

**The Relationship between School Characteristics and Teachers' Intentions to Continue Teaching in High-Needs Schools**

by

Charlesetta Denise Robinson

A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty of  
Auburn University  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the Degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy

Auburn, Alabama  
August 6, 2016

Copyright 2016 by Charlesetta D. Robinson

Approved by

Lisa A. Kensler, Chair, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership and  
Technology

Carey Andrzejewski, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership and  
Technology

Linda Searby, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology

Joni Lakin, Associate Professor of Educational Foundations, Leadership and Technology

## Abstract

With the ever changing and global economy, the demand for effective teachers is steadily increasing. Regrettably, the problem of attracting and retaining those effective teachers presents a formidable challenge, especially for those districts that serve students of color, high-needs and from poverty. Quality teachers are essential for the successful education of our nation's children; unfortunately, recruiting and retaining quality teachers in our high- needs schools has become extremely difficult. Teacher preparation programs are graduating enough teachers to meet the demand; however, the rate of new teacher attrition reduces the supply of teachers to insufficient quantities (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004).

Quantitative methods were used to investigate the factors that influenced teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. This study also used Theory of Planned Behavior to determine how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls influenced teachers' intentions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. Additionally, this study examined whether school characteristics and school level influenced teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. "*Teacher Retention*," a questionnaire that was developed using the three constructs of Theory of Planned Behavior, was given to teachers from an urban Alabama school district. To answer the research questions descriptive statistics, simple and multiple regression, and a one-way ANOVA were used.

The results from the study indicated that there is a strong correlation between teachers' attitudes, subjective norms and perceived behavior controls and intentions. All three constructs

were considered significant. Furthermore, the multiple regression results indicated that attitudes and not subjective norms and perceived behavior controls predicted teachers' intention to continue teaching in their current position at a statistically significant level. Additionally, magnet school teachers had better attitudes than middle and secondary high school teachers towards teaching and will more than likely continue teaching in their current position.

The findings from this study can help educators better understand why teachers are leaving the profession at such an alarming rate. Although this study cannot be generalized to other school districts, it is recommended that educators use Theory of Planned Behavior as an appropriate framework to determine factors that influence teachers' retention in high-needs schools.

## Acknowledgments

“I can do all things through Christ which strengthens me” (Philippians 4:19, King James Version). I first want to thank God for giving me the strength and guidance to complete this task.

I want to extend my deepest gratitude to my committee chair, Dr. Lisa Kensler, for her extensive guidance, patience, and support during this process. Your “whoo-hoo!” responses were on point. They encouraged me to buckle down and work harder. A special thanks to my committee members, Dr. Joni Lakin, Dr. Linda Searby, and Dr. Carey Andrzejewski, and to my outside reader, Dr. Megan Burton, for your guidance. I am extremely grateful for the time, encouragement, and words of wisdom you all extended to me.

Thanks also go to my wonderful and supportive family; my mom Rose Robinson, my uncle Dr. Daniel Harrison, and my siblings, Ronald, Elvernice, and Keith for supporting and believing in me throughout this entire process. You all served as my sounding board and provided much needed encouragement whenever I felt like I wanted to give up. To my guardian angels: my dad, Charlie Robinson, Jr., my grandmother, Mary Harrison, and my Uncle George and Aunt Catherine Williams—thank you for watching over and guiding me. Gone but never forgotten.

Finally, a special thanks to my church family, Southside Church of Christ, and a host of close family and friends who continuously reminded me that it was time to finish this process. You all made sure that I stayed the course. Thank you, and it is done!

## Table of Contents

Abstract.....	ii
Acknowledgments.....	v
List of Tables .....	x
List of Figures .....	xii
Chapter I. Introduction.....	1
Statement of the Problem.....	2
Theoretical Framework.....	8
Purpose Statement.....	11
Research Questions.....	11
Significance of the Study.....	11
Definition of Terms.....	12
Chapter II. Review of Literature.....	16
Introduction.....	16
Characteristics of High-Needs Schools .....	16
No Child Left Behind.....	17
Elementary and Secondary Education Act .....	18
Every Child Succeeds Act .....	20
Alabama Accountability Act.....	21
Why Teachers Are Leaving .....	22

Poor Classroom Management .....	22
Lack of Autonomy .....	24
Poor Working Conditions .....	25
The Effects of Teacher Turnover .....	27
Significance of Effective Teachers in High-Needs Schools .....	28
Strategies to Promote Teacher Retention.....	30
Financial Incentives .....	30
Induction/Mentoring Programs .....	35
Increased Administrative Supports .....	37
Theory of Planned Behavior .....	38
Summary .....	43
Chapter III. Methodology .....	44
Research Questions .....	45
Research Design.....	45
Description of Setting .....	46
Participants and Recruitment .....	47
Description of the Instrument .....	48
Content Validity.....	52
Reliability.....	53
Data Collection Procedures.....	54
Data Analysis .....	54
Limitations .....	56
Summary.....	56

Chapter IV. Analysis and Results .....	57
Descriptive Statistics.....	57
Results of Quantitative Data .....	60
Inferential Statistics .....	61
Research Question One.....	62
Research Question Two .....	65
Research Question Three .....	69
Research Question Four.....	74
Research Question Five .....	75
School Level .....	76
School Classification .....	80
Qualitative Survey Questions .....	82
Summary.....	87
Chapter V. Discussion .....	88
Summary of the Study .....	88
Overview of the Problem .....	89
Purpose Statement and Research Questions .....	89
Review of the Methodology.....	90
Major Findings.....	91
Research Question One.....	91
Research Question Two .....	93
Research Question Three .....	94
Research Question Four.....	95

Research Question Five .....	97
School Level .....	97
School Characteristics.....	99
Implications for Action.....	101
Job Satisfaction .....	102
Working Conditions.....	102
Community Perceptions.....	103
Professional Development .....	103
Induction/Mentoring Program .....	104
Recommendation for Future Research.....	104
Conclusions.....	105
References.....	107
Appendix A Institutional Review Board (IRB) Approval.....	115



## List of Tables

Table 1	Teacher Retention Survey.....	49
Table 2	Data Analysis .....	55
Table 3	Descriptive Statistics for Questionnaire Participants.....	58
Table 4	Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Tenure Status .....	59
Table 5	Descriptive Statistics of School Level .....	60
Table 6	Descriptive Statistics of School Characteristics .....	61
Table 7	Reliability Statistics: Cronbach's Alpha for Attitudes.....	61
Table 8	Descriptive Statistics for Attitudes .....	63
Table 9	Regression Table for Attitudes .....	65
Table 10	Reliability Statistics: Cronbach's Alpha for Subject Norms .....	66
Table 11	Descriptive Statistics for Subjective Norms .....	66
Table 12	Regression Table for Subjective Norms .....	69
Table 13	Reliability Statistics: Cronbach's Alpha for Perceived Behavior Control.....	70
Table 14	Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Behavior Control .....	70
Table 15	Regression Table for Perceived Behavior Control .....	73
Table 16	Multiple Regression Table for Attitudes, Subject Norms, and Perceived Behavior Control .....	75
Table 17	Descriptive Statistics across School Level .....	77
Table 18	One-way ANOVA for School Level.....	79

Table 19	Descriptive Statistics across School Classification.....	80
Table 20	One-way ANOVA for School Classification.....	81
Table 21	Representation of Teacher Responses to Open-Ended Questions .....	83

## List of Figures

Figure 1	Theory of Planned Behavior Schematic Model .....	9
----------	--	---

## **CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION**

Recruiting and retaining good teachers for high-needs schools has become one of the most vexing problems facing many inner city and poor school districts. Researchers have examined this phenomenon and have determined that poor children and children of color will more than likely not be taught by a qualified and effective teacher (Berry, 2008). Furthermore, teacher attrition is the highest in inner city school districts that commonly serve low-income and minority students. This leads to an inequitable distribution of experienced and high quality teachers (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002). Teachers not only play an important role in schooling, but also in supporting children, especially in inner city and poor school districts where students may or may not have support at home (Ronfeldt, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2013). High-needs schools are in dire need of experienced teachers; unfortunately, it is difficult to recruit and retain quality teachers for the students who need them the most.

According to federal statistics in the Schools and Staffing Survey, 34.7% of inner city schools have difficulty hiring a math teacher compared to 25.1 % of suburban schools (Jacob, 2007). The National Council on Teacher Quality (2008) stated that although universities and colleges are graduating large numbers of prospective teachers, only 50% of the graduates actually make it into a classroom and about 46% leave within the first five years. Furthermore, 50% of the nation's veteran teachers are reaching retirement age (Carroll & Foster, 2008). As a result of attrition and resignations, schools and school districts are using more of their limited financial resources on replacing faculty and less on improving the quality of instruction. Consequently, in a declining economy, the issue of teacher retention is critical to

schools and school districts (Pucella, 2011). Therefore, it is imperative that schools and school districts develop strategies to retain teachers in high-needs schools.

The purpose of this study is to determine factors that influence teachers' intentions to continue working in high-needs schools located in an Alabama urban school district. Using the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) as the theoretical framework, this study will examine participating teachers' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls and their effect on intentions. Theory of Planned Behavior uses three constructs — attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls — to examine the likelihood of intentions (Ajzen, 1991). The TPB will be described briefly in this chapter and thoroughly discussed in Chapter 2.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Within the last decade, the concept of turning around failing schools has been thrust into the forefront of the educational arena as a result of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the name given to the 2001 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (2010). As a result of NCLB, many of the nation's schools were classified as not making adequate yearly progress or a school that is in school improvement. Then U.S. Secretary of Education, Arne Duncan, noticed an increase in the number of schools classified as schools in school improvement, he set out to improve 5,000 of the nation's persistently low-performing schools. His quest did not go unnoticed, and it sparked a debate about how this enormous task could be accomplished (Gewertz, 2009). Additionally, educators, policy makers, and community leaders called for dramatic changes to schools that have consistently failed to effectively educate large numbers of students (Murphy, 2008). To assist states with addressing these underperforming schools, the federal government set aside funds within the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, 2009). The ARRA was designed to reinvigorate the economy and included \$3.5 billion for Title I K–12 school improvement grants. For the year 2009, the budget designated \$545 million for low performing schools, and in 2010, the Obama administration requested an additional \$1.5 billion for low-performing schools

(Gewertz, 2009). Arne Duncan, then U.S. Secretary of Education, stated that in order for school districts to receive the funds, they must develop reform strategies to turn failing schools around (Gewertz, 2009). One of these strategies established a longitudinal data system that tracked students' achievements on standardized tests from kindergarten through college and linked students' testing data to individual teachers. This requirement was implemented from the extensive amount of data already collected as a result of the many mandates from NCLB. The data system now included more robust data about the teacher workforce and laid out the foundation for ultimately holding teachers more accountable for the performance of their students (Superfine, 2011).

This increased accountability had an adverse effect on the teaching profession. The federal policies contributed to teacher burnout, increased teacher stress, and affected teacher retention (Berryhill, Linney, & Fromewick, 2009). Consequently, the increased demand for accountability among teachers and administrators dictated a renewed commitment for helping children, especially those who attended schools that were classified as high-needs or underperforming. This renewed commitment fueled several initiatives to significantly overhaul those consistently underperforming schools that were regularly underperforming (Murphy, 2010). In response, school districts had to develop strategies to improve the low performing schools in order to receive Title I school improvement grants. One of the initiatives taken by some school districts included replacing the teachers and administration at the school and recruiting new school leaders and teachers. If teachers wanted to return to their positions, they would have to re-apply. Another strategy used was releasing the entire staff and creating a charter school. Additionally, schools could keep a percentage of the faculty but revamp the entire curriculum. Lastly, school districts could opt to close a school and transfer the students to a school that is making the necessary gains on standardized tests (Gewertz, 2009). These initiatives resulted in many school districts implementing a reduction in force (RIF), executing involuntary transfers, and contracts non-renewed.

Schools have an overwhelming task of preparing their students to be productive citizens that are college and career ready, and teachers play an important role in guaranteeing a school's success. The task becomes even more daunting when the school serves high-needs, low socioeconomic students and students of color. Recruiting and retaining teachers to these high-needs schools is a major problem for schools and school districts for a myriad of reasons. Retaining teachers increases student achievement, builds collegiality, and improves school climate (Ingersoll, 2001). Unfortunately, school districts are struggling to keep their most valuable assets, quality teachers.

Ylimaki, Jacobson, and Drysdale (2005) stated that low socioeconomic levels can interfere with a school's ability to effectively improve student achievement. Poverty is associated with several factors that may impede academic growth, such as poor nutrition, inadequate health services, high rates of illiteracy, and criminal behavior. Furthermore, poverty is associated with high rates of student transience, absences, and disciplinary issues. Jacob (2007) stated that the United States has made great economic gains; however, many of the nation's children remain impoverished. According to the 2015 National Center for Children in Poverty (NCCP, 2015), 16 million American children under the age of eighteen live in poverty. Most of these children have parents who work, but low wages and unstable employment leave their families struggling to make ends meet. Although it was once possible for adults to earn a productive living with only rudimentary academic skills, recent technological advances have made it increasingly difficult for adults without college degrees to find jobs that offer living wages. Today, most blue-collar jobs require knowledge of algebra, as well as sophisticated reading comprehension and problem solving skills. In this new environment of accountability, schools are being asked to provide all students with an education that was once enjoyed by only a select few (Jacob, 2007). This new and increased accountability has increased teacher stress, caused teacher burnout, and affected teacher retention.

Increased accountability and the need to improve persistently low performing schools have caused districts to examine the quality of teachers (Goldhaber, Gross, & Player 2011). Qualified teachers play an

integral role in student achievement and school quality. Inner city school districts often have difficulty finding and retaining qualified teachers (Jacob, 2007). Unfortunately, teachers leave the classroom to pursue other careers within as well as outside of education which results in the loss of experienced teachers; teachers who, on average, are more effective than novice teachers at raising student achievement (Rinke, 2008).

Furthermore, Darling-Hammond and Sykes (2003) suggested that the demand for teachers is not from a teacher shortage but from the high attrition rates of existing teachers, especially from those teachers that are within their first five years. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES, 2015) concluded that one-third of America's teaching force, of nearly 3.5 million teachers, leave their schools every year. Kersaint et al. (2007) stated that school systems are investing millions of dollars to replace teachers. Moreover, the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF, 2007) conducted a study of the cost data of yearly teacher turnovers. The report concluded that Chicago (IL) Public Schools (CPS), Milwaukee (WI) Public Schools, Granville County (NC) Schools, and Santa Rosa and Jemez Valley (NM) Public Schools were spending millions of dollars to replace and train new teachers annually. According to the NCTAF (2007), Granville County, Jemez Valley, Milwaukee, and Chicago school districts lost approximately \$47,238 for each teacher that left. The NCTAF report also concluded that Chicago spent about \$86 million per year on teacher turnover. The NCTAF reported that if Chicago Public Schools were to implement an effective retention strategy, such as a high quality induction program at a cost of \$6,000 per teacher, Chicago could reduce turnover and save millions of dollars. The study labeled this problem as the "Teacher Retention Crisis" (NCTAF, 2007). Districts lose millions of dollars on replacing teachers; money that should be spent on increasing student achievement is used for new hires.

According to Darling-Hammond (2010), recruiting and retaining good teachers should be the main priority for schools and school districts, especially in a declining economy when the issue of teacher retention is critical (Pucella, 2011). Darling-Hammond (2010) suggested that well prepared and



experienced teachers are crucial to increasing student achievement and that a teacher's experience, academic background, pre-service program, and certification matter for teacher effectiveness. Darling-Hammond (2010) also suggested that when teachers receive the necessary training and experience, they are more successful with student achievement and become a valuable resource that should be supported in order to remain effective in the classroom. As a nation, approximately 250,000 teachers are hired each year. Of these 250,000 teachers, half are first year teachers, and the remaining are teachers who have changed jobs or individuals who have returned to the profession. While it is critically important to recruit qualified teachers, it is equally, if not more important, to develop strategies to retain them, especially for inner city and poor rural school districts.

Teaching is a difficult and demanding career that requires intense commitment and dedication. Daily obstacles that teachers face include inadequate support from school administrators and parents, students with severe discipline problems, and low salaries. As a result of such harsh working conditions, many teachers chose to leave the profession (Ingersoll, 2001). Additionally, Ingersoll (2001) stated that nationally, the teaching profession has always experienced high attrition rates, especially within the first few years. Ingersoll stated that approximately 30% of new teachers left within their first five years. Moreover, the percent of attrition ran about 20% higher for those schools and school districts that served children of color and low socioeconomic students (NCTAF, 2007). The attrition rates consisted of the "movers" and "leavers." Ingersoll (2001) defined the "movers" as those who left one school district for another and the "leavers" as those who left the profession temporarily or permanently. "Leavers" and "movers" adversely affects the stability of a high-needs school (Ingersoll, 2001). Unfortunately, high-needs schools have higher levels of leavers and movers than more affluent school districts. As a result, school districts are charged to develop strategies to retain quality teachers in the schools that need them the most.

Nationally, school districts and schools are challenged to staff and retain the nation's schools with qualified teachers. Henke, Chen, and Geis (2000) reported that nationwide, less than 20% of teacher

attrition is a result of teacher retirement, and in high-needs schools the percentage is even higher. Teacher dissatisfaction with their working environments and lack of preparation/training are just a few causes of high turnover in high-needs schools. Additionally, Pucella (2011) stated that teachers leave the profession because of “lack of teacher participation in decision making, minimal career advancement opportunities, low pay, declining respect afforded to teachers by society, the attitudes of students and parents, inadequacy of administration support, and the increasingly violent nature of the school environment” (p. 52). Teachers leave the profession or school for a number of reasons and it leaves a void in the school that not only affects student achievement but also school culture.

Teacher turnovers create needless failures in student achievement and negatively affect the overall morale for students and teachers (Sawchuck, 2012). An inexperienced teacher on a temporary license hinders student achievement most. This is common in high-minority, low-income schools with ongoing teacher turnover (Freedman & Appleman, 2009). Our most vulnerable students are more than likely not being taught by an effective teacher.

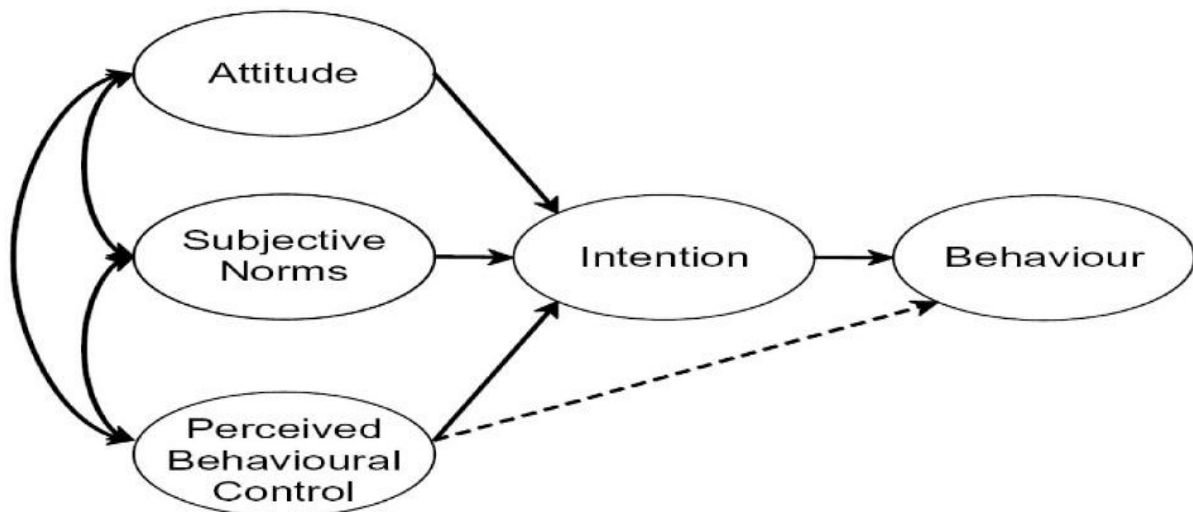
Unfortunately, a number of the nation’s schools are struggling to close the achievement gap that is so prevalent in many high-needs schools. The schools struggled because they were constantly rebuilding their teaching staff due to an inordinate amount of teacher turnover. As a result of the turnover, high-needs schools are consistently staffed with inequitable concentrations of under-prepared, inexperienced teachers who are left to fend for themselves to meet the needs of their already struggling students (NCTAF (2007). Instead of using funds for needed school improvements, schools and school districts spent money on replacing teachers that left. Research suggested that teacher effectiveness increases sharply after the first few years of teaching. Losing this valuable resource so early in the teaching profession wastes money and reduces productivity in education. Unfortunately, the districts rarely reap the benefits of their initial investments because the teachers leave within the first few years of teaching (Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2008).

## Theoretical Framework

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) is an extension of Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and is a predictive framework that “focuses on theoretical constructs concerned with individual motivational factors as determinants of the likelihood of performing a specific behavior” (Montaño & Kasprzyk, 2008, p. 68). According to Ajzen (1991), TPB is centered around three constructs: behavioral beliefs (attitudes), normative beliefs (subjective norms), and control beliefs (perceived behavior controls). Ajzen defined behavioral beliefs as factors that produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior. Secondly, subjective norms are determined by how much the person feels social pressure to do something. Thirdly, perceived control, which differentiates TRA from TPB, is whether the person feels in control of the action in question (Ajzen, 2002).

According to Ajzen (2011), the TPB has been in existence for approximately 28 years and has been one of the most frequently used theories in the prediction of human behavior. Ajzen stated that in 1985, a Google Scholar search would have resulted in 22 citations, but in 2010, the number had grown to over 4,550. Additionally, Montaño and Kasprzyk (2008) stated the TRA and TPB have been used successfully to determine “health behaviors and intentions, including smoking, drinking, health services utilization, exercise, sun protection, breastfeeding, substance use, HIV/STD-prevention behaviors and use of contraceptives, mammography, safety helmets, and seatbelts” (p. 68).

Furthermore, TPB was created as a result of TRA’s lack of attention to behaviors in which people had very little or no control over, control believes. Figure 1 is a schematic representation of TPB. Figure 1 depicts a multiple regression model. The predictive variables are attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavior control. The outcome variables are intention and behavior. The theory examines the correlations between the three constructs that predict intention and/or behavior. For the sake of this study, I will not examine the correlation between constructs (attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control) and behavior (Ajzen 2002).



