternative certification program	Requirements	Internship	Course work	Seminars	Unique components	Findings
South Carolina Critical Needs Program	College degree in mathematics, science, library science, or foreign language. Must hold a teaching position.	A two-year paid internship replaces student teaching.	No traditional education courses.	Two-week preservice. Monthly seminars first eight months.	Graduated 56 in mathematics, 83 in science, and one in library science. Trained mentors.	1. Student teaching is important. 2. Participants expressed an appreciation for the art and science of teaching. 3. Teachers can be trained in less time in an alternative certification program than in traditional certification programs.
West Virginia State College	Candidates interviewed by panel from public education and higher education. Pre-assessment of cognitive knowledge base.	Mentored by experienced teacher and college coordinator.	Accelerated training in human development, learning strategies, special education, and reading in the content areas.	Periodic seminars on participants' experiences and related needs.	Graduated six. Joint effort of higher education and public schools.	1. Strong background in content needed with pedagogical knowledge. 2. Content knowledge must be related to curriculum. 3. Professional education courses are valuable, but they did not prepare students for "cultural shock." 4. Selection and screening are important.

(table continues)

Table 6 (continued)

Alternative certification program	Requirements	Internship	Course work	Seminars	Unique components	Findings
Texas A& M	Graduate Record Examination test. A 2.5 grade point average in teaching field. Interview was conducted.	One year paid internship with paid mentor. Funded by the local school district.	36 hours in the field.	None.	Graduated 10 participants.	1. Students taught by alternative certification teachers scored higher in science, but not mathematics. 2. Benefits from collaborative efforts. 3. Alternative certification programs are a viable option.
Dallas Independent School District	Entrance exam. Overall 2.8 grade point average was required. Bachelor's degree required. 150-word essay required. Agreement to take six hours in reading.	Students were assigned a teacher advisor who helped select the intern.	Six semester hours in reading.	None.	Graduated 94. Teacher advisor helped select.	1. Alternative certification teachers have less of a long-term commitment to teaching than traditional certification teachers. 2. Most met or exceeded standards on teacher appraisal. 3. Interns compared well on subject-area tests.

(table continues)

Table 6 (continued)

Alternative certification program	Requirements	Internship	Course work	Seminars	Unique components	Findings
Georgia Southern University	No admission requirements.	One year with trained mentor and eight formal observations from a university supervisor.	Short summer courses on pedagogy, and ongoing courses to meet state certification requirements.	Cohort met during the school year.	Compared graduates after three years teaching experience.	1. Alternative certification and traditional certification teachers scored equally well on a classroom performance instrument. 2.Students taught by alternative certification teachers scored better than students taught by traditional certification teachers in science, but not mathematics. 3. Both groups had the same perceptions about their preparation for teaching.

(table continues)

Table 6 (continued)

Alternative certification program	Requirements	Internship	Course work	Seminars	Unique components	Findings
East Carolina University	Grade point average of 2.2 in mathematics or science. References from previous work. Interview with education professors.	One year paid internship.	No course work required.	Six weeks of training in essential skills. Three weeks of activities on campus. Class observations.	Attracted marines from a local base for rural school teacher shortages.	1. No differences on Scholastic Aptitude Test scores. 2. Fewer alternative certification interns scored above average on teacher appraisal than traditional certification teachers. 3. Little differences between alternative and traditional certification teachers who scored below on teacher appraisal, but more traditional certification teachers scored above standard. 4. Maturity level of interns may contribute to success.

(table continues)

Table 6 (continued)

Alternative certification program	Requirements	Internship	Course work	Seminars	Unique components	Findings
San Diego University, San Diego Unified School District, and U.S. Navy	Had to be a naval officer. Interviews.	One year, paid.	Pedagogy.	None.	1. Collaborative effort of navy, higher education, and public education. 2. Teachers who helped select participants served as teacher advisors.	1. Number of participants did not justify the cost. 2. Military participants required extensive contact with university personnel to make the adjustment to the school environment.
Old Dominion University (1989 -1991)	Bachelor's degree. Naval officer.	Twenty hours of classroom observation. Six weeks of student teaching.	Thirty-six credit hours in classes designed for participants to meet certification requirements.	Optional.	Graduate courses taught by professors and public school personnel.	1. No difference in most teaching skill areas. 2. Employers were "very satisfied." 3. No special problems encountered.

Mentors

Beginning teachers are likely to experience more problems in their first year than at any other time in their careers (Veenman, 1984). With teacher shortages occurring in certain content areas, it is important that educators utilize every resource available to recruit and retain qualified teachers. Mentorship programs may be one method to prevent potentially good teachers from leaving the profession.

Taylor (1997) defined mentoring as a relationship between an experienced and a less experienced person in which the mentor provides guidance, advice, support, and feedback to the protégé. Typically, mentoring in education occurs during the first year of teaching and is designed to be part of the induction process. According to Koki (1997), mentoring is a multidimensional process of guiding, teaching, influencing, and supporting new teachers. Feiman-Nemser (1996) offered a word of caution regarding assumptions about mentoring. She concluded from her review of the literature that mentoring programs have lacked a clear purpose and have not been subject to rigorous empirical scrutiny to determine if they realize their goals.

Marso and Pigge (1990) conducted a study of 27 first-year teachers in Ohio to determine their perceptions of the value of a teacher-mentoring program. They sought to determine the beginning-teachers' assessment of the mentoring experience which was provided by their formally assigned mentor teacher. They identified the types of mentoring experiences provided. They compared the first-year teachers' perceptions of mentor helpfulness to those of principals, supervisors, and other teachers.

Only 27 of the 75 (36%) first-year teachers were assigned an experienced teacher in the role of a formal mentor, according to Marso and Pigge (1990). The typical first-year teacher

reported receiving approximately 15 hours of assistance from the assigned mentor during the academic year. The beginning teachers reported the assigned mentor to be more helpful than the principal and teacher supervisor, but less helpful than the teacher colleague. Elementary principals were reported to be more helpful than secondary principals. They found the more well-prepared beginning teachers spent significantly more hours with their mentor teachers which may have been the reason they rated principals as less helpful than their mentors.

Marso and Pigge's (1990) first-year teachers rated the mentor teachers' helpfulness in six areas; (1) preparation of lessons, (2) overall classroom management, (3) handling pupil discipline, (4) meeting school requirements and procedures, (5) dealing with other professionals, and (6) dealing with parents. The results of the survey are in Table 7. There were significant differences in how elementary and secondary beginning teachers rated their mentors' helpfulness in two areas: preparation of lessons and handling pupil discipline. Both elementary and secondary first-year teachers rated mentor assistance as the highest in meeting school requirements and procedures.

Table 7

Elementary and Secondary First-Year Teachers' Ratings of Mentor-Teacher Helpfulness in Six Assistance Areas

		Not helpful (1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		Very helpful (7)			
Area of assistance	Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Mean ranking	Rank of group mean
Preparation of lessons	Elementary	1	8	0	0	3	25	2	17	3	25	0	0	3	25	4.50*	4.5
	Secondary	4	27	4	27	0	0	3	20	3	20	1	7	0	0	3.00*	6.0
	Total	5	19	4	15	3	11	5	19	6	22	1	4	3	11	3.67	6.0
Overall classroom management	Elementary	0	0	1	8	2	17	5	42	1	8	1	8	2	17	4.42	6.0
	Secondary	4	27	1	7	1	7	4	27	0	0	2	13	3	20	3.86	3.0
	Total	4	15	2	7	3	11	9	33	1	4	3	11	5	19	4.11	4.5
Handling pupil discipline	Elementary	0	0	1	8	0	0	3	25	3	25	2	17	3	25	5.17**	2.0
	Secondary	4	27	1	7	2	13	3	20	0	0	3	20	2	13	3.73**	4.0
	Total	4	15	2	7	2	7	6	22	3	11	5	19	5	19	4.37	2.0

(table continued)

Table 7 (continued)

		Not helpful (1)		(2)		(3)		(4)		(5)		(6)		Very helpful (7)			
Area of assistance	Group	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	Mean ranking	Rank of group mean
Meeting school requirements & procedures	Elementary	0	0	1	8	0	0	3	25	2	17	3	25	3	25	5.25	1.0
	Secondary	2	13	0	0	2	13	2	13	2	13	2	13	5	33	4.89	1.0
	Total	2	7	1	4	2	7	6	22	4	15	5	19	8	30	5.04	1.0
Dealing with other professionals	Elementary	0	0	1	8	3	25	2	17	3	25	1	8	2	17	4.50	4.5
	Secondary	4	27	1	7	1	7	1	7	3	20	2	13	3	20	4.07	2.0
	Total	4	15	2	7	4	15	3	11	6	22	3	11	5	19	4.26	3.0
Dealing with parents	Elementary	1	8	0	0	1	8	3	25	3	25	1	8	3	25	4.83	3.0
	Secondary	5	33	1	7	0	0	5	33	0	0	2	13	2	13	3.53	5.0
	Total	6	22	1	4	1	4	8	30	3	11	3	11	5	19	4.11	4.5

Note.. From “Teacher Mentor Induction Program in Ohio: An Assessment by First-year Teachers,” by R. N. Marso and F. L. Pigge, 1990, American Secondary Education, 18, p. 11. *These means differed significantly, t = 2.13, p = .04. **The difference between these

means was significant at $\underline{p}$ = .07, ($\underline{t}$ = 1.88). Standard deviations not available. Reprinted with permission of the author. Percentages were calculated on the number of responses.

Ganser (1995) suggested that mentor programs follow guidelines, but that they be flexible enough to meet the particular needs of the school and staff. He recommended that mentors provide beginning-teachers with continuous feedback rather than a final evaluation.

Career Change

In our present culture of change, it is not surprising that in 1986 almost 10 million workers changed occupations (Mergenhagen, 1991). Researchers have estimated that between five and eight percent of workers in the United States will change occupations each year (Herr & Cramer, 1988). Many workers of today believe that it is desirable and possible to engage in several careers throughout a lifetime (Kirk, 1989). According to a study of women who change occupations, the typical female career-changer is 37 years old, white, middle class, with a bachelor's degree, married with children ages six to 18, and lives near a large city (Fields, 1985). The likelihood of a person changing occupations decreases with age even though more and more mature workers are opting to change occupations (Herr & Cramer). Of those who changed occupations in 1986, five percent were 45 to 54 years old and 29 percent were teenagers (Carey, 1990).

An increasing number of workers with various occupational skills are no longer selecting a permanent career in the early stages of adulthood. Different theories have been developed to explain why some people change careers, and several researchers have identified reasons for career changes. Clopton (1973) identified a subgroup of individuals --Type C career shifters. These individuals are characterized as people who change careers even though they are satisfied with their initial occupations. Kirk (1989) found that dissatisfaction with a former occupation was not a prerequisite for career change. Instead, he found attraction to a new occupation was the greatest cause for change. He found that factors such as the nature of the work and contextual matters (e.g., salary and recognition) were major attractions to change. Lewis (1996) contended

adults change careers due to the following reasons; (a) late-developing restlessness, (b) craving for adventure, (c) need to help others, (d) economic advancement, and (e) need to find a new field after job loss. In another study of the employment patterns and career motives of 40 prospective late-entry teachers the greatest cause for change was the lure of intrinsic reward opportunities available in teaching (Serow & Forrest, 1994). Dieterich and Panton (1996) found from a survey of post-baccalaureate students (N =100) that the primary motivation for changing careers was internal, such as a desire to make a difference. Thomas (1979) contended that many workers seek a change in occupations for intrinsic work benefits such as growth and job satisfaction and extrinsic rewards such as salary.

Some researchers have sought to give meaning to career change. Perosa and Perosa (1984) found that individuals who had already changed occupations were higher on identity achievement and affiliation than individuals who were only considering a change and those who were in the process of change. Snyder, Howard, and Hammer (1978) found that professors who entered college teaching with intentions to become administrators were attracted to power more than role autonomy. Role autonomy was valued by professors with no intention of entering administration. West and Nicholson (1989) conducted a longitudinal study of job changes among 1,100 British managers and found job change was associated with increases in perceived opportunities for growth and material rewards. Harris and Wittkamper (1986) found no differences in males and females in the reasons given for changing jobs.

Chesapeake Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program Description

The Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program is a year-long program designed to facilitate the transition of beginning teachers into the teaching profession. The program provides the beginning teacher with instructional assistance and emotional support on both building and

divisional levels. Beginning teachers report to work prior to other teachers for three days of pre-service meetings and two days of orientation in their assigned school. During the first year of teaching, needs are assessed through surveys. Personal interviews and in-service topics are devised accordingly. Individual classroom visits and follow-up conferences are also conducted.

The Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program has two major components, the school-based program and the division program. The school-based program includes a mentorship in which each beginning teacher is paired with an experienced teacher at the school. The role of the mentor is to assist in the development and training of the beginning teacher. A guide is available for mentors (Colleague Guide: Supporting Beginning Teachers, 1986). The guide includes tasks the mentor needs to perform in providing assistance. The mentor is paid a small stipend. In addition to the mentorship program, the principal may initiate other activities to assist the beginning-teacher during the transition. The division-level program includes three days of pre-service meetings to address issues, topics, and situations not typically covered in the college setting. Two division employees serve as instructional specialists to plan in-service training throughout the school year based on the expressed needs of the beginning teachers. They also conduct at least one classroom observation and give feedback and assistance as needed. One specialist is assigned to the elementary level (grades K-5) and the other is assigned to the secondary level (grades 6-12). The school division provides each new teacher with a Beginning Teacher Handbook as a reference. Other resource personnel are available in the school division if needed.

Summary of the Literature Review

The shortage of qualified teachers in areas like mathematics, science, foreign language, vocational education, and special education continues to be a challenge for educators today. Teacher shortages can be a major obstacle in a time when reform movements are proclaiming a need to increase the quality and diversity of teachers to improve public education. Military personnel have been considered an excellent pool of candidates to meet these needs because of their knowledge of certain subject matter, leadership skills, and ability to be role models. The federal government has provided incentives for military personnel to enter public education through initiatives such as the Troops to Teachers program.

Traditional routes to gain teacher licensure may not be necessary because second-career military personnel already have knowledge of subject-matter and other skills that would facilitate their success in the classroom. Therefore, alternative certification programs have been created to attract second-career adults to teaching. Researchers have found that graduates from these alternative certification programs perform as well as teachers from traditional certification programs. Some researchers have compared academic achievement of the students with teachers from the alternative certification programs. Students with alternative certification teachers seem to do as well as students with traditional certification teachers. Additional studies are needed in this area. Other criteria such as the National Teachers' Examination and teacher evaluation instruments have been used to compare alternative and traditionally prepared teachers. The evidence indicates that alternative certification teachers perform as well as other teachers on these examinations and teacher evaluation instruments. In spite of evidence to support alternative certification as a viable option to meet the needs of teacher shortages, there is skepticism about teachers who enter teaching through alternative certification programs. There is some evidence to support the idea that military personnel who enter teaching have difficulty adjusting to the

developmental needs of children and also being accepted in the public school setting. Others assume alternative certification teachers lack the pedagogical knowledge to be successful in the classroom.

Local school divisions have induction programs to assist teachers in making the transition during their first year of teaching. It has been suggested that teacher preparation should become the responsibility of the local school district given the claim that higher education programs have failed to produce quality teachers. Some states mandate induction programs with mentors to assist with the transition during the first year of teaching. Induction programs are designed to help retain teachers by providing support and encouragement during the most challenging time of one's teaching career.

Regardless of how military personnel who enter teaching compare to other teachers or why they enter the profession, they are likely to continue to be a source of teacher recruits. The shortage of teachers, federal legislation that provides incentives to employ retired military personnel, and perceptions that they are good candidates for teaching are factors that will continue to influence their entry into the teaching profession. As alternative certification programs continue to grow and provide a viable route for second-career military teachers to enter the profession, increased pressure will be put on local school divisions to provide training and support for these recruits. It is important for educators to understand where these programs fall short and what additional support second-career military teachers will need to be successful in the classroom.

Factors that are obstacles for second-career military personnel who become public school teachers are examined in this study. The study is designed to solicit the perceptions of second-career military personnel teachers, their mentors, and their school principals regarding obstacles

they face during the first year of teaching. Furthermore, this study is designed to examine qualities they bring to the profession, support they receive from the local school division in the first year of teaching, and preparation they receive through their training program. Through this study, information on the transition of military personnel to teaching will be added to the literature.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This chapter contains the methodology used for conducting the research for this dissertation. It begins with a description of the setting where the study was conducted. A discussion of the population studied and an explanation of how the data were collected follow. The chapter ends with an explanation of how the data were analyzed.

Setting of the Study: The Chesapeake Public School Division

Chesapeake is a rapidly growing city with urban, suburban, and rural environments. The January 1999 population of 198,747 was more than 250% greater than the 1963 population of 78,153. According to city planners, the city population is expected to increase 21% by the year 2018 with a projected population of 240,000 (Chesapeake Planning Department, 1999). The city is 353 square miles and is located in the southern section of the state of Virginia in a region known as Hampton Roads. Chesapeake is bordered to the north by the cities of Portsmouth and Norfolk, to the east by Virginia Beach, to the south by Currituck and Camden Counties in North Carolina, and to the west by the city of Suffolk.

Chesapeake has eight growth areas: Camelot, Deep Creek, Great Bridge, Greenbrier, Indian River, Southern Chesapeake, South Norfolk, and Western Branch. There are 28 elementary schools, eight middle schools, and six high schools in the school system. Numerous schools are being planned.

Students are primarily Caucasians and African-Americans. According to the latest statistics reported to the United States Office of Civil Rights, the racial breakdown of the Chesapeake Public School Division is 64.5% white, 33% black, 1% Hispanic, 1% Asian, and .5% American Indians.

The Virginia Department of Education (2000) compared the percentage of high school students on the state-level with students on the division-level who passed the Standards of Learning Tests in the 1997-98 academic year. The percentage of Chesapeake high school students who passed English, mathematics, science, and history was slightly below state averages. A slightly above average percentage of Chesapeake middle and elementary students passed the Standards of Learning Tests compared to state-level performances.

Approximately 2,500 certified teachers are employed in the Chesapeake Public School Division, and 48% hold a bachelors degree, 49% hold a master's degree, 2% have a certificate of advanced study, and 1% have a doctorate.

Population

The participants in this study were teachers employed in the Chesapeake Public School Division for three or fewer years. They had not yet achieved tenure. They had at least 10 years of previous military experience and had been trained through an alternative teacher certification program, the Old Dominion University Military Career Transition Program (MCTP). All teachers in the school division who meet these criteria were included in this study.

Principals in the Chesapeake school division were asked to identify teachers they thought met the criteria stated above. They provided names of 18 teachers in their buildings. After initial contacts and interviews, the number was reduced to 13 because some did not meet the criteria. Table 8 has more specific information about the study group.

Table 8

Background Information on the Participants in This Study

Participant	Sex	Age	Years of military experience	Rank	Branch of service	Present teaching assignment
P1	M	46	28	Lieutenant Commander	Navy	Special education K-5
P2	M	45	20	Lieutenant Commander	Navy	Math 9-12
P3	M	43	20	Chief E-7	Navy	Physical science 8
P4	M	54	22	Torpedo Man Chief E-7	Navy	Life science 7
P5	M	41	20	Chief E-7	Navy	Life science 7
P6	M	43	22.5	E-8	Navy	English 6 & social studies 6
P7	M	44	20	E-9	Navy	Academic resource class 6,7,8
P8	M	43	20	Lieutenant	Navy	Science 7
P9	M	41	13	Lieutenant O-3	Navy	Academic resource class 8
P10	M	46	25	Lieutenant Commander	Navy	Physical science 8
P11	M	49	25	Captain	Coast Guard	Math 9-12 & science 9-12
P12	F	50	14.5	Lieutenant Commander	Navy	Learning disabled self-contained 8
P13	M	48	23	Commander O-5	Navy	Learning disabled 6,7

The population of 13 participants included 11 Caucasian males, one African-American male, and one Caucasian female. The average age was 45.6 years old, with ages ranging from 41 to 54 years old. One participant served in the United States Coast Guard, the others were in the United States Navy during their military careers. The population included six enlisted men and seven officers.

The number of years served in the military prior to their second career in public education ranged from 13 to 28. All participants completed the Military Transition Program at Old Dominion University and obtained a master's degree in education. Two were assigned to high schools, one to an elementary school, and 10 to middle schools in Chesapeake. The middle school participants were assigned to six of the eight middle schools in the school division. Five taught science, one taught science and math, three taught special education, one taught math, one taught English and social studies, and two were assigned to teach a state-funded self-contained class called Academic Resource Class (ARC) designed for students experiencing difficulties with behavior and academics.

Elementary, middle, or high school principals in the nine schools where the participants were assigned were interviewed to verify or augment the data gathered from the participants. Nine mentors were interviewed. Two participants had the same mentor assigned to them, four were not assigned a mentor, but two identified colleagues who unofficially served in that capacity. The mentors who were assigned to the participants were at the school with the participants. All assigned mentors, unofficial mentors, and principals were interviewed.

Protocol Development and Data Collection

All data were collected using face-to-face structured interviews. The interviews permitted the researcher to gather in-depth information that could not be obtained from other methods.

Because of the size of the population, the face-to-face interview method was feasible. The interview method provided opportunities to elaborate, explain meaning, and seek clarification when needed.

Interview Protocol Development

The interview protocol was developed to solicit responses relative to the research questions. An initial set of interview questions for each research question was generated by the researcher. These questions were reviewed by other educators for content validity and clarity. See Appendix A for the initial interview questions that were associated with each research question.

Two groups provided feedback to the researcher on the interview questions. The first group consisted of eight practicing teachers employed by the Chesapeake Public School Division. They were selected because of their experience teaching in public schools, and they were recognized as leaders in the school where the researcher was previously assigned as principal. They served on the principal's advisory committee and were department chairpersons for their curricular areas. Their years of experience in teaching ranged from 3 to 25. There were five males and three females. The mathematics department chairman was a graduate of the Military Career Transition Program at Old Dominion University and taught in that program. The social studies department chairman was a part-time teacher in the same program.

The feedback provided by the classroom teachers (see Appendix B) resulted in changes in the interview questions. The interview questions that relate to the first research question were reduced from 10 to six to improve clarity. Fourteen questions were reworded to further improve clarity. According to the responses of the teachers, each interview question was closely connected to its corresponding research question.

The second group consisted of 12 students in the 1998 class of the Military Career Transition Program at Old Dominion University. These students had served in the military and were preparing to become teachers. The range of military service was from three years to 23 years. Appendix C is a summary of the students' responses. This group did not consider the interview question regarding gender roles in the military and in teaching relevant to the research question (see question 1.3 in Appendix C). This question was not removed from the interview protocol for two reasons. First, it may have been the change in wording that caused the different reaction. Second, the reaction may be caused by the extreme defensiveness of military personnel to this issue rather than a belief that it does not relate to the research. Because no comments were made regarding this question, there is no reason to accept the premise that the interview question does not relate to the research question. All other interview questions were found to be related to the research questions by the students. The wording of four questions was changed for clarity.

Given the feedback from the two groups, the questions on the protocol were sufficiently valid for identifying the variables that facilitate the transition of military personnel to classrooms, identifying obstacles they experience, and evaluating the Military Career Transition Program and the school division's beginning teachers' assistance program. The check for clarity indicated the interview questions were worded in a manner that is clear for retiring military personnel entering teaching.

Data Collection

Thirty-one individuals were interviewed: 13 participants, nine principals, and nine mentors. Responses to the interview questions were recorded on a tape recorder and later transcribed on index cards. The index cards were labeled and coded to match the interviewee. No attempts were

made to match the participant with the assigned mentor or principal. However, a master list was maintained to match them if that information were needed.

Mentors were not assigned to all of the participants. In those cases where a mentor was not assigned, participants were asked to identify a colleague to be interviewed who was most helpful during their transition. The two high school participants were not assigned a mentor and could not identify anyone in particular who was helpful. Two middle school participants were not assigned a mentor, but they identified another staff member who was helpful during their transition. The interview questions used were the same as those asked to the participants with only changes in wording to address the principal or mentor. Other probing questions were asked to the interviewees when additional information was needed for clarification or when other pertinent ideas were presented.

Data Analysis

After the data were collected, recorded, and transcribed, the process of analyzing it began. Tapes were replayed and studied to obtain a complete and objective analysis of the data. The transcribed interviews were read several times and carefully studied. Responses were compared and grouped by research question. A content analysis was conducted by identifying common themes and categories as they emerged from the responses to each of the interview questions (Miles & Huberman, 1995). The data were coded based on the categories, and the frequency of responses was noted. Statements from the transcripts of the interviews were extracted and placed in appropriate categories under each research question. The categories were combined and changed several times. The data were presented in raw data matrices as suggested by Miles and Huberman. Sub-categories emerged for each category. The categories and sub-categories were the data from which answers to the research questions were derived.

For the purpose of establishing inter-coder reliability, an outside reader reviewed a participant's interview to identify and create themes. After reviewing the taped interview, he created the following major themes: (a) hindrances to the transition, (b) contributions to the transition, (c) higher education/teacher, and (d) school division staff development. These themes correspond correctly with the four research questions in this study.

The outside reader also reviewed the part of a participant's interview transcripts relating to obstacles and contributing factors in the transition from the military to the classroom to compare categories of responses with those of the researcher. The two lists of categories created by the two readers from the interview of the same participant are in Table 9. There were differences in the categories created by the two readers. The outside reader created 12 categories from this one interview transcript while the researcher created eight categories. The researcher's categories were more general in nature. After describing the categories to each other, it was agreed that the variables under his 12 categories could fit into seven of the researcher's eight categories. It is likely that the researcher's categories were more general because they were created after reading the transcripts of all the participants. The outside reader created categories after reading the transcript of one participant. These eight categories were later changed as the other participants were analyzed. Additional categories were created after the interviews of the mentors and principals were analyzed.

Table 9

A Comparison of Obstacles and Contributing Factors in the Transition of Military Personnel to the Classroom Identified by the Researcher and an Outside Reader

Outside reader	Researcher	Agreement
Lack of knowledge of subject	Job skills	yes
Lack of knowledge of teaching skills	Job skills	yes
Time constraints	Teacher certification process	yes
Money constraints	Teacher certification process	yes
Parental attitudes	Relating to parents/staff	yes
Human relations	Relating to parents/staff	yes
Previous teaching experience	Life experiences	yes
Control issues	Life experiences	yes
Gender relations	Life experiences	yes
Adaptation to change	Flexibility	yes
Accepting diversity	Flexibility	yes
	Unexpected benefits	no
Feedback		no

Summary of Methodology

This research is a qualitative study of 13 second-career military personnel who have been recently employed as teachers in the Chesapeake Public School Division. Face-to-face interviews were used to obtain rich, in-depth information needed to address the four research questions. Verification of information provided by the participants was sought through interviews with mentors and principals. Responses from the interviews were categorized according to themes that addressed the research questions. Categories emerged within each theme. Sub-categories

developed within categories. Major and minor conclusions were drawn based on the data collected in the interviews.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

This chapter is organized into five sections. The first section includes factors that contributed to the second-career teachers' transition from the military to the classroom. In the second section, obstacles they encountered in the transition are presented. The third section includes an assessment of how well the Military Career Transition Program prepared participants to perform selected teaching components. In the fourth section, an assessment of how well the Chesapeake Public School Division's Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program supported the needs of these second-career teachers during the first year of transition is presented. A summary of the findings is in the last section. The interviewees were 13 participants, nine mentors, and nine principals. Their responses to the interview questions are displayed in raw data matrices, Tables D1 to D7 (see Appendix D). References in this chapter are made to these tables. The interviewee and table are cited. Mentors (M1-M9), principals (PR1-PR9), and participants (P1-P13) are cited first. The tables (TD1-TD7) contain statements collected in the interviews and recorded in the transcripts. For example, (P1, TD1) indicates that participant one made the statement. It can be found in Table 1 in Appendix D.