Ajzen, (2002, p. 1)

*Figure 1.* Theory of Planned Behavior

Theory of Planned Behavior consists of three determinants, attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control. All three determinants are inter-correlated and are predictive of intention. For example, if the attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control are more favorable, then the individual's intention to perform the behavior under consideration is stronger. The importance of all three constructs in the prediction of intention is expected to vary across behaviors and situations. Therefore, in some instances, only attitudes have a significant impact on intentions, and in some cases, attitudes and perceived behavior control are sufficient to account for intentions. In others, all three constructs account for intentions (Ajzen, 1991). The theory has been instrumental in predicting intentions and as a result has been used in a number of fields to determine intentions.

The Theory of Planned Behavior has been used on hundreds of predictive studies and is commonly used in the medical field (Ajzen, 2011). Nevertheless, educators have recognized the theory's validity and reliability in predicting behaviors and have begun to use the theory to determine teachers' and students' intentions. Chen (2007) conducted a study using TPB to determine the likelihood of kindergarten teachers to enroll in a postgraduate program. This study was designed to determine teachers' attitudes toward the

behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control of the teachers to better understand why they would return to college to study in a graduate level program and what factors influenced their decisions. The data from this study was obtained from two sources, an elicitation study and a questionnaire. The study concluded that the three constructs of TPB accurately predicted the factors affecting kindergarten teachers' intentions, and the most powerful components to affect the teachers were attitude and perceived behavior control (Chen, 2007).

Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, and Meisels (2007) used TPB to determine the probability of a teacher's intentions to continue or resign from their present teaching position. The data from this study was obtained from an elicitation study and questionnaire. The elicitation study consisted of several open-ended questions where the responses from the questions were used to create the themes for the questionnaire. The survey questions were paired: one question dealt with presence of the belief and the other paired question dealt with the importance of the belief. The study examined each belief and determined which factors influenced a teacher's decision to continue teaching. The study concluded that family issues are the greatest concern for all teachers, and that "leavers" placed much more emphasis on the time they are able to spend with their family than "stayers." The importance assigned to all factors was influenced by demographic concerns. Unfortunately, the study did not break down the results by constraints. Consequently, the design of this study influenced the *Teacher Retention* survey.

Theory of Planned Behavior has been widely used to predict intentions and is predominantly used in health-related services to determine behaviors such as smoking, drinking, HIV/STD-prevention behaviors, exercise, sun protection, and safety helmets. After examining the research studies that have used TPB to determine intentions, I have decided to use TPB as my theoretical framework to address the research questions. The three constructs of the theory attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls will assist me in determining whether teachers intend to continue teaching at high-needs schools and to determine if school characteristics influenced their decision.

## **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to use the three constructs of Theory of Planned Behavior to examine factors that influenced teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools that are located in a central Alabama urban school district. Additionally, the study sought to examine if school levels and school characteristics influenced their decisions.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions were considered in this study.

1. Of the attitudes measured in the study, which do teachers report as important or relevant relative to their decision to leave or stay in their current teaching position?
2. Of the subjective norm measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current teaching position?
3. Of the perceived behavior control measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current teaching position?
4. To what extent do attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control relate to teachers' intentions to remain in the profession?
5. What are the contextual factors across which teachers' attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavior control, and intentions differ across school level and school classification?

## **Significance of the Study**

A major challenge facing inner city schools is retaining qualified teachers. According to the National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF), teacher attrition problems cost the nation approximately \$7 billion annually for recruitment, administrative processing and hiring, professional development, and training of replacement teachers (NCTAF, 2007). To address this phenomenon, Kersaint et al (2007) examined factors that influenced teachers' retention and resignation, which was the catalyst for this dissertation work. The Kersaint et al. study surveyed teachers who had left the profession, while this

study surveyed teachers who were currently teaching. This study is significant because it helps fill a gap in research by applying a conceptual framework to explore factors that influence teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. Furthermore, Phillips (2015) posited that there was significant amount of research addressing why teachers leave the teaching profession; however, there is limited research describing what factors encouraged them to continue teaching in their current teaching position. The findings from this study will assist schools and school districts develop and promote more effective strategies for recruiting and retaining expert teachers to high-needs schools.

## Definition of Terms

**Achievement Gap** – The disparity in academic achievement that exists between two populations of students, as evidenced by standardized test scores.

**Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP)** – Minimum level of improvement school districts must achieve each year with respect to the growth rate in the percentage of students who achieve the state’s definition of academic proficiency (Fusarelli, 2004, pg. 73).

**Behavioral Intention** – Perceived likelihood of performing the behavior (Montaño & Kasprsyk, 2008).

**Behavioral Belief (Attitude)** – Factors that produce a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward the behavior (Ajzen, 2003).

**Charter School** – A form of school choice that offers most of the advantages of school voucher without sacrificing the benefits of government oversight and are run by for-profit organizations. They operate without the constraints of regular public schools which allows them the freedom of educational approaches (Hanushek, Kain, Rivkin, & Branch, 2007).

**Classroom Management** – Discipline and handling student behaviors (Allen, 2010).

**Exit Attrition** – Those who left teaching altogether—that is retired, returned to school, stayed at home with young children, or took nonteaching positions in education (counselor, administration) (Billingsley, 2004).

**Disaggregate** – The breakdown of data according to the different subgroups (ethnicity, special education, English-language, and economically disadvantaged (Fusarelli, 2004).

**High-Poverty/Urban School** – Schools with approximately 50% or more of the students on free or reduced lunch, located within a greater urban metropolitan area (Freedman & Appleman, 2009).

**Leavers** – Teachers who leave classroom teaching (Freeman & Appleman, 2009).

**Movers** – Teachers who leave their classroom for another (Freedman & Appleman, 2009).



**Novice Teacher** – A teacher that is within the first three years of the profession (Pogodzinski, 2013).

**No Child Left Behind** – A 2002 landmark law that mandated education reform designed to improve student achievement. Its main purpose is to ensure that all children have a fair, equal, and significant opportunity to obtain a high quality education.

**Perceived Behavior Control** – Whether the person feels in control of their actions (Ajzen, 2003).

**Persistently Failing Schools** – Elementary and secondary schools that do not meet the state's reading/language and mathematics annual measurable achievement objectives (AMOs) at a proficient level, over a three-year period, for all the students group attending a full academic year.

**Retention** – Teachers who remained in the same teaching assignment and the same school as the previous year (Billingsley, 2004).

**School Classification** – Refers to whether a school is magnet or traditional.

**School Failure** – A school that does not demonstrate AYP in improving academic performance.

**School Level** – Refers to whether a school is elementary, middle, or high school.

**Stayers** – Teachers who remain in the same school for one year to the next (Freedman & Appleman, 2009).

**Subject Norm** – Determined by how much the person feels social pressure to do something (Ajzen, 2003).

**Teach for America (TFA)** – A program that was founded in 1989 by Wendy Kopp, a student at Princeton University. The program aims to address teacher shortages by sending graduates from elite colleges, most of whom do not have a background in education, to teach in low-income rural and urban schools for a two-year commitment (Darling-Hammond et al., 2005).

**Teacher Autonomy** – Making classroom decisions and participating in schoolwide decision making (Ladd, 2008).

**Teacher Empowerment** – A process whereby school participants develop the competence to take charge of their own growth and resolve their own problems (Ladd, 2008).

## **CHAPTER II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this review of literature is to discuss and critique the research related to teacher retention and to determine factors that influence teachers' decisions to remain or leave high-needs schools. This review of literature will explore existing research that is pertinent to teacher retention in a central Alabama high-needs school district. The review of literature will (1) define the characteristics of high-needs schools, (2) discuss factors related to teachers' attrition, (3) examine the characteristics of effective teachers, (4) investigate efficacious strategies used to retain teachers in high-needs schools, and (5) describe how the Theory of Planned Behavior can be used to learn about teachers' intentions to stay or leave their current teaching position.

### **Characteristics of High-Needs Schools**

However, schools that service poor and minority students often employ teachers with low qualifications and weak academic credentials to teach a disproportionate number of low income and at-risk students. These teachers have difficulties in the classroom and often leave the teaching profession or transfer to less arduous teaching assignments (Buddin & Zamarro, 2009). According to Berryhill, Linney, and Fromewick (2009), often times inner city, students of color, English Language Learners (ELL), and low socioeconomic students score significantly lower on standardized tests than their suburban counterparts. These test scores highlight the disparities that exist between certain groups in the areas of reading and math (Buddin & Zamarro, 2009). To address the disparities and inequalities that exist in many high-needs schools, the federal and state governments passed several legislations that addressed the prevalent achievement gaps between the different sub groups. The federal government passed the No Child Left

Behind Act of 2001, which became known as the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 2010, and is now referred to as Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) of 2015. Furthermore, the state of Alabama passed the Alabama Accountability Act of 2013 (AAA, 2013). These new federal and state laws established more stringent accountability measures that not only effected student achievement, but teacher recruitment and retention as well (Boyd et al., 2008).

### **No Child Left Behind**

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) was designed to improve the academic performance of American children by insuring that all students had access to highly qualified teachers (Berryhill, Linney, & Fromewick, 2009). Unfortunately, NCLB had a negative effect on teacher retention and resulted in excessive teacher burnout and increased teacher stress levels, especially in those schools that served low-socioeconomic children and children of color. NCLB defines a high-needs school as one that is

(a) located within an urban or rural area in which more than 30% of the student population comes from families with income levels below the poverty line, or (b) within the top 25% of a state's schools as ranked by the number of unfilled teaching positions, or (c) located within urban or rural areas with relatively high percentages of teachers who are not certified or licensed, who teach out of field, or teach in schools with higher teacher turnover rates. (Public Education Network, 2011)

According to the U.S. Department of Education, after the implementation of NCLB, the number of schools classified as a school in school improvement or turnaround increased dramatically due to their failure to increase student achievement in the areas of reading and math. As a result, districts were mandated to develop a corrective action plan, which included, but was not limited to, replacing the school's entire administrative staff or restructuring the school itself by replacing the entire staff and changing the curriculum.

Kutash et al. (2009) stated that the number of failing schools were increasingly on the rise and had become a major problem as a result of NCLB. During the 2008–2009 school year, the number of failing

schools rose approximately 26% from the previous year. Furthermore, in 2010, the U.S. reported an additional 5,000 failing schools which served an estimated 2.5 million students. Students attending those failing schools were typically high-poverty students and students of color (Kutash et al, 2009).

NCLB had caused school districts to examine how it serviced minority and disadvantaged students and forced school districts to develop strategies to address their weaknesses. However, the law caused many school districts that would normally be considered high achieving to now be classified as low achieving. For example, Durant Road Middle School, which is located in Wake County, NC, was considered a school of excellence and was chosen as a model school for others to watch and emulate. However, the school failed to meet AYP goals under the NCLB in the areas of reading and math for English Language Learners. Durant met 27 of 29 (93%) of its AYP goals; therefore, the school is classified as a failure. Consequently, if the school were to fail to make AYP the following year, students have the right, under the guidelines of NCLB, to transfer to a performing school (Hui 2003).

Another example of the effects of the federal policy is King Philip Middle School in West Hartford, Connecticut. King Philip is a former blue ribbon school that was classified as failing under the provisions of NCLB. According to the school's test results, 80% of its students demonstrated proficiency and above-proficiency in math and 88% of its students scored proficiency and above-proficiency in reading. Unfortunately, the special education population did not meet proficiency on the math portion of Connecticut's Mastery Test, and as a result, King Philip Middle School did not meet AYP and was classified as a failing school (Moreau, 2003). This new classification affected teachers' intentions and caused many to transfer to less arduous schools and school districts.

### **Elementary and Secondary Education Act**

NCLB maintained many of the original goals of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) by providing schools serving disadvantaged children with the necessary funds to assist with student achievement. Unfortunately, many mandates of NCLB made it difficult for school districts to

implement school reform and implement innovations. To assist school districts with the much needed school reform, the federal government, in March 2010, began the process of reauthorizing ESEA which gave school districts the flexibility needed to create school reform. ESEA flexibility focused on supporting state and local reform efforts in the three critical areas:

- a) Transitioning to college-career-ready standards and assessments.
- b) Developing systems of differentiated recognition, accountability, and support.
- c) Evaluating teacher and principal effectiveness and supporting improvement.

ESEA's flexibility provided states with an opportunity to be released from certain requirements of NCLB. In addition, schools labeled as "needs improvement" under NCLB would be more fairly judged through a focus on standards and school progress (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

Under the new provisions of ESEA, states would no longer have to set targets that required all students to be proficient by 2014, as was originally the plan of NCLB. ESEA allowed states to have the flexibility of developing an achievement test that focused on student growth. Additionally, a state would have the flexibility to establish ambitious but achievable goals in reading and math to support student achievement. States would also be granted flexibility regarding district and school improvement and accountability requirements. School districts and schools would receive some relief from the part of NCLB that categorized schools as "failing." Under the ESEA flexibility, states would have the flexibility to design a system targeting schools that consistently performed poorly on state standardized tests and had the largest achievement gaps per subgroups. In other words, schools could tailor interventions to the unique needs of the school, district, and students. According to Arne Duncan (2009), the benefits of ESEA flexibility were that it allowed school districts the ability to measure student growth in critical thinking to ensure better teaching and greater student engagement across a well-rounded curriculum. It also created a collaborative learning culture where teachers could direct their instruction towards the needs of the students.

Additionally, ESEA provided greater flexibility for districts to tailor solutions to their unique educational

challenges of their students. Finally, the law included provisions for teacher recruitment and retention for hard to staff schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2009).

### **Every Child Succeeds Act**

In December 2015, the federal government passed the Every Child Succeeds Act (ECSA) that replaced ESEA. The new law:

1. Ensures that states set higher standards to guarantee that students are college and career ready when they graduated from high school.
2. Maintains accountability by ensuring that strategies are put in place for those students who fall behind. The focus will be placed on the lowest performing five percent of schools, high schools with high dropout rates, and schools with struggling sub groups.
3. Empowers state and local decision-makers to allow school districts to develop their own systems for improving student achievement.
4. Preserves annual assessments and reduces the burden of excessive testing on students and teachers; ensures that teachers can and cannot teach to the test.
5. Provides more children access to high quality preschool.
6. Establishes new resources that will spur reform and will increase opportunities for students to achieve academically. ([www.ed.gov/essa?src=feature](http://www.ed.gov/essa?src=feature))

The effects of this piece of legislation on teacher recruitment and retention are unknown at this time; however, it included incentives for educators who teach in high-needs schools. There is not any evidence as to how ECSA will affect teacher retention. Title II of the bill addresses preparing, training, and recruiting high-quality teachers, principals, or other school leaders for low performing schools.

## **Alabama Accountability Act**

The Alabama Accountability Act (AAA) of 2013, since modified in 2015, created accountability measures for the state of Alabama and as a result, redefined what constitutes a failing school. According to the AAA, a failing school is any school that:

- Does not primarily service students with special needs.
- Has been listed in the lowest six percent of public schools on the state's annual standardized test in reading and math.
- During the most recent three years, received a grade of "F," or during the most recent four years, received at least three grades of "D" on the school's grading system.

The Alabama Accountability Act afforded parents the option of transferring their child from a failing school to a non-failing school, public or private. The child could transfer to any non-failing school that would accept him/her (ACT 2015-434, p.7).

No Child Left Behind, Elementary and Secondary Education Act, Every Child Succeeds Act, and Alabama Accountability Act of 2013 were designed to force schools and school districts to re-examine how they educated their most underserved students and to create strategies to improve student achievement. These federal and state policies significantly impacted high-poverty and low-achieving schools by affecting funding and imposing sanctions. These sanctions included possible reorganization and school closures if students did not make significant gains on standardized achievement tests (Santoro, 2011). Regardless of the long standing challenges that teachers are faced with on a daily basis, these federal policies have affected public schools' classrooms in ways previously unimaginable (Kukla-Aceveda, 2009). Teachers are leaving the profession in droves. Furthermore, these policies have made it difficult for school districts and schools to recruit and retain veteran high-quality teachers for our most vulnerable students. Few people enjoy working in persistently failing schools, especially under a system that fails to recognize or reward real progress with those students who are the most difficult and underserved. Federal and state policies have



developed criteria that identified high-needs schools, and the following section will discuss research on why teachers are leaving.

### **Why Teachers Are Leaving**

Teachers today experience greater professional opportunities than their predecessors and are more likely to perceive career paths as fluid, which results in less commitment to a particular occupation. Therefore, many teachers leave teaching careers for other opportunities, and the attrition rate for beginning teachers is consistently increasing (Klassen & Chiu, 2011). High rates of teacher turnover have made it difficult for schools to attract and develop effective teachers, and as a result, low-income children and children of color who attend hard-to-staff schools are routinely taught by novice, uncertified, and ineffective teachers (Clotfelter, Ladd, Vigdor, & Wheeler, 2007). Efforts to solve these staffing problems have focused primarily on recruiting veteran and effective teachers to high-poverty schools. Unfortunately, these efforts did not address supporting and retaining them once the contract is signed (Ingersoll & May, 2011). Consistent teacher turnover in high-needs schools made sustained academic improvement an extraordinary challenge (Allensworth et al., 2009). Research has suggested that teachers are leaving due to poor classroom management, lack of autonomy, and poor working conditions (Boe, Cook, & Sunderland, 2008). Poor classroom management has adversely affected teacher retention in high-needs schools.

#### **Poor Classroom Management**

Today's educators face a myriad of challenges in their efforts to educate children, and those challenges influence their decisions to continue to teach or leave the teaching profession all together. Allen (2011) posited that schools have gone through a number changes in the name of school reform, changes that include increased accountability with high-stakes testing, which has placed student academic achievement at the top of the list of challenges. However, there are other problems that deserve the same amount of attention, one being classroom management.

Efforts to help students become proficient in reading, writing, math, science and other academic areas are frequently conducted under conditions that are counterproductive to learning. Teachers face the challenging task of educating students whose behavior is a serious impediment to their own learning as well as that of others (Springer, 2006). Students' negative behaviors interfere with learning, divert administrative time, and contribute to teacher attrition (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010). The type of behaviors teachers experience on a daily basis include, but are not limited to, bullying, horseplay, disobedience and disrespect, class cutting, cursing, sexual harassment, fighting, and vandalism. Unfortunately, these behaviors are more prevalent in high-need schools. As a result of these conditions, many teachers deem high-need schools less desirable and will transfer to a more desirable school or leave the profession all together (Ladd, 2011).

Improving the ability of teachers to effectively manage classroom behavior requires a systematic approach to teacher preparation and ongoing and relevant professional development. Ongoing professional development in classroom management is essential for all teachers but especially for new teachers. Effectively managing the classroom is extremely difficult for new teachers who may not have received sufficient training and who may be assigned to classes with large percentages of at-risk students. Consequently, the novice teacher becomes overwhelmed by the needs and often unpredicted disruptive behaviors of the students. As a result of the behaviors, the teacher becomes more reactive instead of proactive and will more than likely respond to a student's inappropriate behavior by removing the student from instruction. Thus, students who are already at-risk for poor academic performance receives less instruction and fall further behind. Subsequently, the students' minor behavioral problems escalate and are more likely to be inappropriately referred for special education services. Additionally, Allen (2011) stated that students with disabilities are significantly more likely to be suspended than students without disabilities and students with emotional and behavior disorders are suspended at more than four times the rate of students in other disability categories (Wagner et al., 2005).

Additionally, the ability of teachers to organize classrooms and manage the behavior of their students is critical to achieving positive educational outcomes and improving teacher retention. Although sound behavior management does not guarantee effective instruction, it establishes the environmental context that makes good instruction possible. Unfortunately, teachers today experience more stress than earlier generations of teachers due to the diversity of student populations and decreasing levels of parental involvement and responsibilities. Teachers in these situations may feel as if they have added responsibilities, a more difficult workload, and less support from the students' parents. This combination of problems may increase the likelihood of burnout, transfer, and may result in the teacher leaving the profession (Springer, 2014).

### **Lack of Autonomy**

The lack of teacher autonomy is another factor that influences teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. Teacher autonomy is referred to as the ability to affect school policies and practices. Boyd et al. (2011) stated that teachers derive greater satisfaction from their work and are more likely to continue teaching when they perceive themselves to have autonomy in what they teach and how they teach. Teachers are also more likely to stay in schools where they have the opportunity to contribute to schoolwide decisions. These decisions may include scheduling, selection of materials, and professional development. Paradoxically, due to the proliferation of standardized testing, there is increased governmental control over education in the name of school improvement and raising standards (Smethem, 2007). This top down approach has significantly reduced the amount of teachers' autonomy, thus creating a group of skilled technicians instead of educators. This approach to education has greatly decreased teacher autonomy, and as a result, teachers have begun to transfer to less arduous teaching assignments or leave the profession all together (Boyd et al., 2011). Additionally, Allensworth et al. (2009) conducted a study in Chicago with 50,000 public school teachers and determined that teachers are more likely to stay in schools where they have influence over school decisions.

## Poor Working Conditions

Teacher Follow-up Survey (TFS, 2010) and Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS, 2009) revealed that working conditions play an integral role in teachers' decisions to transfer to another school/district or leave the profession all together. There are significant differences in the amount of support teachers receive in schools serving students from low-socioeconomic households versus those from more affluent households (Darling-Hammond, 2010). Teachers who teach in more affluent communities' experience less arduous working conditions, including smaller class sizes and pupil loads, nicer facilities, parent support, collegiality within the school, and greater influence over school decisions (Murnane & Steele, 2007). Working conditions that are ideal for a novice teacher. Furthermore, Ladd (2011) posited that teachers' working conditions should include collegiality at the workplace and there should be a positive and respectful relationship between administrators, teachers, students, and parents. Unfortunately, teachers in high-needs schools work in isolation and receive minimal support from administration and parents. This type of working environment contradicts research, which suggests collaboration among teachers has positive effects on student performance. Consequently, schools are more attractive to teachers when they are structured for creative collegial work under an effective principal (Johnson, 2006). Additionally, inadequate facilities and resources are also likely to reduce a teacher's willingness to stay in a high-needs school. When facilities are unsafe or are badly configured for teaching and learning, or when teachers do not have access to sufficient supplies, teachers are likely to feel unsupported and less successful than they otherwise would be (Ladd, 2011). As a result, teachers will more than likely transfer to schools or school districts where they feel supported.

Moreover, the National Educational Association (2007) stated that within the first five years, an average of 50% of teachers leave the urban school through resignations or transfers. Andrews, Gilbert, and Martin (2007) stated that historically, the first year of teaching is usually difficult because of a myriad of conditions:

1. teachers are assigned to the most challenging teaching assignments;
2. teachers have multiple preparations;
3. teachers receive inadequate professional support and feedback;
4. teachers have insufficient materials and supplies;
5. teachers realize few opportunities for collaboration;
6. teachers have underdeveloped teaching skills; and
7. teachers are provided insufficient planning time.

Teachers and principals often underestimated the complexity of teaching, and as a result, new teachers do not receive the necessary emotional support or information on policies and procedures needed to perform their job successfully (Andrews et al., 2007).

Across the United States, approximately half a million teachers leave their school each year. When given the opportunity, teachers oftentimes will choose to leave schools serving large concentrations of poor, low-performing, and non-White students (Boyd et al., 2011). According to Ingersoll and Smith (2003) between 40–50 percent of all beginning teachers leave the teaching profession after five years. The consistent loss of teachers is likely to create a teacher shortage, especially at a time when the student population is growing. A shortage of this magnitude will be compounded by the retirement of the baby boomer generation (Tickle, Chang, & Kim, 2011). Several studies on teacher retention have been conducted and have suggested teachers left the profession for a multitude of reasons and some of those reason are – lack of classroom management, lack of administrative support, decreased teacher autonomy, and poor working conditions (Darling-Hammond, 2010). School working conditions, such as facilities, student behavior, and accountability, play an integral role in a school’s ability to recruit and retain quality teachers.

## **The Effects of Teacher Turnover**

Berry et al. (2010) posited that teachers make the greatest impact on student achievement. Boyd et al. (2008) estimated that effective teachers can increase student achievement by up to 50 percent. Unfortunately, high-poverty and high-minority schools are disproportionately assigned teachers who are new to the profession. Moreover, students in high-needs schools are assigned novice teachers almost twice as often as students in low-poverty schools. Additionally, students in high-needs schools are normally assigned teachers that are “out-of-field” and lacked a major or minor in the subject they teach (Boyd et al., 2008).

Ronfeldt et al. (2013) suggested that there are two effects of teacher turnover: compositional and disruptive. Compositional turnover is defined as having a direct effect on student achievement. Compositional turnover can have a positive or a negative effect on student achievement. For example, when teachers leave and their replacements are better than the teacher that left, than the compositional effect is positive. However, if a veteran teacher leaves and is better than the replacement teacher, than the compositional effect is negative. Compositional explanations assume that students benefit when their school hires teachers that are more effective than the ones that transferred out. The overall effect of teacher turnover depends on the resulting distribution in effectiveness of individual teachers. If the veteran teachers that transferred out are equally as effective as those who replaced them, then there is no effect of turnover. Therefore, turnovers’ effects are driven only by “leavers” and their replacements. The students of teachers who stay in the same school from one year to the next are unaffected by the turnover (Ronfeldt et al., 2013). Unfortunately, compositional turnover is more prevalent in high-needs schools and negatively affects student achievement.

The next effect of teacher turnover is disruptive turnover. According to Ronfeldt et al. (2013), disruptive turnover may have an adverse effect on the organization that extends beyond that of teachers, students, and replacement teachers. In this instance, all members of the community and the transferring

teachers are affected by the turnover. Disruptive turnovers can impact student achievement even when the replacement teacher is as effective as the veteran teacher (Ronfeldt et al. 2013). When teachers leave schools, the quality of relationships and trust that once existed among colleagues, students, and community members have been disrupted and as a result, affects student achievement and/or changed the school climate. Moreover, when teachers leave schools, previously held relationships are often times negatively altered. The relationships have changed so that the turnover disrupts the formation and maintenance of staff cohesion and community trust, which in turn affects student achievement. Guin (2004) posited that teacher turnover does have a negative effect on faculty interactions and school climate. Hanselman, Grigg, Brush, and Gamoran (2011) indicated that teacher and principal turnover have a disruptive effect on staff collegiality, community, and trust within a school. The turnover is even more detrimental in high-needs schools and can negatively affect student achievement.

Ingersoll and Perda (2011) have suggested teacher turnover is relatively high when compared to other professions. Turnovers in education have outpaced lawyers, engineers, architects, and pharmacists. Several studies have indicated that between 40–50% of novice teachers leave the profession within the first five years (Ingersoll, 2003). Additionally, Ingersoll and Perday (2010) have suggested that a major contributor for this high turnover is lack of support from their administration. Research on the significance of effective teachers follows in the next section.

### **Significance of Effective Teachers in High-Needs Schools**

Inner city school districts face challenges that are uncommon to suburban and more affluent school districts. Inner city school districts often have a disproportionate number of low-income, at-risk students and children of color. Often times, these students are the majority in some schools and neighborhoods. As a result of this, these at-risk students become isolated or have very little to no interaction with more affluent peers (Buddin & Zamarro, 2009). Another challenge these school districts face is lack of qualified teachers. Teachers prefer to work near their homes, so they gravitate towards more affluent suburbs or wealthier

neighborhoods in urban districts. Unfortunately, this forces inner city school districts and schools in low-income urban neighborhoods to employ teachers with low qualifications and weak academic credentials to instruct disproportionate numbers of low income, at-risk students and children of color (Murnane & Steele, 2007). The repercussions of ineffective teachers go beyond the classroom. If districts and schools continue to employ poor and ineffective teachers for their at-risk students, the students will have limited opportunities for achievement in a technological economy (Buddin & Zamarro, 2009).

According to Hanushek (2007), high quality teachers are imperative to student achievement. The author suggests that the average gains in classrooms, even classrooms within a particular school, can vary. High quality, effective teachers have consistently shown tremendous academic gains in student achievement year after year in comparison to ineffective teachers in a particular subject area or grade-level. The gains, in many situations, could range anywhere from one and a half years to half a year. The author gives an example of two students who enter the same grade-level in August in different classrooms. They had vastly different academic outcomes as a result of which teacher they were assigned. Therefore, if a student has had several years of bad teachers, then it may or may not be possible for the student to recover academically. Hamushek (2011) posited that there is no other school factor that is as integral to student achievement than qualified and effective teachers (Hanushek, 2011). Unfortunately, schools that service high-needs students have difficulty retaining effective teachers. A number of studies have been conducted stressing the importance of effective teachers in high-needs schools.

Guin (2004) conducted a survey of 66 elementary schools located in an urban school district. Guin's study focused on the relationship between teacher turnover and student achievement on standardized tests in the areas of math and reading. The study concluded that schools with higher turnover have lower academic achievement. Also, according to a study conducted by Ronfeldt et al. (2013), researchers and policy makers concluded that teacher turnover was detrimental to student achievement, caused a loss of financial resources, and affected the continuity of the school. Consequently, some turnover is beneficial. It



can result in better job matches and an infusion of new and different ideas. However, poor job matches can influence teachers' decision to transfer or resign. As a result, it is imperative that school districts develop strategies to promote the right teachers for high-needs schools and then develop strategies to retain them.

### **Strategies to Promote Teacher Retention**

According to Ingersoll and Strong (2011), new teachers do not receive the necessary support and guidance that is common in many blue- and white-collar professions. Traditionally, the work of a teacher is commonly done in isolation from other co-workers. Oftentimes, this type of isolation is extremely difficult for novice teachers, specifically those who are forced to work without guidance and assistance.

Additionally, for the teachers who are assigned to the most difficult schools and or classrooms, isolation is extremely challenging. As a result of this isolation, Ingersoll (2006) refers to teaching as an occupation that “cannibalizes its young” (Ingersoll, 2006, p. 140). To curve teacher attrition, many districts have begun to provide financial incentives, incorporate induction/mentoring programs, and increase administrative supports.

#### **Financial Incentives**

According to Freedman and Appleman (2009), our nation's high-poverty and urban schools are in dire need of dedicated and experienced teachers who are willing to commit to these demanding schools long enough to make a significant difference in student achievement and schools' cultures. There is little debate about the need for the experienced teachers; however, there is a tremendous amount of disagreement regarding how to most effectively recruit, train, and retain teachers to effectively serve the most underserved students. To assist with recruiting and retaining, many schools and school districts have begun to offer financial incentives. Incentives include signing bonuses, retention bonuses, and housing incentives (Steele, Murnan, & Willett, 2010) attempting to encourage experienced teachers to teach in high-needs schools.

Podgursky and Springer (2011) concluded that during the 2006–2007 school year, schools in the United States spent around \$197 billion on salaries and \$64 billion on benefits for instructional personnel and recruiting and retaining the most effective teachers (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). Salaries account for about 55% of current K–12 expenditures and approximately 90% of instructional expenditures (Clark, 2009). Teacher compensation had four different components: base pay, supplements, benefits, and deferred compensation. These four components are:

1. Base Pay, including a salary pay schedule that had grown from generations of collective bargaining and agreements.
2. Supplements, including base pay that is augmented by salary supplement (e.g. coach for an athletic team, mentor for novice teachers, department head and etc.).
3. Benefits, including health insurance and paid leave.
4. Deferred Compensation, including retirement packages.

The purpose of an effective compensation package is to recruit, retain, and motivate highly qualified teachers to inner city schools or rural schools or school districts. Unfortunately, the current salary scale has been described as “a mix of policies reflecting diverse stakeholder preferences, legislative tinkering, and legacies from earlier vintages of employment contracts” (Podgursky & Springer, 2011, p. 166). Furthermore, single salary schedules for teachers differ greatly from pay practices of most other professions where merit or performance-related pay is the norm. For example, the pay of doctors and nurses vary depending on the area of specialty (Folland et al., 2006). Likewise, in higher education, large differences in salary exist between faculties by teaching field (Ehrenberg, 2004). The training, working conditions, and non-teaching opportunities for higher education teachers differ greatly by teaching field and school; however, the pay schedule within most K–12 public schools treat all teachers the same, regardless of field and school characteristic (Podgursky & Springer, 2011).

A number of inner city school districts in the United States are experiencing difficulty with staffing and retaining high quality teachers (Milanowski et al., 2009), particularly in the areas of science, math, and special education where it is extremely difficult to find and retain high quality teachers (Clotfelter et al., 2008). The shortages of qualified teachers in those key areas present a number of obstacles for schools and school districts that serve large numbers of low-income and low-performing students. The student achievement gap that is prevalent in many inner city school districts can be attributed to the inequitable distribution of high quality of teachers across school districts. Unfortunately, teachers view the low performing schools as less attractive and prefer to teach in schools with more advantaged and higher-performing students (Clotfelter et al. 2008). The effective teachers prefer to teach in less arduous schools.

A majority of inner city public schools differ in attractiveness as places to teach. Schools with a higher concentration of low-income, non-white, and low-performing students are perceived as less desirable places to teach. Regrettably, veteran teachers or those with more seniority tend to transfer to more affluent schools. The teachers who transfer to more affluent schools contribute greatly to the disparities in quality teachers across the districts. As a result, restrictive contracts/teacher unions put low-income and low-performing schools at a disadvantage in the competition for teachers and resources within school districts (Moe, 2009). To combat this trend, many school districts have begun to offer pay incentives to attract and retain high-quality teachers in hard-to-staff inner city schools (Murphy & DeArmond, 2003). Additionally, recent federal initiatives, such as the Teacher Incentive Fund, the Race to the Top Fund, and School Improvement Grants (SIG) encourage states, districts, and schools to adopt economic incentive policies to address teacher staffing challenges. The incentive policies recommended by different federally-funded initiatives, increases teachers' salaries by offering salary supplements and other benefits that reward teachers over and above their regular pay, if they decide to teach in high-needs schools. It is thought that the policies will increase and differentiate teachers' salaries in ways that affect their decisions about whether and where to teach (Kolbe & Struck, 2012).

Several studies have investigated the effectiveness of financial incentives on teacher retention and student achievement. Steele, Murnane, and Willett (2010) examined California's teacher incentive program, Clotfelter et al. (2008) examined North Carolina's program, and Goodman and Turner (2013) studied the New York City program. The first study that will be addressed is the California's Governor's Teaching Fellowship (GTF), which is a \$20,000 conditional scholarship that was designed to attract and retain novice teachers to teach in the states' lowest performing schools for at least four years. California awarded approximately 245 scholarships in 2001 and 945 scholarships in 2002. No scholarships were granted in 2003 because the program was discontinued due to financial costs. The recipients were awarded the full amount prior to graduation. However, if the student failed to teach in a low performing school for the required time frame, the teacher was required to pay GTF \$5,000 per year for not fulfilling his/her portion of the contract. A total of 1,190 students received the bonuses, and the researchers noted that at the end of the 2004–2005 school year, roughly 61% of the GTF recipients continued to teach in low-performing schools. Approximately 39% could not be located. The researchers concluded that the GTF was an ambitious policy initiative that did attract teachers to the states' lowest performing schools; unfortunately, researchers did not observe any difference in retention rates between recipients and non-recipients (Steele, Murnane & Willett, 2010). According to the California study, money is not necessarily an incentive to encourage teacher retention.

Another study conducted was the North Carolina \$1,800 Teacher Bonus Program (Clotfelter et al., 2008). The Bonus Program offered math, science, and special education teachers a yearly bonus of \$1,800 to teach in a middle or high school that serviced low-income or low-performing students. The premise behind the program was good; however, eligibility requirements were complicated and many districts had difficulty implementing the program. As a result, the Bonus Program was weakened and its potential effectiveness in teacher recruitment and retention was minimal. Furthermore, the researchers noted that teachers and principals felt that \$1,800 was too small an amount to encourage significant changes in

teachers' behaviors. Nonetheless, the program did increase teacher turnover rates by 17%. Additionally, within the first year of implementation 2001–2002, the bonus made up about four to five percent of the eligible teachers' salary, which suggested that even modest financial gains influenced teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools (Clotfelter et al., 2008).

Moreover, the United Federation of Teachers implemented another teacher incentive program. Between the 2007–2008 and the 2009–2010 school year, the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) and the New York City Department of Education (DOE) implemented a teacher incentive program in over 200 high-needs schools. The New York City Bonus distributed approximately \$75 million to roughly 20,000 teachers. Each participating school could earn \$3,000 for every UFT-represented staff member, and the school could distribute the money at its own discretion. The only qualification was that the school met its annual performance goal that was set by the DOE. The school would receive \$1,500 for each UFT staff member if the school met 75% of its annual performance goal. However, Goodman and Turner (2013) concluded that providing financial incentives to teachers did not increase student achievement in any way nor did it affect teacher behavior as it pertains to teacher retention in a district or to a particular school.

Furthermore, many school districts have begun to offer targeted assistance programs to help schools fill difficult teaching assignments. Targeted assistance programs are loan forgiveness programs or scholarships aimed to attract high quality teachers to undesired schools (Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002). The U.S. Legislature introduced loan forgiveness programs in 1998. Legislation allows \$5,000 of an individual's federal Stafford Loans to be forgiven at the end of a five-year teaching assignment in a low-income, low-achieving school. Additionally, in 2004 Congress passed the Taxpayer-Teacher Protection Act, which raised the maximum Stafford Loan forgiveness allowance to \$17,500 for teachers of mathematics, science, or special education (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Finally, Congress passed the Higher Education Reconciliation Act of 2006, which made the loan forgiveness amount increases permanent (Spellings, 2006). Financial incentives encouraged some teachers to continue teaching in high-

needs schools; however, it should not be the only strategy used to retain teachers once they arrive. In addition to financial incentives, schools and school districts should also incorporate a productive induction/mentoring program for novice teachers.

### **Induction/Mentoring Programs**

The implementation of induction/mentoring programs is another strategy schools and school districts used to improve teacher retention in high-needs schools. Research has conveyed the importance of an induction/mentoring program and its impact on teacher retention (Wilkinson, 2009). Ingersoll and Strong (2011) posited that new teachers generally do not receive the kind of support, guidance, and orientation that is common in most skilled professions. Additionally, Ingersoll (2003) suggested that there is a strong correlation between novice teacher retention and the perennial teacher shortage that plagues many high-needs schools and school districts. To fix this problem, many districts have implemented an effective inductive/mentoring program (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004).

An effective teacher induction program is similar to that of other occupations and has a number of different purposes. Teacher induction programs can involve a variety of elements, including workshops, collaborations, support systems, orientation seminars, and mentoring (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004). The strongest and most effective element is the mentoring component. Experienced teachers, as mentors, would assist new teachers with understanding and navigating school's procedures and school district's policies (Jorissen, 2003). To have an effective mentoring program, the mentors must receive training, have release time from regular teaching duties, and be a part of a mentor support system (Berry, 2001).

Additionally, Wilkinson (2009) referred to the first three years of teaching as the period of induction, which she defined as a comprehensive "developmental process through a variety of educational enculturation or a formal program for the support, development and assessment of beginning teachers" (Wilkinson, 2009, pg. 98). Breaux and Wong (2003) defined induction as a structured training program that must begin before the first day of school and continue for two or more years. The basic purposes of new

teacher induction programs are to 1) provide instruction in classroom management and effective teaching techniques, 2) reduce the difficulty of the transition into teaching, and 3) maximize the retention rate of highly qualified teachers. The authors also suggested that an effective induction program must contain certain characteristics in order to be successful. For example, the program must start four or five days before school starts, offer ongoing and relevant professional development for at least two to three years, and must provide study groups where new teachers can network and build support systems, commitment, and leadership in a learning community. The program must also integrate a mentoring component that provides opportunities to observe effective teaching strategies and reflection during in-service days and mentoring meetings (Breux & Wong, 2003). Unfortunately, many novice teachers do not receive necessary induction/mentoring to be successful in high-needs schools.

Researchers Ingersoll and Smith (2004) used data obtained from the Schools and Staffing Survey for the years 1990–91, 1993–94, and 1999–2000 and developed three levels of induction:

- Level 1 – mentor and principal support
- Level 2 – mentor, principal support, new teacher seminars
- Level 3 – mentor, principal support, new teacher seminars, staff collaboration on instruction, external teacher network, a reduction in class preparations, and teacher's aide

Using these levels of support, Ingersoll and Smith (2004) determined that about half of the new teachers experienced induction at a Level 1. He also noted that less than one-third experienced induction at Level 2. Finally, less than 1% experienced induction at Level 3. The type of support obtained determined the likelihood of attrition of new teachers. The researchers also noted that teachers who received no induction support resulted in a 41% attrition rate, teachers who received Level 1 support resulted in a 39% attrition rate, teachers who received Level 2 support resulted in 28% attrition, and teachers who received Level 3 support resulted in 18% attrition rate (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). An effective teacher induction/mentoring program is integral to teacher retention, especially in high-needs schools.

Furthermore, approximately three out of ten novice teachers move to a different school or leave teaching altogether at the end of their first year. Ingersoll and Smith (2004) posited that there are large variations in the numbers and types of induction-related activities offered to beginning teachers and the rates of beginning teacher turnover in those schools. The researchers also found that there is a strong link between teacher induction programs and reduced rates of teacher turnover. The author noted that there are certain aspects of an induction program that seem to be more beneficial than others. Having a mentor from the same school, same grade, and same subject and being a part of an external network of teachers impacted teacher retention (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Induction/mentoring programs are instrumental to the success of novice teachers.

### **Increased Administrative Supports**

Another strategy used to increase teacher retention is increasing administrative support. According to Louis et al. (2010), there is substantial evidence that suggests school leadership/ administrative support makes a difference in schools. Administrative support refers to the extent of which principals and other school leaders help make teachers' work easier and improve their teaching. Administrative support can assume a variety of forms, ranging from providing teachers with professional development opportunities to protecting them from central office mandates. Moreover, Darling-Hammond (2003) stated that school leaders can provide support for new teachers in the form of mentoring programs that enhance strong initial preparations. Well-designed induction programs raise retention rates for new teachers by improving their attitudes, feelings of efficacy, and instructional skills. Ladd (2009) conducted a study in North Carolina and concluded that teachers' perceptions of school leadership are more predictive of teachers' intentions to remain in the school or to find alternative jobs than are their perceptions of any other school working condition. Additionally, Boyd et al. (2010) suggested that there is a correlation between school leadership and other school working conditions that influence a teacher's decision to remain or leave the profession.



Vanderslice (2010) theorized that school leaders should recognize the extent to which their attention to working conditions significantly impacts teachers' feelings toward their job. Key conditions include teacher participation in decision making, strong and supportive instructional leadership from principals, and collegial learning opportunities (Darling-Hammond, 2003). Personal satisfaction and professional responsibilities are important indicators of a person's psychological well-being as well as predictors of work performance and commitment. Therefore, employee satisfaction is a reliable predictor of retention (Perrachione et al., 2008). Furthermore, Teven (2007) revealed that teachers' perceptions of their immediate supervisor's support are positively related to job satisfaction. The perception of a caring supervisor translates into more satisfying experiences for the teacher. Effective leaders spend time developing relationships with novice teachers. Roberson and Roberson (2008) recommended that leaders should provide novice teachers with meaningful, instructive feedback that is both personal and professional.

When given the opportunity, many teachers choose to leave low performing schools at an alarming rate. Excessive teacher turnover can be costly and detrimental to the instructional cohesion in schools. Consequently, school districts have implemented policies aimed to curve teacher attrition, such as induction programs and financial incentives, particularly at those schools that traditionally experience extremely high turnover rates. Unfortunately, without a better understanding of the reasons teachers leave, these approaches may not be as effective as they could be at reducing teacher attrition (Boyd et al., 2011). The next section will discuss the theoretical framework that will be used to determine factors that influence a teachers' decision to remain or leave a high-needs school.

### **Theory of Planned Behavior**

Research has suggested that teachers significantly influence student achievement (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, Rockoff, & Wyckoff, 2008). Unfortunately, in many of our nation's high-needs schools, the students are taught by inexperienced teachers. These high-needs schools are in dire need of dedicated and skilled teachers that are willing to commit to these schools long enough to make a significant difference in student

achievement (Freedman & Appleman, 2009). Berg and Donaldson (2005) estimated that students achieve more if their teacher has had a minimum three years of teaching experience. Additionally, Kan, Rockoff, and Staiger (2007) suggested that the differences in effectiveness from the most effective teachers to that of the least effective of teachers resulted in a 0.33 standard deviation difference in student gains over the course of an academic year. The need for experienced teachers is evident in high needs schools; unfortunately, those teachers are not staying.