Factors That Contribute to the Transition of Military Personnel to Classrooms

Responses of the participants, mentors, and principals related to the first research question are contained in this section. Five categories of factors that contributed to the transition of military personnel to the classroom emerged from interviewees' responses. The categories are: (a) life experiences, (b) values or attitudes, (c) willingness to accept diversity, (d) ability to adapt, and (e) rank or status. The responses of participants are in Table D1; responses of mentors and

principals are in Table D2 (see Appendix D). A discussion of the five categories and related sub-categories that emerged within each of the categories follows.

Life Experiences

Life experiences prior to becoming a teacher contributed to the transition of military personnel to the classroom. Within this category, seven sub-categories emerged from the data. They are: (a) previous teaching experiences, (b) leadership skills, (c) organizational skills, (d) technical skills, (e) travels around the world, (f) age and maturity, and (g) self-discipline and good work ethnic. Each sub-category is discussed.

Previous Teaching Experience

Four participants noted they had previous teaching experience while serving in the military. One participant reported that he had taught in one form or another during his entire career in the military (P11, TD1). Another said, “In all my jobs I’ve done... I’ve always felt one of my roles was to teach” (P1, TD1). Others expressed how they felt their previous teaching experience in the military taught them techniques that they could now use in their classrooms. One principal and one mentor cited previous teaching experience in the military as a contributing factor. One principal said, “Those that have had teaching experiences in the military are way ahead of those who did not” (PR8, TD2).

Leadership Skills

Four participants who were officers in the military said that the leadership skills they learned in their military careers contributed to their transition to the classroom. According to them, their leadership skills could be used in their present positions to “get the job done.” Participants said that their leadership skills allowed them to influence subordinates (P7, TD1), understand people (P9, TD1), and work towards a common goal (P12, TD1). Leadership was not

identified as a contributing factor to the participants' transition to the classroom by mentors or principals. One principal noted that the participants had not been in the school setting long enough to assume leadership positions (PR5, TD2).

Organization Skills

Three participants said that organizational skills they acquired in the military helped them make the transition to the classroom. Four mentors said that the participants have excellent "organizational skills" which help them as teachers. One mentor noted a participant had good organization in his planning (M1, TD2). Others said that they are organized and get things done (M7, TD2), and they have been able to do some things more efficiently than those who did not have a military background (M8, TD2). Three principals mentioned organizational skills as a factor that contributed to the participants' transition to the classroom. "They have been very well organized because they've had to be organized," observed one high school principal (PR7, TD2). Many mentors and principals stated that the organizational skills allowed the participants to be more structured. It was noted that this helped the participants to be more accurate with reports and helped them manage things (M1, TD2). Another mentor cited a participant's structure as a contributing factor in the transition to the classroom (M5, TD2).

Technical Skills

Many interviewees said that technical skills the participants acquired in the military helped them as they made the transition to the classroom. Four participants attributed technology skills learned in the military as contributing factors to their transition to the classroom. One participant said, "Most military people would have computer skills equal to or above the average teacher" (P8, TD1). Other participants noted that their duties in the military demanded they have adequate training in technology. Technology skills were mentioned by two mentors and four principals.

"He's really up on technology in the classroom," said one mentor (M4, TD2). A principal noted, "Their abilities in technology are better than the average teacher . . ." (PR5, TD2). Another principal credited a participant with helping other staff members use computers in their daily work by providing in-service training and assistance when it was needed (PR1, TD2).

Travels Around the World

The factor mentioned most often by interviewees that contributed to the participants' transition was world travel. Three participants said that their travels around the world helped them make the transition to the classroom. One participant said, "I can tell them about pyramids because I've seen them. I was a scuba diver, and I can tell them about underwater" (P5, TD1). Seven mentors and three principals noted travel as a factor that helped the participants enrich their teaching experiences. One mentor said, "He had been in a lot of different places, and he could bring in experiences that were personal to the classroom..." (M3, TD2). Another said that a participant's experiences helped him teach science because he could use different examples (M4, TD2). A principal said, "I have a German teacher who spent a great deal of time in Germany" (PR7, TD2), indicating that living in Germany helped him better know and teach the language and culture.

Age and Maturity

Age and maturity were other factors that helped participants make the transition to the classroom. Participants attributed their patience and work ethic to their age. One participant said, "You are able to handle a little bit more friction and chaos than maybe a 22 year old coming out of college" (P1, TD1). One principal said, "I think the positive thing is that they come in with some maturity" (PR6, TD2). The maturity factor was given as a reason they have such a good

work ethic by two principals. A mentor said, “Because of their age they tend to be calmer” (M7, TD2).

Self-Discipline and Work Ethic

Finally, self-discipline and work ethic were cited as contributing factors to the participants’ transition. Personal discipline was needed to consistently do lesson planning (P4, TD1). Other aspects of self-discipline included continuing education (P5, TD1), dressing professionally (P8, TD1), and being prepared (M8, TD2). Three participants credited their work ethic to their military background. One participant said, “You’re here early, you work late. You stay until the job is done” (P9, TD1).

Values and Attitudes

Participants, mentors, and principals identified various values and attitudes as factors that contributed to the transition of military personnel to classrooms. Their values were expressed in their attitudes towards teaching. Even though these values and attitudes were diverse, several sub-categories emerged from the data: (a) being competent and confident, (b) being dedicated, (c) being cooperative, (d) having a sense of mission, and (e) being non-competitive. These findings are discussed in this section.

Being Competent and Confident

The second-career teachers placed a high value on their competence and the competence of others. Three participants made statements indicating they place a high value on one’s competence. A participant said, “I don’t mind who I work with as long as the qualifications are there” (P3, TD1). Another said, “We had the same qualifications. If someone was pushed through just because she’s a woman, I might have a problem with that” (P6, TD1). A mentor referred to a participant when she said, “He was very confident and willing to help with anything” (M2, TD2).

Several principals indicated that the participants enter teaching with a high level of confidence. One said, ". . . they come in with a 'can-do' attitude" (PR2, TD2).

Being Dedicated

Nine responses indicated that the participants' dedication contributed to their transition to the classroom. One participant said, "You work hard to prepare for class, and you set a level of expectation on yourself to do the best job possible. And, I think that's what the military taught me" (P9, TD1). Several principals indicated that they perceived the military teachers as dedicated individuals. A principal said, "I view him as a very valuable member of the staff. He was willing to do a lot of extra things around the building" (PR3, TD2). Another was impressed that they "show up on time" and "never ask to leave for personal reasons" (PR5, TD2).

Being Cooperative

The participants were viewed by the principals as being very cooperative staff members. A principal said, "They are all willing individuals, cooperative and willing to do whatever it takes to help the entire program" (PR1, TD2). Three principals indicated that the participants are always willing to help with anything. Many of the comments that related to cooperation were made in reference to activities outside the classroom. When the mentors and principals were asked how the Military Career Transition Program prepared the participants for the classroom, many indicated that it was their cooperative attitudes. These responses are presented later in this chapter when an assessment of the Military Career Transition Program is discussed.

Having a Sense of Mission

Several participants expressed a sense of mission as a contributing factor to their transition to the classroom. One participant stated, "My experience and approach in my job, it's a responsibility to pass on knowledge and information.... It's always been my approach to make

things better" (P1, TD1). According to this respondent, his attitude contributed to his transition to the classroom because it gave him a sense of mission and purpose as a teacher. Another said, ". . . we are supposed to teach good citizenship. I take good citizenship to heart" (P5, TD1). This participant was motivated to maintain order in the classroom and throughout the school. He said that helped him to be accepted by the staff. One participant had strong feelings about being in education "for kids." He noted that this belief enabled him to go through all the obstacles to become a teacher. For him, this sense of mission was a contributing factor to his transition to the classroom (P4, TD1).

Being Noncompetitive

One participant liked the change from a highly competitive environment in the military to a less competitive environment in education. According to him, the value he places on competition is more compatible with the education environment. He said, "For 28 years, I competed for everything . . . . Once I got out, I said, That's it, I don't want to compete with anybody for anything" (P11, TD1).

Willingness to Accept Diversity

Five participants said their willingness to accept diversity contributed to their transition to the classroom. All five indicated they were able to accept a diverse student population due to their experiences with diversity in the military. One participant said, "The military is a more multi-racial community . . ., top to bottom. You're more comfortable working with different ethnicity(ies)" (P3, TD1). According to the participants, their willingness to accept diversity helped them work with people, different cultures, and minorities (P9, TD1). There were no mentors who gave responses that related to the participants' willingness to accept diversity, but a high school principal responded, ". . . they walk into a classroom that's 50% minority, it's not much different

in what they had in the military." He indicated that participants dealt with a lot of different people in their military careers (PR7, TD2).

Ability to Adapt

Two participants said that they were able to be adaptable due to their experiences in the military. One responded, "Just getting your life successful in the military you have to be adaptable and flexible." He added, "You've got a new command comes in and wants to take you to the right. Three years later a new one comes in and takes you a different direction. You've got to kind of change your sails as you go along" (P1, TD1). Another participant said that teachers on his staff indicated to him that they would never have known he was in the military because he is not rigid (P2, TD1). Later during the interview, he indicated that this was not typical of most military personnel. He also stated that he was not "like a military guy," even when he was serving in the military.

No mentors or principals said that the participants displayed behaviors in the schools that indicated that their military experiences helped them to be more adaptable. Mentors and principals did respond that lack of flexibility was in fact an obstacle. This will be discussed later in this chapter.

Rank or Status

Participants, mentors, and principals were asked if participants' rank in the military affected their transition to the classroom. Most respondents felt that military personnel who become teachers are affected by their previous rank or status when they make the transition to the classroom. However, ten of the participants, mentors, and principals, did not believe the participants were affected by rank or status in the military.

Four participants responded that rank had little or nothing to do with the transition of military personnel to the classroom. One said, “When I retired, I retired” (P2, TD1). Another indicated the transition was more affected by “knowledge and attitudes” rather than by rank (P1, TD1). Another observed, “We have a wide variety, chief petty officers to captains, who seem to do equally well” (P10, TD1). Four mentors and two principals indicated that rank had little or nothing to do with the participants’ transition. Many of those interviewed were not aware of the participants’ rank in the military. One principal who is also an instructor in the Military Career Transition Program at Old Dominion University felt very strongly that there was no relationship. In fact, he noted, “That would be like saying a student’s GPA [grade point average] would determine how good they would be in the classroom” (PR8, TD2).

Some respondents thought rank in the military had a positive effect on the transition to the classroom. Three participants indicated that not having status or rank was a positive factor. One of them indicated that it was a relief not to be in charge (P4, TD1). Another said, “I think it was better because I would get tired of hearing the same old excuses” (P13, TD1). A participant said, “I made it to the rank of lieutenant . . . . That causes more responsibility . . . . That prepares you for making good decisions” (P5, TD1). One mentor felt rank would help the transition because military personnel understand chain of command (M1, TD2). Six principals responded that the participants’ rank affected the transition in several positive ways. Three said that officers would have an advantage over enlisted personnel because they were better educated (PR9, TD2), they understand protocol (PR6, TD2), and they understand the chain of command (PR2, TD2). One principal indicated that enlisted personnel tended to use more inappropriate or “salty language” in the school setting (PR6, TD2). Another said, “Officers have been taught how to talk, how to behave, how to interact with others” (PR5, TD2). Another principal said, “. . . they [officers] just

don’t seem to be bossy, and I don’t think they had a hard time taking orders form anybody” (PR7, TD2).

There were some who indicated that one’s rank might have a negative effect on the transition to the classroom. For example, one enlisted participant said, “So I would imagine if you were always an officer and had a staff to do things for you, it would be difficult in that you don’t have anyone to do things for you” (P8, TD1). Another said, “Officers can come with such attitudes” (P12, TD2). There were no comments from the principals or the mentors to indicate that one’s rank in the military would have a negative effect on the participants’ transition to the classroom.

Factors That Are Obstacles to the Transition of Military Personnel to Classrooms

Participants, principals, and mentors were asked to identify factors that were obstacles as participants made the transition from the military to the classroom. The interviewees’ responses address the second research question and are discussed in this section. Six categories of obstacles emerged from their responses: (a) relating to students, (b) environmental factors, (c) lack of knowledge about school operations, (d) staff and community relations, (e) getting teacher certification, and (f) lack of feedback. Before the study began it was thought that military personnel may have difficulties relating to female supervisors. Therefore, the findings related to this question are presented. The mentors and principals identified three additional obstacles which were not mentioned by the participants: (a) lack of flexibility, (b) need for control, and (c) receptiveness to assistance. The participants’ responses are in Table D3. The mentors and principals’ responses are in Table D4 (see Appendix D). Each of these categories of factors as well as the sub-categories which emerged within each category are discussed.

Relating to Students

Most respondents identified relating to students as an obstacle to their transition. Nine participants, six mentors, and seven principals said that relating to students was a major obstacle for military personnel who enter teaching. This was an obstacle because the second-career military teachers had to change their assumptions about students' behaviors and attitudes. They had to develop strategies to cope with these behaviors and attitudes. Within this category of obstacles four sub-categories emerged from the interviewees' responses: (a) students not complying with directives, (b) learning to work with younger students, (c) learning to teach students on their level, and (d) culture shock.

Students Not Complying with Directives

Four participants noted it was difficult to accept the fact that students did not do what they were told to do. This was unlike what they were accustomed to in the military. A participant said, "When I had them do something, I expected it to be done and done correctly. Coming in the school system, that's not there" (P2, TD3). Another participant compared students today with students when he was in school. He commented, "When you were told to do something, you did it" (P6, TD3). Many mentors and principals agreed that the participants were accustomed to people "doing as they are told." Four mentors and four principals indicated this was an obstacle. A mentor said, ". . . students are not used to taking orders and just doing it. Because they've [participants] been in the military, they're used to when someone says something, you just do it" (M3, TD4). A middle school principal said, "One obstacle is that he expects kids to jump when he says jump" (PR3, TD4). This expectation for student compliance is an obstacle because unnecessary student-teacher conflict occurs.