The question becomes, what can schools and school districts do to retain its teachers, especially in schools that need them the most? Perrachione, Rosser, and Petersen (2008) have noted that there is very little research on why teachers remain in the profession. To address this gap in research, Theory of Planned Behavior will be used to explore teachers' intentions and what factors influence their decisions. As stated earlier, TPB consists of three constructs, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls. Attitudes will be used to examine the teachers' beliefs about teaching in their teaching location. Subjective norms will be examined to determine how the opinions of others influence intentions to continue teaching. Lastly, perceived behavior controls will be examined to determine how factors beyond one's control influence intentions.

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) has by far become one of the most widely used theories to predict intentions and human behaviors, and its popularity has grown immensely since its conception. TPB is an extension of Theory of Reasoned Action and is guided by three constructs: attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control. A schematic representation of the TPB is discussed in Chapter 1. According to the theory, the more favorable the attitude and subjective norm and the greater the perceived behavior, and the stronger the intention to perform a particular behavior (Ajzen, 2001).

A questionnaire is used to address the three constructs of TPB. A TPB questionnaire generally consists of a five- or seven-point bipolar Likert Scale and is organized in two parts, Part I and Part II. Part I of the questionnaire begins with formative research. Formative research consisted of defining the behavior,

specifying the research population, and formulating items for direct measures. According to the authors, defining the behavior must be done before any work can begin. In this section, target, action, context, and time elements must be defined. Specifying the research population is the next component of formative research. The targeted population for the study must be determined. Lastly, items for direct measures must be formulated. In this section, five to six questions are generated to assess each of the theory's major constructs: attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls. The next component in a TPB questionnaire is the elicitation (Ajzen, 2011). An elicitation study consists of open-ended interviews that are used to identify pertinent behavior outcomes, referents, and environmental facilitators and barriers for each particular behavior and population that is being studied. An elicitation study is conducted with a sample of about 15–20 individuals from each target group. Usually, half the participants would have performed the behavior in question while the other half of the participants would not have performed the particular behavior (Montaño & Kasprzyk, 2008). For the sake of this study, an elicitation study was not conducted; research was used to determine beliefs. Research was used instead of conducting an elicitation study because there was substantial amount of research concerning teacher attrition.

Theory of Planned Behavior has gone from being cited approximately 22 times in 1985 to over 4,550 times in 2010 (Ajzen, 2011). The theory is most commonly used in the health field to predict intentions in areas such as smoking, drinking, sexual habits, and exercise (Montaño & Kasprzyk, 2008). There are few educational studies that have used the theory; however, Chen (2007) and Kersaint et al. (2007) have used the theory to determine teachers' intentions. Chen's study examined teachers' intentions to enroll in master's degree programs, while Kersaint et al. addressed teacher retention.

Chen (2007) used TPB to identify factors that influenced Taiwanese kindergarten teachers' decisions to enroll in a master's program to further enhance their craft and increase the chance of future promotions. To better understand why teachers would enroll in a graduate program and what factors

influenced their decision, the researchers used TPB. The researcher used the theory to determine kindergarten teachers' attitudes towards enrolling in a master's program.

The data for Chen's study was obtained from two sources, an elicitation study and questionnaire. The elicitation study consisted of five questions that focused on the participants' perceived advantages and disadvantages of registering to a graduate program. The questionnaire consisted of 280 questions and was disseminated to six randomly selected graduate programs in Taiwan. The researcher used Cronbach alpha to estimate reliability and internal consistency. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, t-test, one-way ANOVA, Pearson product correlation, and multiple regression.

The study concluded that the greatest variable to predict behavioral intention was subjective norms. Subjective norms influenced kindergarten teachers to enroll in a graduate program. The second strongest variable to predict behavioral intention was attitude towards the behavior. Those kindergarten teachers who had the most positive beliefs were the ones who demonstrated the strongest intentions to enroll into a graduate program. These teachers understood that furthering their education resulted in several outcomes: (1) taking control of their lives, (2) gaining new knowledge, (3) honing in on their craft, (4) developing their self-realization and achievement, (5) career planning, and (6) understanding their intrinsic motivation. Perceived behavior control had no influence on kindergarten teachers' intentions to enroll in a graduate program. According to the Pearson correlation, perceived behavior control did not reach significance level (Chen, 2007).

Kersaint, Lewis, Potter, and Meisels (2007) conducted another study using TPB. The purpose of this study was to determine why teachers leave and factors that influenced their decision, as well as ascertain the intents of those who resigned from teaching but returned to teaching within three years. More importantly, the researchers looked at factors that encouraged or hindered resigned teachers from returning to teaching. Also, Kersaint et al. used TPB as the foundational framework for this study because it is a predictive model that bases its beliefs on targeted behaviors. In this study, the targeted behavior is

returning to teaching within three years of resignation. The authors examined attitudes towards returning to teaching within three years. The respondents' attitudes were determined by asking questions about the advantages and disadvantages of returning to teaching. Subjective norms were determined by asking the respondents questions that pertained to identifying individuals or groups who might approve or disapprove of a return to teaching. Perceived behavioral controls were determined by asking the respondents questions about factors that might influence their decision to return to teaching with the next three years. The researchers looked at four areas: support by school administrators, opportunities to teach part-time, benefits such as health insurance or retirement pension, and support from district administrators.

Furthermore, the elicitation study resulted in 18 identified beliefs. The questionnaire was designed based on the 18 identified beliefs obtained from the elicitation study. Each belief question had a paired question. One paired question addressed the importance of the belief and the other question addressed the presence of the belief. The means from the individual paired questions were multiplied and the square root of this score was taken to determine the actual belief score.

The questionnaire was disseminated at random to over 20,000 teachers that are currently teaching and those that left the profession from two large Florida school districts. The survey discovered six factors that influenced teachers' decisions to leave the profession: (1) time with family, (2) family responsibility, (3) administrative support, (4) financial benefits, (5) paperwork, and (6) assessments. The results also indicated that there was a need for school districts to develop a system of identifying teachers who are on the verge of leaving and then create strategies to address the needs of the teachers.

Kersaint et al.'s (2007) study played an integral role in the formation of this study. Kersaint et al. used TPB to examine factors that influenced teachers' decisions to leave teaching, the likelihood of them returning to the profession within three years, and factors that influenced retention. The purpose of this study was to determine factors that influenced teachers' decisions and the likelihood of them continuing to teach in high-needs schools or school districts. To determine teachers' intentions, this study also used TPB

and also modified several of the survey questions from the Kersaint et al. study to address factors that influence teacher retention. The previously mentioned research supports the theoretical basis for using Theory of Planned Behavior as a framework for determining teachers' intentions to continue teaching in a high needs school.

### **Summary**

Teacher quality is the key component that influences student outcome (Aaronson, Barrow, & Sander, 2007). Unfortunately, a large number of children are entering schools significantly behind their peers. They are entering the classrooms without the knowledge or skills needed to be successful. Instead of providing these students with the most experienced teachers, schools hire novice or out-of-field teachers to educate their most vulnerable students. Students in high-poverty and high-minority schools are disproportionately assigned to teachers who are new to the profession (Peske & Haycock, 2006). This research leads to greater understanding about the factors that influence teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools and develops strategies for school districts to retain teachers that are most effective.

Chapter 2 provided a summary of the review of literature on the topics related to teacher retention in high-needs schools. The methods used in the study to collect and analyze data will be discussed in the following chapter.

### CHAPTER III. METHODOLOGY

Across the United States and the world, the demand for teachers has risen. The increase in demand can be attributed to an increase in school-aged children and retiring baby boomers (Pucella, 2011). Unfortunately, low salaries and poor earning potential discourages the most qualified college graduates from entering the profession (Strong, 2005). However, there is evidence that in some parts of the country, the demand is subsiding due to an increase in the use of non-credentialed teachers (e.g. teachers from Teach for America) to fill the vacancies. Boyd et al. (2008) stated that schools with the highest proportions of poor, non-White, and low scoring students are taught by the least qualified teachers as measured by certification, exam performance, and inexperience. Darling-Hammond and Sykes (2003) suggested that inequities exist between schools that are deemed desirable, having many applicants for vacant positions, and schools serving minority and poor students, experience difficulty in attracting and keeping qualified teachers.

The number of teachers that leave determines the number of vacancies generated. The position may become available involuntarily (e.g. poor job performance evaluations, expiration of emergency certifications, terminations, or reduction in force) or as a result of voluntary decisions (e.g. transfers, resignations, or retirement). However, the teachers that voluntarily resign may move to another teaching position; they are referred to as “movers.” “Movers” are those who resign and move to another teaching position within the school district or leave all together and go to another district. The teachers that leave due to attrition, resignations, or termination are referred to as “leavers.” Additionally, those teachers who opt to remain are referred to as “stayers” (Kersaint, 2007).

This chapter describes the methods used to answer the five research questions that guided this study. The following sections describe the participants in the study and discuss the research instrument used in the study. The remaining sections discuss data collection procedures, data analysis, and the limitations of the study.

### **Research Questions**

The research for this study was guided by the following questions:

1. Of the attitudes measured in this study, which do teachers report as important or relevant relative to their decision to leave or stay in their current position?
2. Of the subjective norm measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current position?
3. Of the perceived behavior control measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current position?
4. To what extent do attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control relate to teachers' intentions to remain in the profession?
5. What are the contextual factors across which teachers' attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavior control, and intentions differ across school level and school classification?

### **Research Design**

Fink (2003) stated that the purpose of survey research is to collect and analyze data from individuals to describe or compare their thoughts, attitudes, and beliefs. To collect and analyze the data for this survey research, I decided to use a correlational design, which is a form of non-experimental research. I used this design to determine the contextual factors that influence southern school district's teachers' decisions to either leave or continue teaching at high-needs schools.

The literature review described characteristics of a high-needs school, discussed why teachers are leaving, described the significance of effective teachers, and identified strategies that promote teacher



retention. Moreover, the literature review examined the Theory of Planned Behavior and presented evidence that supports the theory as an appropriate tool to measure teachers' intentions to continue teaching in their school.

It is important to note that as part of the theory, an elicitation study is normally conducted. An elicitation study is pilot work used to identify the themes for behavioral, normative, and control beliefs. It is conducted by giving participants a series of questions that elicit personal beliefs about teacher retention. For this study, I decided not to conduct an elicitation study because there is a substantial amount of research that addresses teacher retention and why teachers are leaving. Unfortunately, there is limited research about what factors influence teachers' decisions to remain at high-needs schools (Phillips, 2015). Using previously published research and surveys, I developed the themes and survey items used for this study.

To address the research questions, I used several statistical procedures. I used descriptive statistics such as percentages, means, and standard deviations to analyze the scale scores for the three TPB constructs and to analyze the data associated with the two types of schools. I also used simple regression to determine if there was a positive or a negative correlation between intentions and the individual constructs and to determine the variance. Additionally, a multiple regression was used to determine if there were a relationship between intentions (dependent variable) and the three constructs (independent variables) and to determine the variance. One-way ANOVA was used to determine the differences among teacher responses across school level and school classification.

### **Description of Setting**

The study took place in a southeastern urban school district with a diverse student and teacher population. The district has 51 schools: 32 elementary schools (grades K–5), 11 middle schools (grades 6–8), and 8 high schools (grades 9–12). The schools are categorized as traditional, technical, or magnet. A traditional school is one that students are zoned to attend based on home address, and there are no special qualifications to attend. A technical school requires students to apply and be interviewed to attend.

Students who graduate from the technical school receive, in addition to a diploma, a certification in advertising design, construction, welding, HVAC/Mechanical Systems, or fire science. Lastly, a magnet school requires students to apply and be interviewed. However, the school is a learning center that focuses on areas of special interest, ability, or need, such as academic, arts, or math and science.

The district has nine magnet schools: three elementary schools, three middle schools, and three high schools. Additionally, there is one technical school and three International Baccalaureate (IB) Candidate schools. According to the school system's website, there are approximately 31,316 students enrolled in the district. Newsweek Magazine, U.S. News, and World Report has ranked three of the district's high schools among the best in the nation. The district also has four U.S. Department of Education Blue Ribbon Schools of Excellence. On the other hand, the school district also has three elementary schools, six middle schools, one high school, and one alternative school that have been classified as failing schools. Failing schools are schools that do not primarily serve special education students and have performed in the bottom 6% on standardized assessments in reading and math ([www.alsde.edu](http://www.alsde.edu)).

The district is the county's third largest employer, contributing about \$21 million to the local economy each month. The make-up of employees includes 2,235 full-time certified personnel (teachers), 1,898 full-time certified support personnel (administrators, central office, counselors, librarians, literacy coaches, and etc.) and 100 part-time employees. The student teacher ratio for K-3 is 18:1, 4-6 is 26:0, and 7-12 is 29:1.

### **Participants and Recruitment**

The Auburn University Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research granted permission to collect data (see Appendix A). I obtained permission to conduct a research study within the school district from the local superintendent of schools. Once permission was granted, I sent the survey, via email, to the district's 51 schools. The survey was sent to principals and individual schools. Unfortunately, the school system's email does not have a group for "teachers," and as a result, the

survey was disseminated to the entire school staff. Because this study focused on current teachers, the survey re-routed those who were not classroom teachers to the end of the survey and surveyed those who were teachers. Finally, two weeks later, a reminder e-mail was sent out to the employees in all 51 schools with a link to the questionnaire included. According to the district's website, there were 2,235 teachers. Of that number, the goal was to reach a 70% response rate, equating 1,564 teachers. However, the minimum acceptable response rate was 10%, or 223 respondents.

### **Description of the Instrument**

A questionnaire was designed using the three constructs of Theory of Planned Behavior: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls. The constructs were used to determine what factors influenced teachers to leave or continue teaching in high needs schools. The target population for this study were teachers who taught in an inner city metropolitan school district that had a combination of traditional and magnet schools. The items for the questionnaire were drawn from previous surveys: Teacher Retention Survey (Kersaint, 2008), Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), and Teacher Follow-Up Survey (TFP). The survey questions were modified for use in this study. The instrument I designed was called *Teacher Intention Survey*. The literature review suggested that teachers left their present teaching position for a multitude of reasons. Some of the reasons the literature cited for teachers leaving were poor classroom management, lack of autonomy, and poor working conditions. The questionnaire comprised of 57 questions from the four TPB constructs with the following question breakdown: attitudes = 10 questions, subjective norms = 12 questions, perceived behavior controls = 22 questions, intention = 4 questions, and demographics = 9 questions. Also, the questions for attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control were written in pairs following TPB (Ajzen, 1991). Table 2 lists the questions and their pairs. The paired question was the same question, slightly revised, to reflect differences between the presence and importance of the belief. For example, presence of the belief reads, "Continuing to teach at my current

school provides me high job satisfaction,” and importance of the belief reads, “High levels of job satisfaction are important to me.”

Table 1

*Teacher Retention Survey*

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Question (Presence of Belief)</b>	<b>Paired Question (Importance of Belief)</b>	<b>Reference</b>
Attitudes	1.	Continuing to teach at my current school provides me high job satisfaction.	High levels of job satisfaction are important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007 SASS, 2008
	2.	Continuing to teach at my current school allows me to help children learn.	Helping children grow and learn are important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007
	3.	Continuing to teach at my current school affords good benefits, such as health insurance and retirement pensions.	Health insurance and retirement pensions are important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007 SASS, 2008
	4.	Continuing to teach at my current school affords me job security.	Job security is important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007
	5.	Continuing to teach at my current school offers personal fulfillment.	Personal fulfillment is important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007
Subjective Norms	6.	Community leaders have indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	Community members’ opinions about whether I remain at my current school are important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007 SASS, 2008
	7.	Parents have indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	My students’ parents’ opinions about whether I remain teaching at my current school are important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007
	8.	My family has indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	My family’s opinions about whether I remain teaching at my current school are important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007
	9.	My administrators have indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	My administrators’ opinions about whether I remain teaching at my current school are important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007
	10.	My co-workers have indicated that they would like for me to remain teaching at my current school.	My co-workers’ opinions about whether I remain at my current school are important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007
	11.	My students have indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	My students’ opinions about whether I remain at my current school are important to me.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007

<b>Construct</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Question (Presence of Belief)</b>	<b>Paired Question (Importance of Belief)</b>	<b>Reference</b>
	12.	High stakes testing, such as ACT Aspire and Global Scholar, influences my decisions to remain at my current school.	I am able to influence the amount of high stakes testing, such as ACT Aspire and Global Scholar, given to my students.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007 Teacher Follow-Up Survey, 2008
	13.	Opportunities to make more money influence my desire to remain at my current school.	There are plenty of opportunities to earn extra money for performing additional duties at my school.	Pucella, 2011 Amrein-Beardsley, 2012
Perceived Behavior Control	14.	The behavior of my students influences my decision to remain at my current school.	I am able to manage my students' behavior effectively.	Pucella, 2011 Teacher Follow-Up Survey, 2008
	15.	My principal's ability to enforce school rules and procedures influences my decision to remain at my current school.	I am able to influence the way my principal enforces school rules and procedures.	Pucella, 2011 SASS, 2008
	16.	The amount of paperwork and other non-teaching responsibilities influences my desire to remain at my current school.	I have control over the amount of paperwork and non-teaching responsibilities that I must do in my school.	Pucella, 2011 Amrein-Beardsley, 2012 Teacher Follow-Up Survey, 2008
	17.	Access to resources, such as computers and textbooks, influences my decision to remain at my current school.	I am able to secure additional classroom materials and resources when I need them.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007 SASS, 2008 Teacher Follow-Up Survey, 2008
	18.	The availability of quality mentoring influences my decision to continue teaching at my current school.	I have access to a mentoring program.	Amrein-Beardsley, 2012 SASS, 2008
	19.	Meaningful professional development influences my decision to remain at my current school.	I am able to select professional development that is meaningful to me.	Amrein, Beardsley, 2012
	20.	The degree of autonomy that I have in my classroom influences my decision to remain at my current school.	I have autonomy as a teacher at my school.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007 SASS, 2008
	21.	The degree of empowerment that I have in my classroom influences my decision to remain at my current school.	I am empowered as a teacher at my current school.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007
	22.	The quality of building facilities influences my decision to remain at my current school.	The quality of my building is beyond my control.	G. Kersaint et al., 2007

Construct	Number	Question (Presence of Belief)	Paired Question (Importance of Belief)	Reference
Intention	23.	I plan to remain teaching at my current school next year.		
	24.	I plan to remain teaching at my current school for the next three years.		
	25.	I plan to remain teaching at my current school for more than three years.		
	26.	If the opportunity arose, I would leave the teaching profession for another occupation.		

The questionnaire used a seven-point Likert type scale: (1) Strongly Disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Somewhat Disagree, (4) Neither Disagree or Agree, (5) Somewhat Agree, (6) Agree, and (7) Strongly Agree. A seven-point Likert type scale was used because Montañó and Kasprzyk (2008) stated that TPB can use either five- or seven-point scales. The authors also noted that using bipolar “unlikely-likely” or “disagree-agree” scales allowed the researcher to gain a better understanding of respondents’ behavioral beliefs about the probability of exhibiting a particular behavior. Additionally, Weijters (2010) suggested that it might be less problematic if the researcher uses scales with more response categories because it allowed the respondent the opportunity to express his/her feelings to a certain degree. As a result, the seven-point Likert scale was used for this study.

As stated earlier, each question has a paired question. One question addresses the importance of a belief and the other addresses the presence of the belief, each with a 1–7 scale. To obtain the belief score, the response scores for the paired questions of each subject were multiplied together creating a score that ranged from 1–49. For example, if the respondent rated a three for the importance of a belief then rated a four for the importance of the belief; the belief score is 12.

The next section of the questionnaire were multiple choice questions that were used to collect demographic information about the teachers. The questions asked were as follows:

1. How are you classified?
2. How many years have you worked as a teacher in public schools?
3. How would you classify the school where you currently teach?
4. How would you describe the school where you currently teach?
5. Are you currently teaching in the same school as you were last year (2014–2015)?
6. Which of the following best describes your move from last year's school to your current school?
7. Did you change schools because of an involuntary transfer (Reduction in force, School Transformation)?
8. Did you change schools because your contract was not renewed?
9. Which of the following reasons best describes why your contract was not renewed?
10. In how many years do you plan to retire with retirement benefits?
11. Do you intend to leave the teaching profession for another profession?

The goal of the previous section was to determine the experience level of the teacher and if the teacher moved voluntarily or involuntarily and why. The final section of the questionnaire included open-ended questions. The purpose of the following section was to offer the respondent the opportunity to explain their intentions. If you reported that you plan to retire, please explain why.

1. If you reported that you plan to leave for another profession, please explain why.
2. If you reported that you plan to leave teaching for another profession, please explain why.
3. If you reported that you plan to continue teaching, please explain why.

### **Content Validity**

According to Fink (2003), content validity refers to the extent of which the survey appropriately measures characteristics it was intended to measure. To ensure the contents of the survey were appropriate, I reviewed the literature related to why we need good teachers, why teachers are leaving, characteristics of turnaround/high needs schools, and how TPB is used to predict intentions.

Additionally, to provide additional validity evidence, the survey was sent to nine educators from other school districts, within and outside of Alabama. The feedback from one of the educators was to reduce the scale from a seven-point to five-point Likert scale to force participants to agree or disagree. I decided to keep the seven-point scale. Another educator recommended changing the wording of the perceived behavior control questions; however, this would have changed the meaning of the questions. Finally, I met with four administrators from my school district to ensure that each question was relevant. Several mistakes were found in the wording and some grammatical errors were also noted.

Once the survey was revised and corrected, it was pilot tested to a group of ten educators: four teachers and six administrators (central office personnel and school based personnel) from surrounding school districts. Fink (2003) noted that the purpose for pilot testing a survey is to (1) administer the survey in its intended setting to determine the time the survey will take to complete, (2) to ensure clarity in the directions, (3) to ensure questions are easily understood, and (4) to determine how the response should be marked. The pilot group was asked to respond, via e-mail, the length of time it took to complete the survey and to describe any complications he/she may have experienced while taking the survey. The pilot test did not result in any additional changes. According to the pilot group, the survey took about 20 minutes to complete and there were no problems selecting or understanding the response.