Learning to Work with Younger Students

Working with younger students was also an obstacle for some of the participants. A participant said, “Once a day, I have to remind myself I’m dealing with ninth graders because there’s an expectation that is different” (P1, TD3). Another noted, “It’s been a long time since I was that age . . . ” (P8, TD3), describing the difficulty in becoming accustomed to working with younger students. A participant responded that he had to learn to treat younger students differently. He said, “You have to tone down your vocabulary . . . water it down” (P13, TD3).

Learning to Teach Students on Their Level

According to some mentors and principals, participants experienced difficulties determining the appropriate instructional level for the students they teach. One mentor and four principals noted this was an obstacle. A middle school principal said, “They’re not accustom to middle school age kids . . . . One of the most difficult things they run into is having to repeat things over” (PR1, TD4). From their perspective the participants assumed their students knew more than they actually knew. A mentor indicated that the participants’ expectations were too high for students (M2, TD4).

Culture Shock

One participant who teaches at-risk students felt that classroom management was an obstacle, but he attributed his difficulties to the nature of the students he taught. During the interview this participant indicated he was having problems with “culture shock.” He said, “Students seem to get away with more . . .” (P13, TD3). Referring to obstacles the participants experienced in their transition to the classroom, a mentor said, “Maybe a little frustration there with the difference of what happens in the real world and what happens in the classroom” (M4, TD4). A principal indicated that working with middle school aged students was an obstacle for

the participant. He added, ". . . understanding the psychology that goes along with being a middle school teacher," indicating that the participant lacked the understanding of how to react to students at this age (PR2, TD4).

There were some aspects of relating to students that assisted participants in making the transition to the classroom. Three participants indicated that some aspects of their background helped them relate to students. One participant indicated that having "children of his own" helped him relate differently and make the adjustment more rapidly (P1, TD3). Another noted that because he had opportunities to work with young people as a volunteer, he was able to relate to students much better (P3, TD3). A third participant responded that he was accustomed to dealing with similar problems "like drinking and social problems" even though his students are much younger now, because he did the same with young adults in the Navy (P6, TD3).

Environmental Differences

Eight participants, six mentors, and five principals observed environmental obstacles to the transition process. Three sub-categories emerged from their responses: (a) unusual circumstances at the school, (b) differences in the military and school environments, and (c) assignment to a special class for at-risk students.

Unusual Circumstances at the School

Three participants described unusual circumstances at their school as obstacles to their transition. One participant was hired in the middle of the school year to replace a very popular teacher who was removed from his position for personal reasons. This participant stated that his transition was particularly difficult because the students never accepted him as their favorite teacher's replacement (P2, TD3). A second participant was assigned after the school year began due to a shift in enrollment. He felt this was a major obstacle because students were reassigned to

him after the school year began (P8, TD3). His mentor said, ". . . he missed all the preliminary information. We did not have a classroom ready for him. He didn't have his own space to feel comfortable" (M1, TD4). This was due to being reassigned two weeks after the new school year began. According to this mentor, the participant never "got it together" that year. The next year was much better because he began the year when the other teachers began (M1, TD4). The third participant was split between two schools and had three different preparations (P1, TD3).

Differences in the Military and School Environments

One participant said, "The military is a very structured world. I think some military people have a very tough time going into this environment [school]" (P4, TD3). Another participant described the military as being a more disciplined environment than the school. He expressed shock when he entered the classroom and discovered it was not as disciplined as the military (P5, TD3). Another participant said, "The military is a more controlled environment, more respect" (P13, TD3, p. 183). Mentors talked about the differences that exist between the military and school environments. A mentor in one of the middle schools said, ". . . being in an environment totally different than what they were used to in the military . . ., orders here are not the same as they are in the military" (M3, TD4). Two other middle school principals also responded that in the military environment one was expected to take orders more readily. Another participant expressed his discomfort adjusting to the school environment when he said, "I had a tough time the first few weeks wearing jeans on Friday" (P8, TD3). He was referring to the school's practice of allowing "dress down" day on Fridays. In the military a standard uniform is worn. According to one mentor, ". . . they have a chain of command in the military that we do not have in the school system" (M8, TD4). Along with this regimentation there are many more written procedures about how things are done. One middle school principal said, "They give more specific directions and

procedures than the school system is accustomed to giving" (PR9, TD4). Another middle school principal noted the lack of creativity in the military as a major environmental difference when she said, "They wear these same outfits. Their offices are bare, there's nothing on the walls" (PR5, TD4). When a high school principal discussed differences between teaching in the military and teaching in public schools, he said, "They never deviate from the lesson plan in the military" (PR7, TD4). He noted that military classes are usually 10 to 14 days in duration, while public school classes are 90 or 180 days.

Assignment to a Special Class for At-Risk Students

An environmental obstacle discussed by one mentor was the assignment of one participant to a special class for at- risk students (Academic Resource Class) instead of a regular class (M2, TD4). Each middle school has an Academic Resource Class classroom designed as a self-contained classroom for students who are not performing well in their regular classrooms. The teacher is expected to teach the mathematics, science, social studies, and English curriculum at the appropriate grade level. According to some mentors, this is a difficult assignment for most beginning teachers.

Lack of Knowledge About School Operations

Seven participants described their lack of knowledge about how the school operates as an obstacle to their transition. Five mentors and one principal observed that the participants had difficulties making the transition due to their lack of knowledge about how schools operate. Three sub-categories emerged from the interviewees' responses regarding the participants' lack of knowledge about how schools operate. They are: (a) adjusting to the amount of paperwork, (b) adjusting to the time required to perform the duties of a teacher, and (c) adjusting to procedures or the lack of procedures.

Adjusting to the Amount of Paperwork

Many interviewees agreed learning non-instructional responsibilities was an obstacle for the military personnel as they made the transition to the classroom. They said that dealing with all the paperwork was the most frustrating aspect of school operations. One participant observed, "The job is not over until the paperwork's done" (P5, TD3). A middle school participant complained, "They expect you to do a lot of paperwork without telling you how to do it" (P6, TD3). Three participants expressed concerns about the lack of information regarding how to complete certain paperwork. One participant said, "I think I saw eight different ways to do a lesson plan in the same school" (P1, TD3). He reacted to the amount of paperwork when he said, "You always wonder if you forgot to turn something in." Three mentors indicated that the participants had difficulties learning to deal with all the paperwork. A mentor referred to obstacles they face when she said, ". . . getting all the paperwork completed . . . . He was just overwhelmed by the paperwork" (M9, TD4).

Adjusting to the Time Required to Perform the Duties of a Teacher

A participant complained that the amount of time it takes per day to do the job right was an obstacle for him (P3, TD3). It was more difficult than he had anticipated. Another participant indicated that teaching is much like the military in that it is hard work and it is a 24 hour job (P9, TD3).

Adjusting to Procedures or the Lack of Procedures

Many participants noted the lack of procedures in schools as an obstacle for them. When procedures did exist, some participants felt unprepared to deal with them due to a lack of training. Three participants indicated they had not received sufficient training to set up their classroom. One participant compared the amount of direction one gets in the military to the amount of

direction one gets in schools. He said, “I’m used to more structure. Knowing what to do was valuable. None of that here” (P6, TD3). An elementary mentor said, “Hard work is not the obstacle. It’s knowing how it all works” (M7, TD4).

Staff and Community Relations

Learning to relate to other staff members and parents was the fourth factor identified by participants, mentors, and principals as an obstacle to the participants’ transition from the military to the classroom. Six participants identified staff and community relations as an obstacle. Nine mentors and principals made comments regarding staff and community relations. Half of the comments were considered negative and half were positive.

Some of the comments were centered around negative encounters with parents. According to one participant, “Parents come across a little more defensive of their children than I had anticipated. They tend to take the words of their children over the words of their teachers as far as behaviors and attitudes” (P3, TD3). Another participant said, “The majority of the problems I see in school is the parents. I didn’t think it was that way before I became a teacher” (P13, TD3). The most negative story told was regarding a former military retiree on the staff of one of the middle schools who was not one of the participants in this study. He is a veteran teacher on the staff, and he was a former captain in the navy. According to the mentor, this staff member “wanted everyone to call him Captain.” The incident involved a parent and teacher conference over the way the teacher had treated the student. When the conference became “heated,” the staff member said to the parent who was an enlisted man in the navy, “You’re a sorry excuse for a sailor” and threatened to “make a phone call to get him straight.”

Two participants felt they could not relate with other staff members very well. One participant expressed this when he said, “Sometimes you sit there and you don’t have a lot in

common with people around you" (P11, TD3). A high school participant seemed to ally with other retired military personnel on the staff. He said, "We have a couple of retired military people on staff who have more experience than I do. Being able to talk to them has been very helpful" (P10, TD3).

Even though several mentors and principals indicated that the participants relate well to other staff members, there were some who disagreed. For example, one mentor responded, "At first he seemed to relate to younger colleagues differently," indicating that he did not treat them as equals (M4, TD4). Another mentor stated, "He sort of stays to himself. I don't think he really hangs around with anyone on the staff" (M5, TD4).

A principal said that officers have a difficult time working with peers who are in education. This same principal related a comment made by a participant who damaged his relationship with other staff members. According to this principal, the participant made a comment in front of several veteran teachers that he made more money from his retirement pay then he did from his pay as a teacher. The principal concluded, "That doesn't do a whole lot for the relationship of a retired military guy trying to establish a working relationship with teachers" (PR6, TD4).

Getting Certification

A fifth factor considered by the participants to be an obstacle was the sacrifices made to gain their teacher certification. Seven participants made comments regarding this being an obstacle to their transition to the classroom. There were no responses from mentors or principals regarding the participants' efforts to gain teacher certification. Mentors and principals had no contact with the participants as they were completing that process.

Three participants talked about the financial sacrifices they made to go back to school to gain certification. The difficulties of getting teacher certification were summarized by one participant when he said, “Going back to school was an obstacle because my military job did not afford me the opportunity of going back to school at night. So I had to go back after I retired, and it was lost wages for a year and a half ” (P3, TD3). It took most participants one and a half or two years to complete the program. Those who were able to complete the program before they retired considered it less of a sacrifice than those who completed the program after retirement.

Two participants told of their experiences of having to return to school because their former programs did not give them teacher certification in an area in which they could gain employment. One held a bachelor’s degree in marketing. The other completed the program that licensed him in math and science, but he was advised to get certification in special education to increase the chances of being employed (P11 & P12, TD3).

Lack of Feedback

The next obstacle observed in the transition process is the lack of feedback from school personnel. A participant said, “My mentor really didn’t say, ‘Ok, this is what you do in any given situation.’ You kind of make up the book as you go.... In the military, there’s feedback. There’s someone to tell you how to do it” (P7, TD3). A second participant also observed that in the military you get immediate feedback. This participant indicated that feedback in education was more positive and intended to help you learn, even if it did not come as often as it did in the military (P12, TD3). A mentor commented, “Some administrators see them [military personnel] as more experienced than other new teachers because of their age. In many respects they need more supervision” (M1, TD4), indicating they do not get enough feedback. Three principals observed the lack of feedback as being an obstacle. The lack of feedback in education is due to two factors

according to the principals: Education is so political and schools lack sufficient supervisory personnel. “We rarely in education give anybody the negative because we are so politically based . . .,” observed one principal (PR5, TD4). Another said, “In education we do not have the personnel to give them feedback on their performance like they do in the military” (PR9, TD4). A high school principal explained that they have other instructors present in a class providing constant feedback (PR8, TD4). One principal commented that a participant gets feedback, but he refuses to take it (PR4, TD4).

Relating to Female Supervisors

Interviewees were asked if the participants experienced difficulties relating to female supervisors when they entered teaching. Nine participants reported they had female supervisors while serving in the military and had no problems accepting direction from a female supervisor. The participants indicated they had no problems relating to female supervisors in education. One participant said, “I worked for female supervisors for 10 years. I had no problems . . . . It doesn’t matter. We have a job to do. Let’s get it done” (P2, TD3). Others gave similar responses. Three participants noted that the military is changing to include a wider variety of roles for females. A majority of the mentors and principals indicated the participants have no problems relating to female supervisors. Eight mentors and six principals stated that they see no problems (TD4). However, one mentor stated, “I sense resentment” (M3, TD4), referring to a participant’s attitude toward female supervisors. Three principals indicated the participants might have a problem relating to female supervisors. Two of the three male principals felt as though the participants did not relate as well to female assistant principals as they did to them. Two of the three female principals did not believe a problem existed in regard to this issue (TD4). In summary, five interviewees felt there may be problems with participants relating to female supervisors. The

remaining 13 were sure there were no problems. Two principals indicated the perception was due to stereotyping of military personnel. Though military personnel may not have problems with female supervisors, this perception may exist because school personnel may believe that they do. The typical image of a male-dominated military force may cause them to believe there is little tolerance of females in leadership positions.

Lack of Flexibility

Two mentors and four principals made comments regarding the participants' lack of flexibility as being obstacles to their transition to the classroom. An observation regarding a participant's lack of flexibility was made when a mentor said, "He probably needs to see there's more than one way of doing things" (M7, TD4). A principal noted, "He's not willing to bend, and he's that way with parents, too" (PR3, TD4). The most obvious observation was made by a middle school principal. She related an incident in which a participant said, "I don't want to use my best judgement. You tell me what to do" (PR4, TD4). This participant seemed incapable of operating without specific directions that applied in all situations.

Need for Control.

Two mentors and one principal indicated that participants' need for control was an obstacle. Two attributed this need for control to the participants' rank in the military; the other attributed it to the military environment. A mentor said, "They [were] the ones in charge and didn't have to answer to a lot of people. You know, they gave orders. As a result it's difficult for them to switch positions" (M3, TD4). Another said, "I think the higher they are in rank [the] more likely they are to be a little more arrogant. More likely to be used to giving commands, not following commands" (M8, TD4). According to a principal, "The biggest obstacle is they are accustomed to the control or someone controlling them . . ." (PR4, TD4).