### **Reliability**

According to Ross and Shannon (2008), reliability pertains to the accuracy or precision of an instrument to measure what is was intended to measure. Assessing reliability of an instrument is an important aspect of survey development and administration, as it confirms the extent to which similar results will be attained if the study is repeated (Fink, 2003). Cronbach's alpha assessed the reliability of the results obtained from the teacher retention survey. Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency of a scale. It is expressed as a number between 0 and 1; the higher the score, the greater the reliability. Generally, coefficients above 0.7 are acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).



## **Data Collection Procedures**

In January 2016, a survey was emailed to all employees within the school district asking them to take the survey. The survey was distributed using Qualtrics, an electronic survey service. I chose electronic distribution over traditional mail distribution because of the number of surveys that will be distributed. Electronic distribution is more efficient and less expensive (Dillman, Smyth, & Christian, 2009). An introduction letter preceded the survey link and stated the purpose of the survey and the survey time of completion (approximately 20 minutes). The introduction letter also explained that the responses were anonymous and that all data is unidentifiable. Additionally, a reminder e-mail with a link to the survey was sent two weeks later.

## **Data Analysis**

Using the computer program Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and the Qualtrics output, the data was organized and analyzed to address the five research questions that guided this study. I conducted statistical analysis using measures of central tendency, simple and multiple regression, and one-way ANOVA to determine if attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral controls contributed to teachers' intentions to leave or continue teaching in high-needs schools. Table 2 is a schematic representation of how each question will be analyzed.

Question 1: Of the attitudes measured in the study, which do teachers report as important or relevant relative to their decision to leave or stay in their current position? I used descriptive statistics including percentages, means, and standard deviation to analyze the scale scores. I also used simple regression to discover and report the percent of variance between intentions and attitudes.

Question 2: Of the subjective norm measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current position? I used descriptive statistics, including percentages, mean, and standard deviation, to analyze the scale scores. I also used simple regression to discover and report the percent of variance between intentions and social pressures.

Question 3: Of the perceived behavior control measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current position? I used descriptive statistics, including percentages, mean, and standard deviation, to analyze the scale scores. I also used simple regression to discover and report the percent of variance between intentions and perceived behavior controls.

Question 4: To what extent do attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control relate to teachers' intention to remain in the profession? I used descriptive statistics, including percentages, mean, and standard deviation, to analyze the scale scores. I also used a multiple regression to discover and report the percent of variance between intentions and the three constructs.

Question 5: What are the contextual factors across which teachers' attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavior control, and intentions differ across school level and school classification? I used descriptive statistics, such as percentages, mean, and standard deviation, to analyze the data associated with the three types of schools. I also conducted one-way, between-subjects ANOVA to determine if there are differences across the three types of schools.

Table 2

*Data Analysis*

<b>Research Question</b>	<b>Survey Items</b>	<b>Data Analysis</b>
Question 1 (Attitudes)	1–5, 27–31	Descriptive/Simple Regression
Question 2 (SN)	6–13, 32–38	Descriptive/Simple Regression
Question 3 (PBC)	14–22, 39–49	Descriptive/Simple Regression
Question 4 (3 Constructs)	1–49	Multiple Regression
Question 5 (3 Schools)	23–26, 63	Descriptive/ANOVA

## **Limitations**

My role for this study was to serve as researcher. I served as a school administrator in the district in which the study was conducted and held my position throughout the study. Serving as an administrator may make the teachers within my school feel compelled to complete the survey. Nevertheless, working in the district proved to be very beneficial, because I am familiar with many of the teachers and administrators.

This study was limited because it was conducted in one Alabama inner city school district. The researcher did not have access to the teachers who left the district. Finally, Muijs (2010) stated that quantitative research is limited because it does not provide breadth; it does not allow the respondent to expound on their beliefs. To alleviate this problem, three open-ended questions were added to the end of the survey to allow the participants to explain why they are retiring, leaving the profession, and why they are continuing to teach.

## **Summary**

The purpose of this study was to assess the level to which teachers reported their intentions to remain or leave their present teaching assignment. I designed a survey called the Teacher Intention Survey to collect data about teacher's attitudes towards teaching and their intentions to stay or leave. The survey was designed using Ajzen's 1991 Theory of Planned Behavior and was created around its three constructs: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls. The items of the survey reflected the common themes reflected in the review of literature on teacher retention.

## **CHAPTER IV. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS**

The purpose of this study was to determine factors that influences teachers' intentions to continue teaching in a high-needs school. The study used Theory of Planned Behavior as a framework for exploring what factors, teachers report, influenced their decision to continue teaching.

This study sought to exam factors that influenced teachers' decision to continue teaching in high-needs schools and to determine if school characteristics played an integral role in the decision making process. The results of this study will be used to assist schools and school districts to determine factors that influence teachers' retention in high-needs schools.

This chapter will present the results of the study beginning first with descriptive information which was used to determine the mean and standard deviation for each question, followed by a Cronbach's alpha to determine if there was reliability in the questionnaire. Additionally, a simple regression and multiple regression were computed to find out and report the percent of variance between the three constructs (attitudes, subjective norm and perceived behavior control) and intention. Finally, a one-way ANOVA was run to determine if there was a difference between school level and school characteristics.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

Tables 3–6 will provide a summary of descriptive statistics for the respondents of the Teacher Intentions Survey. The Teacher Intentions Survey was designed for teachers to determine factors that influences their intentions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. However, other professional personal (central office, librarians, counselors, literacy coaches, etc.) attempted to take the survey. As demonstrated by Table 3 there are 3,940 certified personnel in the district, 2, 235 (21%) are teachers, 98 (2%) are school based administrators (principals and assistant principals) and 1,607 (41%) are other

professional personnel. Table 4 also demonstrates that survey respondents. Of that 3,940 personnel, 590 (21% of the district) respondents participated in the survey. In comparison to district numbers, 465 (79%) of the respondents were teachers, 32 (5%) were administrators and 93(16%) were other professional personal. Teacher survey participants slightly underrepresented the teachers in the district.

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire Participants*

Job Title	Survey Participants		District Numbers	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Teacher	465	79%	2,235	57%
Administrator	32	5%	98	2%
Other Professional	93	16%	1,607	41%
Total	590		3,940	

Additionally, Table 4 demonstrates the number of respondents who were tenured and non-tenured. According to the data, approximately 249 (53%) of the teachers surveyed were tenured and 112 (24%) of the teachers reported were non-tenured. Unfortunately, 106 (23%) of the respondents did not report whether they were tenured or non-tenured. Regrettably, I was unable to retrieve the district’s data on tenured and non-tenured.

Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics of Teachers' Tenure Status*

Tenure Status	N	Percent
Tenured	249	53%
Non-Tenured	112	24%
Missing	106	23%
Total	467	100%

Table 5 demonstrates the number of teachers that participated in the survey that taught in elementary, middle, or secondary high schools. The district has 1,210 (54%) elementary teachers, 489 (22%) middle school teacher and 536 (24%) secondary high school teachers. After reviewing the survey results, and deleting the incomplete responses and replies from non-teachers, the number of viable survey participants changed to 467. Of the 467 teachers that participated in the survey, 157 (34) of the respondents were elementary teachers, 72 (15) of the respondents were middle school teachers, 129 (28%) were secondary teachers, and 109 (23%) of the respondents did not specify school level. In comparison to the district numbers, there is an underrepresentation of elementary school teachers that participated in the survey.

Table 5

*Descriptive Statistics of School Level*

School Level	Survey Participants		District Numbers	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Elementary	157	34%	1,210	54%
Middle	72	15%	489	22%
Secondary	129	28%	536	41%
Missing	109	23%		
Total	467		2,235	

Finally, Table 6 demonstrates the number of teachers that participated in the survey, that taught in a traditional or magnet school. The district has 2,235 traditional teachers and 298 magnet school teachers. Of that number, 1,937 (87%) of the respondents teach in a traditional elementary, middle or secondary high school and 298 (13%) of the respondents teach in a magnet elementary, middle or secondary magnet school. According to the data, there were 467 viable survey response and of that number 309 (66%) of the respondents were traditional elementary, middle, or secondary high school teachers, 49 (11%) of the respondents were magnet elementary, middle, or secondary high school teachers, and 109 (23%) of the participants did not respond to the question. There is an underrepresentation in the number of magnet school teachers that participated in the survey.

Table 6

*Descriptive Statistics of School Characteristics*

School Characteristics	Survey Participants		District Numbers	
	N	Percent	N	Percent
Traditional	309	66%	1,937	86%
Magnet	49	11%	298	13%
Missing	109	23%		
Total	467		2,235	

**Results of Quantitative Data****Inferential Statistics**

To conduct the study's inferential statistics, simple regression, multiple regressions, and one-way ANOVA were used to make predictions about the populations from which the samples were drawn. The three assumptions that are associated with inferential statistics include: (1) observation of independence, (2) normality of frequency distributions, (3) and equal variance. According to Chen and Zhu (2001), observation of independence requires that each observation on an individual participant is in no way related to the same measurement/observation of another participant. Independence of scores cannot be guaranteed. The Teacher Retention Survey was e-mailed to the teachers. The teachers could have taken the survey in a group, in a computer lab, and/or at home. No two participants can participate in the survey using the same link, at the same time. Where and how the survey was completed cannot be determined. I assumed that the teachers worked independently on the survey and as a result independence cannot be determined. The next assumption is normality of frequency distributions. Also, teachers in the same school are not independent. Normality of distribution for the three constructs will be addressed later on in Question 5; however, the assumptions of normality are not critical because ANOVA is robust to violations of normality (Field, 2013).



The final assumption is that of equal variance (homogeneity of variance) will also be discussed later on in Question 5.

**Research question one.** *Of the attitudes measured in the study, which do teachers report as important or relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current position?* Attitudes of teachers were measured with 10 paired items. These items measured attitudes towards job satisfaction, personal fulfillment, job security, benefits, and helping children.

Table 7 demonstrates the reliability of the survey used to determine teachers' intentions to remain in high-needs schools. The reliability of attitudes, presence of the belief, was established by a Cronbach's alpha which equaled .83 and the reliability of Attitudes, importance of the belief equaled .83. The alpha coefficient for each of the two areas suggested that the items have internal consistency. According to Tavakol and Dennick (2011), a reliability coefficient of 0.7 or higher is considered acceptable.

Table 7

*Reliability Statistics: Cronbach's Alpha for Attitudes*

Areas	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Presence of the Belief	.83	5
Importance of the Belief	.83	5

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the mean and standard deviation for each paired attitudes question. Subsequently, the mean for the presence of the belief was multiplied by the mean for the importance of the belief to determine the actual belief score. The range of the actual belief score was 1 to 49. As presented in Table 8, the actual belief score mean for job satisfaction was 31.94, personal fulfillment was 34.06, job security was 34.97, good benefits was 37.06, and helping students to grow and learn was 39.89.

Table 8

*Descriptive Statistics for Attitudes*

Attitudes Statistics	M	Std. Deviation	Total
<hr/>			
Presence of the Belief			
Continuing to teach in my current school provides me high job satisfaction	5.0	1.83	
Importance of the Belief			
High levels of job satisfaction are important to me.	6.3	.88	
Actual Belief Score			31.94
<hr/>			
Presence of the Belief			
Continuing to teach at my current school offers personal fulfillment.	5.2	1.84	
Importance of the Belief			
Personal fulfillment is important to me.	6.6	.88	
Actual Belief Score			34.06
<hr/>			
Presence of the Belief			
Continuing to teach at my current school affords me job security.	5.4	1.67	
Importance of the Belief			
Job security is important to me.			
Actual Belief Score			34.97
<hr/>			
Presence of the Belief			
Continuing to teach at my current school affords good benefits, such as health insurance and retirement pensions.	5.8	1.41	
Importance of the Belief			
Health insurance and retirement pensions are important to me.	6.4	.94	

Attitudes Statistics	M	Std. Deviation	Total
Actual Belief Score			37.06
Presence of the Belief			
Continuing to teach at my current school allows me to help children learn.	5.9	1.43	
Importance of the Belief			
Helping children to learn is important to me.	6.8	.64	
Actual Belief Score			39.89

There are four assumptions which justify the use of linear regression models for the purpose of making predictions about the dependent value (intentions) and the independent value (attitudes) and they include: (1) additivity and linearity, (2) independent errors, (3) homoscedasticity, and (4) normally distributed errors (Field, 2013). The data met three out of four assumptions. To test the assumption of independent errors a Durbin-Watson was done and its value was 1.94 which indicates that there is a positive correlation between adjacent residuals which does not violate the assumption of independence of errors. To test the assumptions of homoscedasticity, additivity and linearity, and normally distributed errors a scatterplot, normal Probability-Probability Plot (P-P Plot) were run. To test the assumption of normal distributed errors the P-P Plot was run and the test indicated that the observed standard residuals are normally distributed which does not violate this assumption. The scatterplot indicated a negative correlation between the standardized predicted and standardized residuals. As the regression standardized residuals increased (y) the regression standardized predicted value (x) decreased and this model violated the assumption of homoscedasticity. Finally, to determine the assumptions of additivity and linearity, the P-P Plot was run and there is a slight deviation in the linear relationship; however, this model does not violate the assumption of additivity and linearity.

To determine if there is a correlation between attitudes and intentions, a simple regression was conducted. The independent variable used was attitudes and the dependent variable used was intention. Results indicated that there is a positive correlation that exists between the intentions and attitudes as presented in Table 9. The correlation coefficient was .34 between intentions and attitudes. The  $p$ -value (Sig.) is  $< .01$ , which is less than the alpha level of  $.05$ . Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and say that there is a positive correlation between intentions and attitudes. The coefficient of determination or adjusted R Square is  $.11$ .  $R^2$  indicates that approximately 11.4% of the variance in participants' intentions can be accounted for by attitudes.

Table 9

*Regression Table for Attitudes*

Values	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized		
	B	Std. Error	Coefficients	t	Sig.
Constant	1.27	.14		8.84	.01
ATT total	.03	.00	.34	6.80	.00

Note.  $N = 352$ ,  $R = .34$ ,  $R^2 = .12$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .11$ , and  $p < .05$ .

**Research Question Two.** *Of the subjective norm measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current position?* Subjective norms of teachers were measured with 12 paired items. These items measured subject norms towards community, family, parents, co-workers, administrative, and student opinions.

Table 10 demonstrates the reliability of the survey used to determine teacher intentions to remain in high-needs schools. The reliability of Subjective Norms for presence of the belief, was established by a Cronbach's alpha which equaled  $.84$  and the reliability of Subjective Norms for importance of the belief equaled  $.85$ . The alpha coefficient for each of the two areas suggest that the items have internal consistency, for instance, a reliability coefficient of  $0.7$  or higher is considered acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).

Table 10

*Reliability Statistics: Cronbach's Alpha for Subjective Norms*

Areas	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Presence of the Belief	.84	6
Importance of the Belief	.85	6

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the means and standard deviation for each paired subjective norms question. Subsequently, the mean for the presence of the belief was multiplied by the mean for the importance of the belief to determine the actual belief score. The range of the actual belief score is from 1 to 49. As presented in Table 11, the actual belief score mean for community opinions is 16.77, family opinions are 24.64, parents opinions are 27.44, co-worker opinions are 28.42, administrative opinions are 29.16, and student opinions is 32.94.

Table 11

*Descriptive Statistics for Subjective Norms*

Subjective Norms	M	Std. Deviation	Total
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
Community leaders have indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school	4.3	2.09	
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
Community members' opinions about whether I continue teaching at my current school are important to me.	3.9	2.1	
Actual Belief Score			16.77
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			

Subjective Norms	M	Std. Deviation	Total
My family has indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	4.4	2.15	
Importance of the Belief			
My family's opinions about whether I continue teaching at my current school are important to me.	5.6	1.71	
Actual Belief Score			24.64
Presence of the Belief			
Parents have indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	5.6	1.70	
Importance of the Belief			
My students' parents' opinions about whether I continue teaching at my current school are important to me.	4.9	1.87	
Actual Belief Score			27.44
Presence of the Belief			
My co-workers have indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	5.8	1.56	
Importance of the Belief			
My co-workers' opinions about whether I continue teaching at my current school are important to me.	4.9	1.87	
Actual Belief Score			28.42
Presence of the Belief			
My administrators have indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	5.4	1.78	
Importance of the Belief			

Subjective Norms	M	Std. Deviation	Total
My administrators' opinions about whether I continue teaching at my current school are important to me.	5.4	1.76	
Actual Belief Score			29.16
Presence of the Belief			
My students have indicated that they would like for me to continue teaching at my current school.	6.1	1.35	
Importance of the Belief			
My students' opinions about whether I continue teaching at my current school are important to me.	5.4	1.75	
Actual Belief Score			32.94

There are four assumptions which justify the use of linear regression models for the purpose of making predictions about the dependent value (subjective norms) and the independent value (attitudes) and they include and the data met 3 out of four assumptions. The assumptions met are additivity and linearity, independent errors and normally distribution of errors. The data violated the assumption of homoscedasticity.

To determine if there is a correlation between subjective norms and intentions, a simple regression was conducted. The independent variable used was subjective norms and the dependent variable used was intention. Results indicated that there is positive correlation that exists between intentions and subjective norms in Table 12. The correlation coefficient is .24 between the two variables. The *p*-value (Sig.) is < .001, which is less than the alpha level of .05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and say that there is a positive correlation between intentions and subjective norms. The coefficient of determination or adjusted R

Square is .05.  $R^2$  indicates that approximately 5.7% of the variance in participants' intentions can be accounted for by subjective norms.

Table 12

*Regression Table for Subjective Norms*

Values	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized		
	B	Std. Error	Coefficients	t	Sig.
Constant	1.79	.10		17.66	.00
SNTotal	.02	.003	.24	4.61	.000

Note.  $N = 352$ ,  $R = .24$ ,  $R^2 = .06$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .05$ , and  $p < .05$ .

**Research Question Three.** *Of the perceived behavior control measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current position?* Perceived behavior control of teachers were measured with 22 paired items. These items measured perceived behavior control towards accountability testing, good salary, control of paperwork, and availability of resources. Perceived behavior control also measured teachers' behavior towards mentoring programs, meaningful professional development, enforcing school rules, control over facilities, feeling of empowerment, student behavior, and teacher autonomy.

Table 13 demonstrates the reliability of the survey used to determine teacher intentions to remain in high-needs schools. The reliability of Perceived Behavior Control for presence of the belief, was established by a Cronbach's alpha which equaled .89 and the reliability of perceived behavior control for importance of the belief equaled .83. The alpha coefficient for each of the two areas suggest that the items have internal consistency, for instance, a reliability coefficient of 0.7 or higher is considered acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011).



Table 13

*Reliability Statistics: Cronbach's Alpha for Perceived Behavior Control*

Areas	Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
Presence of the Belief	.89	11
Importance of the Belief	.83	5

Descriptive statistics were used to determine the mean and standard deviation for each paired perceived behavior control. Subsequently, the mean for the presence of the belief was multiplied by the mean for importance of the belief to determine the actual belief score. As presented in Table 14, the actual belief score mean for accountability testing was 6.96, good salary was 7.75, control of paperwork was 9.12, and availability of resources was 12.3. Table 15 also presents mentoring program was 13.65, meaningful professional development was 18.4, enforcing school rules was 18.5, and control over facilities was 20.67. Finally, the actual belief score for feeling of empowerment was 23.03, student behavior was 24.08, and teacher autonomy was 25.

Table 14

*Descriptive Statistics for Perceived Behavior Control*

Perceived Behavior Control Statistics	M	Std. Deviation	Total
Presence of the Belief			
High stakes testing, such as ACT Aspire or Global Scholar, influences my decision to remain at my current school.	2.9	1.93	
Importance of the Belief			
I am able to influence the amount of high stakes testing, such as ACT Aspire or Global Scholar, given to my students.	2.4	1.86	
Actual Belief Score			6.96

Perceived Behavior Control Statistics	M	Std. Deviation	Total
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
Opportunities to make more money influence my decision to remain at my current school.	3.1	2.19	
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
There are plenty of opportunities to earn extra money for performing additional duties at my current school	2.5	1.85	
Actual Belief Score			7.75
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
The importance of paperwork and other non-teaching responsibilities influences my decision to remain at my current school.	3.8	2.38	
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
I have control of the amount of non-teaching responsibilities that I must do at my school	2.4	1.79	
Actual Belief Score			9.12
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
Access to resources such as computers and textbooks, influences my decision to remain at my current school.	4.1	2.22	
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
Without using personal funds, I am able to secure additional classroom materials and resources when I need them.	3.0	2.03	
Actual Belief Score			12.3
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
The availability of quality mentoring influences my decision to continue teaching at my current school.	3.9	2.09	

Perceived Behavior Control Statistics	M	Std. Deviation	Total
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
I have access to a quality mentoring program.	3.5	2.09	
Actual Belief Score			13.65
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
Meaningful professional development influences my decision to remain at my current school.	4.1	2.08	
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
I am able to select professional development that is meaningful to me.	4.4	2.12	
Actual Belief Score			18.0
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
My principal's ability to enforce school rules and procedures influences my decision to remain at my current school.	5.0	2.04	
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
I am able to influence the way my principal enforces school rules and procedures.	3.7	2.01	
Actual Belief Score			18.5
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
The quality of building facilities influences my decision to remain at my current school.	3.9	2.17	
<b><sup>1</sup>Importance of the Belief</b>			
The quality of my building is beyond my control.	5.3	1.76	
Actual Belief Score			20.67

<sup>1</sup> This is the only item reversed ordered on the scale. We found that the item was more reliable when it was not reverse coded. We believe this is response bias. Future researchers should re-word this item.

Perceived Behavior Control Statistics	M	Std. Deviation	Total
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
The degree of empowerment that I feel in my school influences my decision to remain at my current school.	4.7	2.03	
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
I am empowered as a teacher at my current school.	4.9	1.85	
<b>Actual Belief Score</b>			<b>23.03</b>
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
The behavior of my students influences my decision to remain at my current school.	4.3	2.25	
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
I am able to manage my students' behavior effectively.	5.6	1.45	
<b>Actual Belief Score</b>			<b>24.08</b>
<b>Presence of the Belief</b>			
The degree of autonomy that I have in my school influences my decision to remain at my current school.	5.0	1.86	
<b>Importance of the Belief</b>			
I have autonomy as a teacher at my school.	5.0	1.70	
<b>Actual Belief Score</b>			<b>25.00</b>

There are four assumptions which justify the use of linear regression models for the purpose of making predictions about the dependent values (intentions) and the independent value (perceived behavior control) and the data met two out of four assumptions. The assumptions met are additivity and linearity and

normal distribution of errors. The assumptions the data violated are independent errors and homoscedasticity.