Receptiveness to Assistance

Another obstacle observed by two mentors and one principal was the participants' unwillingness to receive assistance during the transition process. A mentor complained, ". . . I'm not sure why he doesn't let anybody help. He just doesn't" (M5, TD4). One mentor suggested that military people are not receptive to assistance because they already have a strong opinion about how things should be (M8, TD4). Both mentors interpreted the participants' unwillingness to receive assistance as arrogance. A principal also alluded to arrogance when he said, "They think they already know how to do it" (PR7, TD4).

Assessment of the Military Career Transition Program

Responses related to research question three, regarding the assessment of the Military Career Transition Program are analyzed in this section. The interviewees were asked to respond to questions about the alternative certification program the participants completed. The participants, mentors, and principals were asked to describe the program and to make suggestions on how the program could be improved to help other military personnel. Finally, they were asked how well the Military Career Transition Program prepared them to perform in eight selected components of teaching. Their responses are in Tables D5 and D6 (see Appendix D). The findings are reported for each questions addressed to the respondents.

Description of the Military Career Transition Program

When the participants were asked to describe the alternative certification program, many gave their impressions of the program instead of a description. Two participants described frustration. One participant said, "Too long.... It frustrated me having two masters' degrees, having to go back to school and sit in those classrooms, and then be told I needed two more math

classes" (P1, TD5). Another participant said that he was frustrated because there was no logical order to the classes he was required to complete (P2, TD5).

The other participants expressed overall satisfaction with the program. They described strengths and weaknesses of the program. There were 22 comments regarding their impressions of the program. Twelve comments were on strengths and 10 were on weaknesses of the program.

Strengths of the Program

Several strengths of the program were noted. Three participants liked the availability of the classes. One said, "It was nice they scheduled class on times when I was on active duty" (P8, TD5). According to two participants, some of the classes they were required to complete were helpful, but others were not so helpful. Two participants liked the fact that some of the instructors were employed in the public schools (P3 & P6, TD5). One participant seemed particularly impressed with the administration's involvement in the program and the availability of information (P5, TD5).

Weaknesses of the Program

One participant felt he needed more time in the classroom working with students (P3, TD5). One complained about the order of the classes when he said, "Some of the special education classes were repetitive" (P12, TD5).Another commented, "I had an advisor, but he didn't tell me much" (P2. TD 5).

Five mentors admitted they knew nothing or very little about the program. They made no judgements about the program during this part of the interview. Two mentors knew people who were in the Military Career Transition Program. They expressed favorable comments about the program (M8, M9, TD5). One mentor had the impression that the demands in the Military Career Transition Program were less than those in traditional certification programs (M3, TD5). Two

principals were instructors in the Military Career Transition Program and were very knowledgeable and positive about it (PR8, PR9, TD5).

Suggestions for Improving the Program

When the respondents were asked if they had suggestions for improving the program, five participants suggested increasing the amount of time spent in the classroom (TD5). One wanted to increase the amount of time allocated to student teaching (P5, TD5). Another said, "I wish I had taken a class that would have been an overall review of all mathematics" (P10, TD5). A participant who is now a special education teacher suggested more work with Individual Education Plans (IEP) and other special education issues. He said, "Give a better understanding and appreciation for the amount of time and energy that is required for special education students" (P1, TD5). Another suggested, "Keep a close eye on the progress. Spend time in the classroom to see how things are going and give feedback" (P7, TD5). One participant and a mentor suggested more dialogue with others who were successful in the program (P4 & M8, TD5).

Seven mentors and two principals suggested the alternative certification program would be improved by increasing participants' time with experienced teachers. It was suggested that the practicum experience or the student teaching period be extended (TD5). One mentor said, "I think it needs to be as practical as possible. They have the cognitive knowledge; they need the nuts and bolts" (M1, TD5). Other suggestions included a reality check (PR4, TD5), more assistance with

classroom management (PR5, TD5), a more complete picture of schools (PR3, TD5), and more practice (PR1 & PR6, TD5).

Interviewees' Ratings of Selected Teaching Components

The interviewees were asked to rate eight selected components of teaching as poor, fair, good, or excellent. They were also asked to make comments on each of the components if they were so inclined. The interviewees were asked how well the alternative certification program prepared participants in the following teaching components: (a) managing the classroom, (b) having the knowledge of the subject they now teach, (c) using a variety of teaching strategies, (d) recognizing student differences, (e) maintaining students' attention, (f) planning lessons, (g) assessing students' work, and (h) accepting duties outside the classroom. Even though they were asked how well the program prepared them in these components of teaching, most responded based on how the participant performed. Interviewees' responses and tallies for each teaching component are in Table D6 (see Appendix D).

Managing the Classroom

Most participants rated the program as good or excellent in preparing them to manage the classroom, with five fair ratings and no poor ratings. Two responded that it was good or excellent without comments. Four made comments indicating that the classes or instructors were good. One participant said, "The instructor was good. You could tell he enjoyed teaching it [classroom management class]. You get in the classroom and find out it is like that" (P2, TD6). Seven participants indicated that they needed more practical information or experiences. One participant said, "I had a couple of good teachers, but I don't think you can know until you walk into that classroom" (P1, TD6). Several principals agreed that classroom management skills are best learned in the classroom. One high school principal said, "They get good, practical information.

The only thing missing is they have to get some experience to apply it" (PR8, TD6). One principal indicated that classroom management skills are lacking in most new teachers (PR2, TD6).

Principals rated the program's preparation in classroom management as fair or good. Approximately half of the mentors rated the program's preparation in classroom management as good or excellent, and half rated it as poor or fair. Only three mentors made comments about classroom management. One indicated that the participants are not ready to manage classroom behavior (M2, TD6). One mentor indicated that participants did not do well with classroom management because they are too rigid (M8, TD6). The comments possibly indicated a rating of the participants' performance rather than the program.

Having Knowledge of the Subject They Now Teach

There was a wide variety of ratings by the participants. Seven participants stated they did not increase their knowledge of the subject from the alternative certification program because they did not need it. From their perspectives, they had already acquired content knowledge through previous training. A participant who now teaches science responded, "Not at all because I had a master's degree in oceanography" (P1, TD6). A participant who felt the program was excellent in preparing him for the subject that he now teaches responded, "On target for what I was teaching" (P10, TD6). Three others indicated the program was better in some subject areas than others. Mentors and principals rated the program as good or excellent in providing participants with knowledge in content areas. Principals and mentors agreed participants had sufficient knowledge in their content fields. A principal said that the participants had come into the Military Career Transition Program with an excellent knowledge base in the subjects they are now teaching (PR9, TD6).

Using a Variety of Teaching Strategies

All but one participant rated the program good or excellent on how well they were prepared to use a variety of teaching strategies. Seven participants made comments about how the program gave them a number of teaching strategies from which to choose. One participant said, "They give lots of strategies to choose from. Not just lecture" (P8, TD6). There were no excellent ratings from the mentors and principals on the variety of teaching strategies component. All ratings were fair or good. However, eight mentors or principals commented that the participants use a variety of teaching strategies, including technology, labs, experiences, and hands-on activities. A middle school principal said, "They get various teaching strategies in their methodology, but they tend to revert back to lecture unless they are encouraged to do otherwise" (PR9, TD6). A mentor said, "I've seen both, some who had a hard time and some who were willing to try different things" (M8, TD6).

Recognizing Student Differences

When the participants were asked how well the program prepared them to recognize student differences, all but two responded good or excellent. One participant commented that a special education class included content on different learning modalities (P5, TD6). Another indicated that they learned how to use diagnostic tools (P8, TD6). A high school participant said, "I don't think the program had enough time to do that" (P1, TD6). And, one participant said, "The shortcoming comes in when it comes time to put it into practice" (P3, TD6).

One mentor and one principal rated the preparation for recognizing student differences excellent, one rated it poor, seven rated it fair or good, and four did not rate it. A mentor commented, "In my experience, I've seen some people who have had a lot of difficulty with that [recognizing student differences] because they want to put every student in one profile" (M8,

TD6). A principal responded, “They recognize it, but they don’t do anything about it” (PR5, TD6).

Maintaining Student Attention

Eight participants rated the program as excellent in preparing them to maintain students’ attention. Three participants rated the program good and one rated it fair. A participant said, “They gave us lots of ideas, but it’s a personal thing” (P4, TD6). The participants reported they had learned other ways to maintain students’ attention in the Military Career Transition Program. They were given opportunities to talk with classroom teachers (P1, TD6). They learned to use hands-on activities to teach their subject matter (P5, TD6) and to use a variety of activities (P8, TD6). They were taught creative learning strategies (P10, TD6). One participant said, “The program reinforced what I [did} in the navy” (P7, TD6). Another suggested he needed more practice (P3, TD6).

The mentors and principals did not share the participants’ optimism on this teaching component. Although 10 rated the program as good or excellent, many of the comments indicated the participants did not maintain the students’ attention in an exceptional manner, and six respondents said it was fair. A mentor said, “That depends on their personality” (M2, TD6). Another said, “Sometimes things are presented as ‘just the facts.’ It’s hard to break out and teach more innovative things” (M8, TD6). The one principal who rated it excellent actually credited the participants’ experiences rather than training (PR2, TD6). One principal said “It may be superficial attention, but they get it” (PR9, TD6). There was only one comment from a mentor who indicated participants do maintain the students’ attention (M4, TD6).

Planning Lessons

Ten participants rated the alternative certification program as good or excellent in preparing them to do lesson plans. Six participants said they did lesson plans in many or all classes throughout the program. Two said that they felt prepared to do lesson plans when they started teaching because they had lots of practice in the program, but several participants expressed a desire for more practice. One participant said, “They show you the Hunter model which seemed to be the favorite” (P8, TD6). Only three participants did not feel adequately prepared to do lesson plans.

Mentors and principals rated the program as good or excellent in preparing participants to plan lessons. Four comments were made about the detailed nature of the lesson plans. One mentor said, “That goes back to the whole organization aspect of the military. Very detailed” (M8, TD6). A principal said, “Most of them have a real good concept on how to pull a plan together” (PR6, TD6).

Assessing Students’ Work

Five participants rated the program as fair and eight said good or excellent at teaching them how to assess students’ work. The comments are more revealing than the ratings. Regardless of the ratings, participants made comments to indicate it was not adequate. Only two participants felt prepared to properly assess students’ work. One said, “There was good discussion about that. You learned there were different ways to assess” (P1, TD6). Others indicated they could have used more information. For example, a participant said, “We should, in fact, try a couple of assessment methods” (P10, TD6).

The responses of the mentors and principals varied regarding preparation of the participants for assessing students’ work. Most mentors rated the participants’ ability to assess

students' work as fair or good, while principals rated it good or excellent. Two mentors said they could not judge this teaching component because they had not observed it, but one mentor said, "That needs work also" (M3, TD6). A middle school principal said, "They know how to write the test, but they are only going to give knowledge and comprehension questions" (PR5, TD6). One principal said, "They do a pretty good job determining how students are doing" (PR1, TD6). A middle school mentor said, "They know what to expect" (M2, TD6).

Accepting Duties Outside the Classroom

Only two participants rated this component of teaching, and one provided evidence that the program prepared them to accept duties outside the classroom. According to him, "They brought in a couple of gentlemen to talk about duties outside the classroom" (P10, TD6). The other participants either did not correctly answer the question, or they indicated only minimal class discussion on the topic. Some participants stated it was mentioned in a class.

Approximately half the mentors suggested the participants were very involved in activities outside the classroom. Five mentors suggested they were not involved. One mentor said, "Sometimes that depends on what the duties are. Some people might think the duty is beneath them" (M8, TD6). In contrast, principals considered the participants very involved in duties beyond the classroom. Principals rated this teaching component as good or excellent. A principal said, "He's involved in so many things at school. He enjoys being there for the kids" (PR3, TD6). A middle school principal compared a participant's involvement with others when she said, "More than the average teacher. They seem to want to get involved in the school" (PR2, TD6).

to the Transition of Military Personnel to Classrooms

The participants, mentors, and principals were asked how six components of the Chesapeake School Division's Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program contributed to participants' transition to the classroom. Their responses are in Table D7 (see Appendix D). The six components of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program are: (a) a three-day beginning teachers orientation program, (b) the Beginning Teacher Handbook, (c) beginning teacher in-service training, (d) classroom observations by the instructional specialists, (e) a mentor program, and (f) a principal's orientation. They were also asked to make recommendations about how the individual school or school system could improve the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program.

Teachers hired with no prior teaching experience are required to report to work five days prior to other teachers. They are required to attend a three-day orientation planned by the Chesapeake School Division Personnel Department and to spend two days preparing in their classrooms. According to the personnel director, the goal for those three days is to "orient them in skills they may not have gotten at the university level, such as classroom management or legal liability of a classroom teacher." A key component of the program is a presentation of expectations for new teachers. This presentation is conducted by selected elementary, middle, and high school principals. The new teachers then report to their prospective schools for the remaining two days. Principals typically plan a brief orientation and allocate the remainder of the time to work in classrooms. Optional meetings are planned by the instructional specialist after school hours for all beginning teachers throughout the school year.

Contributions of the Three-Day Summer Orientation In-service

Four participants did not attend the three-day orientation in-service because they were employed after the orientation was completed. Because of severe weather conditions, three participants attended for one of the three days. Three participants had somewhat negative responses to the program: One felt the program tried to touch on everything he had been studying for two years (P1, TD7). Three participants had a more positive reaction and felt it helped in several ways. According to one of these, the orientation program was like what was going to happen the first day of school (P3, TD7). It helped with administrative aspects of employment (P4, TD7), provided information about school law, and provided an opportunity to meet people (P5, TD7).