To determine if there is a correlation between perceived behavior control and intentions, a simple regression was conducted. The independent variable was perceived behavior control and the dependent variable used was intention. Results indicated that there is a positive correlation that exists between intentions and perceived behavior control as presented in Table 15. The correlation coefficient is .18 between the two variables. The *p*-value (Sig.) is <.01, which is less than the alpha level of .05. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and say that there is a positive correlation between perceived behavior control and intentions. The coefficient of determination or adjusted R Square is .03. R<sup>2</sup> indicates that approximately 3.1% of the variance in participants' intentions can be accounted for by perceived behavior control.

Table 15

*Regression Table for Perceived Behavior Control*

Values	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.97	.08		23.66	<.01
PBCTotal	.01	.00	.12	3.39	<.01

Note. N = 352, R = .18, R<sup>2</sup>=.03, adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .03, and p < .05.

**Research Question Four.** *To what extent do attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control relate to teachers' intentions to remain in the profession?* To determine if there is a relationship between the means of the three constructs and its effect on intentions, a multiple regression was run. Before I employed the multiple regression, I addressed the assumptions associated with regression. The data met three out of the 4 assumptions. The data met the assumptions of independence of errors, normally distribute errors, and additivity and linearity. However, it violated the assumption of homoscedasticity.

The independent variables were attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls and the dependent variable was intention. As presented in Table 16, the  $p$ -values associated with each beta weight, it was determined that attitudes predicted teachers' intentions to continue teaching in their current position at a statistically significant level,  $p = <.01$ , which was less than .05. Whereas subjective norms,  $p = .36$  and perceived behavior controls,  $p = .72$  do not predict teachers' intentions to continue teaching in their current teaching position. Additionally, the coefficient of determination or adjusted R Square was .11.  $R^2$  indicated that approximately 11% of the variance in teachers' intentions can be accounted for by the 3 constructs.

Table 16

*Multiple Regression Table for Attitudes, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavior Control*

Values	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
Constant	1.26	.15		8.71	<.01
ATTTotals	.03	.01	.32	4.95	<.01
SNTotals	.00	.00	.06	.93	.36
PBCTotals	-.00	.01	-.02	-.36	.72

Note.  $N = 352$ ,  $R = .35$ ,  $R^2 = .12$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .11$ , and  $p < .05$ .

**Research Question Five.** *What are the contextual factors across which teachers' attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavior controls, and intentions differ across school level and school classification?* To determine the difference between the means of school level and school classification and its effects on intentions, a one-way ANOVA was conducted. Before I computed the one-way ANOVA, I addressed the assumptions associated with ANOVA. The three assumptions associated with ANOVA include: (1) independence of scores, (2) normality in distribution, (3) homogeneity of variances. Independence of scores cannot be guaranteed; however, the questionnaire link was emailed to the teachers individually. The teachers could have taken the survey in a group, in a computer lab, and or at home.

Where and how the survey was completed cannot be determined. I assumed that the teachers worked independently on the questionnaire. Next the assumption of normality in distribution was tested on each variable (school characteristic and school type). To determine this assumption of normality, I used skewness and kurtosis. The value of the skewness for school level was .15 which falls between +1 and -1 and kurtosis was -1.73 which is less than 3. The results indicated that the skewness and kurtosis of school level is slightly skewed and does not violate the assumption of normality. The value of the skewness for school classification was -2.12 and kurtosis was 2.52. The results indicated the skewness does not fall between +1 and -1 which indicated that the skewness is substantial and the distribution is far from symmetrical and as a result violated the assumption of normality. The assumptions of normality are not critical because ANOVA is robust to the violations (Field, 2013). Lastly, to determine the homogeneity of variances, a Levene's test was conducted on school level,  $F(2, 354) = .56, p = .57$ , and school classification,  $F(2, 354) = 15.8, p < .01$ . The results indicated that one out of the two questions met this assumption. According to Field (2013) if the Levene's test is significant, less than .05, then the variances are significantly different. The test results showed that school level had a  $p$ -value that was .57 which is more than .05, indicated that the variances were not significantly different and does not violate the assumption of homogeneity. However, school level's  $p$ -value is less than .001 which is less than .05, indicated that there are significant differences between the variances and violated the assumption of homogeneity.

***School level.*** Descriptive statistics were run to determine the mean and standard deviation of school level (elementary, middle, and secondary school). As presented in Table 17, the descriptive data for school level across the three constructs and intentions. The results for descriptive statistics indicated that there is very little variation from the mean for elementary, middle, and secondary high school teachers' responses for intentions; there is consistency among the teachers across school levels. Also, the descriptive data for attitudes indicated that there was variation in responses among the teachers across school levels. There was no consistency among the teachers' responses; however, elementary teachers had the least amount of

variations from the mean for intentions. Additionally, the descriptive statistics for subjective norms indicated that there was variation from the mean for teacher responses across school levels. However, secondary high school teachers had the least amount of variation among teacher responses. Finally, the descriptive statistics for perceived behavior control indicated that there was variation among teacher responses across school levels. There is no consistency among the teachers; however, secondary high school teachers have the least amount of variation among teacher responses.

Table 17

*Descriptive Statistics Across School Level*

Variable	School Level	Mean	SD	N
Intention	Elementary	2.4	.72	157
	Middle School	2.1	.72	72
	Secondary	2.1	.79	128
	Total	2.2	.74	357
Attitudes	Elementary	37.2	9.11	154
	Middle School	33.9	9.67	67
	Secondary	34.9	9.70	129
	Total	35.7	9.51	350
Subjective Norm	Elementary	28.7	11.48	156
	Middle School	25.1	11.12	68
	Secondary	28.0	10.84	129
	Total	27.8	11.23	353
Perceived Behavior Control	Elementary	17.8	9.14	156
	Middle School	15.7	9.24	72
	Secondary	17.7	8.82	129



Additionally, to address this question a Tukey post hoc was conducted. The Tukey post hoc was used to compare intention, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control to school level to ascertain if there was a significant comparison. To determine if the comparison was significant, the  $p$ -value is less than .05 and if the  $p$ -value was more than .05 then the  $p$ -value is not significant (Field, 2013). Furthermore, a one-way ANOVA was completed to address this research question, testing for differences between the attitudes, subjective norm, perceived behavior control, and intention and its effect on school level and school classification, as presented in Table 18. The independent variable was school level and the dependent variables were attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavior control and intentions. The one-way ANOVA determined that three out of four dependent variables were significantly different. Teachers from elementary, middle, and secondary high schools reported different intentions,  $F(2, 354) = 5.09, p = .01$ , with Tukey post hoc tests indicating that elementary teachers more likely to continue teaching in their current position; therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis. Also teachers from elementary, middle, and secondary high schools reported different attitudes,  $F(2, 354) = 3.57, p = .03$ , with Tukey post hoc tests indicating that elementary teachers more likely to continue teaching in their current position; therefore we can reject the null hypothesis. Additionally, teachers from elementary, middle, and secondary high schools reported different subjective norms,  $F(2, 350) = 2.44 p = .09$ , with Tukey post hoc tests indicating that elementary teachers are more likely to continue teaching in their current position,; therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis. Finally, teachers from elementary, middle, and secondary high school teachers did not report different perceived behavior control,  $F(2, 354) = 1.51, p = .22$ ; therefore, we accept the null hypothesis.

Table 18

*One-way ANOVA for School Level*

		Sum of		Mean		
		Squares	df	Square	F	Sig.
Intention	Between	5.446	2	2.72	5.09	.01
	Groups					
	Within Groups	189.512	352	.54		
	Total	194.958	356			
Attitudes	Between	636.546	2	318.27	3.57	.03
	Groups					
	Within Groups	30915.840	347	89.1		
	Total	31552.386	349			
SN	Between	609.910	2	304.96	2.44	.09
	Groups					
	Within Groups	43749.387	350	125.0		
	Total	44359.297	352			
PBC	Between	246.904	2	123.45	1.51	.22
	Groups					
	Within Groups	28956.266	354	81.8		
	Total	29203.170	356			

Note.  $p < .05$

*School classification.* Descriptive statistics were run to determine the mean and standard deviation of school classification (magnet and traditional schools). Table 19 presents the descriptive data for school classification across the three constructs and intention. The descriptive statistics for school classification for intentions indicated that there is slight variation from the mean. There is consistency among the magnet and traditional school teachers. Also, the descriptive statistics for attitudes across school classification indicated that there is variation from the mean among traditional and magnet school teachers' responses; there is no teacher consistency. However, magnet school teachers had the least amount of variation from the mean between teacher responses for attitudes. Additionally, the descriptive statistics for subjective norms indicated that there is variation from the mean among magnet and traditional teachers' responses; there is no consistency among magnet and traditional teachers. However, magnet school teachers had the least amount of variation from the mean in teacher responses. Finally, the descriptive statistics for perceived behavior controls indicated that there is variation from the mean among magnet and traditional teachers' response; however, magnet school teachers had the least amount of responses variation.

Table 19

*Descriptive Statistics Across School Classification*

Variable	School Type	Mean	SD	N
Intention	Magnet	2.4	.61	49
	Traditional	2.2	.75	308
	Total	2.2	.74	357
Attitudes	Magnet	41.5	9.11	47
	Traditional	34.9	9.66	303
	Total	35.8	9.52	350
Subjective Norm	Magnet	35.4	8.44	48
	Traditional	26.5	11.04	305

	Total	27.7	11.15	353
Perceived Behavior Control	Magnet	20.4	7.29	49
	Traditional	16.8	9.06	308
	Total	17.3	8.92	357

As presented in Table 20, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to answer the second half of this research question; testing for difference between intentions, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control and its effect on school classification. The independent variable was school classification and the dependent variables were intention, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls. The one-way ANOVA determined that all four dependent variables were significantly different. Teachers from traditional and magnet schools reported different intentions,  $F(1, 355) = 5.33, p = .02$ . Additionally, teachers from traditional and magnet schools reported different attitudes,  $F(1, 348) = 21.15, p < .00$ ; therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis. Also, teachers from traditional and magnet schools reported different subjective norms,  $F(1, 351) = 28.85, p < .00$ ; therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis. Lastly, teachers from traditional and magnet school reported different perceived behavior controls,  $F(1, 355) = 7.19, p = .01$ ; therefore we can reject the null hypothesis.

Table 20

*One-way ANOVA for School Classification*

		Sum of		Mean		
		Squares	df	Square	F	Sig.
Intention	Between Groups	2.872	1	2.87	5.33	.021
	Within Groups	191.20	355	.54		
	Total	194.07	356			
Attitudes	Between Groups	1812.52	1	1812.52	21.15	<.01

	Within Groups	29825.55	348	85.71		
	Total	<u>31638.06</u>	<u>349</u>			
SN	Between Groups	3322.84	1	3322.84	28.85	<.01
	Within Groups	40427.61	351	115.18		
	Total	<u>43750.44</u>	<u>352</u>			
PBC	Between Groups	562.41	1	562.41	7.19	<.01
	Within Groups	27778.91	355	78.25		
	Total	<u>28341.32</u>	<u>356</u>			

Note.  $p < .05$

### Qualitative Survey Questions

Section three of the Teacher Intention's Survey sought to provide clarification for research questions one and three. The open-ended questions were as follows:

- If you reported that you plan to retire, please explain why. This question allowed respondents to expound on why they are leaving; what factors are influencing their decision to retire.
- If you reported that you plan to leave teaching for another profession, please explain why. This question allowed respondents the opportunity to express their attitudes about the profession and explain their intentions.
- If you reported that you plan to continue teaching, please explain why. This question afforded the respondents the opportunity to discuss why they have decided to continue teaching.

The open-ended questions provided the teachers the opportunity to bring forth additional factors that had not been addressed in the first two sections of the survey (Bogdan & Biklin, 2007). Skip Logic was used to guide the respondents. If the respondent stated that he/she planned to continue teaching, then the skip logic skipped the respondent to the next applicable question.

In organizing the data, I first read through all of the teachers’ responses before deciding on a method of coding (Bogdan & Biklin, 2007). While reading through the responses, I looked for patterns, attempting to determine potential themes to represent data. I then reread each response, coding them into what appeared to be common themes and documenting those responses that did not easily fit into one of the categories. The themes used for the first question were age and years, working conditions, and miscellaneous. The themes for the second question were working conditions, job satisfaction, exhausted, legislation/pay, and miscellaneous. Lastly, the themes for the third question were love of teaching, watching children grow and learn, invested too much time and money, and miscellaneous.

As displayed in Table 21, a schematic representation of the open-ended questions. The table demonstrates the theme, several responses for each theme, and the number of responses for each theme. Question 1 had 101 responses, question two had 177 responses, and question three had 101 responses.

Table 21

*Representation Teacher Response to Open-Ended Questions*

<b>If you reported that you plan to retire, please explain why.</b>		
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sample Responses</b>	<b># Comments</b>
Excessive Non-Teaching Duties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am not able to teach anymore. It is all about paperwork, lesson plans, etc.</li> <li>• I love teaching and am passionate about it but the mounds of paperwork, the endless demands on teachers.</li> <li>• We are required to enter lesson plans weekly and do a Strategic Agenda Board.</li> <li>• I am tired of working from 6:45 until 5:00 every day and then taking stuff home to do!</li> <li>• Workload is demanding</li> <li>• Overwhelmed with paperwork</li> <li>• The workload of teachers has quadrupled over the past few years.</li> <li>• Paper work and other non-teaching duties are becoming too overwhelming.</li> </ul>	57
Student Discipline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discipline is nonexistent in many public schools’ settings.</li> <li>• No more energy to deal with student and parents.</li> </ul>	42

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sample Responses</b>	<b># Comments</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The behavior of the students is becoming worse each year.</li> <li>• The mental, emotional, and health of the children is serious problem that lawmakers and administrators are falling to realize and teachers are not equipped to handle all behavior problems.</li> <li>• Teachers are not protected. When a student physically harms a teacher, the teacher is considered to be at fault.</li> </ul>	
Salary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of monetary compensation is ridiculous.</li> <li>• Teachers have so much responsibility but they are not compensated for all of it.</li> <li>• Less pay</li> <li>• Teachers are underpaid</li> <li>• This profession is like any other and should be paid like such.</li> <li>• To capitalize on other financial opportunities.</li> </ul>	21
Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Principal has no overall vision for the school.</li> <li>• Principal does not have a sense of what kind of school community she and the staff are trying to establish or what values the whole school should uphold.</li> <li>• The principal has no effective communication skills.</li> <li>• I would possibly teach at least one more year if my administrator was easier to work with and work for.</li> </ul>	17
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My background consists of many combined skills; and it would not be fair to limit myself to one specific area for the duration of my working career.</li> <li>• I am a professional actress, playwright and director. When I retire I will continue to be in profession as these things.</li> <li>• I am not retiring; I am escaping public education.</li> <li>• To find another occupation.</li> </ul>	16

**If you reported that you plan to leave teaching for another profession, please explain why.**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sample Responses</b>	<b># Comments</b>
Salary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dale Marsh has stated the only pay raises he will support are those tied to test scores.</li> <li>• The fact that we have already worked 8 years without any increased compensation hasn't entered the equation.</li> <li>• We have reached the point where a family cannot survive on salary of classroom teachers.</li> <li>• The legislature is pushing for tenure to be extended to 5 years and tenured teachers possibly lose their tenure due to student performance.</li> <li>• Teacher's pay is not equal to teachers' stress.</li> </ul>	73

Theme	Sample Responses	# Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I feel it is unfair to tie student achievement to a teacher’s pay raise.</li> <li>• We are the lowest paid professionals.</li> <li>• We teach in schools faithfully, but we have not had a raise in years.</li> <li>• I would like to work in a profession that gives incentives and raises on a continuous basis.</li> <li>• I feel as if my students’ education is being compromised due to “policy” and “political agendas” and that I am powerless to change this.</li> <li>• I am not pleased with our salaries, benefits, and the mounting social responsibilities society has placed on educators.</li> </ul>	
Lack of Autonomy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are too many outside factors influencing my students and their ability to learn, so I plan to enter a profession that allows me to help with those.</li> <li>• Because of district policies, federal guidelines, and state laws, I no longer have control of my classroom.</li> <li>• I have no autonomy when it comes to teaching and am unable to adjust my content to adapt to the needs of my students.</li> <li>• Tired of the same thing and hassles from those who are not here.</li> </ul>	52
Job Satisfaction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unfortunately, I no longer feel the profession is respected and valued by the community and lawmakers. I love to teach, but the education field is more for bureaucrats than teachers</li> <li>• I am not tired of teaching; I am tired of fighting the daily battles to teach.</li> <li>• Better opportunities, more money, teacher burn out, more job fulfillment.</li> <li>• I want to work in an environment where I am appreciated and more importantly, respected as a professional.</li> <li>• I am passionate about areas of science that are not fulfilled by my current job.</li> <li>• I have been robbed of the joy of teaching.</li> </ul>	33
Exhausted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teaching is taking up so much time and energy in my life that I feel very imbalanced.</li> <li>• I often spend 11 hour days in my school building and by the time I get home, I am exhausted.</li> <li>• Teaching has become very difficult.</li> <li>• Teaching is mentally exhausting.</li> <li>• Tired of the same thing and hassle from those not here.</li> <li>• Less stress</li> <li>• The stress of the job is getting worse.</li> </ul>	23



<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sample Responses</b>	<b># Comments</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Too much useless paperwork.</li> </ul>	
Student/Parent Behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Students are not accountable for their actions</li> <li>• Student behavior is horrible</li> <li>• Principals aren't allowed the discipline the students as needed.</li> <li>• Children nor parents are held accountable</li> </ul>	21
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For both professional and personal reasons. I would rather not get into the specifics.</li> <li>• I plan to retire when I reach 25 years of service. I have a counseling degree and would like to explore opportunities in community centers.</li> <li>• I will find another job after retirement because I will be 56 and my youngest child will be 17. She needs to go to college.</li> <li>• Less stress</li> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>	16

**If you reported that you plan to continue teaching, please explain why.**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Sample Responses</b>	<b># Comments</b>
Love of Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I love teaching, it gives me the opportunity to help mold students into good productive young adults.</li> <li>• I enjoy education educating children from poor socioeconomic backgrounds and to be a part of their success is very rewarding.</li> <li>• This is my second career after a 29-year business career. This is the job I believe I was led to have after ending my first one.</li> <li>• I enjoy working with my students and having a positive impact on both their educational and non-educational lives.</li> <li>• I will continue to fight the good fight.</li> <li>• If I can positively impact one kid a week, it has been worth the effort.</li> <li>• Is there anything more worthy or noble than saving lives?</li> <li>• I enjoy helping students find their way in life.</li> <li>• They are the reason I am teaching</li> <li>• It has been my lifelong passion.</li> </ul>	91
Watching Children Grow and Learn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For the one student that wants to sit in my class and learn. For the one student that shines when he finally gets it. For the one student that absolutely nothing, trying to learn a trade and build a skill to better themselves. This is the ONLY reason I teach.</li> </ul>	72

Theme	Sample Responses	# Comments
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My students are always my priority. No matter what type of day I'm having, good or bad, they can make me feel confident in what I do, and they can make me feel like I am truly making a difference.</li> <li>• I am always excited to see their faces light up when they achieve understanding on a new concept. This is why I continue teaching.</li> <li>• I love teaching and not for the summers off.</li> <li>• I love the "ah ha" moment that students get when they figure something out on their own. I love the relationships that I have built with my students and some of their parents. I love encouraging lifelong curiosities. If things were different, I would remain in my profession.</li> <li>• I look forward to the moment each child "gets it." Their excitement is matched by mine.</li> </ul>	
Invested too much Time and Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I have been doing this too long to quit. All I need is five more years and I can call it a wrap!</li> <li>• At this point in the game, I am trying to make it to retirement by years not age.</li> <li>• I have invested a lot of time and money in education. For this reason, I plan to remain in education until retirement.</li> <li>• I am so close to retiring with full benefits, it is in my best interest to continue teaching for a few years.</li> </ul>	7
Miscellaneous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To receive loan forgiveness.</li> <li>• I plan to continue teaching until I finish my Master's degree</li> <li>• I am teaching until my business stabilizes.</li> <li>• N/A</li> </ul>	16

### Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the factors that influenced teachers' intentions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. Chapter 4 used descriptive statistics, simple and multiple regression and one-way ANOVA to answer quantitative questions. Finally, open-ended survey questions were provided to allow participants to expound on factors that influence their decision.

## **CHAPTER V. DISCUSSION**

In the previous chapter, an analysis of the data was reported. This chapter consists of a summary of the study, an overview of the problem, and is followed by the major findings related to teacher intentions and implications for action. Conclusions from the findings of the study are discussed in relation to the factors that influence teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. Finally, the use of Theory of Planned Behavior to examine intentions is discussed.

### **Summary of the Study**

Teachers who teach in high-needs schools tend to leave at higher rates than those who teach in high-performing and white school districts (Boyd, Lankford, Loeb, & Wycoff, 2011). This study utilized Theory of Planned Behavior as a framework to examine contextual factors that may influence teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. Addressing this phenomenon required a review of literature that examined teachers' intentions and the distribution of a survey to all teachers in an urban, Alabama school district. The extensive literature review discussed characteristics of high-need schools, a discussion of why teachers are leaving, the significance of effective teachers in high-needs schools, strategies to promote teacher retention, and an overview of Theory of Planned Behavior. The survey instrument was created and disseminated to teachers who were employed in an urban, Alabama school district. The survey was created using the three constructs of Theory of Planned Behavior: attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls. The results of the survey were then analyzed using descriptive statistics, simple and multiple regression, and one-way ANOVA.

## **Overview of the Problem**

A major challenge for schools and school districts is to attract and retain qualified teachers to high-needs schools (Peterson, 2008). According to the American Federation of Teachers (2001), twenty to thirty percent of new teachers leave the profession within the first five years. Ingersoll (2001) has suggested that the percentages are even higher in schools that serve poor and minority students. Teacher attrition costs the nation an excess of \$7 billion annually for replacement, administrative processing and hiring, and the professional development and training of replacement teachers (National Commission on Teaching in America's Future, 2007).