The mentors and principals were asked how they thought the three-day orientation program supported the participants' transition. Four mentors had no opinion or did not know. Eight mentors and principals thought it was helpful because it gave the participants information or exposure to other teachers. One high school principal said, "It's really good because it gives them a lot of nuts and bolts" (PR8, TD7). Seven mentors and principals were less positive about the program because it was not long enough or there was too much information given at one time. Two principals suggested a separate orientation designed especially for military transition teachers. One mentor suggested that the program was good, but some military people are not receptive because they do not feel they need it (M3, TD7).

Contributions of the Beginning Teacher Handbook

Eleven participants indicated that the Beginning Teacher Handbook was helpful as a reference. It gave them ideas of things to try with the students and provided a format for lesson planning (P1, P2, TD7). Only one participant did not find it helpful. He said, "Not helpful, haven't been able to use it, too hectic" (P7, TD7).

Six mentors confirmed that participants used the handbook, but some questioned its effectiveness. One mentor said, “They’re good about reading policy, but I’m not sure that translates into action” (M1, TD7), suggesting the handbook was not fully utilized for the intended purpose . One mentor suggested it was not fully utilized because much of the information was not helpful for the participant who teaches an Academic Resource Class (M2, TD7). Another suggested that a participant was not receptive when she tried to review it with him (M5, TD7). Responses provided by the principals suggest that principals have little knowledge of the Beginning Teacher Handbook. Two principals freely admitted they were not familiar with it.

Contributions of the In-service Training for Beginning Teachers

Seven participants either did not attend or had no recollection of the beginning teacher in-service training sessions held after school at various times throughout the school year. One participant who did attend thought the sessions were not very helpful. He said, “. . . we rehashed things we already learned” (P7, TD7). Three participants indicated the training was very helpful. Two others gave responses that did not apply to the question, suggesting they lacked understanding of the meetings.

These meetings were not much clearer to the mentors. Only one mentor responded in a manner that indicated there was any awareness about the nature of these meetings. One mentor said that it helped participants set up their grade book (M4, TD7). Another was certain her mentee did not attend the in-service training (M6, TD7). Two mentors thought it might help the participants even though they were not sure about the nature of the training. Eight principals indicated awareness of the meetings and of having some idea of what takes place at these meetings. Five principals thought the in-service meetings contributed to the participants’ transition in some way. According to one, “Probably more helpful than all the bombardment at the

beginning of the year" (PR3, TD7). Another said, "I'm not sure that they ever go" (PR4, TD7). Two principals who had awareness of the in-service training did not feel that it contributed to the transition because the participants need separate meetings and attendance should be mandatory (PR6 & PR9, TD7).

Contributions of Classroom Observations by the Instructional Specialist

There were mixed reactions to the contributions of the classroom observations from the interviewees. Nine participants indicated that the classroom observations did contribute in various ways. One participant said, "She evaluated me in one class... gave me some pointers... real helpful" (P2, TD7). Three participants indicated there were multiple observations. However, one of those participants had confused the instructional specialist with the Academic Resource Class supervisor (P5, TD7). Four participants gave responses to indicate the classroom observations done by the instructional specialist did not contribute to their transition to the classroom. They did not recall a visit from the instructional specialist.

Most mentors indicated little awareness of the instructional specialist's classroom observations. However, one mentor said the observation helped the participants (M1, TD7). The principals indicated more awareness of the visits from the instructional specialist and had more positive feelings about the specialist's contributions to the transition. Five thought the classroom observations were helpful. A middle school principal said, "Extremely helpful . . . gives direction" (PR2, TD7).

Contributions of the Mentors

Four participants were not assigned mentors. Two of them were hired in the middle of the school year, one was reassigned two weeks after the year began, and one had a split assignment between two schools. According to the one with the split assignment, he never saw a mentor (P1, TD7). Three of the four who were not officially assigned mentors identified other individuals who served in that capacity. One identified an assistant principal, another identified her cooperating teacher from her student teaching experience, and the third identified his departmental chairperson.

Six participants indicated the assigned mentor contributed to their transition to the classroom. According to these participants, the mentors served as an advisor (P3, TD7), helped with the paper work (P4 & P6, TD7), and helped spend money for classroom supplies (P5, TD7). Three indicated the partnership was not a success. One said, ". . . other than IEPs, I never saw her" (P6, TD7). The other two said they found another member of the staff who was more helpful.

Most mentors and principals indicated that the mentor program is a good idea and that it contributes to the participants' transition to the classroom. One mentor said, "You can show them the ropes in procedures . . . [and] help them when they run into snags, if they are receptive" (M3, TD7). The problem that several mentors cited with the mentor program was the participants' unwillingness to accept their help. One said, "I tried to help with things like helping him find materials . . . . He was self sufficient" (M2, TD7). Several principals said the mentor program's success depends on a good relationship between the mentor and the beginning teacher.

Contributions of the School Orientation

Ten participants indicated that the orientation provided at the school level by the principal contributed to their transition. Several participants said that they reviewed the school handbook and school procedures. One participant said that the school orientation is where he learned about requirements of teachers that surprised him (P6, TD7). Five mentors indicated the school orientation contributed to the transition. One mentor said, "It's helpful because the new people want to know the nuts and bolts" (M1, TD7,). The two mentors who felt as if it helped also said it was not enough. One said, "[For] a beginning teacher I don't think anything is enough" (M5, TD7). Two mentors were unaware of the nature of the orientation.

Six principals expressed dissatisfaction with the school orientation for beginning teachers, noting time constraints and the large amount of information to be communicated as major obstacles. One principal said, "It's not adequate. There's never enough time . . .. They need all this information . . .. They don't think they need it . . . . I encourage them to come in and ask questions on an individual basis" (PR3, TD7). Another principal indicated that the orientation fulfilled its purpose. He said, "Our goal is to quickly go over the teacher handbook, forms to fill out, procedures, try to make them feel comfortable... let them know we realize they will make mistakes and it will get better after the first year" (PR8, TD7).

Suggestions for Improving the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program

The participants offered a variety of suggestions for improving the Chesapeake School Division's efforts to make their transition better. Four participants said that they needed additional feedback during their transition period. One participant suggested, "More observation on an informal basis without the stress of knowing you're being evaluated" (P3, TD7). Three participants recommended additional training. One said, "More access to training" (P11, TD7). Other suggestions included more help with day-to-day routine stuff (P13, TD7), a mentor who

was a former military person (P5, TD7), early hiring and time to meet other team members (P4, TD7), and money for supplies and materials (P6, TD7). The one participant who was reassigned to another school suggested more follow up for others in his situation (P8, TD7). Finally, two participants felt the school system could do no more.

The mentors agreed that the participants could use more feedback and practical experiences, especially in the beginning of their new careers. Six mentors recommended such additional assistance as sitting in on classes or seminars. Two mentors responded that they felt the Chesapeake Public School Division's program now in place is adequate with a little change here and there (M6 & M9, TD7). One principal also suggested additional assistance for the participants but did not mention the feedback aspect. Two principals recommended additional time with intense training (PR6 & PR7, TD7). Another suggested, "A program where someone would stay with them for at least three years" (PR5, TD7). Another principal said that the mentor program now in place is sufficient (PR8, TD7). And one principal recommended that the participant be placed in the worst situation possible as a student teacher to get experiences "dealing with all types of kids" (PR3, TD7).

Summary of the Findings

A summary of the factors that contributed to participants' transition from the military to the classroom is provided. A summary of the obstacles they encountered and an assessment of the Military Career Transition Program is also provided. Finally, a summary of an assessment of the Chesapeake Public School Division's Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program is contained in this section.

Summary: Contributing Factors to the Transition

Participants were asked to identify factors that contributed to their transition to the classroom. They identified five categories of factors which included: (a) life experiences, (b) values and attitudes, (c) willingness to accept diversity, (d) ability to adapt, and (e) rank and status.

Participants described seven categories of life experiences that contributed to their transition. Those categories were: (a) previous teaching experience, (b) leadership skills, (c) organizational skills, (d) technical skills, (e) travel, (f) age and maturity, and (g) self discipline and work ethnic. All except one (leadership skills), were confirmed by mentors and principals.

Values and attitudes were other factors the participants identified as contributors to the transition. These values and attitudes held by the participants were recognized by the mentors and principals. Attitudes and values such as (a) being competent and confident, (b) being dedicated, (c) being cooperative, (d) having a sense of mission, and (e) being non-competitive.

Two other factors that participant attributed to their transition to the classroom were not substantiated by mentors or principals. Many participants viewed themselves as being able to accept diversity. Most mentors and principals failed to identify this as a contributing factor, but one high school principal did mentioned it. Several participants felt their ability to adapt to new situations was a contributing factor. There were references made by the mentors and principals to indicate that the participants were unable to adapt to the school environment readily because they lacked flexibility.

The rank that these second-career military personnel held while serving may have been a contributing factor. The data were not conclusive. Some felt rank could be an obstacle; however, the majority felt it was a contributor. It is important to note that some interviewees thought that

being an officer was an advantage for those who become teachers, while others thought it was a disadvantage.

Summary: Obstacles to the Transition

The participants identified factors that were obstacles to their transition which included: (a) relating to students, (b) environmental factors, (c) lack of knowledge about school operations, (d) staff and community relations, (e) getting teacher certification, and (e) lack of feedback. The mentors and principals identified three additional obstacles which were: (a) lack of flexibility, (b) need for control, and (c) receptiveness to assistance.

Learning to relate to students was a major obstacle for the participants. Mentors and principals confirmed the difficulties participants had learning to adjust to students. Those in the middle school have difficulties with typical adolescent attitudes given their military regimentation. It was noted that some second-career military personnel experience difficulties with students who fail to "follow orders." Some participants found it difficult learning to teach students at their appropriate instructional level.

Environmental issues beyond the participants' control such as being hired after the induction process posed obstacles for some participants. Second-career military teachers who had been assigned to a special class for at-risk students experienced difficulties adjusting to the classroom. They were not prepared to deal with an alternative classroom setting.

Another factor participants identified as contributing to the transition was their lack of knowledge about how schools operate. Mentors and principals agreed that the amount of paperwork required in teaching created the most challenges for participants. Participants viewed the paperwork as an obstacle to their transition. They were surprised to discover the amount of

time required to perform the duties of a teacher as well as the lack of written procedures to tell them how to perform the duties.

When participants were asked how well related to other staff and community members three participants identified parents as an obstacle to their transition. They had difficulty adjusting to the expectations of parents. They were surprised when parents defended the students' behaviors. One participant indicated that he did not have much in common with other staff members, but most mentors and principals indicated that the participants related well with other staff members.

Some participants provided data to support that teacher getting certification was an obstacle because of the sacrifices they made. Others indicated that the lack of feedback on their performance was an obstacles. The principals and mentors did not confirm these as obstacles for the participants. However, the mentors did identify the lack of flexibility, need for control, and receptiveness to getting assistance as obstacles for the participants.

There was little evidence to support the perception that these second-career military teachers had difficulties working with female supervisors. Several indicated that they had female supervisors while they were serving in the military. Most principals and mentors agreed that the participants worked well with female supervisors.

Summary: Assessment of the Military Career Transition Program

All participants reported they attended the Military Career Transition Program (MCTP) at Old Dominion University which is designed for second-career teachers with military service. The participants described the program's strengths as: (a) availability of classes, (b) course offerings, (c) backgrounds of the instructors, and (d) involvement of the administration. Participants identified the amount of time doing student teaching as the major weakness of the program. There

were isolated comments to indicate other weaknesses such as the order in which courses were completed, repetition of special education classes, and poor advisors. The participants recommended that the program include additional time for them to be in the classroom observing class activities. Although the mentors and principals were not aware of many aspects of the Military Career Transition Program, they agreed additional time should be allocated for the participants to work with experienced teachers in the classroom.

A summary of the findings regarding eight selected teaching components are described as strengths, weaknesses, and differences.

Strengths

Knowledge of subject matter. Most participants said they were prepared in knowledge of the content area; however, they did not credit their knowledge to the Military Career Transition Program because they already had prior education and experience that provided it. All mentors and principals said the program was good or excellent because the participants were knowledgeable about the subject they now teach.

Lesson plans. Participants responded that the Military Career Transition Program adequately prepared them to do lesson plans. Ten participants rated the program as good or excellent and made numerous comments citing specific examples. The mentors and principals strongly agreed with the participants' assessment of their ability to do lesson plans. All other mentors and principals rated this aspect of the program as good or excellent.

Duties outside the classroom. Although this teaching component is noted to be a strength of the participants, it was not generally credited to the Military Career Transition Program by the participants. Only one participant provided evidence that the program prepared them to accept duties outside the classroom. Approximately half of the mentors and all of the principals said the

participants did very well and were very involved in the school beyond their normal classroom duties. There were no examples of how the Military Career Transition Program prepared them in this area.

Weaknesses

Classroom management. Comments from the participants indicated they needed more practical information during their training in classroom management. Even though eight participants rated their preparation in this area as good or excellent, six admitted they needed more practical information or experiences. The ratings of the mentors and principals indicated that they agreed that these second-career teachers lacked adequate classroom management skills.

Assessing students' work. Participants agreed that they needed to improve their skills in assessing students' work. An examination of the comments made by participants reveals there was insufficient opportunity to practice various assessment techniques. Mentor's rankings indicated that the participants' ability to assess students' work was lacking. Principals' comments indicated the participants did a good job assessing students, but there was little evidence that they used a variety of techniques.

Differences Among Participants, Mentors, and Principals

There were two different views regarding the participants' preparation in three of the teaching components. Participants' ratings and comments indicated they were prepared in the following areas: (a) using a variety of teaching strategies, (b) recognizing student differences, and (c) maintaining student attention. The mentors' and principals' ratings and comments did not agree. Participants felt prepared in these teaching components, but mentors and principals did not feel the participants were well prepared.

Using a variety of teaching strategies. Twelve participants rated their preparation in teaching strategies as either good or excellent. Their comments supported these ratings. Most participants indicated that learned they must use a variety of teaching strategies in the classroom. Most mentors and principals rated the program less favorable. However, their comments suggested participants did use labs, shared experiences from their military background, and used hands-on activities to vary their instruction.