A number of reform efforts have been used to address the problem of teacher attrition. Reform efforts such as financial incentives and teacher induction/mentoring programs have been used to counteract the "revolving door" phenomenon. However, the rate of teacher turnover continues to be higher than any other profession (Perrachione, Peterson, & Rosser, 2008). NCTAF (2007) has emphasized that researchers tend to focus on the symptom without addressing the root cause of teacher attrition. Additionally, instead of asking how to recruit and retain more teachers, they should be asking, "How do we get the good teachers we have recruited, trained, and hired to stay in their jobs?" (NCTAF, p. 3).

The Alabama urban school district used in this study is no stranger to the problem of teacher attrition. As part of the district's and individual school's Assist Continues Improvement Plan, each entity is required to develop strategies to recruit and retain highly qualified teachers. To accomplish this goal, factors that influence teachers' intentions to continue teaching in their current teaching position must be addressed.

## **Purpose Statement and Research Questions**

The purpose of this study was to examine factors that influenced teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools and to determine if school characteristics and school level played a role in the decision making process. First, the study sought to examine factors that influenced teachers' decisions

to continue teaching in their current teaching position. Also, using the three constructs of TPB, the study examined teachers' attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls in order to determine what contextual factors influenced their decision to remain or leave a high-needs school. Lastly, the study determined if school characteristics and school level assisted teachers in formulating their decision to leave or continue teaching in high-needs schools.

The study included five research questions:

1. Of the attitudes measured in the study, which do teachers report as important or relevant relative to their decision to leave or stay in their current teaching position
2. Of the subjective norm measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current teaching position?
3. Of the perceived behavior control measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay in their current teaching position?
4. To what extent do attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control relate to teachers' **intentions** to remain in the profession?
5. What are the contextual factors across which teachers' attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavior control, and intentions differ across school level and school classification?

### **Review of the Methodology**

This study used quantitative methods to examine contextual factors that influenced teachers' intentions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. The questionnaire was created using the three constructs of Theory of Planned Behavior (attitudes, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control). The questions were also paired. One question addressed the importance of the belief and the other addressed the presence of the belief. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section addressed participant's classification (teacher, admin, or other). If the participant selected administrator or other, the questionnaire automatically skipped to the end of the survey. If the participant selected teacher, then the questionnaire

continued to the next section. The second section, which was comprised of 48 questions (10 attitudes, 12 subjective norms, and 22 perceived behavior control) addressed the presence and importance of each belief. The third section had 9 multiple-choice questions that addressed teacher demographics. The fourth section consisted of three open-ended questions in which the respondents were asked to write comments about their intentions.

Furthermore, reliability was established for presence and importance of the belief for each construct. The alpha coefficient for each of the two areas suggested that the items have internal consistency. For instance, a reliability coefficient of 0.7 or higher is considered acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). Inferential statistics were used to determine the contextual factors that influenced teachers' decisions to continue teaching in high-needs schools and to determine if school characteristics and school level played a role in teachers' decision making.

### **Major Findings**

Kersaint et al. (2007) conducted a study similar to this study. The authors used Theory of Planned behavior to examine factors that influenced teachers' intentions. The Kersaint et al. study determined that teachers who left the profession reported valuing family and the time spent with them as a major cause for leaving the profession as compared to those who continued to teach. The goal of this study was to determine what factors influenced teachers' intention to continue teaching in high-needs schools. I also sought to examine whether school characteristics and school level played a role in the decision making process. This section discusses the implications for the findings for each of the five research questions.

#### **Research Question One**

*Of the attitudes measured in the study, which do teachers report as important or relevant relative to their decision to leave or stay in their current teaching position?* Simple regression and descriptive statistics were used to address attitudes. Descriptive statistics showed that teachers believed that helping

students grow and learn was more important than being satisfied with the teaching profession, personal fulfillment, job security, and good benefits.

Additionally, simple regression statistics produced results indicating a strong correlation between attitudes and intentions. The correlation coefficient was .34 and the  $p$ -value was  $<.01$ . The data also indicated that the adjusted  $R^2$  was .11, meaning 11% of the variance in teachers' intentions to continue to teach can be accounted for by attitudes. Additionally, by examining the survey questions associated with attitudes, it was determined that job satisfaction, personal fulfillment, job security, salary, and helping children grow and learn were the themes associated with attitudes. These findings are consistent with the research citing that teachers reported that job satisfaction resulted in higher levels of teacher retention (Cockburn, 2001). Additionally, Grayson and Alvarez (2008) reported that most educators do not enter the profession for financial gain, but instead they strive to make a positive difference in children's lives. However, according to Kersaint et al. (2007), the joy of teaching is of low importance across all leavers and stayers-

Furthermore, the open-ended questions examined teachers' attitudes as they pertained to intentions; there were a variety of responses, both positive and negative. The responses consisted of 33 answers that addressed job satisfaction, 91 responses that addressed love of teaching, and 72 questions that addressed watching children grow and learn. Example responses for job satisfaction were, "I have been robbed of my job of teaching," and, "I want to work in an environment where I am appreciated and more importantly, respected as a professional." Responses on the love of teaching and helping students grow and learn include, "I love teaching," and, "I enjoy working with my students and having a positive impact on both their educational and non-educational lives." Some of the negative comments can be attributed to school characteristics. Pearson and Momaw (2005) reported that there are intrinsic factors that motivate and encourage teachers. These motivating factors that increase teachers' job satisfaction include the desire to make a difference in society and the sense of accomplishments felt when they see a student learn. In

addition, 49 of the respondents were magnet school teachers and 309 were traditional school teachers, which indicates that the number of positive responses for helping students grow and learn and for the love of teaching overlapped between magnet and traditional teachers.

### **Research Question Two**

*Of the subjective norm measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay?* Simple regression and descriptive statistics were used to address subjective norms. Descriptive statistics produced results showing that teachers believed that students' opinions are more important to them than community, family, parents, co-workers, and administrative opinions. Additionally, a simple regression was conducted, and it determined that there is a correlation between subjective norms and intentions. The correlation coefficient was .24 with a  $p$ -value of  $<.01$ , and the adjusted  $R^2$  resulted in 5% of the variance in participant's intentions being accounted for by subjective norms.

Furthermore, according to the data, teachers felt that family opinions were important to them, which is consistent with the literature. Guarino et al. (2007) and Borman and Dowling (2008) stated that one of the reasons teachers leave the profession is because of family. A number of teachers leave the profession to start families; however, many return when their children reach school age. Additionally, Boe, Cook, and Sunderland (2008), suggested that of the teachers who leave, 31% of them leave due to family considerations.

The research data, from this study, also suggested that teachers reported that their students' parents want them to stay but that it is not as important to them. The mean score for presence of the belief was high, 5.6 with a standard deviation of 1.87 which indicates that the teacher responses were consistent. Whereas the mean for importance was 4.9, which was lower than presence of the belief for subjective norms. Additionally, the data indicated that the opinions of co-workers and administrators are important to them and influence their decision to continue teaching. Based on literature, school leaders play a major role in



improving teacher retention (Boyd, et al. 2011). Inman and Marlow (2004) conducted a study and determined that it is imperative for novice teachers to have colleagues with whom they can share ideas, make plans with, and have collaborative conversations about issues that may come up. The authors also suggested that it is important for the community to rally behind them and offer support; if not, teachers will continue to leave the teaching profession for other endeavors.

### **Research Question Three**

*Of the perceived behavior control measures included in the study, which do teachers report as important and relevant to their decision to leave or stay?* Simple regression and descriptive statistics were used to address perceived behavior controls. Descriptive statistics showed that teachers believed that teacher autonomy was more important than accountability testing, good salary, excessive paperwork, and professional development. Furthermore, a simple regression was run and the results indicated that there was a positive correlation between perceived behavior control and intentions. The correlation coefficient was .18 with a  $p$ -value of .01. Also, the adjusted  $R^2$  was .03, which indicated 3% of the variance in participants' intentions could be accounted for by perceived behavior control. Additionally, examining the survey questions associated with perceived behavior controls, it was determined that student behavior, lack of autonomy, school leadership, excessive non-teaching responsibilities, availability of resources, and salary were just a few of the themes associated with perceived behavior control. The research findings coincided with the research. Ingersoll (2015) noted that a major factor in increasing teacher retention is the issue of voice and being able to have input in key decisions that affect teaching and learning. Furthermore, according to research, there are a multitude of reasons why teachers leave; however, there is limited research that rank the contextual factors from most important to least important. Boe, Cook, and Sunderland (2008) stated that teachers leave the profession due to family considerations, poor health, school staffing actions, and retirement. Additionally, Strong (2007) stated that teachers leave the profession because they

are unhappy with their salaries and the lack of administrative support, student motivation, student discipline, and decision-making power.

Moreover, according to the research data, magnet school teachers report more perceived behavior controls than traditional school teachers. This could be due to the amount of support magnet school teachers receive from parents and community leaders. Additionally, a majority of the magnet school students usually perform at or above average on standardized tests. As a result, the stress of teacher accountability is minimal in magnet schools, whereas in traditional schools, greater numbers of students perform poorly on standardized tests. As a result, schools are classified as failing and teachers feel increased pressure and stress. Additionally, because magnet school teachers teach students that are more typically motivated and ready to learn, they are given more autonomy over what they teach and how they teach their students. However, traditional teachers are given curriculum frameworks and reading programs that tell them what to teach, when to teach it, and how to teach it. Finally, traditional teachers constantly have reading and literacy coaches as well as central office and state education staff in and out of their classroom critiquing their instruction and providing feedback on what they are or are not doing. Teaching in a traditional school is sometimes an arduous task and requires a teacher with a heart for children and a love for helping children to grow and learn to tackle the many challenges that are prevalent in most traditional schools.

#### **Research Question Four**

*To what extent do attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control relate to teachers' intention to remain in the profession?* A multiple regression was run to address this research question. Once the subjective norms and perceived behavior controls were included, the multiple regression model indicated that attitude was the only variable that contributed significantly to predicting intentions. The adjusted  $R^2$  was .11, indicating that 11% of the variance in teachers' intention can be accounted for by the three constructs. Subjective norms and perceived behavior controls were not significant to teachers' intention to continue teaching. This means that the variances overlap and the remaining variances cannot be

accounted for at this time; however, based off of current literature, there are a number of factors that influence teachers' intentions to continue teaching. The significance of attitudes is addressed more in question 1.

Additionally, the attitudes can be attributed to the lack of opportunities for teachers to express their thoughts and feelings without repercussions. The desire for teachers to express themselves was evident during the distribution of this survey. The response rate from the teachers was outstanding. Within the first week, approximately 191 teachers responded to the survey. Two weeks later, a reminder email was sent out to the schools, and by the end of four weeks, roughly 550 teachers responded to the survey. I was able to close the survey in four weeks with nearly 590 employees that attempted to take the survey. After organizing the data, there were 352 complete and usable responses from teachers. Furthermore, the teachers were given three open-ended questions that addressed their intentions and why they felt the way that they felt. The teachers appeared to be forthright with their responses. Because the survey was anonymous, the teachers could express their feelings without fear of backlash. The teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with the school and district leadership, student behavior, the lack of autonomy, low salary, and excessive non-teaching responsibilities. The teachers also expressed their desire to retire or leave the profession to enter into another profession. Finally, teachers voiced their aspiration to help children grow and learn and their love for children. The rapid response rate and the high numbers of teachers attempting to take the survey indicated a desire to be heard. School districts need to provide teachers with opportunities to discuss their schools and develop strategies to improve their areas of concern. Once teachers and administrators create an open line of communication, trust is developed and attitudes about the profession should change for the better (Boyd, et al. 2011).

Furthermore, teacher attitudes can be adjusted by improving teacher autonomy. Allensworth et al. (2009) suggested that teachers are more than likely to continue teaching in an environment where they feel that they have input in school decisions. Also, Johnson (2006) posited that teachers feel greater job

satisfaction when they feel that they can affect change in school policies and procedures. According to the survey data, teachers reported the importance of the belief and presence of the belief for teacher autonomy were equally important. Both beliefs had a mean score 5, with presence of the belief having a standard deviation of 1.86 and importance of the belief with a standard deviation of 1.70. The data suggested that there is consistency among teacher responses.

### **Research Question Five**

*What are the contextual factors across which teachers' attitudes, subjective norms, perceived behavior control, and intentions differ across school level and school classification?* Descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA were used to answer this research questions. This question has two parts: the first looked at how the three constructs (attitudes, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control) and intentions differed across school level, while the second part examined how the three constructs and intentions differed across school classification.

**School level.** To determine how the three constructs and intentions differed across school level, descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA were used. The mean test results indicated that elementary teachers experienced better attitudes towards teaching and were more likely to continue teaching than middle and secondary teachers. The mean results also indicated that elementary teachers reported subjective norms influenced their decision to continue to teach more than middle and secondary teachers. Finally, descriptive statistics determined that elementary teachers also believed that perceived behavior controls influenced their decision to continue teaching more than middle and secondary teachers. These results are consistent with research siting that elementary teachers were more satisfied with their current teaching position than secondary teachers (Perrachione et al., 2008).

Additionally, Tukey post hoc and a one-way ANOVA were computed on the three constructs and intention to determine how they differed across school level. The independent variable was school level and the dependent variables were intentions, attitudes, subjective norm, and perceived behavior control. The test

results determined that two out of the four variables were significantly different across school level: intentions  $F(2, 354) = 5.09, p = .01$ ; attitudes  $F(2, 347) = 3.57, p = .03$ ; subjective norms  $F(2, 350) = 2.44, p = .09$ ; and perceived behavior control  $F(2, 354) = 1.51, p = .22$ . The test indicated that intentions and attitudes were significantly different; however, subjective norms and perceived behavior control were not deemed significantly different across this school district's elementary, middle, and high schools.

An explanation is offered in an attempt to account for the differences in elementary (grades K – 5), middle (grades 6<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup>) and high (grades 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup>) school teachers' survey results for intentions and attitudes. Middle school students experience several transitions when they are promoted to middle school from elementary and from middle school to high school. During the students' elementary years, their school day is structured and systematic. The students walk the hall in a line to the restroom, library, and lunchroom. Additionally, their classes may be a self-contained class, meaning they interact with one core teacher the entire day. Students may also be departmentalized with two teachers: one core teacher for language arts and another teacher for basic social (math, science, history). Finally, most elementary schools do not have lockers. Middle and high school students experience a tremendous amount of freedom relative to elementary students. The students are now responsible for getting themselves to class within a certain time period, managing a locker, and interacting with at least seven teachers. Finally, this is also the age where middle school boys and girls begin going through puberty and start to develop an interest in the opposite sex. As a result of these factors, middle school students are usually harder to discipline, and many middle school teachers experience high levels of stress. When the students transition from middle to high school, many feel like they have to prove themselves to the upperclassman. As a result, discipline in the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> grade is usually difficult, as well. The behavior of the students could account for differences in attitudes and intentions to continue teaching in their current position between elementary and secondary teachers.

Finally, elementary teachers appear to be more communal and collaborative than secondary teachers, which could account for the differences in attitudes and intentions. Elementary teachers come in weeks before school starts to get their classroom ready for the students, and they start getting their lesson plans ready for the beginning of the school year. In contrast, secondary teachers come in only when they are scheduled to report. Finally, elementary teachers aim to please and are more nurturing to the students. However, many secondary teachers feel that they are there to teach their subject matter and if a student doesn't get it, I am sorry, I taught it.

**School classification.** To determine how the three constructs and intentions differed across school classification (magnet and traditional), descriptive statistics and one-way ANOVA were used. The test results indicated that magnet school teachers had better attitudes towards teaching, and they believed subjective norms and perceived behavior control influenced their decision to continue teaching; all constructs were significantly different. These findings are consistent with the research. Milanowski et al. stated that urban schools have difficulty recruiting and retaining high quality teachers. Also, Jackson (2009) stated that teachers prefer working environments with students of a particular demographic; students who teachers find undesirable will be exposed to poorer and ineffective teachers.

Additionally, a one-way ANOVA was conducted on the three constructs and intentions to determine how they differed across school classification. The independent variable was school classification (magnet or traditional) and the dependent variables were intention, attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavior control. The results determined that all four dependent variables were significantly different between traditional and magnet schools. Also, according to the data, magnet school teachers reported better attitudes and intentions and generally intended to continue teaching. Magnet school teachers reported better attitudes as it pertains to job satisfaction, children's growth and learning, job security, and personal fulfillment. On the other hand, traditional teachers may enjoy helping children grow and learn, but they experience more challenges than magnet school teachers. Additionally, magnet teachers also reported

greater subjective norms than traditional school teachers. When I examined the survey questions related to subjective norms, some of the themes associated are the opinions of community leaders, parents, administrators, and accountability. According to the research data, these themes are important to magnet school teachers and serve as predictors of intentions. Traditional teachers had slightly lower means in the area of subjective norms. This difference could be attributed to amount of scrutiny traditional school teachers receive from stakeholders.

Furthermore, magnet teachers reported having higher perceived behavior controls. External factors like accountability testing, student behavior, resources, and non-teaching responsibilities are not as challenging as they are in traditional schools. Traditional teachers consistently deal with behavior issues, excessive paper work, and daily pressure to teach to the standards to prepare for accountability testing. Finally, magnet school teachers reported having stronger parental support than traditional teachers. This difference can be attributed to magnet schools having criteria in order to be accepted to attend. Magnet school acceptance is predicated on student's grade point average, discipline and attendance data, standardized test results, and student interview. Once admitted, students have to maintain the required grade point average and discipline or they will be released from the school. As a result, parents are typically more involved with their child's education, ensuring that homework assignments are complete and turned in on time, responding to student behavior, and guaranteeing students are prepared for class every day. Magnet school parents are typically also active in the school's Parent Teacher Association (PTA), volunteer to be "Classroom Mom," and attend parent conferences when grades slip. Unfortunately, this is not the norm in traditional schools. Traditional schools accept any and every one zoned to attend that particular school; no student is turned away. Often times parents change phone numbers every other month which makes it difficult for teachers to keep in contact with them when a problem arrives with the child. Additionally, traditional school teachers sometimes experience difficulty getting parents to attend PTA meetings or serve on the PTA.

There are a number of differences that exist between magnet and traditional schools. However, there were a few teachers that reported that they enjoy working in high-needs schools. According to the open-ended response, several teachers reported that “they love teaching children in high-needs schools,” and another stated that “they enjoy educating children from poor socioeconomic backgrounds and to being a part of their success is very rewarding.” This could be attributed to teachers wanting to work where they feel the most needed.

### **Implications for Action**

Since this study was conducted in one Alabama urban school district, the results of this study cannot be generalized to other populations. The results of this study suggest that magnet school teachers have better attitudes and are more than likely to continue teaching than traditional school teachers. According to the data, magnet school teachers have higher job satisfaction and personal fulfillment, feel that they have good job security with good benefits, and they feel as if they are helping children grow and learn. The Theory of Planned Behavior was instrumental in determining the factors that influenced teachers’ intention and as a result is an appropriate framework that all school districts can use to gauge teachers’ intentions.

Additionally, current literature suggests that Theory of Planned Behavior is an appropriate framework to predict teachers’ intentions. There is an abundance of research that examines why teachers leave; however, there is limited research that addresses factors that influence teachers’ intentions to continue to teach (Phillips, 2015). Thus, it is appropriate for traditional school officials interested in improving teacher retention to utilize Theory of Planned Behavior to replicate the environment that is prevalent in magnet schools.

Furthermore, there is a great need for traditional school administrators and school districts to realize the importance of providing working environments that are similar to magnet schools in this urban district. According to the data, providing those environments could improve teacher retention, which in turn, will



improve student achievement. Daughtry and Wider (2010) examine the importance of having effective teachers in classrooms (especially those classrooms that service our most vulnerable students) and developing a system by which teachers will want to teach and will continue to teach in high-needs schools.

Finally, based on the results from this study, school leaders within this urban school district can take specific and intentional measures to improve teachers' retention in high-needs schools by providing working environments similar to that of magnet schools. These working environments will increase the likelihood of teachers wanting to continue to teach for long periods of time and not just long enough to gain tenure.

### **Job Satisfaction**

Teachers in magnet schools reported greater job satisfaction. According to Skaalvik and Skaalvik, teacher satisfaction is derived from intrinsic rewards. Intrinsic rewards include the actual act of teaching as well as working with students and watching them grow, learn, and develop. These are just a few of the motives for becoming a teacher and are an integral part of teacher job satisfaction. Perrachine et al. also suggests that teachers experience job satisfaction when they are provided with positive experiences, such as opportunities to work with children and to nurture student learning. It is suggested that traditional schools should create opportunities for teachers to have those positive experiences to increase teachers' intentions to continue to teach.

### **Working Conditions**

Theory of Planned Behavior is supported by research on examining factors that influence intentions. Thus, it is an appropriate measure to assess the school's environment as viewed through the eyes of novice and veteran teachers. In an attempt to recruit and retain teachers at high-needs schools, it is suggested the working conditions be improved. Improvements include, but are not limited to, increasing parental involvement, providing administrative supports, increasing collegiality among faculty, providing a mentoring/induction program, and increasing the salary for those who teach in hard to staff schools

(Perrachione et al., 2008; Phillips, 2015; Pogodzinski, 2014). Salary is not a predictor for teacher intentions; however, teachers who teach in high-needs schools experience higher workloads which affects teacher job satisfaction.

### **Community Perceptions**

Based on the results of the study, magnet school teachers reported higher subjective norms than traditional school teachers. In an attempt to increase the subjective norms of traditional teachers, it is important that community leaders change their perceptions of traditional school teachers. Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) indicated that the negative portrayal of teachers in the news media has led to teachers being dissatisfied with the profession. Inman and Marlow (2004) stated that teachers feel that community support is important and influences their intention to continue teaching. It is also important that communities become more supportive of teachers and the conditions by which they teach in. This change of perception can be accomplished but will require a combined effort from teachers and administration. Schools can provide community members with more opportunities to be involved in school activities, thus providing the community with a more intimate look at schooling. Community leaders deem magnets schools as better because they score well on accountability tests and receive positive publicity via national merit awards. It will greatly benefit traditional schools to publicize the many positive things that are occurring within the building to counteract any negative things the media and community report.

### **Professional Development**

Research suggests that teacher characteristics (novice and/or veteran) are beneficial to student achievement. Research also suggests that teachers become more effective each year that they teach, and effective teachers are needed to teach in high-needs schools (Hallam et al., 2012). Effective and on-going professional development is imperative to ensure that the teachers have the essential skills to be successful and continue teaching in high-needs schools. Professional development that addresses classroom management and pedagogy are critical to a teacher's success, especially in high-needs schools. Effective

and on-going professional development provides teachers with the necessary tools to increase self-efficacy, and as a result, increase student achievement and teacher retention (Klassen & Chiu, 2011; Wayne et al., 2008).

### **Induction/Mentoring Programs**

Providing an effective induction/mentoring program to novice teachers or transferring teachers is paramount to the success of a teacher and student achievement. It is imperative that school leaders provide novice teachers with mentors—effective veteran teachers who teach the same subject, have common planning periods, and are within the same school. Literature repeatedly demonstrates the importance of mentoring to reduce teacher attrition and improve teacher retention (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

### **Recommendation for Future Research**

Several recommendations for future research have evolved from this study. Future researchers can use the Theory of Planned Behavior to extend this study to determine teachers' behaviors. This study used the theory to address intention and does not examine how the three constructs addressed teachers' actual behaviors relative to remaining or leaving their teaching positions. Another extension of this study could be to research those who have left the teaching profession to find out what factors influenced their decision to resign from teaching or whether they plan to return. This study only focused on teachers that are currently teaching, to extend the study include an examination of years of experience at a specific school and years of experience in general. Finally, it may be of value to replicate the study in other rural school districts to determine the factors that influences teachers' intentions to continue teaching in high-needs schools. While the results of this study will be shared with the school district, it would be interesting to compare these findings to a district that is similar to see if the responses would be consistent.

### **Conclusions**

Theory of Planned Behavior is a well-documented theory used to address intention. The theory was used for predictions in a multitude of studies. Lee et al. (2010) used the theory to predict teachers'

intentions to use educational technology. The researchers determined that all three constructs were significant predictors of teachers' intentions. However, attitudes had twice the influence compared to subjective norms and three times that of perceived behavior control. Teo et al. (2010) conducted a study that was similar to Lee et al. examining pre-service teachers' self-reported intention to use technology. The results of the study determined that attitudes towards usage and subjective norms were significant predictors of behavioral intention to use technology while perceived behavior control was not. Additionally, the study found that attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavior controls accounted for 40% of the variance in behavioral intention for pre-service teachers to use technology. Theory of Planned Behavior was used to predict the likelihood of teachers and pre-service teachers' intentions to use technology in the classroom. Whereas this study used Theory of Planned Behavior to predict teachers' intentions to continue teaching in high-needs schools and not the use of technology, it is still an appropriate framework to predict intentions and is widely used to predict intentions in a variety of areas. As a result, the use of Theory of Planned Behavior effectively addressed the research questions for this study.

It is hoped that the results of this study will inspire school leaders to take the necessary actions to promote and encourage teacher retention in high-needs schools. The teachers that teach in high-needs schools flourish and will continue to teach the most underserved students when they are provided with the necessary supports. While this study took place in an urban school district, the results of the survey were consistent with the research. According to Shuls & Maranto (2011), teachers are not teaching for the money but for the joy of seeing students grow and learn. A survey respondent stated "This is my second career after a 29-year business career. This is the job I believe I was led to have after ending my first one. I enjoy working with my students and having a positive impact on both their educational and non-educational lives." Another respondent stated, "I look forward to the moment each child gets it. Their excitement is matched by mine."

This results of this study suggest that there are a number of teachers who enjoy and want to continue teaching in their current position. Unfortunately, so many teachers are leaving high-need schools due to poor working conditions, lack of autonomy, and lack of administrative support. Many teachers are leaving for less arduous teaching assignments (Jacob, 2007). In order encourage teacher recruitment and retention, school leaders must recognize and develop strategies to attract the most effective teachers to high-needs schools.

## REFERENCES

- Alabama Accountability Act (2013). <http://arc-sos.state.al.us/PAC/SOSACPDF.001/A0011072.PDF>
- Abbate-Vaughn, J., Frechon, O., & Wright, B. (2010). Accomplished urban teaching. *Theory and Practice*, 49, 185–192. Doi:10.1080/00405841.2010.487752
- Alliance for Excellent Education. (2005). *Teacher attrition: A costly loss to the nation and to the states*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process*, 50, 170–211.
- Ajzen, I. (2011). The theory of planned behavior: Reactions and reflections. *Psychology and Health*, 26(9), 1113–1127.
- Allensworth, E., Ponisciak, S., & Maseo, C. (2009). *The schools teachers leave: Mobility in Chicago Public Schools*. Chicago: Consortium on Chicago School Research-University of Chicago.
- Amrein-Beardsley, A. (2012). Recruiting expert teachers into high-needs schools: Leadership, money, and colleagues. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*.
- Andrews, S., Gilbert, L., & Martin, E. (2007). The first years of teaching; Disparities in perceptions of support, *Action in Teaching Education*, 28(4), 4–13.
- Berry, B. (2008). Staffing high-needs schools: Insights from the nation's best teachers. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 89(10), 766–771.
- Berryhill, J., Linney, J. A., & Fromewick, J. (2009). The effects of education accountability on teachers: Are policies too stress-provoking for their own good? *International Journal of Education Policy & Leadership*, 4(5), 1–14.

- Billingsley, B. (2004). Special education teacher retention and attrition: A critical analysis of the research literature. *The Journal of Special Education*, 38(39), 39–55. Doi:10.1177/00224669040380010401.
- Boyd, D., Grossman, P., Ing, M., Lankford, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2011). The influence of school administrators on teacher retention decisions. *American Educational Research Journal*, 48(2), 303–333. doi:10.3102/0002831210380788
- Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, & Wyckoff, J. (2008). The impact of assessment and accountability on teacher recruitment and retention. Are there unintended consequences? *Public Finance Review*, 36(1), 88–111. doi:10.1177/10911142106293446.
- Boyd, D., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., Rockoff, J., & Wyckoff, J. (2008). The narrowing gap in New York City teacher qualifications and its implications for student achievement in high-poverty schools. *Journal of Policy and Management*, 27(4), 793–818. doi: 10.1002/pam.20377.
- Boyd, D., Lankford, H., S., Ronfeldt, M., & Wyckoff, J. (2011). The role of teacher quality in retention and hiring: Using applications-to-transfer to uncover preferences of teachers and schools. *Journal of Policy and Management*, 30(1), 88–110.
- Bryk, A. S. & Schneider, B. (2002). *Trust in schools: A core resource for improvement*. New York, NY: Russell Sage Foundation.
- Buddin, R., & Zamarro, G. (2009). Teacher qualifications and student achievement in urban elementary schools. *Journal of Urban Economics*, 66, 103–115. doi:10.1016/j.jue.2009.05.001
- Carroll, T. & Foster, E., (2010). *Who will teach? Experience matters*. Washington, DC: National Commission on Teaching and America's Future.
- Chen, J. I., & Yang, C. (2007). Using the theory of planned behavior to understand in-service kindergarten teachers' behavior to enroll in a graduate level academic program. *Journal of College Teaching and Learning*, 4(11), 13–17.

- Clotfelter, C., Glennie, E., Ladd, F., & Vigdor, J. (2007). Teacher bonuses and teacher retention in low-performing schools: Evidence from the North Carolina \$1,800 teacher bonus program. *Public Finance Review*, 36(63), 63–87. Doi:10.1177/1091142106291662.
- Clotfelter, C. T., Ladd, H. F., & Vigdor, J. (2005). Who teachers whom? Race and the distribution of novice teachers. *Economics of Education Review*, 24(4), 377–392.
- Clotfelter, C. T., Ladd, H. F., Vigdor, J. L., & Wheeler, J. (2007). High-poverty schools and the distribution of teachers and principals. *North Carolina Law Review*, 85(1348).
- Conner, M., & Armitage, C. (1998). Extending the theory of planned behavior: A review and avenues for further research. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 28, 1429–1464.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2003). Keeping good teachers: Why it matters; What leaders can do. *Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development*, 60(8), 6–13.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). Recruiting and retaining teachers: Turning around the race to the bottom in high-need schools. *Journal of Curriculum and Instruction* 4(11), 16–32.
- Darling-Hammond, L., & Sykes, G. (2003). Wanted, a national teacher supply policy for education: The right way to meet the “highly qualified teacher” challenge. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, 11(33), 33–53.
- Donald, B., Lankford, H., Loeb, S., Rockoff, J., & Wycoff, J. (2008). The narrowing gap in New York City teacher qualifications and its implications for student achievement in high-poverty schools. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 27(4), 793 – 818 doi:10.1002/pam.20377
- Downey, D. B., Von Hippel, P.T., & Hughes, M. (2008). Are “failing” schools really failing? Using seasonal comparison to evaluate school effectiveness. *Sociology of Education*, 81(3), 242–270. doi.10.1177/003804070808100302
- Fink, A. (2003). *The survey kit* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks: Sage.



- Freedman, S., & Appleman, D. (2009). "In if for the long haul" — How teacher education can contribute to teacher retention in high-poverty, urban schools. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 60(3), 323–337.
- Gewertz, C. (2009). Duncan's call for school turnarounds spark debate. *Education Week*.  
<http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2009/07/21/37turnaround.h2>
- Goldhaber, D., Gross, B., & Player, D. (2011). Teacher career paths, teacher quality, and persistence in the classroom: Are public schools keeping their best? *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 30(1), 57–87.
- Goodman, S., & Turner, L. (2013). The design of teacher incentive pay and educational outcomes: Evidence from the New York City bonus program. *Journal of Labor Economics*, 31(2), 409–420.
- Grayson, J. L., & Alvarez, H. (2008). School climate factors relating to teacher burnout: A mediator model. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 24, 1349–1363.
- Grissom, J., Loeb, S., & Nakashima, N. (2014). Strategic involuntary teacher transfers and teacher performance: Examining equity and efficiency. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 33(1), 112-140. doi:10.1002/pam.21732
- Guin, K. (2004). Chronic teacher turnover in urban elementary schools. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 12(42), 1–25.
- Hanselman, P., Grigg, J., Bruch, S., & Gamoran, A. (2011). The consequences of principal and teacher turnover for school resources. Working paper downloaded on December 11, 2011 from [http://ssc.wisc.edu/~sbruch/pdf/Hanselman. et. al. 2011. social. resources. pdf](http://ssc.wisc.edu/~sbruch/pdf/Hanselman_et_al_2011_social_resources.pdf).
- Hanushek, E. (2011). The economic value of higher teacher quality. *Economics of Education Review*, 30, 466–479.
- Hanushek, E., Kain, J. F., Rivkin, S. G., & Branch, G. F. (2007). Charter school quality and parental decision making with school choice. *Journal of Public Economics*, 91, 823–848.  
Doi:10.1016/j.jpubeco.2006.09.014

- Hanushek, E., & Rivkin, S. (2010). Constrained job matching: Does teacher job search harm disadvantaged urban schools? (No. w15816). National Bureau of Economic Research.
- Henke, R., Chen, X., & Geis, S. (2000). Progress through the teacher pipeline: 1992–1993 College graduates and elementary/secondary school teaching as of 1997 (Paper No. NCES 20000152). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics.
- Ingersoll, R. M. (2001). Teacher turnover and teacher shortages: An organizational analysis. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38, 499–534.
- Ingersoll, R. M., & May, H. (2011). *Recruitment, retention and the minority teacher shortage*. The Consortium for Policy Research in Education.
- Ingersoll, R. M., & Merrill, L. (2012). *Seven trends: The transformation of the teaching force*. The Consortium for Policy Research in Education.
- Ingersoll, R. M., & Strong, M. (2011). The impact of induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers: A critical review of the research, *Review of Educational Research*, 81(2), 201–233. doi.10.3102/0034654311403323.
- Inman, D., & Marlow, L. (2004). Teacher retention: Why do beginning teachers remain in the profession? *Education*, 124(4), 605.
- Jacob, B. (2007). The challenges of staffing urban schools with effective teachers. *Future of Children*, 17, 185–192.
- Kersaint, G., Lewis, J., Potter, R., & Meisels, G. (2007). Why teachers leave: Factors that influence retention and resignation. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23, 775–794.
- Kukla-Acevedo, S. (2009). Leavers, movers, and stayers: The role of workplace conditions in teacher mobility decisions. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 102(6), 443–452. Doi:10.3200/JOER.102.6.443-452.

- Ladd, H. F. (2011). Teachers' perceptions of their working conditions: How predictive of planned and actual teacher movement? *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 33(2), 235–261.  
Doi:10.3102/0162373711398128.
- Lankford, H., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2002). Teacher sorting and the plight of urban schools: A descriptive analysis. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 24, 37–62.
- Lee, J., Cerreto, F. A., & Lee, J. (2010). Theory of Planned Behavior and Teachers' Decisions Regarding Use of Educational Technology. *Educational Technology & Society*, 13(1), 152-164.
- MacFarlane, K., & Woolfson, L. M. (2013). Teacher attitudes and behavior toward the inclusion of children with social, emotional and behavioral difficulties in mainstream schools: An application of the theory of planned behavior. *Teaching and teacher education*, 29, 46-52.
- Montaño, D. E. & Kasprzyk, D. (2008). Theory of reasoned action, theory of planned behavior, and the integrated behavior model. In K. Glanz, B. Rimer, & K. Viswanath (Eds.), *Health behavior and health education* (pp. 67–96). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Murnane, R., & Steele, J. (2007). What is the problem? The challenge of providing effective teachers for all children. *Project Muse*, 17(1), 15–43.
- Murphy, J. (2008). The place of leadership in turnaround schools: Insights from organizational recovery in the public and private sectors. *Journal of Educational Administration*, 46(1).  
Doi:10.1108/09578230810849826
- Murphy, J. (2010). Nine lessons for turning around failing schools: Studying turnaround literature about non-education organizations provides some crucial lessons for educators—if they are willing to heed the advice. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 91(8), 93–97. Doi: 10.1177/003172171009100822.
- Ndoye, A., Imig, S. R., & Parker, M. A. (2010). Empowerment, leadership, and teachers' intentions to stay in or leave the profession or their schools in North Carolina charter schools. *Journal of School Choice*, 4(2), 174–190.

- Pearson, L. C., & Moomaw, W. (2005). The relationship between teacher autonomy and stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism. *Educational research quarterly*, 29(1), 37.
- Perrachione, B., Petersen, G., & Rosser, V. (2008). Why do they stay? Elementary teachers' perceptions of job satisfaction and retention. *The Professional Educator*, 32 (2).
- Phillips, O. (2015). Revolving door of teachers costs schools billions every year. National Public Radio.
- Pogodzinski, B. (2014). Collegial support and novice teachers' perceptions of working conditions. *Journal of Educational Change*, 15(4), 467–489.
- Pucella, T. (2011). The impact of national board certification on burnout levels in educators. *The Clearing House*, 84, 52–58. Doi:10.1080/00098655.2010.511306.
- Roberson, S., & Roberson, R. (2008). The role and practice of the principal in developing novice teachers. *The Clearing House*, 82(3), 113–118.
- Ross, M., & Shannon, D. (2008). *Applied quantitative methods in education*. Dubuque, IW: Kendall/Hunt.
- Ronfeldt, M., Loeb, S., & Wyckoff, J. (2013). How teacher turnover harms student achievement. *American Educational Research Journal*, 50(1), 4-36. doi:10.3102/0002831212463813.
- Santoro, D. (2011). Good teaching in difficult times: Demoralization in the pursuit of good work. *American Journal of Education*, 118(1), 1–23.
- Shuls, J., & Maranto, R. (2014). Show them the mission: A comparison of teacher recruitment incentives in high need communities. *Social Science Quarterly*, 95(1), 239–252.
- Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2011). Teacher job satisfaction and motivation to leave the teaching profession: Relations with school context, feeling of belonging, and emotional exhaustion. *Teaching and teacher education*, 27(6), 1029-1038.
- Steele, J., Murnane, R., & Willett, J. B. (2010). Do financial incentives help low-performing schools attract and keep academically talented teachers? Evidence from California. *Journal of Policy Analysis and Management*, 29(3), 451–478. Doi:10.1002/pam.20505

- Superfine, B. M. (2011). Stimulating school reform: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act on the shifting federal role in education. *Mo.L. Rev.*, 76, 81.
- Tavakol, M., & Dennick, R. (2011). Making sense of Cronbach's alpha. *International Journal of Medical Education*, 2, 53–55. Doi:10.5116/ijme.4dfb.8dfd.
- Teo, T., & Beng Lee, C. (2010). Explaining the intention to use technology among student teachers: An application of the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). *Campus-Wide Information Systems*, 27(2), 60-67.
- Teven, J. T. (2007). Teacher temperament: Correlates with teacher caring, burnout, and organizational outcomes. *Communication Education*, 56(3), 382–400.
- Vanderslice, R. (2010). ABC's of keeping the best attrition, burnout, and climate. *Childhood Education*, 86(5), 298–301.
- Wayne, A. J., Yoon, K. S., Zhu, P., Cronen, S., & Garet, M. S. (2008). Experimenting with teacher professional development: Motives and methods. *Educational Researcher*, 37(8), 469–479.
- Weijters, B., Cabooter, E., & Schillewaert, N. (2010). The effect of rating scale format on response styles: The number of response categories and response category labels. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 27, 236–247.
- Wilkinson, G. (2009). Supportive induction slows the revolving door. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 4(1), 97–110.
- Ylimaki, R. M., Jacobson, S. L., & Drysdale, L. (2007). Making a difference in challenging, high-poverty schools: Successful principals in the USA, England, and Australia. *School Effectiveness and School Improvement*, 18(4), 361–381. Doi:10.1080/09243450701712486

APPENDIX A  
Approved IRB Letter

May 9, 2016

**MEMORANDUM TO:** Charlesetta Robinson  
Department of Educational Foundations, Leadership, and Technology (EFLT)

**PROTOCOL TITLE:** "The Relationship between School Characteristics and Teacher's Intention to Continue Teaching in High-Needs Schools"

**IRB FILE NO.:** 15-431 EX 1511

**APPROVAL:** November 11, 2015  
**EXPIRATION:** November 10, 2018

The referenced protocol was approved "Exempt" by the IRB under 45 CFR 46.101 (b) (2):

Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless:

- (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and
- (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Note the following:

1. **CONSENTS AND/OR INFORMATION LETTERS:** Only use documents that have been approved by the IRB with an approval stamp or approval information added.
2. **RECORDS:** Keep this and all protocol approval documents in your files. Please reference the complete protocol number in any correspondence.
3. **MODIFICATIONS:** You must request approval of any changes to your protocol before implementation. Some changes may affect the assigned review category.
4. **RENEWAL:** Your protocol will expire in three (3) years. Submit a renewal a month before expiration. If your protocol expires and is administratively closed, you will have to submit a new protocol.
5. **FINAL REPORT:** When your study is complete, please notify the Office of Research Compliance, Human Subjects.

If you have any questions concerning this Board action, please contact the Office of Research Compliance.



Bernie R. Olin, Pharm.D.  
Chair of the Institutional Review  
Board #2 for the Use of Human Subjects in Research

cc: Lisa Kensler

THESIS/DISSERTATION U.S. COPYRIGHT REGISTRATION AGREEMENT

Personal Information:

Last Name: Robinson Middle Name or Initial Denise  
First Name: Charlesetta Country of Citizenship: U.S.  
Date of Birth: 05/16/71

Degree & Thesis/Dissertation Information:

College, School, or Division: COE Education/EFLT Degree Awarded: PhD  
Department or Program: EFLT Year Degree Awarded: 2016  
Committee Chair: Lisa Kensler Year Manuscript Completed: \_\_\_\_\_

Current Contact Information:

Street Address: 11603 E. Trinity Blvd.  
City: Montgomery State: AL Zip Code: 36106  
Current Email address: cdrc0009@tigermail.auburn.edu  
Primary Phone Number: (334) 315-6474

Permanent Contact Information:

Street Address: 11603 E. Trinity Blvd.  
City: Montgomery State: AL Zip Code: 36106  
Permanent Email address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Primary Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

I have previously registered my published thesis/dissertation, or an earlier version of the manuscript with the U.S. Office of Copyright. The previous registration was made by:

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The Registration Number is: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Author's (Student) Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



**AUBURN UNIVERSITY ELECTRONIC  
THESIS / DISSERTATION FINAL  
APPROVAL FORM**

**STUDENT INFORMATION**

Robinson Charlotta Denise \_\_\_\_\_  
Last Name First Name Middle Name Suffix  
902390554 cdr0009@tigermail.auburn.edu (334)315-6474  
Student ID Number E-mail address Phone  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Major Degree (MS, MA, PHD) Semester of Graduation  
7-7-15 \_\_\_\_\_  
Defense Date ETD Submission Date

Document title: \_\_\_\_\_

Style Guide Used: \_\_\_\_\_ Computer Program(s) Used: \_\_\_\_\_

Except where reference is made to the work of others, the work described in this [thesis / dissertation] is my own or was done in collaboration with my advisory committee. This [thesis / dissertation] does not include proprietary or classified information.

**Publication Options (choose one):**  
 Traditional Publication     Open Access Publishing

**Access/Publication Restrictions (choose one):**  
 Unlimited Access (No Restrictions)  
 Limited Access (access available to valid AU user accounts)  
     6 months     1 year     2 years     5 years  
 Withheld Access (no access to all users including student/advisory committee, etc.)  
     6 months     1 year     2 years     5 years

I wish to have my work protected by registering for an official Copyright.  
*Registering with the U.S. Copyright office establishes your claim to the copyright of your thesis or dissertation and provides you the author with certain protections if your copyright is violated. If you wish, the Graduate School will act as your agent with the US Copyright Office and apply for copyright registration as part of the publication process. We will prepare the application in your name, submit the fee, deposit the required copy or copies of the manuscript, and mail you a completed certificate of registration from the Library of Congress.*

[Signature] 7/7/2016  
Major Professor Signature (signature indicates you are aware and have discussed these options with the student)

Charlotta D. Robinson 7-7-16  
Student's Signature Date