Recognizing student differences. Most participants rated their preparation as good or excellent while most mentors rated it as fair or good. Comments from the different groups of interviewees supported different perceptions. The participants' comments supported the claim that they had instruction in learning modalities and diagnostic tools used to recognize student differences. The mentors and principals' comments were best summarized by one who said that the participants may have known how to recognize differences, but there was little evidence that they did it.

Maintaining students' attention. Eight participants rated their preparation in maintaining students' attention as excellent. Several comments supported these ratings. Examples of experiences in the program that enhanced this skill were cited. The mentors and principals also gave several excellent ratings; however, their comments suggested otherwise. Several comments attributed the participants' abilities to maintain students' attention to their personalities or experiences rather than their training.

Summary: Contributions of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program to the Transition of Military Personnel to the Classroom

Three-day Summer Orientation

Many of the participants were unable to attend the all three days of the orientation program. Those who made comments presented different perspectives regarding the effectiveness of the three-day program. Some observed that it repeated what they had already learned. Learning about school law, meeting people, and conducting administrative tasks were parts of the orientation that were cited as being beneficial. The mentors and principals agreed it was helpful to the participants, but some suggested it was not enough. They felt it gave the participants opportunities to meet people and helped with administrative tasks.

Beginning Teacher Handbook.

The beginning teacher handbook was considered to be beneficial to the participants as a reference. Although the principals were unaware of the handbook's contents, the mentors confirmed its usefulness.

In-service Training for Beginning Teachers

The principals had a greater awareness and understanding of the in-service sessions planned by the instructional specialists during the school year than did the participants or mentors. Attendance was not mandatory; therefore, they were not well attended or considered helpful.

Classroom Observations by a Instructional Specialist

Most participants considered the observations done by one of the instructional specialists as helpful because they received the much needed feedback in a non-threatening manner, but not all participants were observed. Mentors seemed to be unaware of these observations, but the principals confirmed their usefulness.

Mentors

A significant number (four) of the participants were not assigned mentors because three of them were hired after the school year began. Some participants who were assigned a mentor sought other staff members served this function. Approximately half of the mentors provided comments indicating the mentor program contributed to the transition. Three mentors suggested the participants were not receptive to their assistance. Five principals indicated the mentor program was helpful, and three indicated it could be helpful in favorable conditions. One principal indicated that the mentor component of the program was hampered by the structure and organization of the middle school.

School Orientation

According to the participants, the orientation provided by principals contributed to their transition. Five mentors agreed, but six principals expressed dissatisfaction with their own efforts.

Summary: Suggestions for Improving the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program

A majority of interviewees agreed the Chesapeake School Division should provide additional assistance and feedback for the participants during the transitional period. Other suggestions included more informal observations, more access to training, an opportunity to meet other team members, and money for supplies.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRACTICE AND RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to describe, and explain the transition of second-career military personnel to teaching within the Chesapeake (Virginia) Public School Division. Conclusions were based on the responses from participants, mentors, and principals to interview questions. Factors that contributed to or hindered the transition of participants were identified. The effectiveness of the alternative certification program and the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program used by the Chesapeake School Division were examined. Conclusions and a discussion of how the findings relate to the literature are presented in this final chapter. Recommendations are made for the Chesapeake Public School Division, school principals, and the Military Transition Program at Old Dominion University. Recommendations for further research are included. Recommendations for alternative certification policies are made.

Conclusions and Discussion

Participants were asked questions regarding factors that contributed to their transition from the military to the classroom and the obstacles they encountered. They were asked questions about the Military Career Transition Program and the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program. Mentors and principals were asked the same questions. Major and minor conclusions were drawn based on the participants' responses. Major conclusions were drawn when mentors and principals provided data to support the participants' claims. Minor conclusions were made when the mentors and principals provided little or no data to support the claims. When the data conflicted, no conclusions were made.

Major Conclusion Regarding Question One: Contributing Factors

The experiential background and personal characteristics of military personnel facilitate their transition to classrooms.

Minor Conclusions Regarding Question One: Contributing Factors

Military experience provides opportunities for military personnel to learn teaching, organization, and technology skills that readily transfer to their new positions as teachers in classrooms.

Military experience helps military personnel acquire the maturity, self-discipline, and work ethic necessary to perform well in the classroom.

Military experience permits military personnel to acquire knowledge of the world that can be used to enhance their performance as teachers in classrooms.

Discussion of Contributing Factors

Former Secretary of Education William Bennett and others have argued that retired military officers are resources to meet the need in certain areas of teacher shortages because of their excellent leadership skills, organizational skills, and life experiences (Nyjordet, 1991). Alternative certification programs have been developed to attract retired military personnel because it is believed they have acquired superior leadership skills, organizational skills, and strong academic preparation (Dessel & Mehaffy, 1989). The much debated issue regarding knowledge of subject matter versus knowledge of pedagogy continues to surround programs designed to conduct teacher training without the traditional education courses.

The 13 retired military personnel who were in their first three years of teaching in this study identified five categories of factors that contributed to their transition: (a) life experiences, (b) values and attitudes, (c) willingness to accept diversity, (d) ability to adapt, and (e) previous

rank or status. Their mentors and principals confirmed three of these factors: (a) life experiences, (b) values and attitudes, and (c) rank or status.

Military personnel in this study brought maturity, diverse experiences, organizational skills, and technological skills to the Chesapeake Public School Division. Their values and attitudes contributed to the school environment. And their respect for the "chain of command" was appreciated and admired by their educational colleagues and principals. There was little or no evidence that the leadership skills which they acquired in the military transferred to their new environment. However, the participants were in their first three years of teaching, and it may take longer to assume leadership positions in the school setting.

Like other military personnel who enter teaching, the participants were mostly in their mid-40s. With their age comes maturity and experience. Other studies have recognized the maturity level as a contributing factor as well (Hawk & Schmidt, 1989; Parker, 1992; White, 1997). Their travels in the military brought opportunities to enrich the learning process for students. They shared experiences that made learning more interesting and relevant for students. Even though it was not confirmed by the mentors and principals, the participants felt their travels enabled them to be more adaptable, contributing to their success as second-career teachers. Others may not have recognized the adaptability of the participants due to the rigid stereotype often assigned to military personnel; however, evidence did exist to indicate some lack of adaptability. Participants often expressed some degree of stress due to the lack of procedures or structure found in education. Their organizational and technological skills were recognized as contributing factors to a successful transition. Many of the same organizational skills needed to survive in the military apparently were useful in the classroom. Hawk and Schmidt (1989) found

that participants did well managing time. They are efficient record keepers and lesson planners; these are consistent with Parker's (1992) findings.

The participants bring certain values and attitudes with them that contribute to their transition and may also contribute to the school environment. They are perceived as having a good work ethic and being committed to their newly chosen profession. They respect the "chain of command" and are perceived as very cooperative. This is valuable to principals who are attempting to lead a staff to accept a new project or to accept other changes.

One area of the school program for which many principals find difficulty gaining support is the extracurricular activity program. The participants seem willing to accept these responsibilities. Military personnel are not accustomed to the shorter hours in teaching, and they are accustomed to extra duties in the military.

Finally, the participants' rank in the military may have been a contributing factor. Approximately one half of the participants were officers and one half were enlisted personnel. In either case, they were accustomed to having others "under their control." In the military they had to accomplish various tasks utilizing human resources. Some of the participants viewed these experiences as contributing factors. Officers may have an additional advantage because their training is similar to the training of those who are in education. Since there are no other studies that distinguish rank and perhaps no other program that includes enlisted personnel, it is difficult to draw conclusions regarding rank or status. A significant number of the interviewees saw no relationship between rank and success. There were some who felt being an officer could be an obstacle.

Major Conclusion Regarding Question Two: Obstacles

The highly structured training and culture in the military create barriers for the participants as they make the transition from the military to the classroom.

Minor Conclusions Regarding Question Two: Obstacles

Strict compliance to directives in the military environment make it difficult for second-career military personnel to adjust to students who do not readily follow the teacher's directions in the school setting.

Unusual circumstances related to teacher assignment adversely affect the transition of second-career military personnel from the military to the classroom.

The lack of knowledge about how schools operate cause problems for second-career military personnel adjusting to expectations of parents and the amount of time needed to plan lessons, grade papers, and perform other duties required of teachers.

Second-career military personnel do not experience difficulties being supervised by female administrators or relating to other female school personnel.

Discussion of Obstacles

Parker (1992) found no unique problems encountered in the population he studied as they left the military and entered teaching. White (1997), however, found problems that were unique to military retirees which were similar to the findings in this study. The participants in this study identified obstacles they encountered which were placed in five categories: (a) relating to students, (b) environmental differences, (c) lack of knowledge about school operations, (d) staff and community relations, and (e) lack of feedback.

The beginning teachers who retired from the military experienced problems learning to relate to students. Students did not respond to them as their subordinates had in the military.

There was sufficient evidence in this study to support this obstacle. According to several participants, mentors, and principals, learning to relate to students was a major obstacle. In the military, one is trained to follow orders above all else. Students in the classroom do not have this training, especially the typical adolescent who is learning to become more independent. As stated earlier, the average age of the participants was 46.5 which implies they are further removed from today's youth culture than the typical beginning teacher. The eight interns at West Virginia State College who had non-military first careers recommended a period of observation to help prepare for the "cultural shock" (Securro et al., 1989). Learning to relate to students on their level was a problem. Using vocabulary readily understood by students, understanding their vocabulary, and understanding the developmental nature of students proved to be obstacles for these participants. Having been accustomed to dealing with adults made it difficult to relate to younger children.

Second-career military personnel who are employed after the school year begins experienced other problems that were difficult to overcome. They missed portions of the induction process that produced a feeling of "being behind." They missed valuable information and the camaraderie with other beginning teachers. Furthermore, students have a very difficult time accepting a new teacher after the year begins. Two participants had experiences they described as impossible to overcome. Their experiences were also confirmed by their mentors as unique obstacles.

The National Executive Service Corps (1987) surveyed school superintendents who expressed reservations about the military retirees' ability to adapt to the classroom environment. There are differences in the military and school environments that serve as obstacles for the participants. For example, some participants experienced stress due to the lack of clearly defined procedures, the lack of structure, and the lack of discipline found in the schools, especially when

compared to the military environment. White (1997) also concluded military retirees experienced difficulties adjusting to education. The military offers feedback on the performance of military personnel. The lack of feedback in the school setting is another obstacle for the participants. Those who had previous teaching experiences in the military described a very different classroom environment. Lesson plans were not prepared by the instructor, and other instructors observed the classroom to offer direct feedback. That is not part of a teacher's experience in the typical school setting.

Lutz and Hutton (1989) reported interns liked managing behavior problems, grading papers, and planning lessons less than they had expected. The participants in this study were surprised by the amount of paperwork required in teaching. They were also surprised by the amount of time required for grading papers and doing lesson plans.

White (1997) found some military retirees had difficulties working with parents. There were similar findings in this study. Several participants identified parents as an obstacle due to their inappropriate support for their children when they are "wrong." The participants felt they related well to their colleagues. This is consistent with the findings of Parker (1992), though not all mentors and principals agreed. The inconsistent views of the participants may suggest this is more a function of one's individual personality rather than other factors specific to these participants.

Major Conclusion Regarding Question Three: The Military Career Transition Program

As an alternative certification program, the Military Career Transition Program at Old Dominion University adequately prepares second-career military personnel to become teachers in most teaching components.

Minor Conclusions Regarding Question Three: The Military Career Transition Program

The Military Career Transition Program lacks sufficient opportunities for second-career military personnel to practice pedagogical skills they learned in their course work.

Second-career military personnel complete the Military Career Transition Program with knowledge in the subject they teach, proficiency at writing lesson plans, and readiness to accept duties outside the classroom.

Second-career military personnel complete the Military Career Transition Program feeling prepared in managing the classroom, teaching a variety of strategies, recognizing student differences, maintaining students' attention, and assessing students' work; however, their performance, as assessed by mentors and principals, indicates that additional training in these areas is needed.

Discussion of the Military Career Transition Program

The participants in this study concluded that the Military Career Transition Program adequately prepared them for the classroom. When they were asked to describe the program, most provided positive responses about the program and their preparation; however, they felt that the program lacked sufficient opportunities to learn specific skills in a classroom setting. When they were asked to rate how the program prepared them in eight selected teaching components, they indicated it prepared them in six of the components, and they felt they were already prepared in the other two components. The eight components included: (a) managing the classroom, (b) having knowledge of the subject, (c) using a variety of teaching strategies, (d) recognizing student differences, (e) planning lessons, (f) maintaining students' attention, (g) assessing students' work, and (h) accepting duties outside the classroom. The two teaching components in which the program did not prepare participants were knowledge of the subject and accepting duties outside

the classroom. Most felt prepared for those components before they entered the Military Career Transition Program.

The findings of this study are consistent with Parker (1992) who asked area supervisors to compare Military Career Transition Program participants with other beginning teachers in 27 components of teaching. They are also consistent with the findings of Hawk and Schmidt (1989) who compared marines who had been trained in an alternative certification program with traditionally prepared teachers. In each of these studies the participants felt that their program prepared them to become teachers. The second-career teachers in the Chesapeake Public School Division also felt the Military Career Transition Program prepared them for the classroom.

However, mentors and principals in Chesapeake made less favorable judgments about Military Career Transition Program teacher training than did second-career military teachers. The mentors and principals made judgements about the Military Career Transition Program based on their perceptions of the participants' competencies rather than knowledge of the program. Three principals who had the most knowledge of the Military Career Transition Program gave more positive responses about it.

Participants indicated the Military Career Transition Program did prepare them for the classroom, but the lack of opportunities to acquire skills in a classroom setting was a concern for them. The same concern was expressed by mentors and principals. Perhaps this can be explained by comparing the Military Career Transition Program with other alternative certification programs.

When the Military Career Transition Program is compared to other alternative certification programs, there are similarities and differences. All of the programs are designed to attract and train candidates for teaching in areas where there are shortages. The programs usually take less

time then do traditional teacher preparation programs. They attempt to balance knowledge of subject matter, professional knowledge, and knowledge of pedagogy.

The major differences are the requirements for entering the program and the amount of time and resources allocated for the internship. Some of the other programs used interviews, grade point averages, written essays, or references from previous employers as criteria for admission into their programs. The Military Career Transition Program includes few requirements for admission; however, more teacher candidates complete the program and become teachers in areas where there are teacher shortages. The obvious question of quality of teacher candidates arises. Does the Military Career Transition Program provide candidates who are qualified to teach? Since it was not the purpose of this study to make this determination, the question will go unanswered. It is worth noting, however, that the studies mentioned earlier did indicate comparable competencies of alternatively certified and traditionally certified teachers. In addition, Denton and Peters (1988) found that students perform as well academically with teachers from either group.

The Military Career Transition Program requires that the participants complete a 20-hour classroom observation practicum in addition to a six-week student teaching experience. The student teaching experience is significantly shorter than other teacher preparation programs, thus providing fewer opportunities for participants to acquire skills in a classroom setting. In this study, the participants noted they needed those opportunities to learn classroom management skills, teaching strategies, assessment, and how to relate to students. Other programs include one or two years of paid internships with trained mentors. Studies support the need for the practical application of teaching skills through experiences like student teaching or internships (Million, 1987; Securro et al., 1989).

Finally, other programs reviewed for this study included more collaboration between higher education and public education than does the Military Career Transition Program. Through such partnerships, more opportunities to train in the classroom are possible. Because the public school division will employ the graduates, they will be more likely to provide opportunities for meaningful internships. Some other programs involved public school personnel in the screening process of candidates. They served as mentors for the interns as well.

Major Conclusion Regarding Question Four: The Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program

The Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program does not provide second-career military teachers with adequate support to make the transition from the military to the classroom throughout their first year.

Minor Conclusions Regarding Question Four: The Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program

Second-career military teachers do not benefit from the three-day pre-service workshops due to poor attendance.

Poor communications about the after school seminars adversely affects attendance. Because the seminars are optional, many second-career military teachers make little effort to attend.

Mentors are helpful in some cases; however, difficulties assigning appropriate mentors and the attitude of participants toward mentors are problems.

The Beginning Teacher Handbook, classroom observations by the instructional specialist, and the individual school orientation are somewhat beneficial to participants.

Discussion of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program

The Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program has been designed to support teachers during their first year in the Chesapeake School Division through six components: (a) a three-day

pre-service workshop, (b) a school orientation, (c) a Beginning Teacher Handbook, (d) an assigned mentor, (e) observations by instructional specialists, and (f) periodic seminars with first-year teachers. Based on the responses from the participants in this study and the confirmation from their mentors and principals, these components did not fulfill their intended purposes. The shortcomings of the program and the reasons for the shortcomings will be discussed.

The three-day pre-service orientation program held before the school year began was designed to supplement the participants' knowledge in areas where their training may have been insufficient. It was also designed to conduct administrative tasks and to provide an opportunity to meet key personnel in the school system. Recent programs have included sessions on school law and principals' expectations. Less than half of the participants found the pre-service orientation program helpful. Weather conditions caused cancellation of two of the three days for some of the participants. Others did not find the information helpful because it was repetitive. And, some were employed too late to attend.

The instructional specialists are supposed to observe each new teacher at least once during the school year. According to the personnel department, approximately 300 new teachers were employed last year. Typically, the Chesapeake School Division employees approximately 150 new teachers. There are two instructional specialists for the entire school system. These observations should occur during the first few weeks of school to help determine who will need the most support. Because some teachers were employed after the school year began, they were never on the list to be observed. The large number of new employees, the small number of personnel assigned to conduct observations, and an anticipated teacher shortage contributed to the challenge of providing meaningful observations with follow-up discussion for new teachers in the Chesapeake School Division. More than half of the participants in this study did not find the

observations helpful. Some participants gave responses to indicate the observations were helpful because they received valuable feedback.

Another aspect of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program designed to provide support for new teachers is the periodic meetings held throughout the school year. Unfortunately, most of the participants in this study did not attend. Apparently, many of them were not aware that they existed or did not know when they were scheduled. The mentors and principals also were not aware of when they were scheduled. Because these meetings were poorly communicated and attendance was apparently optional, most of the participants did not benefit from this component of the program.

A key component of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program and a resource Veenman (1984) considered to be important in preventing potentially good teachers from leaving the profession is the mentorship program. Unfortunately, four participants were never assigned a mentor. Marso and Pigge (1990) found only 27 of 75 first-year teachers were assigned a mentor. It does not appear mentors in this study spent sufficient time with the participants to develop a supportive role in their transition. Only three of the thirteen mentor-participant relationships developed sufficiently.

Mentors are assigned to new teachers by the school principal. Principals are instructed to use criteria such as years of experience, room proximity, and same subject area when determining assignments. Even though the mentor is provided a handbook, very little training is provided. There are few incentives to be a mentor and little accountability for performance as a mentor. Some participants admitted they did not meet with their mentors very often for a variety of reasons. Participants identified other individuals on the staff who helped them more. The lack of time dedicated to the mentorship, the lack of incentives and accountability, and a mismatch of

mentors with the participants are all factors that contributed to this key component not fulfilling its intended purpose.

The two components of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program identified by the participants as helpful were the school orientation and the Beginning Teacher Handbook. It is interesting to note that the primary focus of both of these components is procedures or "practical stuff." Even though the principals were not as satisfied with the school orientation, the participants found it helpful because it was practical information. This information provided them assistance in performing their duties.

In spite of these factors, approximately one half of the participants felt the Chesapeake Public School Division provided support for them during their transition. When they were asked how else the school or system could help other military personnel who become teachers, several participants felt no more needed to be done. Those who did make recommendations wanted more feedback and more practical information. The participants may have felt supported in their transition because of the cooperation and willingness of other staff members to help. Those who sought assistance received it in some fashion.

Recommendations for Practice and Research

Based upon the findings of this study, the following recommendations are presented for principals, the Chesapeake Public School Division, the Military Career Transition Program, and future researchers. Finally, considerations for policies regarding alternative certification programs are offered.

Recommendations for Principals

Second-career military teachers in this study were viable teacher candidates, especially in areas of teacher shortages. They brought diversity to schools because of their age, maturity, and

past experiences. Principals indicated that they were dedicated, hard working, and supportive staff members who were willing to accept many duties outside the classroom. Principals should continue to explore this pool of candidates as teacher recruits.

Participants did not receive adequate feedback on their performance, especially during the early part of the school year. This may have been due to several factors. One mentor suggested that principals tend to assume these second-career teachers know more than they actually do because of their age; therefore, principals provide less assistance. One participant indicated that some principals may feel intimidated by second-career teachers who were high ranking officers in the military. Others suggested that principals lack sufficient personnel to provide adequate staff to assist new teachers. Based on personal experiences, principals do not normally schedule classroom observations the first couple of months in the school year because it is believed that teachers should have time to make adjustments before the observation and evaluation process begins. Principals should consider using mentors, assistant principals, content supervisors, or other faculty members to provide second-career beginning teachers feedback through classroom observations early in the school year. It should be clear to all that this feedback will not affect the teacher's evaluation. Principals should keep in mind that second-career military teachers share many of the same problems as other new teachers. The confidence that they project may not be indicative of their level of performance.

The assignment of mentors to the participants was a problem in this study. Most participants were not satisfied with the support they received from their assigned mentor. Some were never assigned a mentor. Principals should consider creating a pool of potential mentors, then allow each new teacher to select a mentor from the pool during the first few weeks of school. If the mentor and new teacher have more input in the selection process, the relationship

may be more successful. Some participants indicated that they would have preferred to have been assigned a mentor who had also completed the Military Career Transition Program. Others indicated that they would not have preferred a former military teacher. It is not possible to match the needs of the new teacher and the strengths of the mentor if the selection occurs before the school year begins.

Recommendations for the Military Career Transition Program

Participants felt they were prepared after completing the Military Career Transition Program in most teaching components. Participants in this study were perceived to be competent in knowledge of content matter, but lacking in their knowledge of pedagogy, managing the classroom, and knowledge of how schools operate. The lack of opportunity to practice pedagogical skills and learn "nuts and bolts" was identified as a major weakness of the Military Career Transition Program. It is recommended that the program increase the amount of time allocated for student teaching or to include an internship period in cooperation with local school divisions. Required university classes could be offered on weekends and during the summer months before and after the internship. The Military Career Transition Program should collaborate with local school divisions to explore ways the program could increase opportunities for participants to learn and practice pedagogical skills in an actual classroom under the supervision of a successful, experienced teacher.

Recommendations for the Chesapeake Public School Division

The Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program did not support the participants' transition from the military to the classroom for the following reasons: Participants failed to attend many of the after school seminars because they were poorly advertised. Some participants did not believe the seminars were important because their attendance was optional. Severe weather conditions

caused the cancellation of a portion of the pre-service orientation program, thus they could not receive the full benefit of the orientation. Two instructional specialists were unable to provide meaningful classroom observations and feedback to all new teachers due to the large number of new teachers. Some second-career military teachers were not receptive to assistance. Mentors, principals, and instructional specialists did not fully understand all aspects of the program. Principals were unaware of the contents of the Beginning Teacher Handbook. Mentors were unaware of the instructional specialists' classroom observations.

It is recommended that the Chesapeake Public School Division better communicate to new teachers, mentors, and principals the in-service workshops held throughout the year. Attendance expectations should be clear to new teachers and mentors. The in-service meetings should be based on the needs of new teachers using the Beginning Teacher Handbook as a guide since it was identified as helpful to these participants.

It is also recommended that the Chesapeake Public School Division conduct a formal evaluation of the three-day orientation program to determine its effectiveness. Poor attendance of these participants does not offer adequate information to make conclusions, but there were indications that the program did not meet the needs of the participants.

A key component of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program is the use of mentors for beginning teachers. Most beginning teachers did not receive satisfactory assistance from mentors. Mentors are likely to invest a minimum of five hours per week with the new teacher. Their efforts should be fairly compensated and they should be held accountable for fulfilling their responsibilities. Principals should be encouraged to ensure all new teachers are assigned a mentor and that the mentor and new teacher relationship works to accomplish the goals of the mentorship program.

Recommendations for Further Research

As a result of this study and recent state legislation regarding alternative teacher certification programs, it is likely that changes will occur in the Military Career Transition Program. The director has indicated that the program will provide more opportunities to learn pedagogical skills in a classroom with experienced teacher mentors. A similar study should be conducted if these changes are implemented in the Military Career Transition Program to compare the results with this study. After the changes are implemented it would be helpful to know if the participants experience similar obstacles and identify the same contributing factors as they make the transition from the military to the classrooms. Comparisons of the participants' assessments of the Military Career Transition Program can be made to evaluate the effects of the changes.

Another study should include further investigation into the relationship between rank in the military and success as teachers. The interviewees in this study felt that rank in the military contributed to the transition of second-career teachers. However, they did not agree on how rank contributed to the transition. Some felt that officers made the transition to the classroom more easily than enlisted personnel, while others said that it was more difficult for officers. Some past alternative certification programs have not admitted enlisted personnel into their program because they were designed for officers only. The Military Career Transition Program was originally designed for officers, but later admitted enlisted personnel. The decision to accept enlisted personnel continues to be debated among some Military Career Transition Program faculty. Another study that examines this issue may provide data that would be helpful for future program designers.

It is recommended that a program evaluation of the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program be conducted to determine how well the needs of all beginning teachers are supported

the first year of teaching. The participants in this study indicated that the program did not support their needs as they made the transition to the classroom in their first year of teaching. The problems they identified with the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program may have been unique to this group. These participants represent a small portion of the new teachers who are employed by the school division. Furthermore, unusual circumstances occurred which caused cancellation of a significant part of the orientation program. Therefore, an evaluation of the program that includes all new teachers would give decision-makers in the Chesapeake Public School Division more information before initiating changes in the Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program.

The idea that military personnel are inflexible and rigid surfaced throughout the interviews with principals and mentors, but the second-career teachers did not view themselves in that way. This study did not attempt to discover if the these perceptions are a result of stereotyping military personnel or if miliary personnel are more inflexible and rigid than other beginning teachers. Another study should be conducted to determine if military personnel who enter teaching are more rigid than other teachers approximately the same age. Results from this study can be used with other studies which examine the effects of a teacher's flexibility or rigidity on student learning.

Alternative Certification Program Policy Considerations

The purpose of this research was not to compare the Military Career Transition Program with other alternative certification programs. However, the findings in this study, the characteristics of other programs, and the recommendations of other researchers suggest considerations for policies regarding alternative certification. It is important to attract highly qualified individuals to alternative certification programs; therefore, a screening process for acceptance into the program is essential. One criterion for admission must be related to

knowledge of content since time constraints do not allow content area courses. Once in the program participants must be given opportunities to learn pedagogy and to practice their skills under the supervision of a successful, experienced teacher. This can be accomplished through the coordinated efforts of higher education and public schools. For example, teacher advisors in the Dallas Independent School District helped select the participants in the Lateral Entry Program. Their involvement was, in part, credited for the success of the program.

Summary

Alternative certification programs are designed to address teacher shortages in critical areas such as math, science, and special education. The Military Career Transition Program is one of the largest programs in the country. Graduates from this program bring unique attributes and encounter unique obstacles as they enter the classroom. It is not only important to attract qualified candidates in these areas, appropriate steps must be taken to ensure they have a smooth transition and remain committed to the profession. To accomplish these goals, public school divisions and alternative certification programs must work together to address concerns. School personnel must be able to recognize the contributions military personnel can make without stereotyping them based on past myths. Military personnel must understand the subtle differences in the school environment and the military to make the necessary adjustments. It is critical for school leaders to encourage their staffs to accept second-career teachers and support them during their transition. It is also critical that second career-military teachers receive critical feedback to help them adjust to teaching students rather than young adults. The Beginning Teachers' Assistance Program in the Chesapeake School Division is well designed to offer support to second career military personnel who become teachers; however, they are not receiving the support that is intended through this program